

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 4 June 2009 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman), Harris and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, B. Dodd, I. Leivesley and A. Jones

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE

		<i>Action</i>
ES1	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2009 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
ES2	AREA FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09	
	<p>The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Corporate and Policy informing the members of the spending by the Area Forums for 2008/09.</p> <p>The report advised that funding was allocated to the Area Forums to spend on small scale projects that were identified by the community. In 2008/09 a total of £600,000 was allocated to the Area Forums, made up of £300,000 Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) and £300,000 from Halton Borough Council Priorities Fund. It was allocated on a per capita basis across the seven Area Forums that cover the Borough.</p> <p>It was noted that the local community were invited to raise ideas for neighbourhood projects, which would help improve their local area. The Forum then considered these ideas, and an action plan agreed. Actions must have community support and not result in a long-term financial commitment.</p>	

The projects were divided into the following categories and the proportion spent on each category overall is indicated in brackets.

- 1) Landscape (24%)
- 2) Safety (7%)
- 3) Youth Facilities (20%)
- 4) Improved Parks (18%)
- 5) Pedestrian Access (4%)
- 6) Security (11%)
- 7) Other (16%)

The Area Forums were a key tool in engaging with local residents, and the budget provided a means of funding minor schemes in response to local needs. The projects funded were all required to demonstrate a contribution to priority areas such as safety, health and so on. There were no ongoing financial implications, as it was a strict criterion that area forum projects should not incur ongoing costs.

Members commented that it was important that the minutes from the area forums were circulated within the public arena. It was confirmed that the minutes were published on the HBC website and could also be included on the Members bulletin.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2008/09 4TH QUARTER

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Financial Services on the Treasury Management 2008/09 4th Quarter (January to March) which updated the Sub Committee on activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy (TMP). The Operational Director reported on the current investment market particularly in relation to building societies.

The report provided supporting information on the short term rates, longer term rates, temporary borrowing/investments, longer term borrowing/investments and policy guidelines. It was noted that all the policy guidelines in the TMP had been complied with. Following the mergers of building societies the Council's exposure to

Nationwide Building Society exceeded its limit; however this would unwind as investments mature.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES4 PURCHASE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SYSTEM

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Corporate and Policy informing the Sub-Committee of a decision to purchase a web based Performance Management Software System for use by the Council and the Halton Strategic Partnership.

To date the Council had operated an effective performance monitoring system, largely based upon internally developed templates, to provide performance information to relevant Officers and Members at an organisational and partnership level. Given a number of changes that had occurred within the operating environment it would be unlikely that such arrangements would remain effective in the medium term. These changes included:

- The introduction of a single National Indicator Data Set from April 2008. Such measures were no longer confined to the outputs of the organisation, as were the Best Value Performance Indicators that they replaced, but were much more outcome focused and relate to information that originates from both the Council and its partner agencies.
- The strengthening of Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework that places far greater emphasis upon the collaboration between the Council and its partners in achieving outcomes for the local communities that they serve.
- The ongoing need to make efficiency savings in light of tighter fiscal constraint.

Taking account of such changes the Council, as had most others, had recognised the potential benefits of acquiring a web based performance software system that would deliver medium-term benefits that would include:-

- Reducing the duplication currently incurred in the reporting of progress towards objectives in the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan and LAA.

- Improved quality, accessibility and timeliness of information required by the Council's decision making processes.
- Addressing issues raised in the most recent Corporate Performance Assessment concerning the need to improve partnership performance arrangements.

Ten tenders were submitted by vendors, costs ranging from £22,000 to £188,000. The evaluation led to the 4 lowest cost suppliers being shortlisted to present their system to a panel. As a result of this exercise and following visits to relevant reference sites by the performance specialists and the Corporate Performance Team, the two lowest cost suppliers were identified as primary options; namely 'Ten Software' and 'Inphase'.

The final decision was taken to acquire the Performance Plus software system as although the cost of acquiring the system was higher, it had medium term advantages in that it demonstrated superior IT and system specifications.

It was noted that the system implementation would begin in June and involve a series of training workshops for system use being delivered to staff both within the Council and within relevant partner agencies. Concurrent to such workshops, work would be undertaken in regards to system design and development and data transfer and it was envisaged that the system would become operational during the second quarter of the current financial year.

It was noted that the cost of the software would be shared equally between the Halton Strategic Partnership and Halton Borough Council. The Council's contribution over the three years could be met from within existing budgets. The system would be externally hosted to facilitate access by external partners, and so there were no additional hardware costs falling to the Council. It was also confirmed that there was no need to employ additional staff, as the administration of the system would be carried out by the Policy Team.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

ES5 NOTIFICATION OF WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS BY EXECUTIVE BOARD ON 2ND APRIL 2009 TO EXTEND EXISTING CONTRACTS FOR PROVISION OF MINOR ADAPTATIONS AND STAIR LIFTS

The Executive Board Sub Committee received a report from the Strategic Director, Health and Community on the notification of waiver of Standing Orders by Executive Board on 2nd April 2009, to extend existing contract for provision of Minor Adaptations and Stair Lifts. The report notified the Executive Board Sub Committee of the decision by the Executive Board to extend two contracts in the light of the exceptional circumstances.

The report detailed that on 2 April 2009 the Executive Board agreed to extend the following contracts for a period of one year during which time the tendering process for new contracts would be undertaken:-

- 1) Contract for the provision of minor adaptations; and
- 2) Contract for the provision of stair lifts.

This decision was taken due to the exceptional circumstances; namely time being available, announcement of grant and capacity within the service.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board Sub Committee note the decision of the Executive Board.

MINUTES ISSUED: 15 June 2009

CALL IN: 22 June 2009

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 22 June 2009.

Meeting ended at 10.50 a.m.