

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Thursday, 6 January 2011 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Balmer, Browne, Gilligan, Hodge, Loftus, J. Lowe and L. Lawler

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Fry, P. Lloyd Jones and M. Ratcliffe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Bennett, H. Coen, M. Grady, G. Meehan, N. Moorhouse, S. Nyakatawa, J. Potter, M. Simpson, C. Taylor and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: Cllr Swain in accordance with Standing Order 33 and Councillor Inch.

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
CYP34 MINUTES	
The minutes of the meeting held on 1 st November 2010 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record	
CYP35 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was reported that no public questions had been received.	
CYP36 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Board received a report which contained the Minutes relating to the Children and Young People Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of the PPB.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.	
CYP37 CHILDREN'S TRUST UPDATE	

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided an update on the latest developments within the Halton's Children's Trust. It was reported that Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 set out the duties that required local authorities and their relevant partners to co-operate to improve the wellbeing of children and young people in areas which were detailed in the report.

It was noted that Halton's Children's Trust Board had been established in 2008 in line with national requirements that became statutory on April 1st 2010. The Trust built upon the Children and Young People's Alliance Board that was developed in 2006 in line with Children Act 2004 requirements.

The Coalition Government announced in July 2010 its intention to reform Children's Trusts. The proposals came into force from 31st October 2010 and included the following:-

- Removing the duty on schools to co-operate through Children's Trusts;
- Removing the requirement on local authorities to set up Children's Trust Boards and the requirement on those Boards to prepare and publish a joint Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP); and
- Revoking the regulations underpinning the CYPP and withdrawing the statutory guidance on Children's Trusts.

It was further noted that the reform allowed each local authority area to agree its own way forward in terms of delivering Children and Young People's services. The duty for partners to co-operate would continue but the list of statutory partners had been reduced to remove the bureaucracy surrounding Children's Trusts or similar local partnerships for partners and, in particular, schools.

The Board was advised that the reforms had removed the requirement on Halton to produce the CYPP. Halton's current Plan ran until March 2011. It was noted that with agreement that Halton's Children's Trust would continue in its current format. There was also a need for CYPP to provide strategic direction and so a third CYPP for Halton would be in place from April 2011. Work had begun on this CYPP following a Children's Trust Development Day on 6th

December 2010.

The priorities that were set in 2008 were outlined in the report and these priorities would remain in place until April 2011. Following discussions at the Trust's Development Day and at the Children's Trust Executive Group, it was proposed that the priorities and the structures within the Children's Trust would be amended from April 2011. The new priorities maintained strong links to the existing priorities outlined in 4.6 of the report and reflected the progress made by the Trust in its current agenda. The new proposed priorities were outlined in the report for information.

It was further noted that it had been agreed to keep the name Children's Trust in place for the partnership in order to keep continuity and the awareness of the name for the partnership as a brand. It had been proposed to amend the strapline for the Trust to recognise the importance of participation of young people within the structures at all levels and within all work.

The Board was informed of a new Children's Trust Website that would be going live during 1st week in January 2010. Members requested that the URL for the new website be circulated.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CYP38 BSF UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided an update on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme in Halton including the award of select bidder and the timetable for the construction and completion of the two sample schools.

It was reported that on 6th August 2010 the Secretary of State announced that all 33 local authorities "sample school" projects in 14 Council areas would now proceed.

Schools that were part of the Academy Programme at the time were put into one of two categories; ones that were granted capital now, of which were 44 and ones that would be decided in the Spending Review, of which there were 79. The Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy fell into the later category.

The Academy, along with the Local Authority

representatives had recently met with Partnership for Schools (Pfs) to discuss their options but a decision on funding for the Academy was not expected until the end of December 2010.

The immediate consequences of the Coalition Government BSF announcements were outlined in the report for information. In addition to the longer term consequences of the Coalition Government BSF announcements.

Following evaluation of both bids on the 2nd December 2010, Executive Board approved the appointment of the Local Transformational Partnership as the selected bidder for the Halton BSF Programme. The timetable for the programme of Financial Close was set out in the report as there were indications that funding could be lost if Financial Close was not completed by 31st March 2011.

It was further reported that construction would start on the two schools in April 2011 until December 2012 and it was planned that both schools would be operational in their new facilities in January 2013.

Arising from the discussion Members raised concerns regarding remaining schools in the Borough that would not be included in the BSF scheme. In response it was noted that there was continued dialogue with Government in respect of the other schools and there was a meeting scheduled for 26 January with Council officers and Lord Hill – Under Secretary of State for Schools, and an update would be provided at a later date.

The Board requested a further update be provided on the progress of the two sample schools after Financial Close.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Members note the appointment of the select bidder and the revised timetable for completion of the two sample schools; and
- (2) a further update be provided on the progress of the development of the two sample schools after Financial Close.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP39 COMMISSIONING UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Strategic

Director – Children and Young People which provided an update on the development of a Joint Commissioning Team and highlighted the work undertaken by the team to assess the contracts which would be decommissioned or redesigned in the light of the funding cuts.

It was reported that the Commissioning and Contracts team was now fully staffed and had responsibility for over 50 contracts plus the responsibility for the contractual function for Residential, Independent Fostering Agency placements and Leaving Care placements.

It was reported that the team had joined up with Halton and St. Helens PCT Commissioners to create a Joint Commissioning Unit (JCU) which met once a month and all members of the JCU had attended a three-day Commissioning Skills Training event.

The Board was informed of five priority areas that had been identified by the Children's Trust and had been allocated to commissioners within the JCU and individual action plans were currently being developed. Some of the elements that would be covered in the plans were set out in the report for information.

It was further noted that the action plans would be finalised early in 2011 and would evidence a move towards efficiency savings through reductions in duplication of services and support functions with clear recommendations to achieve this.

The Board discussed the number of children from out of Borough in care homes in Halton and were informed of new statutory guidance which provided clarification on the 'sufficiency duty' placed on local authorities under 22(G) of the Children Act 1989, to secure sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of their looked after children. It was intended to guide local authorities to:

- modify their commissioning practices to ensure they have sufficient local provision to meet their needs; and
- ensure they have a strategic plan for commissioning placements for their looked after child population

It was further reported that when a local authority placed a child, their overriding aim, was to secure the most appropriate placement for the child, in order to safeguard and promote his/her welfare. For the majority of looked after

children, the 'most appropriate placement' would be within the local authority area.

Reference was also made to the decommissioning of services, it was felt that resources should be focussed on the most vulnerable and hard to reach areas. The Board was advised that the end result of the action plans was to obtain better value for money, improved delivery of services and find enhanced ways of working.

Members requested a brief explanation be circulated of what services were offered by providers and which budget they were funded from, from the table detailed in 4.5.3 of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted and the Board ask for a further report to be provided in the impact of the budget efficiencies on commissioned provision in Halton; and
- (2) the PPB endorse the development of an outcome based accountability framework and cost based saving tool for all contracts.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP40 REGULATION 33 VISITS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which proposed a revision to the Regulation 33 for visits of Children's Homes.

The report set out the requirement for Regulation 33 visits and noted that they should be at least monthly and unannounced. Copies of the Regulation 33 reports were provided to the Registered Manager of the Children's Home and to Ofsted. Ofsted closely monitored this and checked that visits had been carried out, the quality of reports produced and that any findings had been acted upon by the Registered Manager.

It was further noted that guidance suggested that in the case of the local authority, Elected Members should consider the "desirability" of carrying out the visits to demonstrate their role as a corporate parent.

The Board was advised that there were three Children's Homes in the Borough requiring 36 visits a year and some members were only able to do a couple of visits per year due to other commitments which meant there was a

heavy reliance on just 1 or 2 members out of the current 9 who were CRB checked or trained to carry out the visits. It was also evident that some visits had not been completed within the monthly timescales due to Members commitments and failure to advise officers of non-visits.

In order to address some of these difficulties, it was therefore proposed to introduce a revised rota where visits were undertaken alternately by members and Independent Reviewing Managers from the Safeguarding Unit. This proposal would ensure that Elected Members maintained their corporate parenting role and would remain involved in the process but that additional oversight was offered by an experienced officer of the Council. Members were advised that a similar model was in operation in a number of local authorities.

It was further noted that Independent Reviewing Managers were experienced Social Workers and managers who would be able to provide informed opinion and challenge to the Children's Homes.

Arising from discussion of the report the Board requested that a seminar be held before a full Council meeting to remind Members of their duties as corporate parents and encourage Members to volunteer for training on Regulation 33 visits. It was further suggested that a review be carried out in 12 months to evaluate the new rota. Members were also invited to shadow the Independent Reviewing managers during these visits as a training exercise.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposal be endorsed by Members;
- (2) the revised rota be introduced from April 2011;
- (3) a review of the revised rota be carried out in 12 months; and
- (4) a seminar be arranged before Full Council to remind Members of their duties as corporate parents and recruit for volunteers to carry out Regulation 33 visits.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP41 KINGSWAY CHILDREN CENTRE INSPECTION REPORT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided feedback on

Halton's First Children's Centre Ofsted inspection and subsequent action plan. It was reported that there were many positives that were highlighted in the inspection as follows:-

- Quality of partnerships;
- Good engagement of parents;
- Promotion of personal and emotional development of parents;
- Good safety promotion;
- Strong targeted services;
- Equality and diversity in particular the efforts to engage fathers; and
- Work with vulnerable groups.

Members were advised of other points raised for example Ofsted found that accessibility was not ideal. However Members were informed that there was a refurbishment planned, which would provide a visible reception area. It was further noted that whilst local level health data was not available, the issue of local level data on Children Centre reach areas had been made much more difficult. The reach areas were not co-terminus with ward boundaries as a consequence of what used to be DCSF, insisting through the 2009 restructuring of Halton Children Centres that each reach area contain 1200 children aged 0 to 5.

It was further noted that this had been significantly addressed by restructuring the reach areas of all Halton's Children centres to make them co-terminus with ward boundaries and the creation of detailed reach areas profiles which should no longer be a limiting factor for other Children centre inspections.

The Board also discussed the importance of informing all parents of children centres and suggested partner agencies could signpost the centres.

Appended to the report was the Kingsway Children's Centre Ofsted Action Plan which the Board agreed to endorse.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the Kingsway Children's Centre Ofsted Action Plan.

(NB: Councillor Loftus declared a Personal Interest in the following item due to being an employee of Riverside College)

The Board received a report of the Chief Executive on the Performance Management Reports for Quarter 2, 2010/11.

Members were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of the performance management report on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons and factors affecting the services etc. for:

- Children and families;
- Children's organisation provision; and
- Learning and Achievement.

Arising from the reports the Board discussed alternatives for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and services provided by the Youth Services. Members requested a report be brought to a future meeting providing the findings of the Youth Service Review.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the second quarter performance management report be received; and
- 2) a report be brought to a future meeting providing findings of the Youth Service Review.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP43 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY MID YEAR PROGRESS REPORT 2010 - 2011

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Resources which provided information on the progress in achieving targets contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton.

It was reported that an updated Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton was the central document for the Council and its partners and was presently at an advanced stage of preparation and would become live from April 2011.

The Board was advised that the Coalition Government had set out its performance measures in Government Departmental Business Plans and many of the performance measures were already included in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

It was further noted that the Sustainable Community Strategy included targets which were also in the Local Area Agreements (LAA). In October this year the Coalition Government announced the ending of Government performance management of local authorities through LSS'a. However, the Council needed to maintain some framework of performance management to measure progress towards our own objectives for the improvement of the quality of life in Halton and meet the Government's expectation that would be published in performance information.

Appended to the report was a progress on the 2010/11 mid year which included information for those specific indicators and targets that fell within the remit of this Policy and Performance Board.

It was reported that the SCS for Halton and the performance measures and targets contained within it would remain central to the delivery of community outcomes. It was therefore important that the Council monitor progress and Members were satisfied that adequate plans were in place to ensure that the Council and its partners achieved the improved targets that had been agreed.

The Board discussed the indicators and requested that more detailed descriptions be provided in future reports and that when the new framework was in place whether a progress indicator could be added.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments made be noted.

CYP44 DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2011-14 FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided an update on Business Planning for the period 2011-14 and to consider the Directorate priorities, objectives and targets for services for the period that fell within the remit of the Policy and Performance Board.

It was reported that each Directorate of the Council was required to develop a medium term business plan, in parallel with the budget that was subject to annual review and refresh. Draft Service Objectives and Performance Indicators and targets had been developed by each Department and the information was included with

Appendices to the Directorate Plan. It was further noted these departmental objectives and measures would form the basis of the quarterly performance monitoring received by the Board during the future year.

Members were advised that due to the proposed structural changes across the Council and the need to better integrate the Directorate's priorities as last year, a combined plan would be published rather than individual Departmental Service Plans. This plan was still subject to reconfiguration of services between Directorates, subject to consultation.

It was further noted that the draft Directorate Business Plan would be revised given proposed reconfiguration of directorates during January and would go to Executive Board for approval on 12th February 2011, at the same time as the draft budget. This would ensure that decisions on Business Planning were linked to resource allocation. All Directorate Plans would be considered by full Council at the 2nd March meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Board identifies objectives and targets for the next three years that it wished to see included in the Business Plans; and
- (2) Board Members pass any detailed comments that they may have on the attached information to the relevant Operational Director or the Chairman by 20th January 2011.

Strategic Director
- Resources

CYP45 SSP MINUTES

The Minutes from the Halton's Children's Trust meeting held on 26th October 2010 were presented to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.