

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 13 March 2014 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), D. Cargill, Harris, R. Hignett, Jones, Nelson, Philbin, J. Stockton, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Scott, M. Reaney, G. Cook, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr and E. Dawson

Also in attendance: One member of the press

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB163 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2014, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB164 JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the establishment of Joint Health Scrutiny arrangements across Cheshire.

The Board was advised that the new Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, required that local authorities form joint scrutiny committees where there was a substantial development or variation proposal which impacted on more than one local authority area.

It was reported that having a protocol in place, prior to the commencement of any joint scrutiny committees, would help to support a more structured approach to joint scrutiny.

It was noted that the Health Policy and Performance Board had considered the draft protocol, attached at Appendix 1, at its meeting on 4 March 2014, and had

recommended that it be adopted by Council.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Joint Health Scrutiny protocol.

Strategic Director
- Communities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB165 IMPLEMENTING HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL'S APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which set out the options to resource a corporate Apprenticeship Scheme.

The Board was advised that Halton Borough Council's People's Plan reinforced the need for the Council to continue to attract, develop and retain excellent people. The benefits of apprenticeships, previously reported to the Board, promoted a more balanced workforce, injected freshness and new ideas into the organisation. In addition, they contributed to the Council's wider employment and regeneration policies.

The report set out three funding options for Members' consideration. It was reported that Option 3 – to explore the use of European funding to develop a Borough-wide apprenticeship scheme - was the preferred option of the Council's Organisational Development Group.

It was further noted that a cascade briefing, scheduled for May 2014, would brief managers on apprenticeships so as to cascade the benefits of an Apprenticeships Scheme across the whole organisation. This would set out the process for the identification, appointment, support and monitoring of apprenticeships.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the options to fund apprenticeships within the Council, as set out in section 3.4 of the report, be noted;
- 2) Option 3 be agreed as the preferred option;
- 3) the target of 10 additional apprentices to be established during the next financial year, be approved; and
- 4) a cascade briefing be approved to promote, and

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

provide further information on, apprenticeships.

EXB166 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING – GRANT ALLOCATION 2014/15

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the Voluntary Sector Grant Funding Awards for 2014/15.

The Board was advised that voluntary sector organisations had been invited to submit applications for funding in 2014/15. Applications were assessed and recommendations agreed by a Panel consisting of the Executive Board Portfolio holder with responsibility for the Voluntary Sector and Officers from the Communities Directorate.

The report contained details of the recommended annual allocation for the financial year 2014/15. It was noted that a review of Voluntary Sector funding would need to be undertaken as part of the budgetary setting process for 2015/16.

RESOLVED: That the grant allocations, as outlined in the report, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB167 NORTON PRIORY HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BID

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which sought approval for the provision of financial support for the Norton Priory Museum Trust (the Trust).

The Board was advised that the Trust was granted a stage 1 pass from the Heritage Lottery fund (HLF) in 2013, for its project “Monastery to Museum 900”. The £5m scheme would conserve the 12th century undercroft and redevelop the museum facilities.

It was noted that a stage 2 bid for £3.67m would be submitted by 31 March 2014 to HLF. However, match funding of £690,392 was required, but may not be in place until after the July 2014 deadline, which, it was reported, may put the project at risk.

The Board was further advised that HLF required confirmation that the Council would underwrite the stage 2 match funding, in the event that all of the match funding was not secured by the Trust, within the timeframe.

RESOLVED: That, if the Trust is unable to raise all the match funding required, the Board agree to underwrite the Norton Priory Museum Trust's HLF bid, by providing a loan of up to £300,000 plus interest, to be repaid over a period of up to three years, commencing 2015.

Strategic Director
- Communities

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB168 DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 2013/14

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which detailed the Council's performance against key objectives, targets and milestones for Quarter 3.

The Board was reminded that in September 2011, a review of the Council's existing performance management and monitoring arrangements had been undertaken, based upon a set of principles agreed by the Corporate Policy and Performance Board. This was based around the better management of performance information in terms of both strategic focus and volume. The Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from performance in the relevant quarter for each Directorate, being aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's performance management arrangements, with the Board having a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

It was reported that Directorate Risk Registers were under review and would be refreshed in conjunction with the development of Directorate Business Plans 2014-17; monitoring of high risks would be reported in due course to Executive Board.

RESOLVED: That the information contained in the report be noted.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB169 HALTON HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2013-18 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on Halton's Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 (the Strategy).

The Board was advised that the local authority had

conducted a full Strategic Review of Homelessness in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002. A Homelessness Strategy had been formulated for the five year period to 2018, based upon findings and recommendations of two other documents, as detailed in the report. It was reported that during 2012/13, a Homelessness Scrutiny Review was conducted by Members to review supported accommodation services within the district. A number of recommendations were made, which formed part of the Strategy.

It was noted that the Localism Act 2011, introduced many changes to homelessness and allocations legislation, and that the new allocated powers would impact on future homelessness and service delivery. The legislative issues and implications for the Council's policy were detailed in the report for Members' information.

Reason(s) For Decision

Local Authorities were required to produce a strategy in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No alternatives were considered, as a strategy was required to establish the key challenges, objectives and priorities for tackling homelessness in Halton over the coming years.

Implementation Date

April 2014.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and Halton's Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 be approved.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB170 DE-COMMISSIONING OF BELVEDERE SUPPORTED HOUSING SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which sought approval to decommission and close the Belvedere Supported Housing Scheme.

The Board was reminded that in July 2012, it received a report which set out proposals to reconfigure a number of homeless accommodation services, following a scrutiny review undertaken by the Health Policy and Performance Board. A new hostel in Albert Road, Widnes would open in 2015, at which point Belvedere would be decommissioned.

It was reported that occupancy levels at Belvedere had significantly declined over recent months. However, the Council had a block purchase contract with Community Integrated Care (CIC) for the provision of housing related support at the premises at a fixed monthly sum, irrespective of occupancy levels. It was noted that there was an opportunity to bring forward the plan to close Belvedere and secure a budget saving in 2014/15.

The report set out details for the inclusion of the site in regeneration proposals for Runcorn Old Town, currently underway.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the decommissioning and closure of Belvedere Supported Housing Scheme be approved; and
- 2) upon closure, it be agreed that the building be made safe and secure and disposed of in accordance with the Council's approach to vacant properties.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB171 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption

outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB172 REMOVALS CONTRACT - WAIVER OF PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which sought the approval of a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders with regards to the provision of a removals service for the Borough Council.

The Board was advised that a removals contract was awarded on 1 September 2013, following a procurement exercise. It was reported that in December 2013, the appointed contractor withdrew from the contract; in consultation with the Head of Procurement, action was taken to appoint a replacement contractor, the details of which were set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the waiver of Procurement Standing Order 4.1 (Competition Requirements) under Standing Order 1.8.4 (c) be approved. This would allow a direct award of a contract to the company named in the report for removal services for a period of 3 years, with an option to extend two separate periods of one year each; and
- 2) as a retrospective waiver report, it be noted that the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property's approval to an emergency waiver under Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.2, in consultation with the Head of Procurement, to enable the company named in the report to be appointed to undertake removal services on an interim basis, pending a new contractor being appointed through a competitive process or waiver approval.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

MINUTES ISSUED: 18 March 2014

CALL-IN: 25 March 2014

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 25 March 2014

Meeting ended at 2.25 p.m.