

## **EXECUTIVE**

**24 JANUARY 2022**

### **PRESENT**

Leader of the Council (Councillor A. Western) (in the Chair),  
Executive Member for Adult Social Care (Councillor J. Harding),  
Executive Member for Children's Services (Councillor C. Hynes),  
Executive Member for Communities and Partnerships (Councillor G. Whitham),  
Executive Member for Covid-19 Recovery and Reform (Councillor M. Freeman),  
Executive Member for Culture and Leisure (Councillor L. Patel),  
Executive Member for Finance and Governance (Councillor T. Ross),  
Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Equalities (Councillor J. Slater),  
Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration (Councillor J. Wright).

Also present: Councillors Acton, Blackburn, Boyes, Butt, K. Carter, Cordingley, Evans, Holden, Jerrome, Mirza, Morgan, Myers, Newgrosh and Welton (part only).

#### Officers in attendance:

Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director, Strategy and Resources (Ms. S. Saleh),  
Corporate Director, Adult Services (Ms. D. Eaton),  
Director of Finance and Systems (Mr. G. Bentley),  
Interim Director of Strategy and Policy (Ms. D. Geary),  
Director of Development (Ms. C. Huber),  
Head of Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer (Ms. D. Sykes),  
Governance Officer (Mr. J.M.J. Maloney).

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S. Adshead; and from the Chief Executive.

#### **74. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

It was noted that no questions had been received for consideration at the current meeting.

#### **75. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made by Members of the Executive.

#### **76. MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

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

It was noted that the principal item for consideration was the Scrutiny report on the Executive's draft proposals for the 2022-23 Budget, as considered in greater detail in the following Minute.

**78. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE EXECUTIVE'S DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2022-2023**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee introduced report which reflected the outcomes and recommendations arising from two Budget Scrutiny Working Group sessions which had been held on 30<sup>th</sup> November and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021, with the relevant Executive Members and Senior Officers in attendance to address Members' questions.

Councillor Acton emphasised that, in considering the proposals, Scrutiny Members had been mindful of the particular and significant challenges to budget setting, arising notably from a lengthy period of financial constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic. Members had highlighted a number of ongoing risks, which Scrutiny would continue to monitor. In concluding, he wished to record his thanks to all who had been involved in supporting Trafford's communities in the face of the recent challenges; and to all officers and Members for their support and co-operation in producing the current report.

In response, the Executive Member for Finance and Governance thanked Scrutiny Members for their work in producing the report, and its valuable suggestions. He noted that the Executive would respond formally in bringing forward its finalised budget proposals; and would be content to work with Scrutiny in developing a work programme which would allow an ongoing focus on the areas of concern now highlighted.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That content of the report, and the recommendations made, be noted.
- (2) That a formal response be made in the context of the Executive's referral of budget proposals to Council in February 2022.

*Executive (24.1.22)***79. PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF CLAREMONT/CHAPEL ROAD SITE, SALE AND ASSOCIATED RE-LOCATION OF TRAFFORD MUSIC SERVICE AND STRETFORD LIBRARY**

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration submitted a report setting out early proposals regarding residential redevelopment of the Claremont / Chapel Road site, Sale and the reinvestment of part of the development return to fund the re-location of Stretford Library to the Stretford Mall, and Trafford Music Service to the vacated and improved Stretford Library building. It sought approval to commit the necessary resources for further development of the proposed scheme design to inform the next phase of the proposed development and provide a greater level of cost confidence. This would provide the Council with more detailed information on which to formulate the business case for the proposed development and associated relocation of services.

In discussion, issues were raised relating to the proposed location for the Music Service and library, transport and accessibility issues and various financial aspects of the proposals, which were discussed further in Part II of the meeting. It was emphasised that that the project was at an early stage; that a breakdown would be provided of Music Service users, and further clarification of site details referred to in the report; and that a comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment would accompany any future report.

**RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the due diligence currently undertaken, as set out in the report, be noted.
- (2) That additional feasibility studies be approved in order to procure professional services to facilitate further project design development (RIBA Stage 2) and further progression of the business case.
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Place to make appointments as necessary in relation to the design development and formulation of the business case to support the proposal.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy to finalise and enter into any documents required to give effect to these resolutions.
- (5) That it be noted that a report will be presented to the Executive following the outcome of the proposed work detailing the proposed next steps.

**80. UPDATE ON THE GRAFTON CENTRE, ALTRINCHAM**

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration submitted a report providing an update on the Grafton Centre Altrincham and setting out reviewed proposals for the way forward. In discussion, Members raised issues relating to financial aspects of the proposals, including capital estimates and rental income. These were discussed in greater detail in Part II of the meeting.

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RESOLVED -

- (1) That the update since the development was acquired be noted.
- (2) That the proposed Centre / interim Asset Management Strategy be approved.
- (3) That £400k capital investment, funded from borrowing, be approved, for necessary repairs to the site to prevent further deterioration in the income stream.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Place to procure and agree the relevant contracts to implement the Centre / Asset Management Strategy and commission the Project team to develop future site options.
- (5) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy to finalise and enter into any documents in order to give effect to the content of the report.

#### **81. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (CTS) SCHEME FOR 2022/23 AND COUNCIL TAX HARSHIP FUND**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance submitted a report which set out details of the legal requirement formally to approve the Council's local CTS scheme before the start of each financial year. It was proposed that the scheme remain as is, only changing to reflect the national changes to income related benefits as already agreed in 2016. It set out that the Council Tax Hardship Fund was a separate scheme, funded separately with separate decision making. This temporary scheme would come to an end on 31 March 2022 in line with the government funding, unless further funding were received. All affected claimants would receive correspondence relating to this as part of the annual notification process and would be signposted to relevant information, advice and debt agencies.

RESOLVED - That the Council Tax Support Scheme 2022-23 and Council Tax Hardship Fund proposals detailed in the report be agreed and that the approval and adoption of such be recommended to Council as part of the budget setting process.

*Executive (24.1.22)***82. BUSINESS RATES RELIEF 2022-2023 (AUTUMN BUDGET MEASURES)**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance submitted a report which reminded Members that the Chancellor had announced at the Autumn Budget on 27 October 2021 that the Government would provide a package of business rates measures to support eligible retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England occupying a qualifying property and an extension of the current Transitional Relief and Supporting Small Business schemes. As the measures were temporary there would be no change in legislation and therefore local authorities would be expected to use their discretionary relief powers to deliver the scheme. The cost of the scheme would be fully funded through a Section 31 grant.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the use of proposed relief schemes be approved as detailed in the report in line with the government guidance.
- (2) That the proposed eligibility criteria as detailed in the report be approved.

**83. BUSINESS RATES COVID-19 ADDITIONAL RELIEF FUND (CARF)**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance submitted a report which advised that the Government had announced on 25 March 2021 a new COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) of £1.5 billion to support those businesses affected by the pandemic but that were ineligible for existing support linked to business rates. The relief was available to reduce chargeable amounts in respect of 2021/22 and must be directed towards ratepayers who had been adversely affected by the pandemic and had been unable to adequately adapt to that impact. As the measures were temporary there would be no change in legislation and therefore local authorities would be expected to use their discretionary relief powers to deliver the scheme. Trafford's allocation was £6.4m. It was noted that grant payments would be processed as soon as practicable.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the proposed use of the proposed COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) scheme be approved as detailed in the report in line with the government guidance and available funding.
- (2) That the final allocation of the funding support to businesses be delegated to the Director of Finance and Systems, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance.

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#### **84. FAIR PRICE FOR CARE: HOMECARE AND RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE HOMES**

The Executive Member for Adult Social Care submitted a report which set out details of the Council's annual process to set a Fair Price for Care which determined the bed rate for residential and nursing care and the hourly rate for homecare for the following financial year. In October 2021 the Executive had noted the consultation proposals which were consulted upon between 13th October and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The current report summarised the consultation responses and recommended inflationary uplifts for 2022/2023. In discussing the report, Members expressed a wish to pay tribute to all social care staff for their work in managing a complex and challenging situation.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That, following consideration of the outcome of and response to the consultation, the following fee rates be approved from April 2022:
  - Homecare: 4.51% inflationary uplift - this equates to £18.08 p/hr for framework homecare providers.
  - Residential and Nursing Care : 5.4% inflationary uplift
  - Residential Bed Rate: £602.64
  - Nursing Bed Rate: £673.66
- (2) That it be confirmed that in approving the above, the Executive has taken into consideration the Council's Public Sector Equality duty.

#### **85. BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22 - PERIOD 8 (APRIL TO NOVEMBER 2021)**

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and the Director of Finance and Systems submitted a report which informed Members of the current 2021/22 forecast outturn figures relating to both Revenue and Capital budgets. It also summarised the latest forecast position for Council Tax and Business Rates within the Collection Fund. It was noted that the report presented a favourable movement since the previous report.

RESOLVED – That the updated positions on the revenue budget, collection fund and capital programme be noted.

#### **86. PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE CORPORATE EQUALITY STRATEGY 2021-25**

The Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing & Equalities submitted a report which provided a progress update on achievements since the Equality Strategy was launched in January 2021 as well as an update on the work of the Council's Equality Review being carried out by APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence). The favourable outcomes of the APSE review were noted; and a further update would be provided for Members in June 2022. An opportunity was provided for Members to raise questions, during the course of which further details were given of the Council's plans for future office working arrangements.

*Executive (24.1.22)*

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the content of the report be noted.
- (2) That the proposal be noted to present a further progress report containing updates on the success measures within the Corporate Equality Strategy in June 2022.

## **87. PUBLICATION OF MEMBERS' ADDRESSES**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report in the light of a number concerns raised by Members in relation to the requirements relating to the publication of Members' addresses on the Declaration of Interests Register. The report considered the current position and set out a proposal to consult with Members on a number of options relating to how such matters could be dealt with in future.

In discussion, a number of differing views were put forward on the approach which should be adopted; and it was agreed that these should be submitted to the formal consultation process for which the report's recommendations provided.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the content of the report be noted.
- (2) That the proposal be noted to consult with Members on the options detailed in the report.

## **88. 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.

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**89. PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF CLAREMONT/CHAPEL ROAD SITE, SALE AND ASSOCIATED RE-LOCATION OF TRAFFORD MUSIC SERVICE AND STRETFORD LIBRARY**

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration submitted a supplementary report to that considered in Part I of the meeting, setting out financial details in relation to early proposals regarding residential redevelopment of the Claremont / Chapel Road site, Sale and the reinvestment of part of the development return to fund the re-location of Stretford Library to the Stretford Mall, and Trafford Music Service to the vacated and improved Stretford Library building. Members further discussed details of costs and valuation associated with the proposals, and it was agreed that a written response would be submitted outside the meeting. Details of the formal resolutions associated with this item are set out in the relevant Minute above.

**90. UPDATE ON THE GRAFTON CENTRE, ALTRINCHAM**

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration submitted a supplementary report to that considered in Part I of the meeting, setting out financial advice and details in relation to the Council's approach to the Grafton Centre. Members further discussed details of costs and liabilities associated with the proposals. It was agreed that a written response would be submitted outside the meeting; and that the Executive Member would meet with Councillor Evans outside the meeting to discuss further the issues which he had raised. Details of the formal resolutions associated with this item are set out in the relevant Minute above.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and finished at 7.44 p.m.