

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 24 July 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Nelson, Polhill and Wharton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Cross, D. Johnson, A. McIntyre, S. Nicholson, M. Reaney, D. Tregoe, L. Cairns and G. Cook

Also in attendance: Councillor Hodgkinson

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

#### EXB26 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 19th June and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

#### EXB27 STATUTORY CONSULTATION - ST CHAD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing a summary of the statutory proposal on the closure of St. Chad's Catholic High School and the establishment of a new joint faith Catholic and Church of England Voluntary Aided High School.

It was noted that during the consultation on future secondary provision in Halton, the joint proposal from the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Chester to explore the development of a joint faith school offering both Catholic and Church of England provision at St. Chad's High was supported. Following

*Action*

consultation, a Joint Faith Working Party, led by the headteacher of St. Chad's Catholic High School with members from both faith communities, agreed that the current ethos of St. Chad's summed up in its Mission Statement would remain the mission and ethos as a joint faith school. The Working Party had also considered a number of other key issues including admission arrangements and funding issues.

As the joint faith school was to be a new school, an application had been made to the Secretary of State to seek permission to publish the proposal without holding a competition. On 9<sup>th</sup> June 2008, the Secretary of State exercised the powers conferred on him by Section 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and decided to grant consent to the publication of a proposal for a new 11-19 joint Catholic/Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School. Once permission had been granted by the Secretary of State to consult, the statutory proposal was published by the Governing Body on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008.

The proposal was a joint agreement with the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Chester to close St. Chad's High in order for a joint faith Catholic and Church of England (11-19) School to be established on the current site. St. Chad's Catholic High School would close on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 and the new joint faith school would be established on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009. All the pupils from St. Chad's would transfer to the new joint faith school from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009. The published admission number would increase to 190 from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009 and, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, it would increase to 240 with 100 sixth form places.

Any representation to the published proposal had to be made in writing within six weeks of the publication and sent to Mr. M. Reaney, Operational Director and Monitoring Officer (Legal, Organisational Development and Human Resources). As the Local Authority was the Commissioner of School Places, all comments would then be submitted to the Executive Board in the form of a report, and a decision on whether to agree to the new joint faith school would be made by the Board in October prior to the deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

Consultation meetings had been held with staff, parents and other stakeholders at St. Chad's Catholic High School on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and it was advised that the response had been positive. In particular, it was noted that, in light of the proposal, the number of preferences

expressed for the school during the admission process commencing in Autumn 2007 for September 2008, admissions had risen, and there had been a significant number of appeals for the school. This showed the parental demand for a joint faith school. In addition, applications from St. Chad's Catholic Primary School had remained constant showing that parental demand from this area was unchanged.

RESOLVED: That a further report summarising the response to the consultation be submitted to the Executive Board in October 2008.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

#### EXB28 SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRAVEL POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People fulfilling the requirement of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to annually review the Council's Sustainable School Travel Policy.

It was advised that the Sustainable School Travel Policy 2008 drew together the four required elements of the Act; supported and clearly demonstrated links to the Children and Young People's Plan; and ensured that Halton fulfilled its statutory requirement. The Policy incorporated a number of transport related documents and had allowed for a review of the previous Sustainable School Transport Policy and associated procedures. The Policy also recognised possible changes in transport demands placed upon the Local Authority and was aligned to the Council's School Admissions Policy.

In particular, it was noted that there was a requirement within the 2006 Act that children from defined low income families may be eligible for assistance with travel. This applied from September 2007 to primary aged pupils aged between 5 and 11 attending the nearest qualifying school more than two miles from their home. From September 2008, it would also apply for secondary aged pupils aged between 11 and 16 from low income families attending one of the three nearest qualifying schools which were between two and six miles from the child's home and/or to the nearest qualifying school preferred by reason of a person's religion or belief up to a maximum of 15 miles.

RESOLVED: That the Sustainable School Travel Policy 2008 be approved.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB29 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY - IDEA DIVERSITY PEER CHALLENGE**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining the Council's achievement of Level 3 of the Equality Standard, and the findings of the IDeA report following Diversity Peer Challenge.

It was noted that the Equality Standard for Local Government was the recognised national framework that assessed performance on equality across a local authority. There were five levels, Levels 4 and 5 of which were exemplars and rarely achieved. Halton Borough Council had achieved Level 1 in 2003/04, progressed to Level 2 in 2005/06 and had since worked to achieve Level 3. Two groups had been established to help drive forward the agenda, which worked together with partners and stakeholders, to eliminate discrimination and promote equality.

On 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008, the Council had undergone an IDeA Diversity Peer Challenge Assessment, which concluded that the Council achieved Level 3 of the Equality and Diversity Standard. The Council had had to demonstrate that it fulfilled a number of requirements in order to achieve this level and these were outlined within the report for Members' consideration.

The IDeA Assessment Team had now issued a report summarising the findings of the peer challenge, which had highlighted strengths and areas for improvement. A draft action plan based on the outcomes of the IDeA report had been drawn up and was attached as Appendix 2 to the report. The areas shaded in the action plan had been identified as a priority. The actions required in order to achieve Level 4 of the standard were outlined for the Board, which the Council intended to achieve by the end of 2009. However, it was noted that the IDeA had commenced consultation on the proposed new Equality Framework for Local Governments. Within the Framework it was proposed that the existing standard be replaced by three broad new bandings. Further information was awaited in respect of how this transition would take place.

In receiving the report, the Board commended the work of the Strategic Director – Health and Community.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- 2) the Action Plan at Appendix 2 of the report be agreed.

## **ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB30 HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE MANAGEMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment setting out the transitional arrangements under which the Council was invited to discharge part of its waste disposal functions in order to perform its statutory duty to provide facilities for members of the public to deposit household waste.

It was noted that the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) were currently managed under contract by Mersey Waste Holdings Limited (MWHL). This contract was for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> February to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and, thereafter, the management and operation of the Centres would be carried out under a contract procured by the Mersey Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) as previously agreed by the Board.

However, as a result of delays in the procurement of this contract, arrangements needed to be put in place to manage the Council's HWRCs between the period 1<sup>st</sup> October and the time when the Waste Management Recycling Contract (WMRC) took effect.

The Council's current contract with MWHL, which expired on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008, allowed for an extension where agreed by both parties. It would have been the Council's intention to negotiate such an extension to cover the period up to the commencement of the WMRC. However, as a result of the removal of MWHL's "arms length" status since commencing this contract, they would not be undertaking further "third party business" after 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and would therefore not be in a position to extend the current contract with the Council.

Due to the estimated value of an interim contract of £750,000, EU procurement rules would apply should Halton

not wish to delegate this function to the MWDA. During the procurement exercise that resulted in MWHL being awarded the current contract, no other tender submissions had been received. Therefore, to avoid the need for Halton to undertake an interim procurement, and to mitigate the risks of failing to deliver aspects of its statutory function, it was recommended that Halton delegated that part of its waste disposal function as related to the management of its HWRCs to the MWDA as from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008. This would allow MWDA to manage (or to procure the management of) both MWDA's, HWRCs and Halton's HWRCs for the period between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 and the coming into effect of the WMRC.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council, acting under Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000 and all other enabling powers allowed by law, delegates to the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) that part of its waste disposal function as relates to the procurement and management of Household Waste Recycling Centres and composting centres from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 or such further period as shall be approved by the Strategic Director – Environment after agreement has been reached with MWDA; and
- 2) the Strategic Director – Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Leisure and Sport, be authorised to take all such actions and to make any decisions deemed appropriate in connection with, and in the furtherance of, the powers and authorisation set out in resolution 1 above.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB31 HEALTHIER HORIZONS FOR THE NORTH WEST**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Health and Community, outlining the contents and implications of "Healthier Horizons for the North West".

It was noted that Healthier Horizons for the North West had been launched on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2008. It had been produced by the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for the North West and was the formal response to "Our NHS, Our Future", the National Review of the Health Service led by

Lord Darzi. The report set out an ambitious 10 year vision for the future of health care in the region, reflecting Lord Darzi's concern for a fairer, more personalised, effective, safe and accountable Health Service.

The backdrop to the report was familiar based on the issues facing people in the region. The report recognised the considerable achievements in the region, including the excellent performance on elective treatment and the consistently high scores on "use of resources" (Audit Commission) across the region.

The report included 3 overarching aims, 10 strategic objectives and 7 enablers, which were described for Members' information. The overarching themes were an emphasis on prevention, public health and the linking of initiatives with Local Government. It was axiomatic that all of these themes overlaid the strategic objectives of the Council and that "impactful" partnerships were necessary to deliver the objectives set out in the report.

The following three areas were highlighted:

- 1) personalisation;
- 2) commitment to the mental well being of the population being embedded in all services and the impact of issues such as homelessness and worklessness upon mental health being recognised and acted upon by Health and Social Care; and
- 3) partnership working.

All of these areas required resourcing and strong leadership with effective governance arrangements across agencies.

There was an opportunity to comment on the report up until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008 and the proposed response was outlined for the Board's consideration. In addition, the Board received a presentation from Mr. Eugene Lavan, Acting Director of Strategic Planning and Development at the PCT, outlining:

- the national context of the Darzi review pledges;
- the SHA context in terms of the Healthier Horizons report;
- the Ambition for health, which was the strategic plan, and how clinical pathways would feed into this;
- expectations - for example the requirement that prevention and health promotion be at the core;
- emerging themes of alcohol, obesity, early detection and screening, and prevention;

- the intended impact on health outcomes for Halton and St. Helens;
- changes to the current approach; and
- Halton Borough Council's contribution.

Mr. Lavan advised that there was to be a "Health Summit" on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008, to which all Members of the Board were invited, to share the process to date; to interactively evaluate delivery options for each key area; and to identify preferred options. It was anticipated that this session would enable the moving forward of the agenda.

In considering the presentation, the Board noted:

- the need for the sporting sector to be included in the Health Summit event;
- the opportunities currently available to improve life expectancy, for example around older people; and
- the need for a difficult shift in resources and for the Government to allow time for the reforms to be embedded prior to further reorganisation.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Lavan for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) as described in 5.3 of the report, the vision and objectives as set out in Healthier Horizons for the North West be supported; and
- 2) as described in 5.2 of the report, local health services be engaged with to develop programmes of work that aligned with Council objectives.

## **PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB32 ADOPTION OF SANDYMOOR SPD**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment seeking approval for the formal adoption of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Sandymoor as part of the Halton Local Development Framework.

It was advised that Sandymoor had been allocated for housing development for a number of years, most recently being confirmed as Phase 2 Housing Allocations in the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The area was



expected to make a significant contribution to new house building within the Borough over coming years and an innovative planning obligations legal agreement had already been put in place to secure funding for necessary off-site highways and infrastructure improvements.

The development of the Sandymoor area was to be guided by a comprehensive Masterplan that was incorporated into the Council's planning policy framework by way of this SPD, which had been produced by collaborative working between numerous departments of the Council, English Partnerships and their consultants. The SPD had been delayed due to the need to resolve unexpected technical issues. This delay compelled English Partnerships to secure planning permissions covering portions of the site in advance of the SPD process, including an outline planning consent for residential development and revised access arrangements for the southern portion of the site. The SPD would now inform the determination of all further planning applications, including the forthcoming reserved matters applications in relation to the extant outline consents.

It was noted that, subject to and following the Executive Board's decision, the final version of the SPD would be produced for publication. Appendix 1, the SPD, contained the text and key diagrams that would make up the bulk of the document. Appendix 2 contained a schedule of the changes made from the Public Consultation Draft and recorded all consultees' comments and how they had been taken into account throughout the production of the SPD. In addition, a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Scoping Exercise assessing the environmental effects of the SPD had been undertaken and consulted upon in line with the relevant regulations. This concluded that a SEA was not required in relation to the SPD.

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) had also been produced and circulated for Members' consideration. The purpose of the SA was to independently assess the contribution that the Sandymoor SPD would make to achieve the social, economic and environmental objectives of sustainable development.

In receiving the report it was noted that:

- club facilities were currently an aspiration; however, appropriate funding was in place for this aspiration to be achieved if so required;
- the objection by Scottish Power to the football pitch

was on safety grounds due its location beneath a line of pylons. There would now be either one adult or two junior pitches;

- density of residential development had fluctuated throughout the process and was now expected to be approximately 32 dwellings per hectare, which equated to approximately 1400 new dwellings in the area with 390 to be added at the Wharford Farm end. This was a significant number of dwellings.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Sandymoor be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and part of the Halton Local Development Framework;
- 2) the responses to the representations received at the public participation stages, as set out in the statement of consultation, be agreed; and
- 3) further editorial and technical changes that do not affect the content or intended purpose of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, if necessary, before the document is published.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

#### EXB33 THE DRAFT MERSEY GATEWAY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment, outlining the progress that had taken place on the draft Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy since the Mersey Gateway Executive Board had been advised of the scope of the study on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008. The Sustainable Transport Strategy would inform the planning process for the overall Mersey Gateway Scheme. It would also describe sustainable transport policies and potential interventions that would demonstrate how the Mersey Gateway would enable sustainable transport to be enhanced both in and around Halton.

The draft Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy, “Gateway to Sustainability”, was attached as an appendix to the report, and specific sustainable transport measures were outlined within the report for Members’ information. The Strategy was in accordance with national, regional and local transport policy and had also been

informed in its development by the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the current content of the draft Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy be noted;
- 2) the draft strategy be approved for consultation;
- 3) the Strategic Director – Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, be given delegated authority to approve any minor final amendments to the document; and
- 4) the final strategy be submitted to the Executive Board for approval in the autumn of 2008.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

**MINUTES ISSUED: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008**

**CALL IN: 8<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 8<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

*Meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.*