

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 20 September 2007 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors McDermott (Chairman), D. Cargill, Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Polhill, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Nelson and Swain

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: H. Cockcroft, E. Dawson, I. Leivesley, G Meehan, D. Parr, D Tregea, C. Halpin and J. Sutton

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB34 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB35 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT HOUSING GREEN PAPER "HOMES FOR THE FUTURE: MORE AFFORDABLE, MORE SUSTAINABLE"

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community on the content of the Housing Green Paper "Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable" and to consider the implications for Halton and the wider City Region.

During his early days in office, the new Prime Minister made it clear that housing, and specifically affordable housing, would be a key priority area for his Government. The Housing Green Paper provided evidence of this commitment and set out how the Government intended to address the affordability issue, while minimising the impact

on the environment.

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was consulting Local Authorities and other stakeholders on the range of ideas and proposals contained in the green paper. The deadline for submitting responses was 15th October 2007.

The Green Paper had three aims, each of which was outlined in the report along with delivery recommendations and the implications for Halton and the wider City Region.

(a) RESOLVED: That

- (1) Executive Board note the content of the Housing Green Paper and endorse the comments at 3.8 as the basis for Halton's response to be forwarded to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the North West Housing Forum and Merseyside Policy Unit for inclusion in wider regional and sub regional responses.
- (2) Executive Board authorise the Chief Executive to contact neighbouring local authorities regarding the potential to explore development opportunities arising from the Green Paper as described in 3.8.2.

Strategic Director,
Health and
Community

EXB36 CAPITAL OF CULTURE - YOUTH FESTIVAL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community on the proposals for a Youth Cultural Festival in July 2008 as part of Halton's Capital of Culture programme, and which sought approval to begin to commit expenditure to support the event.

The Board had previously approved Halton's approach to its involvement in Capital of Culture subject to proper consideration of the financial implications as part of the 2008/9 Budget process. Part of the approach was the proposal to host a major Youth Festival in 2008. It was envisaged that all Merseyside's Authorities and their twin towns would be invited to participate in a two day show which highlighted and offered opportunities to exchange different local cultures.

A budget of circa £150,000 would be required to host the event. £40k would be made available via the Capital of Culture Company and other forms of funding, as detailed within the report.

It was noted that to allow the event to go ahead with

confidence however, the event needed to be underwritten to a maximum of £110,000. The Executive Board agreed this in principle at its meeting of 29 March 2007 subject to proper consideration of the financial implications as part of the 2008/9 Budget process.

In addition it was noted that the bulk of resources would be spent on providing infrastructure such as stages, marquees, toilets, stewards and other necessary health and welfare expenditure.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) authority be granted for orders to be placed to a maximum value of £50,000 to enable the Youth Cultural Festival in July 2008 to take place;
- (2) approval be given in principle to a further £60,000, subject to further detail and it being considered as part of the overall budgetary process;
- (3) a report outlining the full details of funding requirements for the event be submitted to a future meeting of the Board; and
- (4) consideration be given to the use of a variety of sites in addition to Spike Island.

Strategic Director,
Health and
Community

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB37 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Audit Commission on the 2006/07 financial statements. The Audit Commission was required to report to those charged with governance summarising the conclusions from their 2006/07 audit work, before they could give their audit opinion on the Council's financial statements. In addition, the Audit Commission was also required to report upon their work in respect of the Council's arrangements for securing value for money in its use of resources.

Mr J. Farmer and Mrs C. Williams of the Audit Commission addressed the Board to set out the key messages and the two recommendations which were outlined in the report. The overall conclusion of the report meant that the Council had secured an unqualified audit opinion.

The Board expressed its thanks to the Accountancy

Department for their efforts in securing an excellent result.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Audit Commission be received.

EXB38 LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Council Solicitor requesting the authorisation of a consultation to review the Council's statement of licensing policy.

On 15th December 2004 the Council adopted a statement of licensing policy in compliance with its obligations under section 5 Licensing Act 2003. The licensing statement lasts for a three year period and must be re-adopted by the Council for successive three year periods. A licensing statement cannot be re-adopted before the completion of a consultation exercise.

It was noted that following completion of the consultation exercise any comments and recommendations received would be reported back to the Board for consideration.

RESOLVED: That a consultation exercise be undertaken in respect of the Council's statement of licensing policy in accordance with section 5(3) Licensing Act 2003.

Council Solicitor

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB39 HALTON UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN SAVED POLICIES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment seeking the Board's approval of the further 'saving' of policies from the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as part of the 'Development Plan'.

With the adoption of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in September 2004, the system of old style plans was abolished. The 2004 Regulations which accompanied this Act, allowed the adopted Halton UDP to be automatically saved for a period of three years from either the date of commencement of Section 28th September 2004 or the date the plan was adopted, whichever was the latter. The UDP was adopted on 7th April 2005, therefore 'old' policies were automatically saved until 6th April 2008. The Act required authorities to apply to the Secretary of

State (via the Government Office) to issue a direction, if it became necessary to save specified policies beyond this three year period. This must be done six months prior to 6th April 2008 in Halton's case i.e. by 6th October 2007.

It was noted that the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF) was intended to replace the UDP. However, given the time taken to produce the documents contained within the LDF it would be necessary to continue to save many of the 'old' policies within the UDP for a number of years, whilst these LDF documents were being prepared.

This situation meant that the Council would have to make a request, to the Secretary of State, that a number of the 'old' adopted UDP policies were automatically saved beyond the automatic three years.

In addition it was noted that the Government would take compliance with a number of criteria, which were outlined within the report, into account when considering extensions to the UDP. Officers had analysed all UDP policies against these criteria and had produced two tables as a result detailing those policies that were intended to be requested as saved and those that were proposed not to be saved beyond the automatic three years.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Policies listed within Appendix 1 are submitted to the Government Office for the North West (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) with a request that they are 'saved' as part of the 'Development Plan' for Halton beyond the expiry of the automatic three year period from adoption of the Halton UDP;
- (2) Policies listed within Appendix 2 are submitted to the Government Office for the North West (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) with a request that they are no longer maintained as part of the 'Development Plan' for Halton beyond the expiry of the automatic three year period from adoption of the Halton UDP;
- (3) The Operational Director (Environmental & Regulatory Services) in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal be authorised to make any changes to this document as required by the Government Office for the North

Strategic Director,
Environment

West;

- (4) Further editorial and technical changes and/or correction of printing errors that do not affect the content be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental & Regulatory Services before the document is published; and
- (5) The importance of replacing ‘saved policies’ with a new style Local Development Framework, starting with the progression of the Halton Core Strategy, is acknowledged.

EXB40 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS BALLOTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment summarising the key elements of the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) business plans for the Astmoor and Halebank industrial estates, the contents of which businesses, within the respective areas, would be balloted on during November/December 2007. The report also sought Executive Board approval to proceed with the ballot.

Members were advised that the Government legislated in the Local Government Act 2003 to allow partnerships between local authorities to set up BIDS. BIDS provide a means for local areas to develop and finance projects and services that would benefit localities such as town centres and industrial estates. This allowed businesses in a given area to lead on and develop their own unique area improvement plans, in addition to those provided and were funded by a levy on businesses within the specified area. The levy would be ring fenced for the area to fund the extra services and improvements identified in the proposal. Each bid was operational for a maximum of five years before a new vote to support the development of BIDS and to facilitate their establishment.

In addition the achievements for Business Led Steering Groups in Halton, the mechanisms for delivering BIDS and the governance, management and delivery of the Business Improvement Districts in Halton were outlined for Members consideration.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Strategic Director - Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, be

Strategic Director,
Environment

authorised to approve the final BIDs business plans for Astmoor and Halebank industrial estates to be voted on in the ballots;

- (2) the Strategic Director - Environment be authorised to take such other action as may be necessary to bring forward a BID at each of the two sites; and
- (3) the Strategic Director - Environment be authorised to undertake the ballot in accordance with government regulations in relation to Business Improvement Districts.

Minutes Issued: 27th September 2007

Call in: 4th October 2007

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 4th October 2007

Meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.