

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee Minutes Relevant to the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2010

EXB9 HALTON HIGH ACADEMY TRANSFER

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which gave Members an update on the development of the Academy to replace Halton High School.

In February 2010, the Executive Board approved the closure of Halton High School subject to the DCSF Funding Agreement. However, there remained a number of land and asset issues to be resolved. All secondary schools were required to have sufficient dedicated facilities to deliver the physical education curriculum. Members were advised that currently, Halton High School used the facilities of the adjacent Leisure Centre under a service level agreement.

Prior to the transfer to the sponsors in September 2010, a Funding Agreement must be signed to ensure adequate facilities are provided, and without this local authority commitment, the sponsors would be unable to agree to the Funding Agreement.

Members considered a number of options for the provision of sports facilities for the duration of the main Academy lease as outlined in the report, which also highlighted other issues under negotiation with the Academy. These related to shared use and the condition of the land and buildings.

RESOLVED: That

- 1 progress on the development of an Academy to replace Halton High be noted;
- 2 the proposal for the provision of physical education facilities for Halton High be approved; and
- 3 the Strategic Director in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Children Young People and Families resolve any outstanding issues similar to those mentioned in this report.

EXB10 OFSTED'S UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE CONTACT, REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT SERVICES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People informing them of the outcome of Ofsted's first unannounced inspection of Children's Social Care Contact, Referral and Assessment Services, which took place on 5 and 6 May 2010.

The purpose of an unannounced inspection was to assess the effectiveness of frontline social work practice in managing potential risk to children and minimising the incidence of abuse and neglect of children. The Board noted that the inspection did not identify any areas for 'Priority Action' (a term which covers areas where children may be left at risk of significant harm).

The final letter from Ofsted which confirmed their judgement was attached to the report at Appendix 1. A number of strengths were identified including the quality of staff supervision, enthusiastic and dedicated staff, good support from managers, provision of quality training, social worker recruitment and support for newly qualified social workers and strong quality assurance processes in place to support the development of practice.

An action plan attached at Appendix 2 provided details of how the areas for improvement would be addressed. One particular area for improvement would be the development of the Carefirst 6 IT recording system, which had been agreed as a priority in the Council.

The Board and the Chief Executive wished to place on record their thanks to the staff within the Directorate, and the current and previous Children and Young People Portfolio holders for all their hard work and commitment to achieve this positive outcome.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the result of Ofsted's inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Services be noted;
- 2) the areas of strengths and satisfactory practice be noted;and
- 3) the Action Plan to address the areas for development arising from the inspection be endorsed.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2010

EXB19 BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE UPDATE – KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided an update on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) procurement process.

The process also identified the opportunity to transfer the centrally based IT support team for schools (known as the SIMS team) and the team that provided the support for the Virtual Learning Platform into the LEP process.

The report detailed the procurement and evaluation process. Members noted that the recommendation of the evaluation team would be presented to the Board on 5 August 2010. The Preferred Bidder would be announced on 24 August 2010, with the programme team having until 7 December 2010 to reach financial close.

Members were informed that school staff who worked on IT must be transferred to the Local Education Partnership Managed Service. This service consisted of a single contract to deliver all IT systems and services for schools. In addition, the authority had staff that provided support and guidance on the learning platform for schools. The Virtual Learning Platform (VLP), managed by UniServity, would be adopted by all schools across the Borough. It was envisaged that the VLP team would transfer to the BSF Managed Service.

Reason(s) for Decision

To provide a single source of data and IT support to all schools.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

VLP and SIMs were retained by the authority. This could cause interface issues for the authority as part of the service would be delivered by the LEP managed service and part by the local authority.

Implementation Date

The decision needed to be made by 1st July 2010 so that consultation could be undertaken with the schools.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the progress in the BSF Procurement process be noted and a further report submitted to Executive Board on 5th August 2010 for approval of the selected bidder; and
- (2) the Board approve, in principle, the transfer of the SIMs team and the team working on the Virtual Learning Platform, subject to the agreement of the Primary and Secondary Schools and on provision that this represents value for money.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 JULY 2010

ESB18 HALTON HIGH/ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT LEGAL SUPPORT

The Sub-Committee considered a request to waive Standing Orders in order that legal support could be commissioned for the construction related works to Halton High as part of the Academy arrangements. Beachcroft were commissioned in line with financial regulations and Standing Orders to provide the legal advice for the Halton BSF Programme and had been the legal advisers for each stage of the Programme. They were also on the Partnership for Schools Framework list, a list of quality assured external consultants who had a specialism in BSF.

It was noted that in order to change a high school to an Academy an additional amount of legal work was required to be undertaken. Some of this work needed to be undertaken within the next month to ensure that the Academy could be established by 1st September 2010. Any delay in agreeing the legal issues could result in a delay impacting on the approval of the Funding Agreement and effect transfer of Halton High.

As Beachcroft were the current legal advisers and had accrued knowledge about the BSF Programme, Halton High and the leasing arrangements, it was proposed that they be commissioned to undertake this work. The award of this work to Beachcroft would ensure that all outstanding legal issues related to the transfer could be undertaken in a timely way due to their knowledge, their previous experience of advising on Academy transfers and their detailed knowledge of Halton's BSF Programme.

RESOLVED: That the Operational Director, Children's Organisation and Provision be authorised to award the contract for Legal Support for construction related work to Halton High as part of the Academy Arrangements to the contractor Beachcroft in the sum of £51,510 and in the light of the exceptional circumstances outlined in paragraph 3.3 and in accordance with Procurement Standing Orders 1.6 Standing Orders 3.1 to 3.7 and 3.9 be waived on this occasion.