

London Borough of Islington

Executive - 30 November 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held in the Council Chamber, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD on 30 November 2023 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors** Diarmaid Ward, Una O'Halloran, Rowena Champion, John Woolf, Santiago Bell-Bradford, Nurullah Turan and Roulin Khondoker

Also Present: **Councillors** Caroline Russell, Flora Williamson and Jilani Chowdhury

Councillor Diarmaid Ward in the Chair

170 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Councillors Kaya Comer-Schwartz and Michelline Safi Ngongo.

171 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

172 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

173 BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 - QUARTER 2

RESOLVED:

(a) To note the breakdown of the forecast General Fund outturn by variance at Appendix 1 and service area at Appendix 2 of the report of the Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance.

(b) To note the forecast 2023/24 General Fund position.

(c) To approve a one-off budget virement which created an income budget and a corresponding expenditure budget due to the announcements of the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund Workforce fund from the Department of Health and Social Care.

(d) To note, and where necessary agree, the virements of budgets between directorates.

(e) To note the Collection Fund forecast for council tax and National Non-Domestic Rates.

(f) To note progress on delivering the 2023/24 agreed budget savings.

(g) To note the Housing Revenue Account forecast.

- (h) To note the capital expenditure forecast for Quarter 2.
- (i) To approve capital slippage to future financial years and to note that there was a risk of further slippage over the remainder of the financial year.
- (j) To agree the latest earmarked reserve allocations and forecast drawdowns for 2023/24.

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

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

174 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022-2023**

RESOLVED:

(a) To note the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review letter 2022-23 dated 19 July 2023, attached to the report of the Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance.

(b) To note that, of the seventeen cases investigated, twelve were upheld decisions with the remaining five cases not upheld.

(c) To note that two out of the twelve upheld cases received a satisfactory remedy before Ombudsman involvement.

(d) To note that six out of the six cases with compliance outcomes during 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, complied with the Ombudsman recommendations.

(e) To note that, separate to the complaints investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman reported in the Annual Review Letter, six upheld decisions during the period in question (finding of maladministration) were decided by the Housing Ombudsman, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

Reason for the decision – To ensure that all parties were informed about complaints that had been reviewed by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Council action to address these.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

175 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2022/23**

RESOLVED:

(a) That the activities of the Council's Treasury Management function for the year to 31 March 2023, as detailed in the report of the Executive Member for Planning, Finance and Performance, be noted.

(b) That Resources officers be thanked for their work.

Reasons for the decision – To comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code

of Practice, which required approval of treasury management semi-annual and annual reports.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

176 **GENERAL FUND FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW**

RESOLVED:

(a) To agree the fees and charges policy and the General Fund fees and charges detailed at Appendix A1-3 of the report of the Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance.

(b) To note that the Acting Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods had undertaken to brief Councillor Russell on the rationale for parking charges.

Reasons for the decision – Annual increases to fees and charges across a range of General Fund functions were to be increased by the September 2023 CPI rate (6.7%) on 1 January 2024, unless otherwise stated, in the context of sustained, historically higher levels of inflation and the resultant increased costs of service provision.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

177 **REPORT OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COST OF LIVING CRISIS**

Councillor Flora Williamson, Chair of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report, highlighting the fact that this scrutiny had been led by her predecessor, Councillor Jenny Kay. She thanked Councillor Kay for her work on the scrutiny report.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the report of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee on “The Cost of Living Crisis” be received.

(b) That it be noted that the Executive Member’s response would be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Committee’s recommendations.

(c) That the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee be thanked for their report.

Reasons for the decision – The overall aim of the scrutiny review was to identify the way in which residents were experiencing hardship in the current cost of living crisis, and to examine how the Council could best support residents’ security and resilience in the home and in work.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

178 **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR RENEWAL OF MAIN PARKING CONTRACT(S)**

RESOLVED:

(a) To approve the procurement strategy for parking services, detailed as Option 5 - competitive tender exercise using the open procedure - as outlined in the report of the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

(b) That the Acting Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods, following liaison with the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport, be authorised to award the contract for an initial period of four years, with optional contract extensions of an additional four years and an additional 2 years (total contract term 10 years).

(c) That officers be thanked for their work on this procurement.

Reasons for the decision – The current parking contract was due to expire on 31 August 2024 and it would be necessary to ensure that a new contract was in place to ensure continuity of service.

Other options considered – five options in total were considered.

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

179 **REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE - NET ZERO CARBON 2030 STRATEGY, FOCUSING ON THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND GREEN JOBS**

The Executive noted apologies for absence received from Councillor Tricia Clarke, Chair of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the report of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee be noted.

(b) That it be noted that the Executive Member's response would be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's recommendations

(c) That the Committee be thanked for their report.

Reasons for the decision – The overall aim of the scrutiny was to review how the Council was taking the lead on encouraging sustainable development, developing policies to encourage sustainable economic development, and working to identify ways to support a circular economy in Islington, with residents and businesses, to help achieve this goal.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

180 **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR COUNCIL ENERGY CONTRACTS**

RESOLVED:

- (a) To approve a procurement strategy to appoint a Public Buying Organisation under a competitive process to procure the Council's electricity and gas supply contracts for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, with an option to extend these contracts by a further two years to 31 March 2029.
- (b) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Community Wealth Building, following consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources and the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport, to sign an access agreement and award energy contracts through a Public Buying Organisation chosen by the methodology set out in the report of the Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport.

Reasons for the decision – Using a Public Buying Organisation was the recommended option as it brought Islington in line with other local authorities' energy purchasing, outsourcing the risk element of trading amid ongoing energy market volatility

Other options considered – a total of four options were considered.

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

181 **REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSFORMATION**

The report was introduced by Councillor Jilani Chowdhury, Chair of the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report of the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee on Adult Social Care transformation be noted.
- (b) That it be noted that the Executive Member's response would be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.
- (c) That the Committee be thanked for their report and that officers in Adult Social Care and Public Health be thanked for their work.

Reasons for the decision – the aim of the Scrutiny report was to consider the impacts of the new Health and Social Care Act 2022, the challenges and opportunities for transforming services and to review the vision and plans for transforming Council services.

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

182 **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR OFFICE FURNITURE**

RESOLVED:

(a) To approve the use of the new Hertfordshire County Council framework agreement for the supply of office and commercial furniture for Islington's purposes.

(b) To designate the use of the framework agreement as a corporate contract which all Islington staff were mandated to use for office furniture

Reasons for the decision – The Hertfordshire County Council framework agreement provided access to experienced office furniture suppliers who had undergone a stringent process to qualify to be on the framework agreement.

Other options considered – A total of four options were considered.

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm