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EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 15 December 2011 in The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), D. Cargill, Harris, Jones, T. McInerney, Nelson, Stockton, Swain, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Scott, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, B. Dodd and R. Barnett

Also in attendance: Councillor J. Bradshaw

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB77 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2011 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

(NB: Councillor Nelson declared a personal interest in the following item of business as the Chair of Governors at The Grange School.)

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

EXB78 SANDYMOOR FREE SCHOOL PROPOSAL - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise on the proposed development of a Free School at Sandymoor.

The Board was advised that an application to establish a non-denominational, 11-18 age mixed Secondary School at Sandymoor was submitted to the Department for Education in May 2011. The school would open in 2012 and have a maximum intake of 900 places.

The Secretary of State had approved the application to proceed to the next stage of the process. Statutory consultation would take place from January 2012 for ten weeks, seeking the views of the Local Authority, schools and other stakeholders.

The Board noted that the Secretary of State had the duty to consider the impact of any new school on existing schools in the area. Appendix A, attached to the report provided a summary of the impact the Free School would have on the current provision in Halton. The Free School was likely to have an adverse impact on other Halton schools. The report contained details of the financial implications for Members' consideration.

The Board further considered representations in writing from Councillor John Bradshaw with regard to the matters raised in the report.

Reason(s) for Decision

The report seeks to gain the views of Executive Board to the proposal to establish a Free School on Sandymoor so that a response can be made to the statutory consultation.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable

Implementation Date

The Free School are looking to open in September 2012.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council respond to the Sandymoor Free School Proposals as set out in the Appendix attached to the report; and
- 2) should the Sandymoor Free School proposals progress, the Council shall sell services to the Free School on a full recovery cost basis.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

(NB: Councillor Harris declared a personal interest in the following item of business as a Governor of All Saints Church of England Primary School)

EXB79 UPTON ROCKS- KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise on the reserved school site at Upton Rocks.

The Board was advised that land at Upton Rocks had been reserved for a number of years for the development of a new school, should it have been needed. In Widnes the Published Admission Number was for 736 pupils per year. With the Basic Need capital development at two Widnes schools (Lunts Heath Primary and St Bede's Catholic Infant and Junior), infant capacity would increase to 756 places, once the work had been completed.

Members noted that there was no additional need for a school to be developed in Widnes, as sufficient capacity would be achieved, which included anticipated increases predicted to peak by 2015, and considered the request to release the site for development.

Reason(s) for Decision

The report seeks permission to release the reserved Primary school site to allow further development and improved access.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Consideration was given to retaining the reserved site. However Primary pupil numbers were insufficient to justify any new development.

Implementation Date

The proposed release date was January 2012.

RESOLVED: That the reserved school site at Upton Rocks be released.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB80 COMMISSIONING SUPPORT FOR CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided a summary of the commissioning support to be offered to Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Commissioning Team.

The Board was advised that CWAC had formally

approached the authority to request dedicated commissioning support for their team. Following discussions between the respective lead officers, two areas of work were proposed. The first was a support package which would focus on areas to assist with the introduction of foundations which would ensure a collective understanding of commissioning.

The second area of work would explore the development of a shared service for commissioning between the two authorities with Halton as the Lead. This approach would strengthen the approach to commissioning and provide efficiencies for both authorities.

The Board noted that there would need to be an estimated 20-30 days of support required, which would generate an income of between £10,000 and £15,000.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the commissioning support arrangements be approved;
- 2) the proposed charge of £500 per person per day be approved; and
- 3) work can commence on exploring the development of a shared commissioning service across the two authorities.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

(N.B. Councillors Wharton, Nelson and T McInerney declared a personal interest in the following item of business as members of the Local Government Pension Scheme)

EXB81 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME - POLICY DISCRETIONS AND STATEMENTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Policy Discretions and Statements.

The Board was advised that Halton employees (other than teachers), had an option to join the Cheshire Pension Fund, which was part of the LGPS. The scheme allowed for employers to exercise certain discretions and to publish those discretions in an annual scheme. The Council was required to publish an annual statement setting out which

discretions it intended to adopt.

The Board noted that the Policy formed an integral element of the Council's overall approach to the management of its employees, and that it had been negotiated with the Trade Unions.

RESOLVED: That the LGPS Pensions Policy Discretions and Statements, contained in the attached scheme be approved, as in the case of augmentation, further detailed in the Staffing Protocol.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB82 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government

Act 1972.

EXB83 ST MICHAEL'S GOLF COURSE, WIDNES- CHANGE TO CAPITAL PROGRAMME - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on amendments to the Capital Programme to ensure completion of Phase 2 of the St Michael's Golf Course remediation programme.

The Board was advised that it was important to complete the Phase 2 works, to reduce the estimated yearly leachate disposal costs and to ensure the site could be restored for future use (yet to be determined).

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision related to a significant investment to conclude the remediation of the former St. Michael's Golf Course. Once the remediation was completed, this would allow the Council to progress with the development of options for the future use of the site.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

An alternative would be to continue with the current leachate disposal arrangements. However, this was costing the Council £3,000 per week and was, therefore, unsustainable financially.

Implementation Date

Implementation of the amendment to the capital programme would be 1st March 2012. Completion of the remediation would be July 2012.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to amend the Capital Programme accordingly.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB84 ST MICHAEL'S GOLF COURSE, WIDNES - REMEDIATION (NORTHERN SECTION) AND FUTURE SITE OPTIONS - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on the progress of the remediation of the northern section of St Michael's Golf Course.

The Board noted the options appraisal attached to the report for Phase 3 - reinstatement of the site for public use.

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision related to an opportunity to bring back into use the former St. Michael's Golf Course. Entering into a commercial partnership was the only viable way of achieving this aim.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A detailed options appraisal was contained in section 3.3 of the report.

Implementation Date

Implementation would be determined during the three month period of negotiation outlined in section 3.3.6 of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) progress on the remediation of the site be noted; and
- 2) approval be given to enter into detailed negotiations with the interested party for a 9 hole golf course, driving range and associated facilities.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

MINUTES ISSUED: 20 December 2011

CALL-IN: 4 January 2012

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 4 January 2012.

Meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.