# JOINT MEETING OF EXECUTIVE CABINET WITH OVERVIEW PANEL

**10 February 2021**

**Commenced: 1.45pm** **Terminated: 2.55pm**

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| **Present:** | **Councillors Warrington (Chair), Bray, Cooney, Fairfoull, Feeley, Gwynne, Kitchen Ryan and Wills** | |
| | **Overview Panel Members: Ricci, Cartey, Cooper, Glover and Welsh** | |
| **In Attendance:** | **Dr Ashwin Ramachandra** | **Co-Chair, Tameside & Glossop CCG** |
| | **Dr Asad Ali** | **Co-Chair, Tameside & Glossop CCG** |
| | **Steven Pleasant** | **Chief Executive & Accountable Officer (part** |
| | **Sandra Stewart** | **meeting)** |
| | **Kathy Roe** | **Director of Governance & Pensions** |
| | **Ian Saxon** | **Director of Finance** |
| | **Steph Butterworth** | **Director of Operations & Neighbourhoods** |
| | **Richard Hancock** | **Director of Adults Services** |
| | **Jayne Traverse** | **Director of Children's Services** |
| | **Tom Wilkinson** | **Director of Growth** |
| | **Ilys Cookson** | **Assistant Director of Finance** |
| | **Debbie Watson** | **Assistant Director, Exchequer Services** |
| | **Sarah Threlfall** | **Assistant Director of Population Health** |
| | | **Assistant Director, Policy, Performance and Communication** |
| | **Tim Rainey** | **Assistant Director, Digital Tameside** |
| | **Paul Smith** | **Assistant Director, Strategic Property** |
| | **Simon Brunet** | **Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence** |
| | **David Berry** | **Head of Employment and Skills** |

## 138. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

## 139. MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE CABINET

**RESOLVED**
**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 27 January 2021 be approved as a correct record.**

## 140. MINUTES OF STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING BOARD

**RESOLVED**
**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Commissioning Board held on 27 January 2021 be noted.**

## 141. MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

**RESOLVED**
**That the Minutes of the meetings of Executive Board held on 20 January 2021 be noted.**

## 142. SCRUTINY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Governance and Pensions summarising the work of the Council's two scrutiny Panels: Place and External Relations and Integrated Care and Wellbeing. A chronological breakdown of activity and oversight of both Scrutiny Panels during 2020/2021 was given.

With regard to the Budget Consultation, Members were informed that all Scrutiny Panel Members were provided with an opportunity to attend one of two budget briefing sessions held in January 2021. This followed on from a mid-year budget position update received at Panel meetings held in September 2020. A number of points were discussed in respect of demand on statutory services and pressures associated with Covid-19 and recovery. Details of the discussion was drafted in a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth; and the Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer, a copy of which was appended to the report.

In respect of follow-up on past reviews, it was reported that both Scrutiny Panels had recently conducted follow-up activity in order to monitor and seek assurances against past recommendations. This work was a vital part of the review process and it was customary for follow-up activity to take place approximately 12 months following the initial review. The Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel had recently revisited the Recruitment and Retention review. This had taken the form of a comprehensive response paper of the Executive, discussed at a designated working group:

It was explained that on 18 November 2019, the Overview Panel received a report detailing the planned approach of Scrutiny Panels to review decisions and focus reports published by the Ombudsman. The aim was to ensure learning opportunities were shared with services in a timely manner and for a formal response and/or position statement to be returned to the appropriate Scrutiny Panel within agreed timescales. It remained important to ensure that the subject matter was appropriate, proportionate and could add value. Work in this area had progressed well, with the plan to ensure responses were reported to Overview Panel at the earliest opportunity. Activity informed by recent LGSCO focus reports was detailed in the report.

In respect of consultation and engagement, it was reported that the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel had recently submitted a formal response to the Inclusive Growth Strategy consultation, a copy of which was appended to the report. The Panel would also submit a formal response to the Community Safety Strategy consultation prior to the deadline of 25 February 2021.

**RESOLVED**
**That the content of the report and the summary of scrutiny activity, be noted.**

## 143. REVIEW AND MONITORING OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2018 TO 2021

The Director of Governance and Pensions submitted a report, providing a summary of activity undertaken by the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel, specific to the oversight and monitoring of Children's Services for the period 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 municipal years.

A chronological breakdown of activity and oversight of Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel during the three municipal years, both directly and in directly, was detailed in the report.

Members were informed that the integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel had completed the following in-depth review on a topic specific to Children's Services:

- Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers
  - Reported to the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 12 February 2020
  - Follow up activity undertaken by the Children's Working Group on 12 November 2020

It was noted that, the remit of the Scrutiny Panel also included Adult Services, Health and Population Health, to which review activity had taken place during the period in question.

It was explained that, in direct response to outcomes from the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in September 2016, the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel established a fixed working group. A primary focus of the group was to consider 'voice of the child' aspects detailed within Ofsted findings. A summary of activity and reporting undertaken by the Children's Working Group for the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 was provided in the report.

With regard to Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), information in respect of assurance reviews undertaken regarding the following LGSCO reports specific to Children's services and Education, was given

- Focus report - Not going to plan? Education, Health and Care Plans two years on, (published in October 2019) - Reported to the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 12 February 2020
- Focus report – Careless: Helping to improve council services to children in care - Reported to the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 10 February 2021.

Scrutiny Budget sessions had enabled members to seek further assurances on the Strategic Commission's approach to setting a balanced budget and to mitigate risk or exposure to any external or unforeseen financial pressures. Scrutiny activity of Children's Services had highlighted demand pressures and long-term financial sustainability.

**RESOLVED**
**That the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity, be noted.**

## 144. ASSURANCE REVIEW OF LGSCO FOCUS REPORT - CHILDREN IN CARE

A report was submitted by the Director of Governance and Pensions providing, for information, a service response on shared learning detailed within the LGSCO focus report on children in care. A copy of the service response was appended to the report.

It was explained that, the LGSCO focus report was welcomed by Children's Services and highlighted many key and important areas that a local authority responsible for statutory children's services should be mindful of.

A number of common issues within the case studies informed specific questions for Scrutiny and the following main themes were covered and commented on:

- Coming into care;
- Care Planning;
- Ensuring stability;
- Contact;
- Accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds; and
- Leaving Care.

**RESOLVED**
**That the content of the report be noted, including the ongoing activity of the Scrutiny Panels to review LGSCO decisions to inform and improve local service delivery.**

## 145. CONSOLIDATED 2020/21 REVENUE MONITORING STATEMENT AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member (Finance and Economic Growth) / CCG Chair / Director of Finance, which updated Members on the financial position up to 31 December 2020 and forecasts to 31 March 2021.

The Director of Finance reported that at Month 9, the Council was forecasting a year end overspend of £3.8 million, which was a slight deterioration on the position reported at month 8.

It was explained that significant pressures remained across Directorates, most significantly in Children's Social Care where expenditure was forecast to exceed budget by £4.134m, with further cost pressures in Adults and Education, and income loss pressures in the Growth Directorate. These were due to underlying financial pressures that the Council would have faced regardless of the COVID pandemic.

On the assumption that the anticipated COVID top up was received in full, a surplus of £512k was projected at year end on CCG budgets.

**RESOLVED:**
**That the forecast outturn position and associated risks for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.**

## 143. BUDGET CONVERSATION 2021/22 – FINDINGS REPORT

The Executive Leader / Executive Member (Finance and Economic Growth) / CCG Co-Chairs / Director of Governance and Pensions / Assistant Director, Policy, Performance and Communications submitted a report which set out responses to a public engagement exercise undertaken between 2 November 2020 and 6 January 2021 to understand the priorities for spending within the context of the financial challenges facing public services.

The conversation was used to educate and inform the public on the Strategic Commission's budget and its financial challenges whilst also allowing feedback and ideas on how services could be improved and savings made. The conversation focussed primarily on two questions:

- What do you think should be the spending priorities for the Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission in 2021/22 and future years?
- Do you have ideas or suggestions for how we might deliver services more efficiently, save money or raise revenue?

To support the engagement activity, a full programme of communications was undertaken. The public were provided with an opportunity to leave comments and feedback through the Big Conversation – available on both the Council and CCG websites. Dedicated webpages to the Budget Conversation were created explaining all aspects of the conversation with links to the feedback form. A dedicated email account was also provided to enable public / service users / businesses to submit any comments.

Due to changing national and local Covid-19 social distancing restrictions, engagement took place through virtual engagement. Methods of virtual engagement were Skype or Zoom video meetings, an online survey and social media. This was supported by an extensive communications campaign including digital methods such as websites, social media and email and non-digital methods such as newspapers and partner organisation networks.

An analysis of the feedback received was detailed in the report.

**RESOLVED**
**That the content of the report be noted and the findings from the conversation be taken into consideration when setting the budget for 2021/22 and future years**

## 144. 2020/21 BUDGET

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Leader / Director of Finance setting out the detailed revenue budget proposals for 2020/2021 and the Medium Term Financial Plan for the 5 year period 2021/22 to 2025/26, including the proposed council tax increase for 2021/22.

It was explained that the Council set a balanced budget for 2020/21, but the budget process was challenging, with budget pressures of more than £23m having to be funded. Whilst the Council dealt with these challenges it did not propose any meaningful transformational efficiencies from departments and as a result relied on a number of corporate financing initiatives to balance the budget including budgeting for the full estimated dividend from Manchester Airport Group, an increase in the vacancy factor and targets around increasing fees and charges income.

The budget also relied on drawing down £12.4m of reserves to target investment into priority areas and allow services the time to turn around areas of pressures. The pressures were broadly, Children's Services placement costs, Children's Services prevention work (which was to be later mainstreamed and funded from reduced placement costs), shortfalls on car parking and markets income. Each of these services required on-going development work to have the impact of allowing demand to be taken out of the system and additional income generated. The additional investment was targeted at the IT and Growth Directorate Services, to invest in IT equipment, software and capacity and to develop strategically important sites for housing and business development, including key Town Centre masterplans.

Although the CCG was on track to meet the 2020/21 amended, post COVID QIPP target of £7.994m, the majority (£6.767m i.e. 85% of target) was expected to be met as a result of non-recurrent means, adding considerable additional pressure to the 2021/22 financial year.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant adverse impact on Council Finances, both in 2020/21 and on future financial forecasts, due to a combination of additional costs and lost income. Significant additional funding had been provided in 2020/21 and for 2021/22 however this did not cover all income losses, particularly those income reductions forecast in future years due to the ongoing economic impact of the pandemic.

Balancing the 2021/22 budget had only been possible through the use of a significant amount of additional one-off funding which was not expected to be available in 2022/23, and as a result the Council still faced a significant budget gap in future years. The delivery of a significant programme of savings in 2021/22 would be challenging, and would require a sustained focus on delivery of plans. The scale of savings, combined with significant financial pressures which may emerge from further demographic changes in Children's Social Care and Adults services, meant that delivery of the 2021/22 budget presented a significant financial challenge. The proposals did not, however, drawdown further on Council reserves, which represented a reduction in the reliance on reserves to balance the budget as in previous years. This helped to protect the Council's overall reserves position during 2021/22.

It was reported that 2019/20 was the fourth and final year of a four year funding settlement for the Council, which provided the Council with some certainty over funding levels despite resulting in year on year funding reductions. A review of the Local Government funding methodology commenced in 2019 but did not conclude, and following a one year budget and a one year Local Government Finance Settlement for 2020/21, a full spending review was expected later in 2020.

COVID-19 had inevitably had a significant impact on Government spending, planning and budget plans, resulting in a further one year provisional settlement for 2021/22. The resourcing figures included in the budget were based on the provisional finance settlement which will be confirmed in February 2021. Traditionally there was little movement between the provisional and final settlements, and any differences would be adjusted through the contingency budget or reserves.

The proposals set out in the report assumed that the Council would approve a 2% general increase in Council Tax and a 3% Adult Social Care precept. However, despite this increase in the amount charged to residents, the Council's total income from Council Tax in 2021/22 was forecast to be over £4 million **less** than the income from Council Tax in 2020/21 (before any increase in Council Tax rates charged).

Government had signalled a desire for a full spending review in 2021 and a multi-year settlement from 2022/23, however no commitments had been made. Whilst the provisional settlement for 2021/22 enabled the Council to plan for the next 12 months, the absence of a multi-year medium term settlement meant that planning for future years was very difficult.

Beyond 2021/22, assumptions had been made based on intelligence gathered and commentary from sector experts. The funding for local government was expected to remain broadly flat, with the continued reduction in central government support being compensated by increasing local taxes, specifically business rates and council tax. It was currently assumed that grant funding made available in 2020/21 would as a minimum, continue at current levels into future years, but that the additional funding announced in the provision 2021/22 settlement would not be available beyond this year.

After taking account of budget pressures, additional income and savings identified for delivery in 2021/22, the total net budget requirement for the Council in 2021/22 was £194.494m. Before any increase in Council tax levels, the resource available in 2021/22 was £189.778m, leaving a gap of £4.716m. The gap of £4.716m could be closed through an increase in Council Tax of 4.99%. This was made up of a 3% increase for the Adult Social Care Precept and a 1.99% general increase in Council Tax (which had previously been assumed in the MTFP). For a typical band A property in Tameside a 4.99% increase in Council Tax would equate to an increase of £50.83 per year, or 98 pence per week.

A three year capital programme had been approved in October 2017 and since then a number of changes had been approved by Executive Cabinet to add additional schemes to the programme. Future investment plans were subject to available resources and the realisation of available capital receipts, however the current plans would see investment in excess of £200million over the four year period 2017 to 2021.

The Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22, Appendix 19 to the report, set out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance within the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The Pay Policy Statement had also been revised to take into account the Council's approach to approval by Full Council for severance payments in excess of £95K in line with guidance received from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This pay policy applied for the year 2021/22 unless replaced or varied by Full Council.

In relation to the Treasury Management Strategy Members were informed that as at 31 December 2020 the Council had £100m of investments which need to be safeguarded, £141m of long term debt, which has been accrued over the years to help to fund the Council's capital investment programmes, and £10m of short term borrowing. The Council was also the lead authority responsible for the administration of the debt of the former Greater Manchester County Council on behalf of all ten Greater Manchester Metropolitan Authorities. As at 31 March 2020, this represented a further £40m of debt. The significant size of these amounts required careful management to ensure that the Council met its balanced budget requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Generating good value for money is therefore essential, in terms of both minimising the cost of borrowing and maximising the return on investments. The Treasury Management Strategy also set out the estimated borrowing requirement for both Tameside MBC and the Greater Manchester Metropolitan Debt Administration Fund (GMMDAF), together with the strategy to be employed in managing the debt position.

**RESOLVED**
**That the following recommendations, as outlined in the submitted report be RECOMMENDED to Council for approval, subject to any final minor changes to the final figures:**

- **(i) That the significant financial challenges and risks set out in this report, be noted;**
- **(ii) That the budgeted net expenditure for the financial year 2021/22 of £194.494m as set out in section 3 and Appendix 1, be approved, noting the significant pressures outlined in Appendix 2;**
- **(iii) That the proposed savings to be delivered by management outlined in section 3 and Appendix 3, noting the additional detail provided in Appendices 7 to 16, be approved;**
- **(iv) That an uplift to fees and charges as set out in Appendix 22, be approved;**
- **(v) That the proposed resourcing of the budget as set out in Appendix 4, be approved;**
- **(vi) That a 4.99% increase to Council Tax for Tameside MBC for 2021/22, consisting of a 1.99% general increase and 3% Adult Social Care precept, be approved;**
- **(vii) It be noted that the budget projections set out in section 6 assume a 1.99% per annum increase in general Council Tax through to 2025/26. The budget projections also assume that there is no further reduction to current levels of Government funding;**
- **(viii) That the Director of Finance's assessment of the robustness of the budget estimates and adequacy of reserves as set out in Appendix 5, be accepted. Following this determine that the estimates are robust for the purpose of setting the budget and that the proposed minimum General Fund Balance is adequate;**
- **(ix) That the proposed minimum General Fund Balance of £27.4m set out in Appendix 6, be approved;**
- **(x) That the Reserves Strategy and note the projected reserves position as set out in Appendix 6, be approved;**
- **(xi) That the position on the Capital Programme (Section 8 and Appendix 18) previously approved by Executive Cabinet, and the forecast future investment requirements, be noted;**
- **(xii) That the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22 as set out in section 9 and Appendix 19, be approved;**
- **(xiii) That the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22, which includes the proposed borrowing strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (Appendix 20), be approved;**
- **(xiv) That the Capital Strategy 2021/22 (Appendix 21), be approved; and**
- **(xv) That delegated authority be given to the Directors (in consultation with the Section 151 officer) to agree any uplifts required to other contractual rates from 1 April 2021 which Directorates will manage within their approved budgets for 2021/22.**

## 145. CLOSED BUSINESS LOCKDOWN PAYMENT

A report was submitted by the Executive Member (Finance and Economic Growth) / Assistant Director (Exchequer Services), which gave details of the latest mandatory grant for businesses that were closed as a result of national lockdown from 5 January 2021 onwards.

The grant was known as the Closed Business Lockdown Payment (CBLP) was announced by the government on 5 January 2021 as further support for businesses that were legally required to close due to national lockdown restrictions. Unlike previous grants which were payable to eligible businesses depending on whether they were trading and open or closed, the COVID restriction in place at that time, the sector the business operated in and the rateable value of the business premises, this grant was a one-off lump sum payment.

Eligibility for the CBLP was the same as the LRSG (Closed) Addendum: 5 January onwards scheme. Businesses that were eligible were those that had been mandated to close by government and included:

- non-essential retail

- leisure
- personal care
- sports facilities
- hospitality businesses

Exclusions applied to businesses that were able to continue to conduct their main services because they did not depend on providing direct in person services from a premise, and could operate their services remotely.

The grant was fully funded by government under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 and New Burdens Funding was to be paid which had yet to be determined.

The scheme would close for applications on 31 March 2021 and the scheme would end on 30 April 2021. Subject to eligibility, payments of £4,000 may be paid where the business rateable value was exactly £15,000 or under, and £6,000 may be paid where the business rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000. A business rateable value of exactly £51,000 or above would receive £9,000.

£3,892,000 CBLP grants had been paid to 879 businesses, which mitigated risk of business hardship to eligible businesses by not making timely payments. Grant assurance work and working closely with audit mitigated the risk of incorrect or potentially fraudulent payments.

**RESOLVED**
**That the content of the report be noted.**

## 146. GREATER MANCHESTER CLEAN AIR PLAN: CONSULTATION

The Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment) / Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods submitted a report setting out the progress that had been made on the development of Greater Manchester's Clean Air Plan following a public consultation on proposals that were developed pre-COVID-19 and the link to taxi and private hire common minimum licensing standards.

It was explained that, in Greater Manchester, the 10 local authorities, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), collectively referred to as "Greater Manchester" or "GM", had worked together to develop a Clean Air Plan to tackle $NO_2$ Exceedances at the Roadside, referred to as GM CAP. The report set the progress of the GM CAP and the next steps for the development of the Clean Air Plan and the closely linked Minimum Licensing Standards (MLS) for taxi and private hire services. Key developments since the last GMCA report included:

- Since the last report there had been no confirmation or offer of government funding for LGVs or hackneys, or the taxi and private hire electric vehicle charge points.
- Government ministers had agreed to consider extending Greater Manchester's Clean Air Zone (CAZ) charges to the sections of the A628/A57 in Tameside which formed part of the Strategic Road Network, within the proposed CAZ boundary. The extension of any charges to the A628/A57 would be subject to a full assessment of the potential impacts, to be led by Highways England. Following the assessment ministers would take the final decision on whether or not charging should be implemented on the A628/A57.
- GM was awarded £14.7m of funding for the retrofitting of buses, and this work commenced in December 2020. GM's bus retrofit fund offered operators of locally registered bus services up to £16k of funding per vehicle towards the retrofit of non-compliant buses. The funding was available for vehicles, including minibuses and coaches, operating on a registered bus service within Greater Manchester. This included cross-boundary services operating within the GM CAZ boundary.

The report set out the near-term impacts of COVID-19 government restrictions on movement on air quality. It set out how air quality was legally monitored, and how the Government had directed GM (and other areas) under UK law to address exceedance of the Annual Average standard for $NO_2$ which is set at 40 ug/m3. As GM Clean Air Plan was required to take action to tackle nitrogen dioxide exceedances until compliance with legal limits had been demonstrated (over a number of years), the nearer term influence of COVID-19 on air quality was not expected to lead to sufficiently long term reductions in pollution such that the modelled exceedances of the legal NO2 limits would be met without implementing a Clean Air Zone.

Members were informed that, following the conclusion of the consultation, both GM CAP and MLS consultation responses were being analysed and reported on by an independent research agency. GM authorities would fully consider all of the information and evidence gathered during the consultation, so that they could understand the consequences COVID-19 had had on vehicle owners and trades which would be directly affected by the GM CAP and MLS.

The report and appendices also set out the work TfGM was undertaking on behalf of the ten Greater Manchester Authorities in the preparatory implementation and contract arrangements required to deliver the CAZ and other GM CAP measures. Preparatory work was required in order to maintain delivery momentum in line with the funding arrangements agreed with JAQU, for example in relation to automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras, back office systems and service providers.

The report covered the consultation approach, engagement activity, additional research undertaken and the number of responses to both the GM CAP and MLS consultations.

The report also set out the governance approach to both GM CAP and MLS, with the GM CAP final plan to be brought forward for decision makers as soon as was reasonably practicable and no later than summer 2021, and the outputs of the MLS to be reported alongside the GM CAP at the same time.

Due to the dynamic context of COVID-19 and national and regional/local lockdowns, progress on the development of the final plan would be provided by the Green City Region Lead, as required at GMCA meetings.

**RESOLVED**

**(i) That the progress of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan be noted;**

**(ii) That the next steps for the development of the Clean Air Plan and Minimum Licensing Standards, listed at Section 12, be noted;**

**(iii) That the distribution of Bus Retrofit funding commenced in December 2020, be noted;**

**(iv) It be noted that Government ministers have agreed to consider extending Greater Manchester's Clean Air Zone (CAZ) charges to the sections of the A628/A57 which form part of the Strategic Road Network, within the proposed CAZ boundary, subject to the outcomes of an assessment, which is expected to be completed by early 2021;**

**(v) It be noted that the GM Clean Air Plan is required to take action tackle nitrogen dioxide exceedances until compliance with the legal limits has been demonstrated and that the nearer term influence of COVID-19 on air quality is not expected to lead to sufficiently long term reductions in pollution such that the exceedances of the legal limits of nitrogen dioxide will not occur without implementing a Clean Air Zone;**

**(vi) It be noted that the GM CAP final plan will be brought forward for decision makers as soon as is reasonably practicable and no later than summer 2021;**

**(vii) It be noted that the outputs of the MLS will be reported alongside the GM CAP as soon as is reasonably practicable and no later than summer 2021;**

**(viii) It be agreed to enter into a collaboration agreement with the other 9 GM local authorities and GMCA/TfGM to clarify amongst other matters the rights, responsibilities and obligations of the authorities in relation to those contracts set out in Appendix 2 that are required to maintain delivery momentum in line with JAQU funding agreements;**

**(ix) It be agreed to delegate to Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment) to agree the final form of the collaboration agreement;**

**(x) It be agreed to delegate to Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment) to award the contracts set out in Appendix 2 (subject to government**

**funding) that are required to implement a charging Clean Air Zone in Spring 2022 to ensure the achievement of Nitrogen Dioxide compliance in the shortest possible time and by 2024 at the latest as required by the Ministerial Direction; and**

**That Council be RECOMMENDED to:**

**(i)** **Agree to the establishment of joint committees and to delegate to those committees the Authority's functions as set out in this report at paragraph 9.5 and the terms of reference, as set out in Appendix 6.**

**(ii)** **Appoint Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment) to sit on both committees for purposes as set out in this report at paragraph 9.5 with specific terms of reference, as set out in Appendix 6.**

(iii) **Appoint Assistant Executive Member (Green Tameside) as substitute for both committees for purposes as set out in this report at paragraph 9.5 with specific terms of reference, as set out in Appendix 6.**

## 147. ACCELERATED DEPLOYMENT OF MICROSOFT OFFICE 365

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Leader / Assistant Director (Digital Services), which set out the unprecedented changes to how the workforce operated and the proposal for the accelerated deployment of Microsoft Office 365.

Members were informed that in September 2019 a report detailing options for replacing the ageing MS 2010 products, whose extended support was ending in 2020, was presented to Executive Cabinet. The report provided details and costs for moving directly to the new Microsoft cloud based Office 365 solution or alternatively, purchasing Office 2016 licences as an interim step before buying Office 365 subscriptions and beginning to move to the new software in Summer 2023.

It was explained that the advancement of agile working and increased take-up and reliance on technology for communicating and collaborating, not only within the Council but wider with partners, had necessitated a rethink on the timescales and pace for deploying Office 365 and associated products such as Microsoft Teams.

Prior to the COVID Lockdown in March 2020, fewer than 100 people regularly used Skype for Business to hosts online meetings or for their desktop telephone calls. This changed overnight when the majority of the workforce moved to home working.

To date, Skype for Business had proven to be reliable and had successfully supported much of the organisations internally and external communication and collaboration requirements. However using different platforms had limited the way joint NHS/Council Teams communicated and shared information, which in turn had caused operational difficulties. Furthermore being Skype users, as opposed the using Microsoft Teams, like many of the other GM authorities, had made joining external meetings with partners confusing, problematic and overly complicated. Other organisations including Manchester City Council were moving to Office 365 for the same reasons.

Preparatory works required ahead of the migration to Office 365 were already underway but would now be accelerated and prioritised. Additional resources would be needed to undertake this work, (and the wider 18 month migration process), in order that the service would be in a position to begin the move to Office 365 in June 2021.

**RESOLVED:**

**(i)** **It be noted that, subject to the appropriate procurement being agreed and undertaken in conjunction with STAR, the timetable for bringing forward the implementation of Microsoft Office 365 is being brought forward 2 years to 2021;**

**(ii)** **Subject to procurement, the Microsoft Teams functionality be deployed to all Council users as the first stage in the transition/migration to the full Office 365 solution;**

**(iii) An 18-month programme beginning in February 2021 will manage the systematic migration of users and their data to the new environment. This work will be undertaken alongside the existing ICT work plan and will require appropriate resourcing which will be detailed in the IT Service Review;**
**(iv) An additional revenue budget of £600k per annum for the licensing costs of Office 365, be approved; and**
**(v) It be noted that additional staffing capacity will be required to enable the implementation team to focus on roll out of Office 365 (section 6). This will be the subject of a further report on a wider IT service review.**

## 148. INVEST TO SAVE - TAMESIDE ONE INSURANCE PROPOSITION

A report of the Executive Member (Finance and Economic Growth) / Assistant Director (Strategic Property) / Assistant Director (Finance) was submitted, which outlined an invest to save proposal in relation to the installation of fire detection equipment into the ceiling voids at the Tameside One building, that had arisen due to changes in the fire insurance market following the Grenfell fire and other similar incidents. The report additionally provided information with regard to the scope of the works required and the contractual /project management processes that would need to be in place. The report provided information as to the cost of the project and requested authorisation to release funding for the required works.

It was explained that, during the construction, building control approval was obtained for the fire safety systems and fire strategy, which did not require the provision of ceiling void fire detection. It was noted that a lack of ceiling void fire protection did not mean that the building was unsafe for occupation. It was also noted that industry standards for fire detection equipment had changed as contained in BS5839-62019. Whilst this specific change related to domestic dwellings and was introduced after the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the insurance industry in general had an increased focus with regard to ceiling void protection overall, which related to the security of the building asset.

Details were given of the insurance requirements and costs of progressing the installation scheme and options were summarised for the preferred approach, as follows:

(i) Inform insurers that equipment would not be installed and accept the increased year on year premium / insurance risk, including the co-insurance clause of up to 25% of the cost of the building; or
(ii) Install the equipment and the associated one-time costs and approve the utilisation of the insurance fund reserve to finance the related costs of £1,249,363, negating the year on year insurance increased insurance charges and replenish the insurance fund reserve over the remaining life of the building from the saving made from the reduced premium levels and self-insurance contributions.

In consideration of the potential financial risks it was recommended that option (ii) above was taken forward and identified as an invest to save opportunity.

**RESOLVED**
**(i) That the installation of equipment and associated contract and project management costs of £1,249,363 via the Council's insurance fund reserve balance, be approved;**
**(ii) That the works be added to the Council's capital programme to the value of £1.25m to be funded from the Insurance Reserve, and managed and monitored by the Council's capital team with progress reports made to the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel;**
**(iii) That the Council makes annual provision for the replenishment of the insurance risk reserve from its existing risk management and insurance budgets over the remaining life of the property at a cost of £45k per annum; and**
**(iv) That the Council ensures that the service charges to third party occupiers reflects the full costs of insuring the leased areas of the premises.**

## 149. THE COUNCIL'S SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PROPOSALS DURING THE COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) PANDEMIC

The Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment) / Assistant Director (Population Health) / Assistant Director (Finance) submitted a report, which gave an update on the plans for financial sustainability of the Council's Sport and Leisure facilities provided by Active Tameside.

It was explained that a Sport and Leisure review was being undertaken across the leisure estate over the next six months. The report described the first phase of the review focused on those facilities that had been operating at a loss in recent years, followed by a second phase including all sport and leisure facilities being carried out in conjunction with the Councils Operational Estate and Portfolio review of council land and property holdings.

It was further explained that there was a need to safeguard the long term future of leisure services in Tameside following the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic which had resulted in a substantial loss of income for the provider. These losses plus the ongoing uncertainty of current restrictions had required the Council, in partnership with Active Tameside to develop the long term cost saving proposals outlined in the report.

Members were informed that all sport and leisure facilities were currently closed to the public due to the national lockdown. The report sought permission to consult on proposals to withdraw Active Tameside services from Adventure Longdendale, Active Oxford Park and Active Etherow and ensure the future of those buildings were informed by the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP). The Council needed to ensure that it had a clear long term strategic vision for the future of its leisure facilities, so that resources were applied effectively. Therefore, the report was also proposing an Operational Estate and Portfolio review on all sport and leisure assets within the Borough. A further report would be presented in a decision document to Executive Cabinet expected in July 2021.

**RESOLVED**

**(i) That the implementation of a public consultation from 12 Feb 2021 to 26 March 2021 be approved, to seek views on the initial proposals outlined in the report and to inform the Council's future commissioning approach;**

**(ii) It be approved that a further review be carried out of all Sport and Leisure facilities in Tameside, including conditions surveys, aligned to the review of the Operational Estate and Portfolio of council land and property holdings;**

**(iii) That it be agreed to review the results of the consultation and recommendations from the asset management review, with final options presented to Executive Cabinet for decision in July 2021.**

## 150. RESTRICTION AND LOCAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT SCHEME UPDATES

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member (Finance and Economic Growth) / Director of Growth, explaining that the Additional Restrictions Grant and Local Support Restrictions Grant Open launched on the 10 December 2020 and were considered by Cabinet on the 16 December 2020. These two grants were part of a family of grants announced by the Government in response to the second National Lockdown in November 2020. The third National Lockdown began on the 5 January 2021 and had no fixed end date. In response to the changing impact of COVID19, an increase to funding available and the Government's latest correspondence to Local Authorities, the report proposed changes to the ARG scheme.

Details of the draft ARG Scheme (based on new proposals) and the successful applicants to the ARG and LRSG (Open) schemes at 25/01/2021, were appended to the report.

It was concluded that the proposals set out in the report aimed to enable the Council to allocate 100% of the ARG fund to planned activity and spend 71% of the allocation by 1 April 2021.

**RESOLVED**
**That the proposals, as set out in section 3 of the report, be approved and the Additional Restriction Grant scheme updated immediately.**

## 151. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

**CHAIR**