

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 17 October 2013 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Scott, M. Reaney, G. Cook, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, D. Parr, E. Dawson, S. Clough, R. Gummery and W Rourke

Also in attendance: Nick Atkin and Ingrid Fife, Halton Housing Trust

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

#### EXB91 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2013 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### **CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO**

#### EXB92 CONTRACTED SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, TARGETED PROVISION FOR CHILDREN IN CARE (GO FORWARD) -- WAIVER OF TENDERING STANDING ORDERS.

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which sought a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders for the provision of contracted services.

The Board was advised that the Go Forward Service had been provided by Barnardo's since April 2012, for the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services for looked after children. Due in part to a demand for the service, a comprehensive review of provision was underway by

*Action*

Halton's Children's Trust Partners. It was noted that this review would determine the needs of the service area and the provision that was required to meet those needs.

The Board noted that the current contract would end on 31 March 2014, with no facility to extend within the current contract. A waiver of Procurement Standing Orders was required to allow for continued service delivery during this review period.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) in light of the exceptional circumstances set out in the report, Procurement Standing Orders 4.1 be waived on this occasion, where compliance with Standing Orders would result in a clear financial or commercial detriment to the Council, in respect of the contracted Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services, Targeted Provision. The waiver is requested to ensure that children and young people receive continuous care and support whilst a review of this service area is undertaken by Halton Children's Trust partners in order to determine the requirements for future provision; and
- 2) the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise be authorised, in conjunction with the portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families, to enter into the above contract for one year from April 2014 to the end of March 2015.

Strategic Director  
- Children and  
Enterprise

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB93 THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH GRANT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which updated Members on the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Business Growth Grant Programme.

The Board was reminded that at its meeting on 11 July 2013, it considered a progress report on the LCR Growth Grant Programme. It was reported that the Growth Grant could support businesses which planned to invest in capital or equipment which would directly create or safeguard jobs and increase business output. It was noted that the LCR Growth Grant was designed to unlock private

sector investment, with a leverage ratio of 5:1.

The report detailed the eligible costs for which funding could be given which included capital expenditure, investment in new technologies, systems and software and employment and training aid. The report further outlined how the scheme would operate in Halton and the key stages of the preferred Delivery Model, the latter supported by information in Appendices 1 and 2.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposed mechanism to be used to deliver funds to Halton businesses through The Liverpool City Region Growth Grant, detailed in Appendices 1 & 2, be agreed;
- 2) the partnership agreement between LCR Local Enterprise Partnership and Halton Borough Council for the delivery of The Liverpool City Region Growth Grant be accepted; and
- 3) the award of Liverpool City Region Growth Grant be delegated to the Operational Director Employment, Enterprise and Property in consultation with the Operational Director, Finance, the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services and the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development.

Strategic Director  
- Children and  
Enterprise

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB94 FALLS STRATEGY 2013 – 2018 AND FALLS PREVENTION SCRUTINY REVIEW - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the Health Policy and Performance Board Scrutiny Review of the Falls Strategy 2013-2018.

The Board was advised that the Falls Prevention Scrutiny Review (the Review) was conducted between April 2012 and March 2013. It was noted that Halton had a higher than average occurrence of falls in older people as well as having a higher level of hospital admissions due to falls. The Review identified 19 recommendations which had been put into an Action Plan for ease of monitoring.

### Reason(s) for Decision

As described in section 3.1 and 3.2 in the report, Halton had been identified as having a higher than the National Average for falls in the Borough and the related consequences i.e. injury, fracture etc. Based on this, it was agreed that a comprehensive falls strategy would be developed to support overall system change and improve performance.

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No alternatives were considered as a strategy was required to establish clear lines of performance, pathway and future commissioning intention that could impact on the service area as a whole.

### Implementation Date

December 2013.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the findings of the Scrutiny Review be noted;
- 2) the Scrutiny Review and its recommendations be endorsed; and
- 3) the Falls Strategy 2013-2018, attached at Appendix 2, be endorsed.

Strategic Director  
- Communities

## **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

### EXB95 HALTON HOUSING TRUST PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received a presentation from Nick Atkin, Chief Executive of Halton Housing Trust, and Ingrid Fife, Chair of the Board, Halton Housing Trust (HHT). They reported on progress to date in delivering some key “pledges” made prior to stock transfer and on progress in meeting the Tenant Services Authority’s Regulatory Framework.

The Board noted that the focus for HHT remained on improving the quality of life for the people living in Halton, in accordance with the Council’s five main priorities. However, there were three big challenges ahead for HHT; moving customers onto a digital self-service platform, the impact of welfare reforms on rental income and the overhaul of governance structures to meet the increasingly complex business needs and expectations from the Regulator.

Members were further advised that HHT had maintained a strong emphasis on apprenticeships and training, and had recently been awarded Investors in People Gold Status, achieving their Health and Wellbeing Award.

Members had the opportunity to ask questions and clarify information contained in the presentation before Mr Atkin and Ms Fife were thanked for attending.

RESOLVED: That the progress report be noted.

#### EXB96 FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued for litter and dog fouling offences.

The Board was advised that a proposal had been received from 3GS (UK) Limited, for the provision of FPNs for litter and dog fouling notices. It was reported that this proposal had been assessed by Officers and the potential benefits of such an arrangement were contained within the report for Members' consideration.

It was noted that the arrangement with 3GS would be strictly limited to the issuing of FPNs for environmental offences which would supplement the work of the Council's current Enforcement Team. This would support the Council's efforts to reduce anti-social behaviour and improve the safety and attractiveness of the Borough.

It was further reported that research had been undertaken on four other local authorities that had engaged private enforcement companies, and this was set out in the report. The delivery of a pilot scheme within Halton would give the opportunity for such an initiative to be assessed, as a number of unknown elements existed at this early stage. A further report would be brought to the Board following an evaluation of the pilot scheme.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) a six month pilot scheme be delivered by 3GS (UK) Limited for the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices for litter and dog control offences;
- 2) the Strategic Director, Communities be authorised in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Physical Environment and the Operational

Strategic Director  
- Communities

Director, Legal and Democratic Services, to determine all matters relating to the pilot scheme; and

- 3) a further report be presented to Executive Board following evaluation of the pilot scheme.

## **RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB97 PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS WAIVER REQUEST - REVENUES, BENEFITS & CUSTOMER SERVICES DIVISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which requested a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders for the continued provision of a document outsourcing mail service for the Revenues and Benefits Services Division.

The Board was advised that the current contract for this service was awarded for one year. A tender process needed to be undertaken to award a contract for the Council's future requirements. It was reported that Government Procurement Services (GPS) would manage a new tender process from 2014, which was open to local authorities. The process would comply with EU Public Procurement Regulations 2006 and removed the need for the Council to run its own tender process.

It was noted that the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders was required until 30 September 2014, to allow the continuation of the current mailing service and to ensure service continuity and continued savings for the Council.

**RESOLVED:** That Procurement Standing Orders 4.1 be waived, to allow the existing Document Outsourcing contract to continue until 30 September 2014, when a Government Procurement Framework will be in place for this mailing service.

Strategic Director  
- Policy &  
Resources

### **EXB98 BUSINESS RATES POOLING**

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which sought approval to establish a Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool from 1 April 2014.

The Board was advised that under business rates retention, Councils retain 50% of the business rates they collect, with the other 50% going to Government. The scheme included provision for Top Up Grants and Tariffs, so

that total income reflected the needs of each Council. It was noted that nationally, the Top Up Grants were funded by the Tariffs and the level of both was fixed until the scheme was reset in 2020. The report outlined the arrangement for Top Up Grants to meet the difference for Halton and St Helens.

The Board considered a proposal to create a Business Rates Pool with St Helens and Warrington Councils from 1 April 2014. This arrangement would enable 45% of Warrington's future rates growth to be retained within the Pool and then shared between the three Councils. The report provided further details of the safety net mechanism whereby Councils were protected from an excessive drop in funding. This would be activated when a Council's Business Rates income fell below a specified level.

It was reported that the application process required the proposal to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by 31 October 2013, and must include details of the potential benefits to Pool members, the lead Council and the management and governance arrangements. If the application was successful, a further report would be brought to the Board to confirm its approval to proceed with the Pool.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) an application be submitted to DCLG, to establish a Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 along with St Helens Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council;
- 2) the Operational Director, Finance, in consultation with the Executive Board Portfolio Holder for Resources, be authorised to prepare and submit by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013 a joint application to DCLG; and
- 3) a further report be presented to the Board following publication of the Provisional Local Government Grant Settlement, in order to confirm whether the Board wishes to continue with establishing a Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool.

Operational  
Director - Finance

EXB99 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 outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting 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, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES  
PORTFOLIO**

EXB100 HALTON PARTICIPATION STRATEGY AND  
PROCUREMENT OF INFORMATION, ADVICE AND  
GUIDANCE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which updated Members on the procurement of careers information, advice and guidance and engagement services delivery from April 2014 (IAG).

As previously reported to Executive Board in June



2013, IAG services were currently provided through the Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership Ltd (GMCP). Following agreement by the Liverpool City Region IAG Commissioning Group for a comprehensive review of services, four authorities had identified similar requirements. Halton Borough Council had been requested to undertake a procurement exercise for this service, alongside the procurement process for the software and monitoring services.

Details of the contract value, contract term and contractor selection were contained in the report.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

To ratify the Halton Participation Strategy, including Halton leading on behalf of Greater Merseyside on the procurement of services.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Halton could procure an IAG independently, but this had been rejected as it was unlikely that this would realise the same level of savings that a jointly procured service would.

#### Implementation Date

1 April 2014.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) additional savings be secured through the implementation of the Halton Participation Strategy (Young Person Strand);
- 2) the Board agree that Halton Borough Council lead on the procurement of careers information, advice and guidance and engagement service on behalf of Liverpool City Region authorities; and
- 3) the Board agree that this procurement commences in October 2013 to ensure the new service is in place for April 2014.

Strategic Director  
- Children and  
Enterprise

**MINUTES ISSUED: 22 October 2013**

**CALL-IN: 29 October 2013**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 29 October 2013**

*Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.*