

APPENDIX 1

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 9 APRIL 2009

146. Approval of BSF Outline Business Case - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which detailed the Outline Business Case (OBC) and sought approval for the submission of the OBC to the DCSF by 22 April 2009.

It was reported that Halton submitted its Strategy for Change Part 1 in July 2008, which had now been agreed. The Strategy for Change Part 2 was submitted on 19 November 2008. It was noted that conditional approval was granted on the basis that additional information was provided by 27 February 2009 and the Authority was given permission to develop its OBCase. It was reported that notification had now been received which confirmed that the outstanding requirements from Strategy for Change Part 2 had now been met.

The Board was advised that the OBC consisted of the following key sections plus associated appendices:

- executive summary;
- background;
- the project within the programme;
- value for money;
- affordability;
- readiness to deliver; and
- managing change.

Explanations of each section were set out in the report for Members' consideration.

It was reported that the current Funding Allocation Model adjusted for Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits was £175 million. Members were advised that this figure would cover the costs of Halton's BSF Programme.

It was noted that the estimated costs to deliver ICT solution for the BSF Programme was £23.5 million and included a 0.5 million contingency.

The available funding was a combination of the BSF funding and a contribution of £200 per secondary pupil per annum, which would be secured for each secondary pupil.

It was reported that for the OBC cases the authority must also confirm that sufficient resources were available to meet the procurement and BSF team costs. It was noted that the total resources available would meet the £4 million requirement for the Authority.

In addition the Board was informed that revenue affordability of the Programme must be confirmed at OBC and in the Halton BSF Programme the building programme was being supported produced in two ways; through PFI where there was more than 70% new build and through the conventional funding solution for Design and Build.

Detailed in the report was a table that set out all the additional contributions which would be made to the BSF Programme. It was noted that the one off (single) contributions had been used to reduce the ongoing annual costs of the PFI schools. In addition, the funding to reduce the annual affordability gap had been identified.

The Board considered the affordability section and noted the four key issues as follows;

- is the capital expenditure affordable?
- are revenue consequences affordable?
- are the costs of the team affordable? and
- are the costs of IT affordable?

Members were advised all the key issues above were affordable based on the model outlined in the report.

Arising from discussion Members requested that a breakdown of costs and plans of each site be circulated and presented in the near future.

REASON FOR DECISION

The Outline Business Case must be completed as part of the BSF Programme.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The Outline Business Case must be submitted to the DCSF and PfS by 22nd April 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Executive Board note the progress made in the development of the Outline Business Case due for submission on 22nd April 2009;
 - 2) The Executive Board delegate responsibility to make any changes to the BSF Outline Business Case to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Member for Children and Young People, Operational Director Financial Services and Operational Director Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources;
 - 3) The Executive Board requests the Strategic Director for Children and Young People to submit the Final Outline Business Case to the Department for Children Schools and Families in the form agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council Member for Children and Young People, Operational Director Financial Services and Operational Director Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources; and
- 1) The Executive Board request a full report on the outcome of the DCSF assessment of the Outline Business Case in June / July 2009.

(NB: Councillor Nelson declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a Chair of Governors at the Grange Schools.)

(Councillor Harris declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a Governor at The Bankfield School.)

(Councillor Swain declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a Governor at Halton High School.)

147. BSF Secondary Re-organisation - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which summarised the response to the statutory consultation undertaken on secondary Special Educational Needs (SEN) unit provision in Halton. An outline of the decision making process was also included for

Members' consideration. A further update on the outcome of the statutory consultation was circulated at the meeting following the end of the representation period on 2nd April 2009.

Members were also advised of the school organisation proposals required in Runcorn for The Heath Specialist Technology College, The Grange Comprehensive, The Grange Junior, The Grange Infant, The Grange Nursery and Halton High School.

It was reported that the proposals recommended the discontinuance of the 7 place EBD Unit at Halton High (Community School) and the discontinuance of the 14 place EBD Unit at The Grange Comprehensive (Community School). The proposals also recommended the reduction in the provision at Wade Deacon for Hearing Impaired pupils from 8 to 6 pupils.

Detailed in the report were the proposals to establish the secondary SEN resources provision as follows:

The Grange Comprehensive (Community School) – The school would provide resource provision for 11 pupils with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), 5 of these places would be reserved for outreach support for pupils in other high schools within the borough. In addition, there would be resource provision for 10 pupils with speech and language and communication needs.

Saints Peter and Paul Catholic College (Voluntary Aided Catholic) - The school would provide resource provision for 11 pupils with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), 5 of these places would be reserved for outreach support for pupils in other high schools within the borough.

The Bankfield (Community School) - The School would provide resource provision for 10 pupils with speech and language and communication needs.

Wade Deacon High (Community School) The school would provide resource provision for 6 pupils with hearing impairment and Specific Learning Difficulties.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The proposals for secondary and secondary special provision must be agreed prior to the submission of the Outline Business Case.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Alternative options have been considered and assessed during the

consultation process.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The proposals for SEN unit provision must be agreed by 9th April 2009 and will be implemented by September 2011.

The proposal to commence the consultation on Runcorn secondary provision must be agreed by 9th April 2009, however, the increase in numbers at The Heath Specialist Technology College are not scheduled to be implemented until the school has been rebuilt as part of the BSF Programme (2012/2013). The proposals for the re-organisation of The Grange Comprehensive, Junior, Infant and Nursery are scheduled to be implemented in April 2010. The date for the establishment of the Academy to replace Halton High is September 2010.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Approval be given to commence the informal consultation process to expand the Heath Specialist Technology College to 1350 11-16 places;
- 2) Approval be given to commence the statutory consultation to alter the age range of The Grange Comprehensive to 0 – 16 years with 60 full time equivalent nursery places, 420 primary places and 900 secondary places and to discontinue (close) the Grange Nursery, Infant and Junior School;
- 3) Approval be given to commence the informal consultation process to discontinue (close) Halton High School followed by the formal consultation to close Halton High School by the authority and consultation to establish the Academy by the Sponsors;
- 4) The proposals to discontinue SEN provision and Halton High School and The Grange Comprehensive as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the tabled report be approved and implemented on 31st August 2011; and
- 5) The proposals to establish SEN Resource provision at The Grange Comprehensive, The Bankfield and St Peter and Paul Catholic College (Voluntary Aided Catholic) and to continue to offer provision at Wade Deacon High School as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the tabled report be approved and implemented by 1st September 2011.

148. Decision on BSF Funding and Procurement - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which set out the range of Procurement Standard Documents and Standard Form Agreements, that were required to be submitted on 22 April 2009 as part of the BSF Programme.

The Board was advised of the range of Procurement Standard Documents as follows:

- The Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU);
- Pre-Qualification Questionnaire;
- Pre-Qualification Evaluation Matrix;
- Descriptive Document;
- Invitation to Participate in Dialogue Volume 1 (IPD); and
- Invitation to Submit Final Bids.

It was reported that templates were available for the documents above which needed personalising in line with each Programme requirements. The documents must then be agreed with Partnerships for schools.

It was further advised that there was a suite of Standard Form Agreements which must be approved by Partnerships for Schools, detailed as follows:

- Shareholders' Agreements;
- Strategic Partnering Agreements;
- PFI Project Agreement;
- PFI Payment Mechanism;
- Funder's Direct Agreement;
- Management Services Agreement;
- ICT Services Contract;
- ICT Payment Mechanism; and
- Design and Build Contract Lump Sum Option.

REASON FOR DECISION

The procurement Standard Documents and Standard Form Agreements must be agreed and submitted with the Outline Business Case on 22 April 2009.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The Outline Business Case and supporting documents must be submitted to the DCSF and PfS by 22 April 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Chief Executive be authorised to agree the supporting Procurement Standard documents and Standard Form Agreements prior to the submission of the business case to Partnerships for Schools and DCSF; and
- 1) the procurement process to be applied to the BSF Programme is that which is set out in the Partnerships for School guidance.

149. Procurement of a Joint Local Education Partnership with Warrington Council - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which outlined the proposals and gain approval to establish a joint Local Education Partnership (LEP) with Warrington Borough Council.

It was reported that a LEP was a public private partnership between the LA, BSF for the Future Investments LLP (BSFI) and a private sector partner selected in open competition under the European procurement rules. The LEP was therefore a joint venture company whose primary purpose was to ensure that BSF investment was efficiently and effectively used to deliver transformation. The key aims of the LEP were outlined in the report for Members consideration.

The Board was advised of the proposal of a joint LEP be procured between Halton and Warrington Borough Council. It was noted that this would allow both Councils to have a joint BSF team that would manage the business cases and procurement preparation. It was further noted that this would strengthen both BSF teams and allow for revenue savings from both Councils. Members were informed that approval in principle was being considered by Warrington Council in April with formal consideration in May 2009.

It was further reported that approval by both Councils would be subject to the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which would outline the operational and revenue implications, role of external commissioned services, the scope of the LEP and the governance arrangements for the Board. Appended to the report was a summary of the style, type and provision of the MoU. It was noted that a full copy of the MoU could be made available on request.

REASON FOR DECISION

A decision is required on the position in terms of the Joint LEP prior to the submission of Outline Business Case on 22 April 2009.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The Outline Business Case must be submitted to the DCSF and PfS by 22 April 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Approval be given to enter into collaborative arrangements with Warrington Borough Council for the purposes of procuring a Private Sector Partner to participate and invest in a Local Education Partnership (LEP);
- 2) The arrangements in 2.1 of the report be subject of an agreed and signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between both Councils;
- 3) The scope of services to be obtained through joint procurement and the governance arrangements to be set out in the MoU; and
- 4) The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Executive Board Member for Children and Young People, be authorised to approve the final MoU and take whatever actions necessary to give effect to this decision

(NB: Councillor Harris declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a Governor at All Saints Upton CE Primary School.)

150. Children's Centre Phase 3 Capital - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which identified the availability of Phase 3 capital funding for children's centres and proposed deployment of this resource to maximise access to children's centre services.

It was reported that since April 2006, local authorities have had strategic responsibility for delivering children's centres, to reflect the mainstreaming of children's centres as a universal, national programme. Children's centre services were planned and delivered in partnership with

the NHS, Jobcentre Plus and a wide range of voluntary, private and community organisations based on local need.

Members were advised that children's centres were not currently recognised in legislation, although the integrated services which they offered to children and families had a statutory basis in the local authority duties under the Childcare Act 2006 to provide integrated early childhood services. However, it was noted that the Government's current proposals contained within The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill, to establish children's centres as a recognised part of children's services infrastructure that had direct bearing on the future developments of the centres.

It was further advised that the proposed legislation would mean that in future, whether or not an establishment was described as a children's centre would be a matter of law. It was reported that the Government proposed to use the Act to establish that all children's centres in existence at the date of the Royal Assent were captured as children's centres for the purpose of the statutory requirements.

It was reported that Local Authorities, working with their statutory partners, would be required to assess the need for children's centres in their area, and to establish and maintain sufficient children's centres to meet that need. The purpose of the proposed legislation was to provide children's centres with a statutory footing, so that their provision was not seen as the outcome of time-limited funding regime, but became a long term statutory commitment and part of the established landscape of early years provision.

The Board was advised that the intention was to reflect in the legislation and associated statutory guidance practice in localities which was outlined in the report for information.

It was further noted that under phase 1 and 2 of the programme, twelve children's centres had been established in Halton. Each children's centre was intended to serve a "reach" of between 800 and 1200 children under 5 years within the locality. All twelve centres had been formally designated as children's centres by Government.

The Board was informed that Government required Phase 3 children's centres (2008-11) to be situated outside the most disadvantaged areas and would therefore offer a less intensive level of support than those phase 1 and 2 centres serving families in the 30% most disadvantaged areas.

It was reported that Phase 3 was supported by capital funding of

£521,866. It was proposed that this funding is used to enhance the facilities at existing children's centres which were outlined in the report for Members consideration.

REASON FOR DECISION

The Local Authority had been notified that it would receive capital funding to develop two further children's centres in the Borough. Subsequent advice received has indicated that the capital provision could be used to enhance existing stock if locally it is determined that further centres are not required.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Consideration was given to developing further children's centres, however, following analysis of reach figures it was recognised that further centres were not necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

This should be confirmed immediately with Together for Children. Work can then progress on developing the existing provisions at Windmill Hill Children's Centre and Upton All Saints Children's Centre and Primary School.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Executive Board recommend the Council to approve the recommendation that the Phase 3 capital funding be made available to Halton for the enhancement and maintenance of current children centre stock; and
- 2) The Executive Board note the positive developments at Windmill Hill Children's Centre and Primary School and approve a lease for up to 5 years to the Primary Care Trust to establish a temporary health facility on the school site.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 4 JUNE 2009

3. Co-optee to Children and Young People PPB

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People requesting them to agree that a representative from the Dioceses of Chester and Liverpool be appointed to the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board.

Under a Direction issued by the Secretary of State, authorities must

appoint diocesan representatives to Scrutiny Committees under s499 Education Act 1996 and DfEE Circular 19/99 all as amended. These representatives would have voting rights in relation to any decision relating to schools maintained by the LA, pupils who attend schools maintained by the LA or are educated by the LA in some way but not the other business of the Committee. This was to enable denominations to have a direct input to policies on education provision for pupils of school age.

The Dioceses of Chester and Liverpool were therefore entitled to nominate representatives to sit on the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board. At present these positions were vacant, however one name had been submitted, Joyce Dippnall. It was expected that another name would follow for the same consideration by the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board and Full Council be requested to agree the appointment of two Diocese representatives for Chester and Liverpool, as voting co-optees on the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board for a period of four years, commencing from the date approval is given.

4. Children & Young People's Plan - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided the Executive Board with a brief summary of the information and requirements as contained in the Children and Young People's Plan Guidance and present Halton's Children and Young People Plan (CYPP).

In February 2009 DCSF published guidance to assist areas in compiling the CYPP. The report stated that the Plan must be a document of strategic intent, which sets the context of children and young people living their lives within safe, prosperous communities where parents were enabled to work. Therefore, establishing effective links between CYPP and the Sustainable Communities Strategy had been a key requirement for this plan. The guidance was concise but expects each plan to provide a number of key elements and statements. In addition the plan must address how local areas would improve the outcomes for children and young people with specific reference to children and young people, there were also a number of additional requirements that needed explanation within each plan. The required elements for local plans fundamentally asked a range of key questions which were detailed in the report.

REASON(S) FOR DECISION

It is a statutory requirement that Halton Borough Council produces and publishes a Children and Young People's Plan.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

June 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The information contained in the report be noted; and
- 2) The Executive Board endorsed the CYPP to be approved by Full Council.

(Cllr Nelson declared a personal interest in the following item as he is the Chair of Governors for the Grange Junior School).

(Cllr Swain declared a personal interest in the following item as he is on the Board of Governors for Simms Cross and Weston C P Schools).

5. Primary Special Education Needs Review

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People on the Primary Special Education Needs Review in Halton.

The Local Authority had been undertaking a review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision within the Borough. The reasons for this review were:

- The need to be able to describe clearly the nature of SEN provision that was required for Halton pupils and the number of places required both now and in the future. This was linked both to Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP);
- Acknowledgement that Halton currently retains a significant amount of unit provision, with some of these units carrying a number of unfilled places;
- Concern that the current range and scope of SEN Unit provision may not be appropriate; and
- The Local Authority was potentially not fully securing value for money in its SEN provision.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Consultation on the revised proposals on the number of places and location of the provision for SEN units within primary mainstream schools commences; and
- 2) Schools are asked to come forward with Expressions of Interest.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON

10. Capital Spending for the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which presented the Capital Funding Plan to support the delivery of Halton's short break programme to meet the requirements of the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme.

The Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme was a national initiative to enable more disabled young people to engage in social activities within their local community. The programme also aimed to provide their parents/carers with a break from their caring responsibilities. In 2008/9 Halton made a successful bid for Pathfinder status, and were one of 20 nationally and two in the North West. During 2008/9 a number of measures were put in place to test out some new activities for children and to build partnerships with local and national providers of short break services.

Members were advised that there had been significant grant funding made available to local authorities by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to improve short break services for disabled children and their families. The funding stream included revenue and capital grants. The report related only to the capital element of the funding outlined in the report. Revenue funding was the subject of a separate commissioning progress.

Members were further advised that consultation with disabled children and young people and their families had been a major focus in the development of the planning for short break services, including the capital spending plan. The views of disabled young people and their families were sought through the "Powerful Voices" Conference along with a consultation leaflet that was sent out to all families with a child with additional needs. The consultation established the types of activities and practical support families would want to use.

It was noted that families of disabled children had told the Council that

they wanted more support after school, at weekends and in school holidays, so they that could have a break when they were under the greatest amount of stress.

It was further noted that disabled children had told us that they wanted to do the same things that other young people did. They wanted to participate in sporting activities, primarily for pleasure but also to join in local and national competitions. For those with potential, they wanted to be able to compete in Paralympics events. The children also wanted to have somewhere where they could meet friends that a safe, adapted and “home-like” space that was available during school holidays, events and weekends.

Members were advised that the Capital Funding attached to the programme had been made available to Local Authorities to support the delivery of the short break programme in recognition of the need for a specialist provision over and above that required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Capital Funding spending plan had been developed following consultation with children and young people and their families and in accordance with the DCSF Guidelines. The proposed spending plan for Halton’s allocation of Capital Funding was as follows:

Halton AHDC Capital Allocation
 2008/9 £85,600
 2009/10 £199,600

Draft Spending Plan	2008/09	2009/10
Inglefield Outreach Centre adaptations	£85,600	£5,000
Outreach Centre (Widnes to be identified)		£120,000
Sporting Wheelchairs		£20,000
Enhanced Toileting Resources		£15,000
Play Builder Resources		£39,600
Total	£85,600	£199,600

The Board was advised of the creation of two resource bases, one in Runcorn and one in Widnes that would provide bases with the specialist equipment required, particularly for those young people with very complex needs. The bases would be available for use by individuals and groups in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays. It was envisaged that the resource could be used for overnight stays by some young people with their personal assistants. Whilst the base in Runcorn had been identified, the options for possible locations in Widnes were currently being scoped.

Members were advised that funds would be used to purchase 10 specialist sports wheelchairs to enable young people to participate in sporting activities throughout the Borough. Some of the wheelchairs would be based in the Tennis Centre and Leisure Centres, with others available at Chesnut Lodge School to be transported to a range of venues locally and nationally to support young people who may be involved in competition events. The initiative was being developed together with Halton Sports Partnership.

Members were further advised that funding would also be used to provide enhanced disabled toileting facilities and play equipment in the new play parks being developed as part of the Play Builder Programme. This would enable more disabled children to use the facilities in their local parks, together with their siblings and peers.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (2) the Executive Board recommend to Council that the draft Spending Plan outlined in the report be approved.

11. Playbuilder - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which updated Members on progress with Playbuilder Year 1 2008-2009 and to agree proposals for Years 2 2009-2010 and outlined proposals for Year 3 2010-2011.

Members were advised that the Executive Board had received a report on the 21st May 2008 informing them of the success of the Authority in achieving Playbuilder status and confirmation of the funding awarded.

Members noted that the guidance received indicated that Halton must deliver a minimum of 6 new, transformed playgrounds in 2008/09, with a further 16 in 2009/10 and 2010/11, making a total of 22 over the 3 years.

Members were advised that a further report had been submitted on the 25th September 2008 whereupon the Playbuilder Project development process was approved, along with the six Year 1 sites and progress to date was outlined within the report.

It was noted that the Spike Island Project had to be deferred to 2009/10, as it proved impossible to complete within the required timeframe.

It was further noted that Playbuilder investment in Playgrounds in Halton in 2008/2009 was £299,092. The total investment from all sources generated or pump primed by the Playbuilder input was however, nearer to £1m.

Members were advised that the allocation 2009/10 was £388,469. The proposal was to allocate this money equally across the eight new target areas, resulting in funding of approximately £48,559 per area.

Members were further advised that the proposals for Year 2 had been considered by both Halton Play Partnership and the Playbuilder Sub-Committee. The proposals for Year 2 included Spike Island, Victoria Park, Milton Avenue, Halton Lodge, Caesars Close, Hallwood Park (Rowhampton Row) and Town Park. Further details of each of the schemes was outlined in detail in the report.

Members noted the possible sites for 2010/11 as being Upton, The Glen, Palacefields and in the areas of Beechwood, Farnworth, Halton Village and Windmill Hill. Further details on each of these areas was outlined in the report.

REASON (S) FOR DECISION

To agree (8) projects to be progressed in Playbuilder Project Year 2.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

A full consultation programme has taken place where all options were considered.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

3-year capital programme with annual capital allowance. Implementation of Year 2 projects to be completed by 31st March 2010.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) progress made with the Playbuilder Project 2008/9 be noted; and
- (2) full Council be recommended to approve the proposals for 2009/2010 Playbuilder projects.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 JULY 2009

19. Standard School Year - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided the results on the joint consultation with the Greater Merseyside Local Authority Learn Together Partnership on proposals for a standard school year. The report recommended approval for the Standard School Year and its implementation in Halton from September 2010.

The Board was advised that The Local Government Association (LGA) was championing the splitting of the school year (September – July) into six fixed terms of approximately equal length, whilst accommodating the Easter celebration.

In May 2008, it was agreed by the Greater Merseyside Directors of Children's Services to conduct a joint consultation to implement the standard school year based on the principles which were outlined in the report for consideration.

The Board was further advised that Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Knowsley and Halton had all participated in the consultation. Wirral, Warrington and Cheshire (as was) had declined to participate this year but had asked to be kept informed of the results.

In respect of the consultation document in Halton, 22,000 hard copies had been sent out to stakeholders. Information was also available on the intranet, internet, local media and the Inside Halton magazine which is delivered to every residence in the borough.

In Halton, 751 people had responded and details of the responses were appended to the report for Members information.

In addition, the results from other Local Authorities that participated in the consultation were similar to Halton's with an overwhelming 83% of all respondents agreeing to the proposals.

It was reported that Liverpool would commence the Standard School Year from September 2009. Knowsley and St Helen's had agreed to implement the standard school year and this would start from the academic year 2010/2011. Wirral were considering adopting the standard school year from 2011/2012 but were waiting to see the position of West Cheshire and Chester before proceeding. Therefore, it was recommended that Halton adopt the Standard School year from 2010/2011 in line with Knowsley and St Helen's.

Reason for the Decision

To establish set holiday periods and even out the length of school terms.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not to establish a standard school year.

Implementation Date

The implementation date would be the academic year 2010/2011.

RESOLVED: That Halton adopt the Standard School Year and agree to its implementation from September 2010.

20. Children in Care Pledge - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which sought approval for a proposed Pledge to Children in Care in Halton.

It was reported that the Government's Green Paper "Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Young People in Care" and the subsequent White Paper "Care Matters: Time for Change" identified steps that needed to be taken to improve outcomes for children and young people in Care.

The report outlined the key aims and roles of Corporate parenting including the expectations that Government announced.

The Board was advised that Halton had established its Children in Care Council in December 2007. Since that time the functioning of the Council had developed, its membership had grown, and there had been some clear outcomes achieved for children.

It was reported that the consultations that had taken place so far included the Pledge itself, Personal Education Plans and Children in Care Reviews. A newsletter and website would also be launched in the near future, so that all Children in Care, and not just those who attend the meetings, were aware of developments and proposals.

Work on the Pledge had commenced in October 2008 and concluded with the young people accepting the final version at their meeting in May 2009 which was appended to the report for information.

The Board was further advised that the Pledge was a document which should ensure that Children in Care and Care Leavers are aware of the key

opportunities that are offered to them locally and that they are consulted and involved in the development of the Pledge.

It was reported that the Pledge as set out in Appendix 1 to the report was the result of the consultation with the Children in Care Council and used their own artwork. It also listed the 10 things that Children in Care and Care Leavers said were key to improving outcomes for them. The pledge was also supported by the statements made by our Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Reason For the Decision

The Children and Young Persons Act, which received royal assent in November 2008, strengthened the role of the Corporate parent. The Government now requires every local area to set out its 'Pledge' to Children in Care and Care Leavers covering the services and support that they should expect to receive.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There is no prescribed format for a Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers, the 'Pledge' (Appendix 1), was designed by the Children in Care Council and therefore it is the one they would like the Executive Board to endorse

Implementation Date

Immediately.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Pledge to Children in Care be endorsed;
- (2) the action to promote the Pledge in order to raise awareness in the Council, Children's Trust and with other partners be endorsed; and
- (3) Young people report annually on the progress of the Pledge to Children in Care to the Executive Board.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2009

109. To seek a Waiver of Contract Standing Orders

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which sought a waiver of Contract standing Orders to permit the extension of the contract of the BSF Programme Director (Daniel Hennessy) from MD Consultants until the 31st March 2011.

It was noted that the current arrangements for the BSF Programme Director were approved at the Executive Board Sub-Committee on 19th July 2008 and a two-year contract was agreed until September 2009. However, prior to submission of the Outline Business Case on the 22nd April 2009 Partnerships for Schools required confirmation of the future Programme Director arrangements so that they could assess whether the Authority was sufficiently prepared to enter competitive dialogue.

It was further noted that the BSF Programme Director role was crucial as it provided the Strategic Direction for the Programme. The current Programme Director had provided leadership, direction and focus to the programme and had ensured that the Programme had met all the key milestones and objectives to date. The Programme Director had extensive experience as a 4PS adviser and Gateway Reviewer for BSG and his advice was often sought nationally and by other authorities.

Members were advised that as the DCSF prepared to announce the next wave of BSF Programme, many authorities were now looking for experienced BSF Programme Directors and Managers to lead their Programmes.

It was there proposed that the current BSF Programme Director contract be extended so that he could provide 217 days support to Halton per annum and that the daily rate of pay be £786 from September 2009 until 31st March 2011. The BSF Framework provided information on the Programme Director rates across the country with the North West, North East and Midlands rates varying from £745 to £1074 per day.

It was essential that as Halton moved into Programme Delivery, there was sufficient appropriately qualified staff. Interim arrangements still existed for the Programme Manager's post as it did not prove possible to recruit to this position initially. This post had now been advertised and interviews would take place on 1st April 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Strategic Director, Children and Young People be authorised to agree a contract for 217 days per annum at £786 per day for a period from September 2009 until 31st March 2011; and

- (2) Legal Services be requested to revise the current contract for the BSF Project Director's role.

110. Contract extension for the provision of Personal Advisor Service for Care Leavers

The Sub-Committee received a report which sought the waiving of Procurement Standing Orders 3.1 to 3.8 which placed a requirement on the Council to tender for contracts with a greater value than £50,000 but not exceeding £1m.

Members were advised that the current personal Advisor for Care Leavers contract had been in operation for five years and would terminate on 31st March 2009. The current cost of the service delivery was £168,000.

Members were further advised that the Service fulfilled the requirements placed on the Local Authority by the Children (Leaving Care) Act, 2000, Regulations and Guidance Chapter 6 Regulation 12: Personal Advisors. The Personal Advisor Service supported young people in making the transition from being in care to living self sustaining and fulfilled lives as independent members of the community.

It was noted that following a competitive tendering process in March 2009, the Panel who considered the proposals from a number of organisations were unable to make a contract award to a single provider. This was primarily on the basis of service continuity for existing users, with no new provider able to meet the terms of the contract due to the length of the contract lead-in period.

Therefore, approval to extend the existing contractual arrangements until 31st March 2010 and to recommence a competitive tendering exercise for this service in September 2009, with a view to awarding a new contract from April 2010 was sought.

The proposed tender process would enable the Council to update the service specification and to include improved outcomes nationally and locally for this vulnerable cohort. In addition, it was proposed that the revised specification would ensure that the service provider continually delivered a service that met identified needs.

It proposed that the new contract would last for a period of three years and would offer an option to extend beyond that for a further two years, subject to specified outcomes being delivered and specified targets being met.

In considering the request to waive Standing Orders and due to the issues outlined in the report, the Sub-Committee felt that performance monitoring of the service provider by Members was necessary and agreed that a further report be submitted to the Sub-Committee detailing this information.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) in the exceptional circumstances set out below, for the purposes of Standing Order 1.6, Procurement Standing Orders 3.1 – 3.8 be waived in order for the existing contractual arrangements to be extended until 31st March 2010. During the period of extension, the Council would complete a competitive tendering exercise for the Personal Advisor Service for Care Leavers;
- (2) delegated powers be approved to enable the Strategic Director Children and Young People in consultation with the relevant Executive Portfolio Holder, subject to an evaluation of value for money in an open tender process, to award a contract to an external provider inclusive of the provision of management and administration; and
- (3) a further report be submitted to the Sub-Committee detailing performance monitoring of the service provider.