

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday, 6 September 2022 in Council Chamber - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 10.32 am
Concluded 11.12 am

Members of the Executive – Councillors

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

Observers:

Councillors Felstead, Pollard, Poulsen and Whitaker, Silsden Parish Councillor Russell

142. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

143. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 7 June and 5 July be signed as a correct record (previously circulated).

ACTION: City Solicitor

144. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

LEADER OF COUNCIL & CORPORATE

(Councillor Hinchcliffe)

145. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE, 2023/24 TO 2025/26

The Director of Finance presented a report (**Document “O”**) on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) update that set out the forecast financial resources available to the Council to support the delivery of its key priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

Since 2010, the Council has had to deliver over £300m of budget reductions and increase council tax in order to meet the financial pressures arising from national austerity measures, rising demand and increasing costs. Having to cut costs and increase income while continuing to meet the needs of residents required difficult decisions and placed services under pressure. Nevertheless, a robust and prudent approach to financial management and the use of resources meant that immediately prior to Covid, Council finances had achieved a greater degree of health and stability than at any point over the previous decade.

The continuing impact of Covid-19 on Council services through additional expenditure and reducing income, alongside inflationary pressures on both pay and prices not seen since the 1970s due at least in part to the war in Ukraine, and the effect of the cost of living crisis on demand for Council services had now altered that outlook for the worse, and created a great deal of additional uncertainty. Recent years had also seen significant growth in demand for Children’s Social Care nationally which had also been experienced in Bradford. Challenges in recruitment and retention, and pressures in adult social care were also contributing to a situation in which Council finances were under considerable strain.

These financial pressures were compounded by repeated delays to Government reforms of Local Government finance such as business rates reset, and Fair funding formula review implementation, which were expected to result in additional funding for the Bradford District. Failure to implement these measures had resulted in further financial pressures above those that would otherwise have been the case.

Despite consistently delivering a balanced budget in previous years, the factors outlined above had created a forecast budget gap that the Council will struggle to address without significant additional funding.

The revised forecast identified for planning purposes a financial gap of c£77m in 2023-24, reducing to £72m in 2024-25 and £64m in 2025-26.

Given the level of uncertainty, a number of assumptions had to be made, and these would need to be revised throughout the budget planning process, and in advance of setting the budget at Budget Council in February 2023.

The Leader noted that we were living through unprecedented times where energy

costs had increased by 118% and child placements had increased by 30%. She added that the Local Government Association was predicting £2.4 billion in extra costs to Local Authorities to which there needed to be a response from government. She referred to the impact on residents and their concerns at how they would get through the winter. She emphasised that the Council needed to be on a firm financial footing to support them and added that she had written to the new Prime Minister to this effect. She added that a rigorous financial review was being undertaken across all departments of the Council to identify savings.

The Healthy People and Places Portfolio Holder referred to the cost of living crisis which was compounding the funding issues for adults in receipt of social care that had been identified over a number of years and called upon the incoming Prime Minister to ensure that that adult social care was properly funded.

The Leader noted that the local authority adult social care provision supported the NHS and emphasised the pressing need for a response from Government to the current cost of living crisis.

The Children and Families Portfolio Holder noted that the cost of living crisis was effecting all of Children's Services in the district and stressed in particular the effect of market forces regarding placements and the number of agency workers. She called on the Government to regulate the market to enable the Council to afford services going forward. The Leader noted that the McAlister review had called for this and hoped that action would be taken.

An opposition member referred to the projected gap in funding due to children's social care and noted the implications for the Children's Trust taking over in the next financial year.

The following amendment to s216 of Document "O" was noted: delete 2023 and substitute with 2025.

The Leader thanked officers for managing the current situation. She emphasised the need for collaborative working with Government to ensure that the Council had the right tools, on the front line, to support people in the District.

Resolved -

That having considered the Medium Term Financial Strategy as an assessment of the Council's financial outlook to 2025-26, and a framework for it to remain financially viable and deliver sustainable public services, in line with its priorities, that Executive approves the updated and revised Medium Term Financial Strategy at Appendix 1 to Document "O".

ACTION: Director of Finance

REGENERATION, PLANNING & TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

(Councillor Ross-Shaw)

146. BRADFORD TRANSFORMING CITIES FUND PROGRAMME

The report of the Strategic Director of Place (**Document “P”**) provided a summary of progress made in the delivery of the Bradford Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Programme and explained project funding, programme timescales and key risks. The report updated on the challenges regarding individual project scope versus the grant funding available and the options and steps being considered by the project delivery teams to mitigate this.

The report sought delegation of the day to day operational decisions to the Strategic Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and sought approval to progress projects through to outline and full business case submission, following an approved Appraisal Framework as defined by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Department for Transport as funding Authorities.

It was noted that £80m would come to Bradford through the Transforming Cities Fund. Members were given a PowerPoint presentation that covered the scheme relationships and delivery, the concept, strategic alignment and in particular City Centre Cycling and Walking.

The Transportation, Highways and Planning Portfolio Holder noted that feedback had been supportive. He added that the schemes would reshape the city centre for the future. He referred to the schemes which were on site and added that Transforming Cities Fund was the next step in moving to the 2025 City of Culture. He noted that Bradford would be cleaner, greener and look different to the way it looked now. He thanked officer and looked forward to implementation.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Executive resolve as follows in relation to the Transforming Cities Fund programme:**
 - a) Approve the proposals shown in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Document “P” as the Council’s current preferred approach to the delivery of the Transforming Cities Fund Programme as developed since the approved Strategic Outline Case submission to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.**
 - b) Authorise the Strategic Director, Place to manage the scheme programme as appropriate to meet changing circumstances.**
 - c) Authorise the Strategic Director, Place to advertise any necessary**

legal orders required to facilitate the delivery of the programme and to make any necessary applications to seek planning permission.

- d) Further update reports are to be presented to the Executive following decision on the Outline Business Case by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.**
- (2) That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director, Place in consultation with the Director of Finance, Director of Legal Services and the Portfolio Holder to:**
- a) Progress and develop the scheme proposals through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Assurance Process and undertake appropriate consultation on scheme proposals.**
 - b) If necessary, approve further scope changes to individual projects within the Transforming Cities Fund portfolio to reflect the available funding for each project.**
 - c) Where necessary, issue requisition notices requiring those believed to have an interest in relevant property to provide title information and details of their interest in land.**
 - d) As may be required secure the procurement of specialist external services having regard to the Council's Contract Standing Orders and national procurement legislation in order to advise the Council on matters relating to the delivery of the TCF portfolio of projects.**
- (3) That Executive resolve in relation to the specific projects within the Transforming Cities Fund programme to approve:**
- a) The Bradford City Centre Cycling and Walking Improvements scheme referred to in Appendix 1 of Document "P".**
 - b) The Bradford Interchange scheme referred to in Appendix 2 of Document "P".**
 - c) The phasing of the South Bradford Park and Ride scheme referred to in Appendix 3 of Document "P".**
 - d) The phasing of the West Bradford Cycle Superhighway scheme as referred to in Appendix 4 of Document "P".**

ACTION: Strategic Director of Place

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO & DEPUTY LEADER

(Councillor I Khan)

147. ENSURING THE SUFFICIENCY OF SPECIALIST PLACES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) ACROSS THE BRADFORD DISTRICT

The Strategic Director of Children's Services presented a report (**Document "Q"**) on the proposed establishment of a 10 place Early Years Enhanced Specialist Provision (EYESP) at Hirst Wood Nursery School. Each place would equate to 0.6 of a FTE place.

The Education and Employment Portfolio Holder noted that the proposals were a continuation of the authority's commitment to provide specialist SEND places where they were required in the district. He added that the percentage increase in children requiring SEND provision was higher in the district than regionally and nationally. He concluded that of the 49 consultation responses, 48 were in favour and the Head teacher and Governors of Hirst Wood Nursery supported the proposals.

Resolved –

That the proposal to establish a 10 place Early Years Enhanced Specialist Provision (EYESP) at Hirst Wood Nursey School be approved. Each place will equate to 0.6 of a FTE place.

ACTION: Strategic Director of Children's Services

148. MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY

The minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 23 June 2022 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