

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2024

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

79 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 Appendices 1 and 2 to the report entitled, 'Delivering the East of Otley Relief Road and Housing Allocation', referred to in Minute No. 87 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 the information contained within Appendices 1 and 2 is commercially sensitive, relating to the financial or business affairs of third parties. The details within the appendices relate to specific legal and commercial terms between Leeds City Council and third parties relating to the delivery of the scheme. These terms have not been finalised and remain in development. Disclosure of this information at this point could impact upon the Council's negotiating position, therefore, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the content of the appendices as exempt from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information; and
- (B) That Appendix 2 to the report entitled, 'Outcome of statutory notice on proposals to expand Broomfield South SILC by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild, and the establishment of a permanent satellite site for post-16 provision', referred to in Minute No. 90 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 the information contained within Appendix 2 (Summary of Heads of Terms for White Rose Park Lease) contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) including commercially sensitive information regarding pricing, rent review clauses and leasing arrangements. Disclosure of this information could seriously harm the Council's position when

negotiating leases in the future. Therefore, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the content of Appendix 2 as exempt from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

80 Late Items

Supplementary Information – Agenda Item 10 – ‘Active Leeds – Vision for Wellbeing Centres’

Whilst there were no formal late items of business to consider, it was noted that supplementary information had been circulated to Board Members and published for inclusion within agenda in the form of some additional text within paragraph 2.6.3 of the above report, which, due to a technical issue, had not pulled through to the formal agenda pack. This supplementary information was circulated to Board Members and published on the same date that the agenda was published (3rd December 2024). Minute No. 88 refers.

81 Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

82 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 20th November 2024 be approved as a correct record.

83 Statement from the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development

The Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development addressed the Board in order to provide an update on an ongoing West Yorkshire Police investigation. It was noted that a total of nine arrests had been made and that four of those arrested were Leeds City Council officers who have subsequently been bailed. It was noted that the media had reported that those officers were from within the Planning department. It was clarified that the Council officers have not been charged by the Police but have been suspended from their Council duties. Assurance was provided that relevant senior Council officers were co-operating with the Police on the investigation and providing information requested to support that investigation. It was highlighted that the Council continued to provide services in-line with robust governance procedures whilst the investigation continued, and that the Council was treating the investigation with the upmost seriousness.

Responding to the statement, a Member highlighted the importance of protecting the integrity of the ongoing Police investigation. Also, support was provided for the request from a Member that an appropriate investigation into such matters is undertaken at the right time by the Council and that Elected Members will have the opportunity to have oversight of that.

COMMUNITIES, CUSTOMER SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

84 Leeds City Council Customer Strategy

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which presented for the Board's endorsement the key points arising from the Council's new Customer Strategy. The report set out a proposed approach towards wider engagement on the Strategy including a referral to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board. Also, the report sought endorsement of a proposal to submit to a future Executive Board a detailed 'Invest to Save' Business Case regarding a transformation programme to deliver the changes set out in the strategy.

The Executive Member introduced the report and highlighted the progress which had been made to enhance the experience for customers when engaging with the Council, and how the proposals within the report looked to deliver the next stage of that process by understanding customer needs and designing services around them. The recommendation to refer the Customer Strategy to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board for oversight and monitoring was welcomed.

Responding to a Member's concern regarding the use of the term 'customer' in the strategy, assurance was provided that the appropriate term to describe Leeds residents would always be used, however, the term 'customer' had been used in this instance to reflect how the Council wanted residents to feel in terms of the high level of customer service they received when accessing the Council.

A Member highlighted that whilst embracing digital processes was the correct approach, the correct balance needed to be struck so that those who did not wish to engage digitally could still practically access services in-person or via the telephone. In response, it was highlighted that the strategy had been developed around what the customer wants, and that whilst people would be able to engage with the Council digitally, this would not remove opportunity to engage via face to face or telephone. It was also emphasised that as part of the proposed engagement within the report, the Council would look to seek the views of partners to ensure that services remain accessible for all.

RESOLVED – That the following be noted and endorsed:-

- (a) The key points of the Customer Strategy, as outlined within the submitted report and as set out in the Plan on a Page at Appendix 1;
- (b) The proposed approach towards wider engagement on the Customer Strategy, both internally within Leeds City Council and externally with the people of Leeds, as set out in Appendix 2 to the submitted report;
- (c) The Customer Strategy being referred to the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board for consideration, oversight and monitoring;

- (d) That a detailed 'Invest to Save' Business Case will be presented to Executive Board in Spring 2025 for approval, to deliver a 3.5-year programme of transformation to deliver the change set out in the Strategy;
- (e) That the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment will be responsible for overseeing and implementing any actions arising from the submitted report.

CLIMATE, ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACES

85 Leeds Household Waste Strategy - Update

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report which provided an update on the relevant national policy, strategy and legislation; together with a strategy for managing household waste in Leeds in line with national 'Simpler Recycling' requirements and which would help Leeds residents to reduce the amount of waste they produced that was not re-used or recycled. The report also sought approval for the proposed way forward for kerbside collection of household waste in Leeds through a "3-bin" approach, which looked to provide residents with the opportunity to recycle more at home without the need for more bins.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted the key points and recommendations within it, emphasising the proposal to approve the "3-bin" approach towards kerbside collection of household waste which would include the addition of food waste to the list of items allowed in the brown bin, a development which would enable that service to be extended to all year-round. The successful addition of glass bottles and jars to the list of items recycled in Leeds through the green bin was highlighted, with the increase in recycling rates of these materials from 42% to 69% since 1 August being emphasised. It was also noted that the report presented information regarding the refuse service's current performance and the actions being taken to address associated challenges.

In considering this report, and in response to a series of related enquiries raised, the Board received updates on:-

- the current position regarding the citywide roll out of brown bin provision;
- the potential timeline for the introduction of food waste to the brown bin, dependant on procurement outcomes and subject to affordability;
- the resourcing of an all-year round brown bin collection;
- the latest position regarding the provision of Government funding, with it being noted that whilst not all information was currently available with regard to such funding, the approach presented within the report was being proposed in order to progress the waste strategy whilst further detail from Government was awaited;
- the current position regarding the progression and implementation of the city-wide collection route review.

Responding to a Member's specific enquiry, the Board was provided with further information and clarification regarding the Performance Indicator (PI) on bin collection rates. It was noted that this PI was made up of the number of residents who contacted the Council to report their missed bins, and that it did not include the 'end of day' report which the Council produced parallel to this PI, in order to avoid the double counting. It was acknowledged that whilst not 100% accurate, this approach did provide a robust indicator of the service's performance.

Responding to the information provided, a Member raised their concerns regarding the accuracy of the PI results and requested that the reporting process be reviewed. Further context was then provided to Members on the scale and complexity of the refuse service across the city, the service's high level of performance, the main logistical reasons for missed bin collections and how Leeds' well established PI processes were consistent with the national approach and which had been used as the Council's PI for missed bin collections since 2001.

Responding to the concerns raised, the Executive Member offered to provide the Member in question with further information on the matters discussed, if required.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the updated national position in relation to implementing the national Resource and Waste Strategy, revised/new recycling collection requirements, as set out in the Environment Act (2021) and the associated Simpler Recycling policy, be noted;
- (b) That the progress made so far in Leeds in meeting the Simpler Recycling requirements; including the recent introduction of glass bottles and jars as items now accepted in the green, household recycling bins, be noted;
- (c) That the "3-bin" approach for Leeds, including adding food waste to the list of items allowed in the brown bin, together with the associated extension of brown bin collections to all year-round and to up to a further 70,000 households citywide, be approved;
- (d) That the decision on the implementation and contractual arrangement for adding food waste to the brown bin, be delegated to the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment, subject to affordability within existing budgets and procurement timelines;
- (e) That the current performance of the refuse service and the actions taken to address the challenges in delivering the second largest household collection service in the UK, as set out in Appendix C to the submitted report, be noted;

- (f) That it be noted that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment will be responsible for the implementation of such matters detailed in the resolutions above.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

86 Confirmation of Decision to Introduce District Parking Charges

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment and the Director of City Development submitted a joint report which, following the Call In process and having considered the key concerns raised as part of that process, recommended that Executive Board approved the confirmation of the original officer Key Delegated Decision (D57783) regarding District Car Park Charges which had been originally taken by the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation and the Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory on 12th November 2024.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member highlighted that the proposed charges were key to the Council's budgetary objectives and that they had been subject to extensive consultation which had resulted in amendments to the pricing proposals. Further detail was provided on the Call In process undertaken in response to the Key Delegated Decision originally taken, with it being noted that the concerns raised by the Scrutiny Board as part of that process had been considered, with responses to those provided in the submitted report. It was highlighted that the report recommended that the Board approved the confirmation of the original Key Delegated Decision, with an undertaking being given that the Executive Member and officers would work collaboratively with local Ward Councillors and local communities when implementing this decision.

Responding to a Member's specific enquiries, the Board received information regarding the approach that the Council was taking in respect of impact assessment processes. In terms of the economic impact upon local businesses, it was noted that, in line with the approach taken by other Local Authorities, an economic impact assessment had not been undertaken due to there being no standard methodology for such assessments, as sufficient reliable data was not available at such a local level. Regarding the wider financial impact upon the Council, it was noted that whilst an impact assessment had not been undertaken, which was consistent with the established approach on such matters, the effects of the decision would be monitored as part of our regular monitoring of car parking policies and charges, and that appropriate action would be taken in response, if required and as appropriate. Regarding the impact upon the surrounding streets in terms of displaced parking, the Board received confirmation around the detailed assessments that would be undertaken as part of the statutory consultation process, as outlined in the report.

A Member raised a number of concerns in respect of the proposals, highlighted the negative consultation responses received, noted the length of

time it would take to implement the Traffic Regulation Order process and emphasised the negative impact that they felt the decision would have upon local communities and businesses. As such, the Member requested that the Board reject the proposals and work with the local community, the local Town and Parish Councils and Ward Councillors in order to identify an alternative way forward. Further to this, the Member highlighted that based upon the information provided around consultation and impact assessment processes, they felt that the recommended decision would be considered unlawful and would potentially expose the Council to potential judicial review.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report and its appendices, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that further consideration has been given by the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment and by the Director of City Development to the recommendations raised by the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board as detailed in the 'Call In Outcome' report dated 21 November 2024, as presented at Appendix 2 to the submitted report;
- (c) That confirmation of the original Key Delegated Decision (D57783) be approved, as follows:-
 - (i) That the findings of the Delegated Decision report, included within Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted, and that support be given to the principle of the introduction of car park charges at the following car parks: Wilderness & Station Gardens in Wetherby; Fink Hill in Horsforth; Barleyhill Road in Garforth; Marsh Street in Rothwell & Netherfield Road in Guiseley;
 - (ii) That it be noted that subject to the Parking Places Order (PPO) being sealed and made, the Chief Officer, Elections and Regulatory is delegated to operate the off-street car parking and associated decriminalisation and issuing of parking contravention notices;
 - (iii) That the City Solicitor be instructed to advertise a draft Parking Places Order in respect of those off-street car parks detailed in Appendix 1 to the Delegated Decision report (included within Appendix 1 to the submitted report), and if no valid objections are received, to make and seal the Order as advertised. If valid objections are received, these will be reported to the Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation for further consideration, and;
 - (iv) That the timescales for implementation be noted, with it also being noted that before and after surveys will be undertaken in the streets around the above car parks, and that, should further restrictions be required, that these will be: subject to further recommendations; fully funded by Communities Housing and Environment; and, reported to the Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Lamb required it to be recorded that he voted against the decisions referred to within this minute)

(In line with Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 8.1.1 (*'The power to Call In decisions does not extend to decisions which have been the subject of a previous Call In'*), the resolutions above were not eligible for Call In)

HOUSING

87 Delivering the East of Otley Relief Road and Housing Allocation

Further to Minute No. 140, 12th February 2020, the Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the delivery of the East of Otley Relief Road and housing allocation project. The report set out an alternative funding approach in response to the challenges which have been faced over recent years to support the delivery of the relief road and the delivery of new housing working with Homes England, the Government's National Housing and Regeneration Agency.

The Executive Member introduced the report providing an overview of the challenges which had been faced in reaching the current position and how, through significant collaboration between the Council and key stakeholders, a position had been reached where there was now an opportunity to take advantage of alternative funding through the Brownfield Infrastructure and Land (BIL) fund. An overview of the benefits arising from this position were highlighted.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, it was confirmed that the proposals within the submitted report related to the proposed change in funding streams for the delivery of the project, and that any planning related representations would form part of any due planning processes which would be undertaken at the appropriate time.

Following consideration of Appendices 1 and 2 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which were considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the changes to the project's viability position since 2019, as contained within exempt Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted, and that approval be given for the Council to request a mutual withdrawal from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Grant Agreement;
- (b) That the positive progress being made with Homes England in relation to the potential for an increase in grant investment through the Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land (BIL) fund, be noted; and that agreement in principle be given to the Council entering into a Grant

Funding Agreement with Homes England, with the details of this being delegated to the Director of City Development;

- (c) That it be noted that the recovery mechanism for Council funds expended through the Capital Programme to date will be via the drawdown of BIL Grant, where eligible under the BIL programme and where directly related to Planning costs; and via the Council's land receipt where related to legal, land, and project co-ordination related expenditure;
- (d) That the injection of the Council land within the East of Otley (EOO) site into the Capital Receipts Programme, be approved, noting the receipt to net off associated Leeds City Council costs of development of the site aligned to the Homes England funding parameter;
- (e) That the progress made relating to the disposal of the Council's land within the East of Otley allocation, be noted, with the responsibility for the detailed terms of the land transaction being delegated to the Director of City Development.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, ACTIVE LIFESTYLES AND CULTURE

88 Active Leeds: Vision for Wellbeing Centres

The Director of City Development submitted a report presenting an update regarding the ongoing development and delivery of the Vision for Wellbeing Centres in Active Leeds, highlighting the actions taken over recent years. The report also presented proposals on next steps in terms of future 'invest to save' proposals in response to the current financial challenge, which were focused upon increased income generation as well as health and wellbeing outcomes to support Leeds' Marmot City ambition.

Further to Minute No. 80 (above), it was noted that supplementary information had been circulated to Board Members and published for inclusion within agenda in the form of some additional text within paragraph 2.6.3 of the submitted report, which, due to a technical issue, had not pulled through to the formal agenda pack. This supplementary information had been circulated to Board Members and published on the same date that the agenda was published (3rd December 2024).

In introducing the report, the Executive Member highlighted the range of improvements which had been delivered since the previous 'Vision' report was considered by the Board in 2016. The increased membership levels experienced in recent years was highlighted, and an overview of the 'invest to save' proposals being brought forward was provided. Also, the Executive Member extended her thanks to all of the Council officers within the service for the crucial role that they continued to play.

Regarding all of the proposals being put forward, a Member highlighted the importance of working collaboratively with local Ward Councillors and local communities when delivering such proposals.

A Member welcomed the development of the new Wetherby High School and the potential opportunity that this provided in terms of a possible site for a replacement leisure centre in Wetherby. In highlighting this, the Member offered his continued support in terms of helping to progress such matters.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the overview presented within the submitted report regarding the Active Leeds service, including the progress made and achievements delivered since the previous Vision for Leisure, be noted, with the need to look forward in the context of the Council's Best City Ambition and the current financial challenge also being noted;
- (b) That the positive impact that the facility improvements are delivering across the city in relation to health and wellbeing outcomes, increased memberships and swimming programme growth, be noted, with the importance of continued 'invest to save' proposals brought forward to support health and wellbeing outcomes, driving Leeds' ambition as a Marmot City and to continue to increase income generation, also being noted;
- (c) That the invest to save proposals for Leisure and Wellbeing Centres across the city to deliver: a network of high quality, affordable, accessible and sustainable leisure and wellbeing centres and a modern, commercially competitive leisure offer that supports income generation and the Council's financial challenge, be noted and supported;
- (d) That approval in principle be given to the proposals for a long-term lease of Middleton Leisure Centre (excluding the gym) to Laurence Calvert Academy, with it being noted that detailed Terms will be delegated to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources and the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture;
- (e) That the ongoing work regarding Wetherby Leisure Centre, be noted, together with the potential considerations around its potential relocation at a future point in time; and
- (f) That it be noted that all of the proposals have been designed in line with the Financial Challenge position and the ask to reduce the Active Leeds net managed budget by £2.5m over a 3 year period.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- 89 Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Processes - Update Report**
Further to Minute No. 6, 19 June 2024, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report providing an update on the activity to date in respect of the Council's approach towards improving its processes and arrangements regarding the assessment of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in

response to the national and local challenges being faced. The report detailed the progress made in relation to the 'delivery phase' of moving to new EHCP arrangements and provided reassurance regarding the tangible improvements being delivered.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member highlighted how the improvement of processes regarding the assessment of EHCPs remained a key priority for the Council. The Board received an overview of the progress made to date, the challenges that continued to be faced, together with the proposed next steps in delivering improvements. It was also noted that such work would continue to be informed by the experiences of children, parents and carers as well as schools and other specialist settings. Thanks was extended to all of those officers involved in delivering the work and improvements outlined in the report.

Whilst acknowledging the scale of the challenge being faced, a Member sought further information on the significant levels of demand which continued to be experienced, and also in terms of their concerns around the associated communications processes and management and oversight of cases.

In response, the scale of the task was reiterated and how such challenges had been acknowledged on a national level. Information was provided on the work being undertaken in specific areas, such as communication, whilst examples were given illustrating the progress that continued to be incrementally made on the assessment procedures. Also, it was acknowledged that there was a need for additional resource, as referenced in the report, and that there was an absolute commitment and a clear plan in place to deliver the further progress required.

Responding to an enquiry around Funding for Inclusion (FFI) and the timeframes associated with the transitional funding arrangements, the Board received an update on the current position as detailed within the report, with it being noted that the transitional arrangements were being undertaken to ensure that the Council's processes were aligned to relevant statutory requirements. It was also highlighted that there was an ongoing commitment for early intervention for children with emerging needs and that dialogue with schools continued in order to ensure that schools were able to appropriately support such children.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the activity undertaken on the 'delivery phase' of the EHCP process review, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the improvements made to the EHCP process to date and those that are underway, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (c) That the need for further improvements to be made, which put children and families at the heart of all activity, be endorsed;

- (d) That the need for additional one-off spend to address increasing levels of assessments outside of statutory timescales, be noted, with it also being noted that for 2024/25, the intention is to make savings elsewhere in the directorate, and for 2025/26 this funding can be drawn from additional social care grants on the assumption they are received;
- (e) That it be noted that resourcing and capacity constraints, coupled with increased levels of demand, will be considered as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

90 Outcome of statutory notice on proposals to expand Broomfield South SILC by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild, and the establishment of a permanent satellite site for post-16 provision

Further to Minute No. 44, 18 September 2024, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the outcomes from the published statutory notice regarding a proposal to expand Broomfield South Special Inclusion Learning Centre (SILC) by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild and the establishment of a permanent satellite site for post-16 provision. The report sought a final decision in respect of this proposal.

The Executive Member introduced the report and highlighted that in line with agreed process, she had considered the 2 objections received during the Statutory Notice period in liaison with the Chair of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board. In line with that discussion, the Chair's recommendation to the Scrutiny Board was that the 2 objections received were planning and highways related matters and therefore did not require additional scrutiny as these would be addressed through the planning process. The Children and Families Scrutiny Board unanimously agreed with the that recommendation.

Following consideration of Appendix 2 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 outcome of the statutory notice period, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the recommendation to expand Broomfield South Special Inclusion Learning Centre (SILC) by 100 places, as part of a school rebuild, and the establishment of a permanent satellite site for post-16 provision, be approved;
- (c) That the resolutions from the submitted report be exempted from the Call In process for the reasons as set out in paragraphs 41-43 of the submitted report;
- (d) That it be noted that the implementation of the rebuild and expansion of Broomfield South SILC will be subject to the outcome of further

detailed design work and planning applications, as indicated in paragraphs 28 and 29 of the submitted report;

- (e) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Deputy Director for Learning.

(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 (c) above, and for the reasons as set out within sections 41 - 43 of the submitted report)

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

91 Proposed Budget for 2025/26 and Provisional Budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 and Revenue Savings Proposals for 2025/26 To 2027/28
(A) Proposed Budget for 2025/26 and Provisional Budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28

The Interim Assistant Chief Executive – Finance, Traded and Resources submitted a report presenting the initial proposals for the Council's 2025/26 budget, which subject to Executive Board's approval, was scheduled to be submitted to the respective Scrutiny Boards for their consideration and review, with the outcome of their deliberations being reported to Executive Board in February 2025, with the proposals also being made available for public and stakeholder consultation as part of a wider engagement process. In addition, the report invited the Board to note the Council's provisional budget position for 2026/27 and 2027/28, and also sought the Board's approval for Leeds to become a member of the 2025/26 Leeds City Region Business Rates Pool, should the application to form a pool be successful.

It was noted that the submission of the initial budget proposals to Executive Board was for the purpose of agreeing that the proposals are released for the required consultation processes.

In considering the national challenges that continued to be faced in relation to Adult Social Care, a Member made an enquiry regarding the impact upon social care providers and the Council when considering the increase in employers' National Insurance Contributions (NICs) and the increase in National Living Wage and whether these issues had been captured in the initial budget proposals. In response, the Board was provided with an update on the latest position in relation to such matters. It was further noted that discussions continued both locally and nationally regarding the potential impact upon Local Authorities arising from the increase in employers' NICs for those services which were commissioned and delivered by a third party. It was highlighted that whilst this was not included within the initial budget proposals, such matters would be monitored, and any outcomes would be reflected in the final budget proposals in February.

On the challenges being faced nationally around the Adult Social Care market, it was noted that work continued with relevant care organisations to understand and mitigate against potential risks in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That it be noted that the Proposed Budget for 2025/26, as presented in the submitted report, is based upon the approval and delivery of £106.4m of directorate savings for 2025/26, £23.8m of which have already been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy and £82.6m of which have been brought to this Board through the accompanying reports, 'Revenue Savings Proposals for 2025/26 to 2027/28' at its October 2024 meeting and as part of today's agenda;
- (b) That agreement be given to consultation being undertaken on the Proposed Budget for 2025/26, which includes the proposed 2.99% increase in core Council Tax and the 1.99% increase in the Adult Social Care precept. Further to this, agreement be given that these budget proposals are submitted to Scrutiny Boards and made available for wider consultation with stakeholders;
- (c) That the provisional budget position for 2026/27 and 2027/28, be noted, and that it also be noted that further savings proposals to address the updated estimated budget gaps of £35.2m and £29.6m for 2026/27 and 2027/28 respectively will be reported to future meetings of this Board;
- (d) That should the application to form a 2025/26 Leeds City Region Business Rates Pool be successful, approval be given for Leeds City Council to become a member of the proposed Pool and to act as lead Authority for it; with it being noted that the establishment of this new Pool will be dependent upon none of the other proposed member Authorities choosing to withdraw within the statutory period after designation.

(B) Revenue Savings Proposals for 2025/26 to 2027/28

Further to Minute No. 64, 16 October 2024, the Interim Assistant Chief Executive – Finance, Traded and Resources submitted a report presenting revenue savings proposals following ongoing review processes which continued to be undertaken across Council services. The proposals were presented as either 'Business as Usual' savings for the Board's information, with decisions to give effect to those being taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer, or as 'Service Review' proposals, in which the report sought approval for consultation to commence, where required, with decisions to give effect to those proposals being taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer following such consultation and in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions).

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the 'Business as Usual' savings, as presented in the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that decisions to give effect to them shall be taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions);
- (b) That agreement be given for consultation to commence, where required, on the 'Service Review' savings proposals put forward, with it being noted that decisions to give effect to them shall be taken by the relevant Director or Chief Officer, following any consultation period, in accordance with the Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive functions) and decision-making framework, save where the Leader or the relevant Portfolio Holder has directed, or the Director considers that the matter should be referred to Executive Board for consideration;
- (c) That with regard to the Service Review proposal to lease out Middleton Leisure Centre to a third party, the necessary authority be delegated to the Director of City Development, to enable the Director to enter into Heads of Terms once draft terms and conditions have been reviewed and approved by the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture;
- (d) That it be noted that the 2025/26 savings proposals presented in the submitted report, combined with the savings proposals brought to the Executive Board at its October 2024 meeting, support a draft balanced budget for 2025/26 and the Council's financial position for the following two years, as set out in the accompanying report elsewhere on the submitted agenda entitled, '*Proposed Budget for 2025/26 and Provisional Budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28*';
- (e) That it be noted that further savings will be required to close the Council's estimated budget gaps in the years 2026/27 and 2027/28, with it also being noted that proposals will be brought to future meetings of this Board.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

(The resolutions referred to within Minute No. 91(A) (a), (b) and (c), given that these were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In, as Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 8.1.1 states that the power to Call In decisions does not extend to those decisions made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. However, the resolutions referred to in Minute No. 91(A) (d) and also 91(B) (a) – (e) were eligible for Call In, given that these were decisions not being taken as part of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules)

RESOURCES

92 Financial Health Monitoring 2024/25 - Month 7 (October)

The Interim Assistant Chief Executive – Finance, Traded and Resources submitted a report providing an update on the Council’s financial performance against the 2024/25 revenue budget, as at month 7 of the financial year. The report also presented the October 2024 (Month 7) position in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the Schools Budget (DSG) and the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund.

In presenting the report the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points in which it was noted that as at month 7 of the financial year, the Council was forecasting a General Fund overspend of £20.7m and highlighted that the DSG was forecasting an overspend of £15.1m. The Executive Member also emphasised the range of mitigating measures being taken to address such pressures.

Regarding the demand led and financial pressures being faced within Adult Social Care, a Member enquired about the extent to which a collaborative approach was being taken between the Council and NHS partners with a view to benefitting both parties when considering the challenges being faced. In response, an update was provided highlighting the range of partnership work that was ongoing in this area.

Responding to a Member’s concern regarding the current and future Children and Families budget, it was highlighted that whilst all was being done to deliver within budget, the service was operating within a highly challenging national context, with specific reference being made to the costs arising from children’s external residential placements. The pressures being faced as a result of the demand experienced and demography of the city was highlighted, with it being emphasised that the protection and safety of children and families remained the priority.

Further to this, the Board received an update on the actions being taken and the progress which was being made in Leeds, including the reduction in the number of Looked After Children and also the provision of new children’s homes.

From a wider perspective, further context was provided on the cross-directorate and cross-Executive portfolio discussions and actions that were taking place in response to the budgetary pressures being faced.

In conclusion, the Executive Member extended her thanks to the officers in Children and Families directorate for the progress being made, as described during the discussion.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That it be noted that at October 2024 (Month 7 of the financial year) the Authority’s General Fund revenue budget is reporting an overspend of £20.7m for 2024/25 (3.3%) of the approved net revenue budget after

the application of reserves set up for this purpose; with it being noted that the overspend should be considered within the challenging national context, and that a range of actions are being undertaken to address this position;

- (b) That it be noted that at October 2024 (Month 7 of the financial year) the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is reporting a balanced position;
- (c) That it be noted that at October 2024 (Month 7 of the financial year), the DSG budget is projecting an in-year pressure of £15.1m which equates to 2.73% of the total estimated DSG funding;
- (d) That it be noted that known inflationary increases, including demand and demographic pressures in Social Care and known impacts of the rising cost of living have been incorporated into this reported financial position. That it also be noted that the 2024/25 pay offer has now been agreed for both JNC and NJC staff, and the JNC element was included in September's payroll and is reflected in directorate dashboards. The Council expects to pay the NJC element in December's payroll and these additional costs and associated mitigations will be shown in dashboards once payment is processed. That it be further noted that inflationary pressures will continue to be reviewed during the year and reported to future Executive Board meetings as more information becomes available, and that a number of actions are being taken to reduce the budgetary pressures being forecast including a review of Agency and Overtime;
- (e) That it be noted that where an overspend is projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account and the Dedicated Schools Grant, 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 agreed by Executive Board in February 2024 through the annual Revenue Budget report.

ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 93 Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy 2023 – 2030: One Year On**
Further to Minute No. 42, 20 September 2023, the Director of City Development submitted a report which provided an update on the progress that the city had made in delivering inclusive growth since the publication of the city's second Inclusive Growth Strategy in 2023. The report noted that the strategy aimed to ensure that the future of the city was more inclusive, healthier and greener and that everyone living in the Leeds could have the opportunity to flourish.

By way of introduction to the report the Executive Member highlighted the key points, noting the ambitions of the strategy and its three themes of 'People', 'Place' and 'Productivity'. It was also noted that the report responded to a White Paper Motion approved by Full Council at its meeting on 13th November 2024 regarding the Government's new Employment Rights Bill.

Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding productivity levels, the Board was provided with an update on the current position in Leeds, with it being noted that the improvement of productivity remained an ongoing priority, and whilst there was still work to do, the Council's Employment and Skills service had recently been judged as 'Outstanding' and would be key to progressing this agenda.

In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the provision of Government funding for British Library North, it was clarified that whilst the Government was currently undertaking a review into such matters no final decision had been taken, with it also being noted that the Council would be making its submission this week in response to the Government's associated 'call for evidence'. It was also separately confirmed that the funding secured for the British Library North through the West Yorkshire Devolution deal remained in place.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress made on delivering the second iteration of the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy, be noted, together with the publication of the submitted annual progress report, which was previously agreed as an action by the Board in September 2023;
- (b) That the contents of the submitted report, which showcases a year of progress in delivering Inclusive Growth in Leeds, be agreed;
- (c) That agreement be given for the Director of City Development to continue to lead on implementing the delivery of the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy working under the Best City Ambition.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 13TH DECEMBER 2024

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 20TH DECEMBER 2024