

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 26 June 2014 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), D. Cargill, R. Hignett, Jones, T. McInerney, Philbin, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Harris and Nelson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney, E. O'Meara, G. Cook L. Derbyshire and E O'Meara

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

*Action*

#### EXB13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2014 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

#### EXB14 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HALTON

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which outlined the work underway to develop a Partnership wide Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) offer in Halton.

The Board was advised that CSR was the management of an organisation's positive impact on society and the environment through its operations, products or services and through its interaction with key stakeholders including employees, customers, investors and suppliers. It was noted that there were a number of key benefits in having a clear direction on CSR, as outlined in the report.

It was reported that, in line with recommendations arising from the Peer Challenge, the Halton Strategic Partnership Board had focussed on how the Borough could look at delivering services in a new way, given the reduction

in available resources. An initial meeting between partner agencies had already taken place as it was clear that a number of projects and work areas had a CSR theme. Projects discussed and under development at the initial meeting were:-

- The Halton CARES (Companies Acting Responsibly and Ethically);
- The Merseylink Timebank;
- Cheshire Connect (formerly Skill Share);
- The Community Foundations for Lancashire and Merseyside (CFLM); and
- The Community Development Team and the Halton and St Helens Voluntary and Community Action (VCA).

It was noted that CFLM was working with the Chamber of Commerce and Halton and St Helens VCA towards the establishment of a 'Halton Foundation'. Part of this would involve the potential establishment of an endowment fund for Halton and it was noted that offers of financial support had been made from a number of agencies. The development of a Halton Foundation could be a key step in building a more resilient community and help to manage demand on public services.

In order to guide this work, it was proposed that Executive Board approve the establishment of a CSR Steering Group, with membership and terms of reference to be developed. In addition, a proposed web site would act as a portal to signpost the work of each member organisation.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) supports in principle the work currently being undertaken; and
- 2) agrees to the ongoing facilitation and advisory role for officers in continuing the work to establish a CSR offer in Halton and detailed proposals for a Halton Foundation.

Strategic Director  
- Policy &  
Resources

## **CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO**

### EXB15 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE STRATEGY - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which sought approval for the School Governance Strategy.

The Board was advised that in January 2014, Ofsted published the document "The Framework for School Inspection", which set out how an Ofsted inspection of a school would provide an independent external evaluation of its effectiveness and a diagnosis of what it should do to improve. The Board noted that Governors in Halton had a vital role in ensuring that every child in Halton received the best possible education.

The School Governance Strategy (the Strategy) set out the support available for Halton's Governors through its Clerking Service and its Training and Development Service, to ensure that they were equipped to undertake their role as strategic leaders. It was reported that the Strategy was aligned to the Council's Learning and Achievement Strategy 2014, which confirmed the Council's commitment to excellence in Education. It also set out how the Local Authority would support and enable strong school leadership and management and early intervention when necessary.

#### Reason(s) For Decision

The Local Authority retained statutory responsibilities with regard to school governance and the Strategy detailed those responsibilities and set out how the Local Authority supported, advised and offered training to Governors to ensure that they were equipped to undertake their role as strategic leaders and meet the rigor of an Ofsted inspection.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

#### Implementation Date

From the date of approval by Executive Board and subsequently circulated to all Chairs of Governors and Head Teachers.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) Endorse and approves the School Governance Strategy; and
- 2) Notes the change to the way in which Local Authority Governors are appointed to re-constituted Governing Bodies.

Strategic Director  
- Children and  
Enterprise

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

### EXB16 WELLBEING WEB MAGAZINE

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health which sought agreement of the Board to award a contract in respect of the Wellbeing Web magazine.

The Board was advised that the Wellbeing Web magazine used ground breaking technology to provide an effective way of communicating with students in schools and colleges, pregnant women and their families.

It was noted that the magazine would use electronic media to provide an effective way of communicating with students in schools and colleges. It would provide a useful opportunity to promote health and wellbeing messages and services as well as other relevant Council run and commissioned services.

It was further reported that Wellbeing Magazines were currently the only organisation to produce a bespoke product in this way. It was therefore necessary to seek authority to award a contract without conducting a tender exercise which required a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders, as set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) in accordance with procurement Standing Order 1.8.3 ( e), Procurement Standing orders 4.1 and 4.2 be waived in respect of the Wellbeing Web Magazine; and
- 2) the Director of Public health be authorised to award a 3 year contract to wellbeing Magazines (with the option to extend for a further 12 months) to deliver:-
  - a) a bespoke electronic magazine service to each of the secondary schools in Halton and also to Riverside College; and
  - b) a bespoke electronic magazine aimed at pregnant women/new parents and the Early Years.

Director of Public Health

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB17 DRAFT NIGHT TIME ECONOMY SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which provided an update on the detailed financial implications following the Safer Policy and Performance Board Scrutiny review of the night time economy.

The Scrutiny Review was first presented to Executive Board at its meeting on 21 November 2013. The Board was reminded that at the time, some of the recommendations had funding implications which required further investigation. However, there were also a number of other recommendations which were unlikely to require additional funding and which could be undertaken within current resources. Appendix 1 contained details of the financial implications of each of the recommendations, for Members' further consideration.

**RESOLVED:** That the Board approve the financial implications for the recommendations in the Topic Group report.

Strategic Director  
- Communities

## **RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB18 REVISED TREASURY MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2014/15**

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on proposed revisions to the Council's Treasury Management Investment Strategy for 2014/15.

The Board was advised that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15 was approved by Council on 5 March 2014. Within this, an Investment Strategy set out a specific list of investment counterparties and maximum limits the Council would invest with each.

It was reported that the Council's advisers, Capita Assets Services, had advised that the counterparty list was restrictive and that opportunities may be missed to utilise different counterparties whilst still maintaining the Council's prudent policy of prioritising security and liquidity over investment yield. The Board noted that advice was to maintain a counterparty list based upon specifying the type of institution to invest in rather than naming specific counterparties. This would be dependent upon the

counterparty meeting a minimum credit rating. A revised counterparty list on this basis was attached at Appendix B.

It was further reported that such improved flexibility would be of particular importance for the Council as opportunities would be taken to borrow in preparation for the Council's contribution to the Mersey Gateway construction costs.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to adopt the revised Treasury Management Investment Strategy and Counterparty List, as shown in the appendices.

Operational  
Director - Finance

#### EXB19 2013/14 FINANCIAL OUTTURN

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the final revenue and capital spending position for 2013/14.

The Board was advised that the final accounts for 2013/14 were complete; the revenue spending position for each Department, which would be subject to external audit, was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

It was reported that budget savings for 2014/15 were implemented over two tranches, the first of which consisted of savings of £6.5m, and approved by Council in December 2013. As a result of some of these savings being implemented early, it provided part-year budget savings in 2013/14.

The report provided details on the key variances (which were in addition to the overall net underspend) in the following services:

- Children and Families;
- Learning and Achievement;
- Children's Organisation and Provision Department;
- Community and Environment;
- Prevention and Assessment;
- Commissioning and Complex Care;
- Finance;

- Policy, Planning and Transportation; and
- ICT and Support Services.

Members were advised that the Council's Reserves and Balances had been reviewed in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Strategy. The Council's General Balances stood at £8,645,662, which, given the financial climate, was considered to be at a reasonable and prudent level.

With regard to Capital Spending, details of spending against the 2013/14 Capital Programme, were attached at Appendix 2. It was noted that spending was £9.9m below the revised capital programme of £48.4m, which represented 80% delivery of the revised capital programme for which 20% slippage was anticipated, and so represented a positive outcome.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### EXB20 ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive which informed Members on the separate and unrelated disposals and purchase of various properties in Widnes and also set out the proposals for overseeing a review of the Council's property and sites.

The report set out details of properties which had been disposed of at Birchfield Road and Mersey View Road, Widnes. In addition, the former lawn mower repair facility at Moor Lane, Widnes had been acquired, which extended Council ownership of the road frontage. The Board was reminded that the Council were considering redevelopment options for this area.

It was noted that time constraints had required action to be taken by the Chief Executive on the respective disposal and acquisition of the properties detailed, so that the opportunities were not lost by undue delays.

The Board was advised that, given the scale of expenditure involved in the Council's property related budget, a review of the Council's Property Assets and Sites would be appropriate. The report recommended the establishment of a Member Assets Review Panel to oversee the work. The Panel would:

- Explore ways of minimising and reducing

property/site related costs associated with the delivery of Council services;

- Evaluate whether property/site related assets were sufficient and in a condition to help meet corporate /service objectives;
- Consider alternative methods of property provision; and
- Investigate opportunities for sharing assets.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note and endorse the Chief Executive's decision to approve the sales of 117 Birchfield Road and the former Haydocks site at Mersey View Road, Widnes, and the purchase of the former lawn mower repair unit at Moor Lane, Widnes; and
- 2) agree to the establishment of a Member assets Review Panel.

Chief Executive

**MINUTES ISSUED: 1 July 2014**

**CALL-IN: 8 July 2014**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 8 July 2014**

*Meeting ended at 2.15 p.m.*