

Public Document Pack



Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

Tuesday, 31 October 2006 5.30 p.m.
Halton Stadium, Widnes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David WR'.

Chief Executive

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe (Vice- Chairman)	Labour
Councillor John Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Sue Blackmore	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Mark Dennett	Labour
Councillor Susan Edge	Labour
Councillor Christopher Inch	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Kath Loftus	Labour
Councillor Paul Nolan	Labour
Councillor Ulfar Norddahl	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 471 7395 or e-mail gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Tuesday, 9 January 2007*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
<p>Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached and (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members) to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.</p>	
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PART II

**ITEM CONTAINING EXEMPT INFORMATION
FALLING WITHIN SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
(ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

In this case the Sub Committee has a discretion to exclude the press and public, but in view of the nature of the business to be transacted it is **RECOMMENDED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(A) **HALTON STADIUM ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN**

22 - 111

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 31st October 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 33 (5).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Standing Order 34(11) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
 - (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
 - (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be submitted by 4.00 pm on the day prior to the meeting. At any meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
 - (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
 - (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note that public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 31st October 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board and Executive Sub Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Corporate Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Sub since the last meeting of this Board are attached at Appendix 1 (link) for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to update the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Minutes be noted.**3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

EXECUTIVE BOARD 7 SEPT 06

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB27 GAMBLING ACT 2005 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Council Solicitor presenting a draft statement of gambling policy, which the Council was required to adopt under the Gambling Act 2005.

The Government had recently announced that statements of gambling policy must be in force by the end of January 2007 and so the draft had been produced in order that a formal consultation period could begin on, or around, 8th September 2006, ending by week commencing 23rd October 2006.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft statement of gambling policy attached to the report be the Council's consultation draft;
- (2) the Council Solicitor determine all matters relating to the consultation process; and
- (3) the matter be reported back to the Executive Board following the consultation process.

Council Solicitor

EXB28 2006/07 BUDGET SAVINGS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy providing details of budget savings.

It was noted that the Council set its 2006/07 revenue budget on 1st March 2006 and, in doing so, approved the inclusion of a savings reduction of £250,000 for each Directorate. Details of how the savings were to be implemented by each Directorate were presented in the Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That the savings proposals presented in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

EXECUTIVE BOARD 21ST SEPT 06

CORPORATE PORTFOLIO

EXB33 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT

The Audit Commission attended the meeting to present the Annual Governance Report 2005/06, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Report be received

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE 7 SEPT 06

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES28 LEGAL SERVICES JOINT PROCUREMENT
ARRANGEMENTS

The Sub-Committee was advised that on occasions the Council Solicitor was required to appoint external firms of solicitors. Typically this happened where there was a temporary peak of work, a need to cover for maternity or sickness, a need for specialised advice or where circumstances were especially sensitive or that a degree of separation or demonstrated independence was required. On occasions agency staff had been used and more often in connection with litigation, Counsel had been used.

Whenever an external appointment of solicitors had been made, Standing Orders must be complied with. This usually involved having to get competitive quotes or formal tenders. This was time consuming and had to be repeated on each occasion work was put out. The ad-hoc process also made poor use of the Council's purchasing power.

The report suggested that as an alternative, the Council Solicitor go out to tender once to appoint a single firm or panel of firms which could be drawn on whenever needed. A Panel was preferable as approved firms needed to be available for certain specialised categories of work (which might include Child Protection). Some firms were generalist but others developed authoritative specialisms in certain fields. Legal Services needed to be able to tap into both types of firm.

This was reflected in an initiative which the Council's Solicitor had been exploring jointly with the Chief Legal Officers at Knowsley MB, Sefton MB, and West Lancashire DC. During July, Halton, acting jointly with the other authorities, would be advertising for expressions of interest. With the assistance of First Law (acting as procurement advisors) a shortlist would be drawn up for each authority although it was anticipated that there would be a substantial

overlap. The intention was that by October 2006 following tenders and presentations to the legal officers of all four authorities, standing lists would be approved.

It was noted that the arrangement would be for a period of three years with an option to extend for a further two years. There was no legal commitment to place any work with any firm on the approved list. There would be nothing to stop authorities continuing to place work with firms not on the approved list if circumstances justified.

The Trades Unions had been consulted and had indicated support on the basis that the facility was available to deal with circumstances where legal work would currently be put out. The intended arrangement had no employment implications for existing staff.

RESOLVED: That the Council Solicitor be authorised to select a firm or firms to form standing call-off arrangements for external solicitors to be drawn on exceptionally and as circumstances require and to take such other actions as may be necessary to give effect to these arrangements

ES29 DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

Under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Authority was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations who were either a charity or a non-profit-making organisation.

The Sub-Committee considered a report which set out details of an application for discretionary non domestic rate relief from National Council of Young Mens Christian Associations, 73 Widnes Road, Widnes.

RESOLVED: That under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, the following application for discretionary rate relief be refused:

National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations	20%
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ES30 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 1ST QUARTER 2006/07

The Board considered a report which reviewed activities on Treasury Management for the first quarter of 2006/07 April – June. All the policy guidelines had been complied with.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES31 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2005/06

The Board considered a report which reviewed activities on Treasury Management for the year 2005/06.

The Annual Report covered:

- the Council's current Treasury position;
- performance measurement;
- borrowing strategy for 2005/06;
- borrowing outturn for 2005/06;
- compliance with Treasury limits;
- investment strategy for 2005/06;
- investment outturn for 2005/06;
- debt re-scheduling;
- other issues.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES32 SALE OF LAND AT AVONDALE DRIVE

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval for the sale of land forming part of the site of the former Our Lady of Perpetual Succour RC Infant School, Avondale Drive, Widnes.

It was reported that the Council owns part of the site with the remainder of the land being within the ownership of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool. The Council's land was landlocked and therefore it was proposed that the Diocese and the Council dispose of the entire site jointly. Discussions had taken place with the Diocese with regard to the proceeds of sale and it was provisionally agreed that the Council would receive 50% of the pro-rate net capital receipts for the entire site.

The 50% reduction reflected the fact that the Council's site was landlocked with no retained rights of access.

The site had been advertised for sale on the open market. Prospective purchasers were required to submit details of their proposed development and fourteen bids had been received ranging from £300,000 to £1,134,500. The bids, together with the development proposals were considered by the Diocese representative and the Council's Land and Property Manager and Planning Officer. All the development proposals included apartments which was not

acceptable from a planning prospective. The four highest bidders were therefore invited to re-submit their bids and development proposals taking into account the Borough Council's planning advice.

Subsequently, two revised bids were received, £867,322 from Langtree Homes and £1m from Beara Properties. The proposal from Beara Properties provided a scheme of 20 dwellings comprising detached and semi-detached properties and had taken into account the requirements to locate a substantial amount of the parking behind the building line. They had also incorporated relevant contributions for public open space and loss of greenspace. Acceptance of the bid would give the Council projected capital receipts of £96,500 and therefore this was recommended for acceptance.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) approval be given for the sale of the site to the former Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Infant School, Avondale Drive, Widnes, to Beara Properties.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

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

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it was:

RESOLVED: That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all of the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

ES37 LAND TO REAR OF MERSEY ROAD WIDNES

The Sub-Committee considered a proposal for the disposal of land to the rear of the Mersey Tavern, Mersey Road, Widnes to form a car park for the hotel.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) approval be given to dispose of the land on the terms reported; and
- (2) a Right of Way Order be granted to allow Copper Mount Inns to gain access to this site.

REPORT TO:	Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	31 st October, 2006
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director Corporate and Policy
SUBJECT:	Council Wide Training Provision
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 At its last meeting the Board asked for a presentation on training activity across the Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 **That the Board considers the presentations and makes any recommendations with regard to future training provision that it considers appropriate.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council invests a significant amount in training its staff. This training is organised and managed by three of the Council's Directorates. The Corporate and Policy Directorates Training Section organises generic training across the Council's Directorates, and the Children and Young People and Health and Community Directorates also organise a considerable degree of training activity for members of those Directorates.
- 3.2 In order to try and give the Board a full picture of the Training Activity across the Council I am seeking to arrange for a representative from each of the Training sections to attend the meeting to make a presentation to the Board. Hazelle Jones will attend from the Corporate Training Team, and among other things, will update the Board on progress with the Board's Graduate Trainee initiative now that it has been running for a number of years.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 To be determined by the Board from the presentations provided.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Training Council staff is a key control measure to ensure that the Council is effective in delivering its services. For training to be effective in this regard it is important that this training is provided in a coherent and coordinated manner.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 Training provision is monitored to ensure that all Council staff are given fair access to training and development opportunities.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 7.1 None

REPORT TO:	Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	31 st October, 2006
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director Corporate and Policy
SUBJECT:	Area Forum Topic Group
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To allow the Chair an opportunity to report on matters discussed at the Area Forum Topic Group meeting on the 5th October 2006.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The first meeting of the Area Forum Topic Group took place on the 5th October. The purpose of the meeting was to consider how best to tackle this work topic. This item has been included on the meeting agenda in case there are any matters or issues that the Chair wishes to feedback to the Board arising from that meeting.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Too early to report at this stage.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Too early to report at this stage.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 Too early to report at this stage.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 7.1 None

REPORT TO:	Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	31 st October, 2006
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director Corporate & Policy
SUBJECT:	Equality Performance Indicators
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Board has responsibility for scrutinising the Council's effectiveness in relation to Equality and Diversity. The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the monitoring that takes place in this context and to seek the views of the Board as to whether the range of current performance indicators are adequate and appropriate in the context of the Council's obligations.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 The Board is asked to consider the range of indicators currently used by the Council and to indicate their further requirements in relation to performance monitoring around equality and diversity.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 At the last meeting of the Board, the Board indicated that it wished to see what performance indicators were currently being used by the Council to monitor its effectiveness in relation to its various duties around equality and diversity. Attached to this report is a list of the Corporate Indicators currently monitored by the Council for this purpose, together with some information on the profile of the Borough and the Council's workforce.
- 3.2 The question that the Board might want to consider is whether these indicators are sufficient to ensure that the Council is meeting its statutory duties, and, if not, what other indicators it might wish to recommend for use by the Council.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 The Council needs to ensure that it has appropriate measures in place in order to be able to measure and monitor progress in addressing Equality and Diversity.

6.2 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 As outlined above.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 7.1 None

APPENDIXProfile of Borough/Council's WorkforceAgeBorough Profile

Age Range	Total	Percentage
0-4	7,200	6.1%
5-14	16,600	14.0%
15-24	15,300	12.9%
25-44	33,800	28.6%
45 – Retirement Age	26,600	22.5%
Retirement Age Plus	18,800	15.9%

(Note: Retirement Age for this purpose is 60 for women and 65 for men).

Workforce Profile (excluding school based employees)

Age Range	Total	Percentage
19 or less	51	2%
20-29	429	17.3%
30-39	635	25.6%
40-49	714	28.8%
50-59	562	22.7%
Over 60	90	3.6%

Gender

Gender is essentially balanced in Halton with 51.7% of residents being female and 48.3% male.

In relation to the Council workforce (excluding schools based employees) 70.4% are female and 29.6% male. The gender balance is more equitable at Managerial level where 55% are female and 45% male. The percentage of women in senior management in the Council (i.e. the top 5% of earners) is now 37.84%.

Ethnicity

The table below outlines the ethnic groups in Halton as reported in the 2001 Census. 1.2% of the population was recorded as belonging to an ethnic minority community, details of which are set out in the table below:-.

Population Group	Total Population	Percentage
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White British	115,396	97.62%
White Irish	824	0.69%
Any Other White Background	563	0.48%
White and Black Caribbean	221	0.19%
White and Black African	151	0.13%
White and Asian	169	0.14%
Any Other Mixed Background	164	0.14%
(Asian or Asian British) Indian	149	0.13%
(Asian or Asian British) Pakistani	32	0.03%
(Asian or Asian British)Bangladeshi	45	0.04%
Any Other Asian Background	47	0.04%
(Black or Black British) Caribbean	54	0.05%
(Black or Black British) African	55	0.05%
Any Other Black or Black Background	23	0.02%
Chinese	240	0.2%
Other Ethnic Group	75	0.06%
Overall Total	118,208	

The ethnicity of the Council's workforce (excluding school bases staff) is as follows:

Ethnic Origin	Numbers	Percentage
White British	2326	94%
White Irish	14	0.56%
White and Black Caribbean	2	0.08%
Any Other Mixed, Black or Black British Background	3	0.12%
(Asian or Asian British) Indian	3	0.12%
Any Other Asian Background	10	0.4%
Chinese	2	0.08%
Not declared	116	4.7%
Overall Total	2476	

This shows that the proportion of the Council's workforce from an ethnic minority background is 1.46%.

Disability

There is no single measure of the proportion of the population with a disability, but in the 2001 census 21.5% of the population in Halton indicated that they had a limiting long-term illness (which is higher than the average for England and Wales which is 18.2%). The census figures are borne out by Benefits data which shows that in the last quarter of 2004, of the 14,900 people of working age claiming benefit in Halton 11,000 were claiming as a result of sickness or disability. In the same quarter, of the 20,500 people of pensionable age claiming benefit, 8,000 were claiming as a result of sickness or disability.

Of the Council's workforce, 0.84% have indicated that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act definition.

Religious Belief

The 2001 Census provides the following picture in relation to Religious Belief in Halton:

Religion	Numbers	Percentage
Christian	99,096	83.84%
Buddhist	114	0.1%
Hindu	98	0.08%
Jewish	40	0.03%
Muslim	148	0.12%
Sikh	33	0.03%
Other Religions	122	0.1%
No Religion	10,273	8.69%
Religion not stated	8,277	7.0%

The Council does not currently hold information on the religious beliefs of its workforce.

Corporate Equality Measures and Targets

Ref:	Definition	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
		Outturn	Target	Target	Target
BV 2(a)	Level of the Equality Standard for Local government to which the authority conforms (higher is better)	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
BV 2(b)	The duty to promote equality (higher is better)	53%	58%	63%	68%
BV 156	The percentage of local authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for accessible to disabled people (higher is better)	39%	40%	41%	42%
BV 11 (a)	The percentage of top 5% earners that are women	37.84%	40%	42%	44%
BV 11 (b)	The percentage top 5% of earner from black and ethnic minority communities	3.12%	3.2%	3.4%	3.6%
BV 16 (a)	The percentage Council employees declaring that they meet the disability definition in the Disability Discrimination Act	0.84%	1.0%	1.2%	1.4%
BV 16(b)	The percentage of economically active disabled people in the Council's area	19.7%	None set	None set	None set
BV 17 (a)	The percentage Council employees from minority ethnic communities	1.72%	1.8%	2%	2.2%

BV 17 (b)	The percentage of economically active people in the Council's area from minority ethnic communities	1.15%	None set	None set	None set
BV 174	The number of racial incidents recorded per 100,000 population	9.29	None set	None set	None set
BV 175	The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action (higher is better)	100%	100%	100%	100%
BV 225	The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population provided or supported by the Council	1.35	None set	None set	None set
BV 56	The percentage of items of equipment delivered within 10 working days (higher is better)	89.14%	92%	94%	96%
BV 195	Older people - Acceptable waiting time for an assessment (higher is better)	71.36%	95%	97%	99%
BV 196	Older people - Acceptable waiting time for a care package (higher is better)	85.11%	95%	97%	99%
BV 43 (a)	Percentage of SEN statements within 18 weeks (excluding exceptions) (higher is better)	69.7%	88%	90%	None set
BV 43 (a)	Percentage of SEN statements within 18 weeks (including exceptions) (higher is better)	50.5%	70%	75%	None set
BV 165	Percentage of pedestrian crossings with	100%	100%	100%	100%

	facilities for disabled people				
DDA	To put in place a Disability Equality Scheme	N/A	N/A	By December 2006	N/A
Equality Act 2006	To put in place a Gender Equality Scheme	N/A	N/A	By April 2007	N/A

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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