

GENERAL REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2023

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

1. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth and Skills, confirmed that Councillor Sandra Walmsley was currently Deputy Mayor and therefore Mayor elect for the forthcoming year, and he proposed that Councillor Khalid Hussain be appointed as Deputy Mayor. Members praised Cllr Hussain's work as a long serving Councillor, his active participation in the business of the Council, and his engagement with the local community.
2. Cabinet agreed to recommend the appointment to Council.

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF TOWNFIELD'S CLOSE FOR THE DELIVERY OF OLDER PERSONS AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME- PYRAMID PARK PHASE 1

3. Councillor Claire Cummins, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, presented the report which proposed the use of a brownfield land site for development of 100% affordable housing for older people (c.35 properties). Members discussed the report and it was noted that this was part of the wider regeneration and the 100% affordable housing was secured through the Registered Provider framework proposed rather than open market.
4. In response to Members' questions it was noted that funding would de-risk the site, so if funding were not secured the development would go ahead but with a reduced capital receipt to the Council. Members also noted that discussions with the chosen Registered Provider would secure the best deal in terms of housing standard, and conversations regarding nesting bricks were underway.
5. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

PROGRAMME PLAN FOR FUTURE SPECIALIST RESOURCED PROVISION - UPDATE ON PROGRESS

6. Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, presented the report updating on the progress made in relation to the delivery of the specialist place sufficiency plan contained within Project Safety Valve, which set out plans to increase specialist resourced provision in mainstream schools, alongside the development of new Free Special Schools. In response to Members' questions, Councillor Smith advised that the project was moving at pace and the target opening date of Autumn 2023 was realistic. With regards to Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary, the first phase was complete but the second phase was dependent on the Diocese. With regards to Summerseat Methodist Primary, this had been experiencing falling roles so as it was not full there were opportunities.
7. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

BURY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BURY BID) - COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE BURY BID BOARD OF DIRECTORS

8. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth and Skills, presented the report which sought approval for Bury Council to be

represented on the BID Board by the Assistant Director Regeneration Delivery (Economy & Business). In response to Members' questions it was noted that businesses in Bury had not resisted the levy but were concerned generally about rising costs.

9. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

GENERAL REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2023

THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

10. Councillor Richard Gold, Cabinet Member for Finance and Communities, presented the report which outlined the forecast financial position of the Council at the end of 2022/23 based on the information known at the end of the third quarter, 31st December 2022. The report set out the position for both revenue and capital and provided an analysis of the variances, both under and overspending.
11. In response to Members' questions, it was agreed that if any schemes on the capital programme were being deprioritised then Councillors would be notified. Councillor Gold gave assurance that savings and budgets would be monitored on a weekly basis by the Executive Team, and Chief Executive Geoff Little advised that savings were being phased and full project plans sat underneath savings targets so they could be effectively prioritised and realised.
12. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

ANNUAL HRA BUDGET 2023/24 & RENT SETTING

13. Councillor Richard Gold, Cabinet Member for Finance and Communities, presented the report which formed part of a suite of documents relating to the Council's budget setting process for 2023/24. It established the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2023/24 and proposed the rent levels for Council Housing for Dwelling and Garage rents, Sheltered Support, Management, Service and Heating charges and Furnished Tenancy charges. The report also established the Management Fee paid to Six Town Housing for 2023/24.
14. Cabinet approved the recommendations and commended them to Council.

2023 / 24 BUDGET PAPERS

15. Councillor Richard Gold, Cabinet Member for Finance and Communities, presented the suite of budget papers with comprised:
 - The Council's Budget 2023/24 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2026/27
 - The Dedicated Schools Grant and setting the Schools Budget 2023- 24
 - Capital Strategy and Capital programme 2023/24
 - Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2023/24
 - Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2023/24

16. Councillor Gold advised that this budget was set against backdrop of economic crisis, war in Ukraine, increased energy costs, rising interest rates, rising inflation and also local context of children's improvement journey and workforce shortages, particularly in terms of social workers, which have resulted in the use of expensive agency and managed teams. The funding settlement did result in a welcome increase in grants, but these were non-recurrent and have conditions against them. A raise in Council tax of 2.99% and a 2% adult social care precept was being proposed and had been assumed within these budget proposals.
17. Taking into account recurrent and non-recurrent spending pressures, the recurrent gap has increased to £31.395m. This has been closed in part by increased Council tax and business rates with the remainder being met by a phased savings approach and through use of £4.802m reserves. It was noted that whilst the Council was able to produce a balanced budget for 2023/24 and was financially resilient in the short term subject to the delivery of all of the savings proposals, reserves have been reduced significantly over the last few years and the Council needs to commence a programme of rebuilding these.
18. Members discussed the use of reserves, and in response to Members' questions, it was noted that one of the four Primary Care Networks operated differently from the others and discussions were ongoing to meet the same commitment as outlined in the OCO - Staying Well appendix.
19. Cabinet approved the recommendations and commended them to Council.

BURY CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY REPORT QUARTER THREE 2022-23

20. Councillor Tahir Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR, presented the report which provided a summary of key delivery and performance that occurred during Quarter Three (October – December) 2022-23, aligned to the 3R priorities. In response to Members' questions, it was noted that staff absences had been discussed in detail at recent sub-committee meetings, the papers of which could be shared to Councillors upon request, but related to lasting effects of Covid-19 and were in line with national levels. Members also queried bin collection and recycling rates and it was noted that this was cyclical based on seasonal changes (i.e. less garden waste in the winter). It was agreed that, for data like this, average rates be shared in future reports.
21. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report

CHANGES TO ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

22. Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, presented the report which set out the outcome of the consultation on proposed changes to the admissions policy for maintained secondary schools, including removing catchment areas and instead using a distance criterion, so when considering oversubscription priority would be given to those applicants residing closest to the school for which they are applying. The changes would come into effect for applications for secondary school places for the academic year 2024/25 and would apply to all Community secondary schools and non-faith Academies in the borough.

23. In response to Members' questions, it was noted that this should reduce the numbers of non-SEN transport to school. Members also discussed the new school in Radcliffe, noting frustration with the DfE over the temporary facilities expected for September 2024, and it was noted that efforts continued to ensure these were fit for purpose and would be for as short a time as possible.
24. Cabinet agreed to recommend the appointment to Council.

RELOCATION OF PENNINE CARE INTO 3 KNOWSLEY PLACE

25. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth and Skills, presented the report which sought approval in principle for the relocation of Pennine Care from Humphrey House to 3 Knowsley Place. This would create a revenue savings to the Council and the generation of a capital receipt from the subsequent sale of Humphrey House, which would be used to make a capital contribution towards the fit out costs of 3KP.
26. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

FUTURE OF BURY TOWN HALL AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS OCCUPIED BY THE COUNCIL

27. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth and Skills, presented the report which presented the findings of a cross party Working Group established to look at the future of Bury Town Hall and presented a preferred option for consultation; to undertake a phased refurbishment of the Town Hall. Members discussed the report, noting their hope that the public took advantage of the consultation as the Town Hall was a public building at its heart.
28. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

PURCHASE OF MICROSOFT LICENCES

29. Councillor Tahir Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR, presented the report which sought a decision regarding who should be the Council's Partner (or reseller) beyond the existing Microsoft Licensing Solutions Partner, SCC.
30. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report

APPLICATION RATIONALISATION / CONSOLIDATION

31. Councillor Tahir Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR, presented the report which sought to procure a solution for consolidated legacy applications not compatible with the Microsoft Azure Cloud Platform. Members voiced their support for the report, in particular ensuring more digitally enabled systems for licensing and ease of use for the end user.
32. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

LOCALITY BOARD FORMALISATION

33. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth and Skills, presented the report which sought to formalise revised partnership arrangements for health and care in Bury. It was noted that at the meeting on 6th

February, the Locality Board supported and approved the suite of papers submitted, pending enhancement and more detail around Primary Care which will be reviewed and incorporated (as applicable) before submission to the GM ICB.

34. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

SEND TRANSPORT/TRAVEL ASSISTANCE - POST-19 PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AN EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

35. Councillor Lucy Smith, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, presented the report which set out the measures that the Council is taking to ensure that the policy regarding provision of transport or travel assistance is both legally compliant and continues to meet the needs of those young people who require support in accordance with the statutory duty.

36. Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report

URGENT BUSINESS

37. Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth and Skills, paid tribute to Geoff Little, Chief Executive, as this was his last Cabinet meeting before retirement. Councillor O'Brien thanked Geoff for adding substance and rigor to reports, and being a driving force behind the level of detail and commitment to delivering outcomes for residents.