

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 3 November 2011 in The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman), D. Cargill, Harris, Jones, T. McInerney, Nelson, Swain, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Stockton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Scott, M. Reaney, G. Cook, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, A. McIntyre, E. Dawson and J Bucknall

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB59 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB60 2011/12 HALF YEAR SPENDING

The Board received a report of the Operational Director, Finance on the 2011/12 Half Year Spending as at 30 September 2011.

A summary of spending against the revenue budget up to 30 September 2011 was attached to the report at Appendix 1. This provided individual statements for each department. The Board was advised that in overall terms, the revenue expenditure was above the budget profile, although this was only a guide to eventual spending.

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 22 September 2011, an Action Plan was approved which aimed to restrict spending by year end within its bottom-line operational budget. It was noted that the required actions

Action

had been put in place and would continue to be applied during the remainder of the year.

The report contained a number of budget proposals for 2012/13. Members noted that a number of these proposals could be implemented immediately, to achieve a part-year saving for 2011/12, to assist in keeping the overall spending in line with budget. Since the report was written, three figures had been amended and these were reported as follows:

- Reduction in the number of externally commissioned placements for children in care (£100,000);
- Open spaces- reduction in security in parks (£50,000); and
- Supporting People – efficiency saving in external and in-house services following review of current Supporting People funding (£100,000) and an underspend in Supporting People budgets (£473,000 one-off).

The report also outlined details of a revision to the capital spending programme and monitoring of the Council's balance sheet.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to the absolutely essential;
- 2) Directorates continue to closely control spending on agency staff and additional hours (including overtime) so that spending in these areas reduces in each succeeding quarter;
- 3) Strategic Directors ensure overall spending at year-end is within their total operational budget;
- 4) Council be recommended to approve the revised capital programme as set out in Appendix 2; and
- 5) Council be recommended to approve implementation of the 2012/13 budget proposals listed in paragraph 3.13 of the report, subject to the inclusion of the amended figures reported.

Operational
Director - Finance

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

(N.B. The following Councillors declared a personal interest in the following item of business: Councillors Swain and D Cargill as Governors of Weston Primary School and Windmill Hill Primary School respectively)

EXB61 BASIC NEED CAPITAL ALLOCATION 2011-12 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided an update on the capital projects to be funded from the Basic Need Capital Allocation 2011/12.

The Board was reminded that in December 2010, the Government had announced the schools capital grant allocations for 2011/12, which included an allocation of £1,689,618 for Basic Need. In July 2011, the Board had approved the development of capital projects to address basic need at Windmill Hill Primary School, Weston Primary School, Lunts Heath Primary School and St Bede's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools.

It was noted that the funding had been allocated in recognition of the significant pressures faced by local authorities in the provision of additional school places, particularly in the primary sector. The additional pressure on primary places was due to rising birth rates and changed migration patterns.

The report summarised the current position for each of the schools listed in terms of building projects, together with indicative costs. The work proposed would allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the learning environment in schools and provide sufficient accommodation for increased pupil numbers.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposals to be funded from the Basic Need Capital allocation be approved; and
- 2) Council be recommended to approve the submission of the projects.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB62 PROPOSAL FOR USE OF LOCAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (LEP) BY WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL- KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise on the proposal to use the Halton Local Education Partnership (LEP) by Warrington Borough Council.

Members were advised that in April 2009, Halton and Warrington Borough Councils agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly procure a LEP. Following changes to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, Warrington withdrew from investing in the LEP as well as being party to the Strategic Partnering Agreement, in August 2010.

The Board was reminded that the Halton BSF had established a public private partnership to deliver two sample schools and any other capital schemes. The partnership was a jointly owned company in which the Council had a 10% share and would benefit from any other capital project procured through the LEP, as future capital projects would deliver an income stream for shareholders.

It was noted that use of the LEP to deliver Warrington Capital Projects alongside Halton schemes, would improve the viability of the LEP and have the added benefit of establishing it as a regional procurement vehicle.

Reason for Decision

The wish to take advantage of the gains to be achieved by the collaboration, and to take advantage of the substantial opportunity which presented itself.

Alternative Options considered and Rejected

Consideration had been given to not supporting collaboration with Warrington. However, Warrington had already invested in the development of the LEP and any future capital projects approved would financially benefit Halton.

Implementation Date

Agreement was needed to proceed by 11 November 2011.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the actions taken to date in respect of the agreement for Warrington Borough Council to use the Halton Local Education Partnership to procure future capital schemes be endorsed;
- 2) the proposal to enter into collaborative arrangements with Warrington Borough Council for the purposes of allowing them to use Halton Local Education Partnership for the provision of future capital schemes be agreed;
- 3) the arrangements in (b) above, be subject to the agreement of a deed of assignment of the Strategic Partnering Agreement which was an agreement between Halton Transformational Partnership and Halton Borough Council; and
- 4) it be ensured that the deed of assignment be in such detailed drafting as may be agreed by the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, but the form of such Memorandum, as set out in the report, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

EXB63 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 items 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.

(N.B. Councillor Harris declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business as he provides advice on a voluntary basis to the Scouting Movement in the North West, and left the room during consideration of the item)

EXB64 POSITIVE YOUTH PROVISION TENDER- KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on the progress made on the re-commissioning of the Positive Youth Provision Tender.

The Board was reminded that since 2009, Halton's Youth Service had been provided by Action for Children. Further developments in the participation of young people in service design and delivery, such as the new Children's Shadow Trust Board, local area youth forums and youth cabinet, had taken place. Work had also been undertaken on the development of a community based approach to support the sustainability of future youth provision through the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) community funding grant.

It was noted that the Local Authority was required to provide a youth provision for 11-19 year olds (and up to 25 year olds for young people with additional needs). As described in Halton's Children and Young People's Plan, a comprehensive, effective youth provision would be an important aspect to ensure a real difference could be made to young people across the range of priorities in Halton.

Attached to the report were draft Service Specifications for the three areas of the Positive Youth Provision for Members' consideration.

Reason For The Decision

To agree the redesign of Youth Provision in Halton.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Maintaining the current provision was considered, however, the reduction in budget and emphasis on positive youth services had necessitated the change.

Implementation Date

The new service would need to be fully operational by April 2012.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) the proposed re-design from a traditional Youth Service, with provision to include a reduction in age to 10 years, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB65 ACCOMMODATION UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided Members with an update on Council accommodation.

Members were reminded that the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy (2007), stated that where possible, staff should be located in Council owned buildings. Since then much progress had been made with a number of proposals resulting in savings within the property portfolio.

The report outlined the current position with a number of properties including Runcorn Town Hall, Municipal Building, Rutland House, Grosvenor House as well as the Council's depots.

The report contained a number of proposals for the future use of a number of the Council's offices for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder, be authorised to implement the proposals contained within section seven of the report.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB66 LAND DISPOSAL FOR LEISURE AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources on land disposal for leisure and commercial development.

The Board was advised that the site referred to was located within the Widnes Waterfront programme area, situated between Widnes Town Centre and the waterfront environment. The area had already seen significant improvements to its appearance and property on offer, through the new B & Q warehouse, the trade counter units, Turnstone and Heron Business Parks, Forward Point and the Hive leisure development.

The Council had advertised the development opportunity on the open market. Following a period of advertising, three formal tenders were received and submissions were assessed. The report provided details of the tenders received.

RESOLVED: That the disposal to Mossbank Developments LLP, a special purchase vehicle and part of the Patrick Group, of the c. 10 acres of land on the terms outlined in Appendix 2 of the report, subject to planning permission, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Policy &
Resources

MINUTES ISSUED: 7 November 2011

CALL-IN: 14 November 2011

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 14 November 2011

Meeting ended at 2.22 p.m.