

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 16 July 2009 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors McDermott, McInerney and Wharton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, B. Dodd, L. Derbyshire, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr and D. Sutton

Also in attendance: Councillor Hodgkinson and N. Atkin (Halton Housing Trust)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB16 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 URGENT BUSINESS

The Board was advised that a matter had arisen which required immediate attention by the Board (Minute 26 refers), therefore, pursuant to Section 100 B(4) and 100 E and due to the timescales involved the Chairman ruled that the item be considered as a matter of urgency.

EXB17 MINUTES

The Minutes of 18 June 2009 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

EXB18 TO CONSIDER REPRESENTATION AT THE INEOS LOCAL LIAISON FORUM

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought to increase the Council's representation on the Ineos Local Liaison Forum (LLF).

It was noted that, at the meeting on 13th January 2009,

Action

consideration had been given to a report setting out details of the establishment of a Local Liaison Forum required in connection with the Energy from Waste facility planned by Ineos Chlor. At the time, it was resolved that “four Elected Members should be nominated to serve on the Forum.” The Leader of the Opposition was asked to provide two representatives and the Council Leader also provided two nominations. To date, the LLF have met on three occasions, the latest meeting having been on 8th July 2009, with Cllrs Mike Hodgkinson, Ernie Ratcliffe, Alan Lowe and Dave Cargill representing the Council.

It was also noted that the Leader of the Council now considered that the Council’s best interest would be served if the Council representation on the LLF was increased to six members. The additional nominations would be provided by the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Conservative Group.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board nominates two additional Elected Members to the Ineos Local Liaison Forum.

Strategic Director,
Environment

EXB19 STANDARD SCHOOL YEAR - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided the results on the joint consultation with the Greater Merseyside Local Authority Learn Together Partnership on proposals for a standard school year. The report recommended approval for the Standard School Year and its implementation in Halton from September 2010.

The Board was advised that The Local Government Association (LGA) was championing the splitting of the school year (September – July) into six fixed terms of approximately equal length, whilst accommodating the Easter celebration.

In May 2008, it was agreed by the Greater Merseyside Directors of Children’s Services to conduct a joint consultation to implement the standard school year based on the principles which were outlined in the report for consideration.

The Board was further advised that Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Knowsley and Halton had all participated in the consultation. Wirral, Warrington and Cheshire (as was) had declined to participate this year but had asked to be kept informed of the results.

In respect of the consultation document in Halton, 22,000 hard copies had been sent out to stakeholders. Information was also available on the intranet, internet, local media and the Inside Halton magazine which is delivered to every residence in the borough.

In Halton, 751 people had responded and details of the responses were appended to the report for Members information.

In addition, the results from other Local Authorities that participated in the consultation were similar to Halton's with an overwhelming 83% of all respondents agreeing to the proposals.

It was reported that Liverpool would commence the Standard School Year from September 2009. Knowsley and St Helen's had agreed to implement the standard school year and this would start from the academic year 2010/2011. Wirral were considering adopting the standard school year from 2011/2012 but were waiting to see the position of West Cheshire and Chester before proceeding. Therefore, it was recommended that Halton adopt the Standard School year from 2010/2011 in line with Knowsley and St Helen's.

Reason for the Decision

To establish set holiday periods and even out the length of school terms.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not to establish a standard school year.

Implementation Date

The implementation date would be the academic year 2010/2011.

RESOLVED: That Halton adopt the Standard School Year and agree to its implementation from September 2010.

EXB20 CHILDREN IN CARE PLEDGE - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which sought approval for a proposed Pledge to Children in Care in Halton.

It was reported that the Government's Green Paper

“Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Young People in Care” and the subsequent White Paper “Care Matters: Time for Change” identified steps that needed to be taken to improve outcomes for children and young people in Care.

The report outlined the key aims and roles of Corporate parenting including the expectations that Government announced.

The Board was advised that Halton had established its Children in Care Council in December 2007. Since that time the functioning of the Council had developed, its membership had grown, and there had been some clear outcomes achieved for children.

It was reported that the consultations that had taken place so far included the Pledge itself, Personal Education Plans and Children in Care Reviews. A newsletter and website would also be launched in the near future, so that all Children in Care, and not just those who attend the meetings, were aware of developments and proposals.

Work on the Pledge had commenced in October 2008 and concluded with the young people accepting the final version at their meeting in May 2009 which was appended to the report for information.

The Board was further advised that the Pledge was a document which should ensure that Children in Care and Care Leavers are aware of the key opportunities that were offered to them locally and that they were consulted and involved in the development of the Pledge.

It was reported that the Pledge as set out in Appendix 1 to the report was the result of the consultation with the Children in Care Council and used their own artwork. It also listed the 10 things that Children in Care and Care Leavers said were key to improving outcomes for them. The pledge was also supported by the statements made by our Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Reason For the Decision

The Children and Young Persons Act, which received royal assent in November 2008, strengthened the role of the Corporate parent. The Government now required every local area to set out its ‘Pledge’ to Children in Care and Care Leavers covering the services and support that they should expect to receive.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There was no prescribed format for a Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers, the 'Pledge' (Appendix 1), was designed by the Children in Care Council and therefore it was the one they would like the Executive Board to endorse

Implementation Date

Immediately.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Pledge to Children in Care be endorsed;
- (2) the action to promote the Pledge in order to raise awareness in the Council, Children's Trust and with other partners be endorsed; and
- (3) Young people report annually on the progress of the Pledge to Children in Care to the Executive Board.

Strategic Director,
Children & Young
People

EXB21 APPROVAL OF THE FORMAL ADOPTION OF THE PLANNING FOR RISK SPD

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment, which sought approval for the formal adoption of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Planning for Risk as part of the Halton Local Development Framework. A copy of the Planning for Risk SPD was attached to the report at Appendix A for information.

The report outlined the following the following aspects of the Document;

- Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) sites;
- Liverpool Airport;
- Consultation processes;
- Sustainability appraisal and related matters;
- Weston Village representations; and
- Policy implications.

The SPD document, when adopted would form part of the Local Planning Framework for Halton and would be a material factor in the consideration of any relevant planning applications. It would also provide an easier to understand and more detailed policy framework than the Unitary Development Plan.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Planning for Risk be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and part of the Halton Local Development Framework;
- (2) the responses to the representations received at the public participation stages, as set out in the statement of consultation be agreed; and
- (3) if necessary, before the document is published, further editorial and technical changes that do not affect the content or intended purpose of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal.

EXB22 WIDNES WATERFRONT PHASE 2 MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK & DELIVERY STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment that sought approval and adoption of the Masterplan Framework and Delivery Strategy for the Widnes Waterfront, which had been prepared in partnership with the Council by consultants Taylor Young supported by the BE Group and Faber Maunsell.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Widnes Waterfront Masterplan Framework and Delivery Strategy Phase 2 undertaken by Taylor Young for Halton Borough Council be endorsed; and
- (2) the Strategic Director for Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation and Development, be authorised to develop and deliver the Masterplan Framework in consultation with landowners, business's, developers and grant aid bodies.

Councillors Nelson, Swain and Wright declared a Personal Interest in the following item due to being a member of the Halton Housing Trust Board.

EXB23 HALTON HOUSING TRUST PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which in accordance with the monitoring framework agreed prior to housing stock transfer, provided a further update on Halton Housing Trust's progress since the last report to Executive Board on the 19th June 2008.

In this respect, Mr N Atkin, Chief Executive of Halton Housing Trust attended the meeting to present the progress to date in delivering some of the key 'pledges' made prior to stock transfer and progress in meeting the Housing Corporation's regulatory framework.

Arising from the discussion the board discussed engagement with tenants in respect of a consultation around choice based lettings and the lack of availability of suitable sites for Extra Care Housing.

RESOLVED: That the progress to date be noted.

EXB24 INTERMEDIATE CARE SERVICE WARRINGTON

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which provided details of the initial expression of interest submitted to Warrington Borough Council and Warrington PCT to deliver an integrated Intermediate Care Service and sought the Board's approval to progress the application and submit a formal tender.

The Board was advised that the Service would aim to:-

- Improve the ability of people to live independently through the provision of enabling and rehabilitation Intermediate Care services;
- Enable adults with physical and / or mental health impairment (but not adults with severe and enduring mental health), the Client Group, to participate fully in their local communities;
- Involve users of services, their significant others and the local community in the planning, development, monitoring and review of Intermediate Care services;
- Provide a robust performance management and clinical governance framework to ensure services

meet the needs of the community, with regard to evidence based practice, best value and value for money; and

- Improve the range and mix of services for the Client Group and develop pathways that enable the appropriate and timely use of primary and secondary health care, social services, culture and leisure activities and voluntary sector services.

The Board was further advised that following the evaluation of the initial submission, the Authority in partnership with Health had been asked to take part in the next stage, the development of an outline solution which was appended to the report for information.

The outline solutions would be assessed and further dialogue would take place with organisations. A detailed solution would need to be submitted in September 2009. The final submission of a formal tender would need to be made by 6th November 2009. If the Authority / Health Trust should be successful, notifications would be in December 2009 / January 2010 with a view to the service being delivered in April 2010.

Arising from the discussion the Board felt there was not sufficient financial information available with regard to long term funding and potential operational problems.

RESOLVED: That Halton Borough Council does not proceed with this application.

EXB25 NATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM FOR HEALTH INEQUALITIES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which gave a progress update and action plan in response to the visit by the National Support Team (NST) for Health Inequalities in February 2009.

The Board was advised that in February 2009 the Health Inequalities National Support Team had assessed the position in St Helens and Halton and made a number of recommendations for improvement. The focus of the review was not on long term strategies but on immediate action which St Helens, Halton and the Primary Care Trust could take to dramatically reduce health inequalities within the next two years.

The Board was further advised that since the visit, a working group had been established and an action plan developed which was appended to the report for Members' consideration. Halton & St. Helens Council's had also agreed to lead on two of the main recommendations.

RESOLVED: That the Action Plan set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

EXB26 WHISTON HOSPITAL - BURNS UNIT

The Board considered an urgent report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which invited the Members to consider a proposal to establish a major burns unit in Manchester to the detriment of the existing unit at Whiston Hospital.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) This Council condemns the decision not to include Whiston Hospital on the short list for the major burns unit;
- (2) This Council calls on the Secretary of State for Health to intervene and ensure that the provision of the Major Burns Unit is maintained at Whiston Hospital without any of the facilities being downgraded;
- (3) This Council is concerned that no proper business case has been developed or presented to the Council to support the recommendation to centralise a Burns Unit in Manchester;
- (4) the Hospital will be left with significant financial problems as it now has a newly built Burns Unit with a PFI tariff to pay; and
- (5) If the Burns Unit is lost to Whiston, then other services will be lost including the services of leading burns specialists and facial reconstruction surgeons who are responsible for the reconstruction of facial features damaged by both cancer and burns.

Meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.

MINUTES ISSUED: 29th July 2009

CALL IN: 5th August 2009

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5th August 2009.