

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 9 October 2008 2.00 p.m.
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

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

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
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, with personal and prejudicial interests (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members), to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
2. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO	
(A) STATUTORY CONSULTATION FOR ST CHAD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL - KEY DECISION	1 - 17
(B) PLAY BUILDER PROJECT - KEY DECISION	18 - 35

*Please contact Lynn Cairns on 0151 471 7529 or e-mail lynn.cairns@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 16 October 2008*

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.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 9 October 2008

PRESENTED BY: Strategic Director – Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Statutory Consultation for St Chad's Catholic High School

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide 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. An outline of the decision-making process is also included.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 **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 High 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.

(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.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Formal consultation with stakeholders commenced in June 2007 as part of the secondary re-organisation 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.

- 3.2 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 High 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 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.
- 3.3 Letters were sent to all parents and governors detailing the date, time and venue of the consultation meeting. In addition, the public meeting was widely advertised through the local press, and posters were displayed at St Chad's Catholic High; all Children's Centres, Community Centres, Direct Links and the library, within the Runcorn area. A copy of the consultation arrangements is attached at Appendix B.
- 3.4 A staff meeting and a public consultation meeting were held in St Chad's Catholic school on 9th July 2008.

The majority of St Chad's Staff attended the school meeting and 15 members of the public attended the public consultation meeting.

The presentation used for the consultation was placed on both the school and local authority website and copies could be provided on request.

- 3.5 Those people wishing to respond to the consultation were advised to put their views in writing to Operational Director, Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources. No responses were received within the representation period of 3rd July 2008 to 14th August 2008.

4.0 DECISION

- 4.1 The Decision maker (Executive Board) must decide the proposal within two months of the end of the representation period otherwise the decision must be referred to the Adjudicator for a decision. If referred to the Adjudicator the proposal and any representations must be forwarded to the school adjudicator within one week of the end of the two month representation period along with any representations received and not withdrawn. Appendix C details the issues the Decision maker needs to consider.

4.2 The Decision maker can decide to:

- Reject the proposals;
- Approve the proposals;
- Approve the proposals with a modification (e.g. the school closure date)
- Approve the proposals subject to them meeting a specific condition.

Conditional approval can only be granted in a limited number of circumstances related specifically to Academy provision or changes in admission arrangements relating to another school. A date by which the conditions should be met must be set.

4.3 The reason for the decision must be given whether it is approved or rejected, it should also include the factors and criteria for the decision. A copy of the decision must be sent to:

- Each objector;
- The Secretary of State;
- LSC;
- Local C of E Diocese
- The Bishop of the RC Diocese; and
- The Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 A capital programme of £1.2 million was completed at St Chad's in July 2007. The school is now preparing for a major £7.4 million building programme which will commence in July 2008 and be completed by December 2009.

5.2 As there is currently no Church of England High school provision within the borough any parents wishing to seek this provision must send their children out of the borough. The authority, therefore are losing the funding for these pupils and in addition in many cases has to cover the costs of transport. The joint faith school provides the opportunity for Halton to retain pupils within the borough and reduce transport costs.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 St.Chad's Catholic High School has been a popular, successful but not over-subscribed school for many years. The current Pupil Admission Number is 170. The admission application process for Halton started Autumn 2007 for September 2008 admissions and the school received 233 applications that identified St.Chad's as first preference – the corresponding figure at the same time in 2006 was 140. 348 identified St. Chad's as either their first, second or third preference. 170 places have been allocated and there have been a significant number of appeals. Applications for admission in 2007 from Church of England primary schools were 4 but had risen this year to 27 (First Preference), 8 (Second Preference) and 10 (Third Preference). This clearly shows the parental demand for a Joint-Faith School. Applications from St Chad's Catholic primary schools have remained constant showing that

parental demand is unchanged.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People

The joint-faith school provides increased choice and diversity for parents and will encourage more parents to choose secondary provision within the borough.

7.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton

Through access to an excellent secondary school for all pupils, standards will improve providing greater employment prospects for Halton's Children and Young People.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

St Chad's is part of the BSF Programme, in developing its secondary schools for the future the authority will demonstrate how it will enable schools to meet the school sport Public Service Agreement through its capital investment and achieve high nutritional standards and encourage healthy living and eating.

7.4 A Safer Halton

Schools for the future will be designed to ensure that children, staff and other community users feel safe and secure on schools sites.

7.5 Halton's Urban

Through the BSF Halton schools will become a major resource for communities they serve and will be designed to offer shared community facilities, linking to other wider regeneration projects as well as being the focus for the local delivery of children's services.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The authority will not be in a position to provide diversity of provision and respond to local demand. Parents will continue to send their children out of borough to access Church of England secondary provision, this could also have an impact on the future viability of St Chad's Catholic High School.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 The proposals for the re-organisation of Halton's secondary and secondary special provision seek to provide choice and diversity, promote inclusion and access.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

10.1 To provide more choice and diversity and retain pupils within the borough.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

11.1 N/A

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

12.1 A decision will be required by Executive Board prior to 14th October 2008.

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

Documents	Place of Inspection	Contact
<u>First Consultation summary – Halton Building Schools for the Future – Inspiring Children</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Consultation Meeting Dates Phase 1</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Consultation Presentations – Phase 1</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Executive Board report – 1st November 2007</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
<u>Second Consultation Summary – Halton Building Schools for the Future – Inspiring Children</u>	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Consultation Meeting dates (Phase 2)	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources

Consultation Presentations	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Pupil Numbers	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Notes of Public Meetings	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
All responses to First round of consultation	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Halton Building School for the Future Pamphlets Federation Pupil Numbers Co-located Schools Zoning	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
All responses to second round of consultation	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and Reception – Municipal Buildings	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Executive Board Reports – 12 th December 2007	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources
Cross Party Members Report	3 rd Floor Chester Building – Grosvenor House, Runcorn and website www.halton.gov.uk/bsf	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Business Planning and Resources

Exemption from Competition 3rd Floor Chester Ann McIntyre –
Letter (9th June 2008) Building – Grosvenor Operational Director
House, Runcorn – Business Planning
and Resources

Statutory Notice – St Chad's 3rd Floor Chester Ann McIntyre –
Building – Grosvenor Operational Director
House, Runcorn and – Business Planning
website and Resources
www.halton.gov.uk/bsf
www.st-chads.co.uk

Presentation St Chad's – 9th July 3rd Floor Chester Ann McIntyre –
2008 Building – Grosvenor Operational Director
House, Runcorn and – Business Planning
website and Resources
www.halton.gov.uk/bsf
www.st-chads.co.uk

Executive Board Report – St 3rd Floor Chester Ann McIntyre –
Chad's – 24th July 2008 Building – Grosvenor Operational Director
House, Runcorn and – Business Planning
website and Resources
www.halton.gov.uk/bsf

CLOSURE OF ST CHAD'S CATHOLIC HIGH AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW JOINT FAITH CATHOLIC AND CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

www.halton.gov.uk

CLOSURE OF ST CHAD'S CATHOLIC HIGH AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW JOINT FAITH CATHOLIC AND CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

www.halton.gov.uk

Part 1:

Notice is given in accordance with section 15(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the Governing Body intends to discontinue St Chad's Catholic High, Grangeway, Runcorn WA7 5YH on 31st August 2009.

The Governing Body is proposing the closure of St Chad's Catholic High in order for a joint faith Catholic and Church of England High (11 to 19) school to be established on the current St Chad's Catholic High site. This is a joint agreement with the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Chester. Please see part two of this notice for further information.

It is proposed that all St Chad's Catholic High pupils will transfer to the new joint faith school from the 1st September 2009 where provision will continue. There would be no impact on travelling as the new school is being established on the existing site of St Chad's Catholic High. All Statutory consultation requirements have been complied with.

Part 2:

Notice is given in accordance with section 10(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the Diocese of Shrewsbury Commission for Schools and Colleges jointly propose with the Diocese of Chester Board of Education the establishment of a new St Chad's Catholic and Church of England Joint Faith, Voluntary Aided High School at Grangeway, Runcorn WA7 5YH on 1st September 2009.

The Secretary of State has granted consent under Section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to publish the proposal for a new 11 to 19 Joint Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary school. It is confirmed that the proposers intend to ask the Secretary of State to designate the school as a school with such a religious character.

The new joint faith school will provide a range of extended services including a community and full adult education programme. These will facilitate the use of the school enabling widened community use in sports, health, education and behaviour support.

On 1st September 2009, it is proposed that all pupils at St Chad's Catholic High (estimate 950 pupils 11 to 19 year old) will transfer to St Chad's Catholic and Church of England Joint Faith, Voluntary Aided High School. Published Admission Number will be 190 from 1st September 2009 and that will increase to 240 from 1st September 2013 11 to 16. In addition the school will continue to provide a sixth form for 100.

The new St Chad's ethos is summed up by the Mission Statement 'a secure, friendly community where we seek to realise the full potential of our members through the living love of Christ'. The school will serve the Christian community of Runcorn.

The proposed admission arrangements and over-subscription criteria will be the ones published in the Halton BC booklet 'Admission to Secondary Schools September 2009' available on www.halton.gov.uk. Future admission arrangements and over subscription criteria will be to give priority to places on a 70% Catholic basis and 30% Church of England. All Halton Borough Council looked after children will be given first priority. If the school is not over-subscribed based on the above proportions, children will be admitted based upon the published admission criteria (please see web link above).

St Chad's was designated a specialist Language College in 2001 and re-designated in 2006, this specialism will continue. There would be no impact on traveling as the new school is being established on the existing site of St Chad's Catholic High.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Andrew Keeley, Headteacher, St Chad's Catholic High, Grangeway, Runcorn WA7 5YH. Telephone 01928 564106. A full copy of the proposals can be found on www.stchads.co.uk or www.halton.gov.uk/bsf. Details of the secondary and secondary special reorganisation proposals for Halton can be found on the website.

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Mr M Reaney, Operational Director (Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources) Municipal Buildings, Kingsway, Widnes WA8 7QF.

Signed:

Andrew Keeley Rev D Roberts Jeff Turnbull
Head Teacher Chair of the Shrewsbury Director of Education
Diocesan Commission Diocese of Chester
For Schools and Colleges

Publication Date: 3rd July 2008.

Explanatory Notes:

All written comments received at the above addresses will be acknowledged. In October 2008, comments will be submitted to the Executive Board of Halton Council in the form of a report, copies of which will be made available to the public on demand. It will not be possible to send detailed responses to individual letters. After a report has been submitted to the Executive Board, all written responses to the consultation exercise will become available for inspection by the public.

Parents will continue to have the right to express a preference. It is recommended that for each of the years up to 2013 a degree of flexibility is retained at each of the four secondary schools in Runcorn to ensure all pupils can be accommodated in advance of the completion of the BSF Programme. The Published Admission Numbers (PAN) will be reviewed to ensure that by 2013 there are a total of 28 forms of entry in Runcorn with a total 840 pupils in each year group. For 2010 it is recommended that the Published Admission Numbers would be: St Chad's 190; The Grange School 180; The Heath 210; Halton High 180.

Consultation

Consultation on the proposal was initially undertaken in June 2007 as part of the secondary re-organisation. A second phase of consultation was undertaken in November 2007.

The consultation on the statutory notice commenced on 3rd July 2008 and finished on 14th August 2008.

The following people were consulted as part of the consultation:

- The general public of Halton;
- Staff and governors of St Chad's Catholic High School;
- Chair of Governors of all Runcorn Schools;
- Trade Unions;
- Executive Board
- Other Neighbouring Authorities;
- Diocesan Authorities;
- Health Authority;
- Alliance Board;
- PCT staff;
- Other departments within the Council;
- Learning and Skills Council;
- Riverside College;
- Members of Parliament; and others.

The minutes of both consultation meetings have been made available to everyone during the consultation through the website, the meetings were as follows:

St Chad's Catholic High – 09th July – 1 meeting with school staff

St Chad's Catholic High – 09th July – 1 meeting with the general public

The two meetings outlined the objectives of the proposal and the government's requirements and provided the opportunity for questions and concerns to be raised. Everyone was advised that the notes from each meeting would be published on the BSF website.

The response to the consultation is summarised below:

- The majority of St Chad's Staff, and 15 members of the public attended the consultation meetings
- No responses to the Statutory Notice were received.

- Letters were sent to all parents and governors detailing the date, time and venue of the consultation meeting. In addition, the public meeting was widely advertised through the local press, and posters were displayed at St Chad's Catholic High; all Children's Centres, Community Centres, Direct Links and the library, within the Runcorn area.
- A staff meeting and a public consultation meeting was held in St Chad's Catholic school.

The majority of St Chad's Staff, and 15 members of the public attended the consultation meetings, however, no responses were received regarding the proposal.

Copies of the presentation used for the consultation have been placed on the website and copies can be provided on request.

Copies of the letter sent by St Chad's Catholic High, to all those consulted are available along with a copy of the statutory notice. The consultation information was posted, distributed to Runcorn schools, placed at key information points such as Children's Centres, Community Centres, Direct Links and also on the website.

FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

Appendix C

FACTORS	CLOSING SCHOOL/OPENING NEW SCHOOL
<p>Complies with requirements</p> <p>Prior consultation</p> <p>Related to other proposals</p>	<p>Published linked statutory notice put together in line with advice and support from DCSF School Organisation Unit and the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and Church of England Diocese of Chester</p> <p>Copies sent to School Governors and School, all Schools, LSC Diocesan Authorities, Trade Unions, Alliance Representatives, Health Authority Representatives and Neighbouring Authorities and Schools Organisation Unit. Published in local papers, schools and other public buildings.</p> <p>Two rounds of consultation held as part of the consultation on secondary re-organisation in Halton. First round in June and July 2007 and second round in November and December 2007. Full details of who was consulted, minutes of dates of public meetings and notes, Executive Board reports, a summary of the views of those consulted, copies of consultation documents are all included on the bsf pages on the local authority website.</p> <p>It is proposed to close St Chad's as a Catholic High School and establish a new joint faith Catholic/Church of England High School on the same site.</p>
<p>School Competition</p>	<p>There were no alternative proposals submitted during the consultation.</p>

<p>System shaped by Parents – best schools are able to expand and spread this ethos and success</p>	<p>There were 245 applications from parents identified St Chad's as first choice for September 2008 against an admission number of 170.</p>
<p>Boosts standards and opportunities for young people and matches school place supply as closely as possible to pupils and parents wishes</p>	<p>2006 Ofsted report described St Chad's as "good with many outstanding features.</p> <p>Standards at the school have continued to rise with 61% of pupils gaining 5 A* - C in 2008, - C including English and Maths and 100% of pupils achieved one or more A* - G pass.</p> <p>There is currently no Church of England Secondary provision within the borough and in 2006 there were only four pupils from Church of England primary schools. In 2008 there were 27 first preferences, 8 second preferences and 10 third preferences.</p>
<p>Assists in delivering principles of Every Child Matters</p>	<p>2006 Ofsted described St Chad's as a school "where every child really matters". The school aim to continue self evaluation and school improvement processes focused on delivering the five outcomes.</p>

<p>Ensures sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils – including future demand for places</p>	<p>There will be no displaced pupils as a result of this proposal. The current pupils will transfer to the new established joint faith school.</p>
<p>Diversity</p>	<p>This proposal enhances diversity within the borough as there is currently no Church of England secondary provision. A working party made up of Church of England and Catholic representatives, Chaired by the Headteacher has met regularly to foster a deeper understanding of each other. St Chad's is also an English as a second language centre.</p>
<p>Curriculum</p>	<p>The new school will continue to meet the general requirements in relation to the curriculum legislation. An SRE programme will be approved by both Dioceses. The joint faith working party has already agreed an RE curriculum that will meet the needs of both faiths. St Chad's already delivers vocational education 14-19 and is part of Halton's 14-19 Partnership which is delivering the new diplomas in collaboration with other schools and the local college.</p>
<p>Specialisms</p>	<p>St Chad's was designated a Specialist Language College in 2001 and re-designated in 2006. This specialism will continue in the new school.</p>
<p>Impact on Community Cohesion and Race Equality</p>	<p>This proposal should enhance community cohesion as it will bring together Catholic and Church of England pupils.</p>

Considers travel and accessibility for all	<p>The new school will be established on the existing site. The school is accessible from two vehicle and three pedestrian entrances. There are four lifts internally in the school to access all areas and levels.</p> <p>The provision of a joint faith Catholic/Church of England secondary school may lead to less pupils travelling to other boroughs.</p>
Equal Opportunity Issues	<p>St Chad's is a comprehensive with intakes from a broad socio economic backgrounds across Runcorn. There are no sex, race or disability issues arising from the proposal.</p>
Rural School	<p>St Chad's is not a rural school.</p>
Pupil Numbers and Admissions	<p>On 1st September 2008 it is proposed that all pupils at St Chad's Catholic High (estimate 950 11-19 years old) will transfer to St Chad's Catholic and Church of England Joint Faith Voluntary Aided School. The Published Admission Number will be 190 from 1st September 2009 and that will increase to 240 from 1st September 2013. In addition the school will continue to provide a sixth form PAN of 100.</p> <p>The proposed admission arrangements and over subscription criteria will be the ones published in the Halton Borough Council Admissions booklet. Future admission arrangements and over subscription criteria will be to give priority places on a 70% Catholic basis and 30% Church of England basis. All Halton Looked After Children will be given first priority. If the school is not oversubscribed on the above proportions, children will be admitted based upon the published admission criteria .</p>
14-19 Curriculum and Collaboration – opportunities for students are not	<p>In Halton 14-19 provision is being developed borough-wide. This ensures that the contribution of a range of partners is maximised. Partners include the schools, college, City Learning Centres and work based providers. Through the development of collaborative arrangements the 14-19 Partnership is seeking to extend the range of 14-19</p>

being reduced	provision offered.
Voluntary Aided Schools	The current ownership is freehold by the trustees of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The Diocese will continue with freehold ownership of the buildings and the school footprint. Halton Borough Council own the school field. The governing body will be able to carry out their obligations and a new governing body will be formed before the school becomes joint faith in September 2009.
Capital	The second phase of a major Targeted Capital project is currently being undertaken at the school. Further capital investment will be possible through BSF.
Views of interested parties	Extensive consultation has been undertaken. No alternative proposals were submitted during the statutory consultation.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 25th September 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Play Builder Project

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on progress to develop the Playbuilder programme and to consider proposals for its delivery.
- 1.2 To consider the opportunity and implications of a bid for Wave 2 Play Pathfinder Status.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 progress to date be noted;
- 2.2 the project approval process be considered and an agreed process confirmed; and
- 2.3 Wave 2 Play Pathfinder status application be progressed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Members received a report on the 21st May 2008 informing them of the success of the authority in achieving Playbuilder status.
- 3.2 Halton received formal confirmation of this status on 31st May 2008 and confirmation of the funding awarded:

Capital	2008/09	299,092
	2009/10	411,252
	2010/11	411,252
	Total	1,121,596
Revenue	2008/09	12,593
	2009/10	16,191
	2010/11	16,191
	Total	44,974

3.3 Guidance received indicated 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.

3.4 Further guidance indicated 5 key themes authorities must include in developing their play builder project;

- **Embedding play in local authority planning**

- Working effectively across departments
 - Strategic approach to and strategic fit with BLF projects
 - Sustainability
 - Gate way to offer services

- **Community Engagement**

- Selection of sites
 - Consulting with communities
 - Encouraging and funding third sector projects. Particularly Social Housing projects.

- **Access/Inclusivity**

- Ensuring sites attractive to 8 – 13 yr olds
 - Open/free
 - Better disabled access
 - Ensuring sites attractive to all

- **Safety**

- Ensuring parental confidence
 - Delivery play work training
 - Employing skilled staff
 - Traffic calming

- **Creativity**

- Delivering innovative and stimulating 'play' environments
 - Sustainable refurbishment using natural materials
 - Linking to other capital assets

3.5 SMT of the 21st May agreed that Halton Play Partnership be asked to consider appropriate models for the consideration, commissioning and management of play area development proposals. At its meeting in May the Play Partnership agreed the formation of a Playbuilder Implementation Project team to be led by John Hatton (Divisional Manager, Leisure and Community Services) and serviced by the Play Services Manager (Children & Young People Directorate) (see appendix 1 for Project Team Membership Details).

- 3.6 The Project Team has met twice to date. Progress has been made to develop a 'Playbuilder Project Plan' (see Appendix 2) and a 'draft Plan' will be tabled for consideration at the Play Partnership meeting of 17th September. The draft plan includes proposals for the identification of and timetable for year 1 2008/09 projects. (See appendix 3.)
- 3.7 The draft plan also considers the formal approval process for all projects. (See appendix 4.)
- 3.8 As a result of the challenging timeframe (all yr1 capital allocation must be spent by 31st March 2009) the project team has, 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 this timeframe (see appendix 5) and meet the criteria proposed for yr 1 projects (see appendix 5a):
- Own or have authority to build on land
 - Have considered planning implications
 - Can guarantee sustainable maintenance funding
 - Have the capacity to design and build within timeframe
 - Have carried out a needs analysis
 - Have carried out local consultation

It must be noted that only £15,000 of the year one allocation can be carried over into the following year. Year one projects must therefore be deliverable by March 31st 2009. Projects have therefore been selected on this basis to ensure that resources are not lost to the borough.

- 3.9 Projects in years two and three will be invited for submission to the Council. This will afford time for a formal application process to be developed where projects will be subject to strict eligibility criteria developed by the Play Partnership. This will ensure the sustainability and equitable distribution of investment according to need.
- 3.10 Wave 2 Play Pathfinder Status
- Existing Playbuilders have been asked if they would like to be considered for play pathfinder status in Wave two. **They have until 19th September (12 noon)** to advise DCSF that they wish to be considered.
 - On Wednesday 1st October those of our current Playbuilders who have informed us that they wish to be included in the final bidding stage will be sent full invitation to bid documentation which will give explicit detail of what your pathfinder bids should include and the criteria that will be for evaluation.
 - The final date for the submission of full pathfinder bids is **12 noon on Friday 24th October**. The expectation is that these bids will be no longer than 3,000 words.
 - There will be 10 Play Pathfinders awarded funding from all applications.

- 3.10 In addition to the £1.1 million capital already approved for playbuilder the 10 Pathfinders will each deliver at least one large adventure playground or play park, costing around £800k. Sites should be open-access, with children generally free to come and go as they please and free of charge.

Pathfinders will 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.

- 3.11 It is important to note that there is no long term revenue budget attached to this additional capital investment and if a bid was submitted the authority would need to consider the additional revenue implications of maintaining and staffing such a facility.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 To embed play in local policy. The successful delivery of the Playbuilder project will make a significant contribution to this process.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Financial Implications.

The Playbuilder funding is a capital grant only and the investment of £1.1 million in new playspaces could have a long-term revenue implication in ensuring the necessary and appropriate maintenance and management regime of this investment.

This has been a key consideration in identifying year 1 projects. All have been selected to operate with no new revenue consequences. They are all either existing playgrounds for which revenue provision already exists or are being developed with Social Housing providers who will fund the maintenance/management regime.

The process for identification and agreement of possible year 2 (2009-2010) and year 3 (2010-2011) developments will also have as a key criteria that revenue streams should be in place (for a minimum of 10 years).

Proposed projects for years 2 & 3 will be subject to a robust and rigorous approval process. No project will be progressed unless revenue support (for a minimum of 10 years) is secured and confirmed.

To support this capital investment, steps are being taken to identify appropriate sources of funding for maintenance and management of playgrounds. (More and better play opportunities being identified as a positive contributor in the NICE Guidance, 'Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives'.)

The (current) review of the 'Play Services' will also seek to support this process through workforce development opportunities for staff to equip/qualify them to contribute to the process.

5.2 National Indicator Set

Fair Play: a consultation on the play strategy announced the government's intention to introduce an indicator into the National Indicator Set which assess the satisfaction of children and young people with the parks and play areas where they live and go to school. This indicator is to be introduced in 2009 and every top tier local authority will have to report on their success in supporting children's enjoyment through play. (See appendix 7.)

The successful implementation of the Playbuilder project will significantly enhance the authorities ability to achieve its targets.

5.3 The timeframe for delivery of the yr 1 2008/09 capital projects is demanding if full spend is to be achieved.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Meeting the five outcomes

Play is a fundamental part of a healthy and happy childhood and its enjoyment is recognised by government as equally important to other outcomes for children. Because it is so fundamental it also contributes to each of the five outcomes for children specified in Every Child Matters.

Enjoying and achieving

The essence of play is enjoyment. When playing, children define their own goals and interests, decide what is success or failure and pursue those goals in their own way. Children's enjoyment through play is linked to the control and choice they are able to exercise. Giving children the chance for free, uninhibited play allows them a psychologically safe space in which to try out new roles and experiences and enhances their enjoyment of life.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The continuous quality improvement of play workers and opportunities for development of skills across play and youth qualifications will be explored fully through Halton's Workforce Development Plan.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Play is crucial to health and development throughout childhood, contributing to social, physical, intellectual, cultural, emotional and psychological development. The physical activity involved in energetic play provides children and young people with a significant amount of their regular exercise and is a key element in tackling obesity.

6.4 A Safer Halton

One of the main reasons children give for not playing outdoors more is that they and their parents are afraid for their safety. Fear of strangers, traffic and bullying by other children combine to keep children in their own homes. Good play provision protects children through reducing unacceptable levels of danger, while allowing them the opportunity to challenge themselves and use their initiative. At the same time, play enables children to take risks, to think through decisions and gain increased self-confidence and greater resilience.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Halton Play Builder proposals will be consistent with Halton's Policies for Urban Renewal and are designed to enhance current play provision.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Play Builder programme is a three-year capital build programme with single year capital allocations/spend targets. Individual project 'risk analysis' will be carried out by project deliverer (see appendix 6 – Risk Analysis Template).

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 A major criteria of the Play Builder programme is the requirement to 'ensure' that access and Inclusivity are a key consideration at the design stage.

9.0 REASON (S) FOR DECISION

9.1 To agree (6) projects to be progressed in Playbuilder Project year 1.

9.2 To agree methodology to develop/approve year 2/year 3 projects.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

N/A

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

3-year capital programme with annual capital allowance. Implementation of year 1 project immediate (to be completed by 31.3.08) Playbuilder project to be promoted Oct/Nov with a view to soliciting expressions of interest/proposals for year 2/year 3 projects.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Play Pathfinder/Builder Application	Children & Young People Directorate	S. M. Duncan Play Services Manager
Fair Play, DCFS/DCMS	Children & Young People Directorate	S. M. Duncan Play Services Manager
Halton Play Plan 2007-2011	Children & Young People Directorate	S. M. Duncan Play Services Manager

Project Management

Play Builder Project planning, implementation and delivery will be an integral element of the 'Play Partnerships' strategic, overarching role in the delivery of Halton's Play Agenda.

The Play Partnership has established a 'Play Building Project Team' modelled on the robust, successful, multi-disciplinary team formed to deliver the award winning Phoenix Park play and youth project. (2007 Regional Property Award for the best Partnership Project in the North West of England). The project leader of the Phoenix Park Project (Divisional Manager, Leisure and Community Services) has also been recruited to lead the Play Builder Project Team.

Play Builder Project Team members will be recruited from; the Play Partnership, the private (particularly social housing partners) and voluntary sector and appropriate disciplines within the local authority particularly with those who specialises link to Play Builder priority areas.

There will be a core project team recruited for the life of the project (approx 12 in number) with the project team having the option to recruit / co-opt (short term) members from time to time, who skills or local knowledge are particularly valuable for individual projects.

The core project team recruited to date includes:

Chair:	Divisional Manager, Leisure and Community Services (Health and Community Directorate)
Servicing Officer	Play Services Manager (CYP Directorate)
Members	Principal Landscape and Conservation Officer (Neighbourhood Services)
	Section Leader Highways (Environmental Directorate)
	Community Development Officer (consultation) (Health and Community Directorate)
	External Funding Manager (CYP Directorate)
	Manager, Barnardos Wider Horizons (Inclusion Project)
	Children & Young People Area Network Manager (Area 4)

Invitations have been extended (and are currently being followed up) to representatives from; Planning and Health. Currently co-opted members include three representatives from local social housing providers; Riverside Housing, Liverpool Housing Trust and CDS Housing.

Halton Borough Council

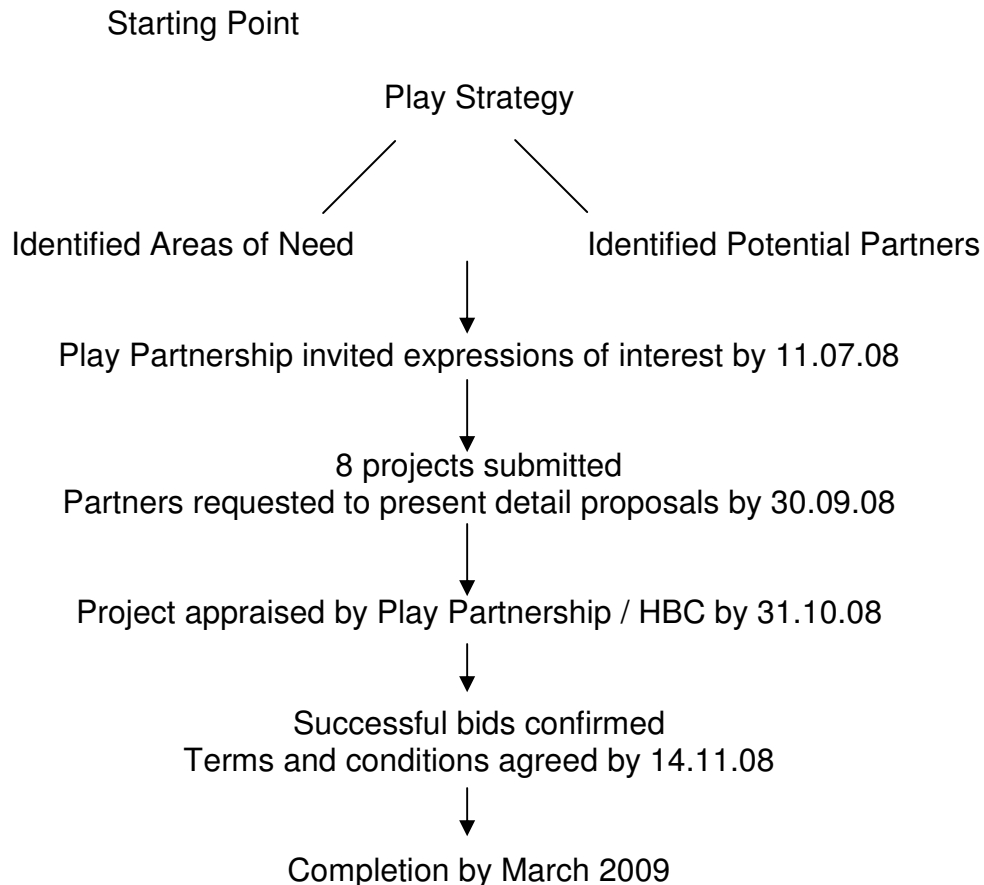
Play Builder Project Plan

Contents

1. Overview of Project
2. Project Management
3. Staffing Arrangements
4. How Revenue Funding to be utilised
5. Design, Build, Procurement, Risk and Contingencies
6. Access and Safety
7. Strategic Approach and Governance Arrangements
8. Planning, Inclusion and Innovation
9. Best Practice
10. Council Approval Process

Initial protocols for Design, Build and Procurement have been developed and are still being shaped and finalised at the time of writing. These protocols draw heavily on the robust terms and conditions for capital grants that were in place for the Big Lottery Fund Children's Play Programme. The initial stage i.e. identification of potential projects varies in Year 1 because of the short development time frame to meet capital expenditure targets.

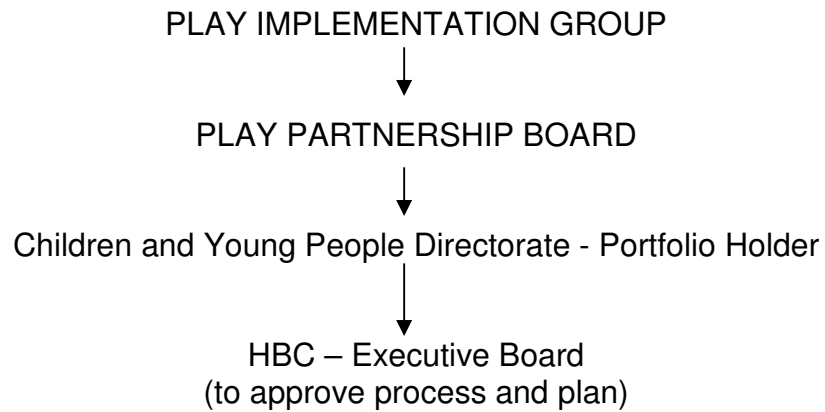
Year 1 Process



(*see Appendix 2 for Year 1 – project information)

Council Approval Process

The following approval process has been proposed (subject to formal approval)



Day to day decisions on project to be delegated to Children and Young People's Directorate Portfolio Holder and Strategic Director Children and Young People.

Possible Play Builder Sites 2008 / 2009

		Site Ownership	Sustainable	Design Capacity	Needs Analysis	Consultation	Delivery Capacity	Match
Site	Delivery Agent							
Widnes Hale Park	HBC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Widnes - Spike Island	HBC	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y
Widnes - Crow Wood	HBC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Runcorn – Town Hall	HBC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Runcorn – Murdishaw	LHT	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Runcorn – Halton Brook	Riverside	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Rationale

General

The time frame in which to deliver a minimum of 6 (up to £50,000) Play Projects in year 1 is very demanding and a pragmatic approach to identification of projects was required.

This pragmatic approach was based on the following criteria;

- Government Guidance; the Playbuilder guidance challenges authority's to build new or **transform** existing provision, to be innovative and to create facilities that will make a statement of intent as well as improving facilities for young people; the guidance also required authority's to engage with third sector providers in the delivery of the project.
- Design/Delivery capacity; do resources exist to allow for the design and delivery of the projects with in the demanding capital spend timeframe for year 1.
- Needs Analysis/Consultation; the guidelines for developing project emphasised the importance for projects to be demand/need led and for the engagement of local children and families in the process.
- Sustainability; the Playbuilder project delivers significant capital funding but no long-term revenue stream to sustain development. Availability of revenue funding to maintain/sustain play development projects is therefore a key priority.

In considering year 1 proposals; their location and strategic benefit it is important to take account of the total project. Years 2 and 3 have 25% (£100,000) more capital provision than year 1 and a further 16 development projects must be identified.

Halton Borough Council Led Projects

There are five Halton Borough Council led projects proposed all of which were considered as part of the Big Lottery Funded Play Programme. The five projects all meet the demanding criteria identified above.

Town Hall Park/Spike Island

Both these sites were approved by executive board (September 2007) as part of the Big Lottery Fund Children's Play Programme. Adding Playbuilder funding to the existing funding will ensure an impactful, high profile facility and represent a Value for Money option.

Hale Park

An already approved development with existing capital. Playbuilder contribution to project will have same impact as for above.

Crow Wood/Town Park

Sites for which there is sustainability funding available, are currently being considered for redevelopment and with which the local community are already engaged. Playbuilder funding would enable and enhance these proposals.

All Halton Borough Council year 1 proposals are targeted at sites which are both, a local (neighbourhood) facility and a destination site. Investment in these sites would significantly enhance Halton's portfolio of 'destination sites'.

Third Sector Led Projects

Several social housing providers were actively engaged in the development of the Halton Play Strategy 2007-11 (approved by Executive Board September 2007), and the Play Services Manager has subsequently supported Riverside Housing Trust in their successful Big Lottery Funded Playful Ideas bid. Government guidance (as indicated earlier) also identified 3rd sector providers as key partners in the Playbuilder process.

All four of the Third Sector led projects deliver;

- Sustainability, revenue streams to maintain/sustain facilities developed
- Additional match funding to maximise impact/play value and represent a Value for Money project
- Have already undertaken needs analysis and local consultation
- Have the resources to lead the design and build process to deliver within the time frame

RISK LOG

Project Name: Playbuilder

Objective: To identify risk within the project

Completed by:

Date Completed:

No	Risk (Threat to achievement of business objective)	Owner	Assessment of Risk [Assume NO controls in place]			Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk [With control measures implemented]		
			Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Risk Rating		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Residual Risk Rating
1									
2									
3									

4									
5									
6									
7									
8									

9									
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Likelihood of occurrence (Scored out of 3)

- Low = Never / unlikely / small chance / no known occurrence
- Medium = Average chance / occurs infrequently
- High = Strong / very strong chance / occurs on a regular basis

Impact of occurrence (Scored out of 3)

- Type 3 = High risk – severe degradation of quality, increased cost, missed deadline
- Type 2 = Medium risk – day to day normal risk that will be solved
- Type 1 = Low risk – small risk, easy to solve

The Local Play Indicators

Appendix 7

The performance indicators for play provision are defined in the table below.

Local Play Indicators

Indicator 1	Participation	Method of generation
Description	The percentage of all children and young people aged birth to 16 (i.e. from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who play out for at least four hours each week	Household survey
Indicator 2	Access to a variety of facilities and spaces	Method of generation
Description	The percentage of children and young people aged birth to 16 that have access to at least three different types (type A, type B, type C) of space or facility, at least one of which is a dedicated place for play and informal recreation, which are all within easy walking or cycling distance as defined below	Open space and play strategy audits GIS mapping
Indicator 3	Quality of facilities and spaces	Method of generation
Description	The proportion of facilities and spaces that have been assessed using the Quality Assessment tool and where improvement plans are being implemented as a result of unsatisfactory assessments	Quality Assessment tool
Indicator 4	Satisfaction	Method of generation
Description	The percentage of all children and young people (i.e. from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who think that the range and quality of play facilities and spaces they are able to access in their local neighbourhood is good/very good.	School Survey

In the near future detailed guidance will be available from Play England on data collection and analysis methods for these play indicators.