

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors S Arif, D Coupar, M Harland,
H Hayden, A Lamb, J Lennox, J Pryor,
M Rafique and F Venner

62 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-

- (A) That Appendix 1 to the report entitled, 'Delivery of New Affordable Housing at Sugar Hill, Oulton', referred to in Minute No. 66 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and be considered in private. This is on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular parties (including the Council). This information is not publicly available from the statutory registers of information kept in respect of companies and charities. It is considered that since this information was obtained through the grant application process then it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this time. Also, it is considered that the release of such information would, or would be likely to prejudice the Council's financial interests in relation to other similar transactions. It is therefore considered that in these circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
- (B) That Appendix 1 to the report entitled, 'Eastgate and Harewood Quarter (Phase 2)', referred to in Minute No. 68 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and be considered in private. This is on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person and affected parties (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that the release of this information is likely to be prejudicial to the commercial interests of both the Council and affected parties and could have a negative impact on negotiations on this matter and/or matters of a similar nature. This information is not publicly available from the statutory registers of information kept in respect of certain

companies and charities. It is therefore considered that in these circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

63 Late Items

There were no late items of business submitted to the Board for consideration.

64 Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

65 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th October 2023 be approved as a correct record.

HOUSING

66 Delivery of New Affordable Housing at Sugar Hill, Oulton

The Director of City Development and the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a joint report providing an update on the Council's ongoing support for the residents of Sugar Hill and Wordsworth Drive, Oulton, and detailing a proposal to continue to work collaboratively with Leeds Federated Housing Association (LFHA) to support the appropriate redevelopment of the site to deliver 70 new affordable homes. The report also set out a recommendation to approve the allocation of a sum from the Council's Affordable Housing Commuted Sums programme to fund a grant to LFHA, which would support the delivery of 30 Affordable Rented homes in total as part of the scheme.

The Executive Member introduced the report, providing an overview of the proposals and details of the work undertaken by the Council and in collaboration with LFHA to support the former residents.

Responding to enquiries, the Board received further information regarding:

- the timing of the proposals, which it was noted were in response to the ongoing engagement with former residents and the desire shown by former residents to return. It was also noted that the proposals would enable the Council to provide a formal commitment to LFHA in relation to the delivery of housing on the site so that the appropriate mix of housing tenure could be determined; and
- the implications for the proposed housing delivery on the site should the allocation from the Affordable Housing Commuted Sums fund not be provided. Specifically, it was noted that the mix of tenure would change, reducing the number of Affordable Rented Homes available, which would in turn reduce the potential for former residents who wanted to rent a home to return.

In addition, assurance was provided on the extensive and ongoing engagement which continued to be undertaken with the former residents, including engagement on how affordable housing on site would potentially be

allocated. It was also noted that consultation would be undertaken on the proposed Local Lettings Policy.

Following consideration of Appendix 1 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council's continued engagement with former tenants of the Sugar Hill and Wordsworth Close estate and their representatives, be noted; and that the actions undertaken to prevent homelessness following eviction by the previous landlord, and the positive way in which Leeds Federated Housing Association has engaged with previous tenants and supported the remaining protected tenants on the estate following acquisition of the site also be noted;
- (b) That a commitment of £2,824,553 Affordable Housing Commuted Sums funds to Leeds Federated Housing Association, be approved, which will uplift the delivery of Affordable Rented homes on the site from 14 to 30;
- (c) That approval be given for the Council to enter into a grant agreement with Leeds Federated Housing Association on the terms as set out within the submitted report; and that full details of the agreement be delegated to the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing;
- (d) That approval be given for the Council to implement a Local Lettings Policy for all of the 30 grant-funded Affordable Rented homes, on the terms as set out within the submitted report, with full details of the agreement being delegated to the Director of Communities, Housing & Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 67 Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy Action Plan Annual Update 2023**
Further to Minute No. 113, 8 February 2023, the Director of City Development submitted a report which presented the second Annual Progress Report of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy (CLTS) Action Plan, covering the period from October 2022 to October 2023. The full Annual Progress Report was detailed at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

In considering the report, a Member raised several concerns regarding the approach being taken as part of the transport strategy, which he felt was resulting in a reduced level of accessibility to, and around the city centre, and also reduced transport connectivity for communities in the outer areas of Leeds.

Responding to the concerns raised, further detail was provided on a number of areas, as summarised below:

- The extensive consultation which had been undertaken over a number of years as part of the establishment of the strategy was highlighted, together with the actions taken in response to the feedback received. The delivery of infrastructure in the city centre to facilitate faster and more reliable bus services was specifically referenced as an example;
- Clarification was provided on the respective levels of accessibility in the city centre that remained for taxis and private vehicles, with the city centre's car parking offer also being highlighted;
- Emphasis was placed upon how the actions being taken via the strategy aimed to ensure that Leeds has a world class city centre and is an attractive and welcoming environment for all users;
- The high level of activity over the past 12 months on a range of schemes was acknowledged, together with the practical issues arising from the delivery of some schemes in the city centre. However, the benefits from those schemes were highlighted.

The Board also received an update on the recent footfall levels in the city centre. It was noted that people continued to steadily return to the city centre following the pandemic, with the statistics referenced in the meeting evidencing that city centre footfall continued to increase when compared to this time last year.

The teams involved in the delivery of key city centre schemes, such as City Square, over the past 12 months were thanked for their efforts, which it was acknowledged were often being undertaken in challenging circumstances.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the submitted Annual Progress Report of the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy - Action Plan 1 (2021 - 2024), including key successes and progress towards objectives, be noted;
- (b) That the funding challenges relating to meeting related ambitions and targets, as outlined in the submitted report, be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that further significant new measures may be required by the end of 2024 in order to meet our net zero targets, and that agreement be given for a further report to be brought to Executive Board to detail these as part of the development of Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy Action Plan 2.

RESOURCES

68 Eastgate and Harewood Quarter (Phase 2)

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the current position regarding the development of the Eastgate Phase 2 site and which presented the key next steps requiring the Council's approval which looked to ensure that this regeneration opportunity could proceed in a deliverable way.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an update on the current position regarding Phase 2 of the development and highlighted the changing property market conditions which the proposals within the report were looking to respond to.

The Board welcomed the report, with a Member suggesting that the potential for residential provision be explored as part of any future Phase 2 development.

The Chief Executive provided further context on the engagement which had taken place with key partners and the approach which had been taken over the past decade to successfully reconfigure the retail offer in the city. It was also highlighted that the proposals within the report provided an opportunity to complement what had been achieved with a mixed use development.

Following consideration of Appendix 1 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED – That approval be granted to:-

- (a) Progress the heads of terms, as outlined within the submitted report; and
- (b) Delegate to the Director of City Development (in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources) the ratification of the final details and any further amendments to the terms agreed and to the developer selected by Hammerson.

69 Financial Reporting 2023/24 - Quarter 2

The Chief Officer, Financial Services submitted a report which presented the Council's financial position as at the end of the first six months of the 2023/24 financial year. Specifically, the report reviewed the current position against the 2023/24 Budget and provided an update in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund, the Capital Programme and the Treasury Management Strategy. Additionally, the report sought approval of several injections into the Capital Programme.

In presenting the report the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points which included the current forecasting of an overspend of £30.5m for the General Fund as at month 6 of the financial year. In considering this, specific reference was made to the increased demand that continued to be experienced in services relating to Looked After Children, with it being emphasised that this was a national trend. Further detail was also provided on the other key aspects of the Financial Health Monitoring section of the report, the Capital Programme and the Treasury Management Strategy.

In considering the report, it was anticipated that further discussion would be had on such matters when the Board considered the initial budget proposals

in December 2023, and leading up to the budget setting discussion in February 2024.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That in respect of the Financial Health Monitoring 2023/24 – Month 6 (September 2023), as detailed at Appendix A to the submitted report:
- (i) As at Month 6 (September 2023) it be noted that the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is forecasting an overspend of £30.5m for 2023/24 (5.3% of the approved net revenue budget) within a challenging national context, with it also being noted that a range of actions are being undertaken to achieve a balanced budget position;
 - (ii) As at Month 6 (September 2023) it be noted that the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is forecasting an overspend of £1.9m for 2023/24 (0.7% of the approved gross expenditure budget);
 - (iii) It be noted that known inflationary increases, including demand and demographic pressures in Social Care and known impacts of the rising cost of living, including the NJC pay settlement of £1,925 and the JNC pay settlement of 3.5%, have been incorporated into this reported financial position. It also be noted that these pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available, and that proposals would need to be identified in order to absorb any additional pressures;
 - (iv) It be noted that where an overspend is projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account, are required to present action plans to mitigate their reported pressures and those of the Council's wider financial challenge where possible, in line with the Revenue Principles, as agreed by Executive Board in 2019;
 - (v) The Month 6 positions with regard to the use of Invest to Save, Covid Backlog and Flexible Capital Receipt resources, be noted, together with the additional planned use of £1m of Capital Receipts in 2023/24 to support transformation projects and deliver savings in addition to the budgeted use approved by the Board in September.
- (b) That in respect of the Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 – Quarter 2, as detailed at Appendix B to the submitted report:
- (i) The following injections into the Capital Programme, as detailed at Appendix B1 (iii) of the submitted report, be approved:
 - £15,325.8k of grant funding from West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) for Active Travel Tranche 3 and 4 Schemes;
 - £3,998.0k of DFE Post 16 Capacity Fund Grant for Pudsey Grammar School;
 - £1,474.8k of Disabled Facilities Grant re Additional Allocations for 23-24 and 24-25; and
 - £1,728.3k of other secured external funding contributions.

- (ii) That it be noted that the resolutions above to inject funding of £22,526.9k will be implemented by the Chief Officer Financial Services;
 - (iii) That the latest position on the General Fund and HRA Capital Programme, as at quarter 2 2023/24, be noted;
 - (iv) That the additional Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme (CRIS) allocations to Wards and Community Committees for the period April 2023 to September 2023 of £144.1k, be noted;
 - (v) That the spending priority for investment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Strategic Fund, as matched funding contributions for Strategic Highways and Transportation Schemes, be agreed.
- (c) That in respect of the Treasury Management Strategy Update 2023/24, as detailed at Appendix C to the submitted report:
- (i) The update on the Treasury Management borrowing and investment strategy 2023/24, be noted.

ECONOMY, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

70 Friendship Oath with the City of Kharkiv

The Director of City Development submitted a report which sought the Board's approval for a Friendship Oath to be signed between the city of Leeds and the city of Kharkiv in Ukraine to officially mark the development of a more formal link between the two cities and the start of negotiations with the aim of forming a Friendship Agreement.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided the Board with an overview of the context which had led to the proposals within the report, including a White Paper Motion resolution of Full Council from 20th July 2022. Also, it was noted that the proposed signing of the Friendship Oath was now scheduled to take place in Prague, rather than Brno, as had been referenced within the submitted report.

In considering this matter, Members highlighted the importance of the support being provided by Leeds to the Ukrainian community via a range of different initiatives, and that the signing of the Friendship Oath would mark the next step in developing further relations with Ukraine and Kharkiv.

Members welcomed and supported the proposals within the submitted report.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the signing of a Friendship Oath between the city of Leeds and Kharkiv in Ukraine be agreed;

- (b) That the proposal for the Lord Mayor of Leeds to sign the Friendship Oath in the presence of the Mayor of Kharkiv City Council on 2nd December 2023 in the city of Prague, be supported;
- (c) That the start of negotiations with the city of Kharkiv on the terms of a Friendship Agreement with a May 2024 deadline, be approved, with the detail of any Friendship Agreement being subject to securing external funds to support partnership activity;
- (d) That the resolutions of the Board arising from the submitted report be exempted from the Call In process pursuant to paragraph 5.1.3 of the Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules on the grounds of urgency, as set out in full at paragraphs 10, 23 and 24 of the submitted report.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (d) above, and for the reasons as set out within sections 10, 23 and 24 of the submitted report)

COMMUNITIES

71 Cost of Living - Update Report

Further to Minute No. 26, 26 July 2023, the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which provided an update on the cost-of-living situation in Leeds and which reflected upon national policy interventions and the actions being taken by the Council and partners in response to such matters.

The Executive Member introduced the report highlighting the key aspects within it and made specific reference to the work being undertaken in this area by the Council and its partners. The increased demand being faced across a range of related support services was highlighted, together with the impact arising from such increased demand. The proposed programme of work scheduled to provide a range of support over the coming winter months was also specifically noted.

Thanks was extended to those officers and partner organisations involved in the continued provision of services in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report be noted, and that the approach being adopted, be endorsed;
- (b) That it be noted that the Director, Communities, Housing and Environment will be responsible for overseeing and implementing any actions arising from the submitted report.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 24TH NOVEMBER 2023

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 1ST DECEMBER 2023