

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2017

EXB62	HALTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17
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The Board considered a report of the Independent Chair, Halton Safeguarding Children Board, on the Halton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2016/17.

Richard Strachan, Chair of the LSCB, attended the meeting and described how organisations and individuals across all sectors were working together to safeguard children and young people. The Annual Report provided a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The report included details on lessons from learning and improvement activity within the reporting period, including Serious Case Reviews, Practice Learning Reviews and Child Death Reviews and audits. In addition, it listed contributions made to the LSCB by partners as well as details of its expenditure.

It was noted that since November 2013, the LSCB had become subject to review of their effectiveness. In 2014, the LSCB was reviewed by Ofsted, alongside the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers.

A summary of the report's content was set out for Members' information. It was reported that the Children and Social Work Act 2017 would abolish LSCBs from 2019. There was an expectation that key safeguarding partners such as the Local Authority, the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group, would establish multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding children processes and practice.

Mr Strachan dealt with Members questions and was thanked for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report and associated Annual Report, attached at Appendix 1, be noted.

EXB63	SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2018-19 – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on the introduction of a National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools and high needs.

The Board was advised that in July 2017, the Secretary of State confirmed the introduction of the national funding formula and announced an increase in per pupil

funding and a minimum per pupil funding level for primary and secondary school pupils in 2018/19. It was reported that local authorities were advised that the minimum funding rates would be used by the Department for Education to determine the total allocation of funding to each authority.

On 11 October 2017, Schools Forum received a report which highlighted the key changes to the funding of schools. Following the release of indicative budgets a consultation paper was sent to all schools in the Borough setting out three options for their consideration. The consultation also addressed the issue of Halton's previous financial commitments for High Needs against the key budget headings as well as its current commitments. Details of other key changes to funding the Schools Block were detailed in the report and a copy of the consultation responses were attached at Appendix B.

It was proposed that during the two year transitional phase, Halton move to an interim formula so as to retain the primary lump sum, and to follow the principles of the transitional national funding formula in all other factors. It was further noted that to address the budget shortfall in High Needs a transfer of 0.5% of the Schools Block budget would be required.

Reason(s) for Decision

To ensure that there was a fair distribution of resources across schools in the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Consideration was given to either retaining the existing funding formula with uplift for the increase; however, this was not an option supported by the schools. Implementation of the transitional NFF was considered but this would have an impact on the smaller schools.

Implementation Date

1 April 2018.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) an interim funding formula for 2018/19 and 2019/20 be approved, to allow the retention of the primary lump sum at 2017/18 levels to support small schools within the Authority; and
- 2) the decision to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block to High Needs Block be noted.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2017

EXB78	COUNCIL PROVISION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on the future delivery of Council Provision of Residential Care for Children.

Following the de-registration and review of Edinburgh Road Children's Home it was reported that a significant financial investment would be required so as to meet the required standards of a skilled team of staff and management structure to support it. The Board was advised that it was likely that an external provider would have access to, and be able to supply experienced staff and the management structure to support the service. The service would be procured on the basis of the Council maintaining ownership of the building and leasing it to a provider as part of a contract.

The report set out details of the financial implications; it was envisaged that the first placements would be of young people returning from Out of Borough provision, with future placements reducing the need to spend on external provision.

RESOLVED: That the option to commission a third party provider be approved.

EXB79	SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on a revised approach to supporting care leavers in their own accommodation.

The Board was advised that for many care leavers, there was a transition period between living in residential or foster care and taking up their own tenancy, often referred to as semi-independent or supported living. In recent times, the number of Halton care leavers had increased due to the increased number of older young people entering the care system. It was noted that some of these care leavers required significant support to make progress towards independent living.

The Care Leaver Service had tried to change the way it delivered its services to meet the challenge of efficiency while ensuring customer focus, value for money and demonstrating best practice. Members were advised that in order to develop the offer for Halton care leavers, it was proposed that support for young people be commissioned which ensured the delivery of a number of outcomes including financial support, personal safety and increasing self-esteem and resilience. A second phase would be to work with local housing providers to develop a small group setting for care leavers. The report provided further detail on both proposed phases for Members to consider.

RESOLVED: That the proposed approach be endorsed.

EXB80**SERVICES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING TENDER**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on the award of a contract for the delivery of services to encourage participation in education and training.

The Board was reminded that in July 2017, it had granted authority for Halton to lead on a joint procurement process for the delivery of a service with Liverpool, Wirral and Knowsley authorities. The tender opportunity was advertised in October 2017 and the evaluation process was completed on 23 November 2017. After the initial assessment stage, a provider was identified as meeting the criteria to go forward to the next stage. This process was completed after the Board report was written and the successful contractor was named and confirmed at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Director, People, be authorised to enter into a contract with Career Connect to deliver services to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education and training. The contract will be awarded for a period of one year with the option of three additional one year contracts.

EXB81**THE NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA FOR SCHOOLS AND HIGH NEEDS UPDATE – KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which provided an update on the financial modelling undertaken and the national funding formula for schools and high needs.

The Board had previously received a report on the National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools. Extensive modelling had been undertaken to retain the lump sum value and minimise losses to Halton schools whilst keeping within the funding available. However, it was reported that there were a number of reasons why it had not been possible for Halton to introduce an interim funding formula, details of which were set out in the report. It was now recommended that the use of the transitional NFF model for 2018/19 and 2019/20 be agreed.

Reason(s) for Decision

To ensure that there was a fair distribution of resources across the schools in the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Consideration was given to either retaining the existing funding formula with uplift for the increase, and retaining the 2017/18 lump sum level but retaining the principles of the NFF. However, this had not proved to be affordable or practically possible to introduce and would create some significant reductions to the budgets of some schools.

Implementation Date

1 April 2018.

RESOLVED: That the funding of schools based on the transitional National Funding Formula model be approved.