

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held on Tuesday, 6 February 2024 in Council Chamber - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 10.30 am
Concluded 11.15 am

Members of the Executive – Councillors

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

Observers: Councillors Davies, Majkowski and Pollard (Minute 77)

Councillor Hinchcliffe in the Chair

72. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In relation to the Quarter 3 Finance Statement 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 Budget Update (Minute 77), the Leader stated that Executive Members will be granted dispensations under the Localism Act 2011 in relation to their declared Disclosable Pecuniary Interests relating to employment, sponsorship and land, prior to the consideration of the Budget on 5 March 2023.

73. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2023 be signed as a correct record.

74. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

75. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

The following recommendations were received by the Executive:

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 11 January 2024:

2024-25 BUDGET PROPOSALS - FINANCIAL ANALYSIS, INITIAL FINANCIAL OUTLOOK AND BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2024-25 AND BEYOND

Resolved –

That this Committee requests the Executive to take into consideration the comments raised, in relation to the 2024-25 Budget Proposals, as part of the consultation process.

Note: In receiving the above recommendation, the Leader stated that the minutes from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting regarding the Budget proposals had been circulated to Executive Members and will also be fed into the budget consultation process.

To be actioned by: Interim Director of Legal and Governance

Petitions received at Council – Tuesday 23 January 2024

- (i) Stop Bradford Council Closing Ford Hill Queensbury HWRC Tip**
- (ii) Call upon Bradford Council to commit to the long-term future of Golden Butts Road HWRC ('Ilkley Tip') and to restore Monday opening hours**

That the petitions will be considered as part of the budget proposals at the meeting of the Executive on 5 March.

Note: In receiving the above petitions, the Leader stated that the petitions will be considered as part of the budget proposals at the meeting of the Executive on 5 March.

To be actioned by: Interim Director of Legal and Governance

LEADER OF COUNCIL & CORPORATE

(Councillor Hinchcliffe)

76. MEETINGS OF COUNCIL AND THE EXECUTIVE 2024/25

The Interim Director of Legal & Governance submitted a report (**Document “AF”**) which recommended a schedule of ordinary meetings for Council and the Executive for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

Resolved –

- (1) That the schedule of meetings of the Executive for 2024/25 as set out in appendix 1 to Document “AF” be approved.**
- (2) That it be recommended to the annual meeting of Council that the ordinary meetings of Council for 2024/25 as set out in appendix 1 to Document “AF” be approved.**

To be actioned by: Interim Director of Legal and Governance

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Corporate

77. QUARTER 3 FINANCE POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2023-24 AND 2024-25 BUDGET UPDATE

The Director of Finance submitted a report (**Document “AG”**) which provided Executive 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 December 2023. It stated the Council's current reserves and school balances.

The report summarised the ongoing action being undertaken to address the current challenges and further urgent action that will be required to secure a sustainable financial position. The Council had applied for Exceptional Financial Support from Government which if agreed, would be provided in the form of a capitalisation directive which would allow the Council to borrow to fund revenue expenditure.

A capitalisation directive is however only an interim solution. To achieve a financially sustainable position, the Council and the Trust will need to deliver a combination of; significantly higher level of savings than is currently proposed; additional income, further asset disposals and further capital expenditure reductions.

A continuous cycle of identifying new savings and other measures to reducing the gap will need to be embedded in 2024-25. The report also provides a budget update for 2024-25 taking account of the completion of the NNDR1 form that sets the Business rates base, and further updates in relation to the Exceptional

Financial Support request.

The Director of Finance added that the forecast overspend for 2023/24 would be £75m, which included the use of £48m one off reserves, with the overspend primarily related to Childrens and Adults Social Care, details of which were set out in the report.

The Bradford Children's and Families Trust had developed a business plan which aims to get back to 2023/24 contract price levels by 2027/2028, however the cost in placements had gone up over time.

The request for Government support was alluded to, the details of which were set out in the report; the response from the Government for assistance would not be known till early March and we had therefore been advised to hold back setting a Budget till that time. The assistance being sought would only be an interim measure to get the Council back onto a sustainable financial footing.

In relation to the 2024/2025 budget additional resources had been made available and they were set out in the report.

The Leader stated that these were challenging times for Local Government and that Government had also asked Councils to utilise reserves to plug the fiscal gap. Our reserves were now exhausted; hence the request had been made to Government for exceptional financial support.

A main opposition group Councillor questioned the potential backlog maintenance costs in relation to Ingleborough Hall and whether revised costings had been looked at, such as the current estimated cost of replacing the heating system. In addition, the staffing costs and staffing levels within Corporate Resources and in the Office of the Chief Executive had increased over time and he sought an explanation for this rise.

In response, the Leader stated that in relation to Ingleborough Hall, officers will be able to provide further details on the specifics outside of this meeting. In relation to staffing levels, the HR Director will be able to provide further clarity on the staffing levels and associated costs in those service areas.

A further opposition group Councillor ascertained why costs associated with the new Darley Street Market were being met, while other developments across the district are being paused due to the Council's perilous financial situation. In response the Regeneration, Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder stressed that some of the money was from the existing budget set aside for the market.

The Strategic Director of Place, added that the extra spend was down to the change in the model the Council was adopting for the food hall and that the money we invest will be recouped through the income generated by the market going forward.

A member also sought clarification on the financial pressures in Household Wastes sites and what options were being looked at in maximising income from scrap metals. In relation to the financial pressures in Household waste sites this

was related to an overspend. In response to maximising income from scrap metals, the Strategic Director Place stated that he would provide further information to the Councillor outside of this meeting.

Resolved –

That the Executive:

- (1) Noted the contents of Document “AG” and the actions taken to manage the issues highlighted.**
- (2) Noted the Exceptional Financial Support request update for 2023-24 and 2024-25 as outlined in section 1.11 to 1.18 to Document “AG”.**
- (3) Approved the following capital expenditure schemes as outlined in section 14.9 to Document “AG”:**
 - £1.455m to complete the fitting out of the F&B operation at Darley Street Market. This will be funded by a mixture of £0.455m current City Centre Market budget (CS0107) and £1.0m new invest to save borrowing.**

To be actioned by: Director of Finance

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Corporate

78. BRADFORD SOUTH LOCALITY PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE 2022/23

The Strategic Director Place submitted a report (**Document “AH”**) which gave an update on the progress achieved towards addressing the locality-wide priorities set out in the Bradford South Locality Plan during 2022/23.

The Bradford South Area Coordinator in presenting the report, highlighted examples of the work undertaken in the Bradford South Area. In particular the work done around employability and associated support. To this end a successful event was held in Great Horton, which involved input from Skills House, a similar event was also held in Tong and Wibsey resulting in a number of those participants managing to secure interviews and gainful employment. The success of these events will enable us to roll out similar events elsewhere in Bradford South.

The Leader welcomed the involvement of Skills House as they had a track record of delivering in the Bradford District.

A number of Members welcomed the work being undertaken in the Bradford South area around improving health outcomes, community clean ups, youth work sessions and outreach work with young people and they extended their thanks to the Area Coordinator, Ward Officers and staff in the Area Office for delivering the various initiatives and supporting the residents of Bradford South.

Resolved –

- (1) **Executive commented on the Bradford South Locality Plan – Progress Update 2022/23, as set out in Appendix A to Document “AH”.**
- (2) **That the Bradford South Area Co-ordinator, accompanied by the Chair of Bradford South 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 Bradford South Locality Plan during 2023/24.**

To be actioned by: Bradford South Area Coordinator

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Corporate & Health and Social Care

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO & DEPUTY LEADER

(Councillor I Khan)

79. PROPOSED CHANGES TO PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS AT TWO MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Strategic Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (**Document “AI”**) which set out a proposed reduction of published admission numbers at Hoyle Court Primary School and Ingrow Primary School. Details of the proposals and the consultation undertaken was alluded to and they were set out in the report.

Members extended their thanks to Emma Hamer, Strategic Manager Intelligence and Sufficiency, who will soon be leaving the Council for pastures new and they thanked her for her hard work and dedication over the years.

Resolved –

- (1) **That the proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Hoyle Court Primary School from 45 to 30 from 1 September 2025 be approved.**
- (2) **That the proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) at Ingrow Primary School from 60 to 45 from 1 September 2025 be approved.**

To be actioned by: Strategic Director Children’s Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Children’s Services

HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PLACES PORTFOLIO

(Councillor Ferriby)

Note: The following items were included on this agenda as exceptions to the Forward Plan in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 10 (General Exception to the Forward Plan) of Part 3D of the Constitution. Accordingly, the proper officer had notified in writing the Chair of Regeneration & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the matter on which the decision was to be made.

80. LIBRARY SERVICE REVIEW

The Strategic Director Place submitted a report (**Document “AJ”**) which set out the proposed approach to conducting a Review of Bradford Libraries Service during 2024 in order to make savings of £175,000 in 2025/6 financial year.

It was stated that the purpose of the Review would be to determine how the Council can best meet its statutory obligation to provide a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ service within the available budget, including consideration of:

- Community managed libraries, Hybrid libraries and Council managed libraries
- Buildings
- Opening hours
- Staffing and volunteers
- IT infrastructure
- Income generation
- Alternative governance models

The outcome of the Review would be to articulate an overall service specification to meet community needs that is sustainable within available resources and details will be brought to subsequent meetings of the Executive.

The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder added that the review and consultation was necessary to inform service provision going forward.

Resolved –

That a strategic Review of the Library Service be undertaken that will deliver £175k savings in 2025/6, pending the outcome of the public consultation on the Council’s budget proposals, and agree the proposed approach to conducting the Review as set out in sections 3 - 6 to Document “AJ”.

To be actioned by: Strategic Director Place

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Regeneration and Environment

81. SPORTS FACILITIES SERVICE REVIEW

The Strategic Director Place submitted a report (**Document “AK”**) which set out the proposed approach to conducting a Review of Bradford Sports facilities Service during 2024, in order to make savings of £60K in 2024/25 rising to £1,250,000 by 2025/6 financial year.

It was stated that the review will focus on:

- Geographic location
- Facility operating costs
- Usage data
- income generation
- Property and asset stock-condition
- Potential for alternative operating models to be adopted

The outcome of the review would identify a hierarchy of provision including facilities which are proposed to stay, have some merit is remaining open and those that might need to close if the budget priorities are to be realised, this review will also consider any new facilities that have not been commissioned at the current time.

The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder welcomed the Review and stressed that this would be a comprehensive review which would inform future service provision in this area.

Resolved –

That a review of the Sports Facilities Service be undertaken as detailed in Document “AK”, the proposed approach, methodology and timeline to achieve the proposed savings of £60K in 2024/25 and a further £1.25M as contained in the 2024/25 Budget Proposals report (Executive Committee 11th January 2024).

To be actioned by: Strategic Director Place

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Regeneration and Environment

82. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Leader stated that the Budget Executive meeting scheduled for 20 February will now be held on Tuesday 5 March 2024.

83. MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY

That the minutes of the meeting of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority held on 12 October 2023 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