

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 12 June 2014 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), D. Cargill, Harris, R. Hignett, Jones, T. McInerney, Nelson, Philbin, 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, E. Dawson, M. Grady and E. O'Meara

Also in attendance: Councillor E. Cargill

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2014 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

(N.B. Councillors Polhill and Wharton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following item of business as they were both members of the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board).

EXB2 MERSEY GATEWAY CROSSINGS BOARD PENSIONS GUARANTEE

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive which advised Members on his use of Delegated Authority in respect of the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Limited (MGCB).

It was reported that the Department for Transport Funding letter dated 19 October 2011, required the Council to establish a Crossings Board to deliver, manage and act as agent for the Mersey Gateway. The report provided details on the governance arrangements and the Council's position.

It was reported that the Mersey Gateway Executive Board had granted authority for the Chief Executive to make all necessary appointments and commissions for those staff seconded to the Mersey Gateway Project Team; it was noted that these staff would be made permanent employees of the MGCB effective 1 June 2014. Existing HBC staff that had transferred under these arrangements would be allowed to retain access to the Cheshire Pension Fund and remain on the superannuation scheme. Further details of how this would affect new employees were also contained within the report.

It was further noted that in order to be able to make formal offers of Employment, MGCB needed to make a Board resolution and for the Council to act as Guarantor. Using delegated authority, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Operational Director, Finance and the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, agreed to provide the Guarantee.

RESOLVED: That the action taken by the Chief Executive in the use of his Delegated Authority in respect of the Execution of a Deed of Guarantee to Cheshire Pension Fund, in relation to the pension scheme for Mersey Gateway Crossings Board, be noted.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

EXB3 CHILDREN SOCIAL WORK REFORM RESTRUCTURE AND FUNDING PROPOSALS - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the reform, restructure and funding proposals for the Children's Social Work Service.

The Board was advised that the Munro Reports made a number of recommendations on how to re-structure social work delivery. Halton had made some changes in response to the Reports within existing structures. However, it was noted that further substantial change was required.

In addition, the Ofsted inspection framework had been revised in the light of the Munro recommendations with the published inspections from other Councils starkly highlighting the changing expectations of what was regarded as good and outstanding.

It was further reported that with the new Ofsted

framework, there were clear expectations about the levels of caseloads for staff and for adoption and safeguarding. Members noted that, in order for Halton to continue to be judged as good, it needed to address the following areas:

- Caseloads;
- Changes in Policy and the Legal Framework; and
- Workforce, including capacity, training and development and recruitment and retention.

Appendix 1 set out the details of the proposed social work reform restructure, which had been shared with staff in a formal consultation. The report provided details on service structure, staff roles, advanced Social Worker role, proposed costings and proposed funding for Members' consideration.

Reason(s) For Decision

The rationale and the evidence for the proposals had been fully outlined in the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There could be no change to the current service design and structure. The service could continue as it was; however, it would be challenging for the Council to meet the changed statutory framework and inspection requirements to the level now required and for the reasons outlined, this had been rejected.

Implementation Date

1 September 2014.

RESOLVED: That the proposed service re-design and the proposed funding arrangements, including agreement to access £287,252 from the Council's contingency fund, be endorsed.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB4 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2014-17

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided an overview of the Halton Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17 (CYPP).

The Board was advised that the CYPP was an agreed joint strategy of the partners within Halton Children's Trust. It detailed how they would co-operate to improve

children's wellbeing, and provided the strategic direction for the Children's Trust Board to commission services to address locally identified needs and better integrate provision.

It was noted that the current CYPP had been in place since 2011. Preparations for the new CYPP started in November 2013 with the establishment of a working group to develop the plan based around the agreed new priorities for Halton's Children's Trust, as set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to

- 1) note the content of the report;
- 2) endorse the Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17; and
- 3) support the roll out of the new CYPP and work in order to meet its priorities over the next three years.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB5 HEALTH POLICY & PERFORMANCE BOARD SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUP REPORT – MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTION & PROMOTION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which provided a summary of the Health Policy and Performance Board (PPB) Scrutiny Topic report on Mental Health Prevention and Promotion.

Councillor Ellen Cargill, Chair of the Health PPB, attended the meeting to present the report to the Board. The Board noted that good mental health had been identified by the Council as a priority. The Topic Group sought to examine the breadth and quality of mental health promotion and prevention services and resources available locally.

It was reported that the Scrutiny Review was commissioned because there were significant numbers of people in the Borough suffering with mental health problems. Appendix 1 set out details of the membership and methodology used and evidence gathered during the review.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report and Appendix 1, be noted.

EXB6 EXTENSION OF CURRENT DOMICILIARY CARE CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which detailed the arrangements to extend the current Domiciliary Care contract.

The Board was advised that at its meeting on 9 January 2014, it had approved arrangements to extend the Domiciliary Care contract for a two month period, to allow the transfer of a large volume of business to new providers. This extension ended on 25 May 2014, and it was reported that due to unforeseen circumstances, it had been necessary to extend the contractual arrangements.

The Board was advised that due to the timing of the Local Borough Council Elections process and there being no meetings of Executive Board set until June 2014, it had been necessary for the Chief Executive to use Emergency Procedures, as set out in Procurement Standing Order 1.8.1. This resulted in the agreement in principle to an extension of current contractual arrangements for the provision of Domiciliary Care provision.

RESOLVED: That the use of Emergency Procedures by the Chief Executive to approve in principle an extension to current contractual arrangements for Domiciliary Care provision, be noted.

EXB7 COMMISSIONING OF SOCIAL NORMS PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health which advised Members on the use of Emergency Procedures by the Chief Executive to approve in principle the procurement of a Social Norms Campaign for schools (the Campaign).

The Board noted that the 'R U Different Campaign', offered young people the opportunity to share their perceptions alongside their own participation on a range of 'risky' behaviours, such as alcohol, drugs, sex and relationships. The scheme was run by the north west organisation, Social Sense, and was targeted at secondary school pupils within the school setting.

It was noted that a Borough-wide campaign involving all secondary schools would enable the collation of statistically valid results which would provide valuable information to inform health improvement and education

programmes such as Healthitude.

Members were advised that, due to the timing of the Local Government elections process, it had been necessary to proceed in principle with the procurement of the Social Norms Campaign for Schools, as set out in the report, and which required a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board note the use of Emergency Procedures by the Chief Executive, using Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.1, to approve in principle the procurement of a Social Norms Campaign for Schools;
- 2) in accordance with Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.4 (e), Procurement Standing Order 4.1 and 4.2 be waived in respect of the R U Different Campaign; and
- 3) the Board note that the Director of Public Health has been authorised in principle to award a contract to Social Sense to deliver the Campaign.

Director of Public Health

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB8 HELP TO WORK SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the Help to Work Scheme.

The Board was advised that the Government Scheme 'Help to Work' commenced on 28 April 2014. This affected any person that had been on the Work Programme but who had not found employment after two years. The report outlined the conditions required where a person wished to continue to claim Job Seeker's Allowance. It was noted that participation in one of the following options was now mandatory under the new Scheme:

1. To accept a community work placement;
2. To visit a job centre every day; and
3. To take part in further training.

Appendix 1 provided more details on how the scheme would be delivered via Job Centre Plus.

Members were asked to consider the implications for the Council of Option 1 – “to accept a community placement”, in the light of the adoption of its Volunteer Policy in 2010. The policy considerations were set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) noted the report;
- 2) considered the potential implications outlined in section 4 of the report;
- 3) drew a distinction between Mandatory and Voluntary Work Placements; and
- 4) does not support mandatory work placements, but will continue to support voluntary work placements which aim to add value and provide individual's with the skills and experience necessary to obtain employment.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB9 DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 YEAR-END 2013/14

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the fourth quarter year-end to 31 March 2014.

The Board was reminded that a review of the Council's existing performance management and monitoring arrangements was undertaken in 2011, based upon an agreed set of principles around better management of performance information. This change also reflected the transition away from local authorities being performance managed by central government and toward being held to account at a local level through the transparent provision of accessible performance data.

Information for each of the Council's Directorates were contained in Appendices 1-3. It was noted that Directorate Risk Registers had been reviewed and refreshed in conjunction with the development of Directorate Business Plans 2014-17. The monitoring of high risks would be undertaken and reported at Quarter 2 period, which would end on 30 September 2014.

RESOLVED: That the report and progress and performance information be noted.

EXB10 DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, relating to an application for discretionary non-domestic rate relief.

The Board was advised that, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Authority was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer, when it was considered appropriate. This relief had only been available to be awarded to organisations that were a charity, a not-for-profit organisation or a Community Amateur Sports Club.

It was reported that since April 2013, there had been significant changes in the funding of non-domestic rate reliefs and exemptions following the introduction of the Retention of Business Rates Scheme, the details of which were set out in the report.

Appendix 1 provided details of the application request from the Islamic Academy of Manchester together with the associated financial costs to the Council for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That the application by the Islamic Academy of Manchester for Discretionary Rate Relief, as set out in the report, be rejected for the following reasons:-

- 1) the property had already been awarded six months Empty Property Rate Relief;
- 2) the lack of any direct social or economic benefit for the Borough from a retrospective application; and
- 3) the cost to the Council at a time when it is facing significant financial challenges.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB11 PROCUREMENT OF A HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE FOR THE ALBERT ROAD SCHEME FOR HOMELESS SINGLE PERSONS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the procurement of a Housing Support Service for the Albert Road Scheme for Homeless

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

Single Persons.

The Board was advised that construction of the 32 unit supported housing scheme for single homeless persons in Albert Road was due for completion in March 2015. The Council's Supporting People Fund would finance the housing support service for future residents.

Members were advised that it was now necessary to undertake a procurement exercise to secure a service provider, using an open tender procedure; a contract would be awarded for three years, with an option to extend for a further two years. The results of this exercise would be reported to the Board prior to acceptance.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the commencement of a procurement exercise for a housing support service at the Albert Road supported housing scheme be approved; and
- 2) a further report be received on the outcome of the tenders.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB12 CONNECTING CHESHIRE PROJECT EXTENSION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on the Connecting Cheshire Broadband project extension.

The Board was advised that the Connecting Cheshire Project was the fastest deployment of high-speed broadband in the world. By June 2015, the project would have achieved 96% fibre broadband coverage across Halton, Cheshire and Warrington. It was now proposed to extend coverage further to 99% by 2017, with a total cost of the project extension including partner contributions and grants expected to be £5.1m. It was noted that Halton's contribution would be £444.5k over a three year period of 2014-17.

The report provided information for Members' consideration on partnership delivery, unlocking grant funding, return on investment and the current delivery position at May 2014.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the extension of the Connecting Cheshire Project

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

be approved, subject to identifying the necessary match funding of £444.5k, to increase broadband coverage from 96.3% to 99% of homes and businesses across Halton. This investment would target the final tranche of approximately 2,100 premises that currently lack access to good quality broadband;

- 2) the Council may enter into an Open Market review and procurement process with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) to scope and define the project extension, including specific costs, timescales and outputs;
- 3) the existing Connecting Cheshire Project's governance arrangements continue. Cheshire East will remain the accountable body for the project;
- 4) delegated authority be given to the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Operational Director, Economy and Enterprise, for decision making in relation to the recommendations set out above; and
- 5) the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to negotiate and enter into any necessary legal documentation to give effect to the recommendations as set out above.

MINUTES ISSUED: 17 June 2014

CALL-IN: 24 June 2014

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 24 June 2014

Meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.