

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 1 June 2022

Present: Councillor Craig (Chair)

Councillors: Akbar, Bridges, Hacking, Igbon, Midgley, Rahman, Rawlins, T Robinson, White

Also present as Members of the Standing Consultative Panel:

Councillors: Ahmed Ali, Butt, Collins, Douglas, Foley, Johnson, Leech and Lynch

Apologies: Councillor Stanton

Exe/22/41 Minutes

Decision

The Executive approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 16 March 2022.

Exe/22/42 Appointment of Executive Members and their Portfolios

The Executive Leader advised that in accordance with Articles of the Constitution 7.4(c) and 7.5(a), she had given notice to the Monitoring Officer and Members in question of her appointment of Deputy Leader and Executive Members (and associated portfolios).

Decision

The Executive note the appointments of Deputy Leader and Executive Members.

Exe/22/43 Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services.

The Executive considered a report of the Deputy Strategic Director Children's Services, which reflected on the recent Ofsted Inspection of Local Authorities Children's Services (ILACS) of Manchester's Children's Services. The report advised of the overall judgement of Ofsted and provided an action plan in response to the findings on what needed to improve.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People advised that Ofsted had judged Manchester's Children's Services overall effectiveness as "Good", placing Manchester children's services amongst the top performing Children's Services in the Northwest of the country, with Ofsted identifying several reasons for this judgement, including ongoing financial commitment to the recruitment and retention of social workers, effective quality assurance and performance management arrangements and strong political and professional leadership.

This rating was in sharp contrast to recent previous inspection results in 2014 and 2017 where services were judged to be inadequate and required improvement to be good respectively and the Leader expressed her thanks and gratitude to those involved in Children's Services and across the Council who had worked over the last number of years to achieve this improved rating.

Despite the judgement, the service was not complacent, the approach to service improvement since the last full inspection in 2017 had been to initiate reform of services that required improvement, develop and implement evidence-based interventions, revise its approach to commissioning, build a comprehensive workforce development and career progression strategy and use quality assurance frameworks and other methods to scrutinise the evidence of impact of these change activities on children and families. These approaches, in addition to the Ofsted action plan, would support the Service's ongoing approach to continuous improvement.

Councillor Leech sought clarification as to what groups of children would be included in the Action Plan.

Decision

The Executive note the report and action plan.

Exe/22/44 Our Manchester Progress update

The Executive considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on key areas of progress against the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 which reset Manchester's priorities for the next five years to ensure the Council could still achieve the city's ambition set out in the Our Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025.

The Leader made reference to the use of the term Manchester Living Rent within the report and explained that this would be a way to increase the homes that all Manchester people could afford. She explained that it would be set below Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels and would also be cheaper to residents than the standard Government definition of Affordable Housing (80% of market value for a particular area). In essence it would mean that regardless of where a home was in the city, it could be affordable to anybody and it was a clear and straightforward way of describing what the Council meant when it had pledged to provide low cost homes that people could afford.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported on the Rodney Street development, the first planned development by the Council's new housing delivery company This City, delivering 128 new homes, all of which will be built to low carbon standards, with 30% available at the Manchester Living Rent. He also reported that a planning application had been submitted for more than 700 new homes, with around half of them to be affordable with a range of tenures, alongside a new high school a community hub and green spaces, to be built on the Former Jackson's Brickworks site, a disused brownfield site in east Manchester.

The Deputy Leader reported on the continued support that the Council and its partners were providing for any Ukrainians escaping the invasion of their country. A

meet and greet point staffed by a council duty officer and volunteers from across the authority had been established at Manchester Airport, with the British Red Cross on call if further support was required. More than £60,000 had been raised by the MCR Ukraine Welcome Fund, set up by the We Love Manchester charity in partnership with Manchester City Council, to help assist arriving Ukrainians. The first grant of £30,000 had been awarded to Ardwick-based charity Europia. It would fund a dedicated support worker to co-ordinate advice and practical support for arrivals and contribute towards a hardship fund which the support worker would help administer. As of May 16 2022, 177 would-be sponsors under the government's Homes For Ukraine scheme had come forward and 42 of a potential 449 beneficiaries had arrived in the city.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport reported that the Council had secured £4.9m in Government funding for further work to reduce carbon emissions from more council-owned buildings with a further Council contribution of £1m which would deliver an almost £6m scheme to cut emissions from seven buildings. The move was another step towards the Council's goal of halving its direct carbon emissions by 2025 as it works towards becoming zero by 2028 – in line with the citywide target. She also reported that consultation was underway on proposed walking and cycling improvements in the city centre (Active Travel) with the proposals aim to support the ambition set out in the Council's City Centre Transport Strategy for 90 per cent of morning peak time journeys into the city centre to be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport by 2040.

In relation to the decarbonisation scheme, Councillor Leech asked whether any re-calculation on the long term savings on cost of energy had been undertaken given the soaring increases in energy costs. He also asked whether there was any substance in a tweet made by the Rt Hon James Grundy MP for Leigh, stating that that Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone was to be shrunk to Manchester city Centre and whether this would have any impact on the Active Travel proposals. He also commented on the challenges residents had reported to him on accessing the checks required for taking in Ukrainian refugees, including being required to pay for electrical safety checks.

Councillor Johnson asked for clarity on whether the Council was on track for achieving its target of becoming carbon zero by 2038.

The Deputy Leader acknowledged that there had been some challenges for residents who were taking in Ukrainian refugees and requested that Councillor Leech provided details of these issues so that she could investigate and resolve.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised that she would arrange a specific briefing for all Elected Members around the decarbonisation target for both the Council and the City. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer commented that in terms of energy price calculations, when the bid for the further government funding had been finalised, it had been estimated that this would save £33,000 per annum and this was being re-calculated at present. In terms of the Council's action plan for achieving zero carbon, this was currently on track and was regularly scrutinised by the Council's Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader commented that it was still Manchester's and Greater Manchester's position to submit a proposal of a non-charging clean air zone plan by 1 July 2022.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People welcomed the proposals for a new High School within the planning application for the Former Jackson's Brickworks site and reported that more than 40 organisations had pledged their support to 2022 Our Year, a year-long campaign to create an array of activities, opportunities and experiences for the city's children and young people and help create a lasting legacy which would make Manchester one of the best places to grow up in. There was a packed programme of events, activities and opportunities underway and a flavour of these were referred to.

Decision

The Executive note the report.

Exe/22/45 Capital Programme Update

The Executive considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which informed Members of requests to increase the capital programme, sought approval for those schemes that could be approved under authority delegated to the Executive and asked the Executive to recommend to Council proposals that required specific Council approval.

The proposals which required Council approval were those which were funded by the use of reserves above a cumulative total of £2 million, where the use of borrowing was required or a virement exceeded £0.5m. These included the following proposed changes:-

- Neighbourhoods - Hough End Masterplan. A capital budget increase of £11.905m was requested, funded by £4m Grant, £5.499m funded by borrowing on an invest to save basis funded by joint funds held by Manchester City Council and Sport England, £1.832m funded by borrowing on an invest to save basis and £0.574m borrowing for the erection of a two-storey extension to form sports field changing rooms, cafe facilities, flexible club/social/training rooms and gym space following the demolition of the existing building on site, formation of two 3G football turf pitches as well as associated floodlighting and fencing together with a reconfiguration of natural turf pitches, with associated 67 space car park and an additional 60 space overflow car park.

The proposals which did not require Council approval and only required Executive approval were those which were funded by the use of external resources, use of capital receipts, use of reserves below £10.0m, where the proposal could be funded from existing revenue budgets or where the use of borrowing on a spend to save basis is required. The following proposals required Executive approval for changes to the City Council's capital programme:-

- Children's Services – Education Basic Need Grant. A capital budget increase of £4.056m in 2023/24 was requested, funded by Government Grant. The grant

was paid to local authorities to support the capital requirement for providing new pupil places by expanding existing maintained schools, free schools, or academies, and by establishing new schools. The grant was not time-bound so that the Council could make the best decisions for the city. The Council had received an allocation of £4.056m for 2023-25 and projects brought forward where a need was identified.

- Children's Services - Schools Capital Maintenance Programme. A capital budget increase of £4.264m in 2022/23 is requested, funded by Government Grant. The Council received grant funding each year from the Department for Education for maintenance to the school estate. Funding would be used to address condition needs identified in the Council's estate of maintained schools which included community, voluntary controlled and foundation schools.
- Children's Services – High Needs Provision. A capital budget increase of £7.658m in 2022/23 and £8.769m in 2023/24 was requested, funded by Government Grant. The Council received funding from the Department of Education to support the provision of new places and improve existing provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision. The Council has received an allocation of £16.427m allocated over 2022-23 and 2023-24.
- ICT – Registrars EPOS Solution. A capital budget decrease of £0.141m in 2022/23 is requested and approval of a corresponding transfer of £0.141m to the revenue budget, funded by Capital Fund. The scheme would replace the current unsupported electronic point of sale (EPOS) and stock control system with a fit for purpose solution to enable Registrars to continue taking payment and managing the certificate stock on a supported system.
- Growth and Development – Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3. A capital budget increase of £4.648m in 2022/23 is requested, funded by Government Grant. A capital virement from approved budgets of £1.550m is also requested, funded by Borrowing via the Carbon Reduction Programme. The Zero Carbon Estate Programme had secured grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3 to deliver a range of energy efficiency and generation measures in Council owned buildings across the City. This project was being delivered specifically to reduce energy consumption within the estate with each building includes measures to decarbonise heat through the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps as a minimum, where feasible additional energy efficiency and generation measures such as LED Lighting & Controls and Solar PV had also been included. All works were required to be completed by the end of March 2023 to qualify for the PSDS Phase 3 grant funding and match funding was required.
- ICT – SAP Review. A capital budget decrease of £0.147m in 2022/23 is requested and approval of a corresponding transfer of £0.147m to the revenue budget, funded by Capital Fund. This proposal was to complete the discovery exercise to determine the correct technology mix to support the future strategic direction of both HR and Finance functions. The work would determine business

requirements from a functional and non-functional perspective and underpin the pre-development work to follow.

- Corporate Services - HR and Finance System Replacement Project. A capital budget increase of £0.525m in 2022/23 and £0.900m in 2023/24 was requested, funded by RCCO – Transformation Reserve. The programme was a once in a generation opportunity to upgrade the Council's core finance and HR systems to help drive change to the way it operated its services, managed and reported performance, and interacted with suppliers. The current system, implemented in 2006, would no longer be supported after 2027. The programme was therefore necessary to move Finance, Human Resources and Procurement (procure-to-pay) functions from the current SAP system. This capital scheme would fund and create new roles to support a dedicated programme working group to undertake pre-development work to prepare the organisation for the significant business change associated with replacing finance and HR systems as well as delivering the operational improvements and training associated with the Council's Future Shape programme. .

The report highlighted that there had been increases to the programme totalling £2.668m as a result of delegated approvals since the previous report to the Executive on 16 March 2022 and if the recommendations in the report were approved the General Fund capital budget would increase by £42.437m across financial years which would also result in an increase in the prudential indicator for Capital Expenditure in corresponding years.

Approval had also been given for the following capital budget virements:-

- £2.169m to be allocated for Schools Maintenance work, from Government Grant received, to be carried out in 2022/23;
- £0.496m from the Asset Management Programme (AMP) for additional funding for the Manchester Equipment and Adaptations Partnership Relocation (Aids and adaptations) project;
- £0.120m from Education Basic Need funding for the Manchester Secondary PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) to reduce the cost-of-service delivery and improve the quality of estate;
- £0.093 from grant funding within the Schools Maintenance budget for Peel Hall Primary Emergency Heating Works

The report also provided an update on the Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) grant award. Since approval of the budget the Council's bid for funding had been approved, thereby, securing a contribution of £6.89m towards the cost of delivering the Council's element of the scheme which was intended to be used to displace the equivalent amount of the HRA funding which had been allocated to deliver the Scheme.

Councillor Leech sought clarity as to whether the £6.89m secured towards the cost of delivering the Council's Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) would mean that other schemes could be brought forward sooner.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development clarified that there was the potential to bring forward other schemes this as this funding would offset some of the HRA funding which could result in other schemes, such as Silk Street be brought forward

Decisions

The Executive:-

- (1) Recommend that Council approve the following changes to Manchester City Council's capital programme:
 - Neighbourhoods - Hough End Masterplan. A capital budget increase of £11.905m, funded by £4m Grant, £5.499m by borrowing on an invest to save basis funded by joint funds held by Manchester City Council and Sport England, £1.832m by borrowing on an invest to save basis and £0.574m borrowing.
- (2) Approve the following changes to the Council's capital programme:
 - Children's Services – Education Basic Need. A capital budget increase of £4.056m is requested, funded by Government Grant.
 - Children's Services - Schools Capital Maintenance Programme. A capital budget increase of £4.264m is requested, funded by Government Grant.
 - Children's Services – High Needs Provision. A capital budget increase of £16.427m is requested, funded by Government Grant.
 - ICT – Registrars EPOS (electronic point of sale) Solution. A capital budget decrease of £0.141m is requested and approval of a corresponding transfer of £0.141m to the revenue budget, funded by Capital Fund.
 - Growth and Development – Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Additional Funding. A capital budget increase of £4.648m is requested, funded by Government Grant. A capital virement of £1.550m is also requested, funded by Borrowing via the Carbon Reduction Programme.
 - ICT – SAP Review. A capital budget decrease of £0.147m is requested and approval of a corresponding transfer of £0.147m to the revenue budget, funded by Capital Fund.
 - Corporate Services - HR and Finance System Replacement Project. A capital budget increase of £1.425m is requested, funded by RCCO – Transformation Reserve.
- (3) Note the increases to the programme of £2.668m as a result of delegated approvals.

- (4) Note the virements in the programme of £2.878m as a result of virements from approved budgets.
- (5) Note the update on Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) grant award.

Exe/22/46 Global Revenue Outturn 2021/22

The Executive considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which set out the final outturn position for the Council's revenue budget in 2021/22. It also highlighted the movements from the previous forecast for the year, which was reported to the Executive in February 2022, based on the position as at the end of December 2021.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources reported that the final outturn position was an underspend of £1.2m for the year and whilst the impact of COVID 19 was still being felt, the financial impact had not materialised at the level initially forecast when the budget was set. Of the approved £41.717 savings for 2021/22, £39.702m (95.2%) had been delivered with £2.015m (4.8%) not being achieved in year as planned. The impact of this had been mitigated during the year and alternative savings were identified where original plans had not been achieved recurrently.

Whilst it had been possible to set a balance budget for 2022/23, the financial position beyond this would be challenging with significant budget shortfalls expected and clarity was needed from Government on future local government funding reforms to enable the Council to plan accordingly with adequate resources.

Councillor Leech commented on the consideration of further possible release of reserves to support the budget and help smooth the level of savings required over the next two years. The Leader responded stating that in developing a Medium Term Financial Plan, the Council needed to ensure it did not go bankrupt as a result of government cuts over the last decade.

Decisions

The Executive:-

- (1) Note the outturn position of £1.161m underspend.
- (2) Approve the proposed revenue budget virements.
- (3) Approve the release of funds approved in budget but not yet allocated to departmental cash limit.
- (4) Approve additional COVID 19 grants to be reflected in the budget.
- (5) Approve the carry forward request totalling £400,000.

Exe/22/47 Gypsies and Travellers - the closure of the Dantzic Street Traveller site

The Executive considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which sought approval to formally close Gypsy and Traveller Dantzic Street (Cheetham Ward) caravan site as it was no longer occupied and had previously been identified as no longer suitable for meeting the needs of existing residents. The report also provided an update to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and a review of the Council's approach to unauthorised encampments.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that in January 2015 the Executive approved the closure of the Dantzic Street Traveller Site, owing to its poor condition. There had been a number of issues with the site over the years and more recently some significant incidents at the site had affected residents.

A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been developed to assess the impact of the closure of the Dantzic Street site on both the former residents and the wider Gypsy and Traveller community. As part of the process of evaluating the impact, consultation with the former residents of the site, with Irish Community Care, a charity who had been providing support and advocacy of behalf of some of the former resident families, and with national and regional organisations representing Gypsy and Traveller interests and rights had been undertaken.

Councillor Leech, noting the sensitive and difficult issue in finding an appropriate site, sought clarity on what the Council's legal duty was in relation to whether it was required to provide just a permanent site or a permanent site and alongside this a site for temporary stays as the Council often spent a considerable amount of money in cleaning up sites where short term occupancy occurred.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development commented that most of the former residents had expressed a wish to live on a Traveller site again in the future and the outcome of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment update would inform the future provision of Traveller sites in Manchester.

The Interim Director of Housing and Residential Growth commented that the council had a legal duty to meet the needs of the gypsy and traveller community, but in doing so the Council had to take account of encampments and unauthorised encampments and the Policing Bill as well as the views of the residents. He added that there was no legal duty to provide a site for temporary stay

Decisions

The Executive

- (1) Note the current condition of the Dantzic Street site.
- (2) Note that the former residents have left the site and are pursuing 'bricks and mortar' accommodation following unrest within the wider Traveller community.

- (3) Approve the proposal to close the Dantzic Street site as it is no longer suitable as a Traveller site.
- (4) Note the proposal to update the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to inform the future provision of Traveller sites in Manchester.
- (5) Approve a commitment that those residents who left the site last summer will be offered a plot or pitch on any new permanent site provided in Manchester in the future.
- (6) Note the outcomes of an Equality Impact Assessment.
- (7) Agree that Discretionary Home Loss payments will be made to former plot holders moving into bricks and mortar accommodation.