

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2016

EXB2	CLOSURE OF WESTFEILD PRIMARY SCHOOL RESOURCE PROVISION BASE FOR PUPILS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT AND SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which sought permission to commence consultation on the closure of the Primary Hearing Impaired Resource Provision Base at Westfield Primary School.

The Board was advised that Westfield Primary School had a Resource Provision Base for six pupils with hearing impairment (HI) and specific learning difficulties at Westfield Primary School. It was reported that parents are choosing to educate their children with such difficulties in mainstream provision rather than in specialist HI provision. It was noted that from September 2016, there would be three children accessing provision.

The Board was further advised that in 2015/16, Halton ceased the secondary specialist Resource Provision base at Wade Deacon High School, due to lack of numbers. The funding this released was invested in strengthening and increasing the level of peripatetic specialist teaching and non-teaching support. It was noted that the three pupils at Westfield Primary would remain in the mainstream school and would be allocated additional teaching assistant support and support from the peripatetic specialist team.

The pre-statutory consultation would commence on 22 June 2016 for four weeks, with the outcome reported to Executive Board, with a planned statutory consultation commencing in September 2016, as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the commencement of consultation on the closure of the Hearing Impaired Resource Provision Base at Westfield Primary School be approved.

EXB3	WHITE PAPER “EDUCATION, EXCELLENCE EVERYWHERE” – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which provided a summary of the White Paper “Education Excellence Everywhere” and the key elements of the proposed Education Bill.

The Board was advised that on 17 March 2016, the Secretary of State launched the document “Education Excellence Everywhere” and the Department for Education’s five year strategy “World-class Education and Care”. It was reported that

these two documents set out the Government's plans and vision for education over the next five years. The proposed reforms sought to radically reshape education and reduce and redefine the role of the local authorities.

There were seven key areas covered within the White Paper, which were detailed in the report and noted as being:-

- Great Teachers;
- Great Leaders;
- A School-led system with every school and Academy;
- Preventing under Performance;
- A World-leading curriculum;
- Accountability; and
- The right resources in the right hands.

Under the current arrangements, every time a school converted to Academy status, the local authority's Education Services Grant (ESG) reduced. It was reported that this funding had previously funded a range of education services including Education Welfare, School Improvement, Asset Management, Premature retirements and a range of statutory services. The School Improvement element of the ESG would be re-routed to teaching schools to support their new role.

Reasons(s) for Decision

To explore the options and opportunities available to the local authority and its maintained schools.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

June 2016.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the implications of the White Paper "Education Excellence Everywhere", and proposed Education Bill be noted; and
- 2) the Board approves the development options for the future role of the Council in supporting schools.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 14 JULY 2016

EXB19	HOME TO SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which sought approval to commence a consultation on sustainable travel and transport for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Board was advised that under the Education Act 1986 (the Act), the Local Authority had a duty to ensure suitable travel arrangements were in place for eligible children and young people. The Act applied to all children and young people permanently resident in Halton and who attended a qualifying school named in their Statement of Educational Needs (SEND) or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

It was reported that currently there were 385 pupils with SEND receiving support from the local authority to access educational provision, either within the Borough or outside of Halton. The cost of this service for 2015/16 academic year was £1,273,776, and it was proposed to consult parents, carers, educational establishments and other interested parties on revised travel solutions. The consultation exercise would run for 8 academic weeks commencing September 2016, with the results and a recommendation on future arrangements reported to Executive Board.

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision was required to fulfil the Council's statutory duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Implementation Date

Any revised policy would be implemented for the September 2017 intake.

RESOLVED: That the commencement of a consultation with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities from September 2017, be approved.