

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday, 9 January 2018 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 10.35 am
Concluded 12.40 pm

Members of the Executive – Councillors

LABOUR
Hinchcliffe (Chair)
V Slater
I Khan
Ross-Shaw
Ferriby
Jabar

Observers:

Apologies:

70. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in items under consideration were received.

71. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

72. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

Council 12 December 2017 – Petition Car Parking at Oastler Road

Resolved –

That the petition be referred to the Executive.

In noting the receipt of the above the Leader requested that a report be presented to the Executive on 6 February and that the petitioners be informed accordingly.

ACTION: Strategic Director of Place

73. REVISED PROPOSALS FOR THE RESTRUCTURE OF SEND SPECIALIST TEACHING SUPPORT SERVICES

On 20 June 2017, Executive agreed to a period of consultation until 31 August 2017 with a range of stakeholders on the proposed remodelling of SEND services for children and young people from ages 0-25.

As a result of feedback and responses during this period of consultation, particularly from schools, internal staff teams and national organisations representing children and young people with sensory impairment, the proposals in the previous report to Executive had been changed.

The changes took account of the feedback received in order to:

- Ensure that the proposals improved the quality of support and provision for all SEND pupils and met the SEN Improvement Test (See Appendix 1);
- Ensure that the funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block (HNB) was used effectively and efficiently to meet the full range of SEND needs across the 0-25 years age range;
- Ensure the Council had an option which both reduced pressure on the High Needs Block and increase specialist places.

The Strategic Director Children's Services presented a report (**Document "AQ"**) which sought approval for a further period of formal consultation on a revised preferred option for transforming the SEND specialist teaching and support services.

A representative of UNITE attended the meeting and raised the following:

- There are concerns about the proposed model in the absence of credible evidence in the report.
- The evidence that the High Needs Block would be reduced by 50% could not be found on the DfE website, only the Council web site.
- The figures in the Financial Appraisal in Section 5 of Document "AQ" did not add up
- The Council will still need to find £1m and the budget is still £1.5m over but the Council will have fewer specialist staff.
- There is no feasibility study in Document "AQ" on how the 30% traded services are likely to be achieved.
- UNITE was concerned that money saved would be used to support redundancy costs rather than support children with Special Needs.
- The appendices to the June 2017 report were not available.
- The proposals today were revised but there was no explanation of what the feedback back was. The data on feedback was not published. Does it back management's proposals?
- Proposals on Prevention and Early Help are linked because of the locality model proposed in the report.
- In June 2017 no job losses were mentioned. The proposals today include job losses. UNITE suspect that this is what is behind the proposals.
- FTE's (Full time equivalent) equate to more members of staff.

- The proposals for Prevention and Early Help equate to axing approximately 500 jobs. In the preferred option for SEND, 40 FTE are proposed to be cut out of 108 FTE. The union believe this could be as high as 100 staff.
- Section 8.6.1 of the report states that the proposals were shared with the unions at OJC level 2 in December 2017. The minutes of the meeting state that there would be 20 -25 job losses. The numbers are very important for Unions to consult on in a timely manner in accordance with S188 of the Trade Union and Labour (Consolidation) Relations Act 1992.
- UNITE call for the Executive to put the consultation on hold to publish, share and examine feedback, to share the evidence with unions and put it in the public domain and to allow a feasibility study to be carried out on whether the 30% traded services model will work. Without this there is a risk to delivering the service.
- A further period of consultation is needed
- Management are saying if the proposals are not approved the service can not be delivered.
- The Executive be urged to put the proposals on hold until other avenues can be explored.

The Strategic Director Children's Services was of the opinion that the 30% traded services could be achieved based on feedback from schools. Examples were given of successful traded services and services that had confirmed that they could trade at 30% based on experience. A high level of response had been received from schools that valued the service and had expressed that the 70% funded 30% traded model was more viable than 100% traded services.

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services stressed that under the new National Funding Formula Bradford should have gained £15m but under new Government proposals Bradford would only gain £7.5m. He emphasised that the current structure was not affordable and the proposals were to make it affordable.

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services confirmed that schools had delegated budgets and the proposals recognised that schools had indicated that they were willing to spend on providing services.

In response to a question from the Leader regarding the likelihood of receiving the £15m that was needed the Strategic Director of Corporate Services advised that the authority had to plan based on what was known.

The Education, Employment and Skills Portfolio Holder stressed the importance of consulting again in the light of the feedback received. He confirmed that the feedback should be shared with UNITE.

It was confirmed that the consultation would continue until 28 February and be reported to the Executive on 3 April 2018.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services confirmed that the model reported to Executive in July 2017 included job losses although the number had changed.

Resolved -

- (1) That Option 3 as set out in Document “AQ” be accepted as the preferred option for consultation.
- (2) That a period of consultation be approved from 17 January 2018 to 28 February 2018 with children, young people, families, partners, stakeholders, staff and all interested parties, see Appendix 4 to Document “AQ”.
- (3) That a further report be received by the Executive in April 2018 following the period of formal consultation.

Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee
ACTION: Strategic Director Children’s Services

74. A COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME FOR 2018/19

The Revenue Support Grant, which included funding for Council Tax Reduction (CTR), had been subject to year on year reductions; and was expected to reduce further so that by 2020/21 it would cease entirely

The expanded scope of Universal Credit would significantly increase the administrative burden of the current CTR scheme for the Council and would create council tax collection difficulties

Following the decision of Executive (10 October 2017), public consultation on proposed changes to the CTR scheme to reduce cost and mitigate the administrative burden had been undertaken

The report of the Strategic Director Corporate Services (**Document “AN”**) set out the results of that consultation; and made recommendations to revise the CTR scheme for 2018/19 and that transitional support was put in place to help those that saw a significant reduction in their CTR as a consequence of those proposed changes.

The Strategic Director introduced the report and referred to the responses received to the consultation. The Equality Impact Assessment identified that people who were disabled would be disproportionately affected by the proposals, however he pointed out that there were measures in place in the Council Tax scheme that sought to provide additional support for disabled claimants and that there was a hardship fund available to that group. He added that female claimants would also be disproportionately affected and that the hardship fund would also be available to them.

The Leader pointed out that if the current scheme were unchanged it would cost the Council £37m next year which would equate to 1% of income. She added that this was not sustainable as by 2020, the Council would receive no Government funding. The new scheme would reduce by approximately £4m. She acknowledged the need to protect vulnerable individuals and supported the hardship scheme.

The Strategic Director noted that in talks with Advice Centres they recognised the challenges faced by the Council and understood the reasons for the changes and had helped in developing the mitigation.

The Leader referred to the impact of welfare changes on individuals and requested that the Strategic Director report to her on steps that could be taken to support individuals affected by the changes.

Resolved –

- (1) That the following recommendations to Council be agreed –**
 - (a) That the outcome of the public consultation as set out in appendix 1 to Document “AN” is considered and noted**
 - (b) That members have due regard to their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and consider the potential impacts of the proposed changes on working age claimants as set out in the Equality Impact Assessment at appendix 3 to Document “AN”**
 - (c) That the following amendments to the current Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme are adopted and take effect from 1 April 2018**
 - (i) Set the maximum CTR for all working age recipients at 70% of a Band A property for all claimants**
 - (ii) Limit entitlement of CTR to those that qualify for £4.00 or more per week**
 - (iii) Remove the Second Adult Rebate**
 - (iv) Introduce a £1 Minimum Change threshold**
 - (v) Assess self-employed in receipt of UC on actual income for the first 12 months of self-employment, and on actual income or the National Living Wage, whichever is greater, thereafter**
 - (d) That the CTR discretionary support scheme as set out in Appendix 4 to Document “AN” is adopted from 1 April 2018**
- (2) That the Director of Corporate Services report to the Leader of Council recommending any proposals to support individuals affected by Government welfare changes.**

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee
ACTION: Strategic Director Corporate Services

RATES BASE FOR 2018-19

The purpose of the report of the Strategic Director Corporate Services (**Document “AO”**) was to calculate both the Council’s Council Tax and Business Rates bases for 2018-19, which in turn would determine the amount of income the Council would raise locally in 2018-19.

The report was divided into two sections. Section A set out how the Council Tax Base was calculated. It took into account the Council’s Council Tax Reduction Scheme, exemptions and discounts and an estimate of the growth in new residential builds. Section B estimated the amount of income that would be generated from Business Rates.

The Leader noted that Bradford had the lowest band D Council Tax rate in West Yorkshire. She asked how the anticipated deficit of £0.4m would be dealt with and was advised that it would be carried forward into 2018-19 and that this had been taken into account in setting the Council Tax base for 2018-19.

The Leader noted with disappointment that the government had not allocated additional funding to adult and children’s social care despite the increasing demand in both areas. She noted that the Council was minded to increase Council Tax by a further 1% to fund social care and asked about consultation on the proposed increase. The Strategic Director advised that as the budget consultation was already underway the proposed increase of 1% in Council Tax would be added to the information on the Council Web site in the same way as the previous year.

The Leader pointed out that a 1% increase in Council Tax raised £1.8m in Bradford yet a 1% Council Tax increase in Surrey raised £6m. She stressed that the Council was determined to keep delivering quality services. She thanked officers and noted that services were still excellent in many areas.

Resolved -

- (1) That the number of band D equivalent properties estimated by the Council as the Council Tax Base for 2018-19 for the whole of the Bradford Metropolitan District is 140,348 as set out in Appendix A1 of Document “AO”.**
- (2) The Council Tax Base for 2018-19 for each Local Council is set out in Appendix A3 of Document “AO”.**
- (3) That from 1 April 2018, in calculating the Council Tax Base, care leavers up to the age of 21 are exempted from paying Council Tax. This exemption applies up to the end of the financial year in which the care leaver attains the age of 21. Further, care leavers are disregarded for the purpose of assessing the number of adult residents in a property for the calculation of Council Tax. This disregard applies up to the end of the financial year in which the care leaver attains the age of 21.**

- (4) The amount estimated by the Council as the Business Rates income for 2018-19 as included on the Council's NDR1 return (Appendix B1 to Document "AO") is £129.6m
- (5) Of the total Business Rates income;-
50% is paid to Central Government - £64.7m
1% is paid to the West Yorkshire Fire Authority - £1.3m
49% is retained by the Council - £63.5m

A further cost of collection allowance is paid to the Council of £0.7m.

- (6) That authority is delegated to the Strategic Director for Corporate Services (or interim Section 151 officer) in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make any necessary amendments to the calculation of the Business Rates estimate arising from the completion of the 2018-19 NDR1 form received from the Government and to include the amended figures in the 2018-19 Budget papers for Council.

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee
ACTION: Strategic Director Corporate Services

76. A STRATEGY FOR GROWTH IN INCOME FROM COUNCIL TAX, BUSINESS RATES AND INVESTMENT

The report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services (**Document "AP"**) proposed a strategy for growing the Council's sources of income from Council Tax, Business Rates and investment in assets, recommending an Investment Advisory Group was established to oversee activity and manage risks.

The Leader emphasised that Bradford was a city with all the right elements to be successful and that there was a need to stimulate growth and generate more income to spend on public services.

The Director of Corporate Services introduced the report and highlighted the proposals in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates and the establishment of an investment fund.

The Leader noted that the Council had been cautious in its investment in assets in the past and that they could be used to generate income and growth in the future. She referred to the purchase of the NCP car park, Hall Ings which generated an income which was in excess of the mortgage on it and which could be used to spend on local services.

In response to a question from the Leader, the Strategic Director of Corporate Services conjectured that the government may introduce regulations to stop Councils over extending their portfolio and gave an assurance that this Council would not do that and would spread its portfolio appropriately. He added that a decision would have to be made on whether the Council invested outside the local authority area and that an investment strategy would have to be in place. As Section 151 officer he stressed the importance of having a prudent investment

strategy.

The Leader welcomed the proposal that opposition members would serve on the Investment Group.

The Regeneration, Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder welcomed the proposals as a means of generating income to support services in the future and bring jobs into the district. He noted the imminent launch of the Economic Strategy which would build on the strengths of the district to unlock growth potential. He noted that the housing delivery team would help bring forward sites in the district and promote the district as a great place in which to invest. Unlocking brown field sites would increase Council Tax and support the Core Strategy.

Resolved –

(1) That the basic premise underpinning Document “AP” be accepted, that targeted activity should be undertaken to grow income from:

(a) Council Tax

(b) Business Rates

(c) Income-generating investment

(2) That the next steps outlined at Section 8 of Document “AP” be pursued.

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee
ACTION: Strategic Director Corporate Services

77. MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY

The minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 5 October 2017 were received.

78. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved –

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the Not for Publication Appendix to Document “AR” on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the proceedings, that if they were present, exempt information within paragraphs 3 and 5 (financial or business affairs and legal privilege) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed and it was considered that, in all the circumstances, the public interest in allowing the public to remain was outweighed by the public interest in excluding public access to the relevant part of the proceedings for the following reasons:

It was in the public interest in maintaining these exemptions because it was

in the overriding interest of proper administration that Members were made fully aware of the financial and legal implications of any decision.

79. CITY CENTRE REGENERATION

The report of the Strategic Director Corporate Services (**Document “AR” which contained a Not for Publication appendix**) provided an update on Bradford’s city centre regeneration projects including further details in respect of the Bradford Odeon, following on from Executive on 5th December 2017.

The Regeneration, Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder referred to the regeneration projects in the city centre and noted that in the next 3 to 4 years the city centre would be very different. He was pleased to note the investment that the projects had attracted from partner organisations.

Resolved -

- (1) That the contents of Document “AR” be noted and the recommendations in the confidential appendix be approved as amended.**
- (2) That the Chair of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to add the report to the work programme for the 25 January 2018 meeting and it be noted that the report is on the work programme of the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 23 January meeting.**

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee
ACTION: Strategic Director Corporate Services

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Executive

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER