

BOARD

10 November 2021

Present: **Elected Members** **Councillors Warrington (In the Chair),
Bray, Cooney, Fairfoull, Feeley,
Gwynne, Kitchen, Ryan and Wills**

Borough Solicitor **Sandra Stewart**
 Deputy Section 151 **Caroline Barlow**
 Officer

Also in Attendance: **Dr Ashwin Ramachandra, Tracy Morris, Catherine Moseley,
Jordanna Rawlinson, Ian Saxon, Emma Varnam and Debbie
Watson**

137 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Cooney and Ryan declared a prejudicial interest on Item 4e Changes to the provision of a statutory Housing Options Service as Trustee/Director and Housing North Board Member for Jigsaw Homes respectively.

138 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Board meeting on the 3 November 2021 were approved a correct record.

139 **MONTH 6 INTEGRATED FINANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth / Lead Clinical GP / Director of Finance. The report detailed actual expenditure to 30 September 2021 (Month 6) and forecasts to 31 March 2022 for the Council and 30 September 2021 for the CCG.

Members were advised that at the halfway point in the financial year, the forecast outturn position for the council was beginning to look more positive for 2021/22. This was largely due to non-recurrent, pandemic related funding streams which would not be available next year.

It was reported that while the council position had improved, due to the allocation of one-off funding streams there continued to be significant financial pressures, particularly in Children's Social Care services. These needed to be addressed in order to balance the in year financial position and address the longer term financial challenge.

It was stated that the NHS financial regime had still not fully normalised following the command and control response to the pandemic last year. Funding had been allocated in order to cover the current costs in the system and was being monitored at a system level (i.e. Greater Manchester). Both the ICFT and the CCG have managed within the required financial envelopes in the first half of this year. Financial and operational guidance for the second half of the year was recently published. This included a system level allocation and confirmation that HDP & ERF funding would continue into H2. But detailed budgets or financial envelopes were not yet agreed at a locality/organisation level. As such this report only included NHS financial information for the first 6 months of the financial year.

The Assistant Director for Finance explained that in 2020/21 the deficit on Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) increased from £0.557m to £1.686m mainly due to funding the overspend on the High Needs Block. If the 2021/22 projections materialised, there would be a deficit of £3.124m on the DSG reserve by 31 March 2022. Under DfE regulations a deficit recovery plan would be required, which would be submitted to the DfE outlining how the deficit would be recovered and spending would be

managed. This would require discussions and agreement of the Schools Forum.

AGREED

That the Strategic Commissioning Board and Executive Cabinet be recommended to:

- (i) Note the forecast outturn position and associated risks for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (ii) Note the detailed analysis of budget forecasts and variances set out in Appendix 2.**
- (iii) Note the forecast position on the Collection Fund in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates as set out in Appendix 3.**
- (iv) Note the forecast position in respect of Dedicated Schools Grant as set out in Appendix 4.**
- (v) Approve the write-off of irrecoverable debts for the period 1 July to 30 September 2021 as set out in Appendix 5.**

140 MONTH 6 CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth / Director of Finance, which summarised the budget and forecast expenditure for fully approved projects in 2021/22 financial year.

Members were advised that the approved budget for 2021/22 was £74.352m and current forecast for the financial year was £42.521m. There were additional schemes that had been identified as a priority for the Council, and, where available, capital resource had been earmarked against these schemes, which would be added to the Capital Programme and future detailed monitoring reports once satisfactory business cases have been approved by Executive Cabinet.

It was reported that the current forecast was for service areas to have spent £42.521m on capital investment in 2021/22, which was £31.831m less than the current capital budget for the year. This variation was spread across a number of areas, and was made up of a number of over/underspends on a number of specific schemes (£2.842m) less the re-profiling of expenditure in some other areas (£28.989m).

AGREED

That the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel be recommended to ask Executive Cabinet to:

- (i) Note the forecast outturn position for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (ii) Approve the re-profiling of budgets into 2022/23 as set out on page 4 of Appendix 1.**
- (iii) Note the funding position of the approved Capital Programme as set on page 9 of Appendix 1.**
- (iv) Note the changes to the Capital Programme as set out on page 10 in Appendix 1**
- (v) Note the updated Prudential Indicator position set out on pages 11-12 of Appendix 1, which was approved by Council in February 2021**

141 ASHTON TOWN CENTRE LEVELLING UP FUND

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth / Director of Place / Assistant Director for Investment, Development & Housing. The report provided an update on the successful bid by the Council to the Levelling Up Fund for Ashton Town Centre and sought approval to progress the Ashton Town Centre Regeneration Programme.

Members were advised that the Council had been successful in its £19.87m bid to the Levelling Up Fund. The bid and the specific interventions proposed within it had been prepared in the context of an emerging wider strategic vision for Ashton Town Centre. The interventions proposed were critical to unlocking the comprehensive redevelopment of the Town Centre and integrating with other as part of a coherent vision, completing of the final phase of Vision Tameside. This in turn would help deliver a catalytic economic and social impact to the local community.

It was explained that the items identified within the bid to the Fund aimed to address the key priorities identified in the engagement and building on the investment delivered in the Town Centre to date focused on:

- Land remediation and enabling infrastructure works on the former interchange site
- Walking/cycling and public realm improvements
- Support the restoration of Ashton Town Hall

In response to questions, the Director of Place described the work that would take place around the Ashton Market and Town Hall over the upcoming weeks. It was explained that the scaffolding would start to be removed from the town hall, the tired hording would be replaced with new Harris fencing and some minor works to tidy the area would be undertaken.

AGREED

That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:

- (i) Note the successful £19.87m Levelling Up Fund bid for Ashton Town Centre (Appendix A refers);**
- (ii) Delegate to the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth the approval for entering into the formal agreements for the receipt of Levelling Up Fund monies once further documentation is received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and reviewed by Legal and Finance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth;**
- (iii) Enable the Director of Place to manage the programme of works associated with the Levelling Up Fund, the Town Centre Regeneration Programme and to drawdown and incur all Levelling Up Fund expenditure related to delivery. On-going performance and reporting will be provided to Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring;**
- (iv) Approve the use of £4.8m from the GM Mayors Challenge Fund (MCF) associated with the Ashton Streetscape and Ashton South projects as match funding to the Levelling Up Fund.**

142 REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONSULT IN RELATION TO DRAFT LICENSING POLICIES

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment / Director of Place / Assistant Director for Operations and Neighbourhoods. The report sought approval to consult on the existing Council policies relating to licensing and gambling.

The Director of Place explained that Licensing Authorities were obliged to review and revise their licensing policies on a regular basis. Regular reviews ensured that policies were kept up-to-date with any changes to legislation and that policies accurately reflected the aims, ambitions and working practices currently employed by the Authority.

It was further explained that the Licensing Act 2003 required Licensing Authorities to publish a revised "Statement of Licensing Policy" at least every five years. The Gambling Act 2005 required Licensing Authorities to publish a revised "Statement of Gambling Policy" at least every three years.

It was stated that a period of 12 weeks to consult was considered appropriate in line with Government guidance. However, a shorter period was allowed where the authority could rationalise this. As there were no significant amendments to either the Statement of Licensing Policy or Statement of Gambling Policy, it was proposed that these policies would be subject to an 8 week consultation period prior to their adoption by the Council.

AGREED

That the Executive Cabinet be recommended to approve the request for permission to consult on both policies.

143 CHANGES TO THE PROVISION OF A STATUTORY HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE

At this juncture, Councillor Cooney and Ryan took no further part in the consideration of the following item of business, having declared a prejudicial interest as Trustee/Director and Housing North Board Member for Jigsaw Homes respectively.

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Housing, Planning and Employment / Director of Place / Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods. The report outlined the current provision of a Housing Options Service in Tameside, outlined the need for a change to the way in which the service was provided and the three options available to the Council for the future of the House Options Service.

The Assistant Director for Operations and Neighbourhoods advised that in light of increasing financial pressure, increasing demand on services and the desire to introduce new and innovative working practices, the Authority should consider the three above options in respect of the Council's Housing Options Service. It was for the consideration of Members to decide which option would provide the best service to the residents of Tameside in the most cost-effective way.

It was explained that the current position, contracting the service out to an external provider, did not fit with the changes required to the service or with the increasing demand.

It was further explained that keeping the service contracted-out, either with the existing provider or with a new provider, significantly reduced the opportunities to redevelop the service into a more flexible and responsive service. It did not offer the level of control that the Council should have over how that service was managed or the financial aspect of that provision. In addition, it would limit opportunities to reduce costs and make significant changes to how temporary accommodation is managed in Tameside.

The three options available to the authority in respect of the Housing Options Service were detailed in the report:

1. Implement no changes to the service currently contracted out to Jigsaw Homes.
2. Serve six months' notice of termination on Jigsaw Homes, in respect of the current contract and re-tender for provision of a service, which is closer aligned with the ambitions and changing demands of the service.
3. Serve six months' notice of termination on Jigsaw Homes in respect of the current contract and move the service "in house", to be operated and managed by Tameside Council within the existing Community Safety and Homelessness Service.

The report proposed that option 3 be recommended to Executive Cabinet. It was explained that should Option 3 be chosen, the working group established to oversee the process had drafted a timetable for change:

- November 2021: Service of 6 months' notice on Jigsaw Homes for early termination of the contract
- December 2021: Consultation with existing THAS staff over TUPE process, terms & conditions
- March 2022: Report to ECG for TUPE process
- May 2022: Service & staff transfer to TMBC
- September 2022: Service redesign process undertaken

AGREED

That Members of the Board note the report and the Executive Cabinet be recommended to grant permission to serve 6 months' notice of termination on Jigsaw Homes in respect of the current contract and move the service "in house", to be operated and managed as a Tameside Council service within the existing Community Safety & Homelessness Service.

144 EDUCATION SPECIALIST AND BASIC NEED PROJECTS UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage / Director of Education for Tameside and Stockport. The report provided an update on the Education specialist and Basic Need Capital projects. The report sought approval to move a number of schemes forward. The report outlined the projected costs of the schemes and sought approval for grant agreements with the academies.

Members were advised that All Saints Catholic College had a chronic shortage of suitable accommodation to meet the increased need for the specialist physical education curriculum that additional pupils would need.

It was explained that All Saints and their consultants Atkins had undertaken a tender exercise and wished to appoint contractors to undertake the work described and were requesting a drawdown of £258,887 against the previously agreed £2 million budget. The total cost of all phases of the work (Appendix 1) was estimated to be £2m and which had previously been agreed through Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel and Executive Cabinet on 29 July 2020. This had been allocated to the project from Basic Need Funding. If the recommendation to enter into a grant agreement for this work was agreed, All Saints Catholic College would have £1,741,110 for further phases of work.

It was reported that the works would be commissioned by the Shrewsbury Diocese with oversight within the Council's Capital Projects Team and a grant agreement would be put in place to fund the project. It was recommended that a grant agreement of £258,890 be agreed with the St Anselm's Catholic Multi Academy Trust to support this work. Ongoing monitoring of the project would be through the grant agreement and reported to the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.

The report also proposed a grant agreement be agreed with The Epworth Education Trust for £23,000. It was explained that the school had been identified as a site where the current resource base provision could be expanded for September 2021.

AGREED

That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:

- (i) Approve a grant agreement for an initial £258,890 with St Anselm's Catholic Multi Academy Trust to enable All Saints Catholic College to accommodate additional school places from September 2021. The capital scheme focusses on remodelling two classrooms into a fitness studio and dance studio to support the additional places.**
- (ii) Approve a grant agreement for £23,000 with The Epworth Education Trust to refurbish an external play area at Rosehill Primary Academy, allowing children in the resourced provision to have dedicated access to a suitable play area. This will provide 10 additional resourced pupil places for at least 10 years from September 2021.**
- (iii) Receive a further report on the projects for Hawthorns Primary School and Cromwell School to ensure sufficient funding and on track to deliver.**

145 SIGNS OF SAFETY PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Executive Leader / Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Population Health / Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth. The report was to seek approval for investment to further develop and improve the implementation of the Signs of Safety Practice Model in Tameside.

The Interim Director for Population Health highlighted Tameside was now in its third year of implementing Signs of Safety and during this time, via a Signs of Safety Steering Group and a dedicated Signs of Safety Programme Manager, Tameside Council and local partners had been driving forward a strategic Implementation Plan involving four main work streams:

- Organisational Alignment;
- Training;

- Leadership;
- Meaningful Measures.

It was explained that significant progress had been made under these areas, however, the implementation of Signs of Safety had been challenging to embed as the approach taken initially was to put all staff in post at that time through the training programme and create a single programme lead to implement the approach for new starters. Given the ongoing issues relating to high levels of agency workers and staff turnover (at both a leadership and social work level), high levels of casework and capacity, along with the increase of complexity of our children and families, fully embedding the model had not been achieved as expected. These challenges had led to some areas of practice being underdeveloped and inconsistent for example old approaches, such as working agreements and service or expert led approaches, were 'shoehorned' into new forms with little discernible change or improvement to individual practice or evidence of meaningful change for children and families.

The Interim Assistant Director for Population Health further explained that Signs of Safety was a complex whole system change. Therefore, a new enhanced team structure was proposed to expedite progress under each work stream within the Tameside Implementation Plan. The new structure would be an increase in staffing to the current team of one person.

It was proposed that this new team structure would feed into the broader Children's Improvement Plan 2021, both in terms of financial investment and outcomes for children. When the model was fully embedded effectively into practice, expected outcomes would include more risks being managed by the family and their network with children remaining at home safely with their families and fewer children requiring higher end intervention under child protection plans or requiring removal and entering into our care system.

The Interim Director of Children's Services stated that the design and development of this new team structure had been informed by lessons from research and the learning from other Local Authorities who had successfully implemented Signs of Safety within their organisation. Members were advised that significant learning had been taken from the work in Sunderland who progressed from an 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgement to 'Outstanding' in three years, the full Ofsted report was attached at Appendix A.

It was reported that the proposed team structure outlined below, would fall under the leadership and management of the Head of Quality and Safeguarding. This structure included the current programme lead for the programme and would also encompass the role and responsibilities previously undertaken by the Workforce Development Manager whose funding had been transferred to the service following the retirement of the previous post holder. This would ensure that all programmes of work relating to the delivery and embedding of Signs of Safety, support to newly qualified social workers and ASYE, relationships with training providers and universities and specialist professional development and career pathways were delivered holistically by the team. Further details of the specific roles were outlined at the attached Appendix B.

AGREED

That the Deputy Executive Leader / Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Population Health / Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth be recommended to agree, the investment of £455,000 over 2 years from Public Health Investment Fund reserve to support the continued and successful implementation of the Signs of Safety Practice Model in Tameside on the basis set out in the report with regular quarterly updates being provided to the Children's Performance meetings.

146 FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan of items for Board was considered.

CHAIR