

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 15 March 2007 at the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors McDermott MBE and Massey

Absence declared on Council business: (none)

Officers present: D. Parr, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, K. O'Dwyer, D Tregea and L. Derbyshire

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB90 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

EXB91 CHILDREN'S DISABILITY SERVICES

The Board considered a report of the Acting Strategic Director, Children and Young People which outlined the progress made in the Children's Disability Services in Halton and sought agreement to the expansion of the Pooled Budget for Disabled Children and revised 'Building Bridges' Multi Agency Strategic Plan for Disabled Children.

It was noted that the plans for the Children's Disability Services in Halton were regarded as an example of good practice and had been praised by representatives of the Department for Education & Skills, HM Treasury and the Department of Health. The significant progress of the plans would also positively contribute to the Joint Area Review planned in March 2008.

RESOLVED: That

Action

- (1) the expansion of the pooled budget as set out in the report be approved; and
- (2) the Building Bridges' Multi Agency Strategic Plan for Disabled Children be approved.

Acting Strategic
Director-Children
& Young People

(NB: Councillor Nelson declared a Personal Interest in the following item of business, due to being a member of Halton Housing Trust).

EXB92 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought approval to change the Council's Allocations Policy with regard to offers to homeless households and undertaking first stage reviews of homelessness decisions.

It was noted that the changes outlined in the report were subject to consultation and a further report would be presented to the Board at the end of the consultation process.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the changes as set out in the report for consultation purposes be approved; and
- (2) a further report be presented to the Board on completion of the consultation exercise.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

EXB93 HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME (KEY DECISION)

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which outlined the forecast outturn for the 2006/07 housing capital programme.

It was noted that the Appendix to the report compared the approved 2006/07 programme with the forecast outturn position, and also showed the proposed programme for 2007/08.

It was noted that the Council had been successful in receiving £25,000 from a bid to the Regional Housing Board.

Reason for the Decision

The proposed programme would enable the Council to make continued progress in addressing the priorities set out in its Housing Homelessness, Private Sector Renewal and Supporting People strategies.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The strategies referred to in paragraph 10.1 of the report had previously examined a range of options for meeting housing needs in the Borough, and the proposed programme of work has been based on the priorities that had already been identified.

Implementation Date

April 2007.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the position regarding the 2006/07 programme be noted; and
- (2) the proposed programme for 2007/08, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be recommended to Council for approval.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

EXB94 REVIEW OF NATURAL ASSETS STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which informed Members that the current Natural Assets Strategy had been approved in September 2000 and defined the Council's corporate policies for Halton's trees, woodland and nature conservation resource. The action programme of the Strategy had been implemented and a new replacement programme was proposed. The review also reflected the changes in the wider environment in which the Strategy operated, recent changes in legislation and highlighted the success of the raised profile of Halton's natural environment.

In this respect the following amendment to the Natural Assets Strategy 2007-2012 was tabled at the meeting:-

Page 106 – Action 46 – replace with “Subject to appropriate budgetary provision, the Council will continue to deliver the Wild About Halton programme and to employ a Wildspace Officer beyond 2009”.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the review of the Natural Assets Strategy, as amended, be approved and published as a document available to the public;

Strategic Director
- Environment

- (2) the policies and actions contained in the Natural Assets Strategy be noted by all Services and adhered to whenever any of the Council's activities would potentially impact on the natural environment; and
- (3) a public launch of the document in 2007 be approved.

EXB95 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING - GRANT ALLOCATION 2007/08

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which recommended Voluntary Sector Grant Awards for 2007/08.

The Board was advised of a letter that had been received from the Chief Executive of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). The letter thanked the Council for the proposed funding to the Bureau. The Chief Executive of CAB highlighted that although the allocation was a reduction on last years funding, he had recognised that it was a substantial amount in light of the Council's budgetary pressures. He also took the opportunity to thank Council Officers for their constructive working relationship during the consultation period and recognised the Council's commitment to the provision of advice to Halton's residents.

The Board noted the comments from the Chief Executive of the Citizens Advice Bureau and the excellent work that had been undertaken by the Council with Voluntary Sector Organisations over the last few years. The Board also noted the valuable contribution that Voluntary Sector Organisations provided in Halton.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the recommended grant allocations be approved; and
- (2) further applications be approved by the Strategic Director, Health and Community, in consultation with the Neighbourhood Management and Development Portfolio Holder.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

MINUTES ISSUED: 22nd March 2007

CALL IN: 29th March 2007

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 29th March 2007

Meeting ended at 2.30 p.m.