

Minutes & Reports

For Presentation to the Council
At the meeting to be held on

**Wednesday, 17 December
2008**

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COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 22 October 2008 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Loftus (Chairman), Austin, P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, M. Bradshaw, J. Bradshaw, Browne, Bryant, E. Cargill, Dennett, Drakeley, Edge, Findon, Fraser, Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, Higginson, Hignett, Howard, D. Inch, Jones, Leadbetter, Lloyd Jones, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, McInerney, Morley, Murray, Nelson, Nolan, Norddahl, Parker, Philbin, Polhill, E. Ratcliffe, M. Ratcliffe, Redhead, Rowan, Rowe, Shepherd, Stockton, Swain, Swift, Thompson, Wainwright, Wallace, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Balmer, D. Cargill, Hodgkinson, Horabin, Osborne and Worrall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: R. Barnett, L. Cairns, G. Cook, B. Dodd, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, S. Nicholson, D. Parr, D. Tregaea and J. Whittaker

Also in attendance: 1 Member of the Press and 1 Member of the Public

*Action***COU29 COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th August 2008, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting be confirmed and adopted.

COU30 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- A plaque "Freeman of England and Wales" had been presented to Halton Borough Council by the Lord Mayor of Hale on behalf of the Freeman on 31st August 2008.
- Runcorn Golf Club had offered to hold another tournament and were looking for a team. Members were requested to contact the Mayor if they were interested in taking part.

COU31 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader reported on the following issues:

- The budget-setting process was to commence in the near future and a number of options were to be outlined by KPMG in a presentation following this meeting. These options were not just about savings but rather the improved quality of services and value for money. The Budget Working Group would continue to meet as in previous years.
- The Council had had no exposure to the Icelandic Banks; however, the implications of the financial climate, and the subsequent impact on banks and developers, would have to be managed by the Authority.
- Halton High School, designated an Academy School as part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) process, now had two sponsors, namely Chester University and Ormiston Education Trust.
- All objectors to Mersey Gateway had been contacted in the last few days in order to try to address any outstanding concerns. There had now been an announcement that a Public Inquiry would take place in this respect although a date was yet to be confirmed. In the meantime, the Government had made £6.4m available to help the Local Authority with the escalating development costs of the Bridge.
- There had been many events for young people in the Summer months run by the Youth Service. David Williams, Head of Halton Youth Service, was leaving the Service and the Leader expressed appreciation of the work he had done since he had being appointed.
- Free swimming was to be available for both the over 60's and the under 16's, running alongside the regular Urban Splash arrangements providing free recreational facilities for youngsters during the school holiday periods.
- Work was continuing slowly in respect of the Liverpool City Region and the Multi Area Agreement. Tentative arrangements were in place for the first meeting to take place at the end of November.

In addition, the Leader confirmed that a Members' Seminar had been held on 15th October 2008 to consider constitutional matters relating to the Local Government and Public Involvement in the Health Act 2007. Two issues had been highlighted at this event. The first related to the electoral arrangements and whether or not to retain the current arrangements of elections by thirds or to move to all-out elections every four years. There had been no enthusiasm at the Seminar for changing these arrangements and so no further action was required by the Authority.

The second issue related to the Council's internal Governance arrangements and whether or not to move to a directly elected Mayor and Cabinet or a Leader and Cabinet model. It had been agreed that each political group would discuss this issue and advise of their preference following which consultation would take place.

COU32 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the Minutes of the Executive Board from meetings held on 24th July, 2nd September, 11th September and 25th September 2008.

In receiving the Minutes, a concern was expressed in respect of EXB49 – Health Summit (25th September 2008) regarding the need to address the shortage of GPs in the Borough and the work the PCT needed to do to tackle this issue.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

COU33 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

The Council considered the Minutes of the Executive Board Sub-Committee from meetings held on 25th July, 11th September and 25th September 2008.

An issue was raised in respect of ES36 – Traveller Transit Site (25th September 2008). However, as this issue had been considered in the absence of the press and public, it was agreed that the matter be considered in Part II of the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

COU34 MINUTES OF THE MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the Minutes of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board from the meeting held on 25th September 2008.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

COU35 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

COU36 AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO DUTIES OF PROPER OFFICERS AND DELEGATION TO OFFICERS - EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE 25TH SEPTEMBER 2008 (MINUTE NO. ES31 REFERS)

The Executive Board Sub-Committee had considered a report requesting that amendments be made to Standing Orders relating to Duties of Proper Officers and Delegation to Officers in the light of changes to the system of Home Office style cautions (used by a number of the Council's Officers as an enforcement tool) and to add Acts of Parliament to/delete Acts of Parliament from the list of Acts enforced by Officers of the Consumer Protection Service.

RESOLVED: That Standing Orders relating to Duties of Proper Officers and Delegation to Officers be amended as follows:

- 1) references to "formal cautions" in paragraphs 152 and 172 of these Standing Orders be replaced with references to "simple cautions"; and
- 2) the list of Acts included as Appendix B to these Standing Orders be amended by the addition of the Fraud Act 2006, the Licensing Act 2003 and the Protection of Children (Tobacco) Act 1986, and by the deletion of the Mock Auctions Act 1961 and the Trading Representations (Disabled Persons) Act 1958.

COU37 BUDGET - MERSEY GATEWAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2008 (MINUTE NO. MGEB8 REFERS)

The Mersey Gateway Executive Board had considered a report regarding the revised development cost budget forecast for delivering Mersey Gateway up to the construction phase when a contract would be in place with the private sector (the Concessionaire) to design, build, finance and operate the project. The information updated the

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

forecast made in the development budget approved by the Executive Board on 20th April 2006 and the information on budget monitoring reported to the Mersey Gateway Executive Board since then.

Councillor Polhill undertook to provide a written response to a question from Councillor Findon regarding the procurement process, ie whether it had started and how far along this path the Council was. In addition, it was advised that further details would be provided at a later stage regarding the increase in the budget together with information about any additional monies, such as the £6.4m from Government to assist in the development costs.

RESOLVED: That the Capital Programme be amended as outlined within the report.

COU38 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEALTHY HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD (PPB) AND HALTON'S LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK) - EXECUTIVE BOARD 16TH OCTOBER 2008

The Executive Board had considered a report outlining a proposal to establish formal links between the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board (PPB) and the newly established Local Involvement Network (LINK).

RESOLVED: That a LINK representative (name to be confirmed once LINK formalised) be appointed as a non-voting co-optee on the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board for a period of one year, commencing from 22nd October 2008.

COU39 STANDARDS COMMITTEE - PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY

The Council considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy regarding the proposed appointment of a Parish Council representative to the Council's Standards Committee.

Members had previously agreed to increase the size of the Standards Committee by one additional independent member and one additional Parish member. Since the previous meeting, Rev. David Felix, a Parish Councillor at both Daresbury and Sandymoor, had agreed to fill the vacancy.

RESOLVED: That Rev. David Felix be appointed as a new Parish Council representative member of the Council's

Standards Committee until the end of the 2011/2012 Municipal Year.

(NB Councillors McDermott and Polhill declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business due to being board members of Widnes Regeneration Ltd (WRL) and left the room during its consideration.)

COU40 WIDNES WATERFRONT LEISURE DEVELOPMENT, THE HIVE

The Council considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment seeking approval to amend the Capital Programme.

It was advised that Widnes Waterfront Economic Development Zone (“EDZ”) was 200 acres of low quality former industrial land located on the banks of the River Mersey to the south of Widnes town Centre. The European Union, Central Government, North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA) and Halton Borough Council had designated the EDZ as a regeneration site of high priority and funding to bring this land back into full economic use was available until 31st March 2010. In order to address the area’s problems, the Widnes Waterfront Masterplan had been approved by Executive Board on 22nd May 2003 setting out the vision and objectives for the EDZ.

One of the development projects within the Masterplan was the creation of a significant regional leisure and tourism facility, on the Venture Fields site on Earle Road, by Widnes Regeneration Limited (WRL). Planning permission had been granted for Phase 1, which was expected to cost in the region of £9m. However, there was currently a funding gap of approximately £4m. Due to the current economic climate, the gap was now larger than originally anticipated. In addition, both the abnormal remediation and utility costs were larger than the original estimates. It was therefore proposed that the gap should be made up from three sources –

- (1) Halton Borough Council’s WRL Dividend;
- (2) NWDA funding; and
- (3) Under reprogramming of the Council’s Capital Programme.

Executive Board had approved the releasing of the Council’s dividend of £550,000 on 20th March 2008, and an application to the NWDA for funding of £1.5m had been made.

In terms of capital, the Council's Capital Programme included a contingency sum of £2m for the Queens Hall "Marmalade Development" which was no longer required and could therefore be transferred to the WRL Leisure Development. It was proposed that all or part of this contribution be recovered from a future sale of the asset subject to the clawback provisions imposed on the Venture Fields site by the NWDA and by Merseyside Task Force (now English Partnerships) as a result of the remediation works which they funded in the 1980's.

It was confirmed that this reallocation of funding would not change the relationship in the dividend between the Council and St. Modwen Properties PLC. In addition, it was advised that it was not possible to forecast whether future monies could be put aside to maintain the Queens Hall although this would be borne in mind during the budgetary process.

RESOLVED: That the Capital Programme be amended by transferring finance currently allocated for the Queens Hall Marmalade Development to the Venture Fields leisure development known as "The Hive" subject to confirmation of further funding from the NWDA.

COU41 CALL-IN - WIDNES VIKINGS - EXECUTIVE BOARD 11TH SEPTEMBER 2008 (MINUTE NO. EXB44 REFERS)

The Mayor advised that, in the interests of the convenient dispatch of business due to the item relating to a Part II report, this matter would be moved to the end of the agenda.

COU42 ACQUISITION OF BAYER CROPSCIENCE SITE - EXECUTIVE BOARD 25TH SEPTEMBER 2008 (MINUTE NO. EXB55 REFERS)

The Council noted the action taken by the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy, in accordance with Standing Orders, to make a bid to acquire the Bayer Cropscience site. It was advised that the matter had required immediate action, which could not await this Council meeting.

COU43 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council noted the following appointments to outside bodies that had been made in accordance with delegated powers:

- Halton Housing Trust – Councillor Swain replaced Councillor Osborne;
- Liverpool City Region Housing and Spatial Planning Board – Councillors Polhill and Wright appointed;
- North West Regional Housing Board – Councillor Wright appointed; and
- Norton Priory Museum Trust – Councillor Nolan replaced Councillor Wright.

COU44 MINUTES OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of the Council on 13th August 2008:

Children and Young People
Employment, Learning and Skills
Healthy Halton
Safer Halton
Urban Renewal
Corporate Services
Business Efficiency Board

In receiving the Minutes the following points were noted:

- The Chairman of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board (PPB) thanked the Strategic Director – Children and Young People for attending the question and answer session. In addition, the Children and Young People Portfolio holder thanked the Strategic Director and his team for the work undertaken in securing sponsors for the Academy School.
- Healthy Halton PPB – it was advised that a seminar regarding streamlining adaptations had taken place at Pentecostal Church in Widnes. This had been chaired by Mr Dave Thompson from Warrington and had been a well-attended event.
- Safer Halton PPB – Minute No. SAF 12 – Councillor Findon expressed disappointment regarding the continual change in personnel of police inspectors in Runcorn and Widnes, and confirmed that he would ask Councillor D. Cargill to raise this issue at the next meeting of the Police Authority.

(NB Councillor Wainwright declared a personal interest in the following item of business relating to DEV38 of the Development Control Committee meeting held on 15th September 2008 as he had represented the resident against the application.

Councillor A. Lowe declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business relating to REG17 of the Regulatory Committee meeting held on 1st October 2008 as he had been called as a witness. There was no discussion on this item.)

COU45 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of the Council on 13th August 2008:

Development Control
Standards
Regulatory

COU46 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraphs 3, and 1, 2 and 3 respectively, of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of

business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraphs 3, and 1, 2 and 3 respectively, of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

COU47 ES36 EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

Clarification was sought in respect of pitches and warden arrangements at the Travellers' transit site. A response was provided by the Strategic Director – Health and Community.

(NB Councillors Howard and Swain declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business due to being season ticket holders and left the meeting during its consideration. In addition, Councillor Swain advised that the decision to purchase a season ticket had been taken since the meeting of the Executive Board on 11th September 2008.

The Chief Executive also declared an interest and left the room due to being a Director of the club.)

COU48 CALL-IN

It was noted that the following call-in had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order No. 9:

“The Council is making a significant financial commitment to an organisation which has recently been in administration with debts to the Council.”

The Council considered the call-in and discussed the financial implications of the decision. In addition, a further issue was raised relating to the declaration of interests by Members who were season ticket holders. In response it was confirmed that advice had been provided in this respect and relevant Members had outlined their reasons for declarations prior to discussion commencing.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board decision, Minute No. EXB 44, be affirmed.

Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 9 October 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Vice-Chair, in the Chair) Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson, Swain, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillors McDermott and D. Cargill

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Cook, G. Collins, S. Duncan, C. Halpin, J. Hatton, A. McIntyre and G. Meehan

Also in attendance: Councillor Hodgkinson

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

Action

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

**EXB56 STATUTORY CONSULTATION FOR ST CHAD'S
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL - KEY DECISION**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided the response to the statutory consultation on the closure of St Chad's Catholic High School and the establishment of a new joint faith Catholic and Church of England Voluntary Aided High School.

It was noted that formal consultation with stakeholders commenced in June 2007 as part of the secondary reorganisation process. A further round of consultation was then undertaken in November 2007. Permission was then sought from the Secretary of State to publish the proposal without holding a competition. On 9th June 2008, the Secretary of State exercised the powers conferred on him by Section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and decided to grant consent to the publication of a proposal for a new 11-19 joint Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School.

The statutory proposal was published by the governing body on 3rd July 2008. The statutory proposal was a joint agreement with the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Chester. The notice outlined the intention to close St

Chad's Catholic High School in order that a joint faith Catholic and Church of England (11-19) school could be established on the current site. It was proposed that St Chad's Catholic High School close on 31st August 2009 and the new joint faith school commence on 1st September 2009. All the pupils from St Chad's Catholic High School would transfer to the new joint faith school from 1st September 2009. The published admission number would increase to 190 from 1st September 2009 and from 1st September 2013 it would increase to 240 with 100 sixth form places.

Members were further advised of the consultation process undertaken and that those people wishing to respond to the consultation were advised to put their views in writing to the Operational Director, Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources. No responses had been received within the representation period of 3rd July 2008 to 14th August 2008.

It was further noted that approval to the proposal had to be agreed within two months of the end of the representation period otherwise the decision would be referred to the Adjudicator for a decision. The Board was advised of what this would mean along with the issues the decision maker needed to consider.

RESOLVED: That

Having had regard to the statutory guidance and in pursuance of the powers set out in Section 10 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 and the related Regulations and the permission that was granted by the Secretary of State IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following related proposals be approved:-

- (a) With effect from 31 August 2009 St Chad's Catholic High School be discontinued.
- (b) With effect from 1 September 2009 the new St Chad's Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School be established on the current St Chad's Catholic High; and
- (c) With effect from 1 September 2009 the St Chad's Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School published admission number be 190 per year group. In addition, the school will continue to provide a sixth form for 100. The expansion of this admission number of the closing Catholic High School is to give effect to the joint faith dimension of the new school. The Published Admission number will increase to 240 per year group on completion of the BSF investment at St Chad's.

(NB: Councillor Wharton declared a personal and prejudicial interest in

the following item of business due to being the Chairman of the Friends of Hale Park).

EXB57 PLAY BUILDER PROJECT - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which updated Members on the progress made in developing the Playbuilder programme and which sought consideration of the proposals for its delivery. In addition it sought to give Members the chance to consider the opportunity and implications of a bid for Wave 2 Play Pathfinder Status.

Members received a report on the 21st May 2008 informing them of the success of the authority in achieving Playbuilder status. Halton had received formal confirmation of this status on 31st May 2008 and confirmation of the funding awarded, as detailed within the report.

From the guidance received, it had been identified that Halton must deliver a minimum of 6 new/transformed playgrounds in 2008/09 and a further 18 in 2009/10 and 2010/11 making a total of 24 over the 3 years.

It was noted that Halton Play Partnership had been asked to consider appropriate models for the consideration, commissioning and management of play area development proposals. At its meeting in May 2008 the Play Partnership agreed the formation of a Playbuilder Implementation Project team and the Membership details were outlined in the report.

The Project Team had met twice to date and progress had been made to develop a 'Playbuilder Project Plan' and a 'Draft Plan'. The draft plan would include proposals for the identification of and timetable for year 1 2008/09 projects.

As a result of the challenging timeframe (all yr1 capital allocation must be spent by 31st March 2009) the project team had, based on the consultation carried out to develop the Halton Play Plan 2007-2011 and the Big Lottery Funded Children's Play Initiative, identified a number of projects which could meet the challenge of delivering within the timeframe and that it met the criteria proposed for year 1 projects.

The Board was advised that only £15,000 of the year one allocation could be carried over into the following year. Year one projects must therefore be deliverable by March 31st 2009.

It was noted that projects in years two and three would be invited for submission to the Council. This would afford time

for a formal application process to be developed where projects would be subject to strict eligibility criteria developed by the Play Partnership.

Members were advised on the Wave 2 Play Pathfinder Status. Existing Playbuilders had been asked if they would like to be considered for play pathfinder status in Wave two and were given until 19th September 2008 to advise DCSF that they wished to be considered.

The final date for the submission of full pathfinder bids was 12noon on Friday 24th October 2008 and there would be 10 Play Pathfinders awarded funding from all applications.

In addition to the £1.1 million capital already approved for playbuilder the 10 Pathfinders would each deliver at least one large adventure playground or play park, costing around £800k.

Pathfinders would also receive revenue funding to cover activity such as generating learning on innovative ways of improving local play offers; appointing a senior project manager to link to high-level decision-making; and any other required infrastructure to ensure the Pathfinder programme runs effectively.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) progress to date be noted and the schemes identified in Appendix 5 to the report be agreed; and
- (2) Wave 2 Pathfinder status application be progressed.

MINUTES ISSUED: 14th October 2008

CALL IN: 21st October 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 21st October 2008

Meeting ended at 2.15 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 16 October 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors McDermott (Chairman), Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson, Polhill and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors D. Cargill and Swain

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Wharton

Officers present: L. Cairns, B. Dodd, G. Cook, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney and D. Tregoe

Also in attendance: None

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

Action

(NB Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman welcomed back Councillor Nelson who had been absent for some time due to ill health.)

EXB58 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 25th September 2008 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB59 STANDARD SCHOOL YEAR JOINT CONSULTATION WITH GREATER MERSEYSIDE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing information regarding a proposed joint consultation with the Learn Together Partnership to implement a standard school year from September 2010.

It was advised that the standard school year, which was championed by the Local Government Association (LGA), required splitting the school into six terms of roughly

equal length, fixing them regardless of the Easter celebration. The benefits of this were outlined for Members' consideration.

In May 2008, Liverpool City Council had tabled a proposal at the Greater Merseyside Directors of Children's Services meeting to conduct a joint consultation across all Greater Merseyside Local Authorities (LAs) to implement this change. The Directors present agreed in principle to this proposal, which was outlined within the report, and Liverpool City Council was piloting this system for the 2009/10 academic year.

All Local Authorities in the Learn Together Partnership had been invited to be part of the joint proposal. At Halton's request, Cheshire had also been invited. The Partnership agreed that each LA would co-ordinate its own consultation based on agreed documentation and timescales, and a consultation letter had been drafted for all LAs involved to use. This would be headed with Halton's logo and have a proforma for stakeholders to return. The consultation process would begin week commencing 3rd November with a co-ordinated press launch, and close on 18th December 2008.

RESOLVED: That Halton participates in the joint consultation process.

COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB60 PROCUREMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION (TRADING STANDARDS) SERVICE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community seeking support for the procurement of the Consumer Protection (Trading Standards) Service from Warrington Borough Council and the associated transfer of the officers of Halton's Consumer Protection team to the employ of Warrington Borough Council.

It was noted that, during the budget-setting process for the financial year 2008/09, a savings target of £75,000 had been included, based on the proposal that Warrington Borough Council would provide the Consumer Protection Service. The ultimate business objective of this project was to deliver a single Trading Standards Service of optimum size, "fit for purpose" in delivering good outcomes, and which would develop and continually improve to meet the present and future Trading Standards needs of the Halton

and Warrington communities. The aim was to provide an enhanced quality of service by combining the best of two very good but relatively small services, delivering economies of scale and flexibilities through a larger team. Financial implications of this change were outlined within the report for Members' consideration.

To date, the project had been delivered through a Project Board with sub-groups focusing on legal/human resources, finance, IT and technical trading standards matters. Colleagues from both authorities had supported managers to progress the project and Warrington had provided a lead project manager. Officers who would be subject to transfer had played active roles in the IT and technical trading standards sub-groups. In addition, a joint Halton/Warrington visioning day had been held for both sets of staff and a number of on-going information/consultation meetings had been held with officers of Halton's Consumer Protection team.

The Heads of Terms Document, which included governance arrangements, was included at Appendix 1 of the report. The foundation for the service on which the contract was based was provided by a comprehensive specification document appended to the contract that provided the background, overview, current strengths and outcomes of the present Halton and Warrington Services, and key joint service objectives. The latest version of this document was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

Between the date of transfer and 31st March 2009, the two teams would operate side by side and all officers would be involved in the design of a new, single Service structure that would provide full integration on 1st April 2009. The first five months of operation would see a focus on delivering the front line job whilst at the same time creating the new structure with existing officers and recruiting to vacant posts. The specification at Appendix 2 was intended to take the Service through to 31st March 2010. From then on, whilst the specification would continue to have some relevance, it would effectively be updated and taken forward via an annual Service Plan.

The Board was advised that the terms of the contract would ensure satisfactory governance arrangements for Halton. The initial contract term was five years with a formal review every two years and, subject to satisfactory review, the option to extend the contract by a further two years at each review. In addition to this formal review, a selection of objectives and milestones/performance indicators and

targets would be agreed by the Halton and Warrington contract managers and performance against these would be reported quarterly to the relevant Halton Policy and Performance Board (PPB). Further reporting mechanisms in relation to attendance at meetings, half year and year end performance and service plans were also outlined for Members' information.

Reason for Decision

To provide an enhanced quality of service by combining the best of two very good but relatively small services, and delivering economies of scale and flexibilities through a larger "Trading Standards" team. This would deliver a single Trading Standards service of optimum size which was "fit for purpose" in delivering good outcomes and which would develop and continually improve to meet the present and future Trading Standards needs of the Halton and Warrington communities.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Partnership arrangements had been explored with three neighbouring authorities with a view to:

- 1) jointly providing a single, cross boundary Trading Standards service;
- 2) Halton providing a single, cross boundary Trading Standards service; or
- 3) the other authority providing a single, cross boundary Trading Standards service.

The only expression of interest came from Warrington Borough Council which was keen to pursue option 3.

Implementation Date

1st November 2008 or as soon as practicably possible thereafter.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Warrington Borough Council be requested to provide the Consumer Protection (Trading Standards) service within Halton Borough Council's administrative area under Contract, for an initial period of five years, with provisions for review/ extension etc. as outlined in the Heads of Terms attached to the report as Appendix 1;

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

- (2) an annual cost of £405,000 be paid, pro rata for 2008/2009, with a Contract start date of 1st November 2008 or as soon as practicably possible thereafter;
- (3) all authorisations, powers and duties relevant to Halton Borough Council's Consumer Protection function be discharged by Warrington Borough Council; and
- (4) all ancillary actions be taken by the Strategic Director – Health and Community, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Community and to the satisfaction of the Operational Director and Monitoring Officer (Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources).

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB61 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community providing an update on the current position on the equality and diversity agenda in Halton.

It was noted that equalities were a dynamic area of public policy and there had been major recent legislative changes in this area. The Equality Bill "A Framework for a Fairer Future" had been presented to Parliament in June 2008 and provisions of the Bill were outlined for Members' information. It was noted that the legislation had strengthened the requirement to not only tackle discrimination but to actively promote diversity.

In December 2006, the Council adopted a new Corporate Equalities Scheme. This encompassed all its then legal duties in terms of promoting the race, gender and disability equality schemes. The scheme was currently being revised to ensure that the Council fulfilled all its legal obligations.

In May 2008 the Council invited the I&DeA to undertake a Peer Challenge and had subsequently been judged to have progressed to Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. Following this, the Corporate Equality and Diversity Group had agreed, and was progressing, an Action Plan to move forward to Level 4 of the Standard, acknowledging at the same time that the system may be amended in 2009-10.

Progress had been made in a number of areas, which were outlined within section 4 of the report for Members' consideration, in respect of:

- the training of officers and Members;
- use of service plans;
- updates to the intranet and Website;
- involvement in an equalities forum with other Merseyside authorities; and
- a benchmarking exercise currently underway.

The Board noted that a conscious decision had been taken to carry forward equality and diversity work in the day-to-day task of service delivery and Halton's progress in respect of the equalities agenda would be proportionate to the effort and resource expended. Therefore, all services would need to continue to demonstrate how they would effectively and efficiently encourage their teams to positively incorporate equality and diversity issues into their attitudes, behaviour, culture and all aspects of service delivery in order for this to have a beneficial impact on our communities.

In receiving the report, Members considered the proposal to provide a multi-faith prayer room, which would be available to all staff and members of the public. It was advised that this would be funded from within existing budgets and would be available for use by all faiths, filling a current gap in provision and helping to provide equality for all.

The Board was also advised that Riverside College had entered into a partnership with various companies in Libya to provide teaching opportunities in this country. This had resulted in a number of Lybian families moving into the area for a minimum of three months and it was hoped that this would offer opportunities for exchange learning around issues such as faith, business and commerce. The Strategic Director – Children and Young People reported that he had met with representatives of the College in order to consider implications for Halton as a result of this arrangement, for example learning needs of younger children within these families.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the actions outlined in section 4 of the report be endorsed in order for the Council to move forward to Level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB62 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEALTHY HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD AND HALTON'S LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK)

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining the proposal to establish formal links between the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board (PPB) and the newly established Local Involvement Network (LINK).

A report had been presented to the Healthy Halton PPB on 16th September 2008, outlining the expectation that there would be a formal relationship between the Healthy Halton PPB and LINKs as set out in Government guidance. In particular, it was noted that the PPB had a duty to acknowledge any referral from LINK within 20 days on areas that could warrant scrutiny. The PPB had also noted it would be beneficial for both bodies that the PPB and LINK worked in parallel to avoid duplication of work streams.

It was proposed that, to ensure that the PPB and LINK worked closely, a LINK representative should be appointed as a non-voting co-optee for a period of one year. The Board was advised that Halton Voluntary Action would decide who this person would be.

RESOLVED: That Full Council be recommended that a LINK representative (name to be confirmed once LINK formalised) be appointed as a non-voting co-optee on the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board for a period of one year, commencing from the date of approval.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

EXB63 HOME CARE SERVICES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining a proposal to develop a re-ablement service.

It was advised that Adult Social Care Services were increasingly establishing re-ablement services as part of their range of home care provision. Typically, home care re-ablement was a short-term intervention, provided free of charge, that aimed to maximise independent living skills.

The evidence suggested that the use of short-term re-ablement care had achieved an overall 28% reduction in the number of long-term domiciliary hours subsequently commissioned, which equated to financial savings on the number of long-term hours commissioned. In addition,

qualitative evidence from service users suggested that re-ablement care could make a significant difference to their lives.

The current in-house home care service consisted of two teams, one in Runcorn and one in Widnes, delivering care and support to approximately 80 service users at any one time. Further details about the existing service were provided for the Board's information. It was advised that the in-house home care service in its current format was not viable; unit costs were too high and the staff rota was too inflexible to meet the needs of the service users.

It was advised that the Authority needed to modernise quickly to keep pace with change but also to be more efficient, and an options appraisal had therefore been completed to consider the potential future provision of services. Details of the consultation were outlined for the Board's consideration and it was noted that five options had arisen from this:

- Option 1 – continue as now;
- Option 2 – amendments to the rota;
- Option 3 – to merge the two teams at Runcorn and Widnes;
- Option 4 – re-ablement Service; and
- Option 5 – contract with the independent sector.

It was recommended that the Council implement Option 4.

The Board noted that the views and suggestions identified by the teams had been taken into consideration and amendments had been made to the initial option and service specification. A number of staff working groups would be established to ensure full staff involvement in the changes required.

Members were advised that the new service would enable the Council to deliver a more intensive approach to re-ablement with the quality of the existing service being retained, if not improved in the future.

An implementation plan had been completed in respect of Option 4. It was estimated that approximately £450,000 worth of savings could be delivered, although in the absence of the true costs of premium pay, which had yet to be resolved, the Board noted that the costs identified were estimates.

RESOLVED: That the outcome of the consultation be agreed and Option 4 and the next steps be approved.

EXB64 VALUING PEOPLE NOW

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community regarding the recently issued Government Guidance on the transfer of responsibility for commissioning social care services from the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to the local authority (LA) and the implications for Halton.

It was noted that, in August 2008, the Department of Health had issued guidance on the transfer of responsibility for commissioning social care for adults with a learning disability from NHS to local government and the transfer of appropriate funding. Halton and St. Helens PCT and the LA were now required to:

- a) reach agreement via PCT and LA respective governance arrangements on the amounts to be transferred for 2009/10 and inform the Department of Health by 1st December, 2008; and
- b) put arrangements in place (if they did not already exist) so that the transfer was effective from April 2009 and local transfers of the amount agreed could be made for 2009/10 (and 2010/11).

It was expected that the transfer would include an appropriate allowance to meet commissioning and planning costs previously incurred by the PCT and that the transfer would be based on the actual spend in 2007/08 and amended by any other changes locally agreed to reflect necessary investment decisions. The amount transferred would be agreed locally and not by a national formula.

The Board was advised that this transfer of funding would be made locally for two years and would include an uplift for inflation beyond 2011. Once agreements had been reached and results analysed at a national level, the Department of Health would consult on determination of allocations for the future.

Halton PCT and the Council had already entered into a Section 75 Agreement on all service areas. For learning disabilities this meant that the LA was the lead commissioner. A pooled budget arrangement had been in place since 2003 and was currently subject to a three-year financial plan. This pooled budget stood at £12.5m but had

been subject to pressure, which was likely to continue giving growing need and cost. However, the Council and the PCT had agreed a number of issues which would facilitate this current negotiation and these were outlined for Members' information.

The Board noted that a working group made up of Directorate and Corporate representatives had been established to drive forward the agreement with the PCT and it was anticipated that the work would be completed by the end of November 2008. It was advised that there were a number of issues which remained to be resolved which would need to be considered as integral to the negotiations including:

- a) retraction of Supporting People funding;
- b) infrastructure costs; and
- c) current contributions by the PCT.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the requirements to reach agreement by 1st December 2008 be noted; and
- (2) powers be delegated to the Portfolio Holder, Health and Social Care and the Strategic Director - Health and Community to settle and submit the Council's submission to the Department of Health in response to the Valuing People Now consultation document.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

EXB65 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public

interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB66 PROCUREMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION (TRADING STANDARDS) SERVICE - PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining the personnel implications relating to the Divisional Manager, Consumer Protection arising from the procurement of the Consumer Protection (Trading Standards) Service from Warrington Borough Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

MINUTES ISSUED: 23rd October 2008

CALL IN: 30th October 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 30th October 2008

Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 6 November 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors McDermott (Chairman), D. Cargill, Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Polhill and Swain

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Nelson

Absence declared on Council business: Councillors Wharton and Wright

Officers present: L. Cairns, M. Reaney, G. Cook, J. Kirk, D. Tregoe, S. Clough, B. Dodd, D. Johnson, A. Jones, I. Leivesley, A. McIntyre, G. Meehan and D. Parr

Also in attendance: 1 Member of the Public

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

EXB67 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB68 POST 16 EDUCATION WITHIN A 14-19 CONTEXT - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing an outline of the proposed plan for the delivery of Post 16 education within a 14 to 19 context.

It was advised that Halton Borough Council (HBC) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) were required to ensure that plans were in place for the effective delivery of 14 – 19 education. Both organisations were responsible for securing sufficient provision in the Borough to meet the new educational entitlements and the ambition to raise the participation age in education. There were a number of key drivers of this new planning framework and these were outlined within the report for Members' information.

Action

It was proposed that a Collegiate model be developed for the delivery of Post 16 education, which would be sited within the 14 – 19 framework. The Local Authority would commission provision through the Collegiate model. The partnership of Riverside College, secondary schools, work based learning providers, together with Halton Council, would then be in a position by 2013 to deliver the national entitlement. This would include vocational elements, AS/A Levels, International Baccalaureate and the new Diplomas.

The Collegiate would oversee the strategic development of the Borough-wide offer for Post 16 education within the 14 – 19 framework and two Collaboratives, one in Widnes and one in Runcorn, would be formed to oversee specific developments of Post 16 education within each learning community.

Delivery was based on the assumption that Riverside College, all secondary schools, special schools, and work-based learning providers would be centres for 14-19 learning, carrying equal status and working within a collaborative to deliver the “Halton offer” to young people.

Further information was provided in the report regarding the fundamental framework, the national context, the local context, the consultation process that had been undertaken, and the role of the Local Authority and relationships with stakeholders. It was advised that the Collegiate approach required alignment of LSC and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) capital investment, and the Collegiate would critically inform the Council in its future Commissioning role under the Machinery of Government transferred LSC responsibilities to the Council in 2010.

The Board noted the work that had gone into establishing this model, which would build on the excellent attainment levels achieved by schools in the Borough in recent years, and extended thanks to all those involved including head teachers, the College and Principal, and relevant officers within the Borough Council.

Reason for the Decision

There was a pressing requirement to agree provision for Post 16 education with a 14 – 19 context in Halton. As part of the developing BSF programme, and the Primary Capital Programme, a review of Post 16 education within a 14 to 19 context had to be undertaken.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None. This was a requirement for the BSF and Machinery of Government programmes.

Implementation Date

The Collegiate and two Collaboratives would form as soon as approval was granted, building on the preparatory meetings to date. Implementation of the full model would commence September 2010.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Collegiate model be approved as the delivery mechanism for Post 16 education within the 14 – 19 curriculum in Halton;
- (2) the Widnes and Runcorn Collaborations within the Collegiate Model be approved; and
- (3) the design of the model be delegated to the Collegiate Strategic Board.

EXB69 SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS REVIEW - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People which completed the review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in Halton.

It was noted that the Local Authority had been undertaking a review of SEN provision within the Borough for a variety of reasons, which were outlined in detail within the report. A number of stages to this review had taken place which included:

- 2005 Review of SEN Unit Provision;
- strategic review of Autistic Spectrum Disorder Provision in Halton (28th August 2008); and
- a local analysis of need.

The present provision of units in Primary and Secondary mainstream schools was outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.

Halton's aim was to ensure that "Pathways" for learning for SEN pupils would be personalised to meet individual and family needs. This would involve the current SEN Unit Provision across all key stages being re-designed

to provide flexible provision within a mainstream school, or early years setting, that enabled the learner to spend as much time as possible in the mainstream part of the school, depending on the needs of the individual pupil. When it had been shown through assessment that the pupil's needs could not be met in a mainstream school, alternative provision would be sought. Prior to this decision there would be an expectation that "reasonable adjustments" would be made using the totality of resources made available to the mainstream school.

Members were provided with information regarding the proposed consultation to take place with primary and secondary schools. Within both primary and secondary provision, joint working with all areas of Children's Services, including health, would provide a wrap-around provision for children and families.

The Board noted that provision for SEN within mainstream units did not currently match the needs of the Borough and young people: the present provision for units within schools did not provide value for money due to the number of surplus places. This proposal meant that money would be prioritised in the right direction to ensure everyone in SEN had their needs met; ie this was not about a reduction in resources, they would simply be re-distributed to better reflect/match current and emerging need.

Reason for Decision

At present, there were surplus places within mainstream units. Mainstream SEN units were not matching the present and future requirements of the Borough. As part of the developing Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme a review of SEN unit provision needed to be undertaken.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

An alternative option was to leave the provision as it was. However, this would potentially leave the Council vulnerable to challenge.

Implementation Date

The Secondary SEN Unit Provision Review must be agreed by December 2008 and implemented during the development of the BSF programme. The Primary SEN unit provision review would be agreed February 2009 and implemented by September 2010.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) consultation on the provision for SEN units within secondary mainstream schools commence; and
- (2) consultation on the provision for SEN units within primary mainstream schools commence.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

MINUTES ISSUED: 13th November 2008

CALL IN: 20th November 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 20th November 2008

Meeting ended at 2.15 p.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 13 November 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), D. Cargill, Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson and Wharton

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillors McDermott, Swain and Wright

Officers present: L. Cairns, G. Cook, M. Reaney, B. Dodd, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, A. McIntyre and D. Tregoe

Also in attendance: Councillor Hodgkinson

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

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

Action

(NB The following Councillors declared personal interests in the following item of business for the reasons shown:

Councillor Harris – Governor of The Bankfield School

Councillor Nelson – Governor of The Grange Comprehensive School

Councillor Wharton – son attends Fairfield High School)

EXB70 BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE (BSF) STRATEGY FOR CHANGE (PART 2) AND BSF FUNDING - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing a summary of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Strategy for Change (Part 2) (SfC2), seeking approval for its submission to Partnership for Schools (PfS) by 19th November 2008. The report also outlined the role and benefits of a Local Education Partnership (LEP) and requested approval to utilise this procurement route. A summary of the potential sites for capital receipts was outlined and approval in principle was sought to maximise this income to deliver the

BSF programme.

A copy of the strategy had been attached to the report at Appendix A and a slightly revised version was tabled at the meeting for Members' information, together with a list of the changes that had been made. It was noted that the document described how the Authority intended to achieve its vision with its key stakeholders, and had been developed by working in partnership with Head Teachers of Secondary and Special Schools, external consultants and other key stakeholders, and through the BSF workstreams such as ICT and Technical. In addition, each Secondary and Secondary Special School within Halton had now developed its own School Strategy for Change for inclusion in the SfC2.

In respect of the Local Education Partnership (LEP), it was advised that this was a public private partnership between the Local Authority, BSF Investments LLP (BSFI) and a private sector partner selected in open competition under the European Procurement Rules. It was a joint venture company whose primary purpose was to ensure that the BSF investment was efficiently and effectively used to deliver a transformed secondary estate.

The benefits of this route for Halton were outlined for Members' information within the report. It was noted that the LEP enabled the Authority to deliver its programme through a mix of procurement routes: Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and conventionally funded projects. This was the BSF default procurement model and the SfC2 confirmed the Authority's intention to procure BSF in this way.

Further information was also provided in respect of capital receipts that could be generated from the four sites within the Borough, which would be partially or fully vacated once the programme was complete. These sites were Chesnut Lodge School, Ashley School, part of Fairfield High School and part of the sites housing the four Grange Schools. However, prior to release of any land for capital receipts, the Authority had to consider the impact on the Unitary Development Plan and the Sports England requirements, particularly where a Section 77 request would be needed to release school playing fields. These rules restricted the availability of land for redevelopment.

It was confirmed that other opportunities arising as a result of BSF were also being considered such as the intention to have a significant positive impact on children and young people's health, particularly levels of obesity in the Borough, through the facilities and services which would

be provided through secondary schools. Various issues in different localities were being examined in order that provision could be better targeted to meet local needs.

Reason for the Decision

A Strategy for Changes Part 2 must be completed by all authorities in the BSF programme.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

The Strategy for Change must be submitted to PfS by 19th November 2008.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Strategy for Change Part 2, attached as Appendix A to the report and revised as outlined at the meeting, be approved and the Strategic Director for Children and Young People be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Children and Young People, to make any necessary minor amendments following this meeting prior to its submission;
- 2) the LEP model be confirmed as the BSF procurement route and a further report be requested on its potential scope;
- 3) approval be confirmed to seek permission to utilise 100% of available capital receipts on vacant secondary premises to fund the BSF Capital Programme; and
- 4) the Cross Party BSF Working Group be reconvened to develop the Strategy for Change Part 2 to inform the Outline Business Case.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

MINUTES ISSUED: 19th November 2008

CALL IN: 26th November 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 26th November 2008

Meeting ended at 2.10 p.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 20 November 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors McDermott (Chairman), D. Cargill, Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson, Polhill, Swain, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Cairns, G. Cook, B. Dodd, I. Leivesley, P. McWade, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney and D. Tregoe

Also in attendance: 1 Member of Public and Councillor Redhead

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

EXB71 MINUTES

Action

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2008 were taken as read and agreed as a correct record.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB72 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Financial Services setting out the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2009/10 to 2011/12. The Medium Term Financial Forecast set out a three-year projection of resources and spending based on information that was currently available. The Board was advised that there was information yet to be received and revisions would need to be made as this became available - confirmation of a number of grants was expected on 26th November 2008. As a result, the projections had to be treated with a considerable degree of caution; however, they did provide initial guidance to the Council on its financial position into the medium term.

Members noted that the global “credit crunch” and the

consequent inflationary and economic pressures were beginning to have an impact on the budget. The Prime Minister had stated that additional borrowing would be used to stimulate demand within the economy, including a focus on public works projects; however, the consequences on local authorities were not yet clear.

Information was set out within the report outlining the objectives of the MTFS, which were in line with the Council's priorities; the proposed budget strategy; and the proposed capital strategy. It was noted that the MTFS represented the "finance guidelines" that formed part of the medium term corporate planning process. These guidelines identified the financial constraints that the Council would face in delivering its key objectives and were an important influence on the development of the Corporate Plan and Service Plans and Strategies. It was anticipated that savings of £6 million would need to be made over each of the next four years.

The Executive Board noted that the Strategy would be considered at the Policy and Performance Board Chairs' Away Day, scheduled to be held on 12th and 13th December, where Chairs of the regulatory Committees and representatives of the two opposition parties would also be in attendance.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Medium Term Financial Forecast be noted;
- (2) the base budget be prepared on the basis of the underlying assumptions set out in the Forecast;
- (3) the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved;
- (4) the Reserves and Balances Strategy be approved; and
- (5) further reports be considered by the Executive Board on the areas for budget savings and spending pressures.

Operational
Director -
Financial Services

EXB73 PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS' ACCESS TO PART 2 ITEMS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy proposing an amendment to the Constitution regarding Members' Access to Part 2 items.

It was noted that clarification had been sought in respect of Members' Rights of Access to meetings of a

Committee/Sub-Committee/Board of which they were not members when exempt information was being discussed. Appropriate advice had been given by officers and it had been requested that consideration be given to an amendment being made to the Constitution in order that an agreed protocol could be adopted.

A slightly amended proposed change was tabled for Members' consideration including the proposal that discussion should take place with the relevant Chairman prior to the relevant meeting.

RESOLVED: That Council be asked to approve an amendment to the Constitution as set out below:

“For the avoidance of doubt, Councillors who are not Members of a particular committee/sub-committee/board have no automatic right to remain in a meeting of a committee/sub-committee/board once a resolution has been passed under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 excluding the press and public from the Meeting. A Councillor would only be entitled to remain in the Meeting if he or she had been able to establish a “need to know” as described above, to the satisfaction of the committee/sub-committee/board. In these circumstances, a Councillor who is not a Member of the committee/sub-committee/board wishing to remain in a meeting following a passing of the appropriate resolution shall demonstrate the “need to know” on a report by report basis to the Chief Executive no later than the day preceding the Meeting or as soon as possible. The Chief Executive will then consult the relevant Chair. This will enable due consideration to be given to the request, in order that appropriate advice may be given to the committee/sub-committee/board to assist them in making the decision.”

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

EXB74 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy seeking approval to the development and implementation of an Efficiency Programme over the next four years on the lines of that outlined by KPMG at the recent presentation to Members. Agreement was also sought of outline arrangements to support the implementation of the programme. A revised recommendation was tabled for Members' consideration.

It was noted that the Council had commissioned KPMG to assist in developing an Efficiency Programme to help the Authority in meeting the significant financial

challenges it faced over the coming years. The Medium Term Financial Strategy showed the level of cashable savings the Council would be required to make over the next four years which, if service levels were maintained, would be challenging. KPMG had been asked to work with the Council to develop a programme which both protected or enhanced front line services and made efficiency savings.

The KPMG work had identified a number of areas of the Council's business where it was felt that there was potential for making efficiency savings and these were outlined within the report for Members' information. An outline business case for each of the areas had been produced and, if the Board was content, these would be developed between now and the end of the calendar year into a detailed implementation plan. KPMG believed that these opportunities had the potential to achieve cumulative savings of £20.2m by the end of 2012. In order to achieve this level of saving in the time outlined, the programme needed to commence in January 2009.

In order to deliver the programme the Council would need to establish a Programme Office and identify a Programme Manager. The Programme Team would have the responsibility of co-ordinating the programme and would be Council led although it was suggested that, in accordance with best practice, KPMG be retained to work alongside the team to provide the additional capacity and enhanced skill base the Council needed to deliver the programme.

The Board was advised that, in order to achieve savings of £20.2m KPMG had identified investment in the region of £2.3m to make it happen. That figure had been included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. This would be used to fund the development of a Programme Office and to fund any outside support the Council needed to deliver the programme.

The delivery of the programme would be challenging and would require close working between Members, staff and trade unions. In order to manage that process effectively, it was suggested that a Staffing Protocol be developed with the trade unions detailing the way in which staffing matters would be dealt with as the programme unfolded.

It was confirmed that the detailed programme would be brought back to the Board for approval and any proposals that flowed from pieces of work would also be

submitted to the Board for consideration; for example, any proposals in relation to market testing. The Appointments Committee would also be involved where appropriate in accordance with the Council's Constitution. In addition, there had already been meetings with trade unions and briefing sessions. The Board noted that communication with staff, who continued to deliver excellent services despite the challenges they faced, would be an important part of the process.

The Chief Executive confirmed that this was not a crisis situation but rather a managed approach to improve the quality of the organisation and was necessary if the Council was to achieve the savings required over the forthcoming years. Although the proposals equated to a reduction in approximately 150 staff posts, this would largely be addressed by natural turnover within the organisation, which currently stood at 120 staff per year.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) approval be given to develop an efficiency programme based the elements outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report;
- (2) the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy, in consultation with the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, be authorised to extend the contract arrangements with KPMG, to support the Programme Office in delivering the programme with the final arrangements being reported back to this Board;
- (3) the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy, in consultation with the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, be authorised to draw up a Staffing Protocol to outline the options available to staff throughout the process; and
- (4) the detailed delivery programme be brought to this Board for approval with regular progress reports being submitted to the Business Efficiency Board.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

EXB75 DCLG CONSULTATION: MEMBER/OFFICER CODES OF CONDUCT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy seeking approval of the Council's response to the Government's Consultation Paper on an Officers' Code of Conduct.

It was noted that there were separate Codes of Conduct for Members and officers, both of which appeared in the Halton Constitution. The Members' Code included the Ten Principles of Public Life recommended in the Neil Report into Conduct in Public Life, which had been prescribed by law. Halton's version followed the national model. Members accepting office agreed to be guided by the Code and breach of the Code was dealt with under the Standards Committee process.

The Officers' Code of Conduct had never been prescribed by law although there had been a national model recommended at one time by the Local Government Management Board (LGMB), which was substantially the model approved by the Council and included in the Constitution. Breach of the Code could form the basis for engaging the Disciplinary Code. Officers were expected to comply with the Code and, in recent years, employees' Particulars of Employment had explicitly required them to comply with its terms. This Code of Conduct was in addition to various other codes that certain officers were subject to; for example employees who belonged to particular professional bodies.

Since the introduction of the Local Government Act 2000, there had been power to establish a national statutory code of conduct for officers. The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had published a new consultation paper in October 2008 inviting responses to 22 questions relating to "Codes of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees" with comments to be submitted to the Department by 24th December 2008.

The report outlined the areas that the consultation paper was inviting comments upon in terms of both Members and officers. Consultation on the Members' Code of Conduct fell within the remit of the Standards Committee and, as such, the Committee had been requested to consider this at its meeting of 19th December 2008. The Board was advised that the Committee had agreed the response to the Member Code outlined within Appendix A to the report subject to further consideration being given to including police cautions to the definition of "criminal offence" and to whether the conduct of Members in a private capacity that resulted in a tribunal finding of discrimination should be capable of amounting to a breach of the Code.

Although not in its remit, the Standards Committee had also considered the Officers' Code and had requested that the Executive Board consider removing the reference to

politically restricted posts in the response to question 18 so that it read “Yes the Code should require employees to register their interests publicly”. The Executive Board considered this proposal but agreed that the implications of this change would be unreasonable in terms of the impact on officers’ civil liberties and in the administration of declarations from thousands of officers.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the consultation in respect of a revised Members’ Code of Conduct considered by the Standards Committee, the proposed response to this consultation outlined in Appendix A to the report, and the Standards Committee’s subsequent amendments, be noted; and
- (2) the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy be authorised to draw up and submit a response to the Consultation Paper in respect of the Officers’ Code of Conduct as outlined in Appendix B to the report.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB76 MERSEY MULTI MODAL GATEWAY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment seeking approval for further changes to the text of the 3MG (Mersey Multimodal Gateway) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

It was noted that the Board had resolved that the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park (SRFP) SPD, now renamed the 3MG SPD, should be adopted at its meeting of 21st September 2006. However, adoption had been delayed because of continued uncertainty over the state of the open land at Halebank, fronting Lovell Terrace, which had been the subject of two applications for “Village Green” status. Additionally, access to site 253 from the junction between the A5300 (Knowsley Expressway) and the A562 (Speke Road) had been secured through planning permissions granted by both Halton and Knowsley local planning authorities. This would enable the site to be accessed directly off the A562 (Speke Road) and also to connect with the eastern parts of 3MG. Therefore, there was now no need for a new east-west link via Halebank between the two parts of 3MG.

In order to take account of these changes to the access arrangements to 3MG, it had been necessary to revise the content of the SPD. This had been done in two ways. Firstly, there were the “technical” changes to the text, which did not materially affect the content or intended purpose of the SPD. These were listed in the first part of the Appendix to the report and had been agreed by the Operational Director and the relevant Executive Board Member under delegated authority. Secondly, there were changes to the amendments already agreed by the Executive Board in September 2006, which were proposed as a result of public consultation and the emerging design of the project, and were listed in the second part of the Appendix. These changes altered the definition of how site 253 was to be accessed, confirming the primacy of the A5300 link.

Legal advice had stated that no further public consultation was required on the proposed changes to the draft SPD set out in the report. The 3MG SPD had been prepared at the same time as the SPD for the adjoining Halebank Action Area and public consultation had been carried out on both. It was advised that, now the new access to HBC Field had been resolved, the Halebank SPD could also proceed to adoption.

Further background information was provided in the report for Members’ consideration together with information on public participation, the sustainability appraisal and the process for adoption of the SPD.

RESOLVED: That the amendments to the text of the SPD set out in the appendix to the report be agreed.

QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

EXB77 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW TOPIC GROUP AND ACTION PLAN REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy presenting a report and recommendations of the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board (PPB) that had arisen from a review of Performance Management.

It was noted that, at its meeting of 5th June 2007, the Corporate Services PPB agreed to scrutinise the Corporate Performance Management Framework in order to review and further develop Members’ roles in performance management. A Topic Group of Board Members and officers

conducted the review through a series of interviews, surveys, a meeting with PPB chairs, and a visit to another local authority. The review looked at the roles of PPB Members and Executive Board Members in order to establish how Members were currently engaged in the process and how they wanted to develop their input in the future. In addition, it investigated the practical elements of the performance management framework such as the planning process, and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements.

The review had identified a number of areas for further improvement including:

- the role of Members;
- the performance management framework and services planning;
- risk assessment;
- monitoring and reporting arrangements/use of information;
- the new National Indicator Set; and
- the Local Area Agreement.

As a result of the review, a number of recommendations had been made to the Corporate Services PPB on each of these elements on 3rd June 2008 and these were outlined for Members' information. The Corporate Services PPB had agreed these recommendations and also agreed that the Operational Director (Policy and Performance) prepare an action plan based on the recommendations and this be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration and response before being returned to the Corporate Services PPB for regular progress reports. The Topic Group Review Report and action plan were attached to the report for Members' consideration, and the Board discussed the following:

- the need not to lose sight of outputs, without which there would not be outcomes;
- Members were to have a greater involvement at the Service Plan development stage; and
- the development of the quality assurance process for Divisional Plans was one more element in the planning framework.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the recommendations set out in the Topic Group

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

Report and Action Plan be approved; and

- (2) the Corporate Services PPB receive regular progress reports on the Action Plan.

MINUTES ISSUED: 28th November 2008

CALL IN: 5th December 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5th December 2008

Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 16 October 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman), Harris and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Cairns, M. Curtis, B. Dodd, D. Hall, A. McNamara, M. Reaney and J. Unsworth

Also in attendance: Councillor Hodgkinson

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Action

(NB Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman welcomed back Councillor Nelson who had been absent for some time due to ill health.)

ES38 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES39 INVEST TO SAVE

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment providing an update on progress with the Invest to Save bids, reporting on savings achieved to date and seeking approval of further bids in relation Power Perfectors.

It was reported that, as part of the Invest to Save process, four projects had been approved in connection with the work the Council was undertaking through the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. Details of the projects and ongoing savings achieved to date were set out within the report covering:

- the networking of printers to multi-functional devices;
- the installation of Power Perfectors in Council Buildings;
- Halton Stadium; and
- a lighting upgrade.

It was advised that, given the savings that could accrue from installing Power Perfectors, further work had been done to assess the potential of installing the devices at Picow Farm, Widnes Direct Link, Halton Lea Direct Link, Runcorn Market and Oak Meadow. The total cost of installing Power Perfectors at these buildings was £52,000 but should result in annual revenue savings of £12,000 per annum. Approval was therefore sought to increase the Invest to Save bid to enable the schemes to proceed. The total cost of the Invest to Save bid including fees would be £248,150, which would give expected annual revenue savings of £75,000 per annum, a payback of approximately 3.3 years.

In receiving the report the Sub-Committee commended the proposals.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and savings to date be noted; and
- (2) the Invest to Save bids for Power Perfectors be approved.

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

ES40 SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND HEALTH AND COMMUNITY CLIENT TRANSPORT CONTRACTS

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment regarding the decision taken by the Operational Director (Highways, Transportation and Logistics) to award several contracts for the supply of client transport services to “non lowest price” tenderers. In accordance with Procurement Standing Order Number 3.2, the report advised the Sub-Committee of the circumstances surrounding this decision.

Members noted that the Transport Co-ordination Section managed a complex range of client transport contracts and arrangements for clients of both the Children and Young People, and Health and Community Directorates.

Wherever possible, priority was given to arranging transport for clients on the Council's "In House Fleet" operation. However, these arrangements were often contracted out for a period of one to three years to external transport providers, typically licensed taxi and minibus operators.

During the last round of client transport tendering carried out in July 2008, 50 new contracts had been awarded, the vast majority of which were to the lowest priced tenderers. However, 15 contracts (30% of contracts) were awarded to "non lowest price" tenderers. The reasons for these decisions were mostly operational, with the most typical being the preferred tenderer being unable to accept the contract due to lack of resources. However, in a small number of cases, the adopted tendering scoring process led to the decision being taken to offer the tender to a "non lowest price" tenderer on the basis of other considerations such as quality and accessibility of the vehicles offered by the contractor to be used and any previous operational difficulties experienced when using the contractor.

Each tender had been scored using a 50:50 price/quality criteria and details of the individual tenders which had been awarded to "non-lowest price" tenderers were shown in Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED: That the award of several of the client transport service contracts (as set out in Appendix 1 of the report) by the Operational Director (Highways, Transportation and Logistics) to "non lowest price" tenderers be supported.

ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

ES41 WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment seeking approval for the waiving of relevant procurement standing orders in relation to a waste management communications campaign.

It was noted that Halton Borough Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy highlighted the need for effective communications and awareness-raising to facilitate a positive behaviour change in Halton. The Council had invested significantly to deliver a programme of enhanced kerbside recycling services to meet future targets; however, the Council would only be successful in achieving targets if it had the co-operation of the residents of Halton.

Essential to achieving increased co-operation and participation was a raised awareness of waste related issues and the report set out the details of a proposed comprehensive and targeted communications and marketing campaign to bring about such increased awareness amongst the residents of the Borough.

The Sub-Committee was advised that EnviroComms, an external communications specialist, had been commissioned to deliver training to a number of key Council officers focusing upon the principles of successful communication and publicity. EnviroComms had also been asked to provide proposals to deliver a campaign in Halton to achieve a number of outcomes, which were outlined for Members' information. Subsequently, EnviroComms had submitted a proposal that was made up of a number of key components including:

- a Halton "Brand" Development;
- public roadshows;
- direct marketing to each household in the Borough; and
- "doorstepping" and community engagement activities.

A key part of the proposal would be a team of trained individuals directly engaging with residents through a programme of visits to households within the Borough. This would assist in identifying attitudes towards recycling and existing barriers to recycling, and would increase awareness and use of existing and future recycling services. In addition, an integrated media and advertising campaign would also be managed and delivered jointly by the Council's Press and Public Relations Manager and relevant waste management officers who had co-ordinated such activities to date.

The Sub-Committee noted that EnviroComms had a proven track record of delivering successful campaigns for local authorities that had resulted in significant increases in recycling performance. The overall cost of the proposal for Halton, which would run for approximately 18 months, was anticipated to be £140,000. Standing Orders required that a tendering exercise be undertaken where services of this value were to be procured; however, the aim of the campaign was to exceed Halton's Local Area Agreement (LAA) recycling targets and, in order to do so, would require its commencement at the earliest opportunity. Any further delay resulting from a potentially lengthy tendering exercise could jeopardise the Council's achievement of such targets. Furthermore, the early introduction of the campaign would increase the level of recyclable materials collected and the

Council would benefit from an increased reduction in landfill disposal charges.

The first meeting with Government Office North West to review the Council's actions to meet the stretched performance targets contained within the Halton LAA was to take place on 26th November 2008 and it was important to be able to demonstrate that plans were in place by that time. Members were advised that the financial investment in this campaign was considered to represent value for money as a cost/value ratio analysis had revealed that increased landfill disposal cost savings were achievable as a result.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) relevant procurement standing orders be waived and EnviroComms be appointed to deliver a Communications Campaign for Halton; and
- (2) the Strategic Director – Environment be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Environment, to take all steps necessary to develop and implement a Communications Campaign in Halton.

Strategic Director
- Environment

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

ES42 TRAVELLER TRANSIT SITE - PITCH CHARGES

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining proposed charges to be made for occupation of pitches at the new Traveller Transit Site in Warrington Road, Runcorn.

It was noted that, at its meeting on 25th September, the Sub-Committee had considered a report on proposed charges for occupation of the site but had decided to defer a decision on the matter pending further consideration of potential costs to the Council, given uncertainty about some of the operational costs. In the interim, quotations had been obtained for costs associated with the drainage system, which was the single biggest area of uncertainty, and the forecast budget had been amended accordingly.

The Appendix to the report summarised the cost implications for the Council of a range of potential charge rates and occupancy rates. Occupancy rates could not be guaranteed but it was not unreasonable to assume that a 90% rate could be achieved. It was noted that charge rates for private caravan sites varied considerably depending on

location and facilities; however, a number of comparisons had been sought and these were set out within the report for Members' information.

The Sub-Committee was advised that the intention was that the site would be cost neutral and it was therefore proposed that a charge of £11 per adult household be set initially for a period of 6 months and a further report be brought to the Sub-committee to review income against costs in the light of operational experience.

RESOLVED: That a charge of £11 per adult household be set initially for a period of six months and a further report be brought to the Sub-committee to review income against costs in the light of operational experience.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

ES43 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Sub-Committee considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Sub-Committee during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government

Act 1972.

**PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND
RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

(NB Councillor Hodgkinson remained in the meeting during consideration of the following item of business having demonstrated a "need to know".)

ES44 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES
CONTRACT

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment outlining the outcome of the tender process for the provision of the Environmental Consultancy Services Framework Contract.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of Amec Earth and Environmental to the Environmental Consultancy Framework Contract be approved.

MINUTES ISSUED: 22nd October 2008

CALL IN: 29th October 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 29th October 2008

Meeting ended at 10.50 a.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 6 November 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman) and Harris

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Nelson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, P. Barron, R. Dart, S. O'Sullibhan, B. Dodd and C. Halpin

Also in attendance: A. Jones

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Action

ES45 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES46 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Sub Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which asked Members to consider 3 applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

It was noted that under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Authority was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that were either a charity or a non-profit making organisation. Relief could also be awarded to Community Amateur Sports Club. A summary of the applications and a list of the associated figures were attached as an appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the following organisations at the percentage indicated, for the period from 1st April 2008 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later, to 31st March 2009:

Halton Access to Media	100%
Halton Haven Hospice	20%
Tenants and Residents Organisations of England	20%

- (2) In respect of the following organisations, it is also recommended that they should be granted discretionary rate relief for the backdated element of the charge:

Tenants and Residents Organisations of England	20%
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ES47 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2008/09 2ND QUARTER: JULY-SEPT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Operational Director, Financial Services which updated Members on the activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy. It was noted that all the activities, including prudential indicators, complied with the policy guidelines.

Following various reports from the credit rating agencies, the authority had been particularly careful in placing money into investments, especially for those deals of longer duration. To date there had been no problems with repayments, although it was becoming increasingly worrying that very large organisations, often household names were deemed to be at risk of failure. Quite often credit ratings were giving no indication as to the current situation an organisation may be in and what off balance sheet problems they may be facing. It was noted all the Council investments were in UK banks and building societies.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES48 2008/09 HALF YEAR SPENDING

The Sub Committee received a report of the Operational Director, Financial Services which gave details of the Council's overall revenue and capital spending

position as at 30th September 2008.

Members were advised of the spending against revenue budget for each department, up to 30th September 2008 and it was noted that in overall terms, revenue expenditure was below the budget profile. Areas of concern were outlined in detail in the report.

Members were advised of the capital spending to 30th September 2008, which totalled £17.8m, and which was 77% of the planned spending of £23.2m at this stage. However, this represented only 36% the total capital programme of £49.5m.

It was noted that although historically capital expenditure was significantly higher in the latter part of the financial year, it was important that project managers maintain pressure to keep projects and spending on schedule and in particular to ensure that all external funding is maximised.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

ES49 NORTON PRIORY CATERING CONTRACT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought approval of the transfer of three staff to the Council's establishment to facilitate the development of the Norton Priory catering project.

It was noted that the Council, like many other Council's across the UK, had found it difficult to meet the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate objectives of finding people known to social care, particularly those with learning disabilities, suitable employment opportunities.

Following recent negotiations an offer from Norton Priory to the Learning Disability Day Services for the contract (SLA) to provide all the catering at Norton Priory had been put forward. This would include special, local and corporate events as well as the café.

The commercial aspects of this contract would provide the department with the opportunity to set up a 'social enterprise' scheme with the capacity to provide jobs for people with disabilities in the short to mid term.

It was noted that Day Services had existing experience at providing community based catering projects in the Murdishaw Café and Country Gardens Kitchens and have planned to subsume the contract into its current operations without any increase to establishment.

The contract and its supporting services were outlined in the report and it was anticipated that the proposals would increase capacity by at least one third to 238 'spaces' for service users to learn and gain meaningful experience and potentially employment.

The Sub Committee requested that a business plan for continuity of the service be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Strategic Director, Health & Community in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder (Health & Social Care) be authorised to enter into contractual arrangements with Norton Priory Trust to provide catering and related services at Norton Priory;
- (2) the addition of up to three members of staff to the Council's establishment as a result of duties under the Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment Regulations 2006 (TUPE) be approved in relation to the current catering services provider to the Trust, FGF;
- (3) the Strategic Director, Health & Community be authorised to take such other actions as may be necessary to give effect to the above recommendations; and
- (4) a business plan for continuity of the service be submitted to a future meeting of the Board

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL

ES50 HIGH HEDGE COMPLAINTS

The Board received a report of Strategic Director, Environment which recommended increasing the fee for making formal High Hedge complaints to the Council.

It was noted that the High Hedge Act (part of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003) came into effect on 1 June 2005.

This Act was to enable neighbours to make a formal complaint to the Council if they were unable to resolve the matter themselves.

Furthermore to meet the required criteria set out in the Act, a valid complaint must relate to a hedge that was at least two metres high and contain at least two or more evergreen trees. Fees were charged to the complainant who must provide detailed evidence that they have tried to resolve the matter with the owner.

The fee provided a service, which was likely to benefit an individual (the complainant) rather than the community in general.

In addition it was noted that a review of the charges made by other local authorities had been undertaken. This data was not readily available so particular consideration was given to other Councils (namely Bexley, Lincoln & Shepway) that set the fee in line with the cost of householder applications in 2005. They have since increased their fee in line with the cost of planning applications to £150.

Neighbouring Councils Warrington, St Helens and Liverpool charge a considerably higher fee. Since the High Hedge Act came into effect there have been over 150 enquiries leading to over 30 complaints.

It was recommended that the fee should be maintained at the same rate as householder planning applications. It was also recommended that the Strategic Director - Environment continue to have the authority to waiver the charge in part or whole when appropriate in individual cases of severe hardship.

RESOLVED: That the fee be increased from £135 to £150 in line with the minimum householder planning application fee.

Meeting ended at 10.55 a.m.

MINUTES ISSUED: 13 November 2008

CALL IN: 20 November 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 20th November 2008

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3MG EXECUTIVE SUB BOARD

At a meeting of the 3MG Executive Sub Board on Thursday, 16 October 2008 in Conference Room 2, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), Nelson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, S. McDonald, D. Sutton, B. Dodd, C. Halpin, D. Parr and D. Tregoe

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-BOARD**

ESB1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

ESB2 FINANCIAL REPORT, 3MG LANDSCAPE CONTRACT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which confirmed that the 3MG Landscape contract would be delivered within the agreed budget of £1,170,381. However, the Board was notified, as required by Standing Orders Relating to Finance 5.1.5, that the agreed tender price would be exceeded by approximately 10%.

Members were advised that commencement of the landscaping works had been held back by several months due to delays in the diversion of the sludge main by United Utilities. The contract started on site in May 2008, and the contractor had made good progress, accelerating his programme in order to bring the works back on schedule. Members were provided with a map outlining the works (available on the Council's website).

The Board was further advised that it had been

Action

necessary to include a number of unforeseen/additional items in the contract since it started on site, which would result in a projected overspend of the contract sum by £73,213.36, which represented just less than 10% over the tender sum of £762,236.09. A full description of the items was set out in Appendix One to the report. It was noted that a 10% contingency figure was normal for a project such as this one, however, Standing Orders relating to Finance require that expenditure exceeding 5% be reported to the relevant Executive Board.

The budget allocation for the project was £1,170,381, which was made up of funding from the North West Development Association, EDRF and Halton Borough Council's capital allocation to the 3MG project. The estimated total spend on the project of £835,000 would be accommodated within this budget allocation. The Council's capital contribution would be approximately £117,000 out of its project allocation of £163,853, giving a saving to the Council of approximately £47,000 on the original budget estimate.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ESB3 PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE 3MG MASTERPLAN

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which gave Members an update on the progress of implementing the 3MG Masterplan.

The Board was advised on progress in respect of the A5300 Western Approach, Network Rail's GRIP approvals process relating to the design of sidings, Landscaping, Halebank Recreation Ground, Private Sector Investment, Funding, Acquisitions and Skills and Recruitment.

The Board was provided with a map of the overall Masterplan and pictures of Halebank Recreation Ground (available on the Council's website).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Board support the continuation of the Masterplan Programme.

Meeting ended at 3.20 p.m.

MINUTES ISSUED: 31st October 2008

CALL IN: 7th November 2008

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 7th November 2008

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MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board on Thursday, 20 November 2008
in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors McDermott (Chairman), Polhill and Wharton

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: B. Dodd, D. Parr, D. Sutton, D. Tregear, S. Nicholson, M. Noone
and L. Derbyshire

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

Action

MGEB10MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

MGEB11 REVISED FUNDING CONDITIONS CONFIRMED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which informed Members of the satisfactory conclusion to the discussions and assessments made with officials at the Department for Transport (DfT) leading to the Programme Entry Approval being reconfirmed and the funding conditions revised.

The Board was advised that since the Mersey Gateway had received Programme Entry approval from Ministers in March 2006, Members had received regular progress reports dealing initially with the development of the new traffic model leading to applying the finished model in a revised appraisal of the proposed scheme. The funding agreement with Ministers required both value for money and deliverability to be reviewed prior to any Public Inquiry based on the results of the new traffic model.

The Board was further advised that the conclusions

drawn by officials at DfT were reported to their Investment Decisions Committee in September, and last month the Authority received confirmation of the outcome. The Chief Executive received a letter on 23 October 2008 from Mr John Dowie, Head of Regional and Local Major Projects at DfT advising that the Minister Mr Paul Clark had agreed to reconfirm Programme Entry for the proposed Mersey Gateway scheme following a review of the value for money.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress made and the actions taken be noted;
- (2) the Board agree, subject to receiving confirmation of the accounting treatment methodology explained in the report, the revised funding conditions be acceptable to the Council.

Strategic Director
- Environment

MGEB12PROGRESS TOWARDS THE PUBLIC INQUIRY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which advised Members of the progress made in preparing for the Public Inquiry which had been announced.

The Board was advised that the formal objection period for the Orders and Applications submitted for Mersey Gateway had ended in July and on 30 September the Secretary of State had announced that a conjoined Public Inquiry would be held to consider these statutory applications. The announcement of the Public Inquiry had established the procedural timetable and the first key event took place on 11 November when the Council submitted its Statement of Case. All parties who wished to present evidence at the Inquiry are required to submit a Statement of Case.

The Board welcomed the preliminary proposal by the Planning Inspectorate to commence the enquiry on the 10th March 2009. It was noted, however, that this date was still to be confirmed.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the progress made in general and that the Council Statement of Case for the Inquiry has now been published.

Strategic Director
- Environment

MINUTES ISSUED: 21 November 2008

CALL IN: 28th November 2008

**Any matter decided by the Mersey Gateway Executive Board may
be called in no later than 28th November 2008**

Meeting ended at 3.50 p.m.

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 3 November 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Horabin (Vice-Chairman), Browne, Drakeley, Fraser, Gilligan, J. Lowe and Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Higginson, Parker, M. Ratcliffe and Mr. C. Chorley

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: P.Boyce, L. Butcher, L. Derbyshire, J. Kirk, A. McIntyre, G. Meehan and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: In accordance with Standing Order 33 Councillor McInerney – Portfolio Holder, Children and Young People

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
CYP18 MINUTES	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 th September 2008 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CYP19 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
CYP20 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee relating to the work of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board were submitted for information.	
In respect of Minute No: EXB37, Members commended Officers for the excellent Joint Area Review.	
In respect of Minute No: EXB57 – Play Builder Project	

– Clarity was sought on whether the new playgrounds had been identified.

In response it was reported that the Executive Board had approved the Year 1 projects and options for Years 2 and 3. It was anticipated that the funding, £1m over three years for the Play Builder Project would fund up to 24 play areas in the Borough. It was suggested that the Executive Board be circulated to all Members of the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes and comment raised be noted; and
- (2) the report relating to Minute No: EXB57 – the Play Builder Project be circulated to all Members of the Board.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

CYP21 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends / comparisons and factors affecting the services for:

- Specialist Services;
- Universal and Learning Services;
- Preventative Services; and
- Business Planning and Resources.

The Chairman reported that a Special Meeting of the Board had been arranged on 26th November 2008, at 6.30 pm in the Civic Suite, Runcorn Town Hall. He also gave an update on the Working Groups as follows:-

- Oral Health Working Group – Ongoing
- Access To Services for the Homeless – a new Lead Officer is to be identified; and
- The Youth Justice Board - a meeting would be arranged in the near future.

Universal & Learning Services

- The key areas of developments were noted;
- ULS3 – To improve Educational Outcomes for all Children at Primary Level – clarity was sought on the

amber light. In response it was reported that in this area of work there would always be areas that could be improved resulting in the amber light. This enabled the Authority to stay alert and ensure that firm controls were in place and action taken when and if required;

- ULS6 – To reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles in schools – clarity was sought on what was being done to increase the percentage of young people between the ages of 4 – 18 participating in at least two hours of high quality PE school sport. In response it was reported that work was continually being undertaken with schools to improve this indicator. However, it was also highlighted that it was a difficult indicator to monitor and it was probable that the percentage was higher than the recorded 86%;
- It was noted that the Building Schools for the Future Programme would map out the provision of PE, Sports, Arts and Culture and how to extend their use and increase facilities. It was also noted that the National Health School Status included participation in exercise;
- The revised funding for SEN Units implemented in April 2008 was noted;
- Leadership and Management Hub – The issues and actions being taken to address the potential shortfall in the number of headteachers available to replace headteachers leaving their posts because of retirement etc in the next few years was noted;
- It was noted that there had been a 7% rise in KS3 results this year . It was also noted that the press had reported that there would not be SATS or report cards in the future. However, the Authority would put appropriate mechanisms in place to check and monitor progress at KS3;
- In respect of the issue of boys underachieving, it was noted that an analysis of this group would be undertaken and solutions formulated; and
- Standard School Year – It was noted that consultation was being undertaken by a number of Greater Merseyside Authorities on whether to move to a Standard School Year, splitting the school year into

six terms of roughly equal lengths and fixing this pattern regardless of the Easter Celebration. It was also noted that with the exception of Liverpool, the Authorities were consulting at the same time with the same consultation principles.

Preventative Services

- It was noted that work was being undertaken to progress the co-ordination and delivery of services to children, young people and families on a locality basis across the Borough. It was also noted that Working within the Children's Trust arrangements, a Project Plan was being compiled which would over time see the join up of services across the 0-19 age range across a locality footprint. It was suggested the project plan be presented to a future meeting of the Board in order to obtain Members views;
- My Place Bid – It was noted that the Authority had submitted a radical and innovative bid to secure an investment of £2.5m to redesign and refurbish the Kingsway Health Building into a Youth Hub to be called 'The Buzz';
- PRU's / Alternative Provision - It was noted that DCSF had published a white paper 'Back on Track' in response to the perception of the poor quality of alternative provision nationally;
- Child Poverty – Innovation Pilots – It was noted that the bid had been unsuccessful and this was being discussed with Government Office, North West as it was felt to have been a strong bid;
- The challenges relating to Sexual Health Services were noted. It was also noted that the National Support Team for teenage pregnancy had visited Halton on the 22nd September 2008 to review Halton's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. It was suggested that the Board receive the feedback from the visit and this be combined with the review being undertaken on sexual health services in conjunction with the PCT;
- The increase in the number of young people contracting Sexually Transmitted Diseases from unprotected sex was noted. The actions being taken to address this issue were also noted;

- The importance of the emphasis being on relationships and self esteem rather than sex and the targeted work being undertaken to achieve this was noted; and
- The Integrated Youth Agenda which integrated and maximised support mechanisms for teenage services was noted.

Specialist Services

- The key developments in respect of the Safeguarding Unit were noted:
- It was noted that an update on the issues in respect of Halton's Safeguarding Board would be included in Quarter 3's performance monitoring report;
- It was noted that there had been a significant increase in demand for specialist services along with an increase in costs for placements for Children in Care, which was subject to a detailed review. It was also noted that the increase in demand over the last 18 months had been in two key areas, children in need cases and the cost of placements for children in care, particularly the out of borough placements;
- It was noted that a Placement Strategy was currently being developed and this would look at ways of improving the local supply of foster care. It was suggested that a detailed report on the Placement Strategy and the cost of Out of Borough Placements be presented to a future meeting of the Board;
- The improvements in respect of SS L12 – the percentage of Care Leavers living in temporary accommodation was noted;
- SS L13 – the percentage of Social Care referrals with neglect as the primary factor – the reasons for the Authority being unlikely to hit the yearly target was noted;
- NI 63 – Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement – it was noted that this was a critical indicator and had significantly improved and was higher than the national target;
- The mechanisms for tracking young people in the Council's care when they move to another area was

noted;

- It was agreed that the Board would receive a regular report on the number of jobs being created by the Council and its key partners, for Children in Care;
- It was noted that in the north west 21 authorities had formed and approved a collective residential provider list which allowed a comparison of standards between the private residential providers. This list was also published; and
- It was suggested that the Board receive a report on the Placement Strategy and the quality of Section 33 reports and training requirements.

Business Support and Commissioning

- It was noted that the Alliance Board meeting on the 3rd September 2008 considered proposals for a new structure to replace existing arrangements and establish a Children's Trust;
- It was noted that the BSF Strategy Part 1 outlining the vision for BSF in Halton had now been approved. It was also noted that The Strategy for Change Part 2 had to be completed by 19th November 2008. This detailed document was available to view on the Council's website;
- BSC 2 – To deploy resources effectively and efficiently – Implement medium term Financial Plan Sept 2008 – it was noted that to date this had not been developed;
- BSC 5 – To recruit and retain a fully staffed trained and motivated workforce – it was noted that there were some outstanding issues relating to Job Evaluation that was currently being addressed. It was also noted that recruitment was proving to be more difficult as some posts had been evaluated below the market rate;
- It was noted that CRB checks were only required when there would be direct access to young people;
- BPR L121 – The number of service areas subject to strategic needs analysis – The complexity of the Strategic Needs Analysis which had lead to capacity issues was noted;

- Concern was raised that a considerable number of capital projects had not commenced. It was noted that a report outlining all capital projects would be considered by the Executive Board in December and a carry over would be possible; and
- It was suggested that future performance reports include a reference to financial issues including staff shortages and recruitment issues.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the quarterly performance management reports be received;
- (2) the Board consider and respond to the consultation on the Standard School Year before its presentation to the Executive Board;
- (3) the Board consider a report on sexual health and related services that would also include feedback from the National Support Team;
- (4) a report on the number of jobs created within the Council and key partners, for Children in Care in the Borough be presented to the Board on a regular basis;
- (5) the Project Plan within the Children's Trust arrangements be considered at a future meeting of the Board; and
- (6) a detailed report on the Placement Strategy and the cost of Out of Borough placements be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

CYP22 SPECIALIST STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP MINUTES

The Chairman requested that this item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting. He indicated that Members could email any concerns that would not wait for the next meeting to the Committee Administrator for action.

RESOLVED: That consideration of this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Board.

CYP23 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION - COUNCILLOR MCINERNEY

The Chairman requested that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That consideration of this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Board.

CYP24 TRANSITION FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young people which provided Members with an overview of the issues that impact on Children in Care and their experience of transition from care into adult life.

The Board was advised that there were 148 Children in Care in Halton and 78 Care Leavers. The population of Children in Care had remained consistent over a number of years as a result of the emphasis placed on supporting families and seeing care as a final positive choice for children and young people.

The Board was further advised that all children who came into care had a clear plan, which considered the needs of the individual child and how these needs could be matched to an alternative carer and other service provision. The care planning process was driven by the health and well being of the child.

It was reported that the Authority would need to improve the continuity of planning for children as they leave care and delay the 'event' until the young person was ready to leave home. This could be achieved by extending the offer for young people to stay with their carer until they were 21 years of age. It was highlighted that this would have funding implications and could have an impact on the availability of placements for other children, but it was an essential first step to improving outcomes for Children in Care.

The actions and the next steps as set out in paragraphs 4.3 (i-v), 4.4 and 4.5 of the report were also highlighted for consideration by the Board.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- It was noted that Appendix 1 to the Children in Care Strategy was not attached to the report. It was agreed that this be circulated to Members;

- It was suggested that a report be presented to the Board on the quality of the Section 33 and Climbē visits before the Corporate Parenting Conference was rerun in February 2009. It was also suggested that information on the visits be sent to all Members asking that they receive training and participate in the visits;
- Concern was raised regarding the quality of the reports in respect of Section 33 visits and ensuring that actions were followed up. It was suggested that the form be amended to include a date for any actions that had been taken. It was suggested that the reports, be anonymised and reported back to the Board;
- The Board supported the actions set out in paragraphs 4.3 (i-v) and the next steps set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Appendix 1 to the Children in Care Strategy be circulated to all Members of the Board;
- (2) a report detailing the quality of Section 33 and Climbē visits be presented to the January meeting of the Board;
- (3) the Section 33 and Climbē visit reports be anonymised and reported back to the Board as good practice; and
- (4) the actions set out in paragraphs 4.3 (i-v) and the next steps set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report, as attached to the minutes, be approved.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

Meeting ended at 9.05 p.m.

APPENDIX

4.3 ACTIONS

- i). The Children in Care Strategy (Appendix 1) and JAR improvement plan identify the actions required to address the areas for improvement identified in the JAR and in the Care Matters Change for Children program. Care Matters sets out a new deal for Children in Care and for care leavers. This new deal provides many challenges for the Council and the Children's Trust but in many ways provides us with a real opportunity to get things right.
- ii). We will need to improve the continuity of planning for children as they leave care and delay the "event" until the young person is ready to leave home. Extending the offer for young people to stay with their carer until they are 21 is the beginning of this process. Whilst this will cost money and may impact on the availability of placements for other children this is an essential first step to improving outcomes for Children in Care. A feasibility exercise is currently being undertaken in social care as part of the development of a placement strategy for Children in Care.
- iii). Social care teams will need to be reconfigured to avoid the transfer of case management when a young person reaches the age of 16. A more suitable age would be 13/14 as this is a time when all young people start to consider their futures as they decide on the Key Stage 4 options.
- iv). The Council and Children's trust will need to fully implement the Care Leavers employment policy, which guarantees care leavers a job or an entitlement to ongoing training and learning. All Directorates in the Council, the LSP and Children's Trust will need to commit to this policy. The support services required to enable young people to engage with this offer are managed by social care.
- v). The Council, LSP and Children's Trust will need to secure from local housing trusts and registered social landlords a range of accommodation sufficient to give a choice to care leavers about where they live.

4.5 NEXT STEPS

- The Corporate Parenting conference is rerun in February 2009 for all Members, Senior Officers in the Council, LSP and Children's Trust, Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors. This event would ensure that all these key people are made aware of their role and responsibilities with regard to Children in Care, and are able to explicitly identify how they intend to take forward their Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

- Members scrutinize the implementation of the Children in Care Employment Policy to ensure that care leavers are given every opportunity to find employment in the Council, LSP and Children's Trust partner agencies.
- Members scrutinize the provision of accommodation for care leavers and in particular the reasons why care leavers live in temporary accommodation.
- Members scrutinize the implementation of the Children in Care Strategy and JAR improvement plan.

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EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 17 November 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Jones (Chairman), Fraser (Vice-Chairman), Austin, M. Bradshaw, Findon, Howard, Rowe and Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Edge, Parker and Worrall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: I. Atherton, H. Cockcroft, G. Collins, S. Davies, L. Derbyshire, N. Goodwin, L. Holland and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: In Accordance with Standing Order 33 - Councillor McInerney, Portfolio Holder, Children & Young People

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

Action

ELS18 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 29th September 2008, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

ELS19 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

ELS20 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Board relating to the work of the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy Performance Board were submitted for information.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

ELS21 SSP MINUTES

The Board received the minutes of the Specialist Strategic Partnership Board (SSP), relating to the Board's

remit, for comments and information.

Arising from the discussion the following points were noted:-

- It was suggested that in relation Minute 3.2 (a) Skills – 100 apprenticeships – the word was not precise enough and consideration be given to being more specific to reflect the range of businesses and different skill levels;

It was reported that this comment would be raised at the next SSP meeting on 27th November 2008 for consideration;

- Concern was raised that the minutes contained a considerable amount of jargon which made them difficult to understand;

In response, it was reported that the jargon would be removed from the next SSP minutes for presentation to the next meeting of the Board.

- It was suggested that, if available, a transcript of a BBC Radio 4 Programme relating to Incapacity Benefit be obtained and circulated to all Members;
- It was agreed that a report be presented to the Board in January outlining all the projects commissioned by the SSP; and
- Concern was raised at the lack of consultation and details on the Riverside College proposals to have a learning resource at the Stobart Stadium Halton. It was highlighted that the Council owned the Stadium and clarity was sought on the income that would be generated from the resource. In principle, Members indicated in favour of the proposal, subject to it not being detrimental to other social community activities held at the stadium.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the minutes be received;
- (2) if available, a transcript of the BBC Radio 4 Programme relating to Incapacity Benefit be circulated to Members of the Board;
- (3) a report detailing the projects commissioned by the

Strategic Director
- Environment

Employment, Learning and Skills SSP be presented to the Board at its meeting in January; and

- (4) it be noted that, in principle, the Board is in favour of the proposals for a learning resource which would utilise the Stobart Stadium, Halton, subject to further details on the proposals for the income that would be generated and it not being detrimental to other community activities.

ELS22 OLYMPIC GAMES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which gave Members an update of initial developments in Halton to respond to the award of the Olympic Games in London in 2012.

The Board was advised that the London Olympics would take place on 27th July – 12 August 2012. The Para Olympics would take place on 29th August – 9 September 2012.

The Board was advised of the activities that had taken place to encourage and support sport as follows:-

- A Sports Development Grant Scheme;
- A Platinum Card Scheme for elite performers;
- Rate Relief for Clubs;
- Free pitch hire for junior sports matches; and
- Significant sport-related capital investment for pitch drainage, athletics track, all weather pitches, multi use games areas, skate parks, flood lit training facilities and changing rooms.

The Board was further advised that an early proposed initiative was to establish an Olympic Fund to support Halton residents to get more involved because of the Olympics and to support local athletes to aspire to compete in the Olympic Games.

It was reported that the Executive Board at its meeting of 29 March 2007 had agreed to support the idea of an Olympic Fund. By attracting funds from a number of sources (NRF, Priorities, Sports Partnership, Sport England), a budget of £90,000 had been established. Grants had already been awarded to young people involved in table tennis, cycling and special gymnastics. The intention now would be to seek sponsorship from other partners and local businesses to continue to 'top-up' the fund up to 2012.

The Board was further advised that Halton had successfully put itself forward as a potential pre-games training camp. The Stobart Halton stadium and Regional Table Tennis Centre had also been included in the 2012 Training Camp Guide which had been produced by the Olympic Committee.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- The importance of links with schools and organisations to target and support individuals with potential in sporting activities was noted. In addition it was also noted that elite athletes in the Borough could be used as role models to encourage other individuals to aspire to compete in the Olympic Games;
- The difficulties elite athletes had in obtaining individuals for quality practice was noted;
- It was noted that, as yet sponsorship from other partners and local businesses to continue to 'top up' the fund to 2012 had not been established. This would be considered when the programme had been developed;
- It was noted that the Authority worked closely with the Schools Sports Co-ordinator, Clubs and National Governing Bodies to try to ensure that individuals with potential and transferable skills were identified;
- It was agreed that a report on the work being undertaken by the schools to identify and support potential athletes be presented to a future meeting of the Board;
- It was noted that the Olympics could be used as an opportunity to identify elite athletes and this be used as a catalyst to encourage other people to participate;
- The importance of the Volunteer Programme was noted and it was agreed that it should be accessible to all age groups;
- It was suggested that there should be Big Screens available in Widnes and Runcorn so that local people could enjoy the televised Olympics as a collective experience;

- The Board took the opportunity to congratulate Lucy Martin on her excellent achievements in sport; and
- The Board approved of the activities outlined in 3.4 (2) of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a report on the work being undertaken by the schools to identify and support potential athletes be presented to a future of the meeting of the Board;
- (2) it be noted that the Board approves of the following activities to support individuals who could genuinely aspire to participate in the 2012 Olympics, including volunteers:-
 - free entry to the Council's sports facilities;
 - support for coaching and practice partners;
 - advice and support from mentors;
 - physiotherapy and access to medical advice;
 - support to cover the costs of competing and equipment;
 - access to sports science expertise;
 - health and medical advice including nutrition and diet; and
 - appropriate travel costs to support training and participation;
- (3) consideration be given to the use of Big Screens being utilised in Widnes and Runcorn to show the televised Olympics; and
- (4) Lucy Martin be congratulated on her excellent achievement in sport.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

(NB Councillor Stockton declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to being an unpaid Director of Murdishaw Community Centre).

ELS23 COMMUNITY CENTRES ANNUAL REPORT 2007-08

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which updated the Members on the performance of Community Centres in 2007/08 and issues impacting across the service.

The Board was advised that there were five Council operational Community Centres: Upton, Ditton, Castlefields, Grangeway and Murdishaw. Across the service 31 staff

were employed and there were 17 active volunteers. A grant was also provided to Churchill Hall which was run by the TH Brown Trust.

The Board was further advised that the Community Centres were safe, accessible facilities located in the heart of the Borough's communities. They served both the local and wider community and promoted inclusion, equality and diversity and community cohesion. The Community Centres service contributed to the six key council priorities as outlined in the report.

The Board was also advised of the Community Centres Performance, the quality and standards for customer care, the development of a Luncheon Club at Murdishaw, the planning of the new Community Centre for Castlefields, the Youth Hub at Grangeway, the programming and investment into the Community Centres, the service improvements and future developments in the Community Centres.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- Castlefields Community Centre – it was noted that there had been a reduction in visits which had been largely due to the withdrawal of a Community Café Service because the external funding had ended and a lottery bid had been unsuccessful. A limited refreshment service was being provided whilst opportunities to re-establish a café service was being developed. It was agreed that this matter be resolved as soon as possible and a café service re-established;
- the importance of quality standards for customer care and consideration being given to a Charter Mark for sport and leisure facilities was noted;
- concern was raised regarding the partial closure of Upton Community Centre for redecoration. The Board requested that Property Services make every effort to resolve the problem and agreed that a report on this matter be presented to the next meeting;
- the Board requested that the Children and Young People's Directorate give consideration to any opportunities to expand the community centre service within the Building Schools for the Future Programme; and

- the Board discussed the benefits and agreed that the Authority look at ways of encouraging Halton Housing Trust and Registered Social Lords to have joint funding arrangements to improve local surveillance for external cameras that would be routed through Community Centre Monitoring Systems.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Café Service at Castlefields Community Centre be re-established as soon as possible;
- (2) Property Services be requested to make every effort to resolve the roof problems at Upton Community Centre and a report on this matter be presented to the next meeting of the Board;
- (3) the Children and Young People's Directorate be requested to give consideration to any opportunities to expand the community centre service within the Building Schools for the Future Programme; and
- (4) the Authority look at ways of encouraging Halton Housing Trust and Registered Social Landlords to have joint funding arrangements to improve local surveillance for external cameras that would be routed through Community Centre Monitoring Systems.

Strategic Director
- Environment

ELS24 ANNUAL REPORT FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING 2007/08

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which examined the current funding climate for the Voluntary Sector and provided performance information on the thirteen organisations Core Grant supported in 2007/08.

The Board was advised that they would need to consider what funding was available in 2009/10 before any guarantees or decisions were made prior to commit funding to the future projects identified in the report.

In this respect the Board received a presentation which outlined the benefits of core funding the Voluntary Sector during 2007-08.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- The 2005 Home Office Citizenship Survey which estimated that 44% of the population of England and Wales volunteered formally at least once over a 12 month period was noted;
- In respect of 28 individuals providing 28,885 hours of volunteering which if paid would cost £375,500, which equated to £13 per hour, clarity was sought on how it had been calculated and it was noted that £13 per hour represented a low rate of pay;
- The series of short training events on the first step to winning contracts which had been delivered by a Contract Manager from the Local Authorities Social Services team at Halton Voluntary Action was noted. It was also noted that it was too early to assess how successful the training had been in respect of Contacts gained after training;
- It was agreed that the mid year funding report be presented to the Board's meeting in January;
- The Board agreed that the three year funding arrangement had been very successful and should be restored, and that in the current economic climate, funding to the Voluntary Sector should not be decreased and funded to at least its current level;
- It was noted that the ability for the Voluntary Sector to attract alternative funding had decreased as a result of a decrease in funding from the Authority;
- It was highlighted that wherever possible, if there were duplications of activity and services, agencies should be encouraged to merge and work together; and
- It was suggested that Members visit the various agencies to observe their surroundings and how they worked. It was agreed that if Members wished to participate in this they could email the Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the mid year Voluntary Sector Funding report be presented to the January meeting of the Board;
- (2) funding to the Voluntary Sector for 2009/10 should be

Strategic Director
– Health and
Community

funded to at least its current level and not decreased and the three year funding arrangement should be re-established; and

- (3) Members wishing to participate in a visit to various Voluntary Sector Agencies contact the Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator.

ELS25 CITY EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which gave Members an update on the progress made by the Liverpool City Employment Strategy.

The Board was advised that the North West Development Agency had confirmed £3m of funding to support the programme of which £194,000 was for Halton.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- It was noted that the small executive team would comprise of a manager, a programme officer and a monitoring officer;
- It was agreed that the Barriers to Employment Topic Group findings be shared with the City Employment Strategy (CES). It was also agreed that a meeting would be arranged with Members and Officers from other Authorities and the Topic Group Members to discuss the work and findings of the Topic Group, and those of other local authorities examining similar issues;
- It was noted that there was potential for a roll out of parent direct across the area; and
- The challenges related to engaging fully with the private sector were noted.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the findings of the Barriers to Employment Topic Group be shared with and inform the City Employment Strategy; and
- (2) a meeting be arranged between the Topic Group and Members and officers of the six local authorities in Merseyside in order to share information to inform the

Strategic Director
- Environment

City Employment Strategy.

ELS26 PUBLIC ART

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which presented the draft Public Art Strategy for consideration.

The Board was advised that they had previously received a presentation from Consultants employed by the Council, funded by the Arts Council, to develop an approach to public art in Halton.

At the presentation, the value of public art had been discussed. It had been recognised that Halton had no overall approach to public art, and had a tendency to be reactive to opportunities, and could be missing funding opportunities to develop public art.

The Board was further advised that the strategy was currently at the draft stage and Members were asked to suggest any changes and then recommend a report to Executive Board that could be adopted as Council Policy.

The Board was also advised that the strategy had suggested the creation of a post to kick-start the development of public art. The Arts Council had indicated that they would fund a part-time post for two years at no financial risk to the Council.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- It was suggested that the report and strategy could be more succinct and financial costs could be included;
- The importance of art being on display in public places was noted;
- It was suggested that the work undertaken by the new part-time post be monitored by the Board; and
- Concern was raised regarding the vandalism of the public art outside of the Asda store in Widnes, that it had not been repaired for a considerable time. The Board agreed that the Authority contact Asda requesting support in the maintenance of the statue.

RESOLVED: That

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

- (1) the creation of a part time post on a fixed term contract for two years to kick-start the development of public art be supported;
- (2) the Board receive regular reports on the work undertaken by the new postholder on the development of public art in the Borough;
- (3) that future reports should be more succinct and concise and contain financial information;
- (4) the Authority contact Asda, Widnes to request they support the maintenance of the statue outside their store; and
- (5) the Draft Public Art Strategy, subject to the inclusions above, be endorsed and referred to the Executive Board for approval.

ELS27 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived.

ELS28 ARTS POLICY AND STRATEGY REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which asked the Members to consider the content of the draft Arts Policy and Strategic Review attached as Appendix One to the report.

The Board was advised that the purpose of the report was to:-

- recognise and commend good practice;
- understand the relationship between arts development work and the Council's wider corporate objectives;
- identify areas for service development and improvement;
- suggest areas where cross-service working can be strengthened; and
- help the Arts Development Team in developing their

action plan and business plan for the next phase of arts development work in Halton.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- That arts in parks, weather permitting should be promoted;
- It was agreed that the biggest influence in the Borough was architectural design and the Authority should be investing in visual art. It was also suggested that architectural design should be regarded as a key aspect in projecting the cultural ambitions of the Borough; and
- It was noted that it was difficult for the Borough to obtain funding from other sources.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Strategy include architectural design and deliver outstanding designs that represent the cultural aspects and talent within the Borough;
- (2) additional internal and external funding be explored; and
- (3) the strategy, subject to the inclusions above, be endorsed and referred to the Executive Board.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

ELS29 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS - QUARTER 2

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive on progress against Service Plan Objectives and Performance Targets, Performance Trends/Comparisons and factors affecting services for Economic Regeneration and Culture and Leisure for the 2nd Quarter.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were noted:-

- the issues and challenges related to the current economic climate;
- the reasons for the various targets not being applicable;
- the progress being made on installing new visitor information kiosks and the key issue that the kiosks

must be able to integrate with the existing Merseyside network; and

- the approaches being used in primary schools to promote a programme of next generation entrepreneurs.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

ELS30 SERVICE PLANS 2009-12

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which gave Members an opportunity to contribute to the development of Service Plans at the beginning of the planning process.

In respect of Service Planning, the Board was advised of the following issues for consideration:-

General Issues

BSF Opportunities, KPMG, budget restraints, Utility Costs, the effect of the credit crunch, CPA and addressing inter-generational issues.

Libraries

National Review, Halton Lea, IT/System replacement, Radio Frequency Implementation and Runcorn Urban Splash.

Sport

Health / Participation / Delivery, Olympic Games and Runcorn Linnets.

Community

Engagement, Cohesion, Castlefields Community Centre and Modernising Social Services.

Arts and Culture

Received Strategies, Norton Priory – HLP Board and the Halton Castle development.

After considerable discussion, it was agreed that a Special Meeting of the Board be arranged in December to consider the issues highlighted above in relation to the Service Plans. It was also agreed that the meeting would

take place at the earlier time of 5pm.

RESOLVED: That a Special Meeting of the Board be arranged in December to consider Service Planning issues for 2009/10.

Meeting ended at 9.55 p.m.

HEALTHY HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 11 November 2008 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors E. Cargill (Chairman), J. Lowe (Vice-Chairman), Austin, Gilligan, Horabin, Lloyd Jones, Philbin and Swift

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Higginson, E. Ratcliffe and Wallace

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Villiers, A. Williamson, C. Halpin, H. Coen, J. Gibbon and A. McNamara

Also in attendance: Councillors Gerrard, Stockton, C. Beardshaw, J. Kelly, L. Kelly and E. Lavan

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
HEA27 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2008 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.</p>	
HEA28 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.</p>	
HEA29 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee relevant to the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.</p>	
HEA30 SSP MINUTES	
<p>The minutes from the meeting of the Halton Strategic</p>	

Partnership Board on 10th September 2008 were submitted for information.

RESOLVED: That the Halton Strategic Partnership minutes be noted.

HEA31 FORMAL CONSULTATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE CAMHS AT FAIRHAVEN

The Board received a presentation from Mr. J. Kelly and Ms L. Kelly of the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust on the formal consultation on the development of a comprehensive CAMHS at Fairhaven.

The Board was advised that this was a formal consultation aimed at all stakeholders of the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust including statutory and non-statutory partners.

Furthermore Members were presented with the formal consultation document which aimed to provide key information for the local people in the community to know what was being proposed in their area.

In addition Members received an outline of the proposals by the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust to develop an extended range of services for children and young people aged up to 18 years living in the boroughs of Halton, St Helens, Knowsley, Warrington and Wigan

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted:

- that shortfalls in funding had been a major problem in the past, however, this was now being addressed;
- that there was a need to incorporate links to the Council's Education Department for early intervention initiatives;
- that the unit would be for emergency care beds only and would not be expected to undertake long term care, as this would continue to be provided at Chester; and
- that there was a number of children from other authorities residing in private homes within Halton and who were being treated within Halton. It was noted that once a child was registered with a GP in the area they were

entitled to health care and therefore funding could not be recharged back to their home authority.

Catherine Beardshaw, Chief Executive of North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust was in attendance at the meeting and extended her support to the development of a CAHMS.

RESOLVED: That the Board support Option 1 set out in the Formal Consultation Document.

(NB: Councillor Lloyd Jones declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to her husband being a Non-Executive Director of Halton and St Helens Primary Care Trust)

HEA32 WORLD CLASS COMMISSIONING

The Board received a presentation from Eugene Lavan, Director of Strategic Development at Halton and St Helens NHS Trust on World Class Commissioning (WCC).

Members were advised of the WCC process, how outcomes would be measured and of the competencies and documentation required.

Furthermore Members were advised of the Commissioning Strategic Plan and its priority areas. There were three main programmes; helping people to stay healthy; detecting illness earlier and improving quality, safety and efficiency with an overall focus on wellness and prevention.

From these three programmes seven initiatives had been established, including:

- Reducing harm from alcohol;
- Reducing obesity;
- Reducing harm from tobacco;
- Early detection of major illnesses;
- Early detection of depression;
- Emergency care; and
- Planned care.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted:

- there had been an unprecedented rise in hospital admissions in recent weeks and this was an indicator of the greater need for prevention

initiatives;

- there had been issues raised to Members around communication with partners and how this should be strengthened to make sure there were no gaps in service; and
- that disease detection and lifestyle clinics would be held in conjunction which would give the whole population of the Borough a health MOT.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

HEA33 COMMISSIONING STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE HALTON HEALTH CAMPUS

The Board received a presentation from Eugene Lavan, Director of Strategic Development at Halton and St Helens NHS Trust on the Commissioning Strategic Plan (CSP) and Halton Health Campus.

Members were given an overview of the CSP, the rationale for needing to change and governance arrangements along with the strategic vision and mission for the Hospital site.

Members were further advised of the three phases of the project and the seven strategic principles that would be worked towards. In addition it was noted that phase 4 which had been launched on 21st October 2008 and was due for completion in February 2009.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following were noted:

- that the Halton Health Campus site would have facilities for diagnostic tests and lifestyle assessments;
- that part of the project would be looking at the principle of having leisure services near screening services; and
- that there was a need to be innovative in providing services.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

(NB: Councillor Lloyd Jones declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to her husband being a Non-Executive Director of Halton and St Helens Primary Care Trust)

HEA34 UPDATE REPORT ON TRAVEL POLICY & PROCEDURES RELATING TO SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which provided Members with an update on the impact of revisions to the Travel Policy and Procedure for the Health and Community Directorate.

The report set out the background to the revisions and gave Members information in relation to the eligibility quick practice guide and transport satisfaction surveys.

In addition Members were informed of stories relating to travel training from the Community Bridge Building Team.

Members thanked the Bridge Building Team for their hard work.

RESOLVED: That the update on the Travel Policy and Procedure be noted.

HEA35 ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which provided Members with an analysis on complaints processed under the statutory Social Services Complaints Procedure for Adults during 2007/8.

Members were advised that a new complaints procedure called "Making Experiences Count" would come into operation in April 2009. It was noted that pilot areas were operating the new procedures and that this would result in guidance about how the scheme would operate.

Furthermore Members were advised of the current complaint stages and timescales, how the process was being improved and the lessons that had been learned and actions arising from this.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted:

- the need for monitoring of recommendations and actions or changes arising from complaints; and
- the need for more diversity data to be included in the report, in particular to show how this data compares to the social service population as a whole.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be accepted; and

- (2) the proposals for the development of the complaints procedure (nationally and locally) be noted.

HEA36 COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR EXTRA CARE HOUSING

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought support for the Extra Care Housing Strategy.

Members were advised that the purpose of the strategy was to provide the Council with a plan for the commissioning of extra care services. The aim was to meet the changing and growing needs of Halton's older population through a strategy that would achieve good quality, cost effective extra care services, along with maximising the use of available capital and revenue sources.

In addition Members were advised that the primary focus of the Strategy was on older people, but there was also a focus on people with a learning disabilities as their needs could also be met through this type of service.

Furthermore Members were advised of the current provision, the comparison of current levels of provision across Neighbouring Authorities, the projected need and how the proposals would meet this projected need.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted:

- the size and type of land needed to build an extra care unit;
- the unit cost and making sure this was a low as feasible;
- marketing campaigns to encourage owner occupier to prepare for their future, i.e. making adaptations; and
- the need for partnership working with other organisations i.e. Halton and St. Helens PCT

RESOLVED: That the Extra Care Strategy be endorsed.

HEA37 SERVICE PLANS 2009-12

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which offered Members the opportunity to contribute to the development of Service Plans at the beginning of the planning process for 2009/10

Financial year.

It was noted that the 3-year departmental service plans were reviewed and rolled forward on an annual basis and that the plans would be developed in parallel with the budget.

The Operational Director, Adults of Working Age informed Members of the main priorities and new developments that would be considered as part of the service planning process. The three main priority areas were personalisation, funding and partnership working. New developments included working on emerging issues such as autistic spectrum disorder and the national dementia strategy.

The Board requested a report on personalisation be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Members contact the Operational Director, Adults of Working Age with any priority suggestions; and
- (2) a report on personalisation to be submitted to the next meeting of the Board

HEA38 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy regarding the 2nd quarter monitoring report for the Older People's and Physical and Sensory Impairment Services, Adults of Working Age and Health and Partnerships.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted;

- that the topic report on early onset dementia would be considered at the March meeting of the Board;
- how the timescales for assessments were calculated;
- the number of people in the Borough suffering early onset dementia related to drug and alcohol misuse; and
- in relation to the reduction on hospital beds the Board requested information on which ward would be closing and it was agreed that a written response be given.

RESOLVED: That the 2nd quarter year-end performance monitoring reports be received and the actions outlined above be noted.

Meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 18 November 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Osborne (Chairman), Stockton (Vice-Chairman), M. Bradshaw, Lloyd Jones, Morley, M. Ratcliffe, Redhead, Rowan, Shepherd and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Noone, M. Andrews, H. Cockcroft, J. Downes, S. Eastwood, C. Halpin, J. Hunt, A. Jones, R. Stevens, J. Unsworth, A. Villiers, P. Watts and S. Webster

Also in attendance: Councillor Wallace

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

SAF19 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 URGENT BUSINESS

The Board was advised that a matter had arisen which required immediate attention by the Board (Minute 23 refers), therefore, pursuant to Section 100 B (4) and 100 E and due to the receipt of a Petition, the Chairman ruled that the item be considered as a matter of urgency.

SAF20 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 September 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

SAF21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board considered any questions submitted by the public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9). It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

Action

SAF22 HALE ROAD PETITION

The Board was informed of the receipt of a petition relating to the closure of an alleyway in Hale Road.

The Chairman invited Ward Councillor Wallace to speak on behalf of the residents of Hale Road in relation to the petition. A copy of the petition was distributed to Board members for information.

She thanked Officers for their assistance since the matter was brought to the attention of the Council in 2006. It was noted that the initial application to close the alleyway was previously rejected by the Magistrates Court. The situation since the matter was first reported has deteriorated and the anti social behaviour and vandalising of property in the area still continues, examples of these incidents are mentioned in the petition.

Councillor Wallace explained that there was an alternative route available to residents and that pedestrians are currently using this pathway.

Based on the contents of the petition, the mental wellbeing and poor quality of life the residents were currently experiencing, she appealed to the Board to support the closure of the alleyway.

Following the discussion on the matter, the following comments were noted:

1. The petition, although informative, did not provide any clear documentation of incidents, ie dates, times etc; which would be required in order to initiate the closure of the alleyway; and
2. There was a need for information from Police and Fire Brigade responses to incidents that have been reported, to support the closure.

RESOLVED: That it was unanimously agreed that:

1. the Board fully support the measures looking into the closure of the alleyway, subject to receipt of the Police and Fire Brigade information of incidents;

2. a further update report be submitted to the next meeting, including options for deterrents; and
3. advice notes and guidance for Councillors and Members of the public be distributed as soon as is practicable.

SAF23 SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP MINUTES

As per minute SAF12/2008, the minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership meeting held on Tuesday 9 September 2008, were presented to the Board.

With regards to anti social behaviour, a recent article in the Runcorn World (dated 12/10/08) was raised, where a brick was thrown from a bridge injuring a passing motorist, highlighting the need for caged bridges, which it was noted had been raised by Councillors previously.

The Board was advised that since the 'stop the drop' initiative, which started in September 2007, there had been a dramatic reduction in incidents and that plans had been put in place for all High School in the Boroughs to be revisited in the near future.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. the minutes be noted: and
2. that a report item regarding the feasibility of caging the bridge footpaths be submitted to the next meeting.

SAF24 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive in respect of the 2nd quarter performance management reports on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services etc, for:

- Environment and Regulatory Services;
- Culture and Leisure;
- Health and Partnerships and Highways; and
- Transportation and Logistics.

The Board, in considering these reports, identified

areas of interest or concerned as detailed below;

Environment and Regularity Services:

The Board requested clarification on;

- EAR 5 and on the shortage of green bins
- EAR L12, did this represent value for money

Culture and Leisure:

The Board noted the need for up to date financial information to be included in the report.

In response to these requests it was noted that written responses would be provided.

RESOLVED: That the second quarter reports be received and the actions outlined above be noted.

SAF25 SERVICE PLANS 2009-12

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy, which offered an opportunity for Members to contribute to the development of Service Plans at the beginning of the planning process.

The three year departmental plans were reviewed and rolled forward annually. The plans would be developed in parallel with the budget. At this stage members were invited to identify a small number of areas for development or improvement that they would like to see built into those plans. Operational Directors would then develop draft plans that would be available for consideration by PPB's early in the New Year.

Each Head of Service gave the Board a short presentation setting out the key issues and challenges for their service over the coming three years.

Any members with questions arising from the presentations were invited to contact the Officer responsible.

Arising from Members comments, it was agreed that Halton and St Helens PCT be invited to the next meeting of the Board to give an outline of their prevention initiatives in relation to alcohol and drug misuse.

RESOLVED: That:

1. the Board would indicate priority areas for service development or improvement over the next 3 years; and
2. the Halton and St Helens PCT be invited to give an outline of their prevention, initiatives in relation to alcohol and drug misuse at the January meeting of the PPB.

SAF26 SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director Health and Community, which represented the Annual Report of Halton's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Partnership Board, for the year 2007/08, and which briefed the PPB of key issues and progression of the agenda for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

Following discussions it was noted that a recent training course was organised for members and was deemed successful and useful by those who have attended so far.

The Board thanked the Adult Protection Co-ordinator and her Team.

RESOLVED: That:

1. the report be noted; and
2. the Board receives an update in a years time.

SAF27 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY PROGRESS 2007/2008

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Research and Intelligence, which provided further clarification on comparing surveys from different sources conducted under different methodologies. This was requested following a full discussion on the targets set in the Community Strategy and 2007 Local Area Agreement, at a previous meeting of the Board.

Explanations were given into the difficulties experienced in measuring survey information from both telephone and paper methods, and the advantages of

telephone surveys over paper ones.

Central Government were presently conducting a survey on the quality of life of people in the UK, which was expected in the New Year and would be available to all Local Authorities in England.

Following the presentation it was noted that the observatory was a great asset to the Borough and that the Chairman invited Councillors to contact the Research and Intelligence Department for any answers to queries on the subject they may have in the future.

RESOLVED: That Mr Stevens be thanked for his presentation.

SAF28 ADDRESSING PROBLEMS OF LITTER AND DOG FOULING

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director, Environment, regarding the proposals to address the issue of litter and dog fouling by adopting a three-pronged approach of enforcement, communication and education.

Arising from the discussion the following was noted:

- That although the litter and dog fouling laws already exist, awareness and communication of the message was needed and that Councillors were in a good position to do this; and
- Members were in support of the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the proposal regarding the development of Litter Action Initiatives be noted, commented upon and supported by the Board; and
- 2) A report be presented to the Executive Board Sub-Committee containing proposals and recommendations in relation to adopting the following policies:
 - a) To take a minimum tolerance approach to environmental crime and to apply the

maximum penalty appropriate in each case;

- b) Where a fixed penalty fine is available for an offence, it will normally be applied at each opportunity;
- c) Where fixed penalty fines or advice are ignored, further action will be considered;
- d) These policy statements will apply to juveniles and where any formal action is taken the young persons parents will be involved in the process;
- e) A person who drops litter in a public place will be issued with a fixed penalty notice and may face prosecution if the penalty is not paid; and
- f) A person in charge of a dog who fails to remove faeces deposited on public land will be issued with a fixed penalty notice and may face prosecution if the penalty is not paid.

SAF29 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption

outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

SAF30 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived for 15 minutes.

SAF31 CEMETERY PROVISION FOR 2015 AND BEYOND

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director Health and Community presenting a cost benefit analysis of the main options available to the Council to address cemetery provision for 2015 and beyond.

RESOLVED: That the report be deferred.

Meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.

URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board held on Wednesday, 19 November 2008 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Hignett (Chairman), Morley (Vice-Chairman), Balmer, P. Blackmore, E. Cargill, Hodgkinson, Leadbetter, Murray, Nolan, Rowe and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: H. Cockcroft, H. Coen, G. Collins, S. McDonald, A. McNamara, M. Noone, M. Simpson, D. Sutton, J. Sutton and P. Watts

Also in attendance: 2 members of public and Mr Steve O'Connor

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

URB71 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2008, having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.

URB72 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

URB73 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee relevant to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

URB74 SSP MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of the Urban Renewal

Specialist Strategic Partnership Board on 22nd July 2008 were submitted for information.

The following points arose from discussion of the minutes:

- In relation to Halton being on the periphery, in terms of gaining funding, it was noted that the North West Development Agency (NWDA) was aware of Halton and its needs;
- Whether affordable housing could be encouraged due to the amount of empty properties in various areas of the Borough. It was reported that the change in situation had been recognised and would be taken into account when developing the replacement Local Development Framework (LDF).

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

URB75 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report regarding the second Quarter Monitoring Reports for the Highways & Transportation and Logistics, Environment & Regulatory Services, Cultural & Leisure, Major Projects, Economic Regeneration and Health and Partnerships Services.

Arising from the discussion the following issues were raised:

- Clarity was sought regarding the predicted financial outturn for this financial year for the Mersey Gateway Development for end of year and where funds would come from. In response it was noted that this information would be circulated to Members;
- Staff transfers between departments had taken place therefore the LDF Team was now fully complimented; and
- Transport proposals would be investigated for schools involved in the Building Schools for the Future Initiative would be investigated in detail during the Options Appraisal stage of the process.

RESOLVED: That the second quarter monitoring reports be received.

Chief Executive

URB76 STOBART GROUP'S ACTIVITIES IN HALTON

Mr Steve O'Connor provided a verbal report on the activities of the Stobart Group in Halton, which outlined the following:

- A planning application had recently been approved for the distribution centre and the first lease holder for the two buildings would be announced within the next two to three days;
- The Weston side of the operations were continuing well in relation to freight carried by water. Stobart Group had looked at some of the UK's largest port operators in order to determine best practice used; and
- At the beginning of 2010, employment opportunities would be increased providing an estimated 1000 jobs in the first phase.

Strategic Director
- Environment

Members queried whether many vehicles would use the Silver Jubilee Bridge once the Mersey Gateway was completed. In response it was noted that there wouldn't be high volumes of Stobart traffic passing between the two sites as the rail port on the Widnes side and would compliment the water port on the Runcorn side of the river.

It was reported that the project would provide an opportunity to improve accessibility to services and employment in the Borough.

The Chairman thanked Mr Steve O'Connor for an informative update.

RESOLVED: That the update be received.

NB: Councillor Morley declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a Member of the SCARS Board.

URB77 SERVICE PLANS 2009-12

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy, which offered Members the opportunity to contribute to the development of Service Plans at the beginning of the planning process for 2009/10 Financial year.

It was noted that the 3-year departmental service plans were reviewed and rolled forward on an annual basis and that the plans would be developed in parallel with the budget.

Tabled at the meeting were updates for each service

area, which detailed initial proposals covering areas within the remit of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

The Board heard representation from Mr Derek Sutton – Operational Director, Major Projects, Mr Phil Watts – Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services, Mr Mick Noone, Operational Director - Highways, Transportation and Logistics and Mr Gary Collins, Operational Director – Economic Regeneration.

Arising from the information provided it was reported that an economic assessment of the Borough would be brought back to a future meeting.

Members were invited to contact the Operational Directors should they wish to identify any priority areas over the next year.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the information be received; and
- (2) Members contact the Operational Directors should wish to identify any priority areas.

URB78 PUBLIC ART

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community which detailed the draft Public Art Strategy.

It was reported that a presentation had been delivered to the Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board by consultants employed by the Council, funded by the Arts Council to develop an approach to public art in Halton.

It was advised that the value of public art was discussed during the presentation and it was recognised that Halton had no overall approach to public art and tended to be re-active to opportunities. This could have resulted in missing funding opportunities to develop public art.

The brief of the consultants was to produce a practical, working document which considered planning and funding issues and was included in the report for consideration. The Strategy contained three stands as follows; planning guidance, strategy and funding.

The Board was informed that a half-time post for a

Public Arts Co-ordinator had been funded for two years by the Arts Council which would help implement the strategy. It was noted that this new post would be best to sit within the Planning Department.

Members were requested to comment and endorse the strategy in order to be referred to Executive Board for approval.

RESOLVED: That the Strategy be endorsed and referred to Executive Board for approval.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

URB79 UPDATE REPORT ON TRAVEL POLICY & PROCEDURES RELATING TO SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director Health and Community which provided an update on the impact of revisions to the Travel Policy and Procedure for the Health and Community Directorate.

It was reported that on 25th July 2008, Executive Board Sub Committee approved amendments to the Travel Policy and Procedure in various areas, which was outlined in the report for consideration.

The report outlined the following:

- Transport satisfaction surveys;
- Set charges for transport;
- Initiatives across the Borough which sought to promote independence and the range of travel options available to adults;
- Analysis of service users by team, receiving a transport service;
- Number of passenger trips by referring team;
- Analysis of service users weekly journeys within the maximum transport charging thresholds depending on DLA Mobility Benefit being claimed; and
- The approved eligibility quick practice guide;

Members noted that this policy had greatly benefited the community as service users were now able to travel independently as they could not in the past. The Board noted the work that had been associated with this report and thanked the officers involved.

RESOLVED: That the update to the Travel Policy and Procedure be noted.

NB: Councillor Murray declared a personal interest in the following item due to his wife being an employee for the RARS Team for HBC.

URB80 COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR "EXTRA CARE" HOUSING

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community which sought approval of the draft Extra Care Strategy.

It was reported the strategy was to provide the Council with a plan for the commissioning of extra care service. The aim was to meet the changing and growing needs of Halton's older population through a strategy that would achieve good quality, cost effective extra care services making a maximum use of available capital and revenue sources to achieve its implementation.

The Board was advised of Halton's one current extra care scheme – Dorset Gardens. It was noted there was a shortage of 166 units and the Council had to address meeting this need. As each site would have 40/50 units a substantial amount of land would need to be acquired and a cost would be involved.

Members considered the option of using housing associations in terms of adaptations of current facilities. In response it was noted that the Council was working with partners to locate land and a more detailed report would be brought back to a future meeting. The Board was advised of housing associations that had shown interest so far.

The Board also discussed the opportunity for people to stay in care homes should their condition deteriorate. In response it was noted that this would be possible as people could go out of choice or from a referral. Work was being carried out at all times with partnerships and registered social land lords.

Members welcomed the document and strategy and noted that Dorset Gardens was a great achievement and many more units would be encouraged in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Board approve the Extra Care Strategy; and
- 2) A more detailed report regarding the acquisition of land, be brought back to a future meeting.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

URB81 DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY 2008-2011

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community, which sought views on the draft Housing Strategy 2008-2011.

The Board considered the draft housing strategy which had been the subject of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders which were detailed within the report. The Strategy outlined key objectives as follows:

- Homelessness;
- Increase in affordable housing;
- Increase in supported housing;
- Delivery of decent home standard;
- Choice based lettings; and
- Worklessness;

Members discussed difficulties in housing offenders and the problems that face people obtaining choice based lettings, the issue of empty homes and if there was anything that could be done to prevent the high charges for private rented accommodation.

RESOLVED: That the draft Housing Strategy 2008-2011 be received.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

Meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.

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CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 4 November 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chairman), A. Lowe (Vice-Chairman), J. Bradshaw, Browne, E. Cargill, Dennett, D. Inch, Nolan, Norddahl and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, B. Dodd, A. Villiers and C. Halpin

Also in attendance: None

**ITEM DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

Action

CS19 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 9th September 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CS20 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

CS21 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee relating to the work of the Corporate Services Policy & Performance Board since its last meeting was submitted for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

CS22 HALTON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of the Halton Strategic Partnership Board on 10th September 2008 were submitted for information.

In relation to Minute No. 19 the Board expressed an

interest in scrutinising the Neighbourhood Management initiative in greater depth and it was agreed that a special meeting would be held prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Board in order to facilitate this.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Halton Strategic Partnership minutes be noted; and
- (2) a special meeting of the Board be held to scrutinise the Neighbourhood Management Initiative.

CS23 TOPIC GROUP - TRANSFER OF ASSETS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy on the work of the Topic Group on Asset Transfer.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) progress be noted; and
- (2) the draft policy be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

CS24 SERVICE PLANS 2009-12

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which offered Members the opportunity to contribute to the development of Service Plans at the beginning of the planning process for 2009/10 Financial year.

It was noted that the 3-year departmental service plans were reviewed and rolled forward on an annual basis and that the plans would be developed in parallel with the budget.

The setting of performance targets was identified as an area of the service plans which the Board could make a positive contribution to and it was agreed that a report be submitted to the meeting scheduled in January 2009. It was noted that the plans would be finalised once budget decisions had been confirmed in March 2009.

RESOLVED: That the setting of performance targets be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

(NB: Councillors E. Cargill and Nolan declared personal interests in

relation to the service plan for Personnel Services in the following item of business due to both having family members employed by the authority).

CS25 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report which outlined the progress of Performance Management 2nd Quarter against the Service Plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services, etc, for:

- Exchequer and Customer Services;
- Financial Services;
- ICT Services;
- Legal and Member Services;
- Personnel Services;
- Policy and Performance;
- Halton Stadium; and
- Property Services.

The Board, in considering these reports, identified areas of interest or concern as detailed below:

Exchequer and Customer Services: The Board requested a list of age debtors as at 30 September 2008 be circulated and that this information be included with performance monitoring reports.

Financial Services: The Board requested that treasury management information be provided to the Board on an annual or bi-annual basis.

Property Services: The Board asked what action was being taken to increase occupancy levels at Runcorn Market.

Stadium and Hospitality: The Board asked for confirmation of the level of funding allocated to improving marketing with Widnes Vikings and what progress had been made in hosting a pitch based 'pop concert'.

In response to these requests it was noted that written responses would be provided.

The Board noted the excellent school meals service being provided by Halton Stadium and thanked staff for their hard work.

RESOLVED: The 2nd Quarter Performance

Management Reports be received.

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Meeting ended at 7.50 p.m.

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

At a meeting of the Business Efficiency Board held on Wednesday, 12 November 2008 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Leadbetter (Chairman), Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chairman), D. Inch, Jones, A. Lowe, Norddahl, Osborne, Swift and Worrall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Murray and Philbin

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: C. Halpin, I. Leivesley and M. Murphy

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

BEB10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

BEB11 DEVELOPMENT OF THE EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which outlined the next steps in the process and the Board's role in the delivery of the Efficiency Programme.

The Board was advised that KPMG had identified six work streams where it was felt that by doing the business differently the Council would be able to meet the challenge of achieving cashable efficiency savings but also maintaining and enhancing service standards. The six areas were outlined in detail in the report.

Furthermore the Board was advised that the six areas would be developed into individual projects to run over the next three to four years. The projects would form the Efficiency Programme and the Executive Board at its 20 November 2008 meeting would be asked to approve the operational arrangements required to deliver the

Action

programme.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted:

- the importance of frontline staff in maintaining essential services;
- that would be a need to update the 'at risk' policy to ensure the Council did not lose experienced staff;
- the estimated costs associated with the review and what these costs would include;
- the potential impact on the morale of staff;
- the need for all departments to be reviewed using the same criteria and models;
- why there was a need for KPMG to continue to be utilised in the review and that the Board continued to support this.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a detailed programme be considered by the Board at the next meeting; and
- (2) a report on progress made against the programme be presented to subsequent meetings of the Board.

BEB12 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

BEB13 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN - QUARTER 2

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Financial Services which provided a summary of Internal Audit work for the period July to September 2008. The report set out the internal audit reports finalised since the last progress report, key issues and recommendations arising from the audit reports issued and the results of the work undertaken following up the implementation of previous Internal Audit recommendations. Details were also provided of the Council's participation in the National Fraud Initiative.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to Section 17 Payments, the rebuilding of Halton Lodge Primary School, the increase in energy prices and verification of employees' documentation in relation to mileage claims.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Work completed in the quarter be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.

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DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Control Committee on Monday, 13 October 2008 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Nolan (Chairman), P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, J. Bradshaw, Hignett, Hodgkinson, Leadbetter, Morley and Polhill

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Thompson and Osborne

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, G. Henry, A. Pannell, A. Plant, M. Simpson, K. Sparks, J. Tully, R. Wakefield and P. Watts

Also in attendance: 18 Members of public

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

DEV43 MINUTES

Action

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2008, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to it being noted that Councillor Hignett's apologies be recorded as "absence declared on Council business".

DEV44 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties made the decisions described below.

DEV45 - PLAN NO. 04/01064/FUL AND 04/01065/LBC - APPLICATION FOR PART DEMOLITION, RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF HALL AND OUTBUILDINGS INTO 22 NO. RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND ERECTION OF 9 NO. HOUSES (31 NO. RESIDENTIAL UNITS IN TOTAL). PLAN NO. 05/00274/FUL - APPLICATION FOR ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION TO MANAGERS HOUSE AT DARESBUY HALL, DARESBUY LANE, DARESBUY.

The Committee considered the above mentioned proposals as one item as they all related to Daresbury Hall, Daresbury.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. Comments received as a result of the consultation were detailed in the report for consideration.

The Board was advised that the Health and Safety Executive had confirmed that they did not wish to call the application in and no objections had been received from United Utilities. It was reported that an additional letter of objection had been received from Nathaniel Lichfield which detailed the following:

- it was felt that the applications did not overcome the objections raised in the past;
- loss of character to Daresbury Hall as it would appear to be a large house next to a housing estate;
- the Hall would no longer be a dominant feature in the grounds;
- if the application was refused it should be followed up by an Urgent Works or a Repairs notice;
- it was felt that costs were over estimated; and
- the benefits of the scheme would not amount to special circumstances to justify inappropriate development of the Green Belt.

Ms Chris Marsh addressed the Committee on behalf of Lord Daresbury and spoke against the applications.

The Committee raised concerns in relation to the property falling into disrepair and the need for prevention of this happening to be included in conditions.

RESOLVED: That application No's 04/01064/FUL and 04/01065/LBC be referred to the Secretary of State with a recommendation to approve subject a legal agreement and conditions as follows:

1. Standard condition relating to timescale and duration of the permission;
2. Specify plans (BE1);
3. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2);
4. Landscaping condition, requiring the submission of both hard and soft landscaping to include tree planting (BE2);
5. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in

- writing (BE2);
6. Submission and agreement of wheel cleansing (BE1);
 7. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties/ commencement of use (BE1);
 8. Submission of drainage (PR5);
 9. Submission of lighting details (BE1);
 10. Details of hard surfacing to be submitted (BE1);
 11. Update arboricultural report and method statement to be submitted (BE1);
 12. Tree protection conditions (BE1);
 13. Removal of permitted development rights (BE1);
 14. Conditions relating to the finishing details of windows, doors and gate piers (BE1);
 15. Works to be carried out in accordance with the Bats Survey (GE21);
 16. Works to the pond to be carried out in accordance with approved details (GE25);
 17. Visibility splay in accordance with plans (BE1); and
 18. restriction of satellite dishes (BE10).

The listed building consent conditions as follows:

1. Standard condition relating to timescale and duration of the permission;
2. Specify plans (BE1);
3. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2);
4. A number of conditions relating to the finishing details (both internal and external of windows, doors, fire places, coving etc (BE1);
5. Works to be carried out in accordance with the Bats Survey (GE21);
6. Update of schedule of repairs external and internal to be submitted (BE1);
7. Details of paint finishes (BE9);
8. Drainage works (PR5); and
9. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties/ commencement of use (BE1).

Application No. 05/00274/FUL be referred to the Secretary of State with a recommendation to approve, subject to the following:

1. Standard condition relating to timescale and duration of permission;
2. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2);

3. Landscaping condition, requiring the submission of both hard and soft landscaping to include tree planting (BE2);
4. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in writing (BE2);
5. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing and used (BE1);
6. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties/ commencement of use (BE1);
7. Protection of trees (BE1);and
8. Restricting permitted development rights relating to extensions, outbuildings and addition of windows and dormers (BE1);

Note: Councillor S. Blackmore requested that her vote against the above decision be recorded in accordance with Standing Order 16.2

DEV46 - PLAN NO. 08/00215/OUT - OUTLINE APPLICATION (WITH APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT AND SACLE MATTERS TO BE RESERVED) FOR THE ERECTION OF THREE STOREY OFFICE ACCOMMODATION WITH ASSOCIATED CAR / CYCLE PARKING TO THE LAND ADJACENT TO /ADJOINING KECKWICK LANE, DARESURY.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. Comments received as a result of the consultation were outlined in the report for consideration.

It was reported that three letters of objection had been received, details of which were detailed in the report.

It was advised that a legal agreement would be required for offsite highway improvements.

Arising from the discussion Members raised issues in relation to potential traffic problems at the roundabout and the appearance of the building from the main road. It was requested that a suggestion be forwarded to the developers to graduate the height level of the property working with the different ground levels present. It was felt this would minimise the visual impact.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following

1) a legal agreement and conditions relating to the following:

1. Conditions on the time limits on submission of reserved matters;
2. Requiring submission and agreement of materials (BE2);
3. Requiring submission and agreement of boundary treatments (BE22);
4. Requiring implementation of detailed landscape works (BE2);
5. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation / commencement of use;
6. Requiring implementation of a travel plan;
7. External lighting;
8. Landscaping (BE1);
9. Restriction of the use (E1) ;
10. Submission and agreement of finished ground/ floor levels (BE1);
11. Provision of cycle parking (TP6);
12. Requiring wheel cleansing facilities throughout construction phase (BE1);
13. Restricting construction and delivery hours (BE1);
14. Details of bin storage (BE2);
15. Conditions relating to tree protection measures (BE1); and
16. Condition for nature conservation measures (GE21).

Additional conditions were reported as follows:

17. Restriction of floor space and height;
18. Drainage to be submitted and approved; and
19. Condition relating to implementation of access and highway works.

- 2) That if the S106 Agreement or alternative arrangement is not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director - Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Chairman of Vice Chairman of the Committee to refuse the planning application on the grounds that it fails to comply with Policy S25 (Planning Obligations).
- 3) Comments be forwarded to the developers in relation to graduation the height levels of the building.

NB: Councillor Polhill declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following items due to being a Chair of the 3MG Executive Sub Board and left the room during its discussion.

DEV47 - PLAN NO. 08/00422/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF DISTRIBUTION WAREHOUSE (USE CLASS B8), EXTERNAL STORAGE AND ASSOCIATED PARKING TO LAND AT WIDNES INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL, WEST BANK DOCK ESTATE WIDNES AND PLAN NO. 08/00449/FUL PROPOSED REMEDIATION OF SITE AND CONSTRUCTION OF A MODERN, PURPOSE BUILT DISTRIBUTION CENTRE IN TWO PHASES. PHASE ONE TO INCLUDE A 38,861SQ M DISTRIBUTION CENTRE WITH ASSOCIATED RECYCLING SERVICES UNIT (RSU), VEHICLE AND CAR PARKING, SERVICE YARDS, LANDSCAPING AND ALL ASS

The Committee agreed to consider the above applications as one item. The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was reported that tight deadlines were to be adhered to and to avoid delay it was requested that authority be delegated to the Operation Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services with the Chairman or Vice Chairman. It was advised that additional conditions were required.

The Committee welcomed the improvements.

RESOLVED: That :-

PLAN No. 08/00422/FUL be approved subject to conditions relating to the following:

1. Specifying Amended Plans (BE1);
2. Specifying approved use (E7);
3. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2);
4. Implementation of site and finished floor levels in accordance with approved plans (BE1);
5. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in writing including screening of external storage areas (BE2);
6. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing and used during construction (BE1);
7. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development (BE1);
8. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be

- constructed prior to occupation/ commencement of use (BE1);
9. Agreement and implementation of cycle parking provision (TP6);
 10. Requiring submission and implementation of agreed Travel Plan (TP16);
 11. Requiring any external lighting to be installed in accordance with the guidelines of the Institute of Lighting Engineers (BE1);
 12. Restricting height and locations of external storage (E5)
 13. Screening of external bins/ skips (E5);
 14. Conditions required by the Environment Agency relating to drainage and protection of watercourses (BE1/ PR5);
 15. Submission and agreement of landscaping (BE1);
 16. Ground Investigation and mitigation (PR14);

PLAN NO. 08/00449/FUL

- 1) That the application be approved subject to:
 - a) the applicant entering into a legal or other appropriate agreement for a developer contribution towards highway improvements, public transport provision, landscaping / habitat works and / or upgrading of watercourses as required.
 - b) Conditions relating to the following:
 1. Requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved phasing plan and requiring conditions for each phase to be discharged in accordance with the specified timescale for each phase (BE1);
 2. Specifying the approved use(s) (E3);
 3. Requiring submission and agreement of materials (BE2);
 4. Requiring submission and agreement of boundary treatments (BE22);
 5. Requiring submission and agreement of detailed landscape works (BE2);
 6. Restricting areas and height of external storage (E5);
 7. Control of installation/maintenance of external lighting (PR4);
 8. Ground Investigation and mitigation (PR14);
 9. Requiring development be carried out in

- accordance with agreed site and finished floor and ground levels (BE1);
10. Laying out of access/parking and servicing (BE1);
 11. Securing provision of bus lay-by (TP1);
 12. Securing screening of vehicle wash and fuel island (TP10);
 13. Drainage and protection of watercourses (PR5);
 14. Submission and agreement of details relating to bin storage (BE1);
 15. Provision of cycle parking (TP12);
 16. Requiring wheel cleansing facilities throughout construction phase (BE1);
 17. Restricting construction and delivery hours (BE1);
 18. Agreement and implementation of travel plan (TP16); and
 19. Grampian conditions securing works to upgrade Marsh Brook and associated landscaping/ habitat creation, highway works and pedestrian/ cycle works.

DEV48 APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED BY ADJOINING AUTHORITY

The Committee considered an adjoining authority consultation by St Helens Council for proposed extraction of 1.06 million cubic metres of sand / sandstone to a depth of 15 metres above ordnance datum; and progressive restoration with non-polluting construction, demolition and excavation materials to the original topography for use in agriculture and as woodland to the land at Bold Health Quarry, Mill Green Lane, Bold Health, St Helens.

It was advised that a further 125 objections had been received from local residents in addition to a letter from Friends of the Earth. The objections raised issues detailed within the report.

The Committee raised concerns in relation to the previous time permission was given for a similar project and nobody monitored the site with regards to the conditions stated. It was suggested that the message be taken back to St Helens Council expressing Members and residents concern with the proposal.

It was felt that the applicant had not fully justified why the inert waste materials proposed should be disposed of by

landfilling and there were doubts over the need for the site for the disposal of inert waste and whether or not the required volumes of inert fill would be available over the specified time period.

Concerns were raised regarding the potential for the type and amount of inert waste to run out due to increased technology for re-use and recycling.

Members also commented on the increase in traffic caused by more intensive working of the site and importation of inert construction wastes associated with the progressive restoration of the side that could lead to significant highway problems and amenity impacts on residents of Derby Road.

RESOLVED: That the Borough Council objects to the proposal for the reasons outlined above and Members and residents comments be forwarded to St Helens Council expressing concerns raised above.

DEV49 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

It was reported that appeals had been lodged following the Council's refusal of the following applications:-

Decisions had been received as follows :-

07/00899/COU Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new two storey dwelling at 13 Baileys Lane, Hale Heath, Hale Village

This appeal was dismissed

08/00086/FUL Proposed part conversion of existing garage, first floor extension to form play room with loft above at 9 Linacre Lane, Widnes, Cheshire

This appeal was dismissed

The following applications had been withdrawn: -

08/00308/FUL Proposed first floor extension at 80 Coroners Lane, Widnes, Cheshire

08/00334/FUL Proposed extension and

conversion of existing detached garage and construction of new identical detached garage at 16 Islington Green, Widnes, Cheshire

08/00336/CAC Application for Conservation Area Consent for conversion of chapel and attached hall into 2 No. dwellings, together with erection of a detached two storey dwelling with parking area, incorporating the demolition of the existing cottage at Moore Methodist Church & Hall, Runcorn Road, Moore

08/00248/FUL Proposed two storey side extension and internal alterations at 33 Addingham Avenue, Widnes, Cheshire

08/00402/FUL Proposed part rendering of external elevations at Aldi Foodstore Ltd, Lugsdale Road, Widnes

Members considered a list of topics for future training events and were asked to comment on the same.

APPLICATION FOR CONSENT TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE AN ENERGY FROM WASTE COMBINED HEAT AND POWER (CHP) GENERATING STATION AT RUNCORN CHESHIRE.

The Committee was advised of the decision made by the Secretary of State and discussed the letter received which was detailed in the report.

Members discussed the letter that had been sent to the Secretary of State following the meeting held on 28 July 2008. It was advised that this action had been taken in accordance with normal procedures and the Council's Constitution.

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Control Committee on Monday, 10 November 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Nolan (Chairman), Thompson (Vice-Chairman), P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, Hignett, Hodgkinson, Leadbetter, Morley, Osborne and Polhill

Apologies for Absence: Councillor J. Bradshaw

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Farmer, A. Jones, E. Latham, A. Pannell, A. Plant, M. Simpson, K. Sparks and J. Tully

Also in attendance: 3 Members of the public

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

	<i>Action</i>
DEV50 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 th October 2008, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
DEV51 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.	
DEV52 - PLAN NO. 08/00470/FUL - APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BLOCK OF DECK ACCESS FLATS AND CONSTRUCTION OF 36 NO. NEW DWELLINGS (FOR RENT) AT NOS 1-16 AND 101-140 KEEPERS WALK, CASTLEFIELDS, RUNCORN	
The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.	

It was noted that one letter of representation had been received details of which were outlined in the report.

Members raised concerns in relation to the following:

- additional safety measures with it being a school;
- hours of construction and demolition;
- residents parking; and
- provision of recyclables.

In response it was noted that safety measures would be met due to Construction Design Management (CDM) regulations. It was advised that demolition would be scheduled during the summer holidays and that the Council's highways department were satisfied with the amended parking layout plans. It was also reported that the condition relating to bins and storage could be expanded to include recyclables.

RESOLVED: That the planning application be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Condition specifying amended plans (BE1);
2. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2);
3. Landscaping condition, requiring the submission of both hard and soft landscaping to include replacement tree planting (BE2);
4. Boundary treatments including retaining walls to be submitted and approved in writing (BE2);
5. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing (BE1);
6. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development (BE1);
7. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties/ commencement of use (BE1);
8. Agreement and implementation of cycle parking provision (TP6);
9. Finished floor and site levels (BE1);
10. Conditions relating to restriction of permitted development rights relating to extensions and outbuildings, and boundary fences etc; (BE1)
11. Site investigation, including mitigation to be submitted and approved in writing (PR14);
12. Conditions relating to tree protection during construction (BE1);
13. Bins/ storage provision including recyclables (BE1); and

Strategic Director
- Environment

14. Requiring details of solar panel installations (BE1).

DEV53 - PLAN NO. 08/00479/FUL - APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF 15 DWELLINGS, PROVISION OF ACCESS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT EIGHT TOWERS PUBLIC HOUSE, WEATES CLOSE, WIDNES.

The Committee was advised that the above-mentioned planning application had been withdrawn by the applicant.

DEV54 - PLAN NO. 08/00481/FUL - APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BLOCK OF DECK ACCESS FLATS AND CONSTRUCTION OF 34 NO. FLATS INCLUDING CAR PARKING AND CYCLE FACILITIES AT 101-244 HEDGE HEY, CASTLEFIELDS, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

One letter of representation had been received, details of which are outlined in the report.

Members requested that the conditions be extended in relation to bins and storage to include recyclables.

RESOLVED: That application No. 08/00481/FUL be approved subject to conditions relating to the following:

1. Condition specifying amended plans (BE1);
2. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2);
3. Landscaping condition, requiring the submission of both hard and soft landscaping to include replacement tree planting (BE2);
4. Boundary treatments including retaining walls to be submitted and approved in writing (BE2);
5. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing (BE1);
6. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development (BE1);
7. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties/ commencement of use (BE1);
8. Agreement and implementation of cycle parking provision (TP6);

Strategic Director
- Environment

9. Finished floor and site levels (BE1);
10. Site investigation, including mitigation to be submitted and approved in writing (PR14);
11. Conditions relating to tree protection during construction (BE1);
12. Bins/ storage provision to include recyclables (BE1); and
13. Requiring details of solar panel installations (BE1).

DEV55 - PLAN NO. 08/00484/FUL - APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF TWO NEW OFFICE BUILDINGS (USE CLASS B1, 1654 SQ METRES) WITH ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL WORKS AT THE HEATH BUSINESS AND TECHNICAL PARK, THE HEATH, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was reported that there would be no removal of existing trees and the Council's highway engineer had assessed the amended parking ratio and it was now in accordance with standards.

RESOLVED: That application No. 08/00484/FUL be approved subject to the following conditions.

Strategic Director
- Environment

1. Time limit (BE1);
2. Specifying approved use (E3);
3. Tree protection conditions (BE1);
4. Route for construction traffic (BE1);
5. Travel plan update (TP16);
6. Drainage to pass through oil interceptor (BE1);
7. Materials to be used shall be in accordance with plans details of coloured panels a facing brick to be agreed (BE1); and
8. Construction management plan (BE1).

DEV56 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

It was reported that appeals had been received following the Council's refusal of the following applications:-

08/00367/COU Proposed use of existing building for secure care and treatment of medium and low secure mentally ill patients (25 No. medium and 50 No. low secure)

Use Class C2 at Meadow Lodge,
Bennetts Lane, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8
0GT

08/00368/COU Proposed use of existing building for
secure care and treatment of low secure
mentally ill patients (Maximum 75
patients) Use Class C2A at Meadow
Lodge, Bennetts Lane, Widnes,
Cheshire, WA8 0GT

08/00382/FUL External alterations to planning
application 05/00903/FUL at Meadow
Lodge, Bennetts Lane, Widnes,
Cheshire, WA8 0GT

Appeals were lodged following the Council's refusal
of the following applications:-

Decisions had been received as follows :-

07/00767/FUL Proposed erection of 10 No. nursery
units for B1 and B8 uses at Catalyst
Trade Park, Waterloo Road, Widnes,
Cheshire

This appeal was allowed

The issues were that the development would
prejudice the delivery of the Mersey Gateway and the lack of
information contained within the submission in relation to a
flood risk assessment and traffic generation.

On the issue that the scheme would prejudice the
deliverability of the Mersey Gateway the Inspector
concluded within the development plan there is no
identifiable route, even though there is strong policy support
in local and regional policies. There was still a considerable
way to go before implementation of the project as at the time
of the report no date had been set for a Public Inquiry. He
considered that to allow the appellant's proposal would not
make the process any more complex or that it would, on its
own, materially prejudice the achievement of the Council's
objective.

In relation to the lack of information, the Environment
Agency withdrew their objection following the refusal of the
proposal. The Inspector concluded that although the
information contained within the Design and Access

Statement was sparse that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the highway network.

08/00203/FUL Proposed single storey side extension at 85 Moughland Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 4SG

This appeal was allowed

The issues were whether the proposed extension would lead to the loss of front to rear access and would harm the appearance of the street scene because of its affect on bin storage. The inspector concluded that there were properties where the side gap had been completely filled and that the bin storage could be adequately screened and conditioned. As such, the proposed development would not have an unacceptable effect on the appearance of the area.

08/00282/COU Proposed change of use from shop (Class A1) to hot food takeaway (Class A5) at 44 Langdale Road, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 5PU

This appeal was dismissed

The following applications have been withdrawn: -

08/00447/FUL Proposed single storey side/rear extension at 29 Sandringham Road, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 9HD

08/00460/COU Proposed conversion of barn to dwelling house at Barn Unit 3, Village Farm, Chester Road, Daresbury, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 4AJ

08/00493/FUL Proposed first floor extension above existing garage at 7 Lessingham Road, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 9F

Meeting ended at 6.38 p.m.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Standards Committee on Wednesday, 19 November 2008 in Committee Room 2, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Mr B. Badrock (Chairman), Parish Councillors Crawford and D. Felix, Mr R. Garner and T. Luxton, and Councillors Balmer, Parker, Redhead and Wharton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Wainwright

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Cairns and M. Reaney

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

STC8 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2008, having been printed and circulated, were signed as a correct record.

STC9 APPOINTMENT TO VACANCY

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy providing an update on the current position in respect of the appointment to the previous Committee vacancy of “Parish Council Representative”.

It was noted that, on 27th February 2008, the Committee had recommended to Council that the Constitution be amended to provide for an additional Independent Member and an additional Parish Council representative on the Standards Committee. This was in order that it could fulfil its requirements in terms of the new filtering process and was in accordance with best practice. Full Council had subsequently agreed these changes at its meeting of 16th May 2008.

Since that time, steps to fill the Parish Council vacancy had been taken and Rev. Canon David Felix had

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subsequently been appointed by Full Council on 22nd October 2008.

The Chairman welcomed both Mr. Garner, the new Independent Member, and Rev. Canon Felix to their first meetings.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and Rev. Canon Felix be welcomed as the new additional Parish Council representative on the Committee.

STC10 ACTION LIST

The Committee considered the Action List in detail and noted/agreed the following:

- Action 1 – There was a further opportunity for joint training with Warrington on either 12th or 15th January 2009. The training was to be provided by Weightmans and would revolve around dealing with a complaint from first receipt through to delivering a decision at the end of an investigation. Committee Members confirmed that they preferred 12th January.
- Action 3 – The Monitoring Officer agreed to liaise with contacts in Merseyside to ascertain whether or not any complaints were to be considered in the near future. Monitoring Officer
- Action 7 – It was agreed that an article be placed in the next In Touch magazine highlighting the new local filtering arrangements and reporting on the two new additional Members of the Committee. Monitoring Officer
- Action 15 – It was noted that the production of a small loose-leaf folder for Members would be costly and unlikely to be achieved given the backdrop of shrinking resources. However, booklets had been provided by the Standards Board and previously distributed to all Members earlier in the year. Contact would be made with the Standards Board for England again to ascertain whether further copies could be obtained. Monitoring Officer

STC11 SEVENTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES - FEEDBACK

The Committee noted that, further to a previous resolution, the Council had secured two places on the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees in Birmingham

for the Chairman and the Monitoring Officer, which had taken place on 13th and 14th October 2008. The Chairman reported that he had attended a session where the planning process had been examined, with areas of potential problems highlighted. Information from this session had been included as an Appendix to the report with the agenda.

The Committee considered issues surrounding the need for Members to declare interests as well as pre-determination and bias. The Chairman confirmed that the Standards Board had advised that it would be willing to present this training session to local Councils and Members considered that this would be a useful tool to use as part on the ongoing training for Development Control Committee Members, and also for all Members of the Council.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) contact be made with Warrington Borough Council to find out whether Weightmans are to consider planning issues as part of the training session in January; and
- (3) contact be made with the Standards Board for England to ascertain whether or not they will provide the training session to Members of Halton Borough Council as outlined above.

Monitoring Officer

STC12 DCLG CONSULTATION: MEMBER/OFFICER CODES OF CONDUCT

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy seeking approval of a basis for the Council responding to the Government’s Consultation Paper on the Members’ Code of Conduct.

It was noted that there were separate codes of conduct for Members and officers, both of which appeared in the Halton Constitution. The Members’ Code included the Ten Principles of Public Life recommended in the Neil Report into Conduct in Public Life, which had been prescribed by law. Halton’s version followed the national model. Members accepting office agreed to be guided by the Code and breach of the Code was dealt with under the Standards Committee process.

The officers’ Code of Conduct had never been prescribed by law although there had been a national model

recommended at one time by the Local Government Management Board (LGMB), which was substantially the model approved by the Council and included in the Constitution. Breach of the Code could form the basis for engaging the Disciplinary Code. Officers were expected to comply with the Code and, in recent years, employees' Particulars of Employment had explicitly required them to comply with its terms. This Code of Conduct was in addition to various other codes that certain officers were subject to; for example employees who belonged to particular professional bodies.

Since the introduction of the Local Government Act 2000 there had been power to establish a national statutory code of conduct for officers. The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had published a new consultation paper in October 2008 inviting responses to 22 questions relating to "Codes of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees" with comments to be submitted to the Department by 24th December 2008.

The report outlined the areas that the consultation paper was inviting comments upon in terms of both Members and officers. Consultation on the officers' Code of Conduct fell within the remit of the Executive Board and, as such, the Board had been requested to consider this at its meeting of 20th December 2008. Comments from the Standards Committee relating to the Members' Code of Conduct consultation would be reported to the Board the following day for information.

The Committee considered the proposed consultation response to the Member Code outlined within Appendix A to the report and considered issues such as:

- the inclusion of police cautions to the definition of "criminal offence"; and
- tribunals relating to the conduct of Members in a private capacity that resulted in a finding of discrimination.

Although the decision on the consultation relating to the officers' Code was within the remit of the Executive Board, the Standards Committee also made recommendations in this respect relating to question 18 and the need for employees to register their interests publicly. Members agreed that this aspect should not be restricted to those who were on a salary scale prescribed for politically restricted posts.

In addition, Parish Councillor Crawford requested his concerns be noted regarding the current requirements for Members, and the proposed requirements for officers, and the potential impact this could have on obtaining voluntary representatives and appointing clerks. However, the remaining Members of the Committee agreed that the principle that there should be a Code of Conduct for Parish Council Members was correct.

RESOLVED: That

Monitoring Officer

- (1) the consultation in respect of a revised Officers' Code of Conduct being considered by the Executive Board, and the proposed response to this consultation outlined in Appendix B to the report, be noted;
- (2) the Executive Board be recommended that the response to question 18 be amended to read "yes the Code should require employees to register their interests publicly"; and
- (3) the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy be authorised to draw up and submit a response to the Consultation Paper in respect of the Members' Code of Conduct as outlined in Appendix A to the report subject to the inclusion of the following requests:
 - i) that further consideration be given to including police cautions in the definition of "criminal offence"; and
 - ii) that further consideration be given as to whether the conduct of Members in a private capacity that resulted in a tribunal finding of discrimination should be capable of amounting to a breach of the Code.

STC13 STANDARDS BOARD INFORMATION ROUND-UP

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy providing an update on the latest news from the Standards Board.

A copy of Bulletin 40, released since the last meeting of the Committee, was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. In particular, Members' attention was brought to the analysis of the first quarter of local case handling and consultation on the adjournment of local assessment decisions.

The consultation related to the option of Standards

Committees to refer a case to the monitoring officer of the authority concerned and had been issued since the last meeting of the Committee. It was advised that, if the option to refer a case was chosen, the Committee could give directions to the monitoring officer about how to deal with the case under Section 66(6) of the Local Government Act 2000, either by way of a direction to investigate it or to take other action. However, if a case was referred for action other than investigation, it could not subsequently be investigated. Therefore, some Standards Committees had been reluctant to direct the monitoring officer to deal with a case by way of other action when they may not know enough about its circumstances.

Two options had been outlined in the consultation, with concerns and advantages highlighted. The Standards Board had advised that an analysis on the consultation feedback would be in the next bulletin, which would be presented to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 4.40 p.m.

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Monday, 24 November 2008 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Philbin (Chairman), Wallace (Vice-Chairman), Bryant, Drakeley, Howard, D. Inch, A. Lowe, Murray, E. Ratcliffe and Wharton

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Wainwright

Officers present: L. Capper, K. Cleary, J. Findlow and M. Simpson

Also in attendance: 2 members of the public

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

Action

REG18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 10 April, 21 May, 29 May, 16 June, 7 August, 23 September and 24 September 2008 were taken as read and agreed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

REG19 ASDA WIDNES LIST OF INTERESTED PARTIES

The Committee was advised that the application had been withdrawn prior to the meeting.

(NB: Councillor Bryant declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to the relationship with one of the parties involved in the matter, and took no part in the application or the decision.)

REG20 TAXI REPORT LEE NOLAN NOVEMBER 2008

The Committee met to consider whether a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence should be granted to Lee Nolan.

Before reaching a decision the Committee considered the

agenda item and took into account the information provided to them by the Councils Licensing Section, to the submission made by Mr Nolan's Legal Representative Mr J Parry of Nadim Associates Solicitors Limited on his behalf and to the answers received from Mr Nolan to the various questions which were asked by the Members.

The applicant Mr Nolan, his legal representative Mr Parry and the Council's Enforcement Officer John Findlow left the room whilst the Committee made a decision.

Following consideration of all the information presented the applicant, his legal representative and Mr Findlow returned and the decision was announced.

RESOLVED: That a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence be granted to Mr Nolan subject to the following condition:

The application must be completed by Monday 15 December 2008 including a Certificate of Insurance current at the time of completion which, must be produced and the vehicle must be satisfactorily tested at the Council's Lowerhouse Lane testing station with a Certificate of Compliance issued on or before 15 December 2008.

Failure by the applicant to complete the application in full by Monday 15 December 2008 will result in the application being deemed to be void and the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence will be issued immediately by way of a draw to qualifying Single Status Drivers in the borough.

Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.