

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 31 July 2012
in the The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chairman), Roberts (Vice-Chairman), E. Cargill, S. Hill, A. Lowe, A.McInerney and N.Plumpton Walsh

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Dennett, C. Loftus, G. Stockton and Wainwright

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, A. Jones, I. Leivesley and P. McCann

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

CS9 LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

Action

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, requesting that the 'Localisation of Council Tax Scheme' be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration for public consultation.

It was reported that as part of the 2010 Spending Review the Government announced its intention to localise support for Council Tax from 2013-14 and to reduce expenditure on this benefit by 10%. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provides for the abolition of Council Tax benefit. It was noted that provisions for the localisation of Council Tax support were included in the Local Government Finance Bill which was currently before Parliament. It was expected that a one off transition to the new localised schemes of support would take place in April 2013.

It was stated that although the proposals were for each local authority to draw up its own scheme, there were certain areas which the Government was not leaving to local discretion. They had stated that there would be a 10% overall reduction in the amount of expenditure on this scheme. The implications of this for Halton was that there

would be approximately £1.4m less paid out to help towards Council Tax.

The report provided information on a statement of intent covering council tax funding arrangements and localising support for council tax, from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Furthermore, it discussed the costs implications that a new scheme would bring to Halton, and presented the funding alternatives available to meet this cost.

It was noted that although the new scheme needed to be in place by April 2013, due to the setting of Council Tax and billing process, in reality it would need to be in place by October 2012.

Board Members agreed with the proposal as set out in the report and recommended that the draft scheme now be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration and approval for public consultation. It was noted that full details of the public consultation would be provided to all Members.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board be recommended to approve the Localisation for Council Tax Scheme for public consultation, as detailed in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of the report.

Meeting ended at 1.15 p.m.