

At a meeting of the West London Waste Authority held on Friday 20 January 2023 at 11.00 am at the Meeting Room 3, Fourth Floor - Harrow Council Hub.

**Present:**

Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Councillor Katherine Dunne, Councillor Eddie Lavery, Councillor Anjana Patel, Councillor Krupa Sheth and Councillor Julia Neden Watts

In attendance – Robin Pritchard – Independent Member of Audit Committee

**38. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**39. Declarations of interest**

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members.

**40. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2022**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2023 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**41. 2023/2024 Budget Update**

Members received a report which set out the 2023/24 budget proposal.

Jay Patel, Finance Director, advised that the budget was as reported to the Authority in December and that there had now been a final consultation with borough Finance Directors and their feedback was appended to the report. There were two common themes arising from that feedback, firstly the approach to dealing with PPP income was welcomed and secondly there was a desire from Finance Directors to get a better understanding of the Authority's programme of work and savings. A composite response to the queries arising from the consultation had been circulated to the Finance Directors.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the 2023/24 budget be approved;

(2) the budget for work to be met from PPP income;

(3) the Pay As You Throw (PAYT) rates, as set out in section 15 of the report, and the PAYT levy made up of two components totalling of £53.1 million be approved;

(4) the Fixed Cost Levy (FCL) of £14.0 million, as set out in section 16 of the report, be approved;

(5) the recommended trade and construction prices, as set out in section 17 of the report, and delegated authority to the Finance Director to change these in year should the need arise be approved;

- (6) the payment of PPP income totalling £6.3 million to boroughs in July 2023 shared in accordance with the Finance Strategy be approved;
- (7) the new proposed capital budgets, as set out in section 18 of the report, be approved;
- (8) the target level of reserves of £10.3 million to act as a buffer for managing risks (including the risk around the level of PPP income), as set out in section 19 of the officer report, be approved;
- (9) the Medium and Long Term Financial Plan key messages set out in section 20 of the report be noted.

#### **42. Contracts and Operations Update**

Members received a report which provided an update on the Authority's waste treatment arrangements and procurements.

Tom Beagan, the Head of Service Delivery outlined the content of the report and drew attention to the financial implications section. He explained that if, as a result of the rail disruption and resultant additional costs of transporting waste by road, the contractor was unable to use SERC the Authority would miss out on a contract rebate for this material.

The Head of Service Delivery reported that it had been announced that a deposit return scheme for drink containers had been announced by the government for 2025. An update would be provided at the next meeting but that, following a request from a Member, an email update would be circulated once more detail had been received. It would be necessary to stay alert to the implications of such a scheme in terms of recycling rates and materials coming of the waste collection system.

In relation to the HRRC Improvement Plan, a Member asked whether Harrow and Hillingdon were receiving assistance to achieve the minimum diversion rate of 40%. The Head of Service Delivery confirmed that support was being provided and that it was feasible to exceed the 40% threshold and that the other boroughs were generally above 60%.

Members sought clarification on the roll out of the £200,000 funding to boroughs as there was some confusion as to whether the 40% diversion rate threshold had to be reached before funding would be released by the Authority. Emma Beal advised that there appeared to be some misunderstanding and there was a need to rectify this as soon as possible. The Finance Director explained that the mechanism for funding had been documented and agreed with Borough Environment Directors in March 2022 and that officers would liaise with borough colleagues.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

#### **43. Communications Programme Update**

Members received a report which provided an update on the Authority's Communications Programme.

Peter Tilston, Projects Director introduced the report and advised that historically the communications circulated had contained passive information. It was proposed to use

different methodology to engage with residents and to target increasing the use of existing services. Regular updates on this work would be reported to the Authority.

In response to a comment from a Member about the need to work together to improve resident participation in food waste collection, the Projects Director advised that the Joint Communications Group were looking at the sharing of resources and preventing the duplication of work. Another Member stated that there were some residents who wanted to participate but could not access the service, in particular those residing in blocks of flats. She expressed the view that messaging should be to reduce food waste but it was also important not to offend those residents that were already doing the right thing.

Emma Beal, Managing Director, stated that it was important to understand the barriers to resident participation and to understand if any other Authority was having greater success. She acknowledged the need to engage directly, that is, by knocking on doors.

Members note that the Managing Director would be visiting Richmond Council to speak to officers about the work the Authority was doing.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

#### **44. Finance Update**

Members received a report which provided an update on financial and operational matters.

Jay Patel, Finance Director, introduced the report and updated Members in terms of the Learning and Development Key Performance Indicator (KPI) in that more data had been gathered and that since the end of December there had been 391 instances of activities or learning. The expectation was therefore that this KPI would be green by the end of the year.

Having noted a correction to the report in that there was no confidential report setting out details of a delegated decision it was

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the current financial position and forecast for 2022/23 be noted;

(2) the Key Performance Indicators to date be note.

**The meeting finished at 11.57 am.**

The minute taker at this meeting was Alison Atherton.