

## APPENDIX 1

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

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2008**

#### **84. Halton Youth Service - Future Commissioning Arrangements - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People outlining proposals to secure improved outcomes for young people through the future commissioning arrangements of Halton Youth Service.

It was noted that, in June 2002, the Executive Board had agreed that:

- the principle of the Youth Service transferring to Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership; and
- that a first stage transfer would take place from September 2002 with staff seconded to the Connexions service. The second stage for transfer was to take place from April 2003.

In March 2003, the Board further approved the Partnership Agreement for the management of the Youth Service by Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership. This had proven to be successful with the Youth Service now demonstrating improved performance against National Performance Indicators. However, the contracted period for the commissioning of the Youth Service ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

In 2006, the Government launched “Youth Matters”, a key policy directive which promoted a vision of integrated support structures and services for teenagers which promoted and sought to secure access to positive activities and high quality information, advice and guidance. This would be delivered within a framework of integrated and targeted youth support with local flexibility for service re-design.

As a consequence of youth matters, local authorities were responsible and accountable for Youth Policy in their area and were taking responsibility for integrated planning and commissioning of the full range of services for teenagers from universal activities through to more specialist and targeted support. This would, over time, enable universal and targeted services to work closely together to provide integrated support for young people and to improve outcomes for them.

In addition, Youth Matters also made it clear that the support and guidance services provided by Connexions should now “go local” so that they could be more

fully included and integrated with a whole range of services for young people and their parents and carers. It was intended that the “localisation” of Connexions services would be achieved through the development of an integrated Youth Support strategy at the local level, which would enable a greater coherence of service to young people and their parents/carers and provide greater efficiency in the way services were procured and delivered locally.

The guidance contained in Youth Matters had subsequently been confirmed in legislation through the Education and Inspections Act 2007 and would be further embedded in the forthcoming Education and Skills Act.

More recently, the publication of PSA Delivery agreements and, in particular, PSA 14 focused upon the objective to “increase the number of children and young people on the path to success”. Mechanisms for securing progress against the objectives contained in PSA14 included delivery of high quality opportunities and activities for young people to secure their engagement in positive activities and to include diversionary activities to prevent them engaging in “at risk” or anti-social behaviours in the community. Traditionally, this had been delivered through youth clubs but additionally was increasingly now being secured through more creative routes.

In April 2008, Ofsted had undertaken a joint area review of services to children and young people in the Borough. This inspection included further investigations in the areas of Health and Integrated Youth Support, particularly focused upon the impact of this provision on young peoples’ involvement in planning and delivery of local services, their engagement in youth work and in addressing the level of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). The major strengths highlighted by the inspection were outlined within the report for Members’ information together with important weaknesses. Whilst focussing upon many positive developments, the report emphasised the need to locally progress to “determining a single management structure” and also to “review job tasks and identify a model best practice in order that skills and experiences of both personal advisers and youth workers operating in a broader range of settings could be more effectively utilised”.

Consideration needed to be given to the future commissioning of Halton Youth Service within the context of Youth Matters, PSA14 and the future commissioning arrangements for Connexions services. Steps were being taken to commission Connexions services across the City Region in partnership with five other Merseyside Local Authorities. At this stage, Halton Borough Council was the only local authority to have taken steps previously to commission external providers to deliver its Youth Service. As a consequence, it was not appropriate to include the commissioning of Halton’s Youth Service within the specification drawn up for the Connexions service. However, it was evidence that within the developing integrated Youth Support arrangements currently being drawn up that there would need to be a closer alignment if not integration of the Youth Service and Connexions workforce to secure maximum benefit of service support to young

people. As a consequence, it was proposed that the commissioning of Halton Youth Service was aligned with the process of commissioning of Connexions service and was secured within the framework of a single City Region commission with an additional local dimension specific to Halton. This would ensure the delivery of Connexions services and Halton Youth Service by a single provider.

#### REASON FOR DECISION

Arrangements for the future delivery of service to young people would affect all young people aged 13 – 19 in the Borough. It would also include the targeting of specialist services to vulnerable young people to enable them to access their universal entitlement.

#### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None.

#### IMPLEMENTATION DATE

It was intended that the new contractual arrangements would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) steps be taken to secure future commissioning of Halton Youth Service;
- (2) existing arrangements for commissioning Halton Youth Service from Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Limited be extended to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009;
- (3) commissioning of Halton Youth Service be separate but aligned with the commissioning of Connexions Service; and
- (4) the timescale for the contract should align with that of the Connexions Services and should cover the period 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 with an option of an extension to the contract for a further period of up to three years, with the contract accommodating an appropriate break clause in the event of poor performance or reduced financial capacity to commission this service to level previously agreed.

#### **85. Connexions Transition – KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing information on the arrangements for the future commissioning of “Connexions Services”

It was advised that, "Youth Matters" required by April 2008 responsibility for commissioning Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and the funding that went with it be devolved to local authorities working through children's trusts, schools and colleges. Local authorities were expected to lead a genuinely collaborative approach and develop new arrangements for delivering IAG that clearly met the needs of young people in the area. These arrangements would be planned and implemented in a way that not only supported the delivery of the 14 – 19 learning entitlement but were integrated into a wider set of Youth Support Services for teenagers and their parents.

Local Authorities were responsible and accountable for Youth Policy in their area and were taking responsibility for integrated planning and commissioning of the full range of services for teenagers from universal activities through to more specialist and targeted support. This would enable, over time, universal and targeted services to work closely together to provide integrated support for young people and to improve outcomes for them.

"Youth Matters" also made it clear that the support and guidance provided by Connexions should now "go local" so that they could be more fully included and integrated with the whole range of services for young people and their parents and carers. It was intended that the "localisation" of Connexions services would be achieved through the development of an integration Youth Support Strategy at a local level, which would enable a greater coherence of service to young people and their parents/ carers and provide greater efficiency in the way services were procured and delivered locally. More recently, the publication of PSA delivery agreements, and in particular PSA 14, focused upon the objective to "increase the number of children and young people on the path to success".

On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2008 the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families wrote to local authorities notifying them of interim arrangements for the delivery of Connexions services and assessments for young people with learning difficulties from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. The Education and Skills Bill, currently before Parliament, proposed that legal responsibilities be brought into line by effecting transfer to local authorities of the statutory responsibility of Connexions services. Further details were outlined within the report for Members' consideration together with a number of arrangements that had previously agreed by the Board in November 2007 in preparation for implementation. Progress towards these arrangements had been overseen by a Transition Steering Group comprising of the Chief Executives of Halton, Liverpool and St. Helens; the Directors of Children's Services at Knowsley, Sefton and the Wirral; and the Chairman being the Chief Executive of Halton Borough Council.

In 2008 legal advice received by the participating local authorities indicated that the commissioning of Greater Mersey Connexions Partnership could only occur for 2008/09 and that EU Procurement Regulations would need to be followed from 2009 onwards. As a consequence, work had been underway to secure the

commissioning of Connexions services from 2009 – 2011. To assist in this work support had been secured from the Merseyside Efficiency Improvement Partnership (MEIP) which was funding consultants to advise on the details of the specification and procurement process. That work was nearing completion and the next stage would lead into procurement through a process of open competitive dialogue. Additional resources were being sought from the MEIP to fund the project management costs associated with this work.

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, arrangements had been in place for Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council to be the contract holding authority with Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Limited on behalf of the six Merseyside Local Authorities. From the period of the new contract it was proposed that Halton Borough Council becomes the contract holding authority on behalf of the six Merseyside Local Authorities. Contracts would be held with the respective five local authorities to ensure prompt payment on a monthly basis to Halton BC for their share of the contractual commitments with the provider of Connexions Services. A model for this arrangement was already in place with Wirral MBC.

Halton's role in becoming the contract holding authority on behalf of the six participating local authorities would be undertaken on a cost neutral basis. Any costs incurred would be recharged to the participating six local authorities.

The currently contract was worth approximately £17.5m and was funded from the Local Area Agreement (LAA) single pot allocations of which had been confirmed until 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

Consideration had been given to the length of any new proposed contract and whether it should be limited by the period of the current funding round and it was proposed that, due to the scale of the contract, and the extensive preparations undertaken across the six local authorities, letting the new contract for the remaining period of ABG would represent poor value for money. It was therefore proposed that the new contract to be let should run from the period 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 with a further proposed option of extension from for up to three years. Contractually, an appropriate break clause would be included in the contract enabling it to be reduced or ceased subject to appropriate consideration of factors relating to performance or financial sustainability.

No changes in status would occur to the pension arrangements for staff as a result of Halton BC becoming the contracting authority with the provider. Wirral MBC would remain as the administering body for the Merseyside Pension Fund to which current employees of Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Limited contributed.

#### REASONS FOR DECISION

Arrangements for the future delivery of services to young people would affect all young people aged 13 – 19 in the Borough. It would also include the targeting of

specialist services to all vulnerable young people to enable them access their universal entitlement.

#### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None.

#### IMPLEMENTATION DATE

It was intended that the new contractual arrangements would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the existing contract with Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership be amended to cover the period to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009, pending the completion of procurement processes;
- (2) the new contract for Connexions Services should cover the period 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 with an option of an extension to the contract for a further period of up to three years, but for the contract to accommodate an appropriate break clause in the event of poor performance or reduced financial capacity to commission the service to the level previously agreed;
- (3) Halton Borough Council be the lead authority for procurement of the new arrangements on behalf of the six participating local authorities; and
- (4) Halton Borough Council become the contract holding authority on behalf of the six participating local authorities from the City Region for the new contract when awarded with the appropriate cross authority commitments.

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2009**

#### **91. OFSTED Annual Performance Assessment (APA) of Services to Children and Young People in Halton – KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People regarding the outcome of the statutory Annual Performance Assessment (APA) of Children's Services in Halton undertaken by OFSTED. The APA had been published on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and was attached to the report at Appendix 1 for Members' information. The APA drew on evidence from fieldwork undertaken by OFSTED including School Inspections; the Joint Area Review conducted in 2008; the Children and Young People's Plan; and other

inspectors' findings, along with the Council's own self-assessment.

The assessment had graded the Council in seven key areas ranging from 4 (outstanding) to 1 (inadequate). The gradings that the Council had received were outlined for the Board's consideration together with the findings of the inspectors in relation to:

- being healthy;
- staying safe;
- enjoying and achieving;
- making a positive contribution;
- achieving economic well-being; and
- capacity to improve/service management.

In conclusion, Halton's performance had been particularly impressive in that four grades of "outstanding" had been achieved in Safeguarding; Enjoying and Achieving; Making a Positive Contribution; and Capacity to Improve. The Board noted that Halton was the only Council in the North West to achieve this. However, given recent events of Haringey and specifically the circumstances surrounding the death of Baby P, it was noted that the Council continued to develop its services ensuring that they remained fit for purpose, particularly in the field of child protection. With this in mind, at the request of the Chief Executive, work was underway to review services for vulnerable children and young people and their families and how the Council continued to best meet their needs and a report was to be submitted to the Executive Board with recommendations for further improvements in working practices in due course.

It was noted that the Strategic Director – Children and Young People and the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder were also accountable for some services that they did not directly run, such as those impacting on children and young people's mortality rates. In relation to this, the Board was advised that the Primary Care Trust had agreed to carry out all its commissioning within the framework of the Children's Trust that Councillor McInerney chaired.

The Portfolio Holder, Members and relevant staff were thanked for their hard work, professionalism and commitment in securing a massive improvement in Children's Services throughout the Borough.

#### Reason for Decision

Statutory reporting process.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

#### Implementation Date

Immediate.

RESOLVED: That the performance ratings arising from the Annual Performance Assessment of services to Children and Young People in Halton undertaken by OFSTED be noted.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2009**

### **96. Capital Programme 2009/2010 - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing a summary of the capital programme for 2009/10 for the Children and Young People Directorate.

The total capital funding of £6,138,001, and how it was made up, was outlined within the report for Members' information, together with details of the works to be funded and any requirements, or opportunities to submit bids, in relation to this. In addition, it was noted that all local authorities had been provided with the opportunity to bid for capital projects up to £5m that created world class facilities for diploma lines of learning. Consideration was to be given to the projects that represented the best use of limited funding. The Council had made a bid, details of which were within the report, and it was noted that the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) would be advising on which projects would receive funding at the end of March 2009.

All local authorities had also been provided with additional funds to invest in youth facilities with a further 50 local authorities receiving funding to target work and resources "to increase young people's participation in activities, provide facilities and bring young people and the community together" (Youth Taskforce Action Plan 2008). Additionally, Halton had submitted a My Place bid proposing the refurbishment of the Kingsway Health Centre. Approval had been granted by DCSF to carry forward the Youth Capital Fund plus Grant (£452k) to contribute towards the refurbishment costs of the centre if the bid was successful. If the bid was unsuccessful the grant would fund improvements at Upton Community Centre to enhance the facilities of young people there.

#### Reason for Decision

To deliver and implement the capital programmes.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

#### Implementation Date

Capital Programmes to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2009.



RESOLVED: That

- (1) the capital funding available for 2009/10 be noted; and
- (2) Full Council be recommended to approve the Schools Capital Programme 2009/10.

## **97. Primary Organisation – KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing a summary of the current primary school organisation, the number of primary places, and the current and projected primary school numbers in Halton. In addition, the report updated Members on the Primary Capital Strategy including the drivers for prioritising future investment and process for revising and resubmitting the Strategy to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

It was noted that the Audit Commission and DCSF guidance recommended that there should be no more than 10% surplus provision across an authority and that schools should not have more than 25% surplus places. In Halton the level of surplus capacity in primary schools had varied over the last few years. Following revisions to the net capacity of a number of primary schools, there were 1400 surplus places across the Borough, representing a 12.6% surplus, and 8 schools had surplus capacity in excess of 25%.

Predicting the likely level of future primary provision using PCT live birth data and applying the previous rate of school admission to births, the future primary numbers were estimated to be on average 1462 per year, equating to 8% surplus capacity. Although this figure was below the recommended 10%, it was predicted that there would still be schools within the Borough with over 25% surplus capacity. In addition, although there were surplus places in some areas, in others there was a shortage of provision and so increases in school places to meet needs required exploration.

The Board was advised that the DCSF had set a target for Halton that 15% of primary schools in the worst condition should be rebuilt or taken out of use and that a further 35% should be remodelled to bring them up to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards. A range of key drivers, to be included in an investment matrix, had therefore been identified to support the delivery of the national targets and allow Halton to meet its local priorities, details of which were provided within the report.

In addition, the Authority would consider the suitability of its primary provision in relation to special educational needs and disabilities, unmet extended and community services need, health through improved dining and play provision, and access to ICT. Priority would also be given to removing temporary accommodation, increasing specialist accommodation and providing more flexible

learning spaces.

The Board was advised that the outcome of the assessment of the Primary Capital Programme (PCP), undertaken by Capita on behalf of the DCSF, had identified that further work was needed on the Strategy before any funding could be confirmed, and details of work to be undertaken to strengthen the Strategy was outlined within the report. However, it was noted that the vision and context of the Strategy had been assessed as sound.

Members were advised that the revisions to the Primary Capital Strategy must be submitted to the DCSF by the end of January 2009 along with the matrix for prioritisation and the priorities for the first four years of investment. Following further analysis of pupil places and projected numbers a detailed report was to be presented to the Board on the opportunities and options for future primary re-organisation.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

Following further evaluation of Halton's PCP it had been suggested that revisions be made to the original submission to strengthen this document prior to funding being approved.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

This was a DCSF requirement.

#### Implementation Date

The Primary Capital Strategy must be submitted to the DCSF by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the current and proposed level of primary surplus places across the Authority be noted and a further more detailed report on the current and predicted capacity of each school be provided;
- (2) the key drivers for an investment priorities matrix as outlined in paragraph 3.5 of the report be agreed; and
- (3) the Strategic Director – Children and Young People be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Children and Young People, to make the revision to the Primary Capital Strategy required by the DCSF and resubmit the revised Strategy to the DCSF by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>TH</sup>  
JANUARY 2009**

**xx. Connexions – Waiver of Procurement Standing Order (Part 2 Report)**

**xx. Primary Organisation – KEY DECISION**

(NB above mins will be included once finalised and published.)