

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

At a meeting of the Business Efficiency Board held on Wednesday, 12 November 2008 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Leadbetter (Chairman), Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chairman), D. Inch, Jones, A. Lowe, Norddahl, Osborne, Swift and Worrall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Murray and Philbin

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: C. Halpin, I. Leivesley and M. Murphy

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

BEB10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

BEB11 DEVELOPMENT OF THE EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which outlined the next steps in the process and the Board's role in the delivery of the Efficiency Programme.

The Board was advised that KPMG had identified six work streams where it was felt that by doing the business differently the Council would be able to meet the challenge of achieving cashable efficiency savings but also maintaining and enhancing service standards. The six areas were outlined in detail in the report.

Furthermore the Board was advised that the six areas would be developed into individual projects to run over the next three to four years. The projects would form the Efficiency Programme and the Executive Board at its 20 November 2008 meeting would be asked to approve the operational arrangements required to deliver the

programme.

Arising from Members comments and questions the following points were noted:

- the importance of frontline staff in maintaining essential services;
- that there would be a need to update the 'at risk' policy to ensure the Council did not lose experienced staff;
- the estimated costs associated with the review and what these costs would include;
- the potential impact on the morale of staff;
- the need for all departments to be reviewed using the same criteria and models;
- why there was a need for KPMG to continue to be utilised in the review and that the Board continued to support this.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a detailed programme be considered by the Board at the next meeting; and
- (2) a report on progress made against the programme be presented to subsequent meetings of the Board.

BEB12 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

BEB13 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN - QUARTER 2

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Financial Services which provided a summary of Internal Audit work for the period July to September 2008. The report set out the internal audit reports finalised since the last progress report, key issues and recommendations arising from the audit reports issued and the results of the work undertaken following up the implementation of previous Internal Audit recommendations. Details were also provided of the Council's participation in the National Fraud Initiative.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to Section 17 Payments, the rebuilding of Halton Lodge Primary School, the increase in energy prices and verification of employees' documentation in relation to mileage claims.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Work completed in the quarter be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.