

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 1 November 2011 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors A. Lowe (Chairman), Roberts (Vice-Chairman), Dennett, C. Loftus, A.McInerney, Philbin, N.Plumpton Walsh, Redhead and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, A. Jones, I. Leivesley, J. Weston, N. Goodwin, T. Dean, W Rourke and H. Coen

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CS18 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 6 September 2011 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CS19 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

CS20 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub Committee relating to the work of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board since its last meeting, were submitted for information.

Members raised queries relating to the use of agency staff and recruitment, clarification of which was provided by officers.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CS21 LOCAL AREA FORUMS 2010/11

The Board were presented with a report from the Strategic Director Communities, advising of the spending profiles of the Local Area Forums for the financial period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 and were requested to consider introducing a revised funding application.

It was reported that Local Area Forums were set up in 2001 and took decisions and policy developments into communities, bridging the gap between key agencies working within the Borough. Each Local Area Forum was led by the respective ward Councillors and supported by a senior officer from the Council. They both worked closely with the Area Forum Projects Coordinator who also liaised with the Community Development and External Funding departments of the Council, as well as Housing Associations and local residents. The Forums were also attended by partner organisations such as the Police, Fire Service, Voluntary Sector bodies etc, which assisted in keeping communities informed of local developments.

Funding had been allocated to the Area Forums to spend on small scale projects that were identified by the community, or to support larger scale initiatives providing improvements within communities. In 2010/11 £600,000 was allocated to the Area Forum budget. This amount was then allocated on a per capita basis across the seven Area Forums.

Members were then provided with information on the expenditure within each Area Forum for the year 2010-11 which were categorised into a number of key areas as follows: *Landscapes; Safety; Youth Facilities; Improved Parks; Pedestrian Access; Security; and Other.*

Members considered the amended *Area Forums Grant Funding Proposal Form*, which was appended to the report. It was noted that a copy of the final format would be circulated to Members after the meeting.

Members welcomed and discussed the report and wished to convey their thanks to the teams involved in the Locality Area Forums; namely: the Community Development Team; the Sports Development Team and the External Funding Team.

Following debate, Members suggested that future reports could include the following information:

- Data from the previous years spend, so that comparisons could be made;
- The types of projects applied for; and
- Information on the percentages of applications that are approved and not approved.

RESOLVED: That the Board recommends the introduction of the revised funding application.

CS22 WIRELESS SPEAKER SYSTEM - CIVIC SUITE

The Board were presented with a report from the Strategic Director Children and Enterprise, which sought support for the allocation of a sum of £20,000 from the annual DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) budget to fund a wireless speaker system in the Civic Suite at Runcorn Town Hall.

It was reported that following a request from the Members Support Service Working Party group, Property Services were asked to look into the feasibility of providing a wireless speaker system in the Civic Suite at Runcorn Town Hall, similar to that installed in the Council Chamber.

It was noted that following the refurbishment of the Chamber and the installation of a wireless speaker system, the room could now be used with various desk layouts due to the mobility of the units, thus allowing better usage of the room.

It was reported that the current fixed wire speaker system in the Civic Suite was over 10 years old and had become very unreliable. Also, it did not enable people seated at the rear of the room or in the dining area to hear proceedings at public meetings. It was requested therefore that a similar wireless system be installed in the Civic Suite. This could be linked through to the existing speakers in the area adjacent to the kitchen, thus allowing people in that area to hear proceedings. The system would also include personal inductive listening loop receivers to link into personal hearing aids and it would also allow the room to be used more flexibly, as it had with the Council Chamber.

Following debate it was agreed by Members that the present system in the Civic Suite was inadequate for public meetings as mentioned above. It was also agreed that two further quotes for this system should be obtained, so that comparisons could be made with the one already submitted.

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Policy and

Performance Board supports the proposal to install a new wireless speaker system for the Civic Suite and that this be funded through the 2011/12 DDA budget.

CS23 BUSINESS PLANNING 2012-2015

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Policy and Resources, on the development of Directorate Business Plans for the coming financial year and offered Members an opportunity to contribute to the Plans.

The report stated that each directorate of the Council was required to develop a medium term business plan in parallel with the budget that was subject to annual review and refresh.

It was noted that the process of developing such plans for the period 2010-2015 was just beginning and therefore Members were invited to identify a small number of priorities for development or improvement that they would like to see reflected within these plans.

The Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, then made a presentation to the Board on the major challenges facing the Council and in particular those that fell within this Board's remit. Dealing with continuing reductions in funding and new legislation were high on the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the issues raised in the presentation and endorse them for inclusion in the developing business plan.

CS24 SUCCESSION PLANNING

At the Chairman's request, a report was presented to the Board from the Strategic Director Policy and Resources, on how the Council was approaching the issue of 'succession planning' in the light of current pressures on staff numbers.

The Board was advised that the Council did not have a specific succession plan but did have a number of key initiatives and plans which addressed the issue of developing staff, the key one being the Council's *People Strategy*. This strategy was approved by the Corporate Policy and Performance Board in January 2009 and subsequently approved by the Executive Board.

It was reported that in light of the significant change programme the Council was experiencing, the *People*

Strategy was being reviewed and two key pieces of information, namely 'A Staff Survey' and a 'Workforce Profile' would be considered in the review. The revised strategy would then be brought to this Board for consideration before being recommended for adoption by the Executive Board.

Members commented that a succession plan was crucial to the future of the Council as it was important to develop the staff employed by the Council.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The report be noted; and
- 2) The issue be reviewed when the Board receives a draft of the revised People Plan.

CS25 STAFF ACCIDENT/VIOLENT INCIDENT STATISTICS

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Policy and Resources on the staff accident and violent incident statistics from 1 April to 7 September 2011.

The report highlighted:

- a) Statistics to demonstrate how Halton Borough Council as an employer was delivering the new Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Strategy, 'Being Part of the Solution' and continuing to target reductions in accidents, in particular major injuries;
- b) Statistics relating to:
 - Accidents resulting in employees being unable to carry out their normal duties for more than 3 days following the day of the accident (over 3 day injuries);
 - Significant accidents; and
 - Near miss incidents
- c) Statistics relating to violent incidents;
- d) Any identified accident / incident trends and supporting information. By responding positively to identify trends, the Authority could demonstrate compliance with the recommendations of the HSE's guidance.

Following Members discussions the following points were noted:

- The Waste Management procedures had now been reviewed in line with HSE Guidance;
- A three day visit was planned by HSE which would include a visit to Waste Management services;
- The electronic Risk Assessment had now been launched;
- There was an increase in 'over 3 day' accidents compared with the previous two years;
- Concerns were raised over the well being of staff when dealing with verbal and physical abuse from service users. Members requested that a detailed report be referred to the relevant Committee, so the matter could be considered in some detail. It was noted that further information would be provided to this Board in the yearly Health and Safety report submission. In the meantime staff affected so far by such incidents would be monitored; and
- Lone Workers were being encouraged to use the *The Lone Working Monitoring System*.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted subject to the comments made above.

Meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.