

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 14 June 2012 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Scott, M. Reaney, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, D. Parr, B. Dodd, A. Cross, C. Johnson, W Rourke and C. Taylor

Also in attendance: One member of the public

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB22 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2012 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

EXB23 HALTON ADOPTION SCORECARD

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which set out Halton's position on the Adoption Scorecard 2012.

The Board was advised that, in October 2011, the Children in Care and Adoption performance tables were published and the Department for Education (DfE) announced their intention to use data from this as a means to focus on improving performance. It was noted that the Scorecard was supported by a set of performance thresholds which set out the Government's expectations of Local Authorities on two of the main timeliness indicators, as detailed in the report.

Halton's Scorecard, covering the three-year period

2008-2011 was attached at Appendix 1. Members noted that Halton had met its thresholds for both timeliness indicators, which were:

- The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family; and
- The average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the Local Authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Adoption Scorecard be received;
- 2) it be noted that Halton had met both its timeliness threshold indicators, as set by the Department for Education; and
- 3) a further report be submitted to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board, detailing how the Scorecard and other changes will affect the Adoption Service.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB24 A THREE LOCAL AUTHORITY YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise on the issues relating to the potential establishment of a three way Youth Offending Service (YOS) for Warrington, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester.

Members were advised that currently, there were two Youth Justice Teams covering Cheshire, both considered to be high performing by the Youth Justice Board. The Chief Executives of the four Cheshire authorities commissioned a feasibility study on the options for greater collaboration and efficiencies with a possible merger of each of their Youth Justice Services. A Project Board was established to develop proposals for a single YOS scenario that would provide all statutory partners with an analysis of how a single entity would improve performance, increase efficiencies and sustain localism.

It was noted that the basis for the establishment of the YOS was set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. National consultation on the future of the Youth Justice Board had resulted in a decision to retain a national body

with reduced functions and activity, and retaining a role in the monitoring of the work of local services against three National Indicators, detailed in the report.

The report outlined the model for a three Local Authority YOS and the options which had been considered. The proposed model and staffing structure had been developed to protect and enhance the delivery of Youth Offending Services to young people by maintaining all operational activity at the local level in Halton, Warrington and Cheshire West and Chester. This local work would be managed by dedicated senior managers with a lead role in each Local Authority, to provide a consistent approach and knowledge of crime and youth justice issues in each local area.

Reasons For Decision

The move to a three Local Authority YOS would secure and safeguard the high quality services for young people, embrace sub regional collaboration and deliver financial efficiencies.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Consideration was given to a four Local Authority YOS including Cheshire East. Cheshire East had agreed separate arrangements.

Implementation Date

September 2012.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Halton's engagement with, and delivery of, the three Local Authority Youth Offending Service be approved; and
- 2) delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, to manage the development and delivery of the three Local Authority Youth Offending Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families, the Section 151 Officer and the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

HEALTH AND ADULTS PORTFOLIO AND CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

EXB25 AUTISM STRATEGY AND AUTISM SCRUTINY REVIEW FINAL REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the Autism Strategy 2012-2016 and the Autism Scrutiny Review final report.

The Board was advised that in December 2010, statutory guidance was published, "Implementing Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives" for local authorities and NHS Organisations to support the implementation of the Autism Strategy. In response to this, an Autism Strategy was developed, supported by Halton Borough Council, NHS Merseyside and Five Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust for Halton. The Strategy built upon work already undertaken across children's and adult services, health services and the Five Borough's, and resulted in a number of agreed action points. It was noted that the recent National Autistic Society review of the Council's services had been instrumental in shaping the Autistic Strategy.

In addition, a Member-led Scrutiny Review (the Review) was commissioned by the Health Policy and Performance Board, to look at the Council's baseline information in supporting people with autism spectrum conditions, living in Halton.

The Review report made a series of recommendations which had now been collated into an Action Plan. It was noted that the Review had played a key role in shaping the Autism Strategy, in particular, the section on Education and Employment.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Autism Strategy, attached at Appendix 1, be approved; and
- 2) the contents of the Autism Scrutiny Review be noted and the recommendations in the associated Action Plan (attached at Appendix 2), be approved.

Strategic Director
- Communities

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB26 PORTAS PILOT AND HIGH STREET INNOVATION FUND- KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the Portas Pilot and High Street Innovation Fund.

The Board was reminded that Council had made a bid to Government in March 2012 for Runcorn Town Centre to be nominated as a Portas Pilot Town Centre. The concept of forming a Town Team to improve town centre locations was included within the 28 recommendations contained in the Portas Review. Government had agreed to fund twelve pilots, with a maximum allocation of £100,000 per town team.

The Board was advised that Halton's bid for Runcorn focused on making Runcorn Town Centre a unique destination by developing a mixed use leisure, business, retail and cultural offer, with an emphasis on longer term legacy and the attraction of visitors 'for the future'.

Since the report was written, it was noted that Halton's bid for nomination had been unsuccessful.

It was further noted that as part of the Government's response to the Portas Review, it had also agreed to establish a £10million fund to support councils, and that Halton had been allocated £100,000 to work collaboratively with landlords to encourage them to contribute to supporting new occupiers.

Reasons for Decision

The reason was based on an opportunity to link the High Street Innovation Fund to other regeneration activity taking place in Runcorn Town Centre.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

To allocate resources across other parts of the Borough, but, given this was a small amount of revenue funding, this could dilute any potential impact the funding might have. Therefore, it was proposed to concentrate the resource on one distinctive area – Runcorn Town Centre.

Implementation Date

The High Street Innovation Fund allocation was imminent. A Town Team would need to be set and the anticipated start date would be September 2012.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the submission of a bid for Portas Pilot funding be noted;
- 2) the establishment of a Town Team for Runcorn be approved;
- 3) the total allocation of the High Street Innovation Fund to Runcorn Town Centre be approved; and
- 4) the Runcorn Town Team be invited to prepare a funding plan, outlining how the High Street Innovation Fund could be spent.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB27 HALTON CORE STRATEGY - POST SUBMISSION CHANGES - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought approval to consult on the changes required to be made to the Halton Core Strategy.

The Board was reminded that, in July 2011, Council approved the Halton Core Strategy Revised Proposed Submission Document to the Secretary of State, to commence the examination into the soundness of the document. The examination by the Planning Inspector (the Inspector) appointed, has to date consisted of public hearing sessions in November and December 2011. The main issues discussed at the sessions were set by the Inspector prior to their commencement and were listed in the report. It was noted that discussions centred around total housing provision, the proposed housing split between Runcorn and Widnes and the interrelated issue of the potential need for a Green Belt Review to ensure sufficient housing land existed.

The Board was advised that the Inspector wrote to the Council in January 2012, recommending that two key (main change) modifications be made, to enable the plan to be capable of being found 'sound'. These changes were:

- To enshrine the percentage split in housing provision between Runcorn and Widnes/Hale, into a policy

requirement within the document; and

- To include a reference to an early partial review of Green Belt boundaries, to serve the needs of Widnes/Hale.

The amendments had now been incorporated into a revised version of the Core Strategy, which was attached at Appendix B to the report. In addition to the changes which arose from the hearing sessions, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. The Inspector had requested that a further modification be made to the Core Strategy to incorporate a policy concerning the “presumption in favour of sustainable development”, which would provide a link between the plan and the NPPF, detailing how the presumption would be applied in Halton.

The report outlined the next steps in terms of public consultation, how representations would be considered and the Inspector’s final report.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to

- 1) approve the changes to be made to the Halton Core Strategy (attached at Appendix B), for the purposes of a six week period of public consultation;
- 2) agree that further minor editorial amendments as required, be made to the Halton Core Strategy by the Operational Director, Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Physical Environment and the Leader of the Council, before commencing the period of public consultation; and
- 3) agree that the Core Strategy be brought back to Council later in 2012, for formal adoption as part of the Development Plan for Halton.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

NEIGHBOURHOOD LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

EXB28 REVIEW OF THE ARTS STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the review and update of the Borough Arts Strategy (the Strategy).

The Board was advised that in 2008, the Council

commissioned a consultant to produce an arts strategy, which set out where service improvements could be made, and which linked work in the arts to the Council's wider corporate objectives. In addition, it strengthened cross sector working and assisted in business planning.

In developing the Strategy, the council aspired to achieve the following:

- A recognition of the value of arts and culture right across the work of the Council;
- The importance of arts and culture as a key driver of the quality of life acknowledged in corporate strategies;
- Support for and encouragement of high quality arts activities which had integrity, and in which imagination, originality and innovation were valued; and
- Encourage the community to take part in and experience high quality arts activity and to share in the social, educational and economic benefits arts could offer.

As part of a review of the Strategy, a revised version had been prepared and was appended to the report; the Board was advised that this would be subject to public consultation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) work to review and refresh the Borough Arts Strategy be carried out in-house; and
- 2) public consultation to support the review, be undertaken.

Strategic Director
- Communities

EXB29 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 items 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 paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

(N.B Councillor Jones declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business as a Governor of Wade Deacon High School, and left the meeting during consideration of the item)

EXB30 FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL SITE AND LAND

The Board considered a joint report of the Strategic Directors of Children and Enterprise and Policy and Resources, which provided an update on the former Fairfield High School site and land.

The report informed Members on the key issues relating to the potential future development of the site, and suggested some guiding principles for how the site could be developed.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, be authorised to apply to the Secretary of State for approval to re-designate the site for non-educational use;

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

- 2) the development of a 'whole site' approach to the development of the school site be approved; and
- 3) the guiding principles for the future development of the site as contained in sections 3.14 – 3.19 of the report be agreed.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB31 RUNCORN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive, which provided a summary of the bids received for the regeneration of key sites in Runcorn Town Centre.

In 2011, the Council produced an action plan for Runcorn Town Centre which identified key sites with potential for development. Expressions of interest were invited early in 2012, with the sites split into three phases, as detailed in the report.

The report provided Members with details of the bids that were received together with a summary and comparison for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to

- 1) enter into detailed negotiations with Consolidated Property Group (CPG) for a binding development agreement, for the immediate redevelopment of the former Crossville Site and to explore further development of the Direct Link and temporary car park sites;
- 2) invite further discussions with the Neptune Partnership, to explore ways of engaging them and their partners to support the medium to longer term regeneration of the wider Runcorn Town Centre area, possibly including the Direct Link and temporary car park sites, depending on the outcome of further negotiations with CPG; and
- 3) recycle any capital receipts from land transactions generated from within the Runcorn Town Centre area, into further regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre.

Chief Executive

MINUTES ISSUED: 19 June 2012

CALL-IN: 26 June 2012

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 26 June 2012

Meeting ended at 2.30 p.m.