

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet**

**Date:** Wednesday, 13 September 2023

**Venue:** The Atrium, Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, W5 2HL

### **Attendees (in person): Councillors**

P Mason (Chair) J Anand, J Blacker, L Brett, D Costigan, S Donnelly, P Knewstub, S Manro and K K Nagpal

### **Attendees (virtual): Councillors**

B Mahfouz

### **Also present:**

G Busuttil, D Crawford, J Gallant

### **Also present (virtual):**

V Alexander

## **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Shaw.

In accordance with paragraph 2.6(a) of the Council's Constitution, the following speakers addressed the Cabinet with regard to the following items:

Creation of a Regional Park:

- Cllr Busuttil (nominated by Cllr Malcolm)
- Cllr Gallant

2023/24 Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Update:

- Cllr Busuttil (nominated by Cllr Malcolm)

New Lido Facility in the Borough:

- Cllr Busuttil (nominated by Cllr Malcolm)
- Cllr Gallant

The meeting was held in a hybrid format with members and officers able to join the meeting remotely. However, regulations did not allow for members attending virtually to be counted as present in the attendance section of the minutes, and their attendance would not count as attendance in relation to section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Members attending virtually would be able to speak but would not be able to vote. Cllr Mahfouz attended the meeting virtually.

## **2 Urgent Matters**

There were none.

## **3 Matters to be Considered in Private**

The 2023/24 Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Update Report had a confidential appendix which was exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, however, this was not taken in private as it was not necessary to discuss the confidential information provided.

## **4 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

## **5 Minutes**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 12 July 2023 were agreed and signed as a true and correct record.

## **6 Appointments to Sub Committees and Outside Bodies**

There were none.

## **7 Creation of a Regional Park**

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Agreed the Statement of Ambition and Vision Statement for a new regional park included at paragraph 4.7.
- II. Authorised the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to commission consultants to develop the ambition, vision, objectives and business case for the creation of a regional park in Ealing to include a review of the of the future provision of the borough's golf courses to understand the options for their future relationship with the regional park.
- III. Authorised revenue expenditure of up to £0.200m over the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25, with a view to review of costs and capitalisation as part of approved capital programme budgets as the business case for the Regional Park is approved and proceeds, for the commissioning of consultants to deliver the brief set out in the above recommendation as highlighted in paragraph 6 of this report.
- IV. Authorised revenue expenditure of up to £0.160m over the financial

years 2023/24 and 2024/25 for the cost of project support to include the appointment of an interim project director to support existing and future projects under the umbrella of the regional park including but not exclusively related to a new Lido facility (noting the Lido update report is on this same Cabinet Meeting agenda), a new cultural venue and the Gurnell Leisure Centre redevelopment. Revenue expenditure will be reviewed and capitalised as part of approved capital programme budgets when the business case for the Regional Park and other projects are approved and proceed.

- V. Agreed to the principle of a regional park in Ealing and further agrees that the vision and intention should be formally captured in a spatial policy within Regulation 19 of the Local Plan.
- VI. Agreed that a full consultation exercise be carried out, informed by a consultation plan, to establish detailed proposals for the future management of the park and ensure that they are co-created with key stakeholders
- VII. Agreed in principle to the closure of Perivale Park Golf Course in financial year 2023/24 subject to the outcome of the proposed consultation.
- VIII. Delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Climate Action and Thriving Communities to make any final decision to close Perivale Park Golf Course following consideration of the representations received as part of the consultation.
- IX. Authorised the expenditure of £0.075m over the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 to support a closure of Perivale Golf Course and for the rewilding and transformation of the golf course to park land, to be funded from the existing parks capital programme budgets, S106 and grant contributions.
- X. Authorised the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to consult with the community on proposals for an amphitheatre style outdoor cultural venue, and where community support can be demonstrated, commence a process to appoint a partner to design, build and operate the outdoor cultural venue within the Regional Park.
- XI. Noted that in the Summer 2024 a further detailed report including a fully worked up financial business case (including any meanwhile and long-term proposals for Perivale Park Golf Course) will be presented to Cabinet on the outcome of the commission set out in paragraph 2.2 above.
- XII. Noted that the proposed final layout of the regional park will be brought back to Cabinet for decision following a collaborative process of community engagement alongside technical considerations.
- XIII. Noted that soft market testing with cultural operators on the inclusion of an indoor cultural facility will be reported back via the next Cabinet Report

## **REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

1. Cabinet recalled that Ealing Council declared a climate emergency in April 2019, and that it committed to treat the climate and ecological emergency as a crisis requiring immediate and vital action. Cabinet's aim was for Ealing to become carbon neutral, as a borough and an organisation by 2030.
2. Climate change was driving nature's decline, and the loss of wild places left Ealing ill-equipped to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to change. Cabinet considered that responding to the climate crisis was not possible without creating more space for nature.
3. Ealing Council's council plan sets the vision and strategy for the next four years and the Council's 'promises' to focus on the priorities of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. The plan was the Council's high-level strategic response to the opportunities and challenges facing Ealing now and in the future.
4. Climate Action was one of the three cross cutting strategic objectives over the next four years to realise the vision for the borough by greening and keeping Ealing clean, achieving net zero carbon, and ensuring parks, open spaces and nature were protected and enhanced.
5. The Council Plan committed to create 10 new parks and open spaces, give back to nature 800,000 m<sup>2</sup> (the same as 130 football pitches) through re-wilding and re-introducing wildlife, and pioneering 10 new community growing spaces. Furthermore, it pledged to make streets and open spaces beautiful and resilient through planting another 50,000 trees, work towards increasing the proportion of the borough covered by tree canopies to 25% by doubling the number of trees planted each year, and ensuring every town had access to wild fruit.
6. Cabinet considered that the creation of a Regional Park offered the perfect opportunity to develop a wider, more connected Ealing that was equipped to tackle the Climate Emergency. Alongside the climate action agenda, there was also a growing recognition of the need to begin to restore natural habitats, increase biodiversity and provide space for nature to re-establish itself. With these issues in mind, putting nature at the heart of a green 'post-covid' recovery, could help drive locally led economic regeneration in a way that was good for nature, climate and people.
7. The creation of a Regional Park was going to be a major transformation of the landscape of Ealing to deliver a wide range of significant benefits including:
  - Making Ealing a more vibrant, green, and attractive place to live and visit.
  - Supporting nature recovery in Ealing by providing more space for nature-rich habitats and potential new species reintroductions.

- Increasing the carbon storage and sequestering capacity and contributing to the Council's carbon reduction targets.
- Providing more opportunities for Ealing's residents to connect with nature.
- Providing much needed flood resilience

8. A key concept that had emerged in recent years is that of 'rewilding'. Re-wilding Britain, a UK Charity, defined re-wilding as: "the large-scale restoration of ecosystems to the point where nature can take care of itself. Rewilding seeks to reinstate natural processes and, where appropriate, missing species – allowing them to shape the landscape and the habitats within. Rewilding encourages a balance between people and the rest of nature so that we thrive together. It can provide opportunities for communities to diversify and create nature-based economies; for living systems to provide the ecological functions on which we all depend; and for people to reconnect with wild nature." – It was recognised that rewilding differed from traditional conservation as it was more focused on the action of 'returning' a place back to its natural state rather than preserving a place in its natural state. Thus, rewilding focused on actions to move a place from an impacted state to a natural state. As such, there are significant opportunities for rewilding with three broad options that can be further examined:

- **Passive or Abandonment Rewilding:** the simplest option; implies the abandonment of green space to turn into woodland in its own time, with woodland developing within 25 years. This would lead to the loss of open grasslands. Only minor infrastructure would be required.
- **Community Rewilding:** similar to the above but with higher levels of intervention, which in turn is more likely to secure external funding. Woodland would develop within similar timescales to the above option but would also involve keeping more of the site open. The option would also include resources for proactively seeking funding for visitor infrastructure that may be required and on some commercial activities to generate income subject to consultation and sustainable business planning. This would also enable planting new trees as part of the plan to plant 50,000 trees for woodland creation.
- **Active Rewilding:** Infrastructure may involve a wellbeing hub and café; in addition, there could be exemplary cycle infrastructure, with an accessible pathway, suitable for cycles and other wheeled users through trees.

9. The borough population was projected to grow by over 38,000 from 360,000 to 398,000 in the ten years from 2021 to 2031 with an expected increase in demand for different less formal outdoor spaces for people to be active. Regional Parks developed a network of parks and trails that provided connectivity for people, wildlife, and

ecosystems. It was widely understood that people visited regional parks to participate in activities such as hiking, walking, riding, cycling, camping, swimming, boating, nature study, and organised group activities. These activities can be enjoyed year-round, and they contributed to a healthy lifestyle. Regional Parks provided for the health, inspiration and education of residents and visitors through a wide range of indoor and outdoor experiences and activities that fostered enjoyment of and appreciation and respect for the region's natural environments.

#### Vision, Ambition, and Governing Themes

10. Cabinet considered the successful legacy that the proposed regional park was expected to achieve through a clear articulation of the Council's ambition, vision and three thematic priorities for the regional park.
11. The design, development, and curation of the park was going to be governed by the following three themes:
  - Sustainability and Accessibility
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Economy and Culture
12. Cabinet considered the further detail of the potential of the Regional Park to deliver against the key themes which was provided in Appendix 1.
13. Cabinet understood that in the evolution and development of the three themes it had been identified that inequalities, diversity and inclusivity also needed to be an overarching theme given that the creation of a Regional Park could have a significant positive impact on these issues affecting the borough's residents and communities.

#### Sustainability and Accessibility

14. Cabinet recalled that Ealing Council declared a climate emergency in April 2019, committing to treat the climate and ecological emergency as a crisis requiring immediate and vital action. The aim was to become carbon neutral, as a borough and an organisation by 2030.
15. The Council's approach to Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy had been to focus on five themes, where the organisation had the most control and direct influence, based on policies, procurement, projects and relationships. Each of the five themes within this strategy identified unique objectives, targets and actions that were going to either reduce or capture carbon emissions in Ealing and beyond.
16. Cabinet understood that all carbon emission sources were going to need to be cut to zero eventually, this strategy was the first step toward

reducing emissions significantly by 2030.

17. The creation of a Regional Park was going to significantly support the ability for the Council to meet the Climate and Ecological Emergency strategic objectives. It was recognised that the pandemic of 2020 had identified the importance of our greenspaces for mental health and well-being and that they were places which should be treasured and protected. The trees, hedgerows, parks, rivers, ponds, fields and gardens in Ealing all had a vital role to play in storing carbon and combatting climate change. It was of equal importance for the borough to retain a diversity of habitats which were connected to each other. The Strategy sought to increase the amount of greenery in the borough through further development of carbon sequestration habitats including the number of trees and area of meadows. The objectives set out in the Strategy were going to work alongside the borough's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) which was the borough's strategic framework and road map for improving its biodiversity including all plant and animal life.
18. The vision for nature in the Strategy stated that the Council was continuing to reshape and modernise the approach to the management and maintenance of the Borough's green space network to maximise carbon capture, enhance the wildlife value, provide flood resilience and ensure these spaces were equipped to sustainably meet the needs and aspirations of communities recognising the following as a set of benefits.
  - Increased mental health and wellbeing of residents
  - Improved air quality
  - Urban cooling and adapting to extreme heat events
  - Education and access to nature
  - Increase biodiversity and connections for wildlife
  - Increased community engagement amongst residents, reducing loneliness
  - Reduction in noise pollution
  - Reduce risk of flooding
19. The scope for habitat creation with such a large area is extremely valuable as large areas with connected habitats offered the best opportunities to encourage wildlife and provide ecological resilience. The borough currently had limited capacity for tree planting due to the demands on our existing green space and such an area would enable several hundred thousand trees to be planted, providing new woodlands. A mosaic of connected habitats could be created encompassing the river, meadows, woodland, wetland, ponds and lakes in line with the Council's Biodiversity Strategy. The park project would allow the creation of a new generation of wildlife grassland.
20. Three of the best ways to capture carbon were tree planting, ponds,

wetlands and meadows. The scope for increasing the borough's ability to move to net zero by 2030 would be greatly enhanced with the opportunities the new park would offer. Such large areas of new planting and areas managed for biodiversity would increase the Council's ability to filter pollutants and improve water quality.

21. The new park was going to offer many new opportunities for walking and cycling. Having more of the river available would enable better public access of this key asset with new crossing points, paths and seating.
22. Alongside the nature of the offer of the open space, the accessibility to the open space was of particular importance if the open space was to adequately cater for a regional user catchment. The London Plan supports maximum distances for residential properties within London to a Regional Park of 8.0km.
23. While the open space definitions identify that car parking should be accommodated within Regional Parks, accessibility by public transport was an essential characteristic of strategic open space. Long distance accessibility is primarily dependent on the rail system, both London Underground and Overland Network. High quality routes to and from stations to the strategic open spaces network are vital and developing those routes should be considered as an integral element of the management of the strategic open space aspirations.
24. As part of the Local Plan Evidence Base and community led regeneration frameworks, the Council had followed a 20-minute neighbourhood approach to its seven towns. The 20-minute neighbourhood is the idea that people should be able to access their local shops and services including access to public transport, health, education, employment, community, retail, culture, leisure and green spaces within a 20 minute walk or cycle of their home.
25. A regional park at the heart of Ealing with new east-west and north-south active travel routes would be within 20 minutes reach of Greenford, Hanwell, Ealing, Perivale towns and parts of Southall whilst improving accessibility for residents across the Borough. It was going to enable travel by modes other than private car between multiple centres and improve interaction, sociability and access to a wider range of amenities than available currently.
26. Access to open space from a closer catchment could be achieved by both the bus network and pedestrian/cycle networks. Such local access could often be significantly enhanced through relatively small scale interventions that overcome existing barriers to access. This could include works such as opening up existing boundary fences, providing new road crossings, pedestrian and cycle bridges over rivers or rail, or establishment of new links and routes between separate land ownerships.



## Health and Wellbeing

27. Ealing was a diverse and vibrant borough, but it also faced significant health inequalities. This was because people had unequal life experiences, with different access to opportunities and privileges. As well as differences in health outcomes for example diabetes, obesity etc, these differences are visible in the 'building blocks of health and wellbeing' - the wider life conditions which ultimately impact how well, and long people live. The best evidence for sustainable impact on health inequalities supported work on these building blocks of health and wellbeing, away from a focus on individual behaviour change or the provision of health services alone. Access to functional and good quality green space like that proposed for Ealing's regional park, was a good example of an essential building block of health and wellbeing since there were many health and wellbeing, and healthy equity opportunities and impacts that could arise from its creation.
28. Ealing's Health and Wellbeing Board (a partnership between the Council, Local NHS organisations (Ealing ICB, hospital and community health trusts), VCFS and HealthWatch) have developed 'Together in Ealing' the new Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2023-2028 focused on tackling inequality through work on the building blocks of health. Theme 3 in the strategy, '*Connecting the building blocks of health and wellbeing*', included commitments to work on these building blocks, including the equitable provision of good quality green space, through the lens of health equity.
29. Cabinet considered the following as a high-level perspective of some of the health and wellbeing opportunities arising from the creation of a regional park.
30. During the COVID-19 related lockdowns, "going to the park" became a central topic of national conversation. In England, people were permitted to go to parks and sit down, and to meet another individual. For some, this was a pleasant novelty. For others, who have had little access to green outside spaces during lockdown, it was a welcome change in their quality of life. COVID-19 refocused attention on the role that parks play in society. There were over 27,000 urban green spaces in the UK, with more than half the UK population regularly making use of them. Parks today continue to serve their primary historical purpose – to provide urban residents, particularly those with little private green space, a shared site for recreation in a natural environment. It was concern about health inequalities and poor housing conditions in booming industrial towns which led to the creation of parks in the late-Nineteenth Century.

31. Lockdown reignited some of this historical sentiment and the debate over the public/private green space divide. Commentators had argued that confinement without access to a park during lockdown would have had a devastating impact on the mental and physical health of those living in high-density urban areas without a garden. Recent ONS data showed that one in eight households in the UK did not have access to a garden, and that Black people in England were nearly four times as likely as White people to not have their own outdoor space. One in five young people had no access to a garden. Those in semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, as well as the unemployed, were over three times as likely to not have a garden as those in. Londoners in general were least likely to have a garden, with 21% of homes having no shared or private green space.
32. There was growing evidence of the physical and mental health benefits of green spaces such as the proposed regional park in Ealing. Research showed that access to green space was associated with better health outcomes, and income-related health inequality was less pronounced where people had access to green space. Research in the Netherlands showed that every 10 per cent increase in exposure to green space translated into a reduction of five years in age, in terms of expected health problems, with similar benefits cited in Canada and Japan.
33. More specifically access to good quality and large open connected green space was associated with positive health outcomes, including:
- improvements in mental health and wellbeing, such as depression, stress, dementia
  - increased longevity in older people
  - lower body mass index (BMI) scores, overweight and obesity levels and higher levels of physical activity
  - better self-rated health for all ages and socio-economic groups.
  - reductions in a number of long-term conditions such as heart disease, cancer, and musculoskeletal conditions
34. Green space such as the regional park could improve the environmental quality of an area with consequential health benefits. Some of the environmental benefits of green spaces included improved air and water quality, noise absorption and reduced 'urban heat island' effects. Additionally, green spaces could improve absorption of excessive rainwater and reduced surface water run-off reducing the likelihood of floods and sewage overflow, while protecting biodiversity and enhancing ecosystems.
35. Parks could provide alternative routes for circulation including green

routes for pedestrians and cyclists; therefore, promoting more active and healthy travel. Parks also provided a place to take exercise; through either formal provision such as tennis courts and football pitches, outdoor swimming pools, running, cycling, yoga or meditation, to take the dog for a walk or gentle stroll. The links between access to green space and levels of physical activity were well-established in research, which showed higher levels of physical activity in areas with more green space. Estimates suggested that an inactive person was likely to spend 37% more time in hospital and visit the doctor 5.5% more often than an active person. In 2007, physical inactivity was estimated to cost the NHS between £1 billion andm £1.8 billion. This highlighted some of the indirect and long term cost benefits that could be realised through the regional park.

36. In terms of the potential for the regional park to impact positively on health equity, research showed that living in areas with green spaces was associated with significantly less income-related health inequality, weakening the effect of deprivation on health
37. Access to nature had shown to reduce blood pressure, reduce stress and improve mental well-being. A change of scene and impact on the visual sense were beneficial aspects of urban green space.
38. Child development in terms of both mental learning and physical development had shown to improve through play in a variety of stimulating environments, including woodlands, parks and wetland areas. Play was crucial for many aspects of children's development. Play could promote the acquisition of social skills, experimentation, confrontation and resolution of emotional crises, to moral understanding, cognitive skills such as language and comprehension. Play could also promote physical well-being. Hard spaces offered little opportunity for play and green spaces were preferable offering a diverse range of activities.
39. Play brought diverse people together and improved the social and natural environment. Playful places enabled safe and stimulating interactions between friends, families, communities, strangers and with the built and natural environment. For both children and adults, the social aspects of play were fundamental for relationship building with people and the environment. Research suggested that children's and adults' interactions during play could be essential for creating the kind of supportive social environments that fostered a healthy development.
40. Nature-based play helped to create a greater sense of empathy and respect for nature and could contribute to climate resilience. Investments to 'de-grey' (paving, roads, concrete etc.) public spaces, to make room for increased rainfall, and to allow for more greenery and shade were an ideal opportunity to embed play elements into the design of these nature based solutions. Such investments could create climate resilient environments, educate about the importance of

biodiversity and climate action, and open new places for diverse play opportunities.

41. Child and play-friendly spaces could also boost the economic value and long-term viability of the built environment. Public spaces where families with young children chose to visit signal better than any marketing material that an area is clean, safe, and fun. Retail, leisure, and businesses increasingly recognised that play is good for business!
42. Cabinet was seeing a worrying trend of increasing levels of obesity in children. This was because people had unequal life experiences, with different access to opportunities and privileges. These differences were visible in the building blocks of health and wellbeing. These were the health, social and economic inequalities acting as root causes of health and wellbeing and they ultimately impacted how well, and long people live.
43. Addressing these challenges required a collaborative and strategic approach, which was why members of the Ealing Health and Wellbeing Board had worked closely with partners across the NHS, Ealing council and resident and community groups, to develop 'Together in Ealing' the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2023-2028 with the Vision: We will see Ealing's communities thriving, with good health and wellbeing, and with fairness and justice in the building blocks of health and wellbeing. Cabinet considered the following points which provided a high-level perspective of some of the health and wellbeing opportunities arising from the creation of a regional park.

#### Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facility Strategy 2022-2031

44. There was a significant opportunity for the Regional Park to support the delivery of the above strategy which had been developed to support the Council's corporate priorities and the administration's manifesto pledges, in shaping the future of Ealing. Together the strategy and Regional Park presented opportunities to contribute to the achievement of outcomes relating to improved health and increased physical activity levels of Ealing residents, establishing how to best meet their current and future health and wellbeing needs and encourage and support the continued independence of Ealing residents, contributing to the priority of making Ealing a better place to live and work.
45. The strategy had developed an accurate and robust evidence base to provide the leisure and sport content for the new draft Local Plan and to help inform planning policy decisions regarding the protection, enhancement and provision of existing and future indoor and outdoor sports facilities providing an understanding of the best location(s) for any new facilities.
46. In order to achieve the vision and 3 key objectives of the 10-year

strategy, the Council was exploring opportunities to:

- Enable and promote a network of accessible sports facilities across the borough maintaining and enhancing the borough's built and green infrastructure.
- Work with commercial and community partners and national governing bodies to enable and secure the development and long-term management as well as financial viability of indoor and outdoor sport facilities across the borough.
- Seek to maximise opportunities which may arise to develop sports facilities as part of wider regeneration, education or place-based projects.
- Identify and bid for external funding to support the development and delivery of new sports facilities across Ealing.
- Help clubs and organisations to promote the benefits of sport to bring communities together to make them stronger reducing inequality and celebrating diversity.
- Promote sport and active recreation as a key enabler to healthy and active lifestyles.
- Be innovative and creative when investigating possible solutions to facility supply needs in light of the general reduction in funding available to improve and or build new sports facilities.

## Economy and Culture

47. The Council had recently launched its Cultural Manifesto *367,100 Creatives - Ealing's cultural manifesto for creative change* to create direction, focus and purpose for culture in Ealing to achieve a change in the growth, resilience and sustainability of our creative economy and skills sectors.
48. The manifesto was about enhancing connections and enhancing capabilities. Cabinet considered that culture should influence all its services and be embedded in everything the Council does. This included culture-led regeneration; culture to be key in economic recovery and bringing people and pride back to our high streets; requirements for culture embedded in council planning and policies.
49. The creation of a regional park provided an opportunity to further an ambition for the borough to potentially host a new outdoor cultural venue and frame that within the context of the ambition to be the foremost borough of culture in west London. The report recommended the Council consult the community on proposals for an amphitheatre style outdoor cultural venue, and where community support can be demonstrated, commence marketing of Regional Park land to appoint a partner to design, build and operate the outdoor cultural venue.
50. Turbocharging Ealing's creative capabilities by building connections

between creative employers and the education sector; local communities and the creative sector working together with the Council; the creative sector collaborating better with each other; and all connecting with and influencing national agencies and organisations. The Council would work with the developer community to provide affordable creative workspaces, contribute to cultural capacity-building, create Culture Hubs and realise the state-of-the-art arts centre that Ealing deserves.

51. The majority category (36%) of survey respondents engaged in the development of the cultural manifesto were 'somewhat satisfied' with arts and culture in Ealing, highlighting that the top things currently missing from the creative and leisure offer in Ealing: More venues, creative/performance space/hub for artists, more opportunities to participate, more opportunities for children and young people and to appeal to a more diverse audience.
52. Ealing's local commercial centres experienced a resurgence during the pandemic as lockdown restrictions and an increase in working from home reduced the need to travel, meaning that residents were spending more time in their local area for discretionary activities as well as for employment. The Council was adopting a sustainable polycentric form of development across the borough that was going to reinforce the unique functions and roles of the centres within the local and wider West London economy.
53. A regional park could act as a hub for economic activity, provide hundreds of local jobs and create conditions for economic development across communities. A long-term investment in parks can bring a range of economic activities, creating both direct and indirect jobs and provide people with skills to find employment. The jobs created in parks are meaningful and create a sense of purpose. Even revenue-generating activities in park tend to focus on things that communities value, such as cafes, food provision, community events and physical activities.
54. At a regional park scale, a resilient model of both commercial operations and developing an enterprise to meet the needs of people and planet through social enterprise and cooperatives could be feasible. The key assets carrying higher risks within a regional park portfolio were going to need to be run on a commercial basis alongside a social enterprises model, that was going to reinvest the money they made back into the community, for example. A sustainable revenue generation model, supply chain, skills opportunities and capturing the wider economic benefits was going to need to be considered as part of the business case development.
55. A regional park that connected most of the boroughs town centres had clear benefits to invigorating local business, increasing property/land values, enabling development opportunities and job creation. Local residents were also going to benefit from quality of life improvements though better access to recreation and the potential for healthier mode

of travel. Land that had previously been built upon within the park would potentially be released for new income generating developments that supported the investment and upkeep and reduced financial pressure on local services in doing so.

56. Creating a large linear park through and close to some of the more deprived areas of the borough had obvious benefits to encourage and enable recreation and would allow a rethink of the recreation facilities in the borough for all ages, where new ideas and connections could be developed to complement the existing popular facilities like the Gruffalo trail, Hanwell Zoo and Horsenden Farm.
57. In addition to diverse residential neighbourhoods, a regional park was in close proximity of many of Ealing's strategic and local industrial areas in Southall, Hanwell, Greenford and Perivale. With a regional park on their doorstep, improved access and investment, the proposal was going to provide much needed local amenity for employees, attract businesses and improve productivity.
58. The Council had launched 'Good for Ealing' inward investment programme and a new regional park in London was going to further reinforce its credentials as a fantastic place to live and work. A regional park provided an opportunity to work proactively with private sector, business, developers, social enterprise and local voluntary sector to form partnerships and create a shared ambition.
59. Ealing was currently ranked 15th greenest out of the 33 London boroughs. This park represented a huge potential investment in the boroughs and London's natural capital. As the GLA stated in an urban context, these assets were our parks, rivers, trees, and features such as green roofs that collectively form an essential green infrastructure. Designed and managed as green infrastructure, natural capital could:
  - Promote healthier living
  - Lessen the impacts of climate change Improve air quality and water quality Encourage walking and cycling
  - Store carbon
  - Improve biodiversity and ecological resilience
60. It was rare in London to have the opportunity to realise all this in one space which would impact the lives of almost every resident of the borough and beyond as it would be of London wide significance.
61. The importance of open space provision to area regeneration was highlighted in Government guidance and evidenced in London and elsewhere in the UK. Open space assisted in establishing the setting and quality of new developments and in promoting area regeneration. A regional park was going to contribute to the achievement of regeneration benefits by providing an attractive setting for development

and promoting social inclusion and community benefits.

62. High quality parks and public spaces created economic, social and environmental value. They were also highly valued by local people. Research suggested that the quality of public space and the built environment had a direct impact on lives and the way people felt. In terms of economic benefits there was evidence that high quality green spaces had a positive impact upon perceptions of places, were good for business, and being close to public space adds economic value. Safe, clean spaces encouraged people to walk more and therefore offered significant health benefits. Parks and green spaces offered places for sport, recreation and relaxation, benefiting physical health and mental wellbeing – this was particularly well understood during the COVID Pandemic.
63. There was evidence that access to good quality local spaces could help people live longer and green spaces could provide solutions to redress worsening public health. Green spaces could also bring significant community benefits as places to play, encouraging neighbourliness and social inclusion and as a venue for events that brought people together. Networks of linked open spaces and green corridors could encourage cycling and reduce dependency on the car, reducing levels of traffic. Ealing was particularly well served by Green Corridors with the canal network and River Brent Park providing important routes for people and wildlife.
64. Ealing Council's park service had an excellent track record in the delivery of large scale park improvements and a history of achieving quality accolades. For the ninth year (2022) in a row Ealing had won gold in the London in Bloom Borough of the Year Awards. It had continuously been given the honour in the Large City category for the overall impact of its horticulture and environmental management and for community participation. Historically, the borough had been awarded almost perfect marks for elements such as promoting sustainability, developing local heritage including natural heritage, its achievements in conservation and biodiversity and increasing community involvement. Furthermore, Ealing Council and local groups had recently been awarded prestigious Green Flags for 26 parks and open spaces, further enhancing the borough's reputation as one of the greenest and most beautiful in the capital. A Green Flag flying was a sign that that a park kept the highest standards, was beautifully maintained and had excellent facilities.
65. The Council had also delivered pioneering and creative solutions to park improvements; not least on the award winning park projects to create Northala Fields; to restore Walpole Park and Gunnersbury Park and to create the Greenford to Gurnell Greenway.
66. Additionally, good progress had been achieved to deliver the Council Plan target of creating ten new parks. The Central Plaza in the Acton



Gardens development in South Acton was planned to be opened in September 2023. Works were well underway to deliver an area of newly accessible park land at Glade Lane, Norwood Green, Southall; with work extending into surrounding areas, providing wider improvements to the park and the Grand Union Canal. Planning permission had been granted for the newly publically accessible South Lawn at Twyford Abbey and the next phase of the Central Gardens in the Green Quarter, Southall, was expected to be completed by August 2024.

67. The economic benefits were well understood, open spaces improve air quality, provide sustainable urban drainage solutions and could help mitigate against climate change, whilst trees cool air and provide shade. Open spaces were also important areas for wildlife and biodiversity and provided opportunities for local people to experience nature first hand.
68. The London Plan was the overall strategic plan for London, and it set out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031. It formed part of the development plan for Greater London and it was necessary for the London boroughs' local plans to be in general conformity with the London Plan. The London Plan recognised the valuable contribution that green spaces play in providing a good quality environment. In order to fully understand the provision of open space and the demands and needs placed on them. Policy 7.18C of the London Plan stated that when Councils were assessing open space needs they should include appropriate designations and policies to protect open space and identify areas of open space deficiency.
69. National and regional policy guidance required local authorities to set their own local standards for the provision of open space and apply this through local planning policy and the Local Development Framework. Using 2011 population data it had been determined that the current average provision of public open space across the borough is 1.97 hectares per 1,000 head of population. Over the next 15 years, as a result of project population growth this was expected to decrease to 1.82 ha / 1000 head population.
70. This equated to just 18.2 m<sup>2</sup> per person (less than the London average 18.96m<sup>2</sup>) where the World Health Organization recommended the availability of a minimum of 9m<sup>2</sup> of green space per individual with an ideal value of 50 m<sup>2</sup> per capita. One of the primary aims of the creation of a regional park was going to be to increase this availability towards more ideal levels.
71. Whilst the average level of provision was currently 1.97 hectares per 1,000 population the distribution of public open space and the resident population was not uniform. The ward data also showed that the amount of Public Open Space availability over time was going to decline based on

projected increases in population. At a ward level Ealing Broadway had just 0.15 hectares per 1,000 population and North Greenford 6.58 ha per 1,000 population, a variation in provision by a factor of over 40 times.

72. All Public Open Space in Ealing had been classified against the GLA hierarchy set out in Table 1 below. In a built up borough such as Ealing large areas of open green space were at a premium. Larger spaces, in particular District Parks over 20 hectares, offered a wider range of opportunities for recreation and for wildlife. Within the borough there were areas of green space which lay adjacent to, or very close to others, and collectively could provide an opportunity to create one larger parcel of land.

73. Ealing Council had used the GLA hierarchy to analyse accessibility to local parks (within 400 m of people's front doors, about 5 minutes' walk) and to district parks (within 1.2 km, about 15 minutes' walk). This provided a consistent approach across London for identifying broad areas of deficiency in provision. In addition, as required by the GLA guidance, the study area was extended for 1.2 km beyond the borough's boundaries to identify district and local parks larger than 0.3 hectares with catchments that carry across into Ealing. Audits of the condition and quality of those sites were not carried out.

Table 1: London's Public Open Space Hierarchy

Type	Area (ha)	Distances from home to open space	Number of sites Ealing
Regional	Over 400 ha.	8 km	0
Metropolitan	60-400 ha.	3.2 km	2
District parks	20-60 ha.	1.2 km	6
Local parks	2-20	400 m	46
Small local parks	0.4-2 ha.	400 m	41
Pocket parks	Under 0.4ha.	400 m	41

#### Consolidated sites

74. In a built up borough such as Ealing large areas of open green space were at a premium. In general, larger spaces, in particular District Parks over 20ha offer a wider range of opportunities for recreation and for wildlife. There were several places in the borough where areas of green space lay adjacent or very close by to others and collectively could act as a larger parcel of land. There were two spaces in the borough where this created metropolitan parks (greater than 60ha) – Horsenden Hill, and Northolt and Greenford Countryside Park and there were six other sites where combinations of land parcels created District Parks (greater than 20ha); but nothing as significant as a Regional Park (greater than 400ha). It would be reasonable as part of

any feasibility study to consider how the amalgamation of existing spaces in the borough including Brent River Park and Horsenden Hill could support the creation of a Regional Park to achieve the considerable benefits of a Regional Park outlined in this report.

75. It was necessary to consider Regional Parks within the context of current strategic policy guidance. The importance of open space was recognised in a range of government policy and policy guidance. Particular importance was placed on the range of benefits that could be attributed to open spaces within the vision for climate action and thriving communities, particularly in creating improved living environments through the promotion of healthy living, improved accessibility and economic sustainability.
76. Within the GLA Hierarchy a Regional Park was defined as large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which were going to be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. They offered a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.

## **8 2023/24 Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Update**

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the estimated General Fund revenue budget outturn position of net £8.214m (2.87%) overspend for 2023/24 (section 4), and an overspend of £0.732m position on the Housing Revenue Account for 2023/24 (section 7).
- II. Noted the in-year Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit forecast of £3.049m to be charged to the DSG account (section 6).
- III. Noted the progress on delivering the 2023/24 savings programme (section 5).
- IV. Noted the 2023/24 capital programme forecast (paragraph 8.3).
- V. Approved the re-profiling of 2023/24 capital programme net slippage of over £1m of £204.280m (Appendix 2) into future years.
- VI. Approved the decommissioning of £148.252m of capital schemes, most significantly the reversal of budgets for the previous Perceval House redevelopment scheme, as outlined in section 8.5.
- VII. Approved an additional capital programme budget of £3.030m for the purchase of temporary accommodation, as outlined in section 8.8, to be funded by Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Round 2 grant of £2.4m, and £0.630m of Homeless Prevention Grant balances.
- VIII. Approved an additional capital programme budget of £0.906m to the capital programme in relation to Gunnersbury Sports Hub, to be

funded by £0.453m capital contribution from London Borough of Hounslow and £0.453 borrowing, as outlined at para 8.9.

- IX. Approved an increase to the HRA capital budget totalling £4.815m as outlined at section 8.10; £3.788m in relation to the Lexden Road housing scheme, and £1.027m in relation to the Northolt Grange housing scheme, and changes to the financing of these schemes.
- X. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to award the Design and Build JCT contract for the construction of 92 new affordable homes at Northolt Grange approved by Cabinet in February 2023 for a revised total cost set out in Confidential Appendix 3.

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

To forecast the financial position for 2023/24 based on available information at the end of 30 June 2023. Cabinet reviewed the Council's forecast position on revenue, capital, income, and expenditure to the end of Quarter 1.

### **9 New Lido Facility in the Borough**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Reaffirmed the commitment to provide a new Lido facility within the borough in line with the Council Plan 2022-2026 commitment and agreed to the vision statement for the facility as shown at paragraph 3.1 of the report.
- II. Noted and agreed the longlist of sites which have been identified for the possible location of a Lido facility as summarised in Appendix 1 of the report.
- III. Authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability following consultation with the Cabinet member for Thriving Communities to further explore the proposed long list of potential sites identified in Appendix 1 of the report (Lido Site Longlist) and to commission further, more detailed feasibility study work, including surveys, searches, procurement options and viability, to identify a preferred location.
- IV. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability following consultation with the Cabinet member for Thriving Communities to decide upon a shortlisted site.
- V. Approved a revenue budget of up to £0.250m for the purposes of commissioning the activity outlined at paragraphs III and IV.
- VI. Noted that a Sounding Board was to be established, with membership consisting of key stakeholders to support and assist in steering the future direction of the project.

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

1. Provision of a new Lido facility in the borough was an objective set out in the Council Plan 2022 – 2026. Cabinet considered the report which set out a recommended vision for the project in the context of the strategic objectives as set out in the Council Plan and sought a basis on which to take the project forward for further feasibility work and analysis. The proposed vision for the facility would be to create a new outdoor swimming facility in Ealing which was inclusive, family orientated, promoted health and wellbeing and had sustainability at the heart.
2. The Ealing Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facility Strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 31, produced in line with Sport England's latest guidance provided an accurate and robust evidence base to inform Planning policy decisions regarding the protection, enhancement and provision of existing and future indoor and outdoor sports facilities providing an understanding of the best location(s) for any new facilities. By following Sport England's assessment process, this strategic document identified that the existing indoor and outdoor sports facility supply in Ealing fell below the needs of the existing population as evidenced by the projects identified across the borough.
  - a. As with other sports facilities, swimming pool provision was reviewed and an assessment made of the existing and potential future supply and demand of indoor swimming facilities; current and future trends in participation were also considered as well as the views of National Governing Bodies of Sport and local sports clubs. The assessment showed that Ealing had a current and future need for more indoor water space, the level of which supported the need for new and enhanced swimming pool facilities at both Gurnell and Dormers Wells Leisure Centres; even with these two facilities Ealing may still have demand for more water space.
  - b. Although not included in the formal Sport England facility strategy swimming pool assessment process, a new outdoor swimming facility in the borough would, to some extent, help meet Ealing's need for more swimming space.
  - c. Swim England's top eight benefits of swimming were: full body workout, great for general wellbeing, de-stresses and relaxes, burns calories, lowers the risk of diseases, water supports the body, increases your energy levels and allows you to exercise without sweating. There were extra health benefits unique to open and cold water swimming, both disciplines were slightly more extreme forms of outdoor swimming than swimming in a heated outdoor pool, but still relevant to a certain extent; these four additional benefits were better sleep, increased happiness, boosted immune system and preventing and managing long term health conditions.
  - d. Whilst there was abundant evidence for the physical and mental health benefits of swimming, social connection was arguably as beneficial as the physical exercise for participants' health, particularly their mental health. Designing environments that

enable people to connect with others and live well was vital to improving the health and wellbeing of local people and achieving the ambitions set out in the manifesto. It was therefore vital that the Lido was inclusive, actively working to break down social, cultural and financial barriers to bring people together. In addition, a new Lido facility was going to support the Council's plans for Good Growth by creating employment and enhancing green spaces.

3. Work to date had focussed on reviewing sites across the borough to identify those which would suit the accommodation of a new Lido facility. Various sites had been considered and assessed to arrive at a longlist based upon the following criteria:
  - Deliverability
  - Sustainability, energy, transport links, active travel
  - Accessibility for all of borough residents
  - Financial attractiveness to operators, proximity to existing leisure facilities.
4. The potential sites were included at Appendix 1 to the report and constituted the longlist of options. To move the proposals forward, it was necessary to carry out further analysis to determine from this longlist:
  - optimal location
  - projected current and future demand
  - commercial viability and financial return including capital and revenue projections
  - scope of facility and design brief.
5. By coming to this decision, Cabinet established a budget for further feasibility work to be completed on the longlist of sites and determined a recommended site through an officer delegation.

## **10 Final Report Scrutiny Panel 1 2022-23 - Tackling the Cost of Living Crisis**

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the final report of the scrutiny panel 1 2022/23 – Tackling the cost of living crisis
- II. Accepted the scrutiny panel's recommendations in section 13 of the final report
- III. Identified whether further information or advice was required from council officers on any of the recommendations before cabinet could take a decision about accepting or rejecting these
- IV. Directed council officers to produce/or finalise an action plan within

an agreed timescale on those recommendations that are agreed by cabinet.

**REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

1. Scrutiny panels had a role in improving decision-making and service delivery through effective scrutiny. It was important that recommendations from scrutiny panels were taken forward in a timely manner and in accordance with the Council's Constitution if the scrutiny function was to be effective. The scrutiny and executive protocol identified the timescale for cabinet to respond to scrutiny panel recommendations. This decision meant that the response was made in a timely manner and that services can implement the accepted recommendations.

**11 Final Report of the Health and Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel 2022-23**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the final report of the health and adult social services standing scrutiny panel 2022-23
- II. Accepted the scrutiny panel's recommendations in section 7 of the final report
- III. Identified whether further information or advice was required from council officers on any of the recommendations before cabinet could take a decision about accepting or rejecting these
- IV. Directed council officers to produce/or finalise an action plan within an agreed timescale on those recommendations that are agreed by cabinet.
- V. Thanked Cllr D Crawford for his service as Chair to the Health and Adult Social Services Standing Scrutiny Panel for the past seven years.

**REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

1. Scrutiny panels had a role in improving decision-making and service delivery through effective scrutiny. It was important that recommendations from scrutiny panels were taken forward in a timely manner and in accordance with the Council's Constitution if the scrutiny function was to be effective. The scrutiny and executive protocol identified the timescale for cabinet to respond to scrutiny panel recommendations. This decision meant that the response was made in a timely manner and that services can implement the accepted recommendations.

**12 Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman -  
Complaint Reference 22 002 098**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the findings of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO), attached as Appendix 1 to this report;
- II. Noted that the Council accepted the recommendations and has issued an apology to the complainants and paid £3,400 as suggested by the LGO as a remedy;
- III. Noted that the other recommendations the LGO had made had either been completed or were underway.

**REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The LGO completed its investigation into a complaint made against the Council in June 2023. Cabinet considered the full details of the complaint and the LGO's findings as they were found in appendix 1 of the report.

In summary, the household had approached the Council for assistance with housing. The Council accepted it had a housing duty to the household under the relevant homelessness legislation. The household was provided with temporary accommodation in 2016, which was a 10th floor flat. The household reported disrepair to the Council in May 2021 and despite subsequent repairs undertaken by the Council, the primary matter of leaks from the communal roof did not stop and the household were placed on the Temporary Accommodation (TA) Transfer List to move to alternative accommodation. A suitability review was completed by the Housing Demand Department in January 2022 which confirmed the property was unsuitable due to disrepair.

The LGO found fault in that the Council delayed moving the household who lived in unsuitable TA for longer than necessary which the household considered was detrimental to their health. The management of TA transfer cases was in accordance with the TA Placement Policy, which set out the priority principles for each case to be considered based on their current housing circumstances, similar to the Housing Allocation Policy and how social housing was allocated. In this case, the priority level was assessed as Band 3 of the TA Placement Policy, based on a scale of Band A (highest priority) to Band E (lowest priority). The household were awarded Band C on the grounds their current accommodation was not suitable. In similar cases, the repair works could sometimes be undertaken with the household in situ, once completed, the household do not need to move and would be removed from the transfer list as considered suitably housed, but in this case the household needed to move to allow the roof works to be undertaken.

As new TA units became available, the TA Allocations Team considered transfer cases on their housing needs and the available property and offered



to the highest priority transfer case (who had been waiting the longest within that band). This household were moved to alternative TA in October 2022, with the delay being because of the shortage of available 3-bedroom properties to offer and the duty to move other households with higher housing needs before this household.

The current housing crisis in London and across England was well documented, with a substantial decrease in private properties becoming available to let, alongside the substantial increases in rent levels resulting in the Council not being as able to acquire new properties as in previous years, with a recent London Councils report stating that about 3% of available private rented properties available at Local Housing Allowance levels or below and supply levels not returning to pre-covid levels with supply levels in larger properties being in particular short supply both in the private rented sector but also in the social housing sector.

The Council has accepted the LGO's findings and recommendations and has actioned, or in the process of actioning all the recommendations.

The complainant had received a formal apology and had been paid the £3,400 remedy.

The Council had implemented a daily recording sheet for Acquisitions Officers who are responsible for sourcing properties and was looking at best practice of other London councils to improve its recording. The Council had reviewed all the cases on the TA Transfer list to ensure accuracy and correct prioritisation and was currently in the process of reviewing the TA Placement and Acquisitions Policies to meet the second recommendation.

The LGO asked the Council to report its findings to an appropriate body of Council as it found that the complainant had suffered injustice as a result of maladministration. The Council was required to comply with this request by Section 31 (2) of the Local Government Act 1974.

The Council was also required to place two public notices in local newspapers or local newspaper websites notifying the public of the existence of a report of injustice as a result of maladministration made by the LGO. This requirement had also been completed.

## **13 WLA Procurements and Contract Changes**

### **RESOLVED:**

That cabinet:

- I. Noted that Ealing Council, as accountable body on behalf of the West London Alliance (WLA), was going to lead on the sponsorship, procurement and commissioning of the devolved Universal Support Programme in West London.

- II. Authorised the Director of WLA, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to take all necessary steps with DWP, Treasury, GLA, DLUHC and other boroughs and bodies to enter into necessary agreements on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing to enable the continuation of the current devolution to London for employment support programmes, including, the Universal Support Programme.
- III. Authorised the Director of WLA, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to enter into a funding agreement for £35m - £50m, with DWP, Treasury, or DLUHC to fund the provision of the Universal Support Programme across the 7 WLA boroughs.
- IV. Authorised the Director of WLA to invite and evaluate tenders on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing for a contract for the provision of job search services for unemployed, sick and disabled people across the WLA who met the criteria of the Universal Support Programme, with the procurement being carried out using either a competitive dialogue process or a competitive procedure with negotiation and in compliance with Ealing Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- V. Authorised the Director of WLA, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to submit bids for grants and funding; and enter into such agreements on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing as necessary with Treasury, DWP, JCP, GLA, DLUHC; other councils of the WLA or London Councils in relation to other funding that could be available to support the programme.
- VI. Delegated authority to the Director of WLA to award a contract to the bidder with the most advantageous tender received pursuant to the procurement exercise referred to in decision IV.
- VII. Authorised Ealing to act as lead authority on behalf of WLA participating boroughs to jointly develop and procure a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) under the light touch regime flexibilities permitted by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) (to include inviting and evaluating tenders from providers applying to join the DPS or framework) for the additional LDMH care home provision lot. LDMH services was going to be procured as an additional 'lot' on the supported living tender which was approved on 19 April 2023 Cabinet Meeting. The arrangement was going to be for an initial contract term of 4 years with option to extend for a further 4 years with an initial value of up to £628 million for the first 4-year period and £1.3 billion for 8 years (spend figures for the entire contract include both lots). London Borough of Ealing's estimated annual spend was c £25m annually; £100m over the first 4 years and £200m for 8 years on LDMH care homes through this contract.
- VIII. Delegated authority to the Director of WLA, upon completion of the tender process, to appoint bidders to the DPS or flexible framework

- for LDMH care home provision, if suitable tenders were received, in accordance with the tender evaluation criteria and enter into suitable contracts with the appointed bidders.
- IX. Authorised the Director of WLA to enter into Access Agreements with Brent, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Harrow, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and the City of Westminster, with other authorities joining if appropriate (following consultation with the Director of Legal & Democratic Services).
  - X. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Adults Social Services and Public Health to award contracts from the DPS/flexible framework for LDMH care home provision in accordance with its call off rules.
  - XI. Noted that a decision on how to best apply the Real Living Wage (London) in the shared procurement following the impact evaluation and consultation with key stakeholders was going to be taken by considering the sub-region's position in tandem with Ealing's requirements. The approach was detailed in section 3.1.5 – 3.1.6 of the report.
  - XII. Noted that a decision on how best to include social value within a shared contract was going to be taken by considering the sub-region's position in tandem with Ealing's requirements.

## **REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

1. In 2016, the running of employment support programmes for people furthest from the labour market was devolved to London. This was delivered at a Sub regional level ever since. In the March budget this year the Chancellor announced that the Work and Health Programme (WHP) was going to be replaced by the Universal Support Programme from October 2024.
2. Cabinet noted that at the time of the report, all recommendations were contingent on the existing devolution deal remaining in place and the funding which was provided by DWP.
3. Cabinet understood that the reason for coming to this decision before final resolution of the devolution deal and the funding by the DWP was that the service required a large and complex procurement to be delivered by Summer 2024 for the provision of the Universal Support Programme, and delaying the decision would place this goal at considerable risk.
4. Cabinet noted that the Governments policy direction was for increased devolution; so the opinion was that revoking existing devolution arrangements was going to be unlikely.
5. As part of the devolution deal for London, it was anticipated that the commissioning of the Universal Support Programme was going to be devolved to the London sub regions. WLA was one of 4 sub regions in London.
6. The aim was to help those furthest from the Labour Market with typical participants having health issues.
7. Universal Support was going to be a Place and Train model of employment support. With elements modelled on Individual Placement

and Support (IPS). WLA had been successfully pioneering IPS with a variety of cohorts since 2015.

8. Cabinet anticipated that the contract was going to be for an initial period of 5 years commencing from 1st October 2024 with options to extend. Based on the funding for WHP, it was estimated the contract value, including extensions, was going to be in the region of £35m to £50m.
9. Cabinet anticipated that the continuation of the devolution deal was possibly going to require variations to the existing devolution agreements between DWP and Ealing Council, as opposed to replacement or new agreements being required. This assumption was based on the fact that the existing agreements had largely been fit for purpose since they were put in place between the parties in 2017.
10. Given the complex nature of the services that were going to be procured, a Competitive Dialogue procurement route was going to be followed in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended).
11. The Commissioning Alliance was the WLA workstream that supported vulnerable residents across Children's Social Care, Adults Social Care and Temporary Accommodation. A key element of the service was the creation of collaborative procurements that partner local authorities (including Ealing) were going to be able to access. Procurements provided local authorities with a compliant route to market that was open and transparent. A regional approach was demonstrated to deliver value for money as it enabled local authorities to leverage their collective purchasing power and market management. It also facilitates adherence to shared quality standards and contractual terms which helped to raise standards of provision, deliver operational efficiencies, and creates the foundations upon which local authorities could develop shared commissioning strategies.
12. The contract in place for LDMH care homes from the private and voluntary sectors was due to expire on 31st August 2024.
13. It was proposed that when the existing contract ended it was going to be replaced by a LDMH contract including supported living (already approved by Cabinet on 19th April 2023) and LDMH care homes; as well as an additional separate residential and nursing contract (also approved by Cabinet on 19th April 2023). The procurement was going to fall under the light touch regime of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended), and the current preferred option was to use an open procedure to set up the DPSs/flexible frameworks.
14. The procurements were going to be designed in such a way that it did not prevent any member Local Authority from investing in their own 'in-house' provision or having an 'in-house first' policy. The procurements were going to have functionality that enabled Local Authorities to subsequently call-off block contracts should they so wish.
15. The procurements were going to be open to any West London local authority and other authorities where appropriate. The creation and subsequent ongoing management of the procurements were going to be funded through Local Authority subscription payments to the WLA for the adults commissioning programme. This model (which had been

used successfully since 2017) ensured that Ealing did not incur costs for formally hosting the procurements. Each Local Authority was going to be required to go through their own governance in order to join the procurement.

16. The purchasing for LDMH care homes was going to form part of previously approved contract for supported living services. This was based on the review of the existing arrangements and was designed to allow a varied approach to quality and price which was felt was going to bring greater control over cost, quality and market shaping than was achieved in the current arrangements.
17. The total value of spend for LDMH care home services was anticipated to be in the region of £53m per annum based on Brent, Ealing and Harrow's commissioning data. The contract was initially going to be for a period of four years, with a potential to extend by a further four years. The maximum contract value for the LDMH procurement over the 8 years was going to be £1.3 billion (based on combined supported living and LDMH care home spend).

**14 Section 75 Framework Agreement relating to the Commissioning of Health and Wellbeing and Social Care and Education Services for Adults and Children**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Approved London Borough of Ealing entering a new Partnership Agreement with NHS North West London Integrated Care Board (NHS NWL ICB) under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, for the delivery of pooled budgets relating to the commissioning of health and wellbeing, social care, and education services for the population of Ealing, commencing 1st April 2023 for a period of 12 months, plus an option to extend for another term of 12 months. The value of the Agreement was approximately £143 million per annum.
- II. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director Adults and Public Health, Strategic Director Children's Services, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and Director of Legal Services and Democratic Services to finalise and complete the Partnership Agreement and other associated documents with NHS NWL ICB.
- III. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director Adults and Public Health, Strategic Director Children's Services, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and Director of Legal Services and Democratic Services to extend the Partnership Agreement, to agree amendments and variations to the associated Service Schedules; subject to consultation with the Lead Member for Health Lives and Lead Member for Fairer Start.
- IV. Noted that Part 2 of the Partnership Agreement was going to contain Service Schedules the contents of which were listed in

section 3 and that some Schedules provided for the exercise of ICB functions by the Council.

- V. Noted Health and Wellbeing Areas were required under the national conditions of the Better Care Fund (BCF) to establish a Section 75 Agreement for pooled budgets no later than 31st October 2023.

**REASONS FOR DECISION AND OPTION CONSIDERED:**

1. The London Borough of Ealing and NHS NWL ICB (formerly known as Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group or CCG) had long established integrated commissioning arrangements. Cabinet first approved the Partnership Agreement in November 2015, this was extended in 2021 for a term of two financial years (1st April 2021 to 31st March 2023) due to the impact of COVID-19 and uncertainty with the structural reorganisation within the NHS.
2. As part of BCF Planning Framework 2023 - 2025, local areas were mandated to have in place agreed and signed Section 75 Agreements no later than 31st October 2023.
3. There was no alternative option to the Partnership Agreement, as it would impact the availability of approximately £40 million NHS funds to support the local health and social care system in Ealing. This was also going to impact the £3,724,468 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), £1,777,649 Adult Social Care Discharge Fund and £12,679,522 improved BCF (iBCF). The receipt of these grants was reliant upon a BCF plan that met national conditions, of which an established Section 75 Partnership Agreement was one.

**15 Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 12 October 2023.

Meeting commenced: 5.00pm

Meeting finished: 6.10pm

Signed:

Dated: Thursday, 12 October 2023

P Mason (Chair)