

**CABINET**

**REMOTE MEETING HELD  
ON THURSDAY 4TH MARCH, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Fairclough (in the Chair)  
Councillors Atkinson, Cummins, Hardy,  
John Joseph Kelly, Lappin, Moncur and Veidman.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Sir Ron Watson viewed this meeting remotely.

**105. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Maher.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Fairclough reported that Councillor Maher was recovering after recent surgery and requested that the Cabinet's best wishes for a speedy recovery be sent to Councillor Maher.

**106. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

**107. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Decision Made:**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2021 be approved as a correct record.

**108. DOMICILIARY CARE CONTRACTS**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health that sought approval to extend the existing Lead Provider Domiciliary Care Contracts and detailed an update on work taking place in relation to Domiciliary Care.

**Decision Made:** That:

- (1) the current Lead Provider contracts for Areas 1, 2, 3 and 6 be extended for a further twelve months (from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021 onwards) as is provided for in the Contract, as detailed in paragraph 1.3 to the report, be approved;

- (2) the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care be granted delegated authority to make any decisions on the making of any final twelve-month extensions (after the proposed extension period); be approved; and
- (3) the work taking place within the Domiciliary Care sector, be noted.

**Reasons for the Recommendations:**

To ensure that Lead Provider contract arrangements remain thus ensuring that current services and commissioning processes are maintained.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

1. **Not extending current Lead Provider contracts and re-procuring services** – this option was considered and rejected as there is a need to ensure market stability at a time where the sector is dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and there is uncertainty around both the duration of the pandemic and the longer-term ramifications of it. In addition, should the tender for Areas 4 and 5 of Sefton commence, then any further procurement exercises may impact on the stability of the sector. It is also recognised that the current situation has identified opportunities to review new ways of working that have been implemented to respond to the pandemic, which could then be permanently implemented into new models of service, both for Domiciliary Care but also wider models of service linked to further supporting strategic aims around creating and maintaining Service User independence.
2. **Extending contracts for the permitted two-year period** – this option was considered and rejected as it was viewed that this extension period option was too long and that should new ways of working (as outlined in point 1 above) be identified, then they could be implemented as soon as practicable.

**109. SAVIO SALESIAN COLLEGE - APPROVAL OF LEGAL DOCUMENTATION FOR ACADEMY CONVERSION**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Interim Head of Education that detailed the decision by the Secretary of State for Education to convert Savio Salesian College, to a sponsored academy in accordance with statutory requirements and sought authorisation for officers to sign the documentation required to by the academy conversion process.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Safeguarding, Councillor J. J. Kelly thanked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Maher for all his hard work in securing the future of Savio Salesian College and in maintaining a Secondary School focus in South Sefton.

Councillor J. J. Kelly also thanked Officers of Sefton Council, the Catholic Archdioceses, all School Staff and the Academy Trust for all their hard work and on behalf of the Cabinet wished them well for the future.

Decision Made: That:

- (1) the statutory requirements regarding academy conversion, be noted;
- (2) the financial implications to the Council of the academy conversion, be noted; and
- (3) authorise appropriate officers, the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services and the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education in consultation with the Cabinet Member to complete the necessary agreements required as part of the academy conversion process as outlined in the report, be approved.

**Reasons for the Decisions:**

Cabinet needs to authorise appropriate officers to enter into the agreements required as part of the academy conversion process

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

No other options are available. The Secretary of State has the powers to direct that the academy conversion process can continue if the agreements are not signed.

**110. AFGHAN MOD SCHEME**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Communities that outlined the Afghan MOD Scheme and the options for Sefton's participation including agreeing a pledge of numbers of people to be assisted (25 people being the recommended quota). The report also sought approval to appoint the South Sefton Housing Group (Lead organisation Bosco) to deliver the scheme on a 1 year +1+1 arrangement, and sought to delegate authority to the Head of Communities to approve the waiver and any subsequent extension periods.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, Councillor Hardy welcomed the scheme and referred to the success of the syrian refugee programme and those that had settled long term and integrated well in Sefton. Councillor Hardy extended a warm welcome to those families/individuals who would be joining Sefton.

**Decision Made:** That:

- (1) Sefton's participation in the Afghan Ministry of Defence (MOD) Scheme from April 2021, be approved;
- (2) a "pledge" of up to 25 people to be assisted in 2021/22, be approved;
- (3) the appointment of the South Sefton Housing Group (lead organisation Bosco) from April 2021 to deliver the scheme on a 1 year +1+1 arrangement, be approved;
- (4) the Head of Communities be authorised to seek a waiver from the Executive Director to the Contract Procedure Rules to make a direct award of the contract to South Sefton Housing Group, be approved; and
- (5) any extension to the contract following the initial first year be delegated to the Head of Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Communities and Housing, be approved.

**Reasons for the Decisions:**

To participate in a scheme that supports former MOD Afghan personnel that have suffered persecution since the British military withdrawal from Afghanistan. To agree a pledge of 25 people per year which is consistent with the similar Syrian resettlement scheme. To appoint South Sefton Housing Group (lead organisation Bosco) to deliver the scheme given their track record in the Syrian Resettlement scheme and their local knowledge and delivery partnerships. The scheme expenditure will be below the light touch threshold in relation to the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and is for a 1 year +1+1 arrangements. Delegated authority to the Head of Service to approve the waiver and to approve future extensions in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Communities and Housing will provide a seamless approval process.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

The following options was considered and rejected;

1. Not to be involved in the scheme – this option was rejected as there is a moral responsibility to support the scheme which will further enrich Seftons diverse communities.

**111. NEW DOMESTIC ABUSE SAFE ACCOMMODATION DUTY**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Communities that outlined the New Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Duty that the Domestic Abuse Act would introduce, the responsibilities and the work that would need to be undertaken in order to prepare for when the new duty comes into force in April 2021. The report also sought approval for the

creation of a Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and new governance arrangements including membership.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, Councillor Hardy thanked all Council Staff, Partner Agencies and all those providing outreach support to those individuals who have required help and support during the pandemic and who continue to require that support.

**Decision Made:** That:

- (1) the creation of a Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LPB) ensuring the membership meets the requirements of the draft statutory guidance and that the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, Councillor Hardy, be appointed as Chair of the LPB, be approved;
- (2) the creation of a Survivor Forum that will have a representative on the LPB, be approved;
- (3) the Head of Communities be requested to appoint a consultant /additional temporary member of staff to undertake a Needs Assessment and the work outlined in paragraph 5 of the report, be approved;
- (4) the revision of the Sefton Domestic Abuse Strategy to reflect the outcome of the Domestic Abuse (DA) Needs Assessment which is also a requirement of the duty;
- (5) the various commissioning arrangements for DA services in Sefton and bring them into a coherent timetable to ensure that they meet the recommendations of the needs assessment and DA Strategy, be noted; and
- (6) the creation of a range of Safe Accommodation options for DA victims/survivors in Sefton, be approved.

**Reasons for the Decisions:**

The Domestic Abuse Act will place a statutory obligation on Local Authorities to create a Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board who will be responsible for giving effect to the Sefton Domestic Abuse Strategy and in particular the new Safe Accommodation duty the Act places on Local Authorities. The Act recommends membership for Local Partnership Boards, however the governance arrangements fall outside the current arrangements for the Safer Sefton Communities Partnership and will need amending and approving.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

The following option was considered and rejected;

1. Not to create a Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board – this option was rejected as there is a statutory responsibility to create the board.

**112. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2020/21 TO 2023/24 AND FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE 2020 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2020/21 INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE 2020/21 BUDGET - MARCH UPDATE**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services and were advised of:

- (1) the current estimated financial impact of COVID-19 on the 2020/21 Budget;
- (2) the current forecast revenue outturn position for the Council for 2020/21;
- (3) the current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2020/21; and
- (4) the monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of January 2021:
  - the forecast expenditure to year end;
  - variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members;
  - updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects are also presented for approval.

**Decisions Made:** That:

- (A) in respect of the Revenue Budget:
  - (1) the current estimated impact of COVID-19 on the 2020/21 Budget together with the key issues that will influence the final position, be noted;
  - (2) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2020/21 revenue budget and the material variations that are to be expected to the current estimates contained in this report be recognised, and it be agreed subsequent reports provide updates and where appropriate remedial actions plans as appropriate;
  - (3) the current forecast revenue outturn position for 2020/21, be noted;

- (4) it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved;
  - (5) the Government Workforce Capacity Fund grant that has been received to help local authorities to boost staffing levels and which will be utilised in accordance with central government guidance, be noted;
  - (6) the transfer of any unspent Council resources from the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Fund and the Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme into Earmarked Reserves to help support more residents in 2021/22. These transfers will be approved by the Section 151 officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive where applicable, in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, be noted.
- (B) in respect of the Capital Programme:
- (1) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 6.1.1) be noted;
  - (2) the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 January 2021 of £14.572m (paragraph 6.2.1) with the latest full year forecast of £27.237m (paragraph 6.3.1) be noted;
  - (3) the explanations of variances to project budgets (paragraph 6.2.3) be noted;
  - (4) approval of a supplementary capital estimate for £0.788m for the Bootle and Southport Town hall retrofit energy saving works scheme, to be funded from a Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund (PSDF) Section 31 grant allocated by the Government. (paragraph 6.4) be approved;
  - (5) the Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services will manage capital resources to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council (paragraph 6.7.3), be noted.

**Reasons for the Decisions:**

To ensure Cabinet are informed of the forecast outturn position for the 2020/21 Revenue Budget as at the end of January 2021, including delivery of a remedial action plan, and to provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2020/21 and agreed allocations for future years.

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To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None