

**Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board**

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2016**

<b>106</b>	<b>SCHOOL ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2017 – KEY DECISION</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, on school admission arrangements for the 2017 intake into Halton's schools.

The Board was advised that in November 2015, Halton Local Authority issued a statutorily required consultation paper on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2017 intake. It was noted that the consultation ran until 11 December 2015, with no changes proposed to the current oversubscription criteria for local authority schools.

As commissioner of school places, the Local Authority must ensure that the admission arrangements were fair, clear and objective and complied fully with all statutory requirements. It was reported that no responses to the consultation had been received.

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision was statutorily required and any revision to the proposed arrangements may adversely affect school place planning, as detailed in the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

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

Implementation Date

The Policy applied to the September 2017 academic intake.

**RESOLVED:** That the School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2017/18 academic year be approved.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2016

<b>131</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY FOR WARRINGTON, WIGAN, ST HELENS, HALTON AND CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER – KEY DECISION</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, on plans for the development of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), for Warrington, Wigan, St Helens, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester.

The Board was advised that the Government had outlined its expectations that local authorities establish Regional Adoption Agencies in an announcement on Regionalising Adoption. The rationale for this was that a greater pool of adopters would be available and that children would have a better chance of being matched with a family that could meet their needs.

It was reported that Halton and Cheshire West and Chester were full partners in the development of the new RAA, together with Wigan, Warrington and St Helens (WWIISH). Together, the five local authorities would provide the scale required by Government for an RAA. Further, the inclusion of Adoption Matters and Caritas Care, (both Voluntary Adoption Agencies), in the development of the RAA, provided the partnership with an opportunity to build an RAA drawing on best practice from each of the partners and to meet changing demands through the pooling of expertise and resources.

The report provided further detail for Members' consideration on:-

- Aims and objectives of the RAA;
- Benefits of the RAA;
- Project Governance arrangements;
- Key project activities, milestones and update on progress;
- The Communications and Engagement Plan;
- An Options appraisal for the delivery vehicle of the RAA; and
- The Transition Plan and Next Steps.

### Reason(s) for Decision

A decision was required for Halton's agreement to progress with a plan for a regional adoption agency. This was in partnership with four other local authorities and two voluntary agencies and services for adoption which were currently delivered directly by Halton, would be delivered on its behalf by the regional adoption agency.

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

An options appraisal had been undertaken by the Project Board for the regional adoption agency.

## Implementation Date

The proposed implementation date would be October 2016.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted;
- 2) the approach being taken be agreed;
- 3) the proposed scope and function of the RAA be agreed;
- 4) the approach of the RAA Board to set out a transition plan and the bid for further funding in March 2016 be agreed; and
- 5) any further requirements to achieve the RAA are delegated to the Strategic Director, People and Economy, in conjunction with the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families.

<b>132</b>	<b>ACADEMIES UPDATE</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which provided a brief from the Scrutiny Topic Work undertaken by the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board, on "*How we work with our family of schools*".

Members were advised that the Scrutiny Group held four meetings between December 2014 and September 2015, in which they considered the role of the Local Authority (LA) in all schools, including its relationship with Academies. The Group considered whether there should be a differentiated approach between officer roles, service provision and charges for maintained schools and Academies.

Councillor Dennett, Chairman of the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board attended the meeting to present the report. The recommendations that emerged from the process were noted as follows:

That, to ensure that the LA can share information and provide a level of influence across all schools:

- All schools should receive the e-circular;
- All Head Teachers and Principals to be invited to the Head Teacher meetings with the Director;
- Consideration be given to the charges that were currently levied to Academies for access to Council Services, charged at full cost recovery only; and
- Officers continue to promote partnership working, encouraging Academies to work with the Council, including the purchase of services through HBC Service Level Agreements.

Councillor Dennett dealt with Members' questions before being thanked for his attendance.

Reason(s) for Decision

Working in partnership with all the schools across Halton would provide a more coherent, consistent offer for children and young people and the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

It was not considered appropriate to treat Academies and the Free School differently as the Halton offer could only be strengthened by all schools and the local authority working together.

Implementation Date

April 2016.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Topic Group be noted; and
- 2) the recommendations of the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board be approved.