

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 18 June 2009 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), D. Cargill, Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson, Swain, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor McDermott and D. Parr

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Cook, C. Halpin, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Tregea and J. Unsworth

Also in attendance: Councillor Hodgkinson

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB9 MINUTES

The Minutes of 4th June 2009 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB10 CAPITAL SPENDING FOR THE AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN PROGRAMME

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which presented the Capital Funding Plan to support the delivery of Halton's short break programme to meet the requirements of the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme.

The Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme was a national initiative to enable more disabled young people to engage in social activities within their local community. The programme also aimed to provide their parents/carers with a break from their caring responsibilities. In 2008/9 Halton made a successful bid for Pathfinder status, and were one of 20 nationally and two in the North

Action

West. During 2008/9 a number of measures were put in place to test out some new activities for children and to build partnerships with local and national providers of short break services.

Members were advised that there had been significant grant funding made available to local authorities by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to improve short break services for disabled children and their families. The funding stream included revenue and capital grants. The report related only to the capital element of the funding outlined in the report. Revenue funding was the subject of a separate commissioning progress.

Members were further advised that consultation with disabled children and young people and their families had been a major focus in the development of the planning for short break services, including the capital spending plan. The views of disabled young people and their families were sought through the "Powerful Voices" Conference along with a consultation leaflet that was sent out to all families with a child with additional needs. The consultation established the types of activities and practical support families would want to use.

It was noted that families of disabled children had told the Council that they wanted more support after school, at weekends and in school holidays, so they that could have a break when they were under the greatest amount of stress.

It was further noted that disabled children had told us that they wanted to do the same things that other young people did. They wanted to participate in sporting activities, primarily for pleasure but also to join in local and national competitions. For those with potential, they wanted to be able to compete in Paralympics events. The children also wanted to have somewhere where they could meet friends that a safe, adapted and "home-like" space that was available during school holidays, events and weekends.

Members were advised that the Capital Funding attached to the programme had been made available to Local Authorities to support the delivery of the short break programme in recognition of the need for a specialist provision over and above that required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Capital Funding spending plan had been developed following consultation with children and young people and their families and in accordance with the DCSF Guidelines. The proposed spending plan for Halton's allocation of Capital Funding was as follows:

Halton AHDC Capital Allocation
 2008/9 £85,600
 2009/10 £199,600

Draft Spending Plan	2008/09	2009/10
Inglefield Outreach Centre adaptations	£85,600	£5,000
Outreach Centre (Widnes to be identified)		£120,000
Sporting Wheelchairs		£20,000
Enhanced Toileting Resources		£15,000
Play Builder Resources		£39,600
Total	£85,600	£199,600

The Board was advised of the creation of two resource bases, one in Runcorn and one in Widnes that would provide bases with the specialist equipment required, particularly for those young people with very complex needs. The bases would be available for use by individuals and groups in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays. It was envisaged that the resource could be used for overnight stays by some young people with their personal assistants. Whilst the base in Runcorn had been identified, the options for possible locations in Widnes were currently being scoped.

Members were advised that funds would be used to purchase 10 specialist sports wheelchairs to enable young people to participate in sporting activities throughout the Borough. Some of the wheelchairs would be based in the Tennis Centre and Leisure Centres, with others available at Chesnut Lodge School to be transported to a range of venues locally and nationally to support young people who may be involved in competition events. The initiative was being developed together with Halton Sports Partnership.

Members were further advised that funding would also be used to provide enhanced disabled toileting facilities and play equipment in the new play parks being developed as part of the Play Builder Programme. This would enable more disabled children to use the facilities in their local parks, together with their siblings and peers.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted; and

Strategic Director-
 Children & Young
 People

- (2) the Executive Board recommend to Council that the draft Spending Plan outlined in the report be approved.

EXB11 PLAYBUILDER - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which updated Members on progress with Playbuilder Year 1 2008-2009 and to agree proposals for Years 2 2009-2010 and outlined proposals for Year 3 2010-2011.

Members were advised that the Executive Board had received a report on the 21st May 2008 informing them of the success of the Authority in achieving Playbuilder status and confirmation of the funding awarded.

Members noted that the guidance received indicated that Halton must deliver a minimum of 6 new, transformed playgrounds in 2008/09, with a further 16 in 2009/10 and 2010/11, making a total of 22 over the 3 years.

Members were advised that a further report had been submitted on the 25th September 2008 whereupon the Playbuilder Project development process was approved, along with the six Year 1 sites and progress to date was outlined within the report.

It was noted that the Spike Island Project had to be deferred to 2009/10, as it proved impossible to complete within the required timeframe.

It was further noted that Playbuilder investment in Playgrounds in Halton in 2008/2009 was £299,092. The total investment from all sources generated or pump primed by the Playbuilder input was however, nearer to £1m.

Members were advised that the allocation 2009/10 was £388,469. The proposal was to allocate this money equally across the eight new target areas, resulting in funding of approximately £48,559 per area.

Members were further advised that the proposals for Year 2 had been considered by both Halton Play Partnership and the Playbuilder Sub-Committee. The proposals for Year 2 included Spike Island, Victoria Park, Milton Avenue, Halton Lodge, Caesars Close, Hallwood Park (Rowhampton Row) and Town Park. Further details of each of the schemes was outlined in detail in the report.

Members noted the possible sites for 2010/11 as being Upton, The Glen, Palacefields and in the areas of Beechwood, Farnworth, Halton Village and Windmill Hill. Further details on each of these areas was outlined in the report.

REASON (S) FOR DECISION

To agree (8) projects to be progressed in Playbuilder Project Year 2.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

A full consultation programme has taken place where all options were considered.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

3-year capital programme with annual capital allowance. Implementation of Year 2 projects to be completed by 31st March 2010.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) progress made with the Playbuilder Project 2008/9 be noted; and
- (2) full Council be recommended to approve the proposals for 2009/2010 Playbuilder projects.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

EXB12 RUNCORN LINNETS FOOTBALL CLUB

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought approval for the proposals to re-locate Runcorn Linnets Football Club back into Halton.

Members were advised that there had been senior non-league football team in Runcorn since 1918, and Runcorn FC, over the years achieved considerable success. In recent years, the club experienced difficulties, resulting in the sale of their ground in 2001. The club played at Stobart Stadium in Halton and Prescott Cables ground in 2006, when it went into liquidation.

From this situation, fans formed a Supporters Trust to launch a new club, Runcorn Linnets FC, to continue the

history of Runcorn non-league football. This was a not for profit organisation akin to AFC United and Wimbledon AFC, run entirely by its members. The FA were happy to endorse the proposals and establish the team in the North West Counties League. In its first season the club achieved promotion to the North West Counties Premier League.

Members were advised the new Club's aspiration was to return to its roots in Runcorn. Previously, HBC had instigated a study by Liverpool University into football provision in the Borough. The study found that it was essential to have a senior team in the Borough to which local people could aspire to play for, providing community links with local youth teams, developing the female game and disability sport, and policies that responded to the local agenda of healthy lifestyles. Runcorn Linnets, in their development plans, offered these opportunities.

It was noted that options appraisals were carried out to identify a site that the Linnets could relocate to. Detailed proposals had been worked up for a site at Riverside College. The Club attempted to raise external funding to support this proposal but the economic downturn mitigated against this. HBC staff had worked closely with the club in their aspirations, and when the Riverside Site was proved to be clearly unaffordable, other options were considered. Ultimately, the development of a facility at the Council-owned Halton sports site was appraised to be the best and most effective option.

Members were further advised that the requirements to play at their immediate and aspirational levels could be met by developing a facility at Halton Sports. This involved changing facilities, seating and standing for spectators, officials' accommodation, dugouts, floodlights etc. All this could be achieved at no detriment to existing or future users of the site. Indeed, it offered the exciting potential of developing a community centre of sporting excellence.

It was noted that the Runcorn Linnets had played out of Witton Albion FC's ground for the last two years. If the club was to survive and have a long-term sustainability it did need to return its fan base in Halton. Equally, if Halton wanted to promote sport as a lifestyle option, it did need a senior club that was rooted in its community and involved in its community. The FA fully supported the aspirations and the approach of the club.

Members were further advised that the total cost of the scheme would be £200,000. Efforts made by the Club to

fund-raise and attract external funding from the Football Association had closed the current funding gap to £100,000. It was hoped that this sum could be reduced by sponsorship and grant funding from Sport England. This report, however, requested the grant funding to a maximum of £100,000 from HBC to enable the scheme to progress to meet the timescales of the FA to relocate the Club back into Halton. The grant funding could be found within existing resources from managed underspends across the Culture and Leisure budgets.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Halton Borough Council give a grant contribution to a maximum of £100k towards the cost of re-locating Runcorn Linnets Football Club back into the Borough, at the Halton Sport site; and
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Services and for Environment, Leisure and Sport to determine leasing arrangements and operational issues in respect of the Halton Sports site.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

EXB13 PILOT RECYCLING REWARD SCHEME

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which made recommendations concerning a pilot Recycling Reward Scheme in Halton and to requested that relevant procurement standing orders be waived for the delivery of the scheme.

Members were advised that the Borough of Halton had been developing a good recycling record and, with the support of local residents, it had currently reached a recycling rate of over 25%. The Council would like to support residents to do more and believed that reward incentives were a good way of encouraging residents to achieve higher levels of recycling, reduced levels of waste generation and the diversion of more waste from landfill. In addition to the environment benefits, the economic benefits of increased recycling had been highlighted in the Council's Waste Management Strategy and Waste Action Plan.

As had also been highlighted in the Council's Waste Action Plan, Halton had a predicted shortfall in Landfill Allowances from 2009/10. This shortfall, which would continue until 2014, when new waste treatment facilities were due to be in place, would necessitate either the

purchasing of landfill permits or finding interim facilities that were available to divert more biodegradable waste from landfill during this period. Either of these two options would result in significant increased costs, as set out in the report.

Members were further advised that a communications campaign was currently being delivered throughout Halton, key elements of which included raising awareness of recycling and waste minimisation in Halton to encourage increased participation in the Council's recycling services. This report outlined an innovative approach to increased participation and recycling rates even further and recommended that a Recycling Reward scheme be introduced, where residents would earn reward points for recycling which they were then able to spend at participating national retailers based in Halton and local retailers and businesses.

It was noted that Officers had been in discussion with RecycleBank, a US based company that delivered recycling reward scheme to over 1 million households in the US. RecycleBank had a proven track record of success, increasing recycling rates in every one of over 100 areas where its recycling incentive and reward scheme had been implemented. RecycleBank was expanding to the United Kingdom and the report proposed that a Recycling Reward scheme be introduced in Halton.

It was further noted that RecycleBank was the only company in the UK known to offer this precise product and, as such, the Executive Board were being requested to sanction, both in respect of a pilot scheme and a full borough-wide scheme, that an invitation be given directly to RecycleBank to deliver a Recycling Reward scheme in Halton.

Members were advised that the commitment to proceed arising out of this report was purely in relation to the pilot scheme. There would be no commitment to proceed beyond the pilot until the scheme had been evaluated and a further report would be presented to Members in March 2010. Subject to the completion of a successful pilot, and subsequent approval, it would be proposed that all households within Halton would be given the opportunity to participate in the RecycleBank "rewards for recycling" scheme within 12 months from the end of the pilot period, with the aim being to start in the Summer of 2010.

It was proposed that the recycling reward scheme would be introduced in two phases, commencing with an

initial six months pilot scheme to approximately 10,000 properties by October 2009.

Members were advised that if the implementation of the pilot scheme was approved, Halton would become only the second local authority to introduce this programme in the country, and the first in the north of England. This would also reassert Halton's ambition as an innovative authority. A scheme to reward those residents who participate in the Council's kerbside recycling services, but did not have blue wheeled bins, would be developed during the pilot period.

Members were advised the scheme would be a voluntary "opt-in" scheme, only those residents who chose to participate would be included in the reward scheme. Only when a householder activated their account would RecycleBank begin to record the weight of recyclable materials associated to their household and give residents points for recycling. Householders would be able to choose to opt-in or opt-out at any time during the scheme.

It was noted that blue bins would continue to be collected using the Council's current recycling collection vehicles that would be fitted with an automatic reader connected to on-board weighing equipment.

RecycleBank had identified AMCS, a company it had worked with on a number of projects in the US, as their preferred partner to carry out the fitting of on-board weighing equipment and the retro fitting of identification devices for the pilot scheme in Halton. On this basis, it was recommended that relevant procurement standing orders be waived and that AMCS be appointed to provide the necessary hardware and software to capture data for the pilot element of the Recycling Reward scheme only.

It was further noted that RecycleBank would identify national retailers based in Halton, as well as local reward partners prior to the commencement of the scheme, and would continue to add more reward partners following the introduction of the scheme. It was estimated that residents could be able to earn up to £150 per household per year in rewards value.

The Council and RecycleBank would jointly produce publicity material that would be delivered to all households in the pilot areas. This would be to ensure that residents understood the benefits offered by the scheme, why the Council was introducing the initiative and also make sure that they were fully aware that the use of technology

enabled them to earn rewards for recycling, and that it would not be used at any time to penalise them.

It was noted that average participation with Halton's multi-material kerbside recycling service was 50%. It was expected that the reward scheme could increase participation with this service above 70%. It was also an aim that levels of recyclable materials collected could be increased by an average of 50-55kg per household per year. If the scheme were to be rolled out to all properties and with increased participation and materials collected per household, it was anticipated that this could yield in excess of a further 2,000 tonnes of recyclable materials per year, and the overall impact of the reward scheme could add 5% to the Council's recycling performance. Other potential outcomes of this reward scheme were as set out in the report.

Members were asked to note that the full implementation of the recycling reward scheme would represent an "invest to save" as there were costs to the Council in 2009/10 and 2010/11, with the financial benefits being realised from 2011/12 and beyond. The financial implications of the pilot scheme, and indicative costs of the roll out beyond the pilot were set out in detail in the report. The cost of the operation of the pilot scheme would be £63,700. Subject to a successful pilot and the subsequent approval to roll out the scheme borough-wide, costs in 2010/11 would be as follows –

- The cost to install identification devices to the remaining blue wheeled bins was estimated to be £89,600 and the annual costs of maintaining the onboard weighing equipment was £11,400;
- An annual payment would be made to RecycleBank that would be based upon an agreed percentage of the savings made by the Council through the avoidance of waste disposal costs. This payment mechanism had not yet been finalised but would be contained in the report to be presented to the Executive Board in March 2010.

Members were advised that, based on forecasted additional recycling and waste diversion levels as detailed in the report, potential existed for savings of between;

- £62k - £88k in 2010/11
- £78k - £104k in 2011/12
- £94k - £120k in 2012/13

- £110k - £136k in 2013/14

The cost of delivering the pilot scheme would be met from existing waste management budgets and the report presented to Executive Board Members in March 2010 would contain further information on the financial implications of delivering the scheme borough-wide.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Executive approve the delivery of a pilot Recycling Reward Scheme in Halton;
- (2) a further report be presented to Executive Board in March 2010 following a review of the pilot Recycling Reward Scheme;
- (3) relevant procurement standing orders be waived and RecycleBank be appointed to deliver the Recycling Reward scheme (both in respect of the pilot scheme and in respect of a full scheme in the event that it is rolled out borough-wide);
- (4) relevant procurement standing orders be waived and AMCS be appointed to provide the necessary hardware and software to capture data for the pilot Recycling Reward scheme; and
- (5) the Strategic Director for Environment be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Environment, Leisure and Sport to take all steps necessary to develop and implement the Recycling Reward Scheme in Halton.

Strategic Director
- Environment

QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

EXB14 CODE OF CONNECTION

Members received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which advised members of the requirements placed on the Authority by Government through a project called "Government Connect" and its implications as to how the Council does its business.

Members were advised that Government Connect was a national ICT infrastructure for all Local Government bodies that the Council was required to connect into before 30th June 2009. It was a secure private network which enabled secure interactions between connected Local Authorities and organisations.

Members were further advised that it had introduced a set of guidelines and processes that defined how we would use, share, access and store any and all data within the Council, particularly data that was shared with Government bodies.

Members were advised how Halton would develop this programme and how it would affect both Members and employees.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the requirements be noted;
- (2) a series of workshops be held with Members to consider the detailed implications of the code; and
- (3) any additional costs to ensure compliance be met from the existing ICT Capital Programme.

EXB15 MID TERM REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which provided Members with an amended version of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Members were advised that local authorities were required to prepare and implement a Sustainable Community Strategy. Local authorities were expected to work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership to agree priorities and to engage and involve local communities. The current Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted in 2006. It contained a long-term vision with clear objectives with delivery targets for the period 2006-2011.

It was noted that since the strategy had been prepared a number of changes had taken place making it necessary to conduct a mid-term review. This was an update, not a complete revision. Recent perception surveys and the revised State of the Borough Report (2009) confirmed that the underlying vision and priorities from 2006 remained relevant. Widespread engagement had therefore not been undertaken for this mid-term review. However, in 2010/11 work would commence on a full review and roll forward of the strategy with wide engagement, linking up with work being done on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

Members were advised of the main objectives of the mid-term review which were set out in detail in the report. Members were advised that the attached draft of the mid-term review had been drawn up following consultation with partners and would be considered by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board on the 20th May 2009. The revised Sustainable Community Strategy had to be adopted by full Council (Local Government Act 200) and it was planned to take the final draft to the full Council meeting on the 22nd July 2009.

Members were further advised that the draft Strategy had been submitted to the Council's Policy and Performance Boards (PBB's) for scrutiny and a number of comments had been noted, particularly that the Employment, Learning and Skills PPB had requested the addition of a further local indicator for 'children and young people's satisfaction with Open Spaces and Parks'.

REASON FOR DECISION

The 2006 Sustainable Community strategy needs updating to take into account changes to the National Performance Framework, including the Halton Local Area Agreement, and recent statutory guidance.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED:

The following options were considered:

1. To leave the strategy unchanged. This would result in the need to monitor performance against two different sets of targets and would not be compliant with statutory targets; and
2. To conduct a full review of the strategy. This was rejected because the the Strategy was only adopted on 2006 and a full review would be premature.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The strategy will take effect following its adoption by Council (anticipated to be 22 July 2009).

RESOLVED: That the draft mid-term review of the Sustainable Community Strategy, subject to the addition of a further local indicator as set out above, be recommended to Council for adoption.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

MINUTES ISSUED: 1st July 2009

CALL IN: 8th July 2009

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 8th July 2009.

Meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.