

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 11 February 2010 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman) and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Harris

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson and A. McNamara

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE

		<i>Action</i>
ES54	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2010 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO	
ES55	BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT	
	<p>The Civil Contingencies Act requires the Council to maintain plans to ensure that they can continue to exercise their functions in the event of an emergency so far as is reasonably practicable. The Directorate Business Continuity Plan (BCP) had been developed to support delivery of the Directorate Emergency Plan and the Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Rest Centre Plan. The aim of the BCP was to ensure that the Council was in a position to maintain critical services during and after any major, disruption and promote recovery. The BCP had recently been updated in response to the threat posed by major pandemics and to respond to current threat to services should there be a marked increase in the incidence of swine flu.</p> <p>It was noted that during the last few months Senior Council Officers had been working closely with colleagues in Health to develop robust contingency plans to mitigate the</p>	

effects of a potential outbreak.

The Sub Committee considered a request which sought approval to waive standing orders and to obtain delegated powers for the Chief Executive, to ensure the Council has robust contingency measures in place in the event of an emergency.

In the unfortunate event that the Directorates BCP plan was triggered the independent care providers would face extreme pressure once the local hospitals activated their rapid hospital discharge protocol. In view of this, the Directorate would need to increase its supply of domiciliary & residential care. Under current arrangements, social care was purchased through a select list of providers. However, in the event of an emergency, such as a flu pandemic, there was a risk that contracted services would not be able to meet demand.

In order to mitigate that risk, it was proposed that the Council increases its potential supply by establishing a list of emergency suppliers of Social Care. Expressions of interest would be sought from registered providers interested in delivering Social Care in Halton, at a rate in line with existing domiciliary and residential care contracts. Providers selected through this process would only be used if the BCP were triggered.

In addition it was noted that under existing contractual arrangements, Reed was the preferred supplier of agency staff to the Council. Again, in an emergency situation, it was possible that the contracted agency would not be able to meet demand for social care staff. In order to mitigate that risk, it was proposed that the Council increases its potential supply of agency staff by establishing a list of emergency suppliers of social care agency workers. Agencies selected through this process would only be used if the BCP were triggered.

During the emergency period it was anticipated that staff in the Quality Assurance Team, whose current work plan included responsibility for the re-tendering of services, would be deployed to provide support to critical services throughout Halton. Consequently contracts, which were due to end and were timetabled for re-tendering, would need to be extended by a number of months and work on new tenders would need to be suspended. Approval to extend individual contracts beyond their expiry date was normally approved by the Executive Board Sub Committee, however in an emergency this would not be practicable. Standing

Orders does however allow for the Chief Executive to use delegated power in limited circumstances should the situation warrant it.

Therefore, in the event that the Health & Communities Directorate BCP was triggered, the report sought approval for the Chief Executive to use delegated power to extend care and support contracts as may be necessary.

It was also noted that any potential increase in costs for agency staff within social work teams and in-house provider services and for additional Domiciliary and Residential Care would be met from existing Community Care budgets.

RESOLVED: That

(1) In the exceptional circumstances detailed below, for the purpose of standing order 1.6, procurement orders 3.1-3.7 be waived on during an emergency period for contracts for the provision of care or support to vulnerable adults; and

(2) Delegated Powers by the Chief Executive (or in the absence of the Chief Executive the nominated deputy) to waive standing orders under Emergency Procedures 1.7 be authorised, to take such action as may be necessary to implement the recommendations set out above.

Chief Executive

MINUTES ISSUED: 18th February 2010

CALL IN: 26th February 2010

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 26th February 2010.

Meeting ended at 10.25 a.m.