

London Borough of Islington

Executive - 9 February 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 9 February 2023 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors** Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Diarmaid Ward, Rowena Champion, John Woolf, Santiago Bell-Bradford, Nurullah Turan, Michelline Ngongo and Roulin Khondoker

Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz in the Chair

68 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Received from Councillor Una O'Halloran.

69 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
None.

70 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them

71 **BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23 - MONTH 9**

RESOLVED:

(a) To note the breakdown of the forecast General Fund outturn by individual variance at Appendix 1 and by service area at Appendix 2 of the report of the Corporate Director of Resources.

(b) To note that there were no inter-departmental virements in month 9 for approval.

(c) To approve a one-off budget virement of £2.061m which was fully committed against existing budget pressures and the additional expenditure incurred to support the announcements of the Fair Cost of Care grant, Charging Reform and the Adult Social Care Discharge funding from the Department of Health and Social Care.

(d) To note the transformation fund allocations and anticipated profiled drawdowns for 2022/23, as detailed in the report.

(e) To note the collection fund monitoring position at month 9.

(f) To note the Energy Price Analysis position at month 9.

- (g) To note the delivery progress of the 2022/23 budgeted savings at Appendix 5 of the report.
- (h) That the monthly budget monitoring report move to quarterly Executive reports from 2023/24, for the periods ending June, September, December and March.
- (i) To note the forecast 2022/23 HRA estimated outturn of -£2.792m surplus at month 9.
- (j) To note that, at the end of month 9, total capital expenditure of £90.910m had been incurred against a 2022/23 forecast of £165.266m and the revised 2022/23 capital budget of £169.662m.
- (k) To approve capital acceleration of £0.050m in respect of automated public toilets/conveniences.

Reasons for the decision – to ensure the financial resilience of the Council

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

72

BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

RESOLVED:

The General Fund Budget 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- (a) To agree and recommend to Council the MTFS and balanced 2023/24 budget, including the underlying FS principles, in-year monitoring position (to date) and the budget assumptions, as detailed in the report of the Corporate Director of Resources.
- (b) To agree and recommend to Council the proposed 2023/24 net budgets by directorate.
- (c) To agree and recommend to Council that centrally held demographic growth be allocated to service budgets in-year once a more evidenced assessment was available and had been approved by the Section 151 Officer.
- (d) To note that the 2023/24 budget incorporated budget provision for manifesto commitments and provided additional support to residents in the current cost-of-living crisis.
- (e) To agree and recommend to Council a one-off £1m Hardship Fund to support residents focussing on working households, with low incomes, who were facing large rent rises, for launch in advance of the 2023/24 financial year.
- (f) To agree and recommend to Council the annual budget for the London Councils' Grants Committee, following consideration by the London Councils' Leaders' Committee on 13 December 2022, and to note that this would be reported to the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee on 20 March 2023 for information.
- (g) To agree and recommend to Council the 2023/24 savings and note that individual savings may be subject to individual consultation before they can be

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implemented. Further, to note the draft savings proposals for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

(h) To note the funding assumptions following the announcement of the Provisional Local Government Settlement on 19 December 2022.

(i) To note that the fees and charges policy and the General Fund fees and charges for 2023/24 had been agreed by Executive on 24 November 2022 and to agree the amendment to the fees and charges schedule in respect of GLL activities and memberships.

(j) To agree and recommend to Council the policy on General Fund contingency and reserves and agree the movements to/from earmarked reserves assumed as part of the 2023/24 revenue budget.

(k) To agree and recommend to Council that the Section 151 Officer was delegated responsibility for any technical adjustments required for the 2023/24 budget, in line with the council's financial regulations.

The HRA Budget and MTFS

(l) To agree and recommend to Council the balanced HRA 2023/24 budget and note the latest estimates over the 3-year MTFS period.

(m) To agree and recommend to Council the 2023/24 savings and note that individual savings may be subject to individual consultation before they can be implemented.

(n) To note the HRA rents and other HRA fees and charges for 2023/24, as agreed by the Executive on 12 January 2023.

(o) To note that the HRA 30-year business plan was currently being updated to reflect latest government policy

Capital Investment and Treasury and Investment Management

(p) To agree and recommend to Council the proposed 2023/24 to 2025/26 capital programme and note the indicative capital programme for 2026/27 to 2032/33.

(q) To note the estimated funding of the 2023/24 to 2025/26 capital programme and to delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, where necessary, to apply capital resources to fund the capital programme in the most cost-effective way for the council.

(r) To note the estimated borrowing levels for the General Fund and HRA in relation to the 2023/24 to 2025/26 capital programme.

(s) To agree and recommend to Council the Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Treasury Management Strategy.

Council Tax and Retained Business Rates

(t) To agree and recommend to Council the calculations required for the determination of the 2023/24 council tax requirement and the level of council tax as detailed in the report and summarised below:

(i) The 2023/24 council tax requirement of £113,039,838.03

(ii) The relevant basic amount of Islington Band D council tax of £1,380.52, a 4.99% increase compared to 2022/23 (comprising 2% specifically for

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expenditure on adult social care and 2.99% for all expenditure), and that this was not 'excessive' in accordance with the council tax referendum principles for 2023/24.

(iii) The basic amount of Islington Band D council tax for dwellings to which no special item relates (i.e. outside of the Lloyd Square Garden Committee area) of £1,380.25.

(iv) The amount of 2023/24 council tax (excluding the GLA precept) for each valuation band over each of the council's areas.

(v) The total amount of 2023/24 council tax (including the GLA precept) for each valuation band over each of the council's areas.

(u) To note the council's estimated retained business rates funding in 2023/24, as per the 2023/24 NNDR1 return estimate.

(v) To note the council's forecast NNDR surplus/(deficit) for 2022/23.

Further Matters to Consider in Setting the Budget

(w) To have regard to the Section 151 Officer's report on the robustness of the estimates included in the budget and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves when making decisions about the budget and the level of council tax, as required under Section 25(2) of the Local Government Act 2003.

(x) To note the Monitoring Officer's comments.

(y) To note the Equality Impact Assessment and to take full account of it in approving the overall budget and related proposals.

(z) To note the assessment of compliance against the CIPFA Financial Management Code and that this would be re-visited at least annually as part of the budget process, with any actions or recommendations implemented on an ongoing basis.

(a (a)) To note that the council had invited business rate payers, or representatives of business rate payers in Islington, to comment on the draft 2023/24 budget proposals in the report of the Corporate Director of Resources, as required under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(b (b)) To agree and recommend to Council the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2023/24.

(c (c)) To agree and recommend to Council the Retail Relief Scheme for 2023/24

Reasons for the decision – to agree draft proposals in respect of the Council's 2023/24 budget and level of council tax and the latest assumed medium term for recommendation to Council

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

73 **ADMISSION TO ISLINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS 2024-25**

RESOLVED:

- (a) To agree the co-ordinated schemes and timetables for admission to Islington primary, secondary schools, and academies in 2024-25, and in-year admission protocols for 2024-25, as set out in Appendices 1, 4, and 7 of the report of the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families.
- (b) That the policy and oversubscription criteria for admission to community primary and secondary schools and Highbury Fields Sixth Form for 2024-25, as set out in Appendices 2, 5, 8 and 9 of the report, be approved.
- (c) That the admission numbers for Islington community primary and secondary schools and for external applicants to Highbury Fields Sixth Form for 2024-25, as set out in Appendices 3, 6 and 10 of the report, be approved.

Reasons for the decision – to provide fair access to educational opportunities and to comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

74 **FUTURE OF COPENHAGEN AND VITTORIA SCHOOLS**

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report of the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families, including the responses to the consultation on the proposals to amalgamate Copenhagen and Vittoria Primary Schools, be noted.
- (b) That, based on the feedback received during the consultation, the Council proceed to amalgamate Copenhagen and Vittoria Primary Schools and follow the next stage of the prescribed process, which was to issue a statutory notice, as detailed in Appendix D of the report.
- (c) That officers be thanked for their constructive and helpful engagement with all stakeholders on the proposal.

Reasons for the decision – to manage the high levels of surplus capacity in Islington schools to ensure the best outcomes for children.

Other options considered – a range of options were considered

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

75 **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR SUPPORTED LIVING ACCOMMODATION FOR SERVICE USERS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES - WINDSOR STREET**

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the procurement strategy for care and support to procure a new service to provide care and support for adults with learning disabilities within a new development being built on Windsor Street, as outlined in the report of the Executive Member for Health and Social Care, be approved.

(b) That the Director for Adult Social Care be authorised to award the contract, following consultation with the Executive Member for Health and Social Care.

(c) That officers be thanked for their work to procure this service.

Reasons for the decision – The contract would deliver value for money for the Council, facilitate development of long-term relationships with the successful provider and offer mutually beneficial stability for the local care market. The service would also ensure that residents could stay in the borough and live close to their family support networks.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

76

BARBECUE POLICY REVIEW

RESOLVED:

(a) That a new Barbecue Policy, as detailed in the report of the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport, which will ban the public use of coal/wood barbecues in all public parks and open spaces, unless part of a formally approved community or commercial event, be approved.

(b) To continue the trial of electric barbecue stations in parks as an alternative method of ensuring that those without access to a private garden might still enjoy the social benefits of an outdoor barbecue with family and friends.

(c) That officers be thanked for their work on the new policy.

Reasons for the decision – to ensure the Council was meeting targets on air quality. To mitigate the impact the impact of the loss of the facility, the Council will continue to trial electric barbecues as a more environmentally friendly alternative to solid fuel barbecues.

Other options considered – a range of options were considered

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

77

ISLINGTON TOGETHER 2030 PLAN

RESOLVED:

That the refreshed "Islington Together 2030 Plan", attached to the report of the Leader of the Council, be approved for launch in March 2023.

Reasons for the decision – to remove and minimise disadvantages by including "Challenging Inequality" at the heart of the Council's plans.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

78

PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR PATROLLING SERVICES

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the procurement strategy for the Islington Patrolling Service, as detailed in the report of the Executive Member for Community Safety, be approved.
- (b) That the Corporate Director of Environment and Climate Change be authorised to award the contract, following consultation with the Acting Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods and the Executive Member for Community Safety.
- (c) That Parkguard be thanked for their work in keeping the Borough safe and to officers for their work on the procurement.

Reasons for the decision – The current Patrolling Services contract was due to end, following a 24-month extension, on 9 July 2023. The service had a clear and tangible impact on the Council's community safety objectives and a high level of resident satisfaction.

Other options considered – a range of options were considered

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

79

PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR TAXI AND ATTENDANT SERVICE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the procurement strategy for the Council's Taxi and Attendant Service, outlined in the report of the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport, be approved.
- (b) That the Corporate Director Environment and Climate Change be authorised to award the contract, following consultation with the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport.
- (c) To note that the service would be administered by the Accessible Community Transport Service in partnership with the London Borough of Camden and the City of London Corporation.
- (d) That it be noted that regular taxi rounds for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities, would, wherever possible, be shared between Islington, Camden and the City of London to reduce overall costs.
- (e) That it be noted that the new contract would reduce reliance on taxis over the life of the framework, through the increase in personal travel budgets, travel buddies and independent travel training.

Reasons for the decision – Shared rounds would enable costs to be split between Islington, Camden and the City of London and would also have environmental benefits, with fewer vehicles servicing the same number of service users.

Other options considered – a range of options were considered
Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

80 **HEALTH DETERMINANTS RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE CONTRACT
AWARD TO ISLINGTON COUNCIL**

The report was introduced by the Executive Member for Health and Social Care.

RESOLVED:

That the contract for the Health Determinants Research Collaborative award, issued by the National Institute for Health and Care Research, and detailed in the report of the Acting Director of Public Health, be approved.

Reasons for the decision – The Council had been successful in its bid for the Health Determinants Research Collaborative, which included significant income to achieve the objectives of the programme over a six-year period. To comply with the programme timeline, the contract award had to be signed as soon as possible.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

MEETING CLOSED AT 7.25 pm