

# **Bolton Council**

## **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**14<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

## **THE CABINET AND EXECUTIVE CABINET MEMBER MEETINGS**





## BOLTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH

Cabinet – 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	AA
Executive Cabinet Member for Adult, Health and Wellbeing – 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2024	BB
Executive Cabinet Member for Children’s Services – 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	CC
Executive Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Housing – 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	DD

*S. Johnson*

SUE JOHNSON  
Chief Executive  
Town Hall, Bolton

7<sup>th</sup> February 2024



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## THE CABINET

### MEETING, 8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2024

Councillor Peel	Leader of the Council
Councillor Zaman	Regeneration
Councillor Mrs. Thomas	Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Councillor N. Ayub	Culture
Councillor Donaghy	Children's Services
Councillor Silvester	Climate Change and Environment
Councillor Khurram	Transport, Highways and Housing
Councillor Jiva	Stronger Communities
Councillor Haworth	Regulatory Services and Property

#### Other Members in Attendance

Councillor Chadwick  
Councillor Mistry  
Councillor Mrs. Fairclough  
Councillor Morgan  
Councillor Warren  
Councillor Muslim (as deputy for Councillor Cox)  
Councillor Hayes  
Councillor Grant

#### Officers

Ms. S. Johnson	Chief Executive
Ms. H. Gorman	Borough Solicitor
Mr. T. Glennon	Borough Treasurer
Mr. D. Lowe	Assistant Director of Highways and Engineering

Mr. P. Rimmer	Assistant Director Revenue and Benefits and Customer Services
Mr. C. Gaskell	Strategy Delivery Manager
Mrs. V. Ridge	Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cox, Fielding and Sanders.

Councillor Peel in the Chair.

### **23. MINUTES**

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

### **24. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY**

The minutes of the meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority held on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 were submitted for information.

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

### **25. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE UPDATE – DECEMBER, 2023**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided members with an update on progress made against the Council's Corporate key performance indicators and directorate priorities.

Members were advised that the Council's Corporate Plan played a key role on informing the work of our services, to ensure that we were getting the basics right, being stable and responsible, whilst embracing a Place Leadership approach. A guiding principle for the Corporate Plan was the need to ensure that we were focussed on delivery of outcomes that mattered

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most to Bolton and, therefore, Directorate Plans played a key role in determining what the priorities were to achieve this.

It was also stated that alongside the refreshed plans the Corporate Dashboard had been updated to ensure that we continued to measure those key performance indicators which mattered most, recognising the need to be robust and continually develop the dashboard as new indicators emerged.

In terms of the Directorate Plans it was explained that as the Council continued to navigate through challenging periods, it was acknowledged that the plans needed to be reflective of this and these had been updated accordingly to account for new and emerging priorities impacting on Bolton. The plan continued to be worked through and Appendix 1 to the report provided an update on the progress so far. A summary of these were also detailed in the report.

The report also advised that performance management was key to ensuring that the Council was on track to achieve what we set out to do whilst being transparent about this progress. To support this, performance boards had been established across the organisation and would play a significant role in managing the performance and to enable a more pro-active response to performance related issues.

The Corporate Dashboard had been updated to provide the latest available data alongside commentary on progress impacting these and this was detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

**Resolved – That the updated Corporate Dashboard and progress made against delivery of directorate priorities be noted.**

### **26. BOLTON COUNCIL/NCP CAR PARKING CONTRACT (PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS)**

Further to minute of 13 of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2023 the Director of Place submitted a report which set out proposals for 'writing off' the debt accrued by NCP during the

Covid-19 pandemic and adjustment of the Guaranteed Revenue Payment (as required under the Contract) for the period 2023/2024.

By way of background, members were reminded that following consideration of the report on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2023 the decision was 'called in' and referred to the Place Scrutiny on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 for further consideration. At this meeting it was agreed that the recommendations set out in the report would not be supported and that the report be referred to full Council at the earliest opportunity.

In view of the above, the report was debated at full Council on 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 and it was agreed 'that the Council demands the Cabinet rejects the request to write off £1.2 million and ongoing revenue reduction to NCP, it is not financially prudent and not what the public expects of the Council at a time of serious financial hardship for residents and local businesses'.

Members were advised that Bolton Council worked in partnership with National Car Parks Ltd (NCP) to operate the multi-storey car parks at the Octagon, Topp Way and Deane Road and surface car parks on Ashburner Street and the Octagon. NCP also managed the maintenance and cash collection for the on street pay and display terminals located in Bolton. The contract was originally signed in 2009 and the initial term of the contract was for 35 years with an option to extend by a further 15 years.

It was explained that within the contract there was a requirement for NCP to make payments to the Council by way of a Guaranteed Revenue Monthly Payment of £79,398.90 plus VAT. There was also an annual inflation uplift of RPI. When the contract was first signed, the Guaranteed Revenue Payment (GRP) was £55,000.

The report informed members that during the period March 2020 to present, use of the multi-storey car parks was significantly impacted due to national and local Covid-19 restrictions and patronage had not yet returned to pre-



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pandemic levels. As a result, NCP had experienced long periods where the car parks had either been closed, or operational but empty and had suffered a significant loss of income. During this period NCPs account with the Council had moved into arrears and as of November, 2023 the outstanding debt was £4,060,444.82.

In view of the above, the Council had been in discussions with NCP since February, 2022 to address the arrears in payment from the Covid-19 period and to resolve the significant losses that they had suffered through continued operation of the market. It was stated that the debt was due to non-payment of the GRP throughout this period and in the spirit of partnership, NCP had requested that this be reduced by 50% for the period 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2022. This equated to £888,024.82 (VAT inclusive) or £740,020.69 before VAT was applied. It was proposed that this be written off against our existing bad debt provision that had previously been made from covid related funds and the VAT element amount would be reversed into the Authority's VAT account.

In addition, NCP were also seeking to take the GRP back to the 2009 payment of £55,000 per month until the end of March, 2024. If agreed the overall debt write off (or income foregone) would be as follows:-

Period	Amount	VAT	Total
	£	£	£
1.3.20 – 31.1.22	740,020.69	148,004.14	888,024.83
1.2.22 – 31.3.23	199,973.34	39,994.67	239,968.01
1.4.23 – 31.3.24	292,786.84	58,557.37	351,344.21
	1,232,780.87	246,556.18	1,479,337.05

In conclusion, members were advised that the proposed debt 'write off' covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023 which totalled £939,994.03 (excluding VAT) would be funded by a dedicated bad debt provision that had been previously made from covid related funds. It was stated that

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whilst it was not believed that the Council would be required to return any unspent funds from this general covid grant pot, it was still possible. The Government continued to request reconciliations of funds the Council received and had asked the Council to return other surplus funds recently. It therefore made sense to use it in a way so its use could be justified against covid-related activity should a request to return unused funds be made.

It was also explained that for 2023/2024, the reduction in GRP which totalled £292,786.84 (excluding VAT), would be treated as a reduction of in-year income, which would be funded by an in-year redirection of budget. The contractual GRP payable from April, 2024 would be the 2023/2024 GRP of £79,398.90 plus VAT plus an uplift for inflation.

**Resolved – (i) That the request to write off debt for the period March, 2020 to March, 2023, as detailed in the report, be approved.**

**(ii) That the request to reduce monthly Guaranteed Revenue Payments for the financial year 2023/2024, as detailed in the report, be approved.**

**(iii) That the request to return to the contractual Guaranteed Revenue Payments as set out in the contract from April, 2024 be approved.**

**(iv) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to carry out all any necessary legal formalities.**

## **ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

A record of decisions made by the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Services, Safeguarding for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Public Health, Mental Health and Health and Social Care integration and Bolton Cares.

### **MONDAY, 22nd JANUARY, 2024**

Following consideration of the matters detailed below in the presence of:-

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Councillor Mrs Thomas                                 | - Executive Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing |
| Councillor Galloway (as deputy for Councillor Morgan) | - Major Opposition Spokesperson                             |
| Councillor Sanders                                    | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                             |
| Councillor Bamforth                                   | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                             |

#### **Officers**

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Ms R. Tanner   | - Director of Adults, Communities and Integration |
| Ms L. Donkin   | - Director of Public Health                       |
| Ms T. Minshull | - Assistant Director – Strategic Commissioning    |
| Ms C. McMullen | - Group Accountant                                |
| Ms K. Harris   | - Group Accountant                                |
| Ms A. Kelly    | - Principal Lawyer                                |
| Mrs S. Bailey  | - Principal Democratic Services Officer           |

#### **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

The background papers and reports in relation to the following item were considered confidential as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that it be

deemed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in their exemption outweighs the public interest in their disclosure.

## **17. LEVER GARDENS EXTRA CARE HOUSING – CARE AND SUPPORT MODEL**

Further to Minute 29 of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, the Director of Adults, Communities and Integration submitted a report which provided details regarding the development of the new extra care housing scheme in Little Lever and outlined the rationale for proposed changes to the previously agreed Service Model and charging arrangements.

The report advised that in January, 2023, the Executive Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care had authorised the commissioning of the extra care service at Lever Gardens Court and the introduction of a charge for tenants for the core service in extra care schemes.

In this regard, the report summarised the work undertaken to date to engage with partners at Bolton at Home and Bolton Cares and set out proposals to adjust the planned funding of the core Service to align it with the current approach of not charging for the care element of the core service arrangements in the Council's existing extra care schemes.

The revised hybrid approach would support the Council's Live Well at Home Vision and demand management priorities and would make the scheme more affordable to tenants.

**The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED -**

**The adjustment of the planned charging model for the Wellbeing and Emergency Response Service (core Service) which will be in line with the current approach of not charging for the care element of the core service arrangements in the Council's existing extra care schemes.**

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

A record of decisions made by the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children's Services including Looked After Children, Safeguarding relating to Children and Young People, Schools, Early Years strategies, Youth and Play services and the Youth Offending Service.

**TUESDAY, 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2024**

Following consideration of the matters detailed below in the presence of:-

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Councillor Donaghy   | - Executive Cabinet Member – Children's Services |
| Councillor Galloway  | - Major Opposition Spokesperson                  |
| Councillor McGeown   | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                  |
| Councillor Flitcroft | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                  |
| Councillor Grant     | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                  |
| Councillor Morrissey | - Observing                                      |

### **Officers**

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Ms B. Brown     | - Director of Children's Services                       |
| Mr P. Rankin    | - Deputy Director of Children's Services                |
| Ms T. Minshull  | - Assistant Director – Strategic Commissioning          |
| Ms G. Whitehead | - Assistant Director – Inclusive Education and Learning |
| Ms S. Bruce     | - Assistant Director – Social Care and Early Help       |
| Ms A. Hunt      | - Senior Lawyer   |
| Mrs S. Bailey   | - Principal Democratic Services Officer                 |

## **25. MONITORING OF EXECUTIVE CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which provided an update on decisions taken at previous meetings of the Executive Cabinet Member.

**The Executive Cabinet Member NOTED the report.**

## **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

**The background papers and reports in relation to the following items were considered confidential as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that it be deemed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in their exemption outweighs the public interest in their disclosure.**

## **26. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GRANT FUNDED SERVICES REPORT 2024-2025**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which sought approval to extend and ringfence funding for various existing voluntary and community organisations that were currently supported by VCSE Grants until 31st March, 2025 with a view to formally commissioning those services from 2025/26 onwards.

The report sought approval to enable a direct award of grant funding for two Children's VCSE services until 31st March, 2025 which would allow local organisations to continue providing a range of services to meet the needs of individuals and families within Bolton who required additional support. This would provide short-term stability for current providers who received grant funding.

In order to support longer-term service delivery, the report sought approval to ringfence future Children's VCSE funding to allow the Council to formally commission all current grant-funded services from 1st April, 2025 onwards. The Council

would work closely with partners in the VCSE to co-design future service specifications that were built on the sector's knowledge, understanding and access to the needs of service users and the communities they served.

**The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED -**

- (i) The extension of funding from the Children's VCSE grants for BLGC (Family Time Service) until 31st March, 2025**
- (ii) The extension of funding from the Children's VCSE grants for Urban Outreach (Remember UR Not Alone Service) until 31st March, 2025;**
- (iii) A 2% uplift in the Children's VCSE grant offer for the above two contracts; and**
- (iv) The formal commissioning of both future services for a period of 3+1+1 years from 1st April, 2025 on the basis detailed in the report now submitted;**
- (v) The delegation of authority to the Assistant Director to carry out a suitable procurement exercise via corporate procurement to formalise the proposals contained in the report now submitted;**
- (vi) The delegation of authority to the Assistant Director of Strategic Commissioning to award the Children's VCSE contracts on the basis now detailed; and**
- (viii) The delegation of authority to the Borough Solicitor to carry out all necessary legal formalities in this regard.**

**27. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATION WITHIN THE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TEAM – POST CONSULTATION REPORT**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which set out the results of consultation on proposals to review the School Admissions Service to account for a reduction in funding from 2021 onwards and sought approval to implement the final proposals.

The report advised that consultation on the proposed changes to the Service had been carried out for a period of seven days

from 6th December, 2023. No significant issues had been raised during the process.

In this regard, the report sought approval to implement the final proposals, full details of which were provided.

**The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED -**

- (i) The final proposals detailed in the report now submitted, having due regard to the consultation feedback and the Equality Impact Assessment; and**
- (ii) Subject to the approval of the Head of Paid Service, the delegation of implementation of the new structure, including details of voluntary redundancy arrangements and consequential redundancy selection, to the Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services.**



## **TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND HOUSING**

A record of decisions made by the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, Community Housing Services, Private Sector Housing and Highways and Transport:-

**WEDNESDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2024**

Following consideration of the matters detailed below in the presence of:-

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Councillor Khurram                                       | - Executive Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Highways |
| Councillor Walsh   | - Major Opposition Spokesperson                               |
| Councillor Hayes (as deputy for Councillor D. Wilkinson) | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                               |
| Councillor Sanders                                       | - Minor Opposition Spokesperson                               |

### **Officers**

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Mr J. Dyson    | - Director of Place                             |
| Mr M. Aspin    | - Assistant Director – Communities and Housing  |
| Mr D. Lowe     | - Assistant Director – Highways and Engineering |
| Mr J. Powell   | - Head of Community Housing Services            |
| Ms J. Pollard  | - Head of Finance – Chief Executive's and Place |
| Ms N. Raby     | - Principal Lawyer                              |
| Mrs. S. Bailey | - Principal Democratic Services Officer         |

## **8. MONITORING OF EXECUTIVE CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which provided an update on decisions taken at previous meetings of the Executive Cabinet Member.

**The Executive Cabinet Member NOTED the report.**

### **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

The background papers and report in relation to the following item were considered confidential as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that it be deemed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in their exemption outweighs the public interest in their disclosure.

## **9. ASYLUM REFUGEE FUNDING COMMITMENTS**

The Director of Adults, Communities and Integration submitted a report which sought approval to:

- extend the staffing resources currently working with the Asylum and Refugee communities in Bolton;
- fund the associated housing costs; and
- commission third sector Asylum and Refugee support services for Asylum and Refugee communities settling in Bolton from 2024 onwards.

The report outlined the current arrangements for the support and funding of Asylum and Refugee resettlement in Bolton and put forward options to ensure its continuation.

The report stated that there were currently a number of grant funded roles within Community Housing Services which were pivotal in the co-ordination of the offer made available to families. In this regard, the report proposed the extension of the roles to ensure the provision of consistent and high-quality support for asylum communities and sought approval to

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mainstream these roles subject to wider Council decisions on fixed term contracts. (Option 1A of the report referred).

Funded would be from existing Reserves built up from associated Government grants and would include offsetting any risk associated with redundancy should future Governments not commit to funding support for asylum and refugee communities in the future, although this was unlikely.

The report also provided details of the housing costs associated with the provision of settled accommodation for the people who were being supported and the need to bolster the temporary provision given the challenges with property supply. Option 1B of the report proposed the allocation of £263k per annum to cover variable costs across temporary accommodation provision, bonds and deposit support, furniture packages rental top-ups for larger properties and housing quality assessments.

The report also sought approval to commission wider support from the community and voluntary sector over the next four years in line with needs fed back from the community. Option 1C of the report proposed that a short commissioning exercise be undertaken across the Community Integration Support, Education, Training, Skills and Employment, Language Support and Health Engagement lots in this regard.

### **The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED –**

- (i) Option 1A for the mainstreaming of staff resources deployed to support Asylum and Refugee communities, on the basis detailed in the report now submitted;**
- (ii) Option 1B for funding for the associated housing costs to be made available to support Asylum and Refugee communities, on the basis detailed in the report now submitted;**
- (iii) Option 1C for the commissioning of the voluntary and community sector in relation to services in support of Asylum and Refugee communities, on the basis detailed in the report now submitted; and**

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**(iv) The delegation of authority to the Assistant Director for Community Safety and Housing to negotiate and enter into suitable contractual arrangements to formalise the proposals within the report now submitted.**