

## APPENDIX 1

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

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#### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2012

121	<b>DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources on new applications for Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief.

The Board was advised that, under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that were either a charity or a not for profit organisation. Five new applications had been received with details of each contained in the report. In addition, information in Appendix 1 provided a summary of the financial implications for each application.

It was reported that the Council grants discretionary rate relief to organisations for a three year period. Regulations required that a twelve month period of notice be given to organisations if this relief should cease. In March 2012, the Council gave the required twelve months' notice to all existing recipients, as 2012/13 was their third year of receipt of rate relief. A list of those organisations was contained in Appendix 2, along with details of the associated costs.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the following organisations at the percentage indicated, for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later, to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016:

Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Action:	20%
Halton Haven Hospice:	20%
Halton YMCA Ltd:	20%
Widnes RUFC:	20%

- 2) in respect of the following organisations, they be granted discretionary rate relief for the backdated element of the charge from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 and from the commencement of liability, respectively;

Halton Haven Hospice: 20%  
Widnes RUFC: 20%

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

Alzheimer's Society: 20%

- 4) under the same provisions, all current recipients of discretionary rate relief (except Moorfields Sports and Social Club for whom further information was being sought) who still satisfy the appropriate criteria, as listed in Appendix 2, be re-awarded relief from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

**122**

**ABOLITION OF THE DISCRETIONARY SOCIAL FUND**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on the abolition of the Discretionary Social Fund.

The Board was reminded that at its meeting on 18 October 2012, it considered a report which outlined that the Government had abolished Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants through the Welfare Reform Act 2012, and it was suggested that local schemes be developed by each local authority. Local authorities were to be provided with a grant from Government to do this but had a discretion as to whether they used the grant for this purpose. Following consideration of this report, the Board resolved that this item be deferred and referred to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board (PPB) who were asked to consider the issue and make recommendations to the Executive Board.

Following this decision, Members and Officers had worked together and consulted the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who were the current provider, and had liaised with other local authorities about their approach to the issue.

It was noted that the Corporate PPB had met on 11 December 2012, and details of their recommendations were circulated prior to the meeting. Board Members recognised that, as this scheme would be introduced for the first time in April 2013, it would be beneficial to set up a Working Group made up of Corporate PPB Members, to further fine tune the development of the scheme. The Board wished to place on record their thanks to the Members of the Corporate PPB for their input to date.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council develops its own scheme to replace the current Crisis Loan and Community Care grant schemes, utilising the grant provided by Government for this purpose;
- 2) the draft scheme criteria outlined in Appendix 2 to the report submitted to the Corporate PPB, be used as the basis for developing the Council scheme, which would incorporate:
  - a) a scheme of grants rather than loans;
  - b) the limiting of cash payments through the introduction of voucher/prepaid card systems; and
  - c) a limit on two claims per claimant per year;
- 3) given the tight timescales available to get the scheme in place by 1 April 2013, delegated authority be granted to the Strategic Director Policy and Resources, in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder, to make minor adjustments to the scheme in the light of experience or further information and the views of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board Working Group;
- 4) the Corporate Policy and Performance Board be requested to review the scheme after the first three months of its operation; and
- 5) the Corporate Policy and Performance Board set up a working group to fine tune the scheme, until such time as the adopted scheme had been fully developed.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2013**

<b>127</b>	<b>WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS UNDER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES IN RESPECT OF WIDNES ICI RECREATION CLUB DEMOLITION</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the waiver of Standing Orders granted in respect of the demolition of the Widnes ICI Recreation Club.

The Board was advised that, following the fire at the ICI Recreation Club in May 2012, emergency demolition works were carried out in order to remove the immediate danger of structural collapse of the

walls that remained standing. Following consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, the remaining debris had to be treated as contaminated waste, as there was a reasonable amount of asbestos present within the building.

It was reported that because of the urgent need to clear the site so as to minimise risk, tenders for the removal of the contaminated debris and site clearance works were obtained via The Chest from each of the demolition contractors that had won the previous three tender exercises for demolition works. Details of the contractors were contained in the report. It was noted that the Chief Executive had used emergency procedures under Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.1 to ensure all contaminated debris was removed and to put site security in place.

RESOLVED: That the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.1 – Emergency Waiver via the Chief Executive – was obtained to allow the authority to obtain quotations without obtaining expressions of interest, be noted.

<b>128</b>	<b>REMOVALS CONTRACT - INTERIM WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, seeking the temporary waiver of Standing Orders for the Council's (Accommodation) Removals Contract.

Members were advised that the Council's current Accommodation Plan focused on reducing the number of Council offices and premises which the Council owned, managed or maintained. A significant amount of work had recently taken place to generate additional income for the Council by co-locating partners within the Council's property portfolio and charging them rent.

Following a review of the delivery of the Accommodation Plan, a key area identified were the arrangements for the removal/movement of equipment and office furniture, as the Council had been using a local company for a number of years to deliver this service.

To progress a formal procurement of these services, an open market exercise, via The Chest, would be undertaken as required under the Council's Standing Orders. However, it was proposed that the process be delayed for three months to allow time for a specification to be drawn up and to consider the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (the Act), where Halton Borough Council would be required, as the contracting authority, to consider the economic, social and

environmental improvements where considered relevant and proportionate through procurement.

It was noted that the Act placed a requirement on the commissioners to only consider the economic, social and environmental improvements that could be achieved through procurement. By testing the Social Value aspects of the contract, as outlined in the report, consideration would need to be given to how the contract could bring added value to the Borough.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) a waiver of Standing Orders in regard to Part 4 Section 4.1 of the Constitution be approved; and
- 2) the waiver be effective up to 31 March 2013.

<b>129</b>	<b>MARKETS UPDATE</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which updated Members on the changes in the management of the Borough's markets and proposals for improvements.

The Board was reminded that in February 2012, the Council's policy that the Widnes markets (indoor and outdoor) and the outdoor Runcorn market were regarded as key assets in Halton's town centres was re-affirmed. In April 2012, the Council aligned the management of the town centres and markets within a more clearly defined economic regeneration brief, bringing together town centre management, markets operations and town centre regeneration.

It was reported that since April 2012, new markets regulations and a written protocol had been introduced, along with new procedures and the tightening up of issues such as encroachment and the display of goods. A number of marketing and promotions events had also taken place during the year, as detailed in the report, and it was noted that overall, the markets remained vibrant.

The report detailed proposals for improvement works for both the indoor and outdoor markets, and it was further noted that these had been considered and supported by the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Members note the changes made to the management of the markets;
- 2) the proposed actions set out in sections 3.6 to 3.12 of the report be supported;
- 3) the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property be authorised, in consultation with the Physical Environment Portfolio Holder and Resources Portfolio Holder to take decisions in relation to the proposed improvement works outlined in section 3.16 of the report; and
- 4) the proposed improvement works will not exceed £40,000.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2013**

<b>135</b>	<b>DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on the renewal of discretionary non-domestic rate relief.

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 13 December 2012, it had approved the granting of discretionary rate relief for all existing recipients, except for Halton Community Transport and Moorfield Sports and Social Club, for whom additional information was requested. This additional information now confirmed that the two latter organisations were both still eligible to receive the discretionary rate relief. Appendix 1 contained a summary of the financial implications.

It was noted that discretionary rate relief was usually granted to organisations for a three year period, with Regulations requiring twelve months' notice of ceasing that relief. Such notice had been given to these organisations in March 2012.

RESOLVED: That, under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the following organisations at the percentage indicated, for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016:

Halton Community Transport	20%
Moorfield Sports & Social Club	100%

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which updated them on the funding for the development of the Sci-Tech Daresbury.

It was reported that the key strategic site and international hub for world class science at Sci-Tech Daresbury became an Enterprise Zone in August 2011. A Daresbury Joint Venture Partnership, set up in 2010, had been successful in securing £9.77m of Regional Growth Funding (RGF) grant-aid. The grant application had four key components, detailed in the report as Project Tech Space, Power (Phase 1), Environmental Improvements and Transport Improvements.

The Board was advised that the bid included a realistic target on job creation and that the total cost of the works was estimated to be £22m. Details of funding secured were given in the report and the Board noted that a further bid for the Growing Places Fund (GPF) had been approved in November 2012, and an offer letter awaited. A condition of the GPF funding was that it be re-invested in the Liverpool City Region, with the first repayment due in August 2015 and the final one in December 2019.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

On 17 October 2012, the Daresbury JV Partnership was informed that it had been successful in securing £9.77m of Regional Growth Fund funding and £1.8m of Growing Places Funding.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

If the offer of these funds was not accepted, the Borough would lose the opportunities provided by £11.57m plus match funding.

#### Implementation Date

The final grant offer will be signed off by 19 April 2013 following due diligence.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) accepts the offer of £9.77m of Regional Growth Fund (RGF) from the Office for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS);
- 2) accepts the offer of £1.8m of Growing Places Funding (GPF) from the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership;

- 3) gives authority for the Council to enter into back-to-back contracts with Joint Venture Partners for the delivery of the project; and
  - 4) agrees to the Council entering into a claw back agreement with Joint Venture Partners at Daresbury, in accordance with the RGF and GPF offers.
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