

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 25 January 2007 at the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Gerrard

Absence declared on Council business: (none)

Officers present: L. Cairns, G. Cook, B. Dodd, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, A. McIntyre, D. Parr and D Tregea

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB75 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st December 2006 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

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

EXB76 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/2008

The Board considered a report of the Acting Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing a summary of the funding available for the Schools Capital Programme 2007/08. The report outlined the process for prioritisation for Capital Repairs together with the proposed programme.

It was noted that the main source of funding for the Schools Capital Programme was the DfES Capital Allocation. For 2007/08 capital funding available totalled £1,938,007 and current commitments were outlined for information. Following an annual short survey of all schools,

Action

as well as a more detailed survey for one quarter of Halton Schools each year, the key capital repairs requirements had been prioritised through the use of a condition score matrix attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

The Board was advised that the Capital Programme identified would allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the learning environment through capital projects allocated in accordance with the priorities identified in the Asset Management Plan.

RESOLVED: That full Council be recommended to approve the Capital Programme identified in Appendix 1 to the report for 2007/08.

Acting Strategic Director-Children & Young People

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB77 ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy outlining a proposed Accommodation Strategy, which had been produced as a result of a recommendation of the Base Budget Review Working Party, looking at savings and rationalisation.

The objectives of the strategy and issues that needed to be resolved were outlined for the Board's consideration together with proposals for rationalisation in respect of Runcorn Town Hall and Midwood House, and the knock-on effect for Municipal Building, Lugsdale Road, John Briggs House and Grosvenor House.

In addition, an appendix was attached to the report outlining a proposed decision chain, which would be utilised when considering any future changes to accommodation needs.

In particular, the Board considered the proposed space standards which would be used to test any future accommodation moves and it was confirmed that the text 'individual offices down to Divisional Managers only' did not intend to suggest that Divisional Managers would automatically be allocated an individual office as a matter of course.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the approach outlined in the report be supported;
- (2) a capital bid be made to support the refurbishment of

Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy

Runcorn Town Hall; and

- (3) future accommodation decisions be made within the framework outlined in the report and implemented by the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy in consultation with the Corporate Services Portfolio holder.

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB78 MERSEYSIDE WASTE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT: ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment covering the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service's report, which had been produced in accordance with the agreed governance arrangements for the preparation of the Joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document (DPD). This had been done in collaboration with officers from other Districts that were part of the Joint Waste DPD. The core contents and recommendations of the report were the same for all the local authorities involved in the preparation of the Joint Waste DPD to ensure that each district was following exactly the same statutory planning process.

It was noted that the report was seeking approval for the Issues and Options report for public consultation purposes as the first stage in the statutory planning process. A copy of this document, which asked specific consultation questions to structure the consultation process and guide the development of more detailed and specific policies at preferred options and submissions stages, had been circulated for Members' consideration.

It was noted that the consultation period would last for six weeks until 6th April 2007 after which a "results of consultation report" would be prepared along with the policy response to the issues raised. This would be accompanied by the required sustainability appraisal commentary.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the issues and options report be approved for public consultation commencing 23rd February 2007;
- (2) a consultation response to the issues and options report be prepared by 6th April 2007; and

Strategic Director
- Environment

- (3) further reports on progress of the Waste DPD project, including the results of the consultation on issues and options, preferred options report and financial matters, be received later in 2007.

EXB79 VICTORIA SQUARE: DEVELOPING THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director – Environment outlining the approach to be taken in developing a Management Plan for Victoria Square.

It was noted that much progress had been made in regenerating Widnes Town Centre over recent years and, of particular note, was the progress made in and around Victoria Square. To ensure the benefits were maximised and the current momentum was maintained, it was considered appropriate to develop a Victoria Square Management Plan.

Much discussion had already taken place with the Police in this regard and the Board was advised that the Police saw that the development of such a plan was a good way forward for the partners and authorities to meet their duties to reduce crime and disorder within the areas they served (Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998). To this end, a preliminary workshop session had taken place with representatives from all appropriate Council departments, and partners, to look at the issues and opportunities that would need to be considered in the Management Plan.

An integral part of the management plan related to the issues of “al-fresco” drinking and dining and, following discussions with the Police, it was proposed to permit al-fresco drinking/dining on designated parts of Victoria Square adjacent to certain buildings.

It was noted that the development of a Management Plan for Victoria Square at this time would be a very complex task. In addition, it was confirmed that this was a pilot and, if successful, the intention was to develop it across the Borough.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the development of a Management Plan including al-fresco drinking and dining on Victoria Square be approved, subject to resolving any legal, health and safety, and risk management issues; and

- (2) further reports be provided on the progress of the Victoria Square Pilot with a view to developing the night-time economy across the Borough.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

MINUTES ISSUED: 31st January 2007

CALL IN: 7th February 2007

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 7th February 2007.

Meeting ended at 2.20 p.m.