

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board Committee Minutes Relevant to the Children, Young People and Family's Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2011

EXB54 HALTON CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY STRATEGY 2011-2013 - KEY DECISION

RESOLVED: That the Sustainable School Travel Policy be approved for implementation from September 2011.

EXB31 – BSF LOCAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (LEP) STRUCTURE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Directors, Policy and Resources and Children and Enterprise, on the Halton Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2011-13.

The Board was advised that the Child and Family Poverty Act 2010, created a Government commitment to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Specific duties imposed upon local authorities and designated partners included:

- To co-operate to mitigate the effects of child poverty;
- To prepare a local child poverty needs assessment;
- Child poverty to be taken into account when preparing or revising the Sustainable Community Strategy; and
- To produce a local joint child poverty strategy.

The Board noted that the European Union's working definition of poverty, which had been adopted by authorities in the Liverpool City Region was:-

“Persons, families and groups of persons, whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the Member State to which they belong.”

It was noted that the definition recognised that poverty was about effective exclusion from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities, such as income poverty, difficulty accessing quality services such as housing, health and education, as well as the ability to participate in the community and to engage in social activities. In addition, it had a negative impact on experience of education and training and affected the transition to independence.

The Board was further advised that the draft strategy had been subject to extensive consultation and was formally endorsed by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board in September 2011.

Reason for Decision

The Child Poverty Act 2010 placed a duty upon the Council and key partners to complete a child poverty needs assessment and a strategy for the elimination of child poverty across the local authority by 2020.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The option of not developing a strategy for the elimination of child poverty in Halton was precluded by the duties placed upon the Council by the Child Poverty Act 2010.

The process of developing the strategy had been overseen by a multi-agency steering group, chaired by the Portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families.

During the development of the Strategy, over 30 partner organisations and services had participated together with a wide range of local residents and service users.

Implementation Date

October 2011, upon formal adoption by the Council and partners.

RESOLVED: That the Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2011-13 be approved.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 3 NOVEMBER 2011

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.

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.

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2011

EXB68 OFSTED'S ANNUAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES ASSESSMENT- KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, informing them of the Ofsted Statutory Annual Children's Assessment 2011.

The annual assessment of Children's Services took into account the inspection results of all settings and services for children, from Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Post -16 as well as specialist provision including those outside of Local Authority control.

The assessment letter, attached as an appendix, indicated that Halton's Children's Services performed well, and that this level had been maintained from 2010 to 2011. It also acknowledged the improvements made during the past 12 months and areas for improvement. The Board wished to place on record their congratulations to all staff that had contributed to the outcome of this Assessment.

The Board was informed that the letter would be the subject of detailed consideration and action by both the Halton Safeguarding Children Board and Halton's Children's Trust.

Reasons for Decision

To inform Executive Board of Ofsted's Statutory Annual Children's Services Assessment for 2011, reporting on the quality of services for children and young people in Halton. This letter included findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of services and settings for which the local authority had strategic or operational responsibilities, either alone or in partnership with others, together with other published data.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A draft version of this letter was reviewed and approved by the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise for factual accuracy before being submitted to Executive Board. The Ofsted Children's Services Annual Assessment letter is also accessible to the public on the Ofsted website.

Implementation Date

The Ofsted letter would be the subject of detailed consideration and action by both Halton Safeguarding Children Board and Halton's Children's Trust, following publication on 8th November 2011.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that

- 1) Ofsted's judgement that Children and Young People's services in Halton continued to be performing well; and
- 2) the large majority of services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted were judged to be good or better.

EXB69 TRADED SERVICES SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on Traded Services School Improvement Services.

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 30 June 2011, it had approved the appointment of Serco Limited as the preferred bidder to form a Partnership between Halton and Warrington Borough Councils to provide school improvement services across the two authorities.

Staff previously employed by both authorities transferred to the Partnership, (which was named Aspire), on 1 September 2011. The menu of services previously provided by the local authority would be provided through the Traded Services Partnership. It was noted that 37 schools and 2 Pupil Referral Units in Halton had subscribed to Aspire for the provision of school improvement services.

The Board was advised that Halton Borough Council retained its statutory role in improving underperforming schools and the local authority had powers of intervention, as outlined in the Education Bill (expected to become law by the end of November 2011).

The report and attachment at Appendix 4b provided details of the current management structure for Members' information.

RESOLVED: That the report and the progress made since June 2011 be noted.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2011

ESB55 SOCIAL WORKER CRITICAL SKILLS TRAINING

The Sub Committee was advised that in February 2011 Ofsted conducted a three yearly inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children services. Ofsted made 22 separate judgements with 12 areas graded as good and 10 as outstanding. An area identified as needing improvement was that social workers must:

“Ensure that the quality of core assessment and plans for children in need and children in need of protection is consistently good and addresses both the risk and protective factors as well as the implications of the family history”.

It was noted that the training needs of Social Workers were addressed by the Tools for Staff Working with Children & Young People training programme, most of which was delivered in house. However, occasionally there was also a need to use an external specialised provider.

It was proposed to waive Standing Orders to enter into a contract to appoint Afta Thought to deliver social worker critical skills training, without conducting a tender exercise. The reason being that:

- Afta Thought delivered high quality training and are particularly skilled in using actors for training sessions that tackle sensitive issues;
- feedback from social workers, who had previously attended courses, was always very positive and there is a higher transfer rate to practice;
- there was no other provider who were able to deliver this highly specialised training;
- there was not enough time to go out to tender if we are to comply with the action set by Ofsted.

Members noted that future external training courses with specialist providers would be subject to a procurement exercise.

RESOLVED: That

1. under Procurement Standing Order 1.8.2 (e) SOs 4.1 be waived in respect of Afta Thought Training Consultancy Ltd; and
2. the Divisional Manager for Child Protection and Child in Need be authorised to enter into a contract with Afta Thought Ltd as the only provider of Social Worker Critical Skills Training of two days x two at a cost of £9,500.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB MEETING HELD ON 1ST DECEMBER 2011

ESB59 WAIVER OF PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS CONTRACTED SERVICES FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director Children and Enterprise which requested a waiver of Standing Orders in order to award a contract for the provision of Speech and Language Therapy services without obtaining quotes. For several years, the Council had commissioned Speech and Language Therapy services from Halton & St Helens Primary Care Trust's Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy Service. The service assists the Council in addressing speech, language and communication needs in the 0-5 age group and those with Special Educational Needs.

Members were advised that Halton & St Helens Primary Care Trust had been the only practicable provider for this service due to clinical requirements and both previous and existing partnership arrangements. In addition although provision of this service may be available from other NHS organisations contracting arrangements would have a significant negative impact from both a financial and operational perspective as the Council and the NHS currently fund the service on a shared cost basis. Also withdrawal of Council funding at this stage of NHS transitional developments would severely disrupt service delivery

with anticipated increased costs impacting on vulnerable children, young people and families.

It was noted that in accordance with Government policy, Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust was in the process of re-organisation and restructuring which may result in changes to their delivery and costs for Speech and Language Therapy over the next two years. It was proposed that officers would keep the situation under review to ensure the method of service delivery remained the most cost effective option for the Council.

RESOLVED: That

1. in light of the exceptional circumstances set out in the report, for the purpose of Standing Order 1.8.2, Procurement Standing Orders 3.1 to 3.7 be waived on this occasion in order to extend existing contracts with Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust for the provision of Speech and Language Therapy services to children and young people aged 0-5 years and those who have Special Educational Needs, in order to ensure continuous care and support; and
2. the Strategic Director, Children and Young People be authorised, in conjunction with the portfolio holder for Children Young People and Families, to enter into the above contracts for an additional year from April 2012 to the end of March 2013.