

# Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday, 7 November 2023 in Council Chamber - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 10.30 am  
Concluded 11.45 am

## Members of the Executive – Councillors

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

Observers: Councillors Pollard, Davies, Felstead, and Coates

Apologies: Councillor Sarah Ferriby

## Councillor Hinchcliffe in the Chair

### 39. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under discussion were made.

### 40. MINUTES

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 03 October 2023 be held as a correct record.**

### 41. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

### 42. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

The following recommendation had been received from the meeting of the Bradford South Area Committee held on 19 October 2023:

## **BRADFORD SOUTH LOCALITY PLAN 2022-2025**

**Resolved –**

**That the Committee asks the Executive to review how the Council is implementing locality plans.**

**Note: In receiving the above recommendation the Leader stated that the Executive will continue to review Locality Plans and that Area Committees' continue their work with Partners on implementation.**

***To be actioned by: Area Coordinators***

## **LEADER OF COUNCIL & CORPORATE**

*(Councillor Hinchcliffe)*

### **43. QTR 2 FINANCE POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2023-24**

The Director of Finance & IT advised the Executive that it would be necessary and beneficial to present both **Document “Q”** and **“R”** in conjunction with one another prior to taking questions. The Quarter 2 Finance Position Statement (**Document “Q”**) provided Members with the forecast year-end financial position of the Council for 2023-24 and set out the unprecedented scale of its financial challenges. It outlined the revenue and capital budgets and the year-end forecast financial position based on information at the end of September 2023. The report stated the Council's current reserves and school balances. The report summarised the ongoing action that was being undertaken to address the current challenges and further urgent action that would be required to secure a sustainable financial position.

The Head of Finance introduced and highlighted the main points of the report mainly the forecast overspend of 68 million by financial year end and the key factors behind the forecast overspend. It was highlighted that any overspend would have to be covered by reserves, however the Head of Finance stated that based on current trajectories reserves were nearing exhaustion and the scale of challenge faced by the Council was unprecedented.

The Head of Finance then summarised the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (**Document “R”**) which provided an 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. The revised forecast identified a financial gap including the Bradford Children and Families Trust (BCFT) of 71 million for 2024-25 reducing to 48 million for 25-26 and 51 million for 26-27. The Council services excluding the Trust were forecast to have a financial gap of 29 million in 2024-25 reducing to 7.7 million in 25-26 and 26-27. It was highlighted that the

main reason for the reduction was the assumption that the Government would implement the Business Rates Reset and the Fair Funding Formula, as it remained Government policy, however these had previously been delayed at significant cost to Bradford and further delay would increase the financial gap in 2025-26 by a further 18 million.

The Head of Finance highlighted the forecast overspend of the BCFT of 45 million in 2023-24. The Executive were informed that the Trust had recently submitted a draft business plan that contained a series of ambitions to bring costs down to benchmark levels over the next 3 years and some of the proposed measures to reduce costs were highlighted.

The Head of Finance indicated that the Governments' Autumn Statement in November could impact on the size of the fiscal gap.

The Leader stated that the scale of challenge was unprecedented and that Councils across the country were facing similar challenges. Rising demand and ongoing cuts in the public sector made it difficult to make a budget balance. The Leader stressed the pressures faced by the Council with 76% of the annual budget spent on Adults and Childrens Social Care combined with the rising demand pressures due to being the youngest city in the UK. It was added that Bradford had high levels of child poverty, roughly 50% in Bradford East and West which inevitably placed demand pressures on Children's Social Care services. The Leader noted that the Local Government Association had identified a 2.4 billion funding gap this year for Council's across the country.

The Chief Executive of Bradford Council spoke about the mitigations that were being looked at to bridge the financial gap. The Chief Executive stated that it was important to narrow the gap urgently and highlighted measures which could address this such as reducing non-essential spending, developing an asset programme, reviewing the capital programme, and identifying new savings proposals to bolster reserves.

The Leader stressed that the Trust was still relatively new and had only just started in the last 6 months delivering continuous improvement on services. The profits that external providers were making was concerning.

The Chief Executive of BCFT told the Executive that the Trust had been in place for 7 months and that there was a lot to do to tackle the challenges, but the Trust was working in partnership with Bradford Council to reduce overspend. The Chief Executive spoke about plans in place to reduce overspend, such as the Children and Families Plan which was based on the existing Improvement Plan following Ofsted inspections. The importance of early help and prevention was highlighted which could reduce the number of children in care. Executive were informed that social care must be based on children's needs not cost. The Chief Executive told the Executive about the main costs associated with social care and highlighted the rising costs of external providers that were driven by market competition.

A Member of the Opposition Group stated that there had been bafflement surrounding the indicated first year overspend of 45 million of the BCFT despite a reasonably generous baseline budget however it was obvious why this had happened. Attention was drawn to Section 10 paragraph 8 and 9 of **Document**

“Q” which summarised the contract price plus an additional one-off grant by the Department for Education. The astronomical costs of the external placements were acknowledged. The issue had arisen due to unreasonable contract modelling assumptions surrounding agency staff and external residential placements which resulted in large variance. The Member of the Opposition Group told the Executive that the projections were unrealistic and roughly 35 million of the overspend could be attributed to this as the contract model was implausible in terms of reduction of agency staff and residential care placements. The Member of the Opposition Group asked the Executive how anyone engaged in the contract funding model process thought the budget was achievable based on the implausible projections.

In response, the Leader stated that Children’s services across the country were overspent so Bradford were not unique in this and that 100 million of reserves had been put into Children’s services over the preceding years. The Leader stressed that regardless of the model if the money is not there it is unaffordable, and that government need to provide more funding to cope with demand pressures. The Leader acknowledged that Children’s services were at the mercy of national providers and that the Department for Education need to cap agency charges or provide more funding to Children’s services nationally as children in need cannot be turned away.

A Member of the Opposition Group asked about the new capital schemes and the disposal of assets to save money, specifically Ingleborough Hall and the 81 thousand spent on emergency repairs. Ingleborough Hall and a number of assets like this such as Buckden House, Nell Bank were meant to be moving out of Council control why has there been no progress on the disposal of assets in this case.

The Deputy Leader, and Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment and Skills stated that Nell Bank had gone into a charitable trust, and this was the most profitable out of the three, but a business plan was in development for Ingleborough and Buckden. More information would be available regarding progress in the upcoming months.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the contents of Document “Q” and the actions taken to manage the issues highlighted be noted.**
- (2) That the following capital expenditure schemes as outlined in section 14.9 and 14.11 to Document “Q” be approved:**
  - (i) £1.05m for city centre ducting. This will be funded by a mixture of current scheme budgets and £0.7m new corporate borrowing.**
  - (ii) £1.4m for new equipment for enabled care This will be funded by new corporate borrowing.**

- (iii) £0.14m for the replacement of the rack seating at Victoria Hall. This will be funded from the general contingency budget.
  - (iv) £0.3m for new Gym Equipment at two Leisure Centres, subject to final PAG approval. This will be funded by invest to save borrowing.
  - (v) £4m for the continuation of the Empty Homes Capital Programme. This scheme is already included in Reserve Schemes and will be funded from capital receipts generated by the programme.
  - (vi) £0.127m for the acquisition of a Nursery building that will be developed as a teacher training facility. The acquisition will be funded from the general contingency budget and the capital development works grant funded.
- (3) That it be noted that the following has been approved under Section 1.7 of the Financial Regulations:
- (i) £2.3m for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Children’s Residential homes capital scheme. These schemes are already included in Reserve Schemes and will be funded from corporate borrowing.
  - (ii) £0.081m for the repair of the driveway and carpark at Ingleborough Hall. This has been funded from the general contingency budget.

***To be actioned by: Director of Finance***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Corporate

(Andrew Cross – 01274 436823)

#### **44. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

The report of the Director of Finance & IT (**Document “R”**) provided an 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.

The item was discussed in conjunction with the Quarter 2 Finance Position Statement.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That having considered the Medium-Term Financial Strategy as an assessment of the Council’s financial outlook to 2026-27, and a framework for it to seek to remain financially viable and deliver sustainable public services, in line with its priorities, that the updated

**Medium Term Financial Strategy report and appendices (Document “R”) be approved.**

- (2) That the Executive instructs the Chief Executive to draft an emergency financial improvement plan which will help bridge the financial gap the Council and the Bradford Children’s and Families Trust is facing.**
- (3) That the Executive will receive regular updates and budget proposals to address the financial gap prior to setting a budget for 2024-25 in February 2024.**
- (4) That the Council continues its dialogue with Government regarding the financial gap, particularly with regards to Bradford Children’s and Families Trust.**
- (5) That the Council publishes a new financial plan after the Government’s intentions regarding local authority finance are clearer. This should be after the Government’s Autumn budget announcement which is taking place on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.**

***To be actioned by: Director of Finance***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Corporate

(Andrew Cross – 01274 436823)

#### **45. KEIGHLEY LOCALITY PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE 2022/23**

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “S”**) updated the Executive on the progress achieved towards addressing the locality-wide priorities set out in the Keighley Locality Plan during 2022/23. Apologies were received from the Chair of Keighley Area Committee Cllr Firth. The Keighley Area Coordinator outlined the report and the purpose of locality plans. Executive were told that Neighbourhood and Community Services were on the frontline of locality working and helped to facilitate, enable, and empower local communities. The report also detailed the work done by partners to address the locality-wide priorities. Section 2.7 of **Document “S”** set out the key achievements of the locality approach in the Keighley area.

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety highlighted the positive partnership working and locality work and asked what the aims for next year were. The Keighley Area Coordinator stated that relationships with partners would be developed further which would continue to address issues in communities. Positive relationships between local community organisations and Neighbourhood and Community Services were highlighted.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning, and Transport praised the locality work being done and the ambitions for upcoming years. Housing was a priority locally for people and it was good to see the progress being made against this and for area officers to facilitate with housing services to make an impact and reflect local concerns.

The Deputy Leader, and Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment and Skills added that it was good to see all the positive things that had been delivered in Keighley that underlined the commitment to investment in Keighley. Excitement was expressed in relation to the announcement that New College would have a sixth form college in Keighley which would offer good quality further education in the Keighley locality.

The Leader asked about Neighbourhood Connect and the Keighley Area Coordinator explained that it was a partnership with Adults Social Care working with people who do not meet the threshold for intervention, for example people suffering from loneliness and social isolation may be referred and then Ward Officers and Neighbourhoods Wardens would make contact with those individuals to try and get them involved in a local community offer to try break the isolation.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That Executive commented on the Keighley Locality Plan – Progress Update 2022/23, as set out in Appendix A to Document “S”.**
- (2) That the Keighley Area Co-ordinator, accompanied by the Chair of Keighley Area Committee, be requested to present a progress report to the Executive in 12 months time, setting out the progress and achievements made for each of the priorities detailed in the Keighley Locality Plan during 2023/24.**

***To be actioned by: Keighley Area Co-ordinator***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Health and Social Care / Corporate

(Jonathan Hayes – 01535 618008)

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

*(Councillor I Khan)*

**46. PROPOSAL TO LOWER THE AGE RANGE AT HOYLE COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 4 TO 11 YEARS TO 2 TO 11 YEARS**

The report of the Strategic Director of Children’s Services (**Document “T”**) sought approval from the Executive on the proposal to lower the age range at Hoyle Court Primary School from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years. The Strategic Manager of Intelligence and Sufficiency summarised the report and told Executive that the proposal would allow an additional 28 full-time equivalent places to be delivered. The places would replace the closure of a pre-school in the area. Executive were told that the consultation that was carried out received overwhelming support from parents.

**Resolved –**

**That the proposal to lower the age range at Hoyle Court Primary School to 2 to 11 year old children from 03 January 2024 be approved.**

**To be actioned by: Strategic Director of Children's Services**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Children's Services

(Emma Hamer – 01274 439535)

## **HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PLACES PORTFOLIO**

*(Councillor Ferriby)*

### **47. LOCAL VISITOR ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP (LVEP) UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT**

The Strategic Director, Place submitted a report (**Document "U"**) which considered the need for a new organisation to represent tourism in Yorkshire. The recent De Bois Review set the stage for Destination Management Organisations on a tiered format and a West Yorkshire consortium approach had now been established as a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) to manage and promote the tourism offer going forward.

The Visitor and Business Development Manager presented the report and told the Executive that a formal governance board had been established with the Mayor of West Yorkshire being appointed the Chair of the board. The primary aims of the West Yorkshire Destination Management Plan were highlighted and each individual local authority had priorities to build a visitor economy sector. A place marketing and investment partnership board was established. The Visitor and Business Development Manager informed the Executive that the key aims of the West Yorkshire Destination Management Plan and the LVEP was to use the visitor economy to enhance the appeal and image of place in West Yorkshire and to generate more and longer overnight stays to benefit the economy and support jobs.

The Leader asked about money from English Heritage and was advised that WYCA had given 450 thousand to develop the LVEP.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the West Yorkshire Destination Management Plan as detailed in Appendix 1 to Document "U" be approved, which will ensure that Visit Bradford has LVEP status with West Yorkshire Destination Management organisations.**
- (2) That the Council Officers represented on the West Yorkshire LVEP Consortium meetings report updates and future actions to the Bradford Place Marketing and Investment Partnership Board.**



***To be actioned by: Strategic Director, Place***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Regeneration & Environment

(Patricia Tillotson – 01274 431274)

## **REGENERATION, PLANNING & TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO**

*(Councillor Ross-Shaw)*

### **48. DELEGATION SCHEME FOR TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAYS DECISIONS 2023**

The Strategic Director, Place submitted a report (**Document “V”**) which sought Executive’s approval to replace the Council’s current Scheme of Delegation for regulating the decision-making process on Transportation and Highways matters which was previously approved on 7 November 2017.

The Highways Services Manager outlined the contents of the appendices and the changes to the proposed scheme. The Executive were informed that the changes to the existing scheme of delegation was in response to courts and local government ombudsman who now require further reliance that decisions are taken with a clear terms of reference hence the need for a comprehensive scheme of delegation. The additions and delegations of the new proposed scheme of delegation were highlighted.

The Highways Services Manager added that the scheme contained both Executive functions and powers that had been devolved to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee so the approval of the revised scheme would be a two-stage process requiring approval by Executive and subsequently the Regulatory and Appeals Committee.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning, and Transport welcomed the report and voiced support for the new scheme and stated that the use of Community Protection Notices would help combat anti-social driving.

#### **Resolved –**

- (1) That the adoption of the replacement Scheme of Delegation for Highways and Transportation matters as set out in Appendix B to Document “V” be approved in substitution for the current Scheme of Delegation for Highways and Transportation matters as set out in Appendix A to Document “V” in so far as the powers listed in the revised Scheme of Delegation are Executive functions.**
- (2) That a report be presented to Regulatory and Appeals Committee recommending that the Committee approves the adoption of the replacement Scheme of Delegation for Highways and Transportation matters as set out in Appendix B to Document “V” in substitution for**

the current Scheme of Delegation for Highways and Transportation matters as set out in Appendix A to Document “V” in so far as the powers listed in the revised Scheme of Delegation are non-Executive functions.

- (3) That the revised Scheme of Delegation as set out in Appendix B to Document “V” will become operative if, and when, approved by both Executive and Regulatory and Appeals Committee and the provisions of the previous Scheme of Delegation as set out in Appendix A to Document “V” will then be revoked.
- (4) That if approved by Regulatory and Appeals Committee the revised Scheme of Delegation shall remain in force until such time as it may be substituted, modified, varied, or repealed by decisions of the Executive or Regulatory and Appeals Committee or such person or body inheriting the powers of the Executive or Regulatory and Appeals Committee.
- (5) That Executive delegate to the Strategic Director – Place (or such other officer with equivalent duties for the time being) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder the authority to make amendments to the revised Scheme to reflect future changes in job titles, roles and responsibilities or to introduce further delegations in respect of changes in legislation where the powers in the legislation are Executive functions.
- (6) That Executive delegates to the Director of Legal and Governance in consultation with the Strategic Director – Place the authority to make changes to the proposed scheme of delegation to reflect future amendments to the Council’s constitution or where delegated functions may be found to require written records to be made of the decision taken.

***To be actioned by: Strategic Director, Place***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Regeneration & Environment

(Richard Gelder – 01274 437603)

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO**

*(Councillor Duffy)*

### **49. BRADFORD DISTRICT SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

The report of the Assistant Director, Chief Executive Office (**Document “W”**) highlighted the collective activities undertaken by the Partnership and its associated agencies to protect children and young people from harm and abuse. It detailed various initiatives to ensure children’s welfare, learning from practice

reviews, safeguarding training for professionals, performance quality metrics, and developments in line with the Partnership's new priorities. The report was presented on behalf of the three primary statutory partners: the Local Authority, West Yorkshire Police, and the Integrated Care Board.

The Chief Executive of Bradford District Care Foundation Trust summarised the report and told the Executive that there is a statutory responsibility to provide a report once a year and the report was in the public domain on the Safer Bradford website. The Partnership Board focussed on three priorities which were child neglect, non-accidental injuries in babies, and developing a leadership structure for safeguarding. Previous reviews have highlighted that child neglect was an issue, so it was important to get a grip of the priorities highlighted. The increasing role of the voice of children and young people was addressed, and Members were told that work was ongoing to build a youth forum to support the work done under the safeguarding partnership.

The Strategic Director of Children's Services stated that the partnership had been working actively following the recommendations from the Star Hobson review and there had been notable dedication and progress following the recommendations.

The Leader said that it demonstrated a whole collaborative partnership approach to caring for children in the Bradford district and that all agencies had a role.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Families thanked the partners that had been involved and praised the positive progress that had been made. The Independent Chair of the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership was also praised for the positive leadership provided and the support that had been offered to the BCFT.

#### **Resolved –**

**(1) That the Annual Report 2022/23 be noted.**

**(2) That Executive receives a further report in 12 months' time.**

***To be actioned by: Assistant Director, Chief Executive Office***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Children's Services

(Darren Minton – 01274 434361)

#### **50. BRADFORD SAFEGUARDING ADULT BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

The report of the Strategic Director of Adults Social Care and Health (**Document "X"**) outlined the activities carried out by the Board and its partner agencies to protect vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect. The report covered a range of areas, including efforts to improve outcomes for at-risk adults, case reviews, safeguarding training, performance quality assurance, and progress against priorities. The report was presented on behalf of the three statutory safeguarding partners, the Local Authority, West Yorkshire Police, and Integrated Care Board (ICB), who are jointly responsible for the safeguarding partnership arrangements.

The Independent Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Board in Bradford outlined the report and highlighted the key areas within the report. Executive were told that the Safeguarding Board was very broad and there was representation from a number of partners across the district and that all partners both statutory and non-statutory worked collaboratively to safeguard adults.

The Independent Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Board in Bradford told Executive that there had been an increase in activity with approximately 6200 concerns raised and reported regarding safeguarding adults which represents one third of an increase from the previous year. This appeared to be a national trend although Members were informed the reasons behind this were not entirely clear as it could represent an increase of abuse and neglect, but it could also be due to increased awareness which resulted in higher levels of reporting. The Independent Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Board explained that of the 6200 concerns raised around 2500 required further investigation under Local Authority powers which represented a 70% rise in comparison to previous years, so it was a significant increase in activity. The most common type of abuse reported was physical abuse.

The three key ambitions of the Adult Safeguarding Board were highlighted which were continuing to improve awareness, a focus on prevention and encouraging further engagement with local communities.

The Leader mentioned the increase in reporting and asked what people should look out for in terms of abuse and vulnerability and was subsequently informed that work was underway to promote safeguarding and raising awareness. The Leader asked if any training would be rolled out to wardens and ward officers who were on the frontline in communities, and it would be beneficial to identify warning signs and it was confirmed that this would be in place.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the Annual Report 2022/23 be noted.**
- (2) That Executive receives a further report in 12 months' time.**

***To be actioned by: Strategic Director of Adults Social Care and Health***

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Health and Social Care

(Darren Minton – 01274 434361)

**51. MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY**

Note: That the minutes of the meeting(s) of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on [7th September](#) and [28th September](#) be 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