

## **EXECUTIVE**

**18 MARCH 2024**

## **PRESENT**

Councillor T. Ross (in the Chair).

Councillors C. Hynes (Deputy Leader), S. Adshead, K.G. Carter, J. Harding, E. Patel, J. Slater, R. Thompson, A.J. Williams and J.A. Wright

### In attendance

Graeme Bentley	Director of Finance and Systems
Dianne Geary	Assistant Director Corporate Strategy and Policy
Helen Gollins	Consultant in Public Health
Emma Malpas	Head of Legal Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jill McGregor	Corporate Director of Children's Services
Christopher Morris	Director of Highways, Transport and Environment
Richard Roe	Corporate Director of Place
Paul Rogers	Governance Officer
Sara Todd	Chief Executive

### Also Present

Councillors Butt, Evans, Paul and Welton.

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## **114. ATTENDANCES**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **115. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **116. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That

- (i) The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2024 were approved as an accurate record; and
- (ii) That subject to the following amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024 be approved as an accurate record –

Minute no.88

The answer to the question raised by the Member was given by the Executive Member for Finance, Change and Governance.

## **117. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from members of the public.

## **118. MATTERS FROM COUNCIL OR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (IF ANY)**

Councillor Acton, Chair of Scrutiny, informed Members that Scrutiny held its last meeting of the Municipal Year recently. An update of the new Corporate Plan was presented and was well received. The progress report on the Carrington Relief Road was also presented and discussed. Many questions were raised and answered and Councillor Action thanked the Executive Members for Economy and Regeneration and Climate Change for their participation.

Councillor Butt, Chair of Health Scrutiny Committee, at its recent meeting the Committee received an update from the Greater Manchester Mental Health Foundation Trust Improvement Plan which is making progress and overcoming the challenges it faces in achieving the standards set by the Care Quality Commission.

The Chair also informed Members that the Committee received a refresh update on the Trafford Draft Locality Portfolio 24 which would create one plan for healthy care in Trafford by integrating the aims and aspirations of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the next 4 years. Social Prescribing was also discussed and that is being via a task and finish group. More information is still coming through and the Group will be looking at Social Prescribing into the next the next Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: The Executive noted the updates from both Scrutiny Chairs.

## **119. PLACES FOR EVERYONE**

The Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration presented a report regarding a Joint Development Plan Document for nine Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) 2022-2039 (The Places for Everyone Plan).

The Places for Everyone Joint Local Plan (PfE) will provide the overall strategic planning context for Development Management and the Trafford Local Plan, which will contribute to all of the Council's Corporate Priorities, in particular addressing our climate crisis. PfE is being produced in partnership with the GMCA and nine GM LA's (excluding Stockport) and will be one the key strategic policy documents produced at the GM level.

Members were informed that the PfE Plan is a strategic plan, and it does not cover everything that Trafford's local plan would. Therefore, Trafford's Local Plan will set out more detailed policies including both strategic and non-strategic policies, as appropriate, reflecting local circumstances. Appendix A of the PfE Plan, attached

to the report, sets out the policies in the relevant adopted GM district local plans which will be replaced by the Places for Everyone Plan.

Trafford's Local Plan will be expected to look ahead a minimum period from its adoption, in line with national policy. In amending the plan period from 2020 to 2037 to 2022 to 2039 the PfE Plan will provide an appropriate strategic policy framework for 1.3 Trafford's Local Plan which will be produced, following its adoption.

The Executive commended the Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration and the Officers for immense amount of work carried out to achieve the Plan.

The Leader echoed the thanks to all the officers and colleagues across Greater Manchester Combined authorities and other local authorities which has been a long journey to this stage.

Councillor Evans made reference to the following –

- (i) with regard to HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, he felt that the report suggested that HS2 had been replaced by MNPR. He asked if there had been detail on this.
- (ii) He referred to the 18 greenbelt additions had been removed and 31 had remained in. Was this as a result of campaigners or by Council design.
- (iii) The Councillor has been approached by a resident who owns land within the geography of the Plan and is concerned about the next steps. Is there a masterplan for Timperley Wedge underway in conjunction with Trafford Council. He is aware of a resident who is concerned about the spine road which will spill out onto Thorley Lane. He asked how that will be influenced by residents and the Council.

The Executive Member for Economy and Regeneration informed Members that the local authorities put in approximately 30 sites of Greenbelt for inclusion into the plan but the majority did not meet the exceptional circumstances to warrant being allocated as Greenbelt. So it was the Inspectors decision turn those opportunities away. She would get the figures for Trafford to Councillor Evans following the meeting. She reminded Members that the Masterplans for New Carrington and Timperley Wedge are underway and she would wish to introduce the land owner to the consultant involved in that. The Executive Member reiterated that the PfE is a major piece of work and has been subject to extensive consultation.

The Corporate Director of Place informed Members that the Masterplan for New Carrington and Timperley Wedge would be submitted to the Executive for approval. He informed Members that with regard to the HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Route (NPR) there is no design line or approval for the NPR at the moment but we are working to utilise the work done for the HS2 where possible. The Director emphasised to Members that there is no route alignment for the spine road. There has been some consultation taking place but it is work underway on this and we will consult and engage with landowners and

communities. On the HS2 land safeguard point, this is currently a matter for central Government.

The Leader drew Members attention to paragraph 13.2 of the report which sets out the risks if the Plan is not adopted. He emphasised the following three points which would not be in the Council's interests –

- reduced ability to access funding associated with new development to provide essential infrastructure and to facilitate investment in the economy and communities of Trafford;
- not having an up-to-date Development Plan and, associated with this, not having up-to-date policies for the supply of housing, meaning that the council has less control on planning decisions for new housing in the borough;
- potential intervention by the Secretary of State.

He also underlined that there would be no realistic alternative options available that would be in the best interests of Trafford's residents and businesses and communities or environments.

RESOLVED: That the Executive

- (i) Notes the findings of the Inspectors' Report and the Main Modifications to the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document proposed by the independent Inspectors, as set out in Appendix 1.1 and 1.2 to this report, for incorporation into the final version of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.
- (ii) Notes the amendments to the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document Policies Map, as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, for incorporation of all the changes which relate to Trafford's administrative area into the Composite Policies Map.
- (iii) Notes the Additional Modifications to the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, as set out in Appendix 3 to this report, for incorporation into the final version of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.
- (iv) Recommends that Council adopt the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document 2022 – 2039 (provided in Appendix 4), with effect from 21 March 2024 – incorporating the Main Modifications and Additional Modifications – as part of the Development Plan for Trafford, in accordance with Section 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)
- (v) Recommends that Council adopt the Policies Map (Appendix 5) which incorporates the Modifications to it (Appendix 2) and is necessary to give effect to the policies of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.

(vi) Notes that delegated authority will be given to the Corporate Director of Place to make any minor non material editorial amendments to the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document and Policies Map ahead of its final publication, subject to consultation and agreement with the eight other Places for Everyone authorities. These amendments will be limited to correcting minor errors and formatting text.

## **120. UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF THE TRAFFORD VCFSE STRATEGY 2022-27**

The Executive Member for Communities and Safety presented an Update report on delivery of the Trafford VCFSE Strategy 2022-27. 1.1. The Trafford VCFSE Strategy 2022-27 is a 5-year strategy jointly developed by partners to strengthen and create a foundation for a sustainable Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise sector in Trafford.

Members were informed that the strategy was approved and published in July 2022 following engagement with the VCFSE sector and relevant boards and partnerships. Oversight of the strategy originally sat with the Living Well in my Community Strategic Coordination Group.

Previous to this current strategy, the Trafford Partnership had published a Strategy for Building Strong Communities in 2015 which focused on the role of the VCFSE sector.

The four lead organisations involved in the development of the current strategy were Trafford Community Collective, L&Q (previously Trafford Housing Trust), Pulse Regeneration (Thrive Trafford) and Trafford Council. Public services and VCFSE organisations contributed to the content and development of the strategy through several workshops.

Oversight of the Trafford VCFSE Strategy sits with the Policy Team at Trafford Council, working in partnership with Trafford Community Collective, L&Q and Thrive Trafford, who are collectively responsible for the deliverables alongside the Council.

The strategy aligns with the GM VCFSE Accord published in October 2021. This is the first time that progress of the Trafford VCFSE Strategy has been reported to the Executive since the publication of the strategy in July 2022

The Leader echoed the agreement of Members that this is a good report. He emphasised the good relationship with the voluntary sector and that the VCFSE is a significant force for the good in Trafford and the Council will continue to support.

**RESOLVED:** that the Executive

- (i) Notes the content and progress to date; and
- (ii) Agrees for the strategy to be reflected upon to determine next steps and agree the actions required to achieve the deliverables of the strategy.

## **121. WASTE COLLECTION DAY CHANGES**

The Executive Member for Highways, Environmental and Traded Services presented a report regarding Waste Collection Day Changes to Accommodate Property Growth in Partington. This report sought approval to make changes to waste collection days, affecting approximately 300 properties, in Partington and Dunham to accommodate property growth in Partington.

Members were informed that the waste collection service operates a zonal model, with a collection zone for each day of the week. This means that all of the refuse collection vehicles are in the same area on collection day and provides resilience to the service to allow for minor service disruption such as vehicle breakdowns. This method of working was implemented in 2019, and following a minor reorganisation of the rounds in 2023 has worked well with refuse and recycling rounds largely completing their work on the scheduled day with minimal disruption. This method of working is seen as best practice.

The service has seen a reduction in missed bin collections over the last twelve months. As the crews are working in a zonal area, if they experience issues such as a breakdown, the neighbouring rounds are on hand to complete the collections.

There is significant property growth in the Partington area, some developments are already occupied and there are further developments with planning permissions that are due to be completed within the next twelve months.

The proposal is to keep the integrity of the zones with a redefined boundary for the Tuesday and Friday zones to accommodate the property growth and enable this model to continue.

The Executive Member for Highways, Environmental and Traded Services informed Members that appropriate training will be given waste collection crews where necessary.

The Director of Highways Transport and Environment informed Members that the crews will be fully trained on how the new computer system works. The Director emphasised that it is important that the zonal system is balanced and is effective and to keep on top of the new property development in Partington and to keep a stable service.

**RESOLVED:** That the Executive approves the changes to the waste collection zones to be implemented in May 2024.

## **122. REVIEW OF S75 FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES (TLCO)**

The Executive Member for Health and Care presented a report regarding the renewal of Section 75 Strategic Partnership Agreement for the integrated delivery of health and social care services in Trafford 2024/25.

Members were informed that the original Section 75 partnership agreement has been in place since 1 October 2019. Trafford Council and Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) made a commitment to periodically review and revise the partnership agreement to ensure the viability of the delivery of health and social care integrated services through the legal framework of a Section 75 under the National Health Service Act, 2006.

There is now a requirement to renew the Section 75 effective from 1 April 2024 for a period of 12 months with a more holistic review to be undertaken when an agreed target operating model is developed during 2024/25. There is broad provision made within the Section 75 partnership agreement to enable this to happen and work will be undertaken to ascertain whether further changes will be required over the course of the next 12 months.

The Section 75 partnership agreement is accompanied by a suite of schedules that support the operationalisation of the agreement and it should be noted that several schedules will require minor update especially those that are time limited in nature; this work is ongoing and will be complete where possible in advance of 1 April 2024. It should be noted that some schedules will have existing programmes of work aligned to them that mean that they will not be completed by that point.

Several of the schedules will have minor amends made to them to bring them up to date or they may be removed where deemed to be superfluous.

Due to nature of the Section 75 and its practical execution neither party is exposed to any risk as a result of renewing the agreement but that the agreement is a core enabler to joint and integrated working within Trafford.

Details of the Section 75 partnership agreement schedules are set out in the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the Executive

1. Approve the proposal to enter into a Section 75 Strategic Partnership Agreement for the integrated delivery of Health and Social Care services with Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust for 2024/25 as detailed in the report;
2. Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Health and Care, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Adults & Wellbeing and the Director of Legal and Governance to agree the revised terms and conditions of the Section 75 partnership agreement for 2024/25;
3. Note the proposal to undertake a detailed holistic review of Section 75 arrangements during 2024/25; and
4. Note that the renewal of the Section 75 is a key enabling and strategic tool to develop closer working arrangement through 2024/25 and beyond.

### **123. COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM EXEMPTION POLICY**

The Executive Member for Finance, Change and Governance presented a report regarding proposed amendments to the Discretionary Council Tax Premium Exemptions Policy.

Members were reminded that

On the 29 January 2024, Executive approved the implementation of additional Council Tax premiums as detailed in Paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 in line with the powers included within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Long-term empty homes are dwellings that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a defined period. The current approved Trafford premium rates, which is additional to the 100% Council Tax charge, are as follows:

- Properties empty for more than 1 year (from 1 April 2024) but less than 5 years – 100%
- Properties empty for between 5 and 10 years – 200%
- Properties empty for 10 years or more – 300%

Second Homes are currently charged 100% Council Tax, with an option to request a discount of 50% if the second home is needed under a contract of employment. From the 1 April 2025, a premium of 100% will be charged, which is additional to the 100% Council Tax charge.

Although the Council can charge an empty home and second home premium, there are circumstances where owners can apply for a reduction of this charge because of their circumstances. This mainly is for circumstances where an owner can request an exemption from the premium where they can demonstrate, and evidence, that it is beyond their control to bring the property back in to use.

In recognition of this, an exemptions policy has been developed and which has now been consulted on. This is the Discretionary Council Tax Premium Exemptions policy which will be effective from 1 April 2024.

The Council's system will automatically apply the relevant premium and issue an updated bill to the owner which will clearly detail the council tax premium being applied. Information on the exemptions will be detailed on the Council's relevant webpage with a link to apply for an application form to apply for an exemption.

The exemption is not an automatic award as the Council will have no details on the reasons why a property is empty. The Council will need accompanying evidence to be provided in support of the application for an exemption to be considered.

**RESOLVED:** That the Executive gives approval to Implement the Discretionary Council Tax Premium Exemptions Policy from 1 April 2024 for empty homes and 1 April 2025 for second homes.



#### **124. TRAFFORD ASSIST (LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE SCHEME)**

The Executive Member for Finance, Change and Governance presented a report regarding the Trafford Assist Scheme and a proposal on a Redistribution of the Funding to the Trafford Community Hubs.

Members were informed that Trafford Council has had a Local Welfare Assistance policy (Trafford Assist Scheme) in place since April 2013 to help residents in short-term acute financial difficulties.

The scheme has evolved over the years in its operational delivery and now is a cash first scheme.

The pandemic, followed by the cost of living crisis, has meant that the demand for the scheme has reached very high levels and the costs have significantly exceeded the Trafford Assist budget. The additional costs have been met through extra government funding in previous years; the current scheme being the Household Support Fund, but that is due to end 30 September 2024.

The ending of the annual funding means that the Council must review the purpose of the Trafford Assist scheme to contain costs within the annual budget of £218k. Priority being to return it to its pre-pandemic and original scope of being an emergency short term needs scheme mainly for food and fuel.

A public consultation has taken place and comments have been considered. It is recommended that the Trafford Assist budget of £218k plus an additional amount to cover administrative costs be re-distributed to the Trafford Community Hubs who are best placed to make decisions on the most effective way to spend resources in their communities.

Decisions on the allocation of the funds from the 6-month extension to the Household Support Fund will be taken separately, but most of the funding is expected to cover the cost of continuing the school holidays support.

Councillor Welton about emphasised that Broomwood community centre does not have a Hub so residents would be reliant on the Altrincham Hub therefore he felt that residents need to know what services are offered at Hubs. A survey of what people actually know about the Hubs would be useful.

The Executive Member for Communities and Safety informed Members that there is scope to do outreach work into Greenwood Community Centre from Altrincham to highlight and promote the service that they offer. We do already collect data on emergency grants being given on a post code basis and we can look at how that data features in Greenwood, Timperley and Altrincham and she would respond to Councillor Welton on that information following the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Executive approves the proposal to replace the Trafford Assist scheme with a re-distribution of the funding to the Trafford Community Hubs from 1 April 2024.

## **125. FAIR PRICE FOR CARE**

The Executive Member for Health and Care presented a report regarding the annual review of Fair Price for Care.

Members were informed that every year the Council sets a Fair Price for Care which determines the bed rate for residential and nursing care and the hourly rate for home care for the following financial year. The Council has consulted with these providers, together with the providers of supported living, day care and residential care for people with learning disabilities, autism and/or mental health needs on the uplift for 2024/5.

This report summarises the consultation responses, recommends inflationary uplifts for 2024/5 and details the rationale for making these recommendations.

Councillor Evans asked if the uplifts proposed are included within budgets.

The Director of Finance and Systems advised that the cost of the uplifts are included in the budget, albeit the additional uplifts now recommended for approval for Supported Living Providers, following consultation will need to be financed from additional savings which will need to be identified. The Executive Member for Health and Care advised that £336,000 needed to balance the uplifts would be taken from the transformational savings which will be found within the Adults Social Care budget.

RESOLVED: That the Executive approves

- (1) the trialling of a three-month period for the submission of inflationary uplifts outside of the normal uplift process.
- (2) The implementation of the following fee rates from 1 April 2024:
  - (a) Home care: 7.47% increase  
£19.66 to £21.13 per hour
  - (b) Residential and Nursing Care (including Learning Disability and Mental Health provision): 4.92% increase
    - Residential – £657.90 to £690.27 per week
    - Nursing – £735.43 to £771.61 per week
- (3) The Supported Living Rate: 7.47% increase  
There is no standard rate for Supported Living so rates will vary.

- (4) The Day Services: 5.81% increase  
There is no standard rate for Day Services so rates will vary.
  
- (5) in approving the above, the Executive has taken into consideration the Council's Public Sector Equality duty.

## **126. BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 PERIOD 10**

The Executive Member for Finance, Change and Governance presented the Budget Monitoring 2023/24 Period 10 (April 2023 to January 2024) report. The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the 2023/24 projected outturn figures relating to both Revenue and Capital budgets. It also summarises the projected outturn position for Council Tax and Business Rates.

The outturn forecast has improved from Period 8 £0.59m underspend to Period 10 £1.60m underspend, a positive movement of £1.01m, in part, because of the management actions introduced during the year to control expenditure.

Councillor Evans asked several questions regarding the pressures related to the overspend on Home School Transport and on the implications of the growing budget deficit on the High Needs Budget.

The Executive Member for Finance, Change and Governance informed members that it has been highlighted significantly the national challenge that all Councils are facing in relation to SEND and Dedicated Schools Grants and the threat this poses to many Councils.

The Director of Finance and Systems informed Members that this has been a growing pressure over the last few years. Unmitigated Trafford's deficit will rise even further over the next 3 to 5 years.

The Director of Children's Services endorsed the fact that we do have a deficit position but that we are not in a position for the Council to have formal support. There are two national programmes, one being the Safety Valve Programme and the Delivering Best Value Programme which allows councils to have some of their deficit written off. We do have a deficit recovery plan and we are monitored by DfE in relation to that and we are part of a national change programme to try and implement the national SEND Plan to look at how we can reduce demand. The biggest area that we are having to focus on is having more children that are supported in all age stream schools without the need for an education health and care plan. We have seen some reduction in the number of requests for assessments to progress to EHCPs but it is early days in terms of that. Historically our position has been well managed and this is the first time we have needed a formal recovery plan.

The Director of Finance and Systems made reference to Councillor Evans point about recovering interest on the deficit and advised that DfE would not allow the Council to do that.

Regarding the overspend on Homes for School transport and the extra cost on Section 17 payments. The Director of Children's Services advised that if we have more EHCP Plans there will be pressure on the Homes to School Transport budget which is not subject to the Statutory override so as long as Plans go up there will be a need for increased transport. With efficiencies we have used technology in the regard. Regarding the Section 17 budget we are working with colleagues in Finance and across the social work teams to do a deep dive to see why we have got pressures and some of those things relate to for example unaccompanied asylum seeking children and when we get some money back from the government its not full cost and other examples were given to Members.

RESOLVED: That the Executive notes the updated summary positions on the revenue budget and capital programme.

#### **127. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

There were no items of urgent business to consider.

#### **128. EXCLUSION RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the remaining items on the agenda, because of the likelihood of disclosure of "exempt information" which falls within one or more descriptive category or categories of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 and specified on the agenda item or report relating to each such item respectively.

#### **129. LLP PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Executive Member for Finance, Change and Governance presented a report which gave an Update on the Council's Limited Liability Companies.

RESOLVED: That the Executive notes

- a) the trading positions of the three LLP's and the impact this will have on Council resources over the course of the next three years.
- b) the Council's share of feasibility costs associated with the development of the mitigation strategy as detailed in Para 6.2 in the report.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.58 pm