

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 27 June 2013 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), D. Cargill, Harris, R. Hignett, Jones, Nelson, Philbin, J. Stockton, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Baker, S. Clough, G. Cook, R. Gummery, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney, S. Riley and M. Simpson

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB20 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2013 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB21 SPRINKLERS - NEW RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive on the introduction of sprinklers in all new residential properties.

The Board was advised that Cheshire Fire Authority's Policy Committee endorsed and approved a sprinkler policy statement in September 2011. It was noted that Fire and Rescue Services had maintained belief in the benefits of the installation and use of sprinkler systems and remained committed to their promotion. It was reported that, over the years, England had fallen behind the rest of the UK with Scotland and Wales approving new legislation to require sprinklers in certain buildings. The report of the Cheshire Fire Authority, attached to the Board report, provided comparative details for Members' information.

The report asked for support for a campaign to lobby

for the introduction of sprinklers in all new residential properties and specifically in high-rise blocks, which would improve health and safety in the Borough and potentially save lives.

RESOLVED: That the Board support action to lobby for the introduction of sprinklers in all new residential properties and specifically high-rise blocks.

Chief Executive

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

EXB22 PRIORITY SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the Priority School Building Programme.

In July 2011, the Department of Education (DfE) announced that it was commencing the privately financed Priority School Building Programme to address those schools in the worst building condition. To be considered for inclusion in the programme, the local authority and maintained schools must have agreed to be part of a long term private finance agreement.

The Board was advised that Halebank CE Voluntary Controlled Primary School was included in the list of schools in the North West Group, to be taken forward as part of a single development package. The authority was required to submit an Outline Business Case to the Treasury for consideration over the Summer. However, prior to that the local authority was required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, which authorised the Secretary of State to manage the school's progression through the procurement project.

It was noted that the Memorandum of Understanding aimed to establish the respective obligations and commitments during the term of the Project Agreement. In addition, the Council, as landowner of the playing field site, would also need to enter into a Landowner Agreement, to allow the Secretary of State and the appointed contractor access rights to construct the new school building.

Reason(s) for Decision

To enable the re-build of the school to progress as part of the DfE's Priority School Building Programme.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The authority did not have other capital funding to enable the re-build of the school.

Implementation Date

Building works were likely to commence in 2015.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the current position of the Priority School Building Programme in respect of Halebank CE Voluntary Controlled Primary School and the progression of the scheme be noted;
- 2) the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, in consultation with the Portfolio holder, enter into the Memorandum of Understanding Agreement, with all documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services; and
- 3) the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, in consultation with the Portfolio holder, finalise the Landowner Agreement with all documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB23 AMALGAMATION OF PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS - CONSULTATION FEEDBACK - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided consultation feedback on the proposed amalgamation of Pupil Referral Units at The Bridge School and Key Stage 4 Gateway.

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 28 March 2013, it was agreed that a consultation would be undertaken to amalgamate The Bridge School Pupil Referral Unit and Key Stage 4 Gateway Pupil Referral Unit by bringing existing Key Stage 4 staff and provision under the leadership of The Bridge School.

Consultation commenced on 15 April 2013 and 34 responses were received. A breakdown of the respondents was provided in the report with a full record of the comments

received attached at Appendix A. It was noted that a total of 23 respondents agreed with the proposal to amalgamate. The report provided a detailed explanation of the issues raised by those that did not support the proposal for Members' consideration.

Reason(s) for Decision

The implications of the School Funding reform on PRUs and the current vacancies at the Key Stage 4 Gateway provided an opportunity to achieve greater consistency and better value for money by amalgamating both PRUs.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Maintaining two PRUs but putting in place one leadership structure across both PRUs – this was rejected as whilst remaining as two PRUs, there were limited cost efficiencies to be achieved, e.g. each PRU would have to purchase their own Service Level Agreements.

Implementation Date

1 September 2013.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the amalgamation of The Bridge School and Key Stage 4 Gateway by:

- 1) extending the age range of The Bridge School from accepting 11-14 year olds to accepting 11 - 16 year olds from 1 September 2013;
- 2) bringing existing Key Stage 4 Gateway staff, pupils and provision under the leadership of The Bridge School with effect from 1 September 2013; and
- 3) ceasing the Key Stage 4 Gateway Pupil Referral Unit as a distinct unit from 31 August 2013.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB24 WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS - MUSIC SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which requested the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders in respect of the Provision of Music Services to schools.

The Board was advised that, following a successful bid for Music Hub funding, Halton partnered with Warrington to form a Music Hub in September 2012. It was noted that the Music Hub received a grant from the Arts Council, ring-fenced for the development of music provision for schools. As a condition of grant funding, the Council were required to deliver on four key areas to ensure that every child aged 5-18 had the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument, to provide an opportunity to perform, to ensure clear progression routes that were available and affordable and to develop a Singing Strategy.

It was reported that the Halton and Warrington District Music Service (HWDMS) provided music services in Halton schools. Their contract, which was due to end on 31 July 2013, required them to provide Whole Class Tuition projects for schools as well as the Halton Schools' Concert and Training Band.

The Board noted that the purpose of the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders was to award the incumbent supplier a one year contract based on the current terms and conditions currently agreed.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders 4.1 be approved; and
- 2) the waiver be for the period from 1 September 2013 to 31 July 2014.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB25 CAPITAL - BASIC NEED - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which outlined the methodology used to prioritise the schools for the Basic Need funding for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The Board was advised that, Basic Need funding was allocated to local authorities in recognition of the significant pressures faced in providing additional school places. For Halton, the Basic Need funding for 2013/14 would be £1,203,445. The model which Halton used to allocate Basic Need funding in previous years had been applied again for 2013/14 and 2014/15, and identified those schools with the strongest case for support.

The report contained a more detailed explanation of

those schools which had been considered as being the highest priority. Birth data was also analysed for 2014 and 2015 and compared against the Pupil Number Capacity. It was noted that the forecast data indicated that there was sufficient capacity for pupils entering the schools in Runcorn and Widnes at Reception age. However, Beechwood Primary School was identified as being in need of Basic Need support as it was operating above capacity overall with four year groups oversubscribed.

Reason(s) for Decision

To deliver and implement the Basic Need Capital Programme.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

Works at Beechwood Primary School to commence as soon as possible, in order for the school to increase their planned admission number.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) agree the prioritisation process outlined within the report;
- 2) agree that a capital project be developed to address a Basic Need issue at Beechwood Primary School; and
- 3) a further report be submitted to Executive Board, detailing how the balance of the Basic Need funding for 2013/14 and 2014/15 will be allocated.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

(N.B. Councillor Jones declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as he was a Governor at Fairfield Infants School.)

EXB26 OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION ON EXTENDING THE AGE RANGE OF FAIRFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL AND CLOSURE OF FAIRFIELD INFANT SCHOOL - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic

Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided a summary of the outcome of the first phase of consultation on the re-organisation of Fairfield Infant School and Fairfield Junior School.

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 28 March 2013, it had approved the commencement of consultation on the proposal to expand Fairfield Junior School from 1 January 2014. The first phase of consultation closed on 29 May 2013. It was noted that both Governing Bodies supported the proposal with 52 of the 74 other respondents being in favour of the proposed amalgamated school. A summary of the responses was attached at Appendix C.

The next stage was to proceed to statutory consultation in September 2013, which would seek views on:

- Changing the age range of Fairfield Junior School to age 4-11 to become an 'all through' primary school from 1 January 2014;
- The Published Admission Number to remain at 80 per year group;
- Fairfield Infant School to be discontinued from 31 December 2013; and
- All the pupils in the Junior and Infant School become part of the 'all through' Primary School.

Reason(s) for Decision

The Headteacher of the Junior School had acted as Executive Headteacher of the Infants and Junior School since September 2012. During this time, the Infant School had been graded as 'Good' by Ofsted. Combining both schools to an "all through" primary, would allow a more coherent and consistent approach to provision at Fairfield Infants and Juniors, and ensure that there was a smooth transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No change to the current provision was considered, however this was rejected as it did not provide the same opportunities for curriculum continuity and development, flexibility for staffing and resources and allow seamless transition across the key stages.

Implementation Date

The next phase of the consultation was scheduled to commence on 4 September 2013 for six weeks.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the responses on the first phase of consultation be noted; and
- 2) commencement of statutory consultation be approved.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB27 INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided an update on the current provision of careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people in Halton.

The Board was advised that, local authorities had a statutory duty to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Under the Education Act 2011, there was also a requirement for them to record and report the education, training and employment status of their 16-19 year old residents to the Department for Education (DfE) on a monthly basis. The same Act also determined that from September 2012, schools, colleges or providers, had a responsibility to deliver careers IAG to their learners.

Services were currently provided through the Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Ltd (GMCP), whose contract would end on 31 March 2014. It was noted that the planned support services for young people from April 2014 would be delivered through a mix of in-house and externally procured services, as detailed in the report. These services would be supported and co-ordinated through the 14-19 Division.

Reason(s) for Decision

The current contract for IAG services ends on 31 March 2014 and could not be extended.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The option of all six Merseyside Local Authorities jointly commissioning all IAG Services was considered and rejected, due to the different approach each local authority had adopted to RPA, links to other services and the efficiency agenda.

Implementation Date

1 April 2014.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) a revised approach to the delivery of face to face services which encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education and training, as outlined in section 3.4.1 be approved;
- 2) a Council based Raising Participation Age monitoring service to meet the statutory requirement to track 16-18 year olds in the Borough, and provide a monthly report to the Department for Education, as outlined in section 3.5 be approved;
- 3) Halton Borough Council to be the lead authority in a partnership approach to co-ordinating an Raising Participation Age monitoring service, in a cluster of authorities as outlined in section 3.6, be approved; and
- 4) the approaches above be further developed and implemented.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB28 WAIVER OF PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS IN RESPECT OF INVESTIGATION SERVICES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders in respect of the Investigation Services.

The Board was advised that a second, independent investigation had been required at The Bridge and The Gateway Pupil Referral Units. Given the urgency, the need for continuity, the number of Council employees involved and the sensitive nature of the investigation, the Head of

Human Resources advised that Stobarts Business Services be commissioned to undertake the work. The use of Procurement Standing Orders Emergency Procedures was carried out in consultation with the Head of Procurement.

It was noted that the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders 4.1 (Competition Requirements), would be effective for the course of the investigation only.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders 4.1 (Competition Requirements) via the Chest, through the use of Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.2 Emergency Procedures, be approved; and
- 2) it be noted that this waiver would be for one commission until the completion of the second investigation undertaken by Stobarts Business Services at The Bridge and The Gateway Pupil Referral Units.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

HEALTH AND ADULTS PORTFOLIO

EXB29 URGENT CARE – OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which provided details of the options under consideration in response to the development of local Urgent Care.

The Board was advised that a business case was prepared in September 2010 for the development of an Urgent Care Centre on the Halton Hospital site. As part of NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group's (HCCG) commissioning intentions for 2012/13, a review of the original business case was completed to inform an options appraisal and reflect the health care system changes within the last two years.

Three options had been considered for the delivery of an urgent care model within Halton, which were summarised in the report. These options had been presented to the Council's Health Policy and Performance Board, Halton's Urgent Care Partnership Board and the HCCG's Governing Body. It was reported that the preferred option was Option One – Creation of an additional Walk-in Centre plus a Clinical Decision Unit at Halton Hospital site, and maintain

current services within Widnes Walk-in Centre.

The Board noted that business cases would be developed for Option One to ensure its financial viability. This, along with the results of public consultation would be presented to a number of forums for further consideration including the Urgent Care Partnership Board, the HCCG Senior Management Team and the Governing Body, Halton's Executive Board and relevant Trust Executive Directors.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report and associated appendices be noted; and
- 2) the Board support Option One, as outlined in the report.

Strategic Director
- Communities

NEIGHBOURHOOD LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

EXB30 HALTON HOUSING STRATEGY 2013-18 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which presented a finalised version of Halton's Housing Strategy 2013/18 for adoption.

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 24 January 2013, it had considered a report which set out the principal elements of the draft Housing Strategy 2013/18 and approved the documents for consultation purposes.

Formal consultation, which ended on 22 March 2013, sought the views of partners, stakeholders and residents. It was reported that in the main, the comments received did not raise new issues, but sought to expand and add emphasis to existing information already in the evidence paper, in particular, around Welfare Reforms. Where possible, the text had been amended to accommodate these comments but the Strategy itself remained largely unchanged.

Reason(s) for Decision

Under Part 7 of the Local Government Act 2003, local authorities were expected to produce a Housing Strategy which gave an overview of housing in their district and set out priorities for action.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

2013/14 to 2017/18.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the revised Housing Strategy, attached at Appendix A and supporting evidence document attached at Appendix B.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB31 LIBRARY STRATEGY 2013-16 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the Library Strategy for 2013/16.

The Board was advised that the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, required that local authorities provided “a comprehensive and efficient library service”. Although the national library standards did provide a framework at one time, local authorities were now able to determine the level and priorities of their own library service.

The Library Strategy, attached at Appendix 1, defined the priorities for the service in Halton over the next three years. Since 2009, a number of reports and studies commissioned by Government departments and other organisations considered what libraries should offer to their communities. It was noted that the Strategy took account of all previous published reports, but focused on two current documents which would influence the development of the service in the future. These were reported as Universal Offers and Envisioning the Library of the Future, as detailed in the report.

Consultation on the key elements of the Strategy would close on 30 June 2013. The Libraries Vision would be supported by five overarching strategic objectives, each with specific commitments and goals, with the priorities under each objective to be identified in the annual action plan.

Reason(s) for Decision

To outline the priorities for the library service in Halton over the next three years, to ensure the statutory responsibility is fulfilled whilst contributing to the strategic priorities of the

Council and delivering the service within available resources.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

June 2013.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Council be recommended to approve the Library Strategy 2013/16; and
- 2) any further editorial changes/corrections required following the close of consultation be delegated to the Strategic Director, Communities, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood, Leisure and Sport.

Strategic Director
- Communities

TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO

EXB32 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT A 558 DARESBUURY EXPRESSWAY UNDER THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT'S LOCAL PINCH POINT PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which advised Members of the award of grant funding through the Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Pinch Point Programme (LPPP).

The Board was advised that the LPPP was aimed at removing bottlenecks on local highway networks and improving access to development sites to support growth and create additional jobs and housing. In February 2013, the Council submitted a bid for funding from the DfT from a total fund of £170m. Halton's bid, which was successfully fast tracked, comprised a package of schemes designed to increase traffic capacity at three existing junctions on the A533 Daresbury Expressway. This would increase traffic capacity at key highway access points to the Daresbury (SciTech) Enterprise Zone and east Runcorn strategic housing development sites.

The report provided information on the funding contribution, subject to the Council agreeing to a number of conditions. The basis of the bid was that all works would be

undertaken within the existing Highway boundaries and delivered by March 2015.

It was noted that the Council's framework consultants, Mott MacDonald Ltd, had worked closely on the preparation of the LPPP bid. However, their Engineering Consultancy Framework Contract expired in April 2013, prior to confirmation of the DfT's scheme approval. Members were advised that it was proposed to waive Procurement Standing Order 4.1 (Competition Requirements) for reasons of urgency and for this scheme only, to enable the preparatory surveys, scheme design and project management services to proceed for this LPPP scheme with Mott MacDonald Ltd.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the award of £1.675m grant funding for the Daresbury Enterprise Zone/East Runcorn Housing Access Improvement Scheme under the DfT's Local Pinch Point Programme be noted;
- 2) Council be recommended to approve the inclusion of the LPPP scheme into the Council's Capital Programme at a total estimated cost of £2.394m to be phased over 2013/14 and 2014/15; and
- 3) in accordance with Procurement Standing Order 1.8.4, Procurement Standing Order 4.1 (Competition Requirements) be waived, and design and scheme preparation services be procured from Mott MacDonald Ltd for reasons of urgency as set out in the report.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB33 2012/13 FINANCIAL OUTTURN

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the final revenue and capital spending position for 2012/13.

The Board was advised that the final accounts for 2011/12 were complete; the revenue spending position for each Department, which would be subject to external audit, was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

It was reported that budget savings for 2013/14 were

implemented over two tranches, the first of which consisted of savings of £6.04m, and approved by Council in December 2012. As a result of some of these savings being implemented early, it provided part-year budget savings in 2012/13.

The report provided details on the key variances (which were in addition to the overall net underspend) in the following services:

- Children and Families;
- Economy, Enterprise and Property;
- Finance;
- Human Resources;
- Prevention and Assessment;
- Commissioning and Complex Care;
- Community and Environment; and
- Corporate and Democracy

Members were advised that the Council's Reserves and Balances had been reviewed in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Strategy. The Council's General Balances stood at £8,067,000, which, given the financial climate, was considered to be at a reasonable level.

With regard to Capital Spending, details of spending against the 2012/13 Capital Programme, were attached at Appendix 2. It was noted that spending was £7.1m below the revised capital programme of £57.8m, which represented 87% delivery of the revised capital programme. It was reported that the main areas of significant slippage were in respect of Castlefields Regeneration, The Grange (PFI) Project, Widnes Crematorium (Cremators) and Bungalows at Halton Lodge.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(N.B. Councillor Nelson declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as he was a Governor at the Grange School.)

EXB34 2013/14 TO 2015/16 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the Council's total forecast capital programme expenditure and associated funding over the next three years.

As part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Executive Board had approved the capital strategy on 29 November 2012. This covered the period 2013/14 to 2015/16. Council approved the overall capital programme for the same period at its meeting on 6 March 2013, which at the time were based on estimates of capital allocations.

The Council would continue to seek and secure further additional external resources to reduce on-going revenue implications and enhance the capital programme, through for example, Section 106 agreements.

Estimates of capital receipts over the medium term were based on forecast land and building sales. Given the current subdued state of the property market, and with no expected sign of recovery over the term of the capital programme, a cautious approach needed to be followed, and as such, there were no funds available for new capital starts unless external funding was generated to finance the cost.

RESOLVED: That the Council's Capital Programme for 2013/16, including forecast spend and funding, be noted.

INFORMATION ISSUE

Members were advised of the Chief Executive's intention to use Emergency Powers to Waive Procurement Standing Order 4.1 in pursuant of 1.8.4 (c) & (d) in respect of the contract renewal for ICT security software.

It was noted that it was necessary to waive Procurement Standing Order 4.1 in order to procure the MacAfee security gateway licence for a further 3 years at a cost of £145,000 – funded from the existing ICT capital programme – resulting in a £40,000 saving for the authority.

Members agreed and noted the action taken by the Chief Executive.

MINUTES ISSUED: 2 July 2013

CALL-IN: 9 July 2013

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 9 July 2013

Meeting ended at 2.43 p.m.