

# Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday, 7 September 2021 in Council Chamber - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 10.35 am  
Concluded 11.55 am

## Members of the Executive – Councillors

<b>LABOUR</b>
Hinchcliffe (Chair)
I Khan
Ross-Shaw
Ferriby
Jabar
Duffy

Observers: Councillors pollard and Poulsen

### 31. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interests of transparency Councillor Ferriby disclosed an interest in the item relating to short Breaks Provision in Bradford as a member of Nell Bank Outdoor Education Centre.

### 32. MINUTES

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2021 be signed as a correct record.**

ACTION: City Solicitor

### 33. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

### 34. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

Resolution from Council 13 July 2021

### PETITIONS

Former Keighley College land keep as green space Keighley Central

**Resolved -**

**That the petition be referred to the Executive.**

***NOTE: In noting the receipt of the resolution from Council the Leader noted that the petition would be the subject of a report to the meeting of the Executive on 2 November 2021.***

## **LEADER OF COUNCIL & CORPORATE**

*(Councillor Hinchcliffe)*

### **35. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE, 2022/23 TO 2024/25**

The Director of Finance presented a report (**Document “R”**) on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) that set out the financial envelope for the Council to deliver its key priorities as set out in the revised Corporate Plan.

Prior to Covid, the outlook for Council Finances looked significantly healthier than at any point since 2010. The impact of Covid-19 on Council services through additional expenditure and reducing income, coupled with the impact on the wider economy had now altered that outlook for the worse and had added a great deal of additional uncertainty. Additional pressures on Children’s Social Care, the impact of Brexit, and delays to Government reforms of Local Government finance also added further pressures and uncertainties.

The revised forecast identified for planning purposes a financial gap of £13.4m in 2022-23, increasing to £18.4m in 2023/24 and £18.8m in 2024/25. It was noted that a number of mitigations had been put in place and that if they as a worst case, if they did not bring the budget back on track would result in a financial gap rising from £13.4m to £42m. It was reported that through prudent financial management in the last two years there had been no cuts or redundancies.

The Leader noted the number of financial pressures building on this and other Councils. She added that the Local Government Association had identified that services were being reduced by £1.4b in adult social care, that in 2016-17 nationally there were 500 child protection processes started every day compared to 200 a decade before.

The Healthy People and Places Portfolio Holder referred to the significant length of time that Local Authorities had been urging Government to address the issue of funding adult social care to protect vulnerable adults and noted that the burden should not fall on Local Authorities. She commended the Bradford Enablement Support Team (BEST) that provided personal care and support to people at home when they were discharged from hospital and had been judged as outstanding and in the top quartile for keeping people in their own home as long as possible.

The Leader emphasised that just over 60% of the Council’s budget was spent on

children's and adult social care, protecting the most vulnerable and that there was a pressing need for it to be properly funded. She stressed the need for surety of funding post Covid. She added that as furlough ended this month it would have an impact on businesses and on Council revenue.

The Healthy People and Places Portfolio Holder noted the increased pressure on waste services brought about by people working from home which had increased the tonnage of kerbside collections she noted that there was a £1m budgetary pressure.

The Leader referred to the ongoing Covid pressures on finance. Investment in prevention and early help was keeping people at home as long as possible. She noted that more finance was being requested for education, skills and green jobs. She added that a Government announcement was expected in the next month on Northern Powerhouse Rail.

A member of the opposition group referred to the uncertainty in forecasting and noted the risks associated with the forecast listed in the report. He noted that with reference to Council Tax, prudent assumptions were made regarding demographic growth. He also referred to the £1.25m regeneration opportunity referred to in the recurring pressures that result from previously agreed plans.

The Leader acknowledged that there were lots of unknowns but stressed the need to look ahead and forecast spending. She would welcome cross party involvement in making the voice of Local Government known to Central Government regarding adequate funding for front line social care.

#### **Resolved -**

**That having considered the Medium Term Financial Strategy as an assessment of the Council's financial outlook to 2024/25 , and a framework for it to remain financially viable and deliver sustainable public services, in line with its priorities, the updated and revised Medium Term Financial Strategy at Appendix 1 to Document "R" be approved.**

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
ACTION: Director of Finance

### **EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO & DEPUTY LEADER**

*(Councillor I Khan)*

#### **36. SHORT BREAKS PROVISIONS IN BRADFORD**

The report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services (**Document "T"**) provided the Executive with a recommendation for the future provision for Short Breaks for children with disabilities in Bradford.

The report outlined the results of the benchmarking of peer authorities across England, to inform the basis of developing appropriate service provisions for short

breaks for children with disabilities in Bradford.

The report provided an overview for a proposed structure for a new Short Breaks Assessment Team, to help ensure that the Local Area has the correct resources to support the provision of Short Breaks in Bradford as part of the SEND Transformation Programme.

The Education, Employment and Skills Portfolio Holder noted that the district had a high proportion of children with special needs and disabilities; that the need to provide short breaks for parents, carers and children had been recognised and that further investment would be allocated for that provision.

A member of the opposition group asked to what extent the proposals reduced the Council's vulnerability to legal challenge if it did not comply with the statutory duties relating to short breaks. In response it was noted that there would be a SEND inspection and Ofsted would also look at the provision. It was stressed that if a child with SEND needed the service then it would be appropriate to provide it.

The Leader referred to the diversity of the population of the District and asked for an assurance that all families would have equal access to provision. In response it was noted that the authority was working with a wide range of stakeholders using the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to ensure that there will be a breadth of service to meet their needs and improve outcomes as part of their Education health and Care Plan (EHCP). Families would be targeted through the Parent Carers Association.

The Education, Employment and Skills Portfolio Holder noted that there was a lot of flexibility of provision and that it was important to ensure that the provision was tailored to meet different needs.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the use of departmental reserves in 21/22 to cover the partial year cost for both the Short Breaks Assessment Team and service commissions where they are commissioned in the 21/22 financial year be approved.**
- (2) That it be noted that from 22/23, a formal request of £0.387m is requested to fund the Short Breaks Assessment Team as part of the Directorates budget setting process, which will be incorporated into the Medium Term financial Strategy (MTFS) and 2022/23 budget considerations in the build up to budget approval at Full Council in February 2022.**
- (3) That it be noted that from 22/23, a formal request overall of £0.552m is requested which includes the short breaks assessment team, to fund additional services to provide short breaks for children and families in Bradford to a total value of £2.742m. This will be incorporated into MTFS and the 2022/23 budget considerations in the build up to budget approval at Full Council in February 2022.**

- (4) That the development of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to understand the needs of children to inform commissioning intentions, to provide services for children with disabilities across the District be approved.**

Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
ACTION: Strategic Director of Children's Services

### **37. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION THEMATIC REVIEW 2021**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (**Document "S"**) on the CSE Thematic Review which was commissioned in 2019 by the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board, subsequently replaced by the Bradford Partnership – Working Together to Safeguard Children. The three statutory partners of the Partnership were the Council, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and also a number of key agencies, designated as "relevant agencies" were also members. It had an independent chair and scrutineer- Jane Booth.

The review was commissioned in accordance with governmental guidance in force at the time and focused on the response of the agencies in Bradford to Child Sexual Exploitation. Five specific cases formed the basis of the review, two non-recent cases of CSE which had already been in the public domain and the media and three more recent cases. The review also included a review of three more recent cases. It was led by an independent author Clare Hyde MBE. The review looked in detail at the experiences of five children. It spanned a 20-year period from 2001 through a range of political administrations and officers. No individuals were named- the report focused on children and learning.

The review was published on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2021. The Chair of the Bradford Partnership noted that the report had been relatively well received. She added that the report reflected back over years of practice and that despite many positives identified such as Bradford establishing a multi-agency hub early and partnership working, the whole country was on a learning curve regarding CSE. The report highlighted the damage done to individuals. The report was framed according to national guidelines with the purpose of identifying if there were still things to learn.

The Strategic Director Bradford District and Craven Clinical commissioning Group noted that the Health Service had a crucial role in safeguarding individuals from CSE, providing training so that staff could recognise the signs of CSE. He stressed the importance of all agencies working together in strong partnerships to address issues regarding CSE.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services noted the distressing nature of the report. He emphasised that the multi-agency response to CSE would identify and keep children safe and that perpetrators would be brought to justice. He stressed the strength in partnership working.

The Leader referred to the shocking crimes perpetrated against young people and how their lives had been damaged. She noted that victims were both male and female and across ethnicities. She stressed the need to ensure that vulnerable children were protected.

The Children and Families Portfolio Holder referred to the horrendous nature of the crimes that preyed on young people and demonstrated the worst aspects of human behaviour. She noted that perpetrators came from all classes and cultures and that focusing on one area left another avenue open to abusers. She asked the partnership whether everything was being focussed on and identifying potential avenues for abuse to take place.

The Chair of the Bradford Partnership responded that the vast majority of children had adverse childhood experiences and those children had been less able to recover from their experience. The partnership had identified the need to strengthen relationships with schools. Children who were not in school did not have peer group support and relationships making them more vulnerable to exploitation. It was noted that learning resources would be available in schools by the end of September. The importance of looking out into the community was stressed with everybody being the eyes and ears to look out for signs of CSE. She referred in particular to the night time economy and a police intelligence phone app that could be used to report any concerns. It was noted that more disruption was being seen and more work was being undertaken to identify children at risk. She stressed the importance of reporting anything that did not look right such as a child being with someone they should not be with, a child missing from home, a child drinking or using drugs, a child being secretive or having a phone that you did not know of.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services urged anyone with urgent safeguarding concerns to ring 999 or to report concerns to the Front Door where a range of help would be available and would involve police, health service, education and social care. He urged everyone that if in doubt to report.

The Education, Employment and Skills Portfolio Holder stressed the need to strengthen links with schools and ensure that sufficient places were available in schools, particularly for SEND, and noted that investment had been made in this area. He added that there was a need to reassure parents that if they reported concerns they would not lose their child or become a suspect themselves and that support would be provided for them and their children.

The Director of Children's Services noted that the Executive had increased the resources for those children not in education, missing from school or those being educated from home to ensure that resources were sufficient. Work was being undertaken to provide early support for parents to keep children at home.

The Leader asked about ensuring that the lessons learned were embedded. The Chair of the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board responded that there was no quick fix and that with the massive staff turnover and staff shortages there was a risk that organisational memory would be lost, so material was being developed that could be discussed at a team level and included in the staff induction pack. She added that ticking a box in the action plan was not sufficient and stressed that there was also a need to ask if the action had achieved what was intended.

Chief Inspector Dan Greenwood noted that the report was sobering reading and referred to the improvement journey that the police had been on while stressing that they were not complacent. He added that training and induction issues had

been recognised for new and existing staff. He noted the significant difference in dealing with CSE today compared to 10 or 20 years ago. He added that if a child goes missing this is highlighted straight away and resources prioritised to ensure that the child is kept safe.

The Community Safety Portfolio Holder noted that the Community Safety Partnership was focusing on protecting people from exploitation.

The Leader asked about data sharing between agencies. In response it was noted that agencies were co-located at the front door and while the computer systems were not fully integrated information was shared routinely and systems were robust.

The Children and Families Portfolio Holder asked for a reassurance regarding therapy for victims of CSE. In response it was noted that therapy was approached from a trauma informed perspective with a number of interventions being provided. In hospital accident and emergency departments if there was any suspicion of CSE this would be highlighted and trauma informed interventions initiated. In schools it was vital to look at early help and early prevention so that children could access support with Health Champions being vital in providing a safe space for children.

The Leader referred to adults coming forward to report historic cases CSE and stressed that their cases would be investigated and the perpetrators held responsible for their crimes.

The Chair of the Bradford Partnership noted that a case would shortly be coming to trial which was a demonstration of good multi-agency working to take dangerous perpetrators off the streets and that more cases like this would be coming forward which should be seen as a positive outcome rather than in a negative light.

A member of the opposition group noted the abhorrent nature of the crimes and stressed the need to support victims. She added that as a Council basic mistakes had been made and warning signs such as children missing from home had been missed. She noted that this was a work in progress and that fundamental basics had to be in place. She referred to support for victims and was pleased to note that adult social care was a route for supporting victims throughout their lives. She asked whether the contact details for the front door were easily accessible and whether it was a messaging service or someone to speak to. The Strategic Director of Children's Services responded that details of how to contact the front door were on the Council website and that he would ensure that they were prominent and he confirmed that there was someone to speak to and that there was also an out of hours service. She asked whether there was any benefit in having integrated IT across the partnership and was advised that this issue could not be resolved locally but that having staff co-located was the best arrangement unless a decision was made nationally to have integrated IT.

**Resolved -**

**(1) That the report be noted**

- (2) That Executive receive a full report in November on current work in relation to exploitation of both children and adults and that this includes details of work in relation to the CSE actions in the Thematic review.
- (3) The Council commit to working closely with partners to deliver on the actions within the developmental action plan and progressing the extensive wider work presently on going in Bradford

Children's Services Overview &Scrutiny Committee  
ACTION: Chief Executive

### **38. MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY**

The minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 22 April and 24 June 2021 were received.

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