

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2017

EXB 18	CONVERSION OF THE GRANGE SCHOOL TO WADE DEACON TRUST – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which provided a summary of the arrangements for the conversion of The Grange School to Wade Deacon Trust, and also sought authority to undertake any actions necessary to effect the transfer.

The Board was advised that The Grange School was an All-through school catering for pupils from age 3 to 16. It was funded through a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) with service commencement from April 2013.

It was reported that the Local Authority had received an Academy Order from the Secretary of State for Schools in October 2016, which approved the conversion of The Grange School to Academy Status, as part of the Wade Deacon Trust. Due to the complexity of the conversion, a request was made to the Department for Education to provide financial assistance to secure specialist legal support.

The Board noted that in May 2017, the law firm Freeths were commissioned to work alongside Halton's Legal Services to represent the Council's interests during the academy conversion. Given the delay in commencing negotiations, the original conversion date had been delayed. However, a number of key documents would require amendment and agreement, as set out in the report, but which included the School's Agreement, the Principal Agreement, the Long Term Lease, Service Level Agreements and the Deed of Variation to the PFI contract.

Reason(s) For Decision

To seek delegated approval to facilitate the conversion of The Grange School to Wade Deacon Trust.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

All key documents considered and agreed by Executive Board. This option was rejected due to the number of changes required, the number of partners involved and the impact this would have on the timescale for conversion.

Implementation Date

Delegated powers to take effect from July 2017.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The appointment of the law firm Freeths to act for the Authority in the conversion of The Grange PFI School be noted;
- 2) Authority be delegated to the Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families, to agree to the following:-
 - i) Schools Agreement;
 - ii) Principal Agreement;
 - iii) Deed of Variation;
 - iv) Lease;
 - v) Service Level Agreement for Resource Base Provision;
 - vi) Shared Use Agreement; and
 - vii) Commercial Transfer Agreement.
- 3) Authority is delegated to the Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision, in conjunction with the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families, to undertake any actions necessary to effect the conversion.

EXB19	REQUEST FOR HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL TO LEAD THE PROCUREMENT OF AN IAG SERVICE FOR HALTON, LIVERPOOL, WIRRAL AND KNOWSLEY AUTHORITIES
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which sought approval for Halton Borough Council to lead the procurement of Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG) services on behalf of Halton, Liverpool, Wirral and Knowsley Councils.

The Board was advised that the Education and Skills Act 2008 placed certain duties on local authorities to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. A revised approach, known as the Halton Participation Strategy, was approved by the Board on 17 October 2013. An element within the Participation Strategy was the commissioning of a service to provide information, advice and guidance. It was noted that this service was carried out on behalf of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) authorities, with the procurement process led by Halton Borough Council. Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership were awarded the contract for a two year period on 1 April 2014, with an option to extend this to 31 March 2018.

The Board noted that Halton and the LCR authorities of Knowsley, Liverpool and Wirral wished to maintain a similar service from 1 April 2018, and a joint procurement process, led by Halton, would seek to procure four, twelve month periods; this would allow for consistency of service, but with an option to reduce or terminate annually, should financial or other circumstances change.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and

- 2) the Board approves Halton Borough Council acting as lead in the joint procurement process with Liverpool, Knowsley and Wirral local authorities.

EXB20

DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL ALTERNATIVE PROVISION – KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on a proposal to extend the range of vocational education offered by The Bridge School.

The Board was advised that there was insufficient provision in the Borough and neighbouring local authorities to meet the need for good quality skills based vocational alternative provision. Limitations of the current Bridge School site meant that it was not possible to increase or expand provision.

It was reported that a unit had become available at Astmoor, previously used by Riverside College. A feasibility study undertaken to assess suitability of the site and its associated costs, confirmed that with appropriate works, the site could be adapted to provide a skills base as part of the provision offered by The Bridge School.

Details of the proposal with associated costs required for refurbishment and additional specialist teaching resources, were set out in the report. It was noted that the provision would be under the management of The Bridge School and would fall under the Ofsted framework of evaluation. Secondary schools in the Borough had indicated their support for the proposed provision and the revenue costs would be met from schools through buy-back.

Reason(s) For Decision

To agree capital funding for the development of a vocational skills base at Astmoor.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Expand The Bridge School on its current site. This was not possible due to the limitation of the current site.

Implementation Date

July 2017.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the capital project to develop a skills base at Astmoor be approved;
- 2) this approval is subject to the agreement of the terms of the lease and support from Halton secondary schools; and
- 3) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property, and the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, be given the authority to agree the terms of the lease.