

APPENDIX 1

Extracts of Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee Minutes that are relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2011

11	REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS & POLLING PLACES
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The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources on the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places.

The Board was advised that the Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a statutory duty for local authorities to carry out a review of their parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places by 31 December 2007 and every four years thereafter.

The Board was advised that the last formal review of Polling Districts and Polling Places was undertaken in 2007. Since that time, Polling Stations had been reviewed at election times by the Returning Officer, and where changes had been necessary, Ward Members had been consulted and changes made.

The report detailed the three stages of review; the Preliminary Stage, the Proposal Stage and the Consultation Stage. Following the Consultation Stage, the Authority must make its final decisions on the review, taking into account all the representations received. This would need full Council approval before the publication of the Register of Electors on 1 December 2011.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) authority be given for the publication of the notice of the Polling Districts and Polling Places Review; and
- 2) a Working Party of 6 Members (4 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Conservative) be appointed to undertake the review of Polling Districts and Polling Places, following consultation, as required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and to make recommendations to Executive Board.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2011

17	CHANGES TO PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS
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The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on proposed changes to Procurement Standing Orders.

The Board was advised that, as part of the Council's Procurement Strategy, the Procurement Division had been actively seeking new ways to improve procurement practice across the Council.

Current Procurement Standing Orders state differing thresholds of spend to allow officers to procure goods, services and works. The thresholds were detailed in the report and were:

- Up to £1000: Advisable for quotations to be sought;
- £1,001 - £50,000: Must seek three quotations via the Chest (Due North) E sourcing system; and
- £50,001 - £1M: Must follow a formal tender process and in line with EU Public Procurement Contract Regulations in terms of the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) requirements. (Thresholds £156,442 goods and services and £3,927,260 works).

The Board was advised that it was proposed to change the thresholds from £50,000 to the OJEU threshold for goods and services of £156,442. This would mean that for contracts between £1,001 and £156,442, that the three quotation process via the Chest would be used in future. By moving this threshold it would allow both officers in Directorates and the Procurement Team the ability to take a less bureaucratic process to seek quotations via the Chest rather than follow a formal tender.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the changes to Procurement Standing Orders as set out in Appendix 1.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 MAY 2011

2	TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2010-11 Q4 (JAN – MARCH)
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The Sub-Committee received a report of the Operational Director, Finance on the Treasury Management 2010/11 4th Quarter (January to March) which updated the Sub Committee on activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

The report provided supporting information on the economic forecast, short term investment rates, longer term investment rates, temporary borrowing/investments, investment income forecast, longer term borrowing/investments and policy guidelines. The Sub-Committee noted that all investments had been within policy guidelines.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

3	INSURANCE TENDER
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The Sub Committee received a report of the Operational Director, Finance on the tender evaluation process recently undertaken by the Council's appointed insurance broker, Aon.

The Sub Committee was advised that the Council's insurance programme had expired on 31 March 2011 and a formal tender exercise had been conducted under EC Procurement Procedures. In accordance with Procurement Standing Order 2.11, the Operational Director, Finance had accepted the successful tenders.

The report provided information on the tenders received and the amendments to the Council's insurance programme. It was noted that following advice from Aon, cover for Terrorism had been added to the programme.

The Sub Committee noted that the contracts had been awarded on a three year basis, with an option to extend for a further two years. In addition, under the contract with Travellers, the Council would receive five free risk management consultancy days each year.

RESOLVED: That the following be noted:

- 1) the tenders had been accepted;
- 2) the names of the various tenderers;

- 3) the amounts of the tender figures; and
- 4) the changes to the Council's insurance programme.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2011

12	DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF
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The Sub-Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources which sought Members' consideration of two applications for discretionary rate relief, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The Sub-Committee was advised that under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1988, the Authority was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that were either a charity or a non-profit making organisation. This relief may also be awarded to Community Amateur Sports Clubs. A summary of the applications was outlined within the report and a list of the associated figures was included.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the following organisation at the percentage indicated, for the period from 1st April 2011 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later, 31st March 2013:

Halton District Citizen Advice Bureaux Service 20%

- 2) in respect of the following organisation, it was also recommended that they should be granted discretionary rate relief for the backdated element of the charge from 1st April 2010 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later:

Halton District Citizen Advice Bureaux Service 20%

- 3) under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, the following application for discretionary rate relief be refused:

National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations (Incorporated) 20%

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JULY 2011

21	2010-11 FINANCIAL OUTTURN
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The Board considered a report which reported the final revenue and capital spending position for 2010/11.

The report advised that the final accounts for 2010/11 were now complete and the revenue spending position for each department, subject to external audit, was set out in the appendix to the report.

It was noted that the Council had closely monitored and controlled its spending throughout the year and total spending had a overall net underspend of £120,000 for the year.

In addition, the Board was advised that staffing expenditure was significantly below budget across the Council, as posts were held vacant in order to assist in meeting the underspend targets set for each Directorate. In the main these posts had now either been filled or been used as savings for the 2011/12 budget, and therefore the position was not likely to be repeated. The economic downturn continued to have an impact upon the Council's finances, with shortfalls in income in a number of areas.

With regard to the Council's Reserves and Balances these had been reviewed in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Strategy. Total revenue spending for the year was £120,000 below budget (compared to £489,000 in the previous year). However, during the year unexpected Area Based Grant income of £72,000 was received and therefore as a result the Council's General Balances now stood at £7,367,000, an increase of £192,000 from the previous year.

It was reported that during the year a target was set for each Directorate to underspend its budget by £0.5m in order to create a Transformation Fund of £2m. This had been achieved and the Fund was intended to meet these costs associated with the structural changes which the Council needed to make in order to balance its budget and shape the way it delivers services. In March 2011 redundancy costs totalling £738,000 had been met from the fund in 2010/11, leaving a balance of £1,262,000.

In addition, Members received a summary of capital spending against the 2010/11 Capital programme. It was noted that Capital spending totalled £43m which was £7.7m below the revised Capital programme of the £50.6m. The main areas of significant slippage were in respect of Landfill Tax Credits, Castlefields Regeneration and Widnes

Waterfront. The Capital Programme had been reviewed in line with the resolution regarding the proposed development of the former Runcorn market. Despite capital receipts not being generated as quickly as expected, funding up to £750,000 could be made available. However, further capital projects would need to have their own funding in place to be able to be incorporated in the Capital programme.

Arising from the discussion it was suggested that consideration be given to more regular financial report monitoring. It was agreed that this would be considered in consultation with the Resources portfolio holder.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.