

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 12 December 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: A. Scott, M. Reaney, G. Cook, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, E. Dawson and E. O'Meara

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB120 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB121 EUROPEAN FUNDING 2014-2020 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which sought approval to develop a European Action Plan for Halton, as part of the next European Programme 2014-2020.

The Board was advised that Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had been required to produce a European Union (EU) Investment Plan setting out how the Liverpool City Region (LCR) proposed to spend its EU funding allocation.

It was reported that Halton would receive an indicative allocation of £16.9m by the LEP out of the £185m pot. EU Regulations for the new programme required all EU funding to be spent on eleven thematic objectives. The LCR

Action

had agreed that these themes would be taken forward through five 'portfolios', which were:

- Blue/Green Economy;
- Business Economy;
- Innovation Economy;
- Inclusive Economy; and
- Place and Connectivity.

It was noted that Halton had mirrored the five 'portfolios' in developing its own set of projects under the same themes. The next steps would be to develop the high level 'portfolios' in more detail and to consult with stakeholders, with final drafts ready to submit to the LEP by 31 December 2013. A Halton European Action Plan would provide further detail on individual projects, which would be large scale.

Reason(s) For Decision

An indicative allocation of £16.9m was a much needed resource which would support the Borough in delivering its strategic priorities.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

January 2014 onwards.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board notes the progress being made and supports the development of a Halton Action Plan for the European Programme 2014-2020;
- 2) Officers be authorised to identify potential match funding opportunities in order to maximise the benefit to Halton that the European programme provides;
- 3) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property, be authorised, in consultation with the Leader, to take all steps necessary to deliver the

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

programme; and

- 4) any commitments to match funding utilising Council resources, be brought back to the Executive Board for consideration.

EXB122 FIRST WORLD WAR COMMEMORATIONS

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive which considered the Council's approach to the First World War Commemorations 2014 -2018.

The Board was advised that, in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War on 4 August 2014, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport had announced plans to build a commemoration fitting of this significant milestone in world history, working alongside partners including Imperial War Museums, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The focus for events was one of commemoration and remembrance rather than celebratory and was intended to cover the four year period of the war.

It was reported that many local authorities were developing commemoration programmes involving residents in the planning of local commemorations which would bring communities together to commemorate the local impact of the First World War. Examples of such events were contained in the report. The Board noted that there were a number of funding sources available to support local commemorations, in particular, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) was offering grants from £3,000 to £100,000 upwards, and Councils were able to join the Imperial War Museum's First World War Centenary Partnership to access a range of digital resources. The HLF were awarding for community projects which focused on the First World War and on any heritage related to the First World War, and were encouraging new perspectives and stories not previously told.

In terms of regional events, it was further reported that Liverpool City Council in consultation with local regiments, had started to scope a potential First World War Commemoration Event to take place in Liverpool between the 12-14 September 2014. The event would be themed around an educational schools day, display day and a day of commemoration via church services and parades.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council develop a local programme of events to commemorate the First World War and funding bids be drawn up as appropriate;
- 2) the plans for a regional event be noted and once detailed plans are drawn up, the Council consider its involvement in the event; and
- 3) the Leader be nominated as the relevant Portfolio lead.

Chief Executive

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

EXB123 CAPITAL GRANT - TWO YEAR OLD FREE ENTITLEMENT - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which sought approval to commence works on the capital expenditure associated with the Two Year Old Early Years Entitlement in Halton.

The Board was advised that since 2009, local authorities had received funding to provide targeted free entitlement to the most vulnerable two year olds which met strict criteria. In 2011/12, there was an increase in expansion in the entitlement programme, whereby Halton would receive sufficient funding to deliver entitlement to an increased number of recipients.

It was reported that Halton was allocated £355,915 in funding to support the expansion of place capacity. Applications received through the Grant Allocation process were considered by the Capital Funding Panel on 1 October 2013. Details of those applications approved in principle were contained in the report, together with an explanation of the timescales involved in the payment arrangements. It was noted that all capital work would be completed by August 2014.

Reason(s) For Decision

The Local Authority was statutorily required to have sufficient provision of 2 year old free entitlement places.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Implementation Date

Completion of works by August 2014 would allow for the additional places created to be used from September 2014.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approve the capital expenditure detailed in the report, to assist with the expansion of the Two Year Old Early Years Entitlement in Halton; and
- 2) agree to delegate the approval of any further bids received for Two Year Old capital funding to the Capital Funding Panel comprising appropriate members of the Children & Enterprise Directorate and Council's Finance Department (as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report), in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB124 VIRTUAL HEADTEACHER REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided the annual update on the attainment and achievement of Halton children in care.

The report set out the vision statement for the Virtual School, and it was reported that the oversight and governance arrangements for the Virtual School (VS) rested with the Children in Care Partnership Board. The 'virtual' nature of the school referred to incorporating all children in care into one school as well as the multi-agency working relationships which underpinned the work of the school. It was reported that each of the agencies and teams which operated within the VS were committed to achieving the vision statement and worked to prioritise children in care within their own service delivery.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board accept the report and the key attainment and achievement outcomes be noted; and
- 2) support is given to the Virtual School for the future developments identified within the report.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB125 PROCUREMENT OF AN INTEGRATED SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICE IN HALTON

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health, which sought approval to proceed with a tender exercise for the provision of Integrated Sexual Health Services in Halton.

The Board was advised that under the terms of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, responsibility for the commissioning of public health services transferred to Local Authorities on 1 April 2013. Details of the services for which the Council now had responsibility were given in the report. It was noted that under current arrangements sexual health services were delivered under four separate contracts. Appendix A contained a summary of the scope of the services. These contracts had been extended for 12 months from 31 March 2013, with an option to extend to March 2015 if necessary. In addition, it was proposed that the Community Sexual Health and Young Persons' Sexual Health services also be extended until October 2014, to enable a tender process to take place.

The Board was further advised that moving towards a more integrated model of service delivery would bring together the four service contracts into one large contract, the advantages of which were listed in the report. The expectation was that this would result in improved outcomes for Halton residents. The timetable for the proposed tender was attached at Appendix B for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approve the proposal to tender for an integrated Sexual Health Service for Halton;
- 2) agree to using Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.4 (a) to waive Part 3 of the Procurement Standing Orders (Contract value) for the delivery of the service in relation to the Community Sexual Health Services contract;
- 3) agree to the use of Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.4 (a) to waive Procurement Standing Order 4.1, in relation to the Young Person's Sexual

Director of Public Health

Health contract;

- 4) authorise a six month extension to the above contracts to provide service continuity during the tendering process; and
- 5) approve the timeline for the tender process detailed in Appendix B attached to the report.

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB126 DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 2013/14

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the second quarter to 30 September 2013.

The Board was reminded that in September 2011, a review of the Council's existing performance management and monitoring arrangements had been undertaken, based upon a set of principles agreed by the Corporate Policy and Performance Board. This was based around the better management of performance information in terms of both strategic focus and volume. The Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from performance in the relevant quarter for each Directorate, being aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's performance management arrangements, with the Board having a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

It was reported that Directorate Risk Registers were under review and would be refreshed in conjunction with the development of Directorate Business Plans 2014-17; monitoring of high risks would be reported in due course to Executive Board.

RESOLVED: That the report and progress and performance information be noted.

EXB127 DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT AND DISCRETIONARY SUPPORT SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought approval for the removal of the ring fence around the Discretionary Support Scheme budget.

The Board was advised that the Discretionary Support Scheme, (DSS) previously administered by the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP), was abolished by the Welfare Reform Act in April 2013. At the same time, Crisis Loans for general living expenses and Community Care Grants were replaced by a new discretionary service administered by the Council. The Council's Scheme was introduced in April 2013 and payments from the Scheme had been made against a set of criteria, previously agreed by Executive Board in consultation with the Corporate Policy and Performance Board (PPB). It was noted that although the DWP did not expect local authorities to replicate the scheme, it was the intention of Government that the funding would be used to provide support to vulnerable people within the Borough.

The report provided information relating to Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), which provided clients with further financial assistance. Members were advised that the DHP budget was under pressure, with an increase of 682% in the number of applications to date, compared with last year. The Board was further advised that the DSS budget was not ring fenced; it was proposed that, in order to relieve pressure on the DHP budget, and to give the maximum flexibility to the Council to help some of the most vulnerable members of Halton's Community, the DSS budget be used to relieve pressure on the DHP budget. Spend on both budgets would be kept under close scrutiny by the Corporate PPB.

RESOLVED: That the ring fence around the Discretionary Support Scheme Fund be removed, to enable the budget to supplement the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund, if that becomes necessary.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

EXB128 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2013/14 MID YEAR REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which reviewed activities on Treasury Management for the mid-year point 2013/14 in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Policy.

The mid-year report had been completed in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice and covered the following:

- An economic update for the first six months of 2013/14;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy

- Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Council's Capital expenditure (prudential indicators);
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2013/14;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2013/14;
- A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2013/14;and
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2013/14.

The Board noted that the Council was required to prepare prudential indicators and to report on any significant variations, as part of the Council's on-going requirement to report on the current capital position. Details of these indicators were attached to the report at Appendix 1. The report also provided details of the investment and new borrowing portfolio. It was further noted that the Department for Transport had indicated that it may pay a substantial capital grant to the Council during the latter months of 2013/14. In view of this, the counterparty limits for two banks had been increased and Appendix 2 provided details of the revised counterparty list.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and Council be recommended to approve the revised Prudential Indicators and Counterparty List, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

Operational
Director - Finance

TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO

EXB129 OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS, HALTON CASTLE WARD

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which detailed the objections received following public consultation on a proposed 20 mph speed limit on roads within the Halton Castle Ward.

The Board was advised that public consultation had taken place on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits on a number of residential areas within the Halton Castle Ward, as shown on the map at Appendix A. Details of the proposals were set out in Appendix B, attached to the report, and had been considered and supported by the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board at its meeting on 11 September 2013.

The introduction of 20mph speed limits had been shown to reduce the number of collisions on residential roads and reduce the severity of any accident casualties. It was reported that following formal consultation, two objections had been received, as detailed in the report. In addition, it was noted that the proposals had the support of Ward Councillors, Castlefields Implementation Group, Cheshire Police and the Portfolio holder for Transportation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) notice be given of the Council's intention to introduce an Order to implement a 20 mph speed limit on those roads listed in appendix B attached to the report; and
- 2) the objectors be notified accordingly.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

MINUTES ISSUED: 16 December 2013

CALL-IN: 23 December 2013

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 23 December 2013

Meeting ended at 11.50 a.m.