

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 19 January 2017 2.00 p.m.
The Boardroom, Municipal Building

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
3. CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO	
(A) HOME TO SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT POLICY FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) - KEY DECISION	1 - 16

*Please contact Angela Scott on 0151 511 8670 or
Angela.scott@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 23 February 2017*

Item	Page No
(B) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 AND BASIC NEED - KEY DECISION	17 - 22
(C) REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY UPDATE	23 - 36
(D) CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY CONTRACT	37 - 40
(E) SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2018 - KEY DECISION	41 - 62
4. HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO	
(A) RE-DESIGN OF NIGHT TIME SUPPORT	63 - 124
(B) ADULT SOCIAL CARE CONTRACTS - KEY DECISION	125 - 129
5. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO	
(A) WASTE TREATMENT SERVICES	130 - 134
6. RESOURCES PORTFOLIO	
(A) USE OF GUARDIAN SERVICE IN VACANT BUILDINGS	135 - 141
(B) REQUEST FOR BUSINESS RATES RELIEF	142 - 145
(C) BUSINESS RATES RELIEF PROPOSED GUIDING PRINCIPLES	146 - 152
7. SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	

PART II

In this case the Board has a discretion to exclude the press and public and, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it is **RECOMMENDED** that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Item	Page No
8. RESOURCES PORTFOLIO	
(A) DISPOSAL OF FREEHOLD INTEREST IN THE LAND TO THE REAR OF THE FORMER SOUTHBANK HOTEL, LORD STREET, RUNCORN.	153 - 162
9. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO AND RESOURCES PORTFOLIO	
(A) LAND DISPOSAL FOR EMPLOYMENT LAND AT JOHNSON'S LANE, WIDNES	163 - 176

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
WARDS:	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks the Executive Board's approval for a revised assessment and eligibility criteria process for inclusion in the Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- i) The Board approves the revised assessment and eligibility criteria as set out in paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10, for inclusion in the Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; and**
- ii) The Board approves implementation from September 2017 for new applications or applications at the point of transition.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made, where necessary, to facilitate a child's attendance at school, and to ensure that post-16 learners are able to access the education and training of their choice and ensure that, if support for access is required, this will be assessed and provided where necessary.
- 3.2 At the time of writing 385 pupils with special educational needs and disabilities receive support from the Local Authority to access educational provision either within Halton, or, where that specific need cannot be met in-borough, assistance is provided to out-borough provision. This change will impact on new applications or at a point of transition.

- 3.3 The cost for providing transport for pupils with SEND for the 2015/16 academic year was £1,273,776, £879,092 for in-borough transport and £394,684 for out-borough transport. Over recent years the costs of providing transport for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities has continued to increase leaving a budget shortfall in 2015/2016 of £205,000.
- 3.4 To reduce the costs of transport the Local Authority:
- reviews all contracts annually to ensure it secures the best value for money;
 - works in partnership with a neighbouring local authority to share contracts where appropriate;
 - has increased the number of children and young people supported through the Independent Travel Training Initiative; and,
 - is reviewing Special Educational Needs provision to ensure the needs of more children and young people can be met within the local community.
- 3.5 However, these measures alone will not balance the budget. To ensure we can meet our statutory responsibilities, it is proposed that all applications for assistance will need to be submitted to assess eligibility against the statutory duty to provide assistance i.e. 2 miles (nearest qualifying primary school), 3 miles (nearest qualifying secondary school) criteria, and where those criteria do not apply, to assess eligibility for low income families or to assess those children and young people who cannot travel independently due to their special educational needs and disability or/and a medical condition.
- 3.6 A report was submitted to the Executive Board on 14th July 2016 seeking approval to consult on a revised assessment and eligibility criteria process for the Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Board agreed to the consultation and a consultation ran from Monday 5th September 2016, closing on Friday 4th November 2016 (a period of 8 school weeks excluding the October half-term).
- 3.7 Those consulted included neighbouring local authorities; other departments within the Council; the governing bodies of all schools and further education institutions; head teachers, pupils and parents at all nursery, primary and secondary schools; the head teachers of Special Schools and their pupils and parents, Halton Impart, Passenger Transport Executive and the integrated transport authorities; persons of sixth form age and their parents; the Children's Trust and associated partners; Halton SEND Partnership; other bodies including education and training providers; transport companies and authorities operating in the locality; public sector bodies; community groups; voluntary organisations, and groups/organisations with an interest in special

educational needs and disability issues. The consultation was also placed on the Council's website and available at Direct Link and Library offices throughout Halton.

- 3.8 The aim of the revised assessment and eligibility criteria process is that all children and young people with significant special educational needs or disability should lead lives that are as independent and as free from restriction as possible. All applications for assistance will need to be submitted to assess eligibility against the statutory duty to provide assistance i.e. 2 miles (nearest qualifying primary school), 3 miles (nearest qualifying secondary school) criteria, and where those criteria do not apply, to assess eligibility for low income families or to assess those children and young people who cannot travel independently due to special educational needs and disability or/ and a medical condition.
- 3.9 The nature and mode of travel support for those who are eligible will, as previously, be determined by the Council and will be one that is consistent with the Council's duty to secure value for money and the needs of the child/young person. Travel solutions include:
- a) Bicycle – a one off payment made by the Council to purchase a bicycle;
 - b) Walking bus – a Passenger Assistant will guide and support children and young people on their route;
 - c) Travel pass – a free bus pass for use on public transport;
 - d) Personal Travel Budget – access to funds for parents/carers, paying a family member mileage, and use of befriending service;
 - e) Supported Public Transport – use of public transport with a Passenger Assistant;
 - f) Independent Travel Training – Training provided by the Council to children and young people to travel independently,
 - g) Provision of vehicles – this includes multiple pick up vehicles, and under very exceptional circumstances taxis and private hire vehicles
- 3.10 The changes consulted upon were:
- Applications will need to be submitted to assess eligibility for low income families or to assess those children and young people who cannot travel independently due to a medical condition;
 - Where parents/carers are in receipt of the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance with a higher mobility element for their child and where this has been used to hire a vehicle, parents/carers will be expected to use this vehicle to support their child to school. If a parent/carer uses their own car, in these circumstances, they may apply for a Personal Travel Budget from the Council,

- Where transport is provided for Post-16 Students a charge equivalent to the cost of a bus pass will be made. This charge will be reduced where families are on a low income, consideration will also be given to the duration of the course.

3.11 A total of 13 responses were received and included responses from parents/carers/grandparents, a travel provider, SEND Partnership, and a self-advocacy group. It was pleasing to see responses from children and young people with SEND as part of an independently run consultation. A summary of the general comments/responses regarding the proposed changes is attached as Appendix 1.

3.12 Detailed below are the key themes arising from the consultation.

Ceasing Assistance with Transport – Some respondents thought that transport would cease for their child, or that the Council intended to cease assistance completely. For those already in receipt of assistance this will continue, the proposals were not to cease transport altogether. The Council cannot cease transport altogether as it has a statutory duty against criteria to provide assistance. The intention is to ensure that anyone seeking assistance must apply and be assessed against the agreed criteria. If the application meets the criteria then assistance will be provided. If the application does not meet the criteria the parent/carer will have the right of appeal.

Travel Training – There was a view that Travel Training offered to children and young people was only delivered during holidays or quiet times which did not reflect the needs of those children and young people travelling at busier periods. Travel training actually takes place throughout the year, both in school term time and during school holidays. Travel training takes place predominantly during the school term whilst pupils are making their normal journey to/from school. Travel training also has to be provided in school holidays. If the Council did not do this there would be inactivity for 14 weeks of the year which would place additional pressure with constant demands on the service.

Ensuring attendance at 2 separate schools for families with more than one child – Reference was made to the potential difficulty faced by parents who have a child with SEND attending one school, and also have a child (or children) who attend another school. School place planning within Halton seeks to ensure that there is adequate provision locally to prevent excessive travel needs. If a child with SEND is placed at a special school or mainstream school with a specific resource base to support their needs, and an application for assistance with transport is received, the application will be assessed against the agreed criteria. If the application meets the criteria then assistance will be provided and the Council will have met its statutory duty. If the application for assistance does not meet the criteria then the

parent/carer would need to make their own arrangements as it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure their child's attendance at school.

Providing support for children on medical grounds – There was a view that transport may not be provided to children who cannot be expected to walk to school. The Council will ensure it meets its statutory duty in this regard.

A Blanket Model approach – Some respondents thought that each child should have their needs assessed individually, rather than a blanket model. This will be the case, i.e. each application for assistance will be assessed on an individual basis against the determination criteria.

Use of out-borough provision – Some respondents made reference to the use by the Council of out-borough schools, and the transport costs associated with this. Currently the Council does have to use some out-borough provision as this is specialist provision not currently available within Halton. However, the Council is currently reviewing its SEND provision and this will assist in ensuring more locally available/accessible provision, and therefore reduced travel costs.

Disability Living Allowance – Reference was made to the proposal that where parents/carers are in receipt of the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance with a higher mobility element for their child and where this has been used to hire a vehicle, parents/carers will be expected to use this vehicle to support their child to school. One respondent commented that this was unlawful.

If the Local Authority were to decline assistance with transport on the basis that the child/young person was in receipt of the higher rate of DLA and that a vehicle was available to the family due to receipt of this benefit then this may be deemed to be unlawful as this would be introducing a new eligibility criterion which is not included in the relevant legislation and Code of Practice. However, the Local Authority policy is not to consider the receipt of DLA and/or hire of a vehicle to determine whether a child or young person is eligible to receive assistance with transport. This will be determined by the factors as set out in the policy including distance, low income families and where it is deemed necessary due to the child's medical and/or special educational needs.

Once a child/young person is deemed to be eligible then the Local Authority, when determining the nature of the assistance to be provided, will take account of whether a vehicle is available to be used and accordingly whether a mileage rate would be the most suitable travel solution. This is in light of the Local Authority's obligation to

consider the needs of the child concerned but also the overall resources available for others to whom assistance is to be provided.

Therefore, where a parent/carer uses their own vehicle in these circumstances (be that a car they own or have hired using DLA) they may apply for a Personal Travel Budget from the Council to reimburse costs incurred, therefore the Council is providing assistance (through reimbursement) and meeting its statutory duty.

- 3.13 At the time of writing, the Council's Internal Audit are also undertaking a review of Sustainable School Travel. This review includes how the Council promotes sustainable travel and transport, transport arrangements for eligible children, procurement and contract management, financial control, budgetary control, Business Continuity arrangements, and Safeguarding. It is intended that any findings from this Audit Review are then implemented and included, along with any agreed changes to the proposed assessment and eligibility criteria process and incorporated in a fully revised Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which will be submitted to the Board for approval at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Under section 509AB of the Education Act 1996, a Local Authority has a duty to ensure that a suitable travel solution is made for an eligible child/young person. The Authority should set out the extent to which the arrangements can facilitate the attendance at a relevant qualifying school/college for a child/young person with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Act applies to all children and young people who permanently live in Halton and attend a qualifying school named in their Statement of Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan.
- 4.2 The 16-18 transport duty relates to young people of sixth form age with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged up to 19. Local Authorities also have a duty under the Education and Skills Act 2008 to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training.
- 4.3 The Children and Families Act 2014 replaces the Statement of Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) for those over the age of 16 with Education, Health and Care Plans. Under the Act, a local authority may continue to maintain an Education Health and Care Plan for a young person over 19 if a young person requires additional time, in comparison to the majority of others of the same age who do not have special educational needs, to complete his or her education or training. Local authorities may continue to provide special educational provision until the end of the academic year in which the young person turns 25. The age limit for compulsory education/training

has increased from 16 to 18. This applies to young people if they were born on or after 1st September 1997. All of these additional duties are likely to result in a significant growth in demand for transport.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The proposed travel solutions comply with statutory requirements in ensuring that travel solutions are available for children and young people within the borough of Halton. The proposals will ensure that the educational provision for children & young people in the borough is inclusive and accessible.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Educational achievement is critical to the life chances of all children in the borough and the proposed transport solutions help underpin the requirement to promote fair access to educational opportunity.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The proposed travel solutions promote and support measures that encourage local communities to use environmentally sustainable forms of travel, especially walking, cycling, and public transport.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The proposed travel solutions promote the safe travel and transfer of children and young people to school and college.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The revised assessment and eligibility criteria process proposed for inclusion in the Policy will seek to ensure that the Council meet statutory requirements. There are no major risks associated with the publication of the Policy.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The proposed arrangements reflect any requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Any finally determined policy will reflect the diverse needs of

children and young people in Halton in accessing appropriate educational provision. Any determined policy will ensure that suitable travel solutions are in place for those children with Special Educational Needs, and/or a disability who may, by reason of their disability, be unable to walk even relatively short distance to school, and those children with a mobility problem caused by a temporary medical condition who may be unable to walk to school. An Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

9.1 The decision is required to fulfil the Council’s statutory duty to provide, where required, and promote the use of sustainable travel and transport.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10.1 None.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

11.1 It is intended that any revised policy would be implemented for the September 2017 academic intake.

12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Home-to-school travel and transport statutory guidance 2014	People Directorate	Martin West
Post-16 transport to education and training statutory guidance for local authorities 2014	People Directorate	Martin West
Education Act 1996	People Directorate	Martin West
Education & Skills Act 2008	People Directorate	Martin West
Children & Families Act 2014	People Directorate	Martin West

Responses to consultation on Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

There were 13 responses in total to the consultation. Respondents included parents/carers/grandparents, a travel provider, SEND Partnership, and a self-advocacy group. A summary of the responses is provided below:

Respondent 1:

The move to encourage parents to drop their own kids off at school must consider that many parents have school aged children that they need to drop off and pick up at other schools at the same time. I would like you to ensure that any requirement to drop off and pick up a second child at a different school is considered in your criteria and steps are taken to ensure neither child's ability to attend school regularly and punctually are negatively impacted. I am particularly aware of research that indicates siblings of SEN kids often also have poor educational outcomes and this change could further impact this.

Respondent 2:

I have read your consultation and I think these are positive ways to help to balance the deficit. Especially the below:

- Where parents/carers are in receipt of the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance with a higher mobility element for their child and where this has been used to hire a vehicle, parents/carers will be expected to use this vehicle to support their child to school. If a parent/carer uses their own car, in these circumstances, they may apply for a Personal Travel Budget from the Council.
- I think making the reductions needed in transport are to be encouraged alongside some guarantee that our SEN schools will be able to continue to provide the education and support to our children they do without seeing a reduction in their budget.

Respondent 3:

Regardless of distance I feel that all children who attend special needs schools or have a disability should be offered school transport, for their personal safety. It is then the parent's choice if they accept or decline the offer.

Respondent 4:

Statutory guidance relating to the provision of school transport places a clear obligation on local authorities to provide transport when special education needs mean children cannot be reasonably expected to be able to walk. I cannot see anything in the guidance that would allow Halton not to meet this obligation based on the parent's level of income or whether or not they are in receipt of higher rate mobility DLA.

The guidance does make reference to parents being paid a mileage rate to take their children to school but it is clear that this must be with the parent's consent. My reading of the proposed

changes are that Halton are looking to require parents to take their children to school and not to make the required mileage payment in relation to this. I am unable to reconcile this proposal with the statutory guidance.

In relation to my specific concern around how we can be expected to be in two places at once when we drop off and pick up two children from different schools at the same time I note the statutory guidance states that Local Authorities should assess whether it is reasonable for the parent to be expected to accompany the child. Clearly it is entirely unreasonable to expect someone to be in two places at the same time. I cannot see how the proposed changes meet the statutory requirements.

Respondent 5:

I am a single parent of 2 children, one child goes to school in Runcorn and another in Widnes. Both children finish school at the same time, I cannot be in two places at once. I do have mobility for my son but cannot get to both schools at the same time. This would have a massive impact if transport was taken away.

Respondent 6:

I believe that the council are proposing stop transporting disabled children to school. I have a severely autistic 9 year old boy who currently attends *a school* in Widnes. I have taken him to school every day since he started there in 2010. I also have a 5 year old at *a primary school in Widnes* who I also take to school – a logistical nightmare as you can imagine, particularly as I then go to work myself 3 days a week in Manchester.

In 2018, my son will be expected to attend Cavendish Academy in Runcorn. Realistically, all other options have been taken away. My expectation was that he would be taken there and back on transport as there are no schools locally to accommodate his needs. There is nothing that I would like better than to continue taking *my child* to school, for him to walk to school with his friends or for him to ride there on his bike independently.

He is non-verbal. He has no concept of danger and no social awareness. I would go so far as to say he is a danger to himself and others. Hence there is an adult with him 24 hours a day. This is part of the reason we have been awarded higher rate mobility and are in receipt of a blue badge.

It feels as though we are being penalised for our son's disability.

If I take him to Runcorn each day our family is being penalised simply because of his disability.

- 1) *He* experiences high levels of anxiety. Sitting in a car, whilst I am driving, in traffic on Runcorn bridge would not be good for his health. (Taxis and buses obviously are entitled to use the bus lane).
- 2) I would have to give up work
- 3) My daughter would be late for school
- 4) My husband is a shift working police officer. This added pressure would affect his job.

Parents of disabled children struggle emotionally, physically and mentally. By asking my child to get a public bus or ride a bike to school displays as an alternative method of getting to school displays a lack of common sense and a complete disregard for our family life.

I ask you to reconsider your proposal and take some time to meet the children and families you are making these decisions about. At least judge each case on its merits rather than the blanket ban you are proposing.

Respondent 7:

This response was from a Travel Operator and did not make any comment on the proposed changes.

Respondent 8:

This response was from grandparent carers regarding their very specific individual circumstances which, upon examination, will not be affected by the proposals.

Respondent 9:

I realise you have to save money and appreciate it is difficult in today's current financial climate.

I would be happy to pay towards the cost of transport for my 17 year old son to go to his school for young people with additional needs, this is because I am able. I worry about those who are not able, I know you say they will receive help and I hope they do.

Both my husband and I work full time, my husband working six days a week. We have 4 children, 2 living at home, the youngest is not able to be left alone and has learning difficulties. My husband and I work together to look after our youngest son, very rarely having time as a family, when we do, these times are precious.

In March we were lucky enough to be awarded the higher rate mobility component as part of the revised PIP. We now have a car to take our son to his various activity groups. I realise now that us having to take our son to school as part of the transport changes, is us paying towards his transport through this benefit. The only issue our family have is the times for drop off and pick up at school. As a working family we have worked our hours to accommodate the morning school run. If we were picking our son up from school then we would have to leave work very early, only working half a day.

You say you want our young people to be as independent as possible, well how is getting taken to school at 17 by your parents being independent? My son had more independence going on the school bus, at least he was away from us. We are proud to be a working family and promote a good work ethic to our children, how do these changes encourage work? I feel like you are putting obstacles in our way! Can I suggest organising or supporting the provision of breakfast/after school clubs specialising in young people with additional needs, to help working families with care.

I would love my son to be able to go to school on his own with his mates, unfortunately this is not possible. Currently I feel he has the next best thing, a laugh and a joke with his mates on the bus and the relationships he has built up with the drivers and escorts have helped him to mature into a fine

young man (his driver is going to be my son's best man when he gets married). If you take this provision away I feel you will spend more money providing other help in other areas.

Respondent 10:

This response was from a parent regarding their very specific individual circumstances, who are already in receipt of assistance, which will continue, and will not be affected by the proposals.

Respondent 11:

Proposed Changes to the Policy:

- *Applications will need to be submitted to assess eligibility for low income families or to assess those children and young people who cannot travel independently due to a medical condition.*

1. Low income Families:

Disabled children and children with SEN aged 5-16 will be 'eligible' because they can't reasonably be expected to walk to school – so long as they are attending their nearest suitable school. So for these families, whether they receive DLA is irrelevant as is any other income they might have – the transport has to be free of charge. (**Section 208B, Education and Inspections Act 2006**, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/77>)

2. Those who cannot travel independently to school:

Local authorities are required to: "make transport arrangements for all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special educational needs (SEN) or disability¹⁰. Eligibility, for such children should be assessed on an individual basis to identify their particular transport requirements. Usual transport requirements (e.g. the statutory walking distances) should not be considered when assessing the transport needs of children eligible due to SEN and/or disability". This highlights that the ability to 'walk to school' may be due to a range of issues relating to the child or young person's SEN and/or Disability; note that this proposed change indicates a link to medical conditions only. (**Section 1.3 Provision of travel arrangements: Eligible children, Home to School Transport and Transport guidance, 2014**, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445407/Home_to_School_Travel_and_Transport_Guidance.pdf)

- *Where parents/carers are in receipt of the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance with a higher mobility element for their child and where this has been used to hire a vehicle, parents/carers will be expected to use this vehicle to support their child to school. If a parent/carer uses their own car, in these circumstances, they may apply for a Personal Travel Budget from the Council*

1. If a child receives this benefit it is unlawful for this to be taken into consideration when making the decision about eligibility for school transports as it is not one of the criteria

the LA can take into account when deciding whether a child is eligible for home to school transport. For 5 – 16 year olds it is unlawful and cannot be used, nor can anything else other than the legal criteria set out in the 1996 Education Act. (**Schedule 35B, Education and Inspections Act 2006**, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/schedule/8>)

2. For anyone who accesses a personal travel budget when using their own vehicle it is imperative that all expenses are covered in their entirety (not solely fuel costs) in compliance to 508B which states arrangements MUST be made free of charge (**508B, Education and Inspections Act 2006**, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/schedule/8>)
- *Where transport is provided for Post-16 Students a charge equivalent to the cost of a bus pass will be made. This charge will be reduced where families are on a low income, consideration will also be given to the duration of the course.*
 1. We agree that there is no specific duty to provide free transport to 16 and 17 year olds – just under 16s and 18 plus. However – transport charges must not stop young people accessing the transport they need, they must be fair and reasonable and should be waived in appropriate cases. LAs need to consult and have due regard to public sector equality duty s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires them to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for disabled learners. (**s. 149, Equality Act 2010**, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>)
 2. Section 2(1c) requires Local Authorities to provide ‘assistance to [a disabled person] in taking advantage of educational facilities available to him’. This duty arises where it is ‘necessary’ for a Local Authority to provide a service under the CSDPA to meet a person’s needs. As such, there will be no CSDPA duty if in fact the disabled child or adult is able to obtain transport to access education under the Education Act 1996 duties and powers described above. However if there is a gap in the 1996 Act scheme and a need for transport to education cannot or will not be met under that legislation, then the CSDPA duty operates as a safety net. From 1 April 2015 however the CSDPA is repealed in relation to those over 18 and entitlement to transport will then be an issue of eligibility under the Care Act 2014. (**Section 2, Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970** <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1970/44/section/2>)

Respondent 12:

I disagree with current Halton transport consultation and the way parents/carers and young people have been treated in the process. Whilst I agree with promoting independence and being enablers for our young people, we must not lose sight of the fact, that for many, they will remain vulnerable and should have their needs assessed individually rather than a blanket model.

Firstly if we even consider asking our vulnerable young people to ride public transport, I urge the LA to firstly look at the barriers faced everyday in doing so. Full buses not stopping, anti social behaviour and promoting diversity all to be addressed before throwing our young people aboard and expecting that someone else other than the LA will deal with the fallout.

The current travel training provision is well below par with having only one independent travel trainer, who's preference seems to be to travel train from his frame of reference, during holidays or quiet times, over a short space of time with immediate return journeys that do not reflect the needs that you get people will be dealing with during busier periods and after a full day at school.

The use of mobility cars to transport young people is just not feasible for all. Firstly, mobility is put in place to enhance and support young people to participate in a fully functioning life, not for their LA to save on transport costs. The current demands the government put on parents to be in full time employment does not always lend to the availability of parents being able to transport either and the current transport arrangements allow for them to return to work and often have their children safely transported home to childminders or other family members. If such additional cost and time constrictions would be placed on already overstretched parent carers, I urge the LA to consider the implications of this such as financial pressure on families leading to isolation, none participation and additional family support, all being caused by the impossible situation being forced upon them.

Many young people with SEND do not attend schools within their own town and often not even in their own borough, whilst I appreciate the cost incurred by the LA to transport them to their named schools, should this not highlight the fact that it isn't the cost of transport that's the issue but the misuse and lack of integrity in the current funded LA provisions that should, given the funding provided meet the needs of most of their remit rather than us having to transport out of their own area?

The offer of costs that would cost no more than a weekly bus pass has been noted, alongside the fact that any school leaver currently in attendance at Riverside or Cronton actually have theirs provided for free, equality it taking advantage of the most vulnerable in society?

Our young people have no choice but to attend school, as parents we fight and work hard to be proactive, meet the needs of our children, love and nurture them and enable and support them into adulthood. So why is it that Halton LA are now trying to remove their only way of attending school, putting financial pressure and time constrictions stress on families and yet still refusing to have a face to face consultation to answer any of the above. Parents of young people with SEND just want fair and reasonable opportunities to have their voices heard and yet Halton LA continue with lack of integrity in doing the bare minimum to tick boxes of participation and Co production, you have targeted the most vulnerable in our society to make your cuts rather than listen to our voices. Had you listened many years ago this could of been avoided by looking closer to home, overhauling the LA current SEND provisions and teams and listening to the warnings from local Taxi services of the impending cost of running your own fleet vehicles.

Respondent 13:

Below is a summary of a response from children and young people who attended an independently run consultation event:

Changes that the council might make to transport to school or college

Do you think they are a good or bad idea? Why?

When parents/carers get the higher rate of Disability Allowance for their child and have used this to get a mobility car, they will be expected to use the car to take the child to school.

GOOD It is easy to let my Mum or Grandad take me

GOOD It will be cheaper for the council

GOOD I don't like too much noise on the minibus – the car would be quieter

GOOD Because it will cost the council less money for the young person

BAD Cause they can't use transport anymore

GOOD because you can get around

BAD because you should be able to use the school bus instead of your parents taking you

GOOD

BAD

GOOD A bus costs a lot of money

GOOD to allow parents to be with their kids

When the council organises transport for young people over 16, they will start charging the same as it would cost for a bus pass

BAD It is garbage

GOOD It will save the council money which is good

GOOD It is fair to pay some something if you get money

BAD

GOOD It will give young people experience which will help them later in life going on a bus

BAD

BAD

GOOD If you've got money you should pay something

BAD idea that you have to pay for your travel cost

BAD because you have to pay money

Families who don't have much money will have to apply to have an assessment to find out if they can get help with getting their children to school

GOOD to check that you are poor

BAD My Mum and Dad haven't got money

GOOD I think it is fair for the government

GOOD

BAD It is not fair

GOOD I think it is fair

GOOD I think it is fair that they shouldn't have to pay for their son or daughter

BAD The person might lie about being poor

BAD as it should be proven in other ways e.g. seeing if they are on benefits or if the parent has a job. It is unfair and unjust

GOOD

Our messages about transport to the council

'It is good that we have come here to talk about this'

'I don't want to go on the bus (school minibus) I want to go in my Mummy's car. The bus is too noisy'

'I want to get the bus more than go in Mum's car'

'Can there be more days for travel training?'

'I think you should go to school without paying any money'

'I want to go in my Grandad's car so I can get to school' (goes to school in taxi)

'I would like to stay with the transport that I have already got. I don't want to change'

'Make sure all young people are consulted on the raising bus fares so they can give their own views on the fares'

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 January 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People & Families

SUBJECT: Capital Programme 2017-18 and Basic Need

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides a summary of the capital programmes for 2017/18 for the People Directorate.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) the capital funding available for 2017/18 is noted;**
- 2) the proposals to be funded from School Condition Capital Allocation are approved;**
- 3) Council is recommended to approve the Capital Programme 2017/18, and**
- 4) the proposal for the provision of an additional classroom at Lunts Heath Primary School is approved.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In February 2015 the Department for Education announced the schools Capital grant allocations for 2015/16 as well as indicative allocations for the two year period 2016/17 and 2017/18. By introducing three year allocations, the Department for Education are enabling those responsible for the school estate to plan effectively and make strategic investment decisions.

3.2

GOVERNMENT FUNDING	
School Condition Allocation – Local Authority maintained schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE) Allocated to fund condition and suitability projects at Local Authority maintained schools.	£1,097,372

School Condition Allocation – Voluntary Aided maintained schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE) Allocated to fund condition and suitability projects at Voluntary Aided schools.	£849,061
Devolved Formula Capital – Local Authority maintained schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE) Allocated directly to Local Authority maintained schools for their own use to address school building and Information Communication Technology needs.	£249,160
Devolved Formula Capital – Voluntary Aided maintained schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE) Allocated directly to Voluntary Aided maintained schools for their own use to address school building and Information Communication Technology needs.	£160,407

4.0 SCHOOL CONDITION ALLOCATION FUNDING

4.1 The table below details how the School Condition funding will be allocated:

Description	Estimated costs	Description
Computer Aided Design Plans	£5,000	Used to update plans of school buildings where improvement works have been carried out.
Kitchen gas safety / ventilation	£50,000	A rolling programme to address gas safety issues in school kitchens
Asbestos Management	£20,000	Annual update of asbestos surveys and undertaking of resulting remedial works.
Access Initiative Projects	£75,000	Fund that schools can bid for to resolve accessibility issues within school buildings.
Contingency	£99,730	Used for emergency and health and safety works that arises during the year.
Capital Repairs	£883,000	The detailed capital repairs programme for 2017/18 can be found in Appendix 1.
Total	£1,132,730	

The total amount of £1,132,730 detailed above comprises £1,097,372 School Condition Allocation, together with a required total contribution from schools of circa £35,358. The figures are based at this time on current budget costs for the works.

4.2 In previous years the Local Authority has also allocated £345,821 from the Dedicated Schools Grant under the heading Capital Expenditure Revenue Account Funding (CERA). This funding was used by the Local Authority to make a contribution towards capital works in schools. Under National Funding Formula proposals the Department for Education (DfE) have advised Local Authorities that this will no longer be permissible.

5.0 **ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM AT LUNTS HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

5.1 Local Authority receives Basic Need funding from the Department for Education to assist in pupil place planning. Basic Need funding is made available to Local Authorities to ensure sufficient pupil places. The total funding still available in 2017/2018 is £943,346. To ease existing capacity issues at Lunts Heath Primary School, and to provide additional places going forward in east Widnes, it is recommended that an additional classroom is provided. This will assist with current school organisation issues and allow for an increase in the School's overall capacity once the building works are complete. If agreed, the School's Published Admission Number will increase from 50 places per year group to 60 places per year group, increasing the school's overall capacity from 350 to 420, thereby providing an additional 70 primary school places in east Widnes.

5.2 The works will be funded from Basic Need with costs estimated at circa £200,000. The Local Authority has already sought Section 77 approval from the Department for Education, which was approved by the Department on 10th October 2016. Section 77 (of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998) approval is needed when a Local Authority propose a change in use of playing fields (including playground/hard standing ground) used by schools.

5.3 If the Executive Board agrees to the proposed works at Lunts Heath, planning permission will then be sought.

6.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The programme of works will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the environments through capital projects, and to ensure the Council has sufficient school places.

7.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 In February 2015 the DfE announced indicative capital allocations for 2016/17 and 2017/18 as part of a three year announcement covering 2015 to 2018. The indicative capital allocation of funding for 2017/18 (£1,097,372) is the same as 2016/17. In the event that the allocation is reduced, the amount of funding available for elements of the programme will be reduced accordingly. The cost of works at Lunts Heath Primary School will be funded through Basic Need.

7.2 The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by producing more energy efficient buildings. Approval of the proposed additional classroom at Lunts Heath Primary ensures the Council's duty

to ensure sufficient school places.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

8.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The Capital Programme will address condition and suitability issues within school buildings and will improve the learning environment for children and young people.

8.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

8.3 A Healthy Halton

None identified.

8.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

9.1 Capital Repairs - It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of works. Whilst schools are aware of the proposed works, consultation with schools on their contribution to the proposed works will take place following Council approval. If schools are not willing to contribute, any proposed projects will not be carried out in 2017/18. In the event that schools are unable to contribute towards the cost of the works when completed, an element of the contingency budget can be used for this purpose, providing the school commit to making their financial contribution in the next financial year.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

10.1 The Access Initiative Programme provides funding to improve the accessibility of mainstream schools for pupils with disabilities and the wider community. Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects. The capacity of schools to meet the needs of children with more complex needs and disabilities will be developed further through building works at schools.

11.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

To deliver and implement the capital programmes.

12.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable.

13.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

Capital Programmes for 2017/18 to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2017. If the proposed works at Lunts Heath Primary School are approved, and planning permission is agreed, it is anticipated that any works undertaken would be completed in the 2017/18 academic year.

14.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Schools Capital Funding Allocations 2015-2018; Department for Education 12/05/2016.	Rutland House	Catriona Gallimore

Appendix 1**Capital Repairs Programme 2017/18**

School	Works	Phase	Total cost
Retentions	Various from 2016/17		20,000
All Saints Upton C of E Primary School	Electrical - Emergency lighting	Phase 1 of 1	22,000
Brookvale Primary School	Electrical work (lighting & Power wiring)	Phase 4 of 5	60,500
Chesnut Lodge School	Electrical work (lighting & Power wiring)	Final phase	16,500
Fairfield Primary School	Mechanical and Electrical work		275,000
Hallwood Park Primary School and Nursery	Windows	Final phase	33,000
Halton Lodge Children Centre	Windows	Phase 2 of 3	44,000
Lunts Heath Primary School	Windows	Final phase	55,000
Moore Primary School	Windows	Phase 2 of 4	82,500
Simms Cross Primary School	Windows	Phase 2 of 3	82,500
Simms Cross Primary School	Electrical work (lighting & Power wiring)	Phase 6 of 7	66,000
Spinney Avenue CE Vol Controlled Primary School	Electrical work (lighting & Power wiring)	Phase 2 of 3	66,000
The Bridge School	Electrical work (lighting & Power wiring)	Phase 5 of 6	60,000
			<hr/> 883,000 <hr/>

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 January 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: Regional Adoption Agency Update

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform and update members on progress towards a Regional Adoption Agency and the decisions taken under delegated authority by the Strategic Director: People and the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Families.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That Members note this summary report for the full and detailed business case and inter-authority agreement and in particular the following points:**

a) **The inter-authority agreement which sets out the legal and governance arrangements for the RAA, the role of the Lead Member in the partnership board which will oversee the RAA, how future finance and budgets will be agreed and the notice period of any partner wishers to withdraw (Section 5)**

b) **The current basis for funding the RAA being based on levels of activity directly relating to numbers of children with a confirmed plan for adoption (Section 9). Halton's contribution of 15% of the overall budget will be £318,114 which is slightly below the current budget. Any efficiencies identified will be used to invest in the RAA as it transitions to its new partnership.**

c) **The service will be named Adopt Together and Wigan will be the delivery local authority. There will be a "hub" based in Warrington but social workers will still use Halton as a base on a regular basis.**

d) **The service offer is outlined in Section 4 and staff will be consulted on the detail in the New Year.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Section 1: Introduction and background**

3.1.1 Warrington, Wigan, St Helens, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester RAA project board envisages a regional adoption service which:

- provides all children with an adoptive family that meets their needs;
- ensures that those affected by adoption receive the information, support and advice that they need to understand their adoption journey; and
- ensures that RAA families are well prepared, enabled and supported to care for the children with plans for adoption.

3.1.2 The RAA is being developed in the context of government policy to regionalise adoption through the establishment of regional adoption agencies as set out in the Education and Adoption Bill (2015). The RAA project has been granted up to £639K by the Department for Education to establish the RAA by 1 June 2017.

3.1.3 Key partners to the development of the RAA are: Warrington Borough Council, Wigan Council, St Helens Council, Halton Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Adoption Matters, Caritas Care, Nugent Care and After Adoption.

3.1.4 The five local authorities have agreed that the RAA will be a shared local authority service, that Wigan Council will provide the service and Cheshire West and Chester Council will act as the lead commissioner and, that staff in scope for the service will be seconded to Wigan (with a formal review after one year of operation).

3.1.5 The development of the RAA is funded by the Department of Education. Delays in the release of funding by the DfE are reflected in the revised project plan for the RAA. The 'go live' date for the RAA is now set at 1 June 2017 to ensure that the final project funding settlement is not limited to the financial year 2016-17.

3.2 **Section 2: Reasons for change**

3.2.1 Regionalising adoption offers an opportunity to improve economies of scale and reduce fragmentation of the system. It is the stated intent of government that all local authority adoption services will be regionalised by 2020.

3.2.2 A larger pool of adopters improves the likelihood of placing a child with an adoptive family who best meets their needs in a timely way.

A larger pool of adopters also increases the chances of finding such a placement from within the RAA pool, reducing the need to place children with external agencies.

- 3.2.3 The RAA, with an increased focus on adoption by all local authorities, has forecast an increase of 23% of children who will need adoptive families and the proposed model should be able to provide placements for 80% of these children (an increase of 5%).
- 3.2.4 Adoption support is a growing area of business and the development of the RAA allows a full review of the services on offer and a clear rationale for the adoption service offer in the future. This is particularly important in the context of diminishing government grants to fund inter-agency placements or adoption support activities. It also provides greater clarity to external providers, particularly voluntary adoption agencies, about the areas of business that the RAA will seek to commission.

3.3 **Section 3: Scope**

3.3.1 The RAA will:

- provide all children from Warrington, Wigan, St Helens, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester with an adoptive family that meets their needs, either from the RAA pool of adopters or through inter-agency arrangements with other regional adoption agencies or voluntary adoption agencies.
- ensure that those affected by adoption receive the information, support and advice that they need to understand their adoption journey.
- ensure that RAA families are well prepared, enabled and supported to care for the children with plans for adoption support.

3.3.2 Across the five local authorities and average of 5.7% of children in the care of the local authority go on to be matched with an adoptive family. For Halton the number of children who go on to be matched is 6%. Over the last 5 years across the footprint, 110 children have been matched' in Halton this varies from 9 children in 2012/13 and 14 children in 2014/15.

3.3.3 The average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (for children who have been adopted) varies across the region. From 2012 to 2015, the average ranged from 503 days in Cheshire West and Chester to 655 days in Wigan, compared to a national average of 593 days and in Halton 426 days.

3.3.4 A key challenge for the RAA will be to ensure that children in the 'hard to place' category are matched with families willing and able to meet their needs in a timely fashion and that, where possible

(without delaying a match), the adopter is matched from within the RAA. Adoption matches were found for 113 children within this category during 2012-2015 representing 34% of the total number of matches made.

3.3.5 Over the three year period 2012 and 2015, the five local authorities placed 334 children. Of these, 75% were placed with the local authority's adopters or with adopters from a partner local authority. The remaining 25% of children were placed with adopters from local authorities outside the partnership (14%) or with VAA adopters (11%). Predictions for 2015/16 suggest the total number of children adopted across the authorities will be 141. This represents, on average, an additional 28 children per year to be adopted across the region (approx. 23% increase).

3.3.6 Services and functions which are within the scope of the RAA have been identified are set out in Section 4 together with the services and functions which remain the responsibility of individual local authorities. A number of services and functions will be commissioned from external providers which will be largely Tier 3 post adoption support as outlined in Section 4.

3.4 **Section 4: Service offer, skills and staff**

3.4.1 The RAA will offer the following services:

3.4.1.1 Recruitment and assessment of adopters

- It is forecast that the RAA will be required to find placements for up to 141 children per year (23% increase on current level) and, therefore, will need to identify 109 families (16 % increase on current level) to meet these children's needs. Recruitment and assessment social workers and assistants will also take on other functions such as liaison with local authority child care workers for early identification, family finding and support for life story work.
- Local Authority staff will remain responsible for confirming the matching of a child with an adoptive placement. The RAA will be responsible for sourcing and family finding those placements based on the individual childrens needs.

3.4.1.2 Matching and panels

- The RAA will run a panel each week, providing approximately 50 panels per year and considering up to 141 matching decisions and 109 adopter approval decisions. This equates to a case load of five key decisions on matching and approvals at each panel and provides capacity for considering disruptions, withdrawals and other items of business. Weekly panels will provide all

partner local authorities an opportunity to improve the timeliness of decision making in relation to matching and adopter approval.

3.4.1.3 Adoption support

- Pre-adoption support assessments and support planning at the point of the decision by the Agency Decision Maker in the Local Authority that the child should be placed for adoption. Post adoption support assessments and support planning for all relevant children/families in the first 3 years of the placement or at the request of a partner local authority (at any time in during the adoptive placement), for example alongside a joint assessment for a child in need.
- Provision of tier 1 and tier 2 adoption support services as set out in the assessment for the first three years of placement for all relevant families. Tier 1 adoption support includes training/workshops for adoptive parents and the development and support of an adoption community. Tier 2 adoption support services for the RAA includes Theraplay, AdOpt and Nurtured Heart and are included in the service offer by the RAA. Tier 3 (commissioned) bespoke adoption support provision will be funded by the relevant local authority partner after considering the findings of the adoption support assessment and the outcome of an application for Adoption Support Fund assistance.
- Access to records (schedule 2) and schedule 2 counselling for those adopted before 1975.
- Letter box and post adoption contact support.

3.4.2 Two options for staffing the RAA have been considered – The preferred option (B) has a staffing complement which will consist of a service manager, 2 fte principal managers, 2 fte practice managers, 1 fte panel adviser, 19 fte social workers, 5.5 fte family support/social work assistants and 4 fte admin staff. This option provides resilience in the social care teams and reduces the likelihood of staff being at risk of redundancy. The total staff cost is £1,454,865 and is within the parameters of the budget for staffing in the RAA. Business support functions will be provided by individual local authorities on a 'buy back' basis for key business functions, and at no cost for functions such as HR and legal advice.

3.4.3 There has been ongoing engagement with staff, service users and other stakeholders in the design of the service. Formal consultation with staff and unions will take place in February 2016.

3.5 **Section 5: Partnership, governance and funding arrangements**

3.5.1 The legal agreements will document the arrangement to establish

and operate the RAA. An inter-authority agreement will record the nature of the partnership and the principles of joint working that will be adopted by the authorities. The agreement will be for a duration of three years with the ability to extend the arrangement for a further two years. There will be a review of the agreement and the operation of the agency after one year.

3.5.2 The agreement will document:

The commitment by Wigan to provide the adoption services on behalf of the RAA to an agreed specification.

The commitment by Cheshire West and Chester to scrutinise and quality assure the services being provided using a performance monitoring framework in the agreement.

Both authorities will be remunerated for those services via a payment mechanism in the agreement.

3.5.3 The inter-authority agreement will set out the expectation that decisions of the partnership board will be by consensus. In the event of a dispute that cannot be resolved by the partnership board, the issue will be referred to the chief executives of the partner local authorities to consider. The inter-authority agreement will also detail arrangements to dissolve the partnership if the need arises by providing not less than six months' notice.

3.5.4 The inter-authority agreement will provide for the agreed governance structure. A partnership board will consist of both officers and members and will have a remit of oversight and scrutiny. The partnership board will sign off the RAA's business plan, annual budget and staffing structure. The board will meet quarterly and have administrative support and professional advisors. An advisory group and a quality assurance group will meet quarterly to scrutinise and quality assure the provision of adoption services and will report to the partnership board. Direct operational delivery will be undertaken by Wigan Council. Wigan Council will report and provide data to the Board and the two groups.

3.5.5 The five local authorities will jointly fund the RAA and their individual contributions are set out in a funding formula based on the number of children with placement orders made over the three years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16. The funding formula has been agreed in principle by directors of children's services subject to agreement by cabinet / executive board / chief officer with delegated authority. The budget for the RAA in year one is £2,120,579 and is based on the combined adoption budgets for 2016-17. Future budgets will be proposed by the partnership board for consideration by the partner local authorities.

3.5.6 The secondment agreements will be made between each authority

individually and Wigan. Terms and conditions of staff will remain unchanged.

3.6 Section 6: Organisational structure

3.6.1 The RAA will bring together adoption staff from across the five partner local authorities into a single shared service. Wigan Council will act as the provider (host) local authority and Cheshire West and Chester Council will act as the lead commissioner on behalf for the RAA partnership.

3.6.2 Agreement has been reached that adoption staff from Warrington, St Helens, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester will be seconded to Wigan Council on current terms and conditions. This arrangement will be reviewed after one year of operation.

3.6.3 The RAA will provide adoption services across the geographical area of Warrington, Wigan, St Helens, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester. A key requirement of the service is that it will operate from 'where the work is'. In practice this means:

- Close and regular working with local authority child care teams in order to ensure early identification of children likely to require an adoptive placement and to effectively collaborate in family finding and matching
- Meeting with potential adopters and providing adoption support services in locations which are convenient to families
- Running panels across the region to ensure continued local engagement with decision making on adopter recruitment and matching.

3.6.4 Operational requirements therefore dictate a 'hub and spoke' organisational model for the RAA. A central hub will be established and 'spoke' locations will be provided by each of the partner local authorities in existing council premises.

3.6.5 RAA staff in scope for locality based working include the recruitment and assessment teams as well as adoption support staff when conducting assessments and developing care plans, and providing direct services such as family support, events and workshops. Staff likely to be based primarily in the hub include senior management, the admin team and adoption support staff who deliver post-adoption contact such as letterbox and schedule 2 access to records.

3.6.6 A central hub will be established and 'spoke' locations will be provided by each of the partner local authorities in existing council premises. In addition, staff will be enabled to work flexibly from any location (including home working where appropriate) and maintain effective team working through the provision of appropriate ICT

hardware, infrastructure and systems. This flexible working model also provides the advantage of reducing travelling time and costs for staff.

3.7 **Section 7: Premises**

3.7.1 The RAA will provide adoption services across the geographical area of Warrington, Wigan, St Helens, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester.

3.7.2 Two sites have been shortlisted (from a list of five) as potentially suitable for the RAA hub. These are Bewsey Park Community Centre in Warrington and Leigh Sports Village in Wigan.

3.7.3 An appraisal of the two potential hub locations identifies Bewsey Park Community Centre as the preferred location. Key advantages of Bewsey Park are that it is near the geographical centre of the RAA footprint indicating a commitment to a fully shared and equitable service for all partners and both premises running costs and travel costs for staff are lower than at Leigh Sports Village.

3.7.4 Locality working bases for RAA staff will be provided by local authority partners in current council offices. These will be provided at no cost to the RAA.

3.8 **Section 8: Systems**

3.8.1 Both proposed sites for the RAA hub will require a new external cabling and a review of the internal cabling in order to link RAA staff to the Wigan Council network and applications.

3.8.2 RAA staff will need to be able to work from any of the spoke locations based in local authority offices. To this end an ICT group from the five local authorities will enable a cross council standard Guest Wifi network to ensure that RAA staff do not need to log on as a guest user each day. Future work on connectivity may include the development of a secure infrastructure and mediated federated services respectively (seamless service and ICT support regardless of the venue).

3.8.3 In order to meet the demands of flexible working, each member of staff will be equipped with a lightweight tablet/laptop and a smart phone. In addition, each 'spoke' location will be equipped with a local printer in the event that a document is required in hard copy. The RAA hub will be equipped with two standard computer terminals (in order to provide back up if a member of staff is temporarily unable to use the tablet/laptop) and 20 VOIP desk phones. In addition, a networked printer/scanner will be provided. Documentation for panel members will be provided electronically via the case management system.

- 3.8.4 The RAA will have a discrete case management system (CMS). This will enable the service to provide reports tailored to each of the five local authorities (this functionality is not currently available in any of the LA ICSs). The CMS is focused on the family record - formal recording of the child's details on the CMS starts once there is a placement order in place for a child. Early identification and tracking will be managed through close working between the local authority child care teams, the RAA and VAAs and monitored via a tracking tool. RAA staff will have read access to local authority children's case management systems and local authority child care staff will have access to potential adopter reports (PAR) from the RAA case management system. There will be training provided to staff on the different recording systems.
- 3.8.5 Wigan Council, on behalf of the RAA, will procure the market leader case management system as a pilot for a period of 1 year (plus 1 year) by December 2016 (to allow sufficient time to configure the system).
- 3.8.6 The RAA will be staffed by practitioners, administrators and managers seconded from each of the partners to the shared service. HR management functions are therefore maintained by the 'home' authority for each member of staff. The decision on the status of staff in the RAA has taken into consideration the difficulties in managing working time, leave, performance management and appraisal activity. Functionality of the arrangements will be considered by the partnership board at the annual review.
- 3.8.7 Detailed drafting of aligned practice, process and protocols across the five local authorities will be conducted from January 2017.

3.9 **Section 9: Costs**

- 3.9.1 The budget for adoption services in 2016-17 for each of the participating local authorities is £2,120,759. It is proposed that the combined adoption budget is set as the baseline budget for the RAA for 2017-18.
- 3.9.2 The contribution from each local authority has been determined following consideration of 8 different funding formulas. The recommendation from the Project was that funding based on actual activity related to the adoption work (the number of placement orders granted) for the last 3 years was the most fair and transparent option. For Halton, this equates to 15% of the total budget and a contribution of £318,114. This is in line and slightly below the current budget for 16/17 of £319,100.
- 3.9.3 It should be noted that, in the four years to March 2016, the actual average costs of adoption services were 14% higher than the budget set for 2016-17. All five local authorities spent more on

adoption services than is identified in their adoption budgets for 2016-17. The proposed staffing and organisational arrangements for the RAA are assumed to release some efficiencies such as the ability to use in-house adoption placements rather than external placements at cost. Efficiencies will be invested into the service although unanticipated costs may arise. Any such risk will be mitigated by close monitoring of the RAA budget by the partnership board.

3.9.4 The combined local authority 2016-17 budgets include staffing, fees for inter-agency placement (net of income), activity budgets e.g. for adoption support activities, setting in grants and adoption panel costs.

3.9.5 The combined 2015-16 budget does not include back office costs such as ICT, premises, HR, legal services, performance and financial management, commissioning services and insurances. These costs have been difficult to quantify although further work is underway to do so. The majority of back office costs may not be cashable and some will continue to be provided by partner local authorities at no cost to the RAA.

3.9.6 Adoption support allowances have not been included in the calculation for the RAA budget. Funding specialist adoption support activity remains the responsibility of the relevant local authority.

3.9.7 It is calculated that the funding envelope for the RAA is sufficient for the RAA activity. This is based on consideration of caseloads and staff required to deliver the service along with historical costs for inter-agency placements and a range of adoption support activities. As a larger agency which ensures that children are placed for adoption much quicker, it is anticipated that the efficiencies that result will be able to be re-invested in the service and that the budget going forward will be sufficient to meet the increased numbers of children being placed for adoption.

3.10 **Section 10: Expected benefits**

3.10.1 The expected benefits of the RAA have been identified and focus on performance and quality baseline which will inform a detailed service specification to be agreed by the project board. In addition, the performance management and quality assurance framework set out a range of performance and quality evaluation measures, (including the volumes of activity within the RAA and the outcomes/impact required).

3.10.2 The outcomes that this framework will evidence is that for children where it is the plan for adoption are matched with suitable adopters quicker, as we will have a wider pool of adopters to choose from, and that recruitment and approval of adopters is swift and links to

the identified needs of children, particularly in targeting children who are older, part of a sibling group or who have a disability.

3.11 **Section 11: Next steps**

3.11.1 Project

Grant for RAA project formally confirmed	DfE	Mid-December 2016
Draft 1 business case approved for distribution	RAA project board	23 November 2016
Recommendations considered and amended	Relevant senior leadership teams	30 November 2016
Final business case approved	Via delegation to the Strategic Director People in consultation with the Lead Member	January 2017
Agree proposals for branding of the RAA	RAA project board	23 February 2017
RAA shadow service operational	RAA project board	1 April 2017
RAA fully established	RAA project board	1 July 2017

3.11.2 Staffing and skills

RAA service manager starts	RAA service manager	By April 2017
Consultation with staff	Local authority HR leads	February 2017
Final service structure and staffing agreed	RAA project board	March 2017
Recruit to and confirm RAA staffing appointments	RAA project board	March 2017

3.11.3 Partnership and governance arrangements

Inter-authority agreement agreed	Relevant senior leadership teams	31 December 2016
Service specification and performance management/ quality assurance framework agreed.	RAA project board and relevant senior leadership teams	Mid-March 2017

3.11.4 Premises

Hub prepared for RAA including ICT infrastructure	Project manager	By mid-April 2017
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3.11.5 Systems

Set up case management system and train staff	Provider and RAA service manager	By end April 2017
Local authority connectivity established	ICT group	1 April 2017
Staff issued with new ICT equipment and training provided	Wigan ICT provider	1 April 2017
Practice, processes and protocols established	RAA service manager	By mid-May 2017

3.11.6 Costs

Identify cost of back-office functions	Finance group	By end February 2017
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3.11.7 Expected benefits

Baseline for performance and quality assurance determined	Project Manager	By end January 2017
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4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Regional Adoption Agencies are being established under the government direction and failure to be part of an RAA could lead to the local authority being directed to be part of one.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Finance management and the process for resolving disputes and future financial implications are set in the governance arrangements for the RAA.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Where a child has a plan for adoption, the RAA will improve the range of adopters to meet different childrens needs and the level of support to those adopters and childrens post-adoption.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None identified.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Key risks include:

- Staff face uncertainty leading to poor morale
- Insufficient funding for the RAA resulting from a greater service demand than forecast/ closing of government grants for inter-agency placement or adoption support.
- Delays in establishing the RAA
- The RAA does not deliver all of the expected benefits.

7.2 To help mitigate these risks the project board meets regularly and ensures a learning culture by engaging with other emerging RAAs and DfE specialists. In addition, the project board ensures that there is:

- Good and ongoing engagement with staff and other stakeholders
- Governance structures ensure effective oversight of the RAA in terms of costs and outcomes
- Effective project management and ongoing dialogue with the DfE in respect of grant funding to establish the RAA.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 A key priority of the RAA will be to ensure appropriate ethnicity and cultural matches between adopters and children; and by providing adoption support in which needs and equality issues are addressed to help prevent placement breakdowns.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Development of a Regional Adoption Agency Executive Board 24 March 2016	Municipal Building, Widnes	Tracey Coffey 0151 511 6790

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People & Families
SUBJECT:	Children and Young People Speech and Language Therapy Contract
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To request authorisation to commence a joint tender process for Children and Young People's Speech and Language Therapy by Halton Borough Council and Halton Clinical Commissioning Group, noting that the preliminary estimated value over the proposed two-year contract period would exceed £1 million in total.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive Board approve the request for authorisation.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background**

Halton Borough Council (HBC) and Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) currently commission speech and language therapy provision for children and young people separately, with the respective contracts delivering different service elements.

The proposal to commission the service jointly will confer the following benefits:

- further enhance seamless and effective provision for children, young people and their families, drawing together the best practice and learning from the current separate contracts
- anticipated cost savings in respect of service management overheads
- reflection of the government's focus on joint commissioning arrangements across health, education and social care

3.2 **Funding for joint contract**

HBC will contribute £260,000 per annum and Halton CCG will

contribute £550,000 per annum to form a specific funding pool for this provision. The proposed total funding to be committed over two years will be £1,620,000.

It is proposed that the new contract commence 1st July 2017 until 30th June 2019, with the option to extend for three further 12 month periods to 1st July 2020, 1st July 2021 and 1st July 2022 respectively.

3.3 **Procurement Process**

In order that the Council fully complies with EU and Procurement Contract Regulations 2015, showing value for money, transparency and accountability, an Open Tender procedure will be conducted in line with the Light Touch Regime.

4.0 **BUSINESS CASE FOR APPROVAL OF PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES**

4.1 **Value for Money**

The financial contribution from the Council is supported by the contribution from Halton Clinical Commissioning Group and as such conveys the potential for cost savings resulting from reduced management costs and reduced shared resource and accommodation costs. The Council's contribution to the service will be subject to further review in 2017/8.

4.2 **Accountability**

The contracts will be performance managed and service standards monitored by HBC and CCG commissioners via a Joint Working Agreement and by the HBC contracts team.

4.3 **Transparency**

Contracts will be recorded in the Council's Contract Register accessible via the internet together with the publication of all spend in excess of £500.00.

4.4 **Propriety and Scrutiny**

The contract referred to in this report will be compliant with Halton Borough Council's Procurement Standing Orders. Compliance with anti-corruption practices will be adhered to and the contract will be terminated if there is any occurrence of corruption by any organisations or their staff.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The jointly commissioned service will support integrated working

developments across key partner services in Health, Education and Social Care.

- 5.2 A joint working agreement, to include an agreed governance structure, has been proposed and is being further developed. This will reflect similar arrangements in Adult services.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Contributions to the specific funding pool are within both HBC and Halton CCG current budgets.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The delivery of Speech and Language Therapy provision to children and young people is key to supporting Halton's focus upon the Early Years, Early Intervention and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and the priorities within Halton's Children and Young People's Plan. It also supports Halton Health and Wellbeing Board priorities.

7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Support for children and young people with identified Speech and Language needs exerts a critical impact upon their learning and future employment and skills development.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Speech and Language Therapy services impact directly upon the health and well-being of children and young people with an identified language or communication need.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

Speech and Language Therapy services provide support to vulnerable children and their parents/carers, and help them to access appropriate service provision within their local communities. This links to satisfaction with services and overall perception of the area in which people live.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

Continuation of separately commissioned services would result in

the loss of, or reduction in, opportunities to commission a service that brings together the best practice that each of the separate contracts offers, as well as the potential for innovation that would deliver enhanced services to children, young people and families. It would also impact negatively upon the potential for cost savings, particularly in relation to management costs.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 The current proposal would not impact upon any equality and diversity issues as all relevant protected characteristics are fully provided for in the new service.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – People
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	School Admission Arrangements 2018
WARDS:	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report fulfils the Local Authority's statutory requirement to consult upon and then determine Halton's School Admissions Policy for Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools, and Coordinated Admission Schemes for all primary and secondary schools in Halton, for the September 2018 intake.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approves the attached School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Coordinated Schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2018/19 academic year.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On the 3rd October 2016 Halton Local Authority issued a statutorily required consultation on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2018 intake (attached as Appendix 1). The full consultation was available on the Council's website, was issued to Chairs of Governing Bodies, the four Diocesan Authorities responsible for voluntary aided schools in Halton, to all schools in Halton who are their own admission authority, and to neighbouring local authorities.

3.2 The consultation ran until 11th November 2016 and no changes were proposed to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools, and no change to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to Local Authority maintained community secondary schools.

3.3 The Local Authority's consultation advised that there would be no individual response to any submission made, but any responses submitted would be considered by the Council's Executive Board. No responses to the consultation were received.

3.4 The Local Authority as commissioner of school places must ensure that the admission arrangements are fair, clear and objective, and fully

comply with all statutory requirements. The arrangements proposed for the 2018/19 academic year reflect those requirements.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Admissions Policy has been drawn up to maximize parental preference for Halton Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools. The oversubscription criteria contained within the Policy reflect the criteria which are considered good practice and acceptable by the Department for Education.

4.2 Parents/carers may express a preference for any school and must complete an application form which allows them the opportunity to express a preference for any school. If the school of preference is undersubscribed then all applications will be successful. If the school is oversubscribed then the oversubscription criteria will be applied and places allocated in accordance with the criteria.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The proposed policy complies with statutory requirements in ensuring that the admission arrangements are fair and do not disadvantage, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with disability or special educational needs, thereby ensuring that the educational provision for children & young people in the borough is inclusive and accessible.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Educational achievement is critical to the life chances of all children in the borough and the School Admissions Policy detailing school admission arrangements in Halton underpins the requirement to promote fair access to educational opportunity.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The School Admissions Policy is aligned to the Council's Sustainable School Travel Policy which promotes and supports measures that encourage local communities to use environmentally sustainable forms of travel, especially walking, cycling, and public transport.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The alignment of the School Admissions Policy and the Sustainable School Travel Policy promotes the safe travel and transfer of pupils to school.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The admission arrangements and co-ordinated schemes are proposed to maximise parental preference for Halton schools. Any amendment to the current arrangements at this time may reduce parental preference and lead to an increased number of admission appeals, adversely affecting the intake at some schools. Furthermore, any amendments may affect the Local Authority's School Organisation planning.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The proposed admission arrangements reflect any requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

9.1 The decision is statutorily required and any revision to the proposed arrangements may adversely affect school place planning as detailed in 7.1 above.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10.1 Other options considered and rejected include the allocation of places through random allocation (lottery) as this method could be seen as arbitrary and random.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

11.1 The Policy applies for the September 2018 academic intake.

12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
School Admissions Code 2014	People Directorate	Martin West
School Standards & Framework Act 1998	People Directorate	Martin West
Education Act 2002	People Directorate	Martin West
Education & Inspections Act 2006	People Directorate	Martin West



**HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY
SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION
ARRANGEMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS –
2018/19 ACADEMIC YEAR**

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into year 7 at secondary schools in September 2018.
- 2.0** Halton Local Authority is consulting on its proposed admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria for community schools to determine a co-ordinated scheme which will apply to all schools in the authority's area for the September 2018 intake.
- 3.0** The Scheme will apply to the following schools (the proposed published admission number (PAN) detailed below):

School	PAN	Type
The Grange	180	Community
Saints Peter and Paul Catholic College	300	Voluntary Aided
St Chad's Catholic and Church of England Joint Faith High School	190	Voluntary Aided
Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	180	Academy
Ormiston Chadwick Academy	190	Academy
The Heath School	210	Academy
Wade Deacon High School	300	Academy
Sandymoor School	120	Free School

Halton Local Authority (LA) is the Admission Authority for community high schools. Each Academy School (including Free Schools) has a Trust who is responsible for determining the admission arrangements for its school. The Governing Bodies of the Voluntary Aided Schools are the admission authorities for these schools. Academy Trusts and Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided Schools are required to undertake their own consultation regarding admission arrangements.

- 4.0** From September 2017 Halton residents will be given the opportunity to complete a common preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 secondary schools using this form for a school place in September 2018. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DfE School Admissions Code. This form will be available on-line and parents/carers are required to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Parents/carers should only complete one application form and preferences may include Halton schools and schools maintained by other LAs. Paper forms are available by request only.
- 5.0** Admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided, academy and free schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code. All admission authorities must operate an Equal Preference Scheme. Within an equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered, if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place, the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place, parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
- 6.0 APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2018**
- 6.1** Halton LA publishes online an "Admission to Secondary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). A letter and information leaflet will be issued to all year 6 pupils attending Halton Primary Schools and Halton resident pupils who attend schools in other LAs, advising parents of the online booklet and application process, and will be available at the Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the Council's website, and from the Admissions Team. The booklet will be published online at the start of the Autumn Term, **September 2017**, and the on-line application system will be available at the same time.
- 6.2** The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order (regardless of which LA the school preferences are for). Applications from Halton resident parents, either on-line submissions or hard copy (by request only), must be returned no later than **Tuesday 31st October 2017**.

- 6.3** Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring LAs but **must** complete their preferences on the Halton form. Halton LA will work with its neighbouring authorities: Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley, and St Helen's, together with any other admission authority where a parent has applied for a school place.
- 6.4** On-Line Admissions: LAs are required to have a facility for parents to apply on-line for a secondary school place. This facility is in place for Halton residents via Halton Borough Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions. This is the preferred method of application. Residents who cannot apply online may request a paper copy of the preference form from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team.
- 6.5** Halton LA will record all preferences on the admissions database, including those received from neighbouring LAs whose children are seeking a place at a Halton School and will forward, week beginning 20th November 2017, details of all first, second, and third preferences for admission to aided schools, for consideration in accordance with their published admission criteria.
- 6.6** The governing bodies of Voluntary aided schools should note that they must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admission criteria and **must** place in ranked order, against their criteria, the details of all pupils applying to their school, and must return the ranked list to the Admissions Team by Friday 15th December 2017.
- 6.7** When all preferences have been considered and allocations finalised, Halton residents will be able to view their allocated school place online on **Thursday 1st March 2018**, together with details of the appeal process if applicable. Letters advising of the allocated school place will be posted to parents submitting a paper copy of the preference form on this date. Parents/carers will be required to decline any offer of the school place within 10 school days. If the LA does not hear from the parent/carer then it is assumed the place has been accepted. Parents/carers who applied online will also receive an email confirming the allocated place.
- 7.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**
- 7.1** For admission to The Grange in Runcorn (a community all through school), as this is an all through school, pupils already attending The Grange in year 6 will automatically transfer to year 7 in the School and children will not be required to complete a preference form. The remaining places will then be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Looked after children and children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- 2) Siblings - pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight line distances in metres from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of permanent residence of the pupil

7.2 The following notes apply:

a) Children who have a statement of special educational needs (to be known as Education, Health & Care Plans) will be allocated a place at the school named in the statement (Education, Health & Care Plan). If this happens this will reduce the number of places available within any of the oversubscription criteria detailed above.

b) If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria, places will be allocated on distance grounds as described within the distance criteria above. In the instance of a tie regarding distance for the last place to be offered (to two decimal places in metres), a place will be offered using the electronic admission system's random allocation function.

c) Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated.

d) The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the LA will use the address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. It may be necessary for the Council to carry out checks that the address given is genuine and parents may be requested to produce further documentary evidence of the child's address. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

e) Where applications are received from families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants, school places will be allocated to children in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a return date with full address details and providing they would meet the criteria when they return to the UK.

f) If none of the parent's preferences can be met, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school, with places available, to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect the parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

8.0 EARLY AGE TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Children of exceptional ability and maturity can be considered for transfer to secondary schools one year earlier than normal. It is the responsibility of the Head teachers of primary/junior schools to put forward the names of any pupils whom they consider are physically, intellectually, and emotionally suitable to benefit from such a transfer, and who might be educationally disadvantaged by remaining in the primary sector for a further year. However, as a first step, head teachers will discuss possible candidates with parents, the school's link adviser, and the Educational Psychologist. Parents who consider that early transfer might benefit their child should discuss this with the head teacher.

9.0 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community schools received after the closing date will not be considered until after the main allocation of places has taken place for all those applications received on time. If an application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) of preference are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the school's waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeals process are given in paragraph 14 below.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school the school will advise how this will be dealt with. Late applications **must** be made on a paper copy of the preference form which can be obtained from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team. The online application system is not available after the deadline for application, **31st October 2017**.

10.0 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list. It should be noted that the online application process will cease on the closing date, so parents/carers will need to request and complete a paper copy of the application form.

11.0 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house **after the closing date of 31st October 2017 and before 19th January 2018**, parents must notify the LA. The LA may require documentary evidence to confirm this change of address. For changes made **after 19th January 2018**, the address used for the initial allocation of places will be the permanent place of residence provided in application before this date. A new address may be submitted for purposes of waiting list position if required and documentary evidence will be necessary to confirm this change of address.

12.0 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

Halton LA reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

13.0 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for oversubscribed LA Maintained Community Secondary Schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received up to the end of the Autumn Term will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as an in-year admission and the in-year admission process will be applied.

14.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred LA maintained community, voluntary aided, trust, academy or Free schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. The Chairman of the appeal panel will have no connection with the LA. The Panel will consist of at least one lay person and one person with experience in education, and will consist of no less than three people including the Chair. The decisions of independent appeals panels are binding on the LA and on the school's governing body.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools, Trust and Academy schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal.

15.0 SCHOOLS WITH SIXTH FORMS

Each school with a sixth form **must** include in its consultation paper the arrangements they propose to use to allocate places in Year 12. It is not intended that the LA will co-ordinate admissions to sixth form, therefore applications must be sent to the relevant admission authority (i.e. the school) for consideration. Parents and children above compulsory school age have the right to make separate applications for more than one school.

Each school **must** set an admission number for its sixth form, and should say in its published information what the anticipated sixth form capacity will be. However, the published admission number **must** only relate to those being admitted to the school for the first time and should be based on an estimate of the minimum number of external candidates likely to be admitted. It is not necessary for children already in the school to apply formally for places in year 12, but the admission arrangements **must** give details of any entry requirements. Children in care **must** be given highest priority within the criteria, schools **must not** interview children or their families for entry to year 12, although meetings can be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements. Entry **must not** be dependent on attendance, behaviour record, or perceptions of attitude or motivation. Where the admission authority has not admitted up to its PAN it cannot refuse to admit applicants who have met the minimum entry. Any other applicant refused must be given the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

TIMETABLE FOR SEPTEMBER 2018 SECONDARY ADMISSIONS

SEPTEMBER 2017 – APPLICATION PROCESS COMMENCES

31ST OCTOBER 2017 CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

WEEK COMMENCING 20TH NOVEMBER 2017 LA PROVIDES DETAILS OF ALL 1ST 2ND AND 3RD PREFERENCES TO VA SCHOOLS

BETWEEN 20TH NOVEMBER AND 15TH DECEMBER 2017 ADMISSION COMMITTEES OF OWN AUTHORITY SCHOOLS MUST MEET TO CONSIDER ALL APPLICATIONS (IF APPLICABLE)

NO LATER THAN 15TH DECEMBER 2017 OWN AUTHORITY SCHOOLS MUST HAVE RANKED ALL APPLICATIONS IN CRITERIA ORDER & SUBMITTED THIS LIST TO THE LA, FOLLOWING WHICH INTER-LA EXCHANGE OF DATA WILL ALSO OCCUR

1ST MARCH 2018 ONLINE NOTIFICATION OF OFFER MADE TO PARENTS APPLYING ONLINE. LETTER POSTED TO PARENTS SUBMITTING A PAPER COPY OF THE PREFERENCE FORM

THURSDAY 29TH MARCH 2018 APPEALS TO BE LODGED WITH THE LA MAINTAINING THE SCHOOL



HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2018/19 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 1.0 This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into reception class in maintained infant and primary schools.
- 2.0 This Co-ordinated Primary Scheme applies to all those schools detailed on pages 16 and 17 of this document. Halton Borough Council (as the Local Authority - LA) is the Admission Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools, and the Governing Body of each voluntary aided or academy school is the admission authority for the school.
- 3.0 Parents/carers **must** complete their home LA's preference form, therefore if a non-Halton resident is seeking admission to a Halton school, (or vice-versa) they must complete their own authority's form which will then be forwarded to the relevant authority and LAs will then share any cross border applications for consideration.
- 4.0 Halton residents will be required to complete a Halton preference form and will be given the opportunity to express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 primary schools regardless of which authority the school is in. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the School Admissions Code. This form will be available on-line and parents are encouraged to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions.
- 5.0 Where a Voluntary Aided School requires supporting information e.g. asking for a reference from a priest or other religious minister for a faith school, or details of baptism etc parents may be required to complete a supplementary form and VA schools **must** inform parents of their requirements within their school's published admission arrangements.
- 6.0 Admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided and academy schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code. In Halton, as

statutorily required, an Equal Preference Scheme is operated. Within the equal preference scheme all preferences are considered equally against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place the maintaining LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the relevant oversubscription criteria.

- 7.0** Admission authorities **must** provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday and parents are allowed to request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. In Halton this already happens. Parents can request their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age and admission authorities **must** accommodate these requests where it appears to be in the best interest of the child.
- 7.1** As recommended in the School Admissions Code the LA will allow parents/carers to defer their child's entry to school until the child is of compulsory school age, providing the parent applies, is offered, and accepts the place within the normal admissions timetable, and the place is taken up within the same academic year.
- 7.2** In addition, the LA, as detailed within the Department for Education document "Advice on the admission of summer born children" (2013), will ensure that flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school in the September following their fourth birthday. School admission authorities are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to, but are required to make a decision based on the circumstances of the case. In these cases the School may seek the professional views of Local Authority officers including the Special Educational Needs Assessment Team, the Education Welfare Service, and the Educational Psychology Service, together with any other agencies who are involved with the child/family.
- 7.3** It should be noted that if a child is presently attending a nursery class/early years setting they do not have an automatic right to transfer to the primary school to which the nursery/early years setting is attached (the only exception being The Grange School which is an all-through school). Parents/carers are required to indicate a preference for a primary school along with all other parents/carers. The same applies for children who already have siblings already at a particular school, parents/carers must complete a preference form along with all other parents.

8.0 APPLYING FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2018

- 8.1** Halton LA publishes online an “Admission to Primary School” booklet (a Composite Prospectus). A letter and information leaflet will be issued to all Halton Primary Schools and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the council’s website, and upon request from the Admissions Team. The booklet will be published online in **September 2017** and the on-line application system will be available at the same time.
- 8.2** The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order. All applications, whether made online or submitted in paper format (by request only) must be submitted by no later than **Monday 15th January 2018**. This closing date is a statutorily set closing date. The online application system will not be available after this date and late applications must be submitted on a paper copy of the preference form.
- 8.3** Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring local authorities but **must** complete their preferences on their home LA form.
- 8.4** The Admissions Team will load all preferences onto the database including those received from neighbouring LAs (inter-LA exchange to take place **Monday 5th February 2018**). Halton LA will then forward all application details, regardless of whether they are first, second and third preferences to all Voluntary Aided schools where admission is being sought, by **Friday 23rd February 2018**. The Admissions Committee of those governing bodies **must** meet and place in ranked order against their criteria the details of all pupils applying to their school. Governing bodies must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admissions criteria. Voluntary Aided schools **must** then notify the Admissions Team by **Friday 9th March 2018** all pupils’ details in ranked order against their criteria.
- 8.5** The LA will then undertake a final data exchange with neighbouring LAs to ensure that all children have an allocated school by **Friday 23rd March 2018**.
- 8.6** When all preferences have been considered and allocations finalised, Halton residents will be able to view their allocated school place online on **Monday 16th April 2018**, together with details of the appeal process if applicable. Letters advising of the allocated school place will be posted to parents submitting a paper copy of the preference form on this date. Parents/carers will be required to decline any offer of the school place within 10 school days. If the LA does not hear from the parent/carer then it is assumed the place has been accepted.
- 8.7** Parents will have until **Tuesday 8th May 2018** to lodge any appeals with the LA.

9.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

9.1 If a Halton community or voluntary controlled school becomes oversubscribed, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Looked after children and children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight-line distances in metres from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of permanent residence of the pupil.

For admission to community and voluntary controlled schools the following notes apply:

a) Children who have a statement of special educational needs (to be known as Education, Health & Care Plan) will be allocated a place at the school named in the statement (Education, Health & Care Plan). Where a child with a statement (Education, Health & Care Plan) is allocated a place this will reduce the number of remaining places available to allocate within the above oversubscription criteria.

b) If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria 1-3, places will be allocated on distance grounds as described within the distance criteria (3) above. In the instance of a tie regarding distance for the last place to be offered (to two decimal places in metres), a place will be offered using the electronic admission system's random allocation function.

c) Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated.

d) The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent home address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility the LA will use the address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. It may also be necessary for the Council to carry out checks that the address given is genuine and parents may be requested to produce further documentary evidence of

the child's address. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

e) Where applications are received from families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants, school places will be allocated to children in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a return date with full address details and providing they would meet the criteria when they return to the UK.

f) If none of the parent's preferences can be met, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school, with places available, to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

9.2 THE GRANGE ALL THROUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Grange is a designated all through community school, therefore children enrolled in the nursery at the closing date will automatically transfer from the nursery to infants, infants to juniors, and juniors to secondary within The Grange. Following the transfer of those children from the nursery to reception class the remaining places will be allocated in accordance with the admissions criteria as detailed in paragraph 9.1 above. If a child is enrolled to the nursery after the primary closing date, and allocations have been made and the school is full, the child will be placed on the waiting list.

10.0 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools received after the closing date will not be considered until after the main allocation of places has taken place for all those applications received on time. If an application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) of preference are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the school's waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeals process are given in paragraph 15 below.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school or academy the school will advise how this will be dealt with. Late applications **must** be made on a paper copy of the preference form which can be obtained from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team. The online application system is not available after the deadline for application, **15th January 2018**.

11.0 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to request and complete another preference form. The on-line facility will not be available after the closing date. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list as detailed in paragraph 14 below. It should be noted that the online application process will cease on the closing date, so parents/carers will need to request and complete a paper copy of the application form.

12.0 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house **after the closing date of 15th January 2018 and before 23rd February 2018**, parents must notify the LA. The LA may require documentary evidence to confirm this change of address. For changes made **after 23rd February 2018**, the address used for the initial allocation of places will be the permanent place of residence provided in application before this date. A new address may be submitted for purposes of waiting list position if required and documentary evidence will be necessary to confirm this change of address.

13.0 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

Halton LA reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

14.0 WAITING LISTS

The LA will maintain waiting lists for oversubscribed community and voluntary controlled primary schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received up to the end of the Autumn Term will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as an in-year admission and the in-year application process will be applied.

15.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided trust or academy schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. The Chairman of the appeal panel will have no connection with the LA. The panel will consist of at least one lay person and one person with experience in education, and will consist of no less than three people, including the Chair.

Regulations made under Section 1 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 limit the size of an infant class (in which the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 during the school year) to 30 pupils per school teacher. Parents will have a right of appeal but an appeal panel can only uphold this appeal if it is satisfied that:

- a) It finds that the admission of additional children would **not** breach the infant class size limit; or
- b) It finds that the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or were not correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c) It decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

The decisions of independent appeals panels are binding on the LA and on the school's governing body.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal.

16.0 SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

The LA as commissioner of school places is continually reviewing and monitoring the number of places available against projected pupil numbers and updates head teachers accordingly. It is possible that occasionally, there may be certain geographical areas within the borough where demand for places is higher than the actual number of places available, and the LA will, in discussion with the school, give consideration to admitting above a school's Published Admission Number (PAN). Admitting above a school's PAN will only be agreed between the school and the LA where it is confirmed that to do so will

not affect the school in the longer term and will not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring schools and providing it does not breach infant class size legislation.

The figure in brackets denotes the school's proposed Published Admission Number for 2018 but may alter as a result of any school reorganisation.

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

All Saints Upton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
Astmoor Primary (25)
Beechwood Primary (20)
Brookvale Primary (40)
Castleview Primary (20)
Ditton Primary (60)
Fairfield Primary (90)
Farnworth C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (60)
Gorsewood Primary (30)
Hale C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (25)
Halebank C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (15)
Hallwood Park Primary (25)
Halton Lodge Primary (30)
Hillview Primary (30)
Lunts Heath Primary (50)
Moore Primary (30)
Moorfield Primary (45)
Murdishaw West Community Primary (30)
Oakfield Community Primary (40)
Pewithall Primary (30)
Simms Cross Primary (40)
Spinney Avenue C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
The Brow Community Primary (25)
Victoria Road Primary (40)
Westfield Primary (25)
Weston Primary (30)
Weston Point Primary (20)
Windmill Hill Primary (25)
Woodside Primary (30)

ALL THROUGH SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

The Grange (60)

VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

Runcorn All Saints' CE Aided Primary (20)
St Berteline's CE Aided Primary (44)
St Mary's CE Aided Primary (35)

CATHOLIC:

Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary (30)
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary (30)
St Basil's Catholic Primary (60)
St Bede's Catholic Infant (75)
St Bede's Catholic Junior (75)
St Clement's Catholic Primary (30)
St Edward's Catholic Primary (15, to be confirmed)
St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary & Nursery (30)
St John Fisher Catholic Primary (30)
St Martin's Catholic Primary School (30)
St Michael's Catholic Primary (30)
The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary (20)

ACADEMY SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

Daresbury Primary (20)
Palace Fields Primary Academy (40)
St Augustine's Catholic Academy (15)
The Bridgewater Park Academy (20)
Widnes Academy (30)

TIMETABLE FOR SEPTEMBER 2018 PRIMARY ADMISSIONS

15th January 2018
Closing Date for applications

Monday 5th February 2018
Inter LA exchange of preferences

Week beginning **Monday 19th February 2018** preference details sent to all VA schools to rank applications in criteria order

Friday 9th March 2018 VA schools must have ranked all applications in criteria order and submitted the details to the LA

Friday 23rd March 2018
Final exchange of data between neighbouring LAs to confirm allocations

Monday 16th April 2018
Online notification of offer for parents submitting preferences online. Letter posted to parents submitting paper copy.

Tuesday 8th May 2018
appeals to be lodged with LA

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Health and Wellbeing
SUBJECT:	Redesign of Night Time Support
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Executive Board Members' of the outcome of a pilot scheme in London, that can be replicated to improve night time care in the Council's Supported Housing Network for people with learning disabilities, and how this can be achieved.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) the report be noted; and**
- 2) Executive Board be requested to approve the recommendations as outlined in 3.6.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 There is a policy emphasis on providing good care options that promote choice for people with disabilities and that recognises the need to improve care standards in home settings. Standards or expectations specific to the provision of care through the night, are notably absent from both legislation and policy guidance. Many research projects have focused on the daytime care and services that service users receive and a review of the literature indicates that there is a need to better understand night time care practices.
- 3.2 What little research there is indicates a number of beneficial outcomes for service users where disturbances from staff at night is eliminated or reduced. The Southwark pilot is about the most substantive study currently in the public arena. Their report argues that more research needs to be done. A pilot in Halton will provide us with the opportunity to obtain much more robust and clear evidence from our own service users and contribute to the wider national debate
- 3.3 Evaluations of the Southwark Pilot scheme demonstrated positive outcomes for people by the replacement of Waking Night staff for

Sleep-ins with Assistive Technology and highlighted the potential to replicate the approach. It also suggests that if more widely adopted the approach has the potential to deliver more cost effective care personalised support.

3.4 The new model of night time support, challenges traditional thinking about risk that rely on intrusive, blanket solutions for responding to peoples' needs. A person centred approach linked with innovative use of new technologies can offer improved dignity and improved general health and well-being to some users.

3.5 Given the clear success of the Southwark Pilot (**see Appendix 1**), we propose to pilot this approach in Halton, and to consider the feasibility of replacing Waking Night staff with Sleep-ins and technology. The pilot will take into account; outcomes for service users, safety of service users and staff, staff terms and conditions. The Trade Unions have been informed that this pilot may be considered, and will be formally consulted on the proposals.

3.6 **Recommendations:**

- To establish a pilot based on the model presented in “Better Nights”¹ (**see Appendix 2**). This will include; consultation and reviews of all service users who may be affected by the pilot, the identification of appropriate use of technological solutions.
- Consultation will begin with the Unions in January 2017 and then staff side and carers over February and March. It is anticipated that service user exposure to the study will begin in March and last no longer than 3 months concluding by June 2017. The analysis and recommendations from the study will be assessed during July with a final conclusion and recommendations by August
- Staff terms and conditions will be protected during the pilot. The full implications on staff terms and conditions will be explored as part of the pilot, and consideration of the impact will be discussed with HR.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Services delivered to adults need to be both efficient and compassionate. Dignity in care means that all those supported by social care and health, are treated with respect, given the time and attention that they need and the opportunity to gain greater autonomy.

¹ “Better Nights. Evaluation of Choice Support in Southwark” Professors Roger Ellis and David Sines 2012 **Appendix 2**

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The current cost of a Sleep-in is £43.79 per night.

The current cost of a Waking Night is £145.40.

By replacing Waking Nights with Sleep-ins/technology there is the potential to achieve efficiencies; initial savings are estimated at £50k. There is a potential to achieve additional, however this depends on the assessed needs of individuals.

5.2 For Example:

In a house that is covered by Sleep-ins there will be a typical compliment of four staff. Each staff member will cover between one and two Sleep-ins per week, Typically they will start their shift at 4pm and support service users until retiring to bed at 10pm to sleep until 7am or 8am. They will be paid £43.79 for the period between going to bed and rising. It is very rare that staff are disturbed while sleeping but the expectation is that staff can be disturbed up to 3 times per night for a period of 20mins each time before additional payments are made based on the ordinary hourly rate. This has not occurred for at least the last 4 years.

In a house with Waking Night staff the same model is followed except the staff member who has come on at 4pm instead of going to bed at 10pm will go home and the Waking Night staff member will start their shift until relieved by the day time member of staff starting their shift the next morning. They will be paid at £145.40 for their shift during the night. The proposal removes the need for the Waking Night shift.

5.3 The assistive technology such as moisture alarms and pendants are accessed via Halton's Lifeline scheme. There are two levels provided by the Lifeline service:

Level 1 – this gives you a basic unit and a pendant for all members of the household and a response if triggered. £5.87 divided by the number of people in the house per week

Level 3 – this gives you the more complex service with sensors etc., a pendant for all members of the house and a response if triggered. £9.36 divided by the number of people in the house per week.

People currently accessing the service typically pay £243.36 per annum and is covered by their disability benefits. The pilot will provide further opportunities to explore cost reductions to the service user by removing the need to send alarms to the on-call Lifeline warden service by having our own sleep-in staff on duty

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Will improve the quality of life for those younger people with profound and multiple disabilities living in Halton and receiving services from the Network.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Will develop staffing expertise and increase their ability to provide tailored, needs led support.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Will improve the health of those service users to whom the proposals will apply.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Not Applicable

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Not Applicable

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The change will have to be piloted and phased with full consultation with all stake holders including service users, families, staff and unions. Each phase will need to be comprehensively analysed and reported upon.

7.2 The changes will result in a reduction in a number of posts, however there are alternative options within the existing structure for employment.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 This will improve levels of independence and dignity for service users.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Valuing People, A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21 st Century	Runcorn Town Hall	Sue Wallace-Bonner

Appendix 1

The Southwark Pilot

Professors Roger Ellis and David Sines, completed an action research study on the replacement of Waking Night staff for Sleep-ins with the use of Assistive Technology for a service providing support to 83 people with learning disabilities in Southwark in 2012.

The objectives of the pilot had three main intended outcomes:

- Safety should be maintained and any risks associated with the change from Waking Nights to Sleep-ins should be anticipated and managed.
- There should be an improvement in quality of life for service users. Less intrusive forms of night support should promote dignity and independence. Improved sleep should lead to improved health and well-being.
- There should be a reduction in costs for night time support

Key findings of the study

The reduction in costs was so clear that it was decided to focus the evaluation on the risk management and quality of life outcomes. These were assessed through an audit focusing on the individual service users. An audit tool was devised for this purpose with 27 topics including risk management for seizures, nocturnal incontinence and nocturnal activity. The tool was completed for each service user by a Support Worker familiar with the service user and verified by the manager. The findings are:

Cost Reduction

Substantial savings were achieved by the shift from Waking Nights to Sleep-ins. As a percentage the change represented a saving of 66%.

Safety Maintenance

Three issues were identified as involving potential risks:

1). Service Users having seizures and whether they would be detected and managed without regular observation. The study found the movement sensors and monitors worked well and accurately to alert Sleep-in staff.

2). Urinary incontinence and whether service users would experience undetected discomfort through soiling of themselves and their bedding. The study found the use of incontinence pads to be effective.

3). Nocturnal activity and whether service users might harm themselves or others. The study found Where Sleep-in staff attention was required the reasons were genuine and demonstrated that the Sleep-in was effective in providing appropriate night support.

Quality Enhancement

- Utility bill were cheaper with lights and appliances being switched off
- People were more settled with better sleep patterns
- Fewer distracting and intrusive handovers
- Greater consistency of support due to new shift patterns with the same staff at bedtime as waking in the morning. Also more able to spot ill health
- Service users developing the ability pursue activities without support e.g. go to lounge, turn on TV, go to toilet unsupported
- Tendency for people to retire at the same time like home
- Staff more confident to allow people to do things on their own
- More privacy and autonomy
- Regular day and night time routines

Assistive Technology

Included movement sensors, audio detectors and moisture sensors for the incontinence pads. The removal of night time supervision threw a heavier emphasis on the use of assistive technology. While staff are described as Sleeping-in they are obviously expected to respond to alarms from assistive technology. The interface between assistive technology and Sleep-in staff is vital.

Staff Development

Whilst the majority of staff seem satisfied with the new system there were a number of dissenters where indications were that additional training could contribute to attitude change, improve the effectiveness of the use of assistive technology, and also, at an interpersonal level, enhance the ability of the staff to develop independence and new skills in service users.

General Conclusions

- The switch from Waking Nights to Sleep-ins was successful
- The objectives of the pilot had been achieved;
 - Safety was maintained
 - An improvement in quality of life was achieved
 - There was a reduction in costs
- Changes in staffing was managed through redeployment or voluntary redundancy
- A clear commitment to personalisation was achieved through the benefits of a more normal day/night pattern
- Increased independence



Better Nights

EVALUATION OF CHOICE SUPPORT IN SOUTHWARK

by Professor Roger Ellis
and Professor David Sines



Better Nights

by **Professor Roger Ellis**
and **Professor David Sines**

Published by **The Centre for Welfare Reform**



In association with **Bucks New University Social and Health Evaluation Unit**



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About the authors:



Professor Roger Ellis

received his OBE in 2007 in recognition of a long and highly successful career in Higher Education. He is Emeritus Professor in Psychology at both the

University of Ulster and the University of Chester. In particular he has established a number of contract research centres including, most recently, the Social and Health Evaluation Unit at the University of Chester which is now based at Buckinghamshire New University. This unit, over twelve years, has completed more than seventy externally funded programme evaluations in community development, social care, health care, education, regional development and community safety. It now has branches in England, Northern Ireland, Canada and Hungary and has been re-launched as SHEU International.

He brought to this evaluation of the Sleep In Programme internationally recognised expertise in programme evaluation including the development of innovative and effective methods and a capacity to conclude evaluations with recommendations that have impacted on practice and policy. He is proud to have contributed to an evaluation which has produced such significant results and to have an opportunity to continue this work over the next year on the broader topic of Personalisation.

Roger has published more than sixty evaluation reports, ten books and over 200 articles in refereed journals in the broad area of Applied Psychology, Outcome Audit at interpersonal and organisational levels has been a particular interest of Roger's and he brings these insights to the exploration and analysis of night support and personalisation.



David Sines is currently Pro Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean and Professor of Community Health Care Nursing at the Faculty of Society and Health at Bucks New University. He was

previously the Executive Dean for the Faculty of Health & Social Care at London South Bank University. David moved to Buckinghamshire New University in August 2009 to assume responsibility for the academic leadership of the Faculty of Society of Health and to lead the University's new health campus in Uxbridge.

He holds an Honorary Appointment with Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust as Associate Director of Nursing. David is a member of the North West London Health and Innovation Education Cluster Partnership Board. He is a prolific author and his research has been included in the last four UK Research Assessment Exercises. He advises the Department of Health on clinical workforce issues.

David was awarded Fellowship of the Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom in 1989 for his pioneering work in advancing the art and science of nursing and community care. He was awarded the CBE in the 2010 Queen's Birthday Honours List for 'Services to Health Care'.

Contents

Foreword	7
Introduction	11
1. Evaluation	13
2. Outcomes	14
Cost Reduction	14
Safety Maintenance	14
Quality Enhancement	15
3. Waking Nights to Sleep-in: Audit	16
Unsolicited written comments by support staff who completed the audits	19
4. Process	20
5. Stakeholder Perspectives	22
Views of Care Staff on Sleep-in	22
Unsolicited written comments by support staff who completed the questionnaire	24
Issues from comments which may need attention include the following	25
Views of Parents or Next of Kin	26
Managers' Views	26
Conclusion and Recommendations	28
Assistive Technology	28
Staff Development	29
Benefits of Savings	29
Success Stories	29
Questionnaires	31

Foreword

We believe that this report describes the first example, in the UK, of Waking Night staff being successfully removed, on such a large scale, from a community-based supported living service for people with learning disabilities, many of whom are profoundly disabled.

This is the second of three reports being published by the Centre for Welfare Reform describing the ‘personalisation’ of what was a traditional block contract for 83 people with learning disabilities. An overview of the project is given in the first report ‘ISFs in Action’ (Hoolahan, 2012) which is available as a free download at www.centreforwelfarereform.org

The work described in this report would have been impossible without close partnership working and trust between the provider, Choice Support, and the local authority, Southwark Council.

Not only has money been saved but peoples’ lives have been enhanced through the use of assistive technology (AT), which ensures peoples’ sleep is not regularly disturbed by Waking Night staff. Rather, Sleep-in staff are immediately alerted if a person needs support e.g. for enuresis or a seizure. The use of AT has facilitated the delivery of support in less intrusive more cost effective ways. A process of protocols to enable consultation and risk assessment with key people has been created enabling maintenance of high standards of quality and safety.

This evaluation by the Bucks New University Social and Health Evaluation Unit demonstrates positive outcomes for people from the new Sleep-in and AT system, and is an important piece of research that highlights there is a potential to replicate this approach. It suggests that if more widely adopted the approach has the potential to help providers and commissioners manage the significant pressures on social care budgets up and down the country. Its contribution to the evidence base for new approaches to delivering personalised support is important and further research is recommended.

While the savings achieved by this initiative have been welcome, the far more important message from this report is the challenge it makes to the old thinking about risk that relied on intrusive, blanket solutions

for responding to peoples' needs. This report tells us that a person centered approach linked with innovative use of new technologies can offer improved dignity and improved general health and well-being to people.

Chris Dorey

Commissioning Manager, Southwark Council

Steven Rose

Chief Executive, Choice Support

The Report

Introduction

Choice Support is contracted by Southwark Council to provide supported residential living for service users with learning disabilities, based on Individual Service Funds (ISFs). In times of financial stringency it was decided that one economy would be to change the night support provided for service users from the so-called 'Waking Nights' system to a 'Sleep-in' system.

This means that instead of providing 24 hour support and supervision, support would be provided during the day only but with staff sleeping-in during the night period. As a consequence the number of staff required would be reduced. Support staff who were previously paid to provide a waking support throughout the night would be stood down and the smaller number remaining would be required to Sleep-in the accommodation. This would achieve substantial savings. However, the scheme was introduced not only to reduce costs but with the objective of enhancing the quality of life for service users whilst maintaining safety.

This project was to bring the Sleep-in night support to 26 service users in line with that provided for the other 52 in the contract. This new Sleep-in service was introduced for the 26 service users in eight houses from 1st April 2011. It was decided to view this project as a pilot and to commission an external evaluation. The contract for this was placed with the Social and Health Evaluation Unit of Buckinghamshire New University.

The issue is determining how the most cost-effective person-centered support for people with severe learning disabilities can best be provided during the night. Waking night support, which involved carers checking on residents throughout the night, was commonplace in long-term NHS care institutions. It involved 24-hour surveillance and, of course, needed staffing levels to provide this. Many providers still advertise waking night support as the best option for certain situations. On the face of it this seems like the most risk-free approach to care but carries with it an intrusion into privacy, an abnormal life pattern, and a limit on independence and choice. There are suggestions that this form of night-time support for people with severe learning disabilities can result in disrupted sleep patterns and thus deterioration in health.

As care moved from hospitals to supported housing in the community, night support was reviewed and the idea of support staff ‘sleeping-in’ or ‘sleeping over’ introduced. Abandoning Waking Nights carried with it risks in that episodes such as seizures might be missed and that service users might experience discomfort from, for example, urinary incontinence. Further, unsupervised service users might harm themselves or others. The solution may be in part through the use of assistive technology for surveillance such as epilepsy alarms and movement sensors. Incontinence pads are now more developed and can cope with heavy soiling. A further step might be the use of moisture sensors to give an alert.

While there are obvious financial savings in moving from one system to the other there is also belief that there are advantages to the service users in Sleep-in through the normalization of life patterns and increased opportunities for choice and independence. Night time surveillance can be viewed as intrusive and abnormal and its removal allows service users to follow more normal daily routines and to exercise more choice in sleeping patterns and activities with greater privacy.

In a recent article in Community Care it was suggested that there was a need for research to assess the impact of the move from Waking Nights to Sleep-in on the quality of life of service users. This evaluation is therefore timely.

1. Evaluation

The essence of an evaluation is posing relevant questions about a programme and gathering valid and reliable data to answer these questions.

The Social and Health Evaluation Unit approaches programme evaluations using its well established trident method which focuses the evaluation on outcomes and the extent to which these have been achieved; on the process and operation of the programme and the lessons learned from this; and on the perspectives of key stakeholders. Within this framework questions are posed and appropriate data gathered.

As a preliminary, information was gathered from the providers regarding anticipated outcomes and the evidence available of their accomplishment; on the process of change and delivery and how it had been managed; and on the stakeholders whose views might be solicited.

It was established that the pilot had three main intended outcomes:

1. Safety should be maintained and any risks associated with the change from Waking Nights to Sleep-in should be anticipated and managed.
2. There should be an improvement in quality of life for service users. Less intrusive forms of night support should promote dignity and independence. Improved sleep should lead to improved health and well-being.
3. There should be a reduction in costs for night time support.

The reduction in costs was clear so it was decided to focus the evaluation on the risk management and quality of life outcomes. These would be assessed through an audit focusing on the individual service users. A new audit tool was devised for this purpose with 27 topics including risk management for seizures, nocturnal incontinence and nocturnal activity; quality of life maintenance and enhancement; and adaptation to change. This tool was completed for each service user by a support worker familiar with the service user and verified by a service manager.

Analysis of these completed audits gave a picture of the extent to which risk management and quality of life outcomes had been achieved.

Stakeholder perspectives on the scheme included those of support workers; parents and next of kin, and managers.

The process of delivery was considered with managers to identify strengths and weaknesses and lessons learned.

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable cooperation and help we received from Juli Carson, her fellow managers, and the care staff in gathering data for this evaluation. They are clearly a committed and capable team dedicated to the welfare of the service users.

2. Outcomes

The aims of the new scheme are to reduce costs whilst maintaining safety and enhancing quality. This chapter is, therefore organized in three sections: cost reduction; safety maintenance and quality enhancement.

Cost reduction

Substantial savings were achieved by the shift from Waking Nights to Sleep-in. As a percentage the shift to Sleep-in represents a saving of 66%.

For 27 service users the overall annual costs of night support through the Waking Nights system in 2010-2011 was £384, 506; compared with the costs through the Sleep-in system in 2011-2012 of £159, 717. The forecast cost through the Sleep-in system for 2012-2013 will be £127,604. This will represent a savings to the local authority of £256,902.

Expressed as annual costs per service user this shows that night support through Waking Nights cost £14,241 in 2010-2011 whereas night support through Sleep-in 2011-2012 cost £5,915. The cost forecast for 2012-2013 is £4,726. This represents a savings to the local authority per service user of £9,515.

Safety Maintenance

Three issues were identified as involving potential risks:

1. Service users having seizures and whether they would be detected and managed without regular observation.
2. Urinary incontinence and whether service users would experience undetected discomfort through soiling of themselves and their bedding.
3. Nocturnal activity and whether service users might harm themselves or others.

Each of these issues has a set of statements and options in the audit tool and the responses to the questions are summarized in relation to each issue in the audit chapter.

Quality Enhancement

There is a general belief that Sleep-in will encourage independence and normalization of life patterns for service users. Before devising the audit tool we asked managers to identify quality of life enhancements that they had observed. They listed a number including:

- Utility bills are cheaper because lights and electrical appliances are not working at night;
- Cost in regards to service users ISF (Individual Service Fund) is less for the individual because the Sleep-in support costs them a lot less. Their resources are being used more effectively;
- People are more settled generally with a better sleep pattern;
- There aren't so many handovers which distracts staff members and is invasive;
- There is more consistency of support due to new shift patterns e.g. late/sleep early – all being discharged by the same staff member who has been in place during that period of time and will know of any issues that occurred the day before. They also will be able to spot developing problems such as ill health;
- A number of service users have just developed the ability to go and do what they want to without support e.g. go to lounge and turn on TV, go to the toilet unsupported. Previously they would have sought out the night wake staff before carrying out the task;
- Everyone goes to sleep at the same time and this creates a more relaxed ordinary environment which is less like a service and more like a home;
- Staff have become more trusting of peoples' abilities and now are willing to let them be alone. This has led to a change in attitudes to supporting people with more profound disabilities
- People have more privacy and autonomy.
- There is no longer confusion around day or night. There is an end and a beginning to the day in regards to staffing, so now service users don't seek to engage at night and sleep better therefore they are more productive and calm during the day. This seems to have improved concentration and some behaviours at one service especially.

In order to test out the occurrence of these benefits we included statements in the audit tool which had to be answered for each of the service users.

As will be seen in the audit chapter there is evidence that all risks had been managed and that quality of life enhancements had occurred. There are, however, points related to a significant minority of service users that should be noted and addressed.

3. Waking Nights to Sleep-in: Audit

A dedicated audit tool was developed to gather evidence of the accomplishment or otherwise of two major predicted outcomes of the new Sleep-in scheme: risk management and enhancement in quality of life. The audit tool was devised to be completed by a support worker familiar with the service user and verified by the appropriate manager. Ideally, of course, such an audit should be completed by the service user but this is obviously not feasible for all service users so the established method of proxy completion was used. The audit questions aimed to get as close as possible to the experiences and quality of life of service users. It consists of 27 questions where the respondent must choose the most appropriate statement.

16

Possible risks of the new scheme include the detection and management of night seizures; the management of nocturnal incontinence; and night activity and its support and management. Questions 1-10 are concerned primarily with risk management.

A number of possible improvements in quality of life have been suggested and these include normalization of day/night patterns; increase in independence and capability; and availability of savings to provide more day activities. Questions 11- 27 are concerned primarily with quality of life issues.

In the following notes we provide a summary of the responses to questions. A complete tabular report of the answers to these questions, for the 26 service users, is set out in the Appendix to this report. This tabular presentation of responses should be self-explanatory in relation to each question. A final section summarises additional unsolicited written comments provided by a small number of staff.

In this summary, points requiring consideration and possible action are **highlighted in red**. A response on these points from Choice Support is in **blue text with rules above and below**.

► **QUESTIONS 1-4. are concerned with the risk of night seizures and the efficacy of movement alarm systems.**

Night seizures are reported as a potential problem for only a minority of service users (4/26) there have been no increases in night seizures following the introduction of Sleep-in; indeed there has been a small decrease (-1). There are far more movement alarm systems than service users suffering night seizures (11/4) and the number has been increased during the period of Sleep-in. *There is some reported failure or*

unreliability in the movement systems and this should be addressed. Service users are reported as accustomed to the movement alarm systems.

WE ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING into new more efficient types of movement sensors, however we have found no decrease in the amount of night seizures which indicates the monitors are working accurately to alert Sleep-in staff. We will continue monitoring to achieve on going improvements. One staff team reported that a fall alarm monitor had turned itself off so we check this alarm to ensure it is working correctly before the Sleep-in shift commences.

► **QUESTIONS 5-8. address nocturnal incontinence and the incontinence pads worn by service users to absorb urine.**

Half the service users wear pads during the night (13/26). Ten service users appear to accept the pads *whereas three are reported as removing them.* Since pads might have been changed during the night under the Waking Nights system and this support will no longer be available, five service users have been fitted with larger pads. *For five service users pads have not always worked effectively and this needs to be monitored and improved.*

SOME PEOPLE (3) USING pads are damaging them by tearing. This is not new behaviour and has occurred approximately twice in the last quarter so it is not a common occurrence, but it means the pads are less effective. We are finding ways to reduce the tearing by using the most comfortable and best fitting pads. We are conducting research to find higher absorbency pads and seeking advice from Continence Advisors regarding other products available for night time incontinence.

17

► **QUESTIONS 9 AND 10. are concerned with nocturnal activity.**

One concern with the change to Sleep-in was that service users might engage in risky unsupervised night activity. While two service users have walked around during the night there have been no accidents reported.

While the majority of service users know that the Sleep-in staff are there but don't bother them, *six service users have woken staff and two regularly wake staff.* From these figures it would appear that the majority of service users have accepted Sleep-in *but a significant minority (8) would, presumably, include those who would have preferred staff to be available as they were for Waking Nights.*

WE FOUND THAT ALL six service users had genuine reasons for requiring staff attention during the night and this demonstrated to us that the Sleep-in was effective in providing appropriate night time support. One of the 2 people that regularly woke Sleep-in staff had a change in needs due to the onset of dementia, which could not have been foreseen. Steps were taken to support the person to regain their previous sleeping pattern and to sleep better. Our monitoring demonstrates that this is no longer an issue. We are supporting the remaining person to be busier during the day time so they require less staff support at night. This is improving but will require more time in order to completely resolve this issue.

▶ **QUESTION 11.** aimed to gauge the feelings of service users towards the Sleep-in scheme.

The majority are reported as feeling much the same with some (3) happier and some (3) unhappier to start with but now settled down.

▶ **QUESTION 12.** explores the financial status of the service user following the introduction of Sleep-in.

The answers to this question clearly reflect the views of the support staff the majority of whom believe the savings should be available to enhance day time activities although a quarter of respondents believe there has been no effect and a small minority believe there has been an effect. In fact, as discussed elsewhere, the savings have made it possible, within fixed cash limits, to maintain rather than enhance activities.

▶ **QUESTION 13.** assesses the impact of Sleep-in on the sleep patterns of the service users.

For the majority there is no change with a minority sleeping better and some who were initially disturbed having settled down or even improved.

▶ **QUESTIONS 14 AND 15.** address the hand over between day staff and Sleep-in night staff.

Since a number of day staff now Sleep-in there has been an overall reduction in hand overs. For more than half service users (14) this has had no effect although for a significant number (10) the reduction in handovers means less disruption with only one service user missing the daily change of staff,

▶ **QUESTION 16.** reveals that the new shifts have either had no effect or actually improved the consistency of support for service users.

▶ **IN QUESTION 17.** there is a mixed picture regarding the extent to which the new shifts have improved the capacity of the support staff to spot problems.

Although overall, with one exception, the view is that problem detection has either maintained the same standard or improved.

▶ **QUESTIONS 18-27.** The last set of questions are concerned with specific improvements in quality of life for service users including, particularly, increased independence and normalization, key factors in the personalisation agenda.

Overall the picture is that things have either remained constant or improved. In no case was deterioration in quality of life reported. While the reported improvements are generally for a minority of service users this pilot is over a relatively short period and there is potential for further improvement, particularly as support staff become more trusting of service users' abilities. This has, we think, implications for staff training and development.

Unsolicited written comments by support staff who completed the audits

▶ QUESTION 2

The alarm systems are audio alarm systems not movement alarm systems and they only work half the time.

WE ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING into new more efficient types of movement sensors. We have found no decrease in the amount of night seizures which implies the monitors are working accurately to alert Sleep-in staff when a seizure occurs.

▶ QUESTION 8

Waking nights was better for checking incontinence pads and attending to the service users' needs in that regard.

WE BELIEVE THE USE of AT has facilitated the delivery of support in a less intrusive way so that people's sleep is not regularly disturbed by night wake staff.

▶ QUESTION 9

Since Sleep-in service user shouts and screams in the middle of the night.

▶ QUESTION 11

Service user has more energy

▶ QUESTION 12

Release of funds previously spent on Waking Nights – unfortunately the daily shift was reduced as well to keep to ISF

▶ QUESTION 13

Service user doesn't sleep much

▶ QUESTION 16

Now no incontinence pad change when wet (x2)

WE ARE CONDUCTING RESEARCH to find higher absorbency pads and seeking advice from Continence Advisors regarding other products available for night time incontinence.

▶ QUESTION 19

Bed time varies depending on carer and shift (x2)

While these are minority comments they are, with one exception all negative. The concerns about assistive technology are fairly common.

4. Process

This is an evaluation of a significant change in the process of night support for service users with severe learning disabilities.

The system of Waking Nights is well established and involves support staff being awake and available to provide support and care for service users during the night. Typically they would check on the service users regularly and might also carry out various maintenance tasks in the accommodation. This system has high face validity and is based on the premise that those with severe disabilities who require help and support are likely to need it throughout the night as well as the day. The change to Sleep-in means that for the night period there will no longer be waking support but a member of care staff will Sleep-in in the accommodation and, presumably, be available to deal with any emergencies. A further factor in the process is the use of assistive technology where various devices can signal if service users are experiencing difficulties.

In changing from the process of Waking Nights to that of Sleep-in there has been another process, which is the management of change. So in this evaluation we are considering process in two ways first the process of Sleep-in and its effects on the service users and others involved and second the process of change whereby the Sleep-in system was introduced and managed. Our knowledge of these processes has come from five sources; documentary evidence provided by the Area Manager; discussions with the Area Manager; a visit to several of the residences undertaken by two members of the team; the Sleep-in Audit; surveys of Support Staff and, to a limited extent, Parents and Next of Kin of Service Users; and responses from Managers coordinated through the Area Managers.

The process of change management in this project has, in our view, four main elements. First is the management of change in staffing numbers; second is the management of changes in activities for those staff who remain in employment with, possibly, additional training; third is the communication with service users and their parents/next of kin regarding the change and its implications; and fourth the communication with staff about the change and their involvement in decision making.

Staffing establishment for this part of the provision was reduced by fourteen through voluntary redundancy and redeployment. Those who took redundancy opted to stay on as bank workers. The reduced work force follows a shift system to provide support, including Sleep-in. Staff are paid £32 per night to Sleep-in and new accommodation has been provided. The majority of staff in their answer to a question in the survey of staff views considered this process to have been well managed.

So far as we can tell the change and its implications were communicated well to service users and parents. From the audit it would appear that service users have adapted well to the new arrangements and this was substantiated by our observations on a visit to some facilities. The small number of parents who completed a questionnaire seemed satisfied with communication and the arrangements. The majority of staff expressed satisfaction with their involvement in decision-making and planning although a significant minority took the opposite view. Managers felt that planning had been effective but expressed the view that communication could have

been better and more time taken to explain the scheme to staff and to develop positive attitudes.

We were impressed by the thorough approach that had been taken to risk management with a careful identification of risks in each house taking account of the disabilities of service users. With the removal of direct supervision by a night wake staff, risks were associated with seizures, incontinence, night activity and the absence of support for the service users. Plans for risk management included the use of assistive technology including movement sensors and incontinence pads. Generally the risks appear to have been well managed as reported in the audit and the staff survey but there is concern about the reliability of assistive technology and the effectiveness of incontinence pads. Whatever risks there might have been in connection with unsupervised night time activity are counterbalanced by the increased autonomy of service users and their development of new skills. Whilst service users might miss the ready availability of night wake staff there are signs that they are benefitting from uninterrupted sleep and being able, for example, to make themselves tea.

The shift system appears to be working well. The majority of staff believe they are developing more trust in the capabilities of service users and that this has been beneficial to them. However, a small minority remain unconvinced and it is to be hoped that the sharing of good news stories will help to convince them of the benefits of the new system to service users.

The change from Waking Nights to Sleep-in is not just organizational but involves attitude change and development for support staff as well as the enhancement of independence, choice and dignity for service users. There are undoubtedly 'green shoots' apparent in improved quality of life for service users and, with the continued development of staff, we would expect to see continued development in this respect.

5. Stakeholder Perspectives

The key stakeholders in this scheme are of course the service users but the nature of their disabilities means that traditional methods of soliciting views through questionnaires, focus groups and interviews are not always feasible.

The audit focuses on the individual service users and utilizes the insights of the support workers who are closest to the service users.

As one support worker said:

As service users cannot verbalise I have to rely on non-verbal cues and interpretations of moods to try to interpret their views and needs.

Qualitative data were also available from a visit made by two members of the team and these highlighted instances of personal development for service users in more independent living and for staff in the ability to encourage such independence. Their overall impression was of enhanced quality of life for service users as a consequence of the change from Waking Nights to Sleep-in.

The other stakeholders whose views have been solicited are support staff, parents and next of kin, and managers. The results of questionnaire surveys of support staff and parents/next of kin are given in the following sections. The managers contributed to both the specification and assessment of outcomes and the analysis of process and lessons learned.

Views of Care Staff on Sleep-in

Twenty nine care staff completed a questionnaire and several showed their interest by adding unsolicited written comments. The following is a summary of their responses to the twelve questions and these are then presented in tabular form in the Appendix. Finally their written comments are summarized.

IN QUESTION 1 where the statement was - Overall Sleep-in is better than Waking Nights? - a majority (17) prefer Sleep-in with 5 disagreeing and 7 choosing don't know.

IN QUESTION 2 a majority believe that Sleep-in is mainly about saving money (19/29) with a minority (5/29) disagreeing and 5 undecided.

IN QUESTION 3 while a majority (17/29) do not think Sleep-in increases risks, 9 think it does and this is cause for concern.

IN QUESTION 4 a majority believe Sleep-in has improved life for service users (18/29) but 7 disagree and 4 don't know. Again this divided view is cause for concern.

IN QUESTION 5 while 13 believe the money saved through Sleep-in has benefitted the service users, 7 disagree and 9 don't know making an overall majority of those who don't believe the service user has benefitted from the savings. These views may reflect uncertainty regarding the use of the savings and this is referred to in the concluding chapter

IN QUESTION 6, although the majority (17/29) do not feel service users are at more risk with Sleep-in, it is worrying that 9 think they are.

IN QUESTION 7 the majority believe risks have been well managed which confirms our impression. However, it would be interesting to find out why 4 think that they hadn't.

QUESTION 8 GIVES a positive result for a question regarding the normality of service users' life under Sleep-in with 24/29 thinking they have a more normal life.

IN QUESTION 9 it is good to see that a majority of staff (23/29) are encouraging service users to exercise more independence since this is an anticipated advantage of Sleep-in. The small number (6), who are not, may be supporting particularly challenging service users but these staff would benefit from discussion with and encouragement from other staff.

IN QUESTION 10 reveals that a majority of staff either feel their working life is worse under the new scheme or don't know (16/29). A significant number (13/29), albeit less than half, feel their working life is better. In terms of staff morale this is a worrying result particularly since these are the staff who have been kept on!

IN QUESTION 11 the majority of staff (16/29) do not want to go back to Waking Nights but five would like to and a relatively high number (8) don't know. This result rather contradicts that for the previous question with staff who think their working life is worse not wanting to go back to the old (better?) system.

QUESTION 12 SHOWS that the majority of staff 19/29 are not more worried about service users as a consequence of Sleep-in being introduced but a minority are (8/29) and two don't know. This means more than third of staff are more worried or aren't sure which is a cause for concern.

Overall the majority of staff are positive in their views of 'Sleep-in' but a significant minority, from 10-15 including 'don't knows' depending on the question, are not. This should not be 'hidden' in the overall positive response. We would suggest it needs to be addressed through staff development which should include publicity for and discussion of the positive outcomes of Sleep-in. This development should also include training with assistive technology for Sleep-in, and practice in ways of encouraging and rewarding independence.

A small number of staff added unsolicited written comments as follows. In general they support and elaborate on concerns which have emerged in the audit and the questionnaire.

Unsolicited written comments by support staff who completed the questionnaire

The written comments of staff are expressed in relation to individual questions. Whilst they are clearly minority views there are several issues that emerge and in some cases correlate with other evidence. These are summarised after the comments.

▶ Q.1

Sleep-In leads to disturbance and lack of sleep.

Service users try to remove their soiled pads themselves and this is not dignified.

Whether one option is better than another depends on the needs of the individual service user.

▶ Q.3

Sleep-In increases risk to service users with diabetes, epilepsy or heart disease.

▶ Q.4

Cleaning and laundry used to be done during Waking Nights' shift.

Now it's done during the day and service users have less time to choose activities or trips away.

▶ Q.5

The cut did not benefit service users in any way (x2)

▶ Q.6

If the carer is a deep sleeper and doesn't hear the alarm, service users are at risk with sleep-In.

▶ Q.9

Choice and independence are reduced.

▶ Q.10

Sleep disruption caused by the introduction of Sleep-in has resulted in poor performance and mistakes by carers (x6). Monitors stop staff sleeping properly. This is a concern as I am a driver as well.

▶ Q.13

I gave my view to managers but felt that the decision was already made at a higher level regardless of the needs of service users.

▶ Q.14

Lack of outside funding did not help and put pressure on management to further reduce the cost.

Staff were properly informed at each stage, and facilities were provided – although basic.

▶ Q.16

Sleep-In is more normal (x2)

Issues from comments which may need attention include the following:

Incontinence pads removed by service users

WE HAVE INVESTIGATED THIS and found that it is not a frequent problem. In two houses we could only find 3 occurrences since April 2011. One other person does this occasionally but only when she has a bowel movement.

Sensor alarms may not be heard

WHETHER THE STAFF MEMBER sleeping-in is a heavy or light sleeper may be relevant. However, there has been no decrease in the levels of seizures which implies that this has not been the case. We will continue monitoring the situation and explore the most effective assistive technology options to alert staff.

Sleep in for carer is disrupted

THERE WAS A PERIOD of disruption at first but this has now settled down in all services. One service in particular was affected due to the onset of dementia for a woman. She was having night terrors and we supported her to see the GP. We now put on gentle music while she is getting ready to sleep and have changed the lighting to create a more relaxed environment. This has helped to alleviate the problem and this is no longer an issue.

You could argue that the Sleep-in is there to be disturbed at times and this is inevitable on occasions. If Sleep-in staff are disturbed they call the on-call manager and we release the staff member to go home in the morning. This issue has not been reported to managers as a problem.

Service activities previously done during night now take time away from service users during the day

PEOPLE WE SUPPORT, WHO previously had night wake staff, may have never been involved in some everyday activities. We are now supporting people, hand over hand, to do tasks like ironing and cleaning for the first time. Our findings are that

this is working well and much more like normal life. From looking at service user daily plans we can find no evidence of a decrease in activities. It is possible that this comment may have come from the staff who used to be night wakes.

Views of Parents or Next of Kin

It is not straightforward to solicit the views of parents/next of kin/guardians of adults with profound learning difficulties who live in supported accommodation. Many service users have lived away from their parents for most of their lives and contact with parents is variable and, in some cases, minimal or non-existent. Parents' attitudes to their disabled offspring may be ambivalent. Parents may be deceased. Experience in comparable situations has shown a very poor response rate to circulated questionnaires.

However, it was possible to talk to two family members: a brother and a mum. They both said they were aware of what was going on but really hadn't seen any changes for their family member. They seemed to prefer there being no waking night staff as this seemed more 'normal'.

Questionnaires were completed for the two parents in discussion and the following tables show their responses to the sixteen questions which, so far as possible, mirrored those asked of the care staff. Responses to fifteen questions were either positive or don't know. Only the sixteenth question divided the respondents where one thought the scheme had made a difference and one didn't.

It would be interesting to see, if after a longer period, the anticipated increased independence and capability in service users was noticed by parents/next of kin.

Managers' Views

A group of five managers, with the Area Manager, responded to four questions as follows.

► Q 1. What is the best thing about the Sleep-in scheme?

- ◆ We were able to retain activities while reducing costs
- ◆ Reduced costs, financial savings
- ◆ People sleep better at night
- ◆ Service users are more independent
- ◆ More privacy
- ◆ Service users less reliant on staff
- ◆ This has brought the service and staff team together.

▶ Q 2. What is the worst thing about the Sleep-in scheme?

- ◆ Staff can be disturbed
- ◆ Some problems getting the heavy duty night pads
- ◆ Some redundancies
- ◆ Staff negative reactions
- ◆ Resistance to change
- ◆ Lots of fear of the unknown.

▶ Q 3. What have you learned from the implementation of this scheme?

- ◆ The change was manageable
- ◆ More aware now of what service users can do
- ◆ Service users have surprised us with their capacity to change
- ◆ What appears difficult can be straight forward
- ◆ Things work out when they are planned
- ◆ People can be reassured
- ◆ Accept change as it comes.

▶ Q 4. If you could do it again, what would you do differently?

- ◆ Wouldn't change it
- ◆ It went very smoothly
- ◆ Would like longer for staff to prepare their minds
- ◆ Would have liked to be more prepared for the negative staff reaction
- ◆ It went well because it was well planned so I would change nothing.

Conclusion and Recommendations

At the end of this evaluation it is clear to us that the change from 'Waking Nights' to 'Sleep-in' initiated by Choice Support in Southwark can be judged a success. Broadly, the three objectives of the scheme have been achieved through an efficient and effective process and this is reflected in the generally positive views of staff, managers, and parents/next of kin. Crucially the move to 'Sleep-in' has made significant savings whilst, in a number of ways, improving the quality of life of the service users. It is a significant step in fulfilling the personalisation agenda.

The reduction in staff numbers which has achieved the savings appeared to have been managed relatively smoothly with staff redeploying or taking voluntary redundancies and opting to stay on as bank workers. Careful attention was given to identifying the possible risks of removing direct night supervision and planning for their management. There is a clear commitment to personalisation for these service users through the benefits of a more normal day/night pattern, increased independence, and the development of new skills. Investment has been made in living quarters for the staff who Sleep-in although this may need further improvement.

However a number of details have emerged which would merit attention and these are listed below. They should not detract from the overall success of the scheme in achieving significant savings whilst maintaining or enhancing quality and managing risks, but may nevertheless contribute to continuous quality improvement.

Assistive Technology

In this context assistive technology includes movement sensors, audio detectors and moisture sensors which trigger alarms in the Sleep-in bedroom, and also incontinence pads worn by the service users. The removal of night time supervision throws a heavier emphasis on assistive technology.

There were several reports in the questionnaires and written comments indicating unreliable operation of sensors and expressing concerns at inaudible alarms. Incontinence pads, whilst generally effective, were also reported as sometimes unable to absorb high levels of incontinence and, in some cases, being removed by service users.

Whilst staff are described as sleeping in they are obviously expected to respond to alarms from assistive technology. The interface between assistive technology and Sleep-in staff is vital. This interface needs further consideration.

Now that Sleep-in is relatively well established we would suggest that a review should be undertaken of the effectiveness of the present systems and the potential for the introduction of new technology.

Staff Development

Whilst the majority of staff seem satisfied with the new system there are a significant number of dissenters where indications are that additional training could contribute to attitude change, improve the effectiveness of the use of assistive technology, and also, at an interpersonal level, enhance the ability of staff to develop independence and new skills in service users.

Benefits of Savings

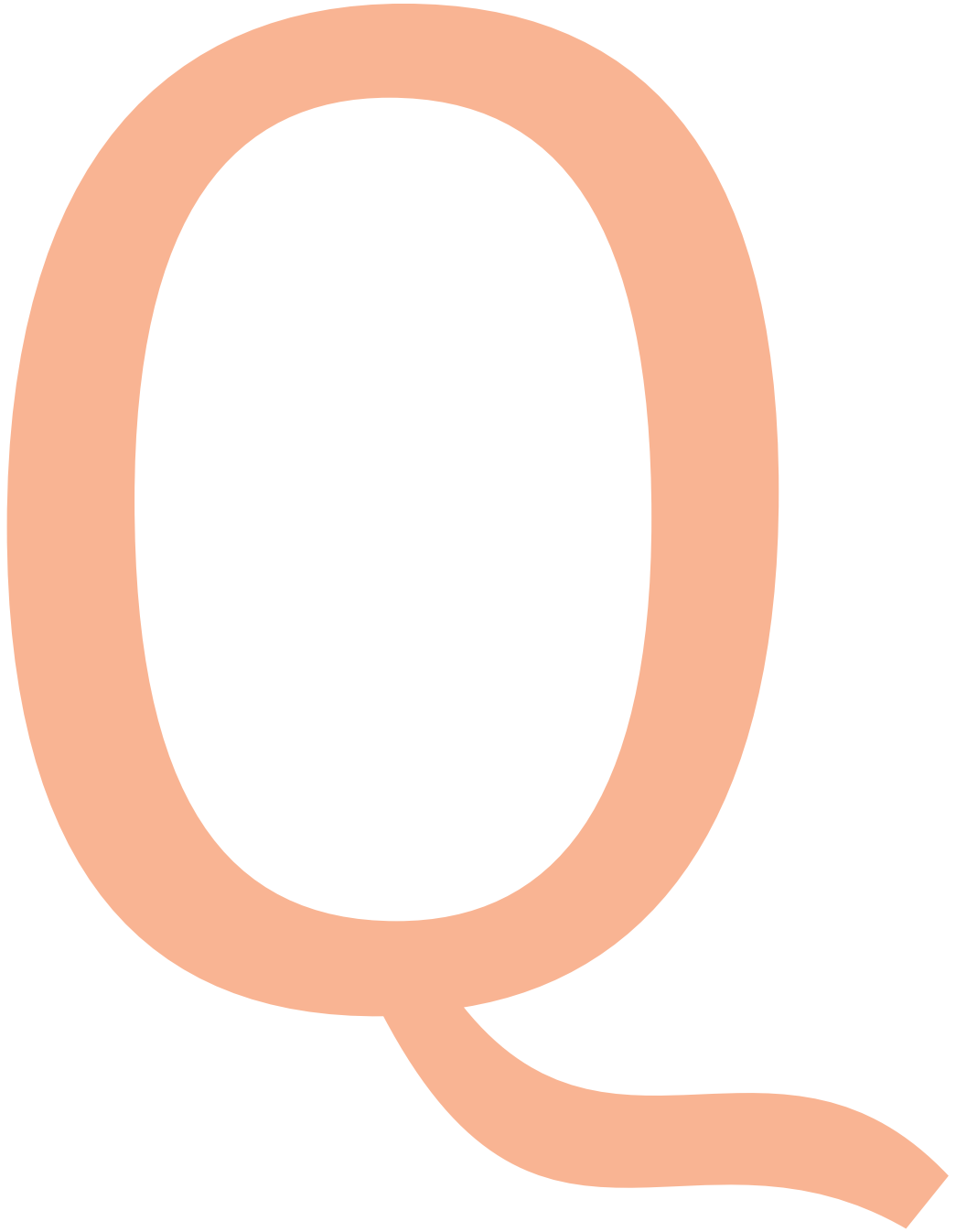
It seems clear that savings on the change from Waking Nights to Sleep-in were required to maintain the current level of provision of daytime activities. This does not appear to be widely understood with some expectation that there will be an enhancement of daytime activities from savings. This needs to be communicated clearly to staff.

29

Success Stories

Some staff seem unaware of the improvements in service users' lives following on from the introduction of Sleep-in staff. A regular internal bulletin with success stories might help to educate staff to the undoubted potential for normalization of day /night patterns and increase in independence and competence in service users.

The most heartening aspect of this evaluation has been the signs of development in service users whose lives have become more normal through the introduction of Sleep-in and who are becoming more independent and skilled. There is no doubt that the service users are supported by a dedicated team of care staff and managers who are themselves developing. We hope the insights given by this evaluation will make some contribution to the lives of both service users and support staff.



Questionnaires

Service User's Experience

▶ 1. Night Seizures

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user does not suffer night seizures	84.6%	22
Service user has suffered night seizures more frequently than previously	0.0%	0
Service user has suffered night seizures less frequently than previously	3.8%	1
Service user has suffered night seizures at the same rate as previously	11.5%	3
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ 2. Movement Alarm Systems

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user has no movement alarm system	57.7%	15
Service user has had movement alarm system fitted during the last year	0.0%	5
Service user has always had movement alarm system	3.8%	6
Service user has had movement alarm system removed during this year	11.5%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ 3. Operation of Movement Alarm System

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Movement alarm system has worked effectively throughout the year	38.5%	5
Movement alarm system has not been required	23.1%	3
Movement alarm system has worked most of the time	30.8%	4
Movement alarm system has worked about half of the time	7.7%	1
Movement alarm system has posed significant problems	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		13
SKIPPED QUESTION		13

▶ 4. Effect of Movement Alarm System

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user is accustomed to the alarm system from the previous Waking Nights system	54.5%	6
Service user is accustomed to the alarm system from the new Sleep-in system	45.5%	5
Service user is concerned about the alarm system	0.0%	0
Service user complains about the alarm system	0.0%	0
Service user has tried to remove the alarm system	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		11
SKIPPED QUESTION		15

▶ 5. Incontinence Pads

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user does not wear incontinence pads	50.0%	13
Service user wears incontinence pads all the time	38.5%	10
Service user wears incontinence pads during the night only	11.5%	3
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **6. Service Users Response**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user is used to incontinence pads since the Waking Nights system	40.0%	10
Service user is used to incontinence pads since the Sleep-in system	0.0%	0
Service user welcomes incontinence pads	0.0%	0
Service user complains about incontinence pads	0.0%	0
Service user removes incontinence pads	12.0%	3
Service user does not have incontinence pads	48.0%	12
ANSWERED QUESTION		25
SKIPPED QUESTION		1

▶ **7. Size of Incontinence Pads**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user does not have incontinence pads	50.0%	13
Service user's pads are the same as they were during the Waking Nights period	30.8%	8
Service user has larger pads since the operation of the Sleep-in scheme	19.2%	5
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **8. Effectiveness of Incontinence Pads**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user does not have incontinence pads	50.0%	13
Pads work effectively for this service user	30.8%	8
Pads usually work effectively for this service user	3.8%	1
Pads sometimes do not work adequately for this service user	15.4%	4
Pads are generally not effective for this service user	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **9. Effect of the Sleep-in for service users**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user usually sleeps throughout the night	50.0%	13
Service user sleeps with some restlessness	34.6%	9
Service user wakes often during the night	7.7%	2
Service user walks around during the night	7.7%	2
Service user walks around during the night with some potential for accidents	0.0%	0
Service user walks around during the night with some accidents	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **10. Sleep-in Staff**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user shows no awareness of the Sleep-in staff	7.7%	2
Service user knows that the Sleep-in staff are there but never bothers them	61.5%	16
Service user occasionally wakes Sleep-in staff	23.1%	6
Service user often wakes Sleep-in staff	7.7%	2
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **11. Service User's emotional state**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user seems to feel much the same following the introduction of the Sleep-in scheme	76.9%	20
Service user seems happier following the introduction of the Sleep-in scheme	11.5%	3
Service user seemed unhappier to start with but has now settled down following the introduction of the new scheme	11.5%	3
Service user is generally less happy following the introduction of the new scheme	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **12. Financial Status**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Sleep-in system has had no effect on the service user's finances	23.1%	6
Sleep-in system should release funds previously spent on the Waking Nights scheme and this will in future enhance day time activities for the service	65.4%	17
Sleep-in system has enabled more to be spent on daytime activities for the service user	11.5%	3
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **13. Sleep Patterns**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user's sleep patterns are generally more settled than before	11.5%	3
No change in the service user's sleep patterns	69.2%	18
Sleep patterns were initially rather disturbed but have now settled down or slightly improved	19.2%	5
Sleep patterns are more disturbed	0.0%	0
Sleep patterns are very disturbed with night time activity	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **14. Handovers**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
While there are fewer handovers with staff sleeping-in, this has had little effect on staff members and the service user	56.0%	14
Service user misses the handovers and daily change in staff	4.0%	1
Since there are fewer handovers this is less disrupting for staff and invasive for the service user	40.0%	10
ANSWERED QUESTION		25
SKIPPED QUESTION		1

▶ **15. Record Keeping and Review**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
The absence of handovers in the new system has removed a useful point to review and record any issues for this service user	4.2%	1
The absence of handovers makes no difference to the monitoring and support of this service user	50.0	12
The continuity of staffing with the removal of handovers enhances the carers' knowledge of this service user	45.8%	11
ANSWERED QUESTION		24
SKIPPED QUESTION		2

▶ **16. Consistency of Support**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
The new shifts have led to a deterioration in consistency of support for this service user	11.5%	3
The new shifts have had no impact on consistency of support for this service user	57.7%	15
The new shifts have improved the consistency of support for this service user	30.8%	8
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **17. Spotting Emerging Problems**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
A staff member being in place for a longer period of time means they may miss problems with service users	3.8%	1
The staff member being in place for a longer period has no impact on their ability to spot problems with service users	38.5%	10
Staff members vary in their ability to spot problems and the new shifts have no effect on this	19.2%	5
The staff member being in place for a longer period has made it more likely that they spot problems with the service user	38.5%	10
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **18. Independence**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user's independence is much as it was before Sleep-in was introduced	76.9%	20
Service user is less independent following the introduction of Sleep-in	0.0%	0
Service user shows some signs of greater independence since the introduction of Sleep-in	19.2%	5
Service user has definitely developed greater independence since the introduction of Sleep-in	3.8%	1
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **19. Bedtime**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service users and carers go to bed at roughly the same time	0.0%	0
Service users go to bed much as they did under the Waking Nights system	34.6%	9
Carers and service users go to bed at different times	15.4%	4
Bedtime varies for the service user and carers	50.0%	13
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **20. Effect of Bedtime**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Bedtimes under the new system have created a more relaxed and ordinary environment for this service user than before	26.9%	7
Whilst bedtimes have changed under the new system this has not changed the general environment for this service user	15.4%	4
Bedtimes have not changed significantly and there is no change in the general environment for this service user	57.7%	15
Changes in bedtimes have made the environment less relaxed	7.7%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **21. Changes in Staff Trust**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
There is no change in staff trust of this service user's abilities	65.4%	17
Staff have become more trusting of this service user's abilities	34.6%	9
Staff have become more worried about risks and less likely to trust this service user	0.0%	0
Staff have tried to be more trusting of this service user but it hasn't worked	0.0%	0
	ANSWERED QUESTION	26
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **22. Privacy and Autonomy**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Privacy and autonomy of the service user haven't changed very much	69.2%	18
Service user is experiencing some improvement in privacy and autonomy	15.4%	4
Privacy and autonomy have deteriorated for this service user	0.0%	0
There has been a clear improvement in privacy and autonomy for this service user	11.5%	3
Privacy and autonomy are necessarily limited for this service user and haven't changed	3.8%	1
	ANSWERED QUESTION	26
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **23. Division between night and day**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
There is a clearer distinction between day and night for this service user	92.3%	24
The distinction between day and night is still confused for this service user	7.7%	2
The continuity of staff has made the distinction between day and night more confused for this service user	0.0%	0
	ANSWERED QUESTION	26
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **24. Changes in sleep pattern and engagement**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user's pattern of sleep and engagement have improved	19.2%	5
Service user's pattern of sleep and engagement is much as before	73.1%	19
Service user's pattern of sleep and engagement has deteriorated	0.0%	0
Service user's pattern of sleep and engagement varies as a consequence of other factors	7.7%	2
	ANSWERED QUESTION	26
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **25. Day time behaviour**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
The behaviour of the service user has remained fairly constant from the previous system to the new one	84.6%	22
Service user has been more productive and calm during the day following the introduction of the new system	15.4%	4
Service user has become less productive and more disturbed following the introduction of the new system	0.0%	0
	ANSWERED QUESTION	26
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **26. Control over environment**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user is showing less control over his/her immediate environment	0.0%	0
Service user's control over his/her environment is much as before	80.8%	21
Service user is showing more control over his/her environment	19.2%	5
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **27. Development of new skills**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Service user is unable to develop any new skills	70.0%	0
Service user has some skills but these have remained constant over a long period	80.8%	21
Service user has developed new skills during the year	19.2%	5
Service user's skill levels have deteriorated during the year	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		26
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

Care Staff Views

► 1. Overall Sleep-in is better than Waking Nights

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	17.2%	5
Agree	41.4%	12
Don't know	24.1%	7
Disagree	13.8%	4
Strongly disagree	3.4%	1
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► 2. Sleep-in is mainly about saving money

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	24.1%	7
Agree	41.4%	12
Don't know	17.2%	5
Disagree	13.8%	4
Strongly disagree	3.4%	1
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► 3. Sleep-in increases risks for service users

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	10.3%	3
Agree	20.7%	6
Don't know	10.3%	3
Disagree	48.3%	14
Strongly disagree	10.3%	3
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► **4. Sleep-in has improved the life of service users**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	13.8%	4
Agree	48.3%	14
Don't know	13.8%	4
Disagree	17.2%	5
Strongly disagree	6.9%	2
	ANSWERED QUESTION	29
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

► **5. Money saved by Sleep-in has benefited service users**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	3.4%	1
Agree	41.4%	12
Don't know	31.0%	9
Disagree	13.8%	4
Strongly disagree	10.3%	3
	ANSWERED QUESTION	29
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

► **6. Service users are more at risk with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	13.8%	4
Agree	17.2%	5
Don't know	10.3%	3
Disagree	48.3%	14
Strongly disagree	10.3%	3
	ANSWERED QUESTION	29
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

► **7. The risks of Sleep-in have been well managed for service users**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	3.4%	1
Agree	65.5%	19
Don't know	17.2%	5
Disagree	6.9%	2
Strongly disagree	6.9%	2
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► **8. Service users have a more normal lie with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	17.2%	5
Agree	65.5%	19
Don't know	10.3%	3
Disagree	6.9%	2
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

43

► **9. I am encouraging more service user independence with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	17.2%	5
Agree	62.1%	18
Don't know	10.3%	3
Disagree	6.9%	2
Strongly disagree	3.4%	1
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **10. My working life is better with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	10.3%	3
Agree	34.5%	10
Don't know	17.2%	5
Disagree	27.6%	8
Strongly disagree	10.3%	3
	ANSWERED QUESTION	29
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **11. I wish we could go back to Waking Nights**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	6.9%	2
Agree	10.3%	3
Don't know	27.6%	8
Disagree	44.8%	13
Strongly disagree	10.3%	3
	ANSWERED QUESTION	29
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **12. I am more worried about service users with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	6.9%	2
Agree	20.7%	6
Don't know	6.9%	2
Disagree	58.6%	17
Strongly disagree	6.9%	2
	ANSWERED QUESTION	29
	SKIPPED QUESTION	0

▶ **13. I felt my views were taken into account in the introduction of Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Agree	55.2%	16
Don't know	31.0%	9
Disagree	3.4%	1
Strongly disagree	10.3%	3
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► **14.** I think the introduction of Sleep-in was well managed

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	69.0%	20
Don't know	13.8%	4
Disagree	17.2%	5
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		29
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

Views of Parents or next of kin

► 1. Overall Sleep-in is better than Waking Nights

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► 2. Sleep-in is mainly about saving money

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	50.0%	1
Disagree	50.0%	1
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► 3. Sleep-in increases risks for service user

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	50.0%	1
Disagree	50.0%	1
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **4. Sleep-in has improved the life of service user**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	50.0%	1
Disagree	50.0%	1
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **5. The money saved by Sleep-in has benefited the service user**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	50.0%	1
Disagree	50.0%	1
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

47

▶ **6. Service user is more at risk with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	100.0%	2
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► **7. The risks of Sleep-in have been well managed for service user**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► **8. Service user has a more normal life with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

► **9. Care staff have encouraged more service user independence with Sleep-in**

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **10.** I wish we could go back to Waking Nights

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	100.0%	2
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **11.** I am more worried about service user with Sleep-in

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	0.0%	0
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	100.0%	2
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **12.** I felt my views were taken into account in the introduction of Sleep-in

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **13.** I think the introduction of Sleep-in was well managed

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **14.** I think the service user is happier with Sleep-in

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **15.** I think the welfare of the service user has been the priority in introducing this scheme

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	100.0%	2
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0

▶ **16.** I don't think the Sleep-in scheme makes any difference

	RESPONSE PERCENT	RESPONSE COUNT
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0
Agree	50.0%	1
Don't know	0.0%	0
Disagree	50.0%	1
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0
ANSWERED QUESTION		2
SKIPPED QUESTION		0





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REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Health & Wellbeing
SUBJECT:	Adult Social Care Contracts
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To seek approval from Executive Board to extend the current services provided by external and voluntary sector providers for a one year period from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, as identified in appendix 1. This requires a waiver to Procurement Standing Orders.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board agree to using Procurement Standing Orders 1.14.3 to waive Procurement Standing Order 3.1 in respect of contracts below the EU threshold, as listed in Appendix 1.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 In Halton there has always been a vibrant voluntary sector and that has been maintained despite the difficult financial landscape they are operating within. The services included within this report are delivered to support the prevention agenda that it is pivotal to the strategic aims of Adult Social Care. These services have played a vital part in helping us to main a level of prevention within the borough and are also well placed to deliver important outcomes linked to the Care Act. It is clear that if the unique and dedicated services were lost there would be a significant gap in service delivery that would not be filled elsewhere.

3.2 The contracts outlined in Appendix 1 represent a number of voluntary organisations who deliver a valuable service across health and social care. It is proposed that the Council continues to fund these services.

3.3 Each of the services listed in the appendix will, from April 1st 2017, be managed through the Better Care Fund. This will ensure that the services are jointly funded and managed. Therefore they will realise improved efficiency in monitoring and overall performance.

3.4 As part of this new 12 month agreement a strategic review will take

place of the current funding. This will aim to consider if the services we commission clearly meet the strategic objectives of the council, do they offer value for money, service user feedback and are there alternative providers that could be procured. As a result we will seek to go to formal tender in April 2018 on each contract listed in appendix 1.

4.0 **BUSINESS CASE FOR EXTENSION OF CONTRACTS**

4.1 **Value for money**

The financial contribution from the council is supported by the contribution from local volunteers and as such the services listed in Appendix 1 provide good value for money. The Council's contribution to all services will be subject to further review in 2017/8.

4.2 **Transparency**

Contracts will be recorded in the Council's Contract Register accessible via the internet together with the publication of all spend in excess of £500.00.

4.3 **Propriety and Scrutiny**

The extension of the contracts referred to in this report will be compliant with Halton Borough Council's Procurement Standing Orders. Compliance with anti-corruption practices will be adhered to and any of the contracts within the subject of this report will be terminated if there is any occurrence of corruption by any organisations or their staff.

4.4 **Accountability**

The contracts will be performance managed and service standards monitored by commissioners and the contracts team.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 On 17th January 2008, the Department of Health issued a Local Authority Circular entitled 'Transforming Social Care'. The circular set out information to support transformation of social care and at the heart of this change is the personalisation agenda. As we develop community provision within prevention services we will need to consider the implications of personalisation for the whole community.

5.2 Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS, July 2010, also sets out plans to radically transform the NHS. This includes development of Clinical Commissioning Groups that means local clinicians having more of a say in how they commission services. This has had a major impact on the voluntary sector as they have had to adapt to a whole new way of working and prepare for commissioning changes in the sector.

5.3 Locally, to support these National documents, the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy identifies the need to support Older People to maintain their independence and a high quality of life. The Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy Mid-term review, The Carers Commissioning Strategy and the Joint Commissioning Strategy for People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities all outline the current position and needs of different service areas in the borough. These documents look at the need for a range of support services to help people achieve the best outcomes for them including information, transport, advocacy and health promotion.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The total financial implication of the contracts listed in appendix 1 is £345,019 for the financial year 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018.

6.2 The contract performances have been reviewed during the course of 2016/17 to ensure that service objectives are in line with the new Health and Wellbeing and Clinical Commissioning Group Priorities and that services continue to provide value for money.

6.3 The cost of the recommended extension to contracts can be met within existing budget allocations.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None

7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Voluntary sector organisations rely significantly on volunteer time to deliver services. The organisations provide training and placement opportunities for volunteers, increasing their skills and employability.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The services provided by Age UK Mid Mersey, Halton Speak Out and Red Cross deliver direct support from people in their own home or as they are being discharged from hospital. Information and Advocacy is a vital mainstay of helping people to remain healthy and independent in their own homes.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

The prevention agenda is well supported by the voluntary sector and Age UK Mid Mersey offer practical help and information to ensure that older people's homes are safe and secure. In addition Red Cross offer practical support for people when they leave hospital.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 The Quality Assurance Team will monitor the grants and ensure the Council and Halton residents receive value for money

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 To receive funding a voluntary sector organisation has to ensure that that acceptable equality and diversity policies are in place.

10.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

To support the Council objectives in relation to adults social care.

11.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

An alternative option would be to carry out a procurement exercise and this is the preferred option for next year. This will allow enough time to complete a full service review of the services that are currently delivered as part of the voluntary sector contracts.

12.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

1st April 2017

13.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.

Appendix 1 – Contract extensions

Name of provider & details of service	Contract start date	Contract end date	Budget 2017/18	Funding	Rationale
Age UK Mid Mersey – Information Service	01/04/17	31/03/18	£66,300	Local Authority – Voluntary sector budget	The service supports older people through signposting, information provision and casework. It works specifically in identifying low –level support for people to help them prevent any health deterioration.
Red Cross – Home from Hospital	01/04/17	31/03/18	£57,069	Local Authority – Voluntary sector budget	This service supports people for a short period during the difficult transition from Hospital to home. The Red Cross support is an important part of discharge management within the hospital and offers its service to help alleviate pressure on beds as well as offering practical support to people when they are at their most vulnerable. The service is currently being delivered at a very competitive unit cost of just £9.84 per hour.
Age UK Mid Mersey – Practical Tasks	01/04/17	31/03/18	£51,850	Local Authority – Voluntary sector budget	The service delivers home environment checks and low-level maintenance to support people remaining independent in their own homes. This service links directly into the local falls service and offers a valuable support to reducing the level of falls in the borough.
Carers Trust (formerly Crossroads) End of Life service and carers respite service	01/04/17	31/03/18	£91,800	Joint Local Authority / Better Care Fund	This service delivers carers respite for people who are supporting someone who is at end of life or someone who is unable to leave their own home. The service has been reviewed and is delivering well; however work is required to review the overall carers respite provision in the borough and for this reason only a one year extension will be sort.
Halton Speak Out	01/04/17	31/03/18	£78,000	Joint Local Authority / Better Care Fund	This service delivers service user led support to people with a learning disability in the borough. It focuses on engagement and support planning ensuring that the services people receive are person centred.

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources
SUBJECT: Waste Treatment Services
PORTFOLIO: Environmental Services
WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is;
- 1.1.1 To retrospectively report to Members details of a Waiver of Standing Orders that was authorised by the Chief Executive using his Emergency Powers;
- 1.1.2 To provide Members with details of contingency arrangements that are proposed to be put in place for the treatment or disposal of Halton's collected residual waste and to make recommendations as to how such arrangements should be secured, and;
- 1.1.3 To ask Members to approve the undertaking of a Tendering Exercise for the provision of a waste transport service that is expected to exceed £1m.

2. RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) Members note the Waiver of Procurement Standing Orders by the Chief Executive, on the grounds of an emergency, and the subsequent appointment of WSR Recycling Limited to carry out a service for the treatment/disposal of Halton's residual household waste during the period 30th November 2016 to 9th December 2016;**
- 2) the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services, to determine all matters and take all steps necessary to secure contingency arrangements for the treatment/disposal of Municipal Waste in the event that Halton is unable to deliver its Waste to the Resource Recovery Contract, including any procurement arrangements and contract award up to the value of £1m; and**
- 3) In accordance with Standing Order 2.1.1 of the Council's Procurement Standing Orders, Executive Board approve that a Tendering Exercise be carried out for the provision of a service for the bulk transport of residual Municipal Waste to the Resource Recovery Contract as set out in the report.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Waiver of Procurement Standing Orders

- 3.1 The arrangement between Halton and the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) for all of Halton's collected residual waste to be treated under the Merseyside and Halton Resource Recovery Contract (RRC) commenced on 1st October 2016. From this date, Halton began delivering its waste, via bulk transport arrangements, to a Rail Transfer Loading Station (RTLS) in Knowsley where it was subsequently transported by rail to an Energy Recovery Facility at Wilton in Teesside.
- 3.2 Due to an unexpected operational problem, the Energy Recovery Facility was unable to accept waste for a short period from 30th November. As a result, the Council was required to put in place alternative arrangements for dealing with Halton's during the period that the Facility was not operating. Given the unanticipated nature of the problem there was no opportunity to secure alternate waste treatment arrangements via normal procurement routes and, due to the immediate and absolute need to have an outlet for Halton's residual waste, an Emergency Waiver of Standing Orders was sought.
- 3.3 In accordance with Standing Order 1.14.1, authorisation to waive the Council's Procurement Standing Orders can be approved by the Chief Executive where urgent action becomes necessary as a result of an unforeseen emergency. Given the circumstances set out in para 3.2 above, a request was made to the Chief Executive for approval to be given to appoint WSR Recycling Limited to deal with Halton's residual waste for the period of the Energy Recovery Facility unavailability. The anticipated value of the service to be carried out during this period was below EU Threshold. Having considered the circumstances and the justification for appointing WSR Recycling Limited, the Chief Executive approved the waiver request. Prior to the waiver request being approved, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services was consulted on the proposed action and was supportive.
- 3.4 Members are advised that Halton was able to recommence deliveries to the RRC from 12th December and that the total expenditure incurred in dealing with Halton's waste under the terms of the waiver approved by the Chief Executive was £88,983.40.

Contingency Arrangements for Dealing with Waste

- 3.5 For some time, Halton's residual waste had been committed to be sent to the RRC from 1st October 2016. On this basis, the Council's previous contractual arrangements for dealing with residual waste expired to coincide with this date. This means that should further operational difficulties be experienced with the Energy Recovery

Facility in Teeside, the Council could be left in a position where it has no arrangements in place for dealing with its residual waste. For this reason, it is requested that approval be given for contingent arrangements for the treatment or disposal of Halton's waste to be secured.

- 3.6 Given the limited time available for officers to consider the Council's options at the time of writing this report, it is recommended that the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Environmental Services, be authorised to take all steps necessary to ensure that the Council has in place arrangements for the treatment/disposal of Municipal Waste in the event that Halton is unable to deliver waste to the Resource Recovery Contract.

Transportation of Waste to the RRC

- 3.7 At its meeting of 15th September 2016, Executive Board approved arrangements for the bulk transport of Halton's residual waste to the Rail Transfer Loading Station (RTLS) in Knowsley for the period 1st October 2016 to 31st March 2017. Members were advised that the cost of directly delivering waste to the RTLS would be more expensive than the cost of having a third party transport it on the Council's behalf. Furthermore, and notwithstanding the financial advantages, in reaching their decision Members had also considered that the bulk delivery of Halton's waste to the RTLS would;

- Maintain current performance levels
- Result in no alteration to current waste collection schedules
- Result in no disruption to members of the public
- Mean that no costs would be incurred in preparing new schedules or advising members of the public of new collection days
- Provide flexibility and better contingent arrangements to deal with operational changes or disruptions to service; such as breakdowns or inclement weather
- Ensure a reduced carbon footprint from less vehicle movements

The transportation of waste to the RRC will contribute towards the achievement of the Council's overall waste related objectives.

- 3.8 For the reasons set out above, the bulk transport of Halton's residual waste to the RTLS remains the best and most financially advantageous option for the Council. To this end, it is recommended that a procurement exercise be undertaken to maintain such waste transportation arrangements beyond 31st March 2017. A soft market testing exercise carried out earlier this year revealed that a longer contract term for this service will attract more competitive rates. It would result in the value over the life of the contract exceeding £1m.

3.9 In accordance with Standing Order 2.1.1 of the Council's Procurement Standing Orders, Executive Board are asked to approve that Officers undertake a tender exercise to procure services for the bulk transport of Halton's residual waste to the RTLS. If approved, it is expected that;

- The Contract Term will be 5 years, plus the option to extend at the Council's discretion for up to a further 5 years in 12 month increments.
- Based upon current estimates, the total contract value, assuming the award of the full 5 year extension period, will be circa £3m.
- The Contractor will be selected through an 'open' tendering process and the contract will be based upon an 80% Price/20% Quality evaluation scoring process.

3.10 The estimated costs associated with this contract will be met from the Council's contingency budget.

3.11 Project risks and controls will be managed through the procurement process and will be built into the Tender documentation; which will also include ensuring that the successful contractor complies with all relevant regulatory requirements. Having an initial contract term of 5 years, with the option not to pursue the contract thereafter, will provide financial control.

3.12 This report contains all of the information required under Procurement Standing Order 2.1.2.

4. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial implications are covered within the report.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no policy implications as a result of this report.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None identified

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None identified

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None identified

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

6.5 **Halton’s Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7. RISK ANALYSIS

Waste Treatment Contingency Arrangements

7.1 Should the Council fail to put in place contingency arrangements for the treatment or disposal of collected residual waste in the event of the non-availability of the RRC, there is a risk that the Council would be unable to collect waste from households within the borough and it would fail to carry out its statutory functions as a Waste Collection and Disposal Authority.

Waste Transport Arrangements

7.2 Should the Council choose not to procure services for the bulk transport of waste to the Rail Transfer Load Station in Knowsley there is a risk that, in directly delivering its waste, the Council will incur significantly increased costs. Additionally, it would likely have resource and operational implications.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues as a result of this report.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Executive Board Report 15 th September 2016 – Waste Treatment Services	Municipal Building Kingsway	Angela Scott

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 January 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director
Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Use of Guardian Service in Vacant
buildings

WARDS All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise the Board of the success of the use of the Guardian Scheme following the initial 4 year contract and to present proposals for continuing this arrangement where appropriate.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) Members approve the continuing use of the Guardian Scheme and approve the retendering of the service;**
- 2) Members are made aware of the potential liability of Belvedere (Former Hostel) and approve the continued use of the scheme as an interim arrangement; and**
- 3) Officers explore the options for disposal and / or demolition of the property and report back to Executive Board with recommendations by June 2017.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Executive Board Sub-Committee on 29 March 2012 approved a pilot of the Guardian Scheme in two of its vacant properties (Egerton Street Library building in Runcorn and Transporter Bridge House in West Bank) as an alternative method of security and it was further agreed that the

outcome of the pilot be reported to a future meeting of the Executive Board.

- 3.2 Following the pilot scheme a progress report was presented at Executive Board on 11th January 2013 in which it was agreed to tender the service with procurement. Ad Hoc were successful in the tender and have been administering the service since 2013, this contract is due to expire in March 2017 and it is recommended that the Council retender the service
- 3.3 Generally by installing the Guardians it ensures that the fabric of the buildings are being maintained due to their continued occupation and incidences of water ingress or burst pipes are quickly noted before any serious damage can occur.
- 3.4 Both properties are inspected monthly by the management company and spot checks are also carried out to ensure that the Guardians are complying with their agreements. The management company provides the Council with a monthly report and also takes meter readings periodically to monitor usage.
- 3.5 To date the service is working well and proving to be cost effective in most cases as set out below:
- 3.6 Egerton Street former Library
- 3.7 The Guardians moved into the former library on 17 May 2012 with an initial set up of £2,640 to install a shower unit (this was more costly than would normally be expected due to complexities with the existing services in the building which had to be adapted). Since then the Council has incurred on average costs of £7,280 which is below previous expenditure.

Costs	Average Amount (13/14 – 14/15 – 15/16)
Gas	£2,520
Electric	£2,230
Water	£575
Mechanical services	£90
Electrical services	£320

Repairs (General)	£1,545
Repairs (Antisocial behaviour)	£0
Total	£7,280

- 3.8 This is contrasted with the costs incurred by the Council during a period of 2 weeks when the building was vacant before the Guardians moved in. There were several break-ins and attempted break-ins resulting in almost £6,500 being spent on repair, boarding up and additional security, not including the cost of officer time in dealing with these incidences.
- 3.9 It is considered highly likely that if the Guardians had not been placed in the property the building would have been vandalised beyond repair and stripped of its unique listed features.
- 3.10 The scheme has also been used successfully during the contract period within Transporter Bridge House and the Former Caretaker's Bungalow at St John Fisher Primary School.
- 3.11 Transporter Bridge House had been vacant for several weeks before the Guardians moved in and whilst there had been no reported incidences of break-ins or vandalism during the interim period there was no guarantee that it would remain secure. The building had been substantially refurbished several years ago. The Property was sold at Auction in 2014 during the marketing period Ad Hoc and the Guardians in residence assisted with the process organising access for potential purchasers on a number of occasions.
- 3.12 Former Caretaker's Bungalow at St John Fisher became vacant in 2012 after it became unfit for purpose. Given its locality to the primary school Ad Hoc ensured that screening took place to find suitable Guardians for safeguarding purposes, a married couple of teachers took up occupation in August 2012. They have only recently moved out due to the decision to demolish the property.
- 3.13 Belevedere
- 3.14 This is a former hostel located on the outskirts of Runcorn Old Town adjacent to All Saints Primary School and

Churchill mansions (HHT). Its layout, condition and title restraints make it a difficult site to dispose. The property became surplus to operational purposes in 2012 and Guardians were accommodated within the property in 2014.

- 3.15 Due to its previous residential use, the initial set up cost was nominal when the Guardians moved in. However since then the Council have incurred on average costs of £18,675 per annum.

Costs	Average Amount (14/15-15/16)
Gas	£13,100
Electric	£2,600
Water	£1,020
Mechanical services	£160
Electrical services	£750
Repairs (General)	£1,045
Repairs (Anti-Social Behaviour)	£0
Total	£18,675

- 3.16 The above table does not take into account total spend within the current financial year as some will be ongoing until March. Within the current financial year costs total in excess of £18K already with five months left until the end of the financial year. In fact the costs for Belvedere appear to be increasing year on year.
- 3.17 It is difficult to determine how this would compare if the property were not occupied by the Guardians. However, if the example of the former ICI Recreation Club is reviewed this property was stripped of valuable elements and was beyond economic repair resulting in urgent and more costly demolition. The former Woodlands building is another example of an empty property which has been subject to numerous break-ins and vandalism resulting in a deteriorating asset. In the past few years the Council has spent over £4,000 keeping the building secure from further vandalism.
- 3.18 It is recommended that the scheme be continued as an interim arrangement within Belvedere. Officers will explore the options for disposal and / or demolition of the property

and report back to Members with recommendations by June 2017.

- 3.19 Whilst not every vacant building would be suitable for Guardians it is considered that it is a viable alternative method of protecting vacant buildings until they are sold, let, demolished or occupied by the Council.
- 3.21 Recently three bungalows at Grangeway Court, Runcorn became surplus to requirements and were proposed to be demolished. Immediately upon becoming empty the properties were subjected to a number of incidents of antisocial behaviour. As such the decision was taken that Guardians should be used to protect the buildings until the Council is in a position to demolish and dispose of the site.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There will be legal implications as contract documentation will need to be completed in respect of each property where Guardians are placed.
- 4.2 In line with Standing Orders a procurement process will be undertaken to appoint a Property Company to manage the Guardian Service.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 With continued budget savings required and work being currently undertaken to streamline services / buildings to achieve savings it is possible that current operational buildings may become surplus / vacant before the Council is in a position to dispose of the property. The Guardian service proves a cost effective way of securing the buildings to protect value.
- 5.2 Management between the expiration of the current contract and new contract will need to be handled carefully to ensure that the buildings remained secure and that any period of vacantness is minimised as much as possible.
- 5.3 There will be a financial cost to the Council in that services would need to be maintained in the building to an extent that

they provide basic amenities for the Guardians and are compliant with Health and Safety standards.

- 5.4 There will also be some initial set up costs, for example, minor adaptations, and clearing out of new buildings.
- 5.5 There will also be utility and refuse disposal costs incurred although Ad Hoc operate a low usage policy and monitor the Guardians activities.
- 5.6 There is no management fee to pay as Ad Hoc gain their income from the Licence fee paid by the Guardians.
- 5.7 As examples above have shown such costs are likely to be small proportion of the costs that could be incurred and the loss in capital or future rental value by leaving a building vacant.
- 5.8 There will be a resource savings as a reduction of time spent on monitoring the vacant buildings and attending to incidences that occur.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

By placing Guardians in vacant buildings it will prevent the building from deteriorating, thereby attracting vermin, being a target for fly tipping and generally having a detrimental effect on the surrounding environment.

6.4 A Safer Halton

By placing Guardians in the vacant buildings it deter acts of vandalism, theft and arson.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The use of Guardians will alleviate the need to board-up the buildings and reduce their deterioration which can quickly happen whilst unoccupied having a detrimental effect on the surrounding neighbourhood.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Belvedere, the nature of this building has meant that this scheme has not been as cost effective as other properties. Since the Guardians have been in occupation the Council has spent in total over £77 K over the last two years. It is recommended that Members approve further investigation into the property.

7.2 A full risk and fire assessment of any proposed building would be required to be carried out by the Guardian management company prior to occupation.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 January 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Request for Business Rates Relief

WARD(S) Daresbury

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of a proposed investor development project at Whitehouse Vale, Runcorn where the company has requested Business Rates Relief whilst they refurbish the property.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the request from PIN Properties be refused for the reasons outlined in the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 A request for Business Rates Relief has been received from a Manchester based company called PIN Properties. The company has a number of units in the Borough, notably Christleton Court, Manor Park, Arkwright Road, Astmoor and 55-56 and 57-58 Brindley Road, Astmoor.

3.2 In considering that request it is important to remember that in the short term, the Council would lose revenue arising from the offer of business rates relief. In the longer term the Council would benefit from an empty industrial unit being brought back into use.

3.3 The previous owner of the Unit had already received 6 months 100% empty property relief which expired in June 2016 and, therefore, the current owners are not entitled to that empty property relief as the Council has already "granted" 6 months relief. Hence they are asking for discretionary rate relief instead. The units are as follows:

Unit 11b Aston Fields - annual business rates £13,792
Unit 12 Aston Fields – annual business rates £24,353
Unit 13 Aston Fields – annual business rates £24,577
Total rates liability £62,722.

3.4 Six months of 100% relief would, in total, be worth £31,361 of which currently the Council would meet 50% i.e. £15,680 and the Government would meet 50%.

3.5 Based on both the Council's previous decisions on rate relief, it is not recommended that relief be granted on this occasion for the following reasons:

- 1) the property has already benefitted from six months empty property relief;
- 2) there has been no evidence presented by the company of new jobs being created or safeguarded; and
- 3) there is no evidence that this scheme will not go ahead if relief is not granted.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no further policy implications arising from this report.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The financial implications of granting relief are outlined within the report.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 The attraction and retention of business is becoming more and more crucial to funding all of the Council's priorities, given the Government's intention to phase out Rate Support Grant. The granting of rate relief should be the exception and not the rule as the funding of all services will depend heavily on such income in the future.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 There is always a risk that a development may not take place if relief is not granted, however, this has to be balanced against the overall financial strategy of the Council and fairness to all current and future businesses in the Borough.

8.2 It is felt that relief should only be granted where there is clear added value in respect of additional jobs and or commercial floor space being created. In this case, it is understood that the development will take place irrespective of the Board's decision, as the work has already started.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 There are no equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 January 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Business Rates Relief Proposed Guiding Principles
WARD(S)	All

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose some guiding principles for how the Council might consider and determine future requests for Business Rates Relief. These guiding principles are included in the Guidance Note in Appendix 1.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the guiding principles contained in Appendix 1 be approved.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 As previously reported, Members will be aware that in April 2013 the Government introduced a business rates retention scheme. This means that Councils are able to keep a proportion of the business rates revenue as well as growth on the revenue that is generated in their area.

3.2 The scheme seeks to offer Councils a strong financial incentive to promote economic growth.

3.3 Where Councils have greater needs than their business rates income, they will receive a top-up payment from Government.

3.4 Councils can increase their business rates revenue by incentivising businesses to either relocate to the area, or by encouraging them to expand their existing business.

3.5 The Council has considered a number of requests from businesses for a temporary reduction in business rates payable for a number of reasons.

3.6 Up until now the Council has considered those requests “on their own merits” without any general criteria to help guide those

decisions. However, given the increasing number of requests, it is now considered appropriate to provide some guidance in order to ensure fairness and equity to the existing businesses and businesses looking to relocate in the Borough. The Guiding Principles appended to this report set out the circumstances where business rates relief might be considered. Members are asked to consider those principles and if thought acceptable approve them. They would then be used when considering future requests.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 If the Board approves the Guiding Principles these will provide the policy framework to help assess future applications.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 The attraction and retention of business is becoming more and more crucial to funding all of the Council's priorities, given the Government's intention to phase out Rate Support Grant. The granting of rate relief should be the exception and not the rule as the funding of all services will depend heavily on such income in the future.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There is always a risk that a development may not take place if relief is not granted, however, this has to be balanced against the overall financial strategy of the Council and fairness to all current and future businesses in the Borough.

7.2 It is felt that relief should only be granted were the appropriate principles in the "Guiding Principles" have been met.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.

GUIDANCE NOTE BUSINESS RATES RETENTION AND BUSINESS RATES RELIEF

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this note is to set out some potential guiding principles following announcements concerning the possible 100% retention of business rates by Local Authorities.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 In April 2013, the Government introduced a business rates retention scheme. This means that Councils are able to keep a proportion of the business rates revenue as well as growth on the revenue that is generated in the area. The scheme is being extended whereby currently Local Authorities retain 49% of business rates, this would lead to 100% retention.

- 2.2 There is still some uncertainty regarding how these proposals would work in practice. It is also unclear as to whether the Government would continue to provide top-up grant to Halton, and whether Halton would be negatively affected. There is also a discussion taking place at a City Region level concerning how any future business rates growth resulting from investment secured from the Single Investment Fund would be recycled.

- 2.3 It would be difficult to implement a formal policy until full details are available on how the 100% scheme will work and where costs will fall.

- 2.4 However, given the Council already has the powers to retain business rates and, given interest from the business community, it is prudent for the Council to consider possible options and scenarios relating to how business rate retention and business rate relief should be managed in the future.

- 2.5 An assessment of the options and scenarios outlined in this paper have been used to develop some 'guiding principles' for how any future business rates policy might operate.

3.0 DISCUSSION POINTS

- 3.1 At the moment, the Council considers requests for business rate relief on an exceptional and on a case by case basis.

3.2 Excluding the arrangements for third sector organisations, to date, the Council has only awarded business rate relief to new businesses that are proposing to relocate to the Borough, as an incentive to potential inward investors.

3.3 ***Providing Added Value?***

Any intervention from the Council would need to demonstrate added value, it is, therefore, proposed that any relief is **retrospective** and is based on evidence that the company will either, increase employment in the Borough, bring back into use vacant industrial/commercial space, and or, increase floor space.

The first guiding principle could be that, ***the number of Full Time Equivalent jobs being created should not be less than 50 and floor space to be created/refurbished as not less than 10,000 sq. ft.*** However, a case could be made for fewer jobs and floor space being created, if the proposals support high value, high growth sectors in accordance with the criteria highlighted in section 3.7 of this note.

3.4 ***Supporting new or existing businesses?***

The Council may wish to consider whether any future scheme should also apply to indigenous existing Halton businesses.

There are obviously positive and negative aspects to this. On the one hand, the Council would be seen to be taking a proactive approach to supporting indigenous businesses, on the other hand, it could be argued that, given the businesses are already in the Borough, they are essentially a “captive audience”.

Furthermore, once the Council has agreed to offer business rates relief to one business, this could lead to a plethora of requests which would be unsustainable.

For these reasons, the second guiding principle could be *“that Business Rates Relief will only be given to proposals which demonstrate they support the attraction of new and additional Inward Investment to the borough”*.

3.5 ***Focus on specific Geographic Locations?***

There is also a question to be raised as to whether the Council should focus on specific geographic locations.

Sometimes incentives can appear to be pepper-potted and, therefore, it is difficult to measure the impact of the investment in an area.

The Council could apply “Enterprise Zone” principles to encourage investment in and development of key regeneration sites. Therefore, the third guiding principle could be that proposals would need to demonstrate:

“a clear and demonstrable economic benefit across a broader geographic area, or be part of a key regeneration site/area of opportunity”.

3.6 **Focus on Town Centres?**

Town centres are important, and some Councils have introduced town centre discretionary pilot business rate schemes to encourage new investment and jobs, encourage new business start-ups/entrepreneurship and existing businesses.

However, the economic impact of such schemes has not been evaluated sufficiently. It is argued that the success or failure of a town centre is dependent upon a number of factors, for example, retail spend and the relative competency of the individual trader.

A modest relief scheme is unlikely to attract large, high profile end-users to the Borough’s town centres and might indeed have the unintended consequence of attracting more low value and/or unsustainable retail businesses to set up in the Borough.

Furthermore, a focus upon the town centre(s) would require a specific definition of town centre boundaries which would, inevitably, lead to dissatisfaction amongst those retailers who find themselves outside designated town centres.

For these reasons, guiding principle four would state that *a focus on town centre businesses would be seen as a lower priority.*

3.7 **The Incentive Effect**

Any financial incentives would need to link to the Council’s “Business Attractiveness Model”.

In summary, the model identifies a set of indicators which help us to determine which businesses are supported based on their ability to drive Halton’s economic growth.

Therefore guiding principle five could be: *“The Council will support proposals from businesses within sectors that will make a long-lasting impact on the economy of Halton”.*

3.8 **Existing Support to Business**

Another factor to consider is that businesses are already supported

by the Council and its partners in a number of ways, for example –

- Business Improvement Districts, Halebank and Astmoor
- Property and Business Grants in Runcorn and Widnes Town Centres
- Business Support Grants through ERDF and RGF
- The Halton Employment Partnership which provides a free service to business to support their recruitment and training needs.

Therefore, the Council should not feel obliged to offer incentives to businesses in the form of Business Rate Relief. There are other interventions that could offer a business and the Council added value.

Other Criteria

Requests for Rates Relief would only be actioned once the following had been confirmed:

- Be able to identify the ultimate end user of the facility;
- Have all planning consents and other permission in place;
- Be able to provide evidence that the applicant has liability for the property;
- Be State Aid compliant.

A project cannot :

- Be located in an existing Enterprise Zone or other area where a specific rate relief policy applies.
- Be submitted retrospectively.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 It is suggested that the above guiding principles will give businesses a clear steer as to what the Council can or cannot provide to businesses.

4.2 Many businesses do not fully understand how the business rates retention scheme works and would work in practice. It would be worth preparing a frequently asked questions guide as and when further details relating to the Business Rates Retention scheme are available.

4.3 The Council might also take a view in the longer-term that rather than supporting individual businesses, through business rate relief, it

would prefer to support businesses in a different way which leads to a greater return on investment and higher economic impact for the borough.

- 4.4 The Council might wish to apply the principle of invest to save whereby relief will only be provided if it results in the long-term lead to an increase in revenue for the Council.
- 4.5 The Council could also apply the principles of Tax Increment Finance in order to improve or provide infrastructure to a broader range of businesses, rather than just in favour of one. This is more likely to accord with State Aid Guidance.
- 4.6 To emphasise this last point, there are a couple of case studies worthy of mention.
- 4.7 At Sci Tech Daresbury, potential uplift on business rates has been used to borrow resources to pay for much-needed infrastructure which is supporting over 50 businesses.
- 4.8 At Johnson's Lane, the Council borrowed in order to provide an access road to the site. This has led to end users now paying business rates leading to three companies being supported.

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