

# **Minutes & Reports**

For Presentation to the Council  
at the meeting to be held on

**Wednesday, 20 February  
2008**

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**COUNCIL**

*At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 12 December 2007 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Hodgkinson (Chairman), P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, Bradshaw, Bryant, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Cross, Dennett, Edge, Findon, Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, Hignett, Horabin, Howard, C. Inch, D. Inch, Jones, Leadbetter, Lewis, Lloyd-Jones, Loftus, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, McInerney, Morley, Murray, Nelson, Nolan, Norddahl, Osborne, Parker, Polhill, E. Ratcliffe, M. Ratcliffe, Redhead, Rowan, Rowe, Sly, Stockton, Swain, Swift, Thompson, Wainwright, Wallace, Wharton, Worrall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Drakeley, Fraser, Higginson, Marlow and Philbin

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Cairns, G. Cook, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney, D. Tregoe and J. Whittaker

Also in attendance: 6 Members of the Public

*Action*

## COU43 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted.

## COU44 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that he and his delegation had been presented with a wooden bowl on a visit to Prince George by the Business Community of Prince George Canada in October 2007.

## COU45 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader of the Council reported on the following issues:

- There had been a good attendance at the Members'

seminar regarding the 3MG proposal. Information would be provided to those who could not attend.

- There was to be a meeting the following week regarding the Mersey Gateway. A petition had been received in favour of a different crossing linking Knowsley Expressway with Frodsham; however, this link had previously been examined and rejected on cost and, predominantly, environmental grounds.
- The Children and Young People Directorate's Annual Performance Assessment (APA) had given a grading of good and outstanding in the vast majority of thematic and service areas. The overall rating was Good, scoring the top rating of 4 in both Staying Safe including Social Care and Make a Positive Contribution. This equated to a 3 star Social Care rating. All those involved were thanked for their contribution.

#### COU46 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board from meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

In moving the minutes, the Leader commented on the following issues:

- Minute number EXB59 – Widnes Vikings – a successful sporting team generated money for both the Stadium and other businesses in the Borough. The Council had therefore stepped in to support the club, taking on a minority shareholding.

*(NB Councillors Gilligan, Nelson, M Ratcliffe and Wright declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to being Board Members of Halton Housing Trust.)*

- Minute number EXB63 – Housing Allocations Policy – Local Connection Criteria – the Board had rejected Halton Housing Trust's proposal that the Council remove the local residency criterion from its Housing Allocations Policy.

*(NB Councillor D Cargill declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to having a secretariat position within the Communication Worker's Union.)*

- Minute number EXB66 – Post Office Closures in

Halton – there was to be a special meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board the following evening to consider this issue.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the minutes be received; and
- (2) Councillor Swain replace Councillor Osborne as a representative on the Halton Housing Trust Board.

COU47 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board Sub-Committee from meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU48 MINUTES OF THE 3MG EXECUTIVE SUB-BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the 3MG Executive Sub-Board from the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU49 MINUTES OF THE MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board from the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU50 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

*(NB Councillor Horabin declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business due to being on the School's Governing Body and having grandchildren at the School, and left the room for the duration of its consideration.*

*Councillor Gerrard declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to being an Associate Governor.)*

COU51 EXECUTIVE BOARD - 1ST NOVEMBER 2007 (MINUTE NO. EXB 47 REFERS) - SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People outlining a revised policy for Schools Causing Concern, and requesting delegated powers to the Strategic Director to exercise the statutory functions of the Council in identifying and intervening in schools causing concern where this was appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the Constitution be amended to authorise the Strategic Director – Children and Young People to exercise the powers and duties provided to the Council under Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

COU52 EXECUTIVE BOARD - 15TH NOVEMBER 2007 (MINUTE NO. EXB56 REFERS) - LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Council Solicitor recommending the adoption of a Statement of Licensing Policy, which had been reviewed in line with the Licensing Act 2003.

RESOLVED: That the Statement of Licensing Policy considered at the Executive Board meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2007 be adopted.

COU53 EXECUTIVE BOARD - 29TH NOVEMBER 2007 (MINUTE NO. EXB54 REFERS) - DETERMINATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy regarding the 'Tax Base' for the area and the tax base for each of the Parishes. The Council was required to notify Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police Authority, the Cheshire Magistrates' Courts Committee, the Cheshire Probation Committee and the National Rivers Authority of this figure by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. The Council was also required to calculate and advise, if requested, the Parish Councils of their relevant tax bases.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the 2008/09 Council Tax Base be set at 37,762 for the Borough, and the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police Authority and the National Rivers

Authority be so notified; and

- (2) the Council Tax Base for each of the Parishes be set as follows:

Parish	Tax Base
Hale	724
Daresbury	140
Moore	349
Preston Brook	339
Sandymoor	816
Halebank	510

COU54 EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE - 15TH NOVEMBER 2007 (MINUTE NO. ES 51 REFERS) - ADOPTION OF SECTION 120 SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003 - REGULATION OF COSMETIC PIERCING AND SKIN COLOURING BUSINESSES

The Executive Board Sub-Committee had considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment advising Members of a single new combined byelaw which allowed for the regulation of persons carrying on businesses of acupuncture, tattooing, semi-permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis, seeking the adoption of new byelaws under the Local Government Act 2003 and setting fees for registration.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Council resolve to apply to the whole of the Halton Borough Section 15 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1982 adopting the new byelaw to cover: acupuncture, tattooing, semi permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis introduced by Section 120 and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act 2003;
- (2) and in doing so
- a) authorising the affixing of the common seal to the byelaws and
  - b) authorising the Council Solicitor to carry out the necessary procedure and apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation;
  - c) upon adoption of the byelaws that the powers and

duties within the byelaws necessary to effect regulation be delegated to the Council Solicitor and the Operational Director Environmental and Regulatory Services as appropriate;

- d) new charges and costs be adopted and these reflect the administrative and officer costs involved in the process of registering a premises and a practitioner; and
- e) the plan for updating registration certificates including the retrospective application of the process to existing businesses be accepted.

*(NB Councillor Sly declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business due to his employer being a tenant of the Northwest Regional Development Agency, and left the room during its consideration.)*

COU55 EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE - 29TH  
NOVEMBER 2007 (MINUTE NO. ES53 REFERS) -  
HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME A56/A558  
DARESBURY EXPRESSWAY JUNCTION

The Executive Board Sub-Committee had considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment seeking approval for capital funding of the Highway Improvement Scheme – A56/A558 Daresbury Expressway Junction.

RESOLVED: That the scheme be included in the capital programme at a total cost of £3.478m.

*(NB The following Councillors declared personal and prejudicial interests in the next item of business for the reasons shown and left the room for the duration of its consideration:*

*Councillor Edge – governor at Wade Deacon High School  
Councillor Findon – governor at Fairfield High School  
Councillor Jones – governor at Fairfield High School*

*The following Councillors declared personal interests in the next item of business for the reasons shown:*

*Councillor Bryant – wife is secretary to the Strategic Director – Children and Young People  
Councillor Harris – governor of The Bankfield School  
Councillor Hodgkinson – governor of Halton High School  
Councillor Nelson – governor of the Grange School  
Councillor Rowe – has a child attending the Heath School  
Councillor Stockton – governor of the Grange School*



*Councillor Swain – governor of Halton High School*

*Councillor Wharton – son attends Fairfield High School and wife has a contract for employment at that School as an invigilator)*

#### COU56 SECONDARY SCHOOL RE-ORGANISATION

The Leader advised that a Cross Party Members' Advisory Working Group had met on Monday to consider the responses in respect of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) proposals and had made a number of recommendations to the Executive Board that morning. A copy of the draft minutes of the Executive Board's meeting were tabled for Members' information.

It was noted that the Executive Board had considered a number of key issues including:

- zone lines;
- school size;
- pupil numbers;
- choice;
- the consultation process;
- an alternative proposal submitted by Fairfield High School;
- hard federation;
- Halton High School; and
- the workforce strategy.

In respect of the proposal from Fairfield High School, there was uncertainty regarding a number of elements and so Members had been advised that, at the current time, the proposal should be rejected as incomplete and flawed. However, the School had the opportunity to consider the questions raised by the Working Group in terms of revisiting the proposal as part of the formal statutory consultation process.

With regard to Halton High School, it had been confirmed that the term "closure" was purely technical and, in practice, there would be no loss of provision.

The Council noted that the team working on BSF had done their best to respond to all queries received, and the public involvement in this process was commended.

**RESOLVED:** That the Building Schools for the Future proposals set out in the report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People considered by the Executive Board on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007 be supported.

COU57 MINUTES OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS  
AND THE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of the Council on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007:

Employment Learning and Skills  
Children and Young People  
Healthy Halton  
Safer Halton  
Urban Renewal  
Corporate Services  
Business Efficiency Board

In receiving the minutes the following was noted:

- (1) SAF31 – Presentation – Youth Inclusion and Support Panel – the Chairman of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board (PPB) advised that this small team provided a much needed, preventative service.
- (2) SAF32 – Presentation Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service – Update of Performance Over Last 12 Months – the Chairman of the Safer Halton PPB advised that there would not be a downsizing of vehicles and thanked the Fire Service for its good service to the Borough.
- (3) Councillor Sly advised that he had been absent from the Urban Renewal PPB meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> November 2007 on Council Business.

COU58 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports on the work of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of the Council on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007:

Development Control  
Standards  
Regulatory

In receiving the minutes Councillor Wainwright advised that he had been absent from the Regulatory Committee meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007 on Council Business.

COU59 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT  
1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO  
INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Council 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 item 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.

COU60 MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD - 15TH NOVEMBER (MINUTE NO. MGEB10 REFERS) - FINANCING ADVANCED LAND PURCHASE

The Mersey Gateway Executive Board had considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment, which proposed funding arrangements to enable advance purchase of land required for Mersey Gateway and sought authority to commence negotiations with affected landowners, subject to specific qualifying conditions, that could lead to the acquisition of land and property by agreement in advance of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) procedure.

RESOLVED: That the prudential borrowing required to support a programme of advance land purchase, as a contingency should the arrangements with Greater Merseyside Pension Fund fail to come to fruition, be agreed

and that such agreement establish the affordability limits referred to in recommendation (1) of minute number MGEB10 of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

*Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board held on Wednesday, 12 December 2007 in the Bridge Suite, Halton Stadium*

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Hennessy, I. Leivesley, A. McIntyre, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney, D. Tregea, L. Cairns and G. Cook

Also in attendance: 2 public, 1 press

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

*Action*

*(NB The Councillors below declared personal interests in the following item of business for the reasons shown:*

*Councillor Harris – governor of Bankfield School*

*Councillor Nelson – governor of the Grange School*

*Councillor Swain – governor of Halton High School*

*Councillor Wharton – son attends Fairfield High School and wife has a contract for Employment at that school as an Invigilator)*

EXB67 SECONDARY SCHOOL RE-ORGANISATION - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children & Young People providing a summary of the process undertaken for the second round of pre-statutory consultation on the reorganisation of secondary schools and secondary special school provision. A summary of the responses received at the time that the report was produced was provided and key issues outlined .

In addition, a further update on the outcome of the consultation, along with recommended proposals for the

next stage of consultation, were tabled for consideration. This information had not been available previously as the consultation period had only concluded on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2007: the Cross Party Members' Advisory Working Group had subsequently met on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

A number of key issues had arisen from the consultation process and these were considered by the Board in detail as follows:

### Zone Lines

It was advised that the local authority had to go through an Admissions Forum Process each year and any movement of the proposed zone line would be part of that process. It was possible that the zone line could move location; however, this would be for specific reasons, for example if there was a major build in the area and the school could no longer cope with the number of pupils coming through.

Should the school apply for Trust Status at some time in the future, it would be responsible for its own Admissions criteria; however, any changes to the admission arrangements would have to be agreed with the local authority. If the local authority did not agree with the proposed changes, and could not come to a compromise with the school governing body, the matter would be taken to the School Adjudicator. Discussions had been held with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and, although it could not be guaranteed, it was anticipated that the school would be expected to follow the policies that the Council had set out.

### School Size

Concerns had been raised about the potential size of some schools and whether they would be too big. It was considered that, if managed correctly, schools could be successful regardless of their size. This was evidenced by the schools currently within the Borough, which showed no correlation between size and performance.

There was a consensus that 750 should be the lowest number and officers had been advised that, if a school was kept open despite falling rolls, the Authority would be seriously challenged about its use of resources as, due to the funding formula, there was a negative impact on a school's budget should the numbers on roll fall.

### Pupil Numbers

It was advised that Building Schools for the Future (BSF) required that the Authority forecast pupil numbers for the period 2007-2017 using National Statistics Data, which had been done. However, as this data was not broken down across Runcorn and Widnes, further forecasting had been carried out using the numbers already in the Borough's primary schools, together with Primary Care Trust data based on live births within the Borough. A number of various scenarios had been examined using these figures and it had been determined that, even allowing for anticipated growth, both communities could be accommodated with there still being a surplus of places. Members were advised that only a certain level of surplus could be planned for as the DCSF would only agree to figures that were evidence based.

In addition, consideration was given to the proposal that all young people between 16 and 19 remain in employment or schooling. It was advised that 78% of young people nationally were already in either training or education. Therefore, the impact of this announcement was relatively low.

### Choice

It was advised that the numbers currently in Year 7 of Fairfield High School had not been influenced by the re-organisation proposals as parents had expressed preferences for schools prior to the start of the BSF process. It was further advised that the Government used the term 'choice' to outline how it expected all parents and pupils to have access to high standards in whichever school they attended and that, so far as was possible, parental preference should be met in terms of the school their child attended.

### Consultation Process

Comments were raised in respect of the consultation process. It was noted that this had been wide-ranging although concerns had been raised in certain areas about the timing of the information. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that there had been some issues raised during the first round: in the second round of consultation, letters were sent home with pupils due to the postal strike that had been ongoing at that time. However, so far as he was aware, these issues had been resolved in the second stage of consultation. It was confirmed that every endeavour would be made to ensure that any further consultations would be

carried out as fully as possible.

#### Alternative Proposal

Members were advised that Fairfield High School had submitted a further alternative proposal at the end of the consultation procedure that the school remain open as a “small school by design” in accordance with recently announced government proposals. However, there was uncertainty regarding a number of elements around this proposal and so Members were advised that, at the current time, the proposal be rejected as incomplete and flawed. However, Fairfield High had the opportunity to consider the questions raised by the Working Group in terms of revisiting the proposal as part of the formal statutory consultation process. The questions were listed under item 3 of the report.

#### Hard Federation

Consideration was given to the hard federation process, which it was hoped would make the transition clear for everyone, providing certainty for the pupils of both schools. It was advised that, throughout this process, Ofsted would still be monitoring the provision from both schools, which was a further safeguard against any deterioration in standards whilst changes were ongoing.

#### Halton High School

It was confirmed that the Board was currently only being requested to consider the principle of whether or not Halton High School should be replaced by an Academy. It was noted that no “closure” would take place until an Academy was built. Only when the funding and sponsor was in place would the issue of where the school should be sited be considered. The Working Group had requested that, at this time, Members be granted an opportunity to consider this in further detail.

The Board requested that a form of words be provided in the resolution regarding Halton High School to make it clear that the term “closure” was purely technical: in practice, there would be no loss of provision.

#### Workforce Strategy

Members were advised that a joint workforce working group had been established, agreeing its terms of reference, frequency of meetings and a communication strategy.



Outcomes from these meetings had been produced on a laminated poster for all schools outlining the names and contact details of the group's members, and its aims. In addition, a range of personnel one-to-one meetings had been held, which had been utilised by a number of staff: more were subsequently to be provided.

The process so far had identified a number of key concerns, which would be used to develop actions and strategies. In addition, proposals had been shared with the Trade Union with a request for a steer on areas to be prioritised, for example "At Risk" and "Redundancy Policies". The BSF TUPE Staffing Protocol Policy had been circulated and a number of policies were now nearly in their final stages.

In moving the resolution, the Members involved in the Cross Party Advisory Working Group were thanked, and Fairfield High School was commended on its input in the process to date.

#### Reason for Decision

Secondary provision must be reorganised prior to entry into the BSF programme.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The initial options along with the alternative options were all assessed and considered against the Government criteria.

#### Implementation Date

The next phase of consultation was to commence in January 2008.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Building Schools for the Future proposals be agreed, as set out below, as the basis for Statutory Consultation;
- (2) Council be invited to support the Building Schools for the Future proposals as set out in the said report; and
- (3) the Executive Board receive a report at its next meeting on any views expressed by Council in respect of the Building Schools for the Future proposals.

**PROPOSALS AGREED**

**RUNCORN**

**1. The Grange Comprehensive**

**A change of the Lower Age Range Limit for the Grange Comprehensive.**

**This will require a Statutory Notice issued in June 2008.**

**2. The Heath – A Specialist Technology College**

**The Heath – A Specialist Technology College to expand to 1200 pupils using capital investment from BSF Funding.**

**A Statutory Notice will not be required.**

**3. Halton High**

**The closure of Halton High and develop a new Specialist Academy with provision for 11-19 year olds.**

**Further work to be carried out on securing a sponsor.**

**Exploration of 3 site options for location.**

**To provide up to 1,050 places for pupils aged 11 – 16 plus 100 places for Post 16's.**

**A Statutory Notice will be required and issued in 2008 at a date to be agreed once a sponsor has been secured.**

*Note:* No closure will be effected until all the relevant outstanding matters in respect of the Academy have been resolved. The Academy will be in place before Halton High is physically closed.

**4. Cavendish Special School**

**No change to the designation of Cavendish agreed by the School Organisation Committee in April 2006.**

**5. St. Chad's Catholic College**

**No recommendation.**

**WIDNES**

**6. The Bankfield and Chestnut Lodge**

The Bankfield to expand to 1,050.

The re-building and co-location of Chestnut Lodge onto the Bankfield Site through Capital Investment from BSF.

A Statutory Notice will not be required.

**7. Fairfield High**

Close Fairfield High.

This will require a Statutory Notice.

The Notice will be issued in January 2008 proposing the closure of Fairfield High School and listing Federation as a transitional safeguarding arrangement.

A hard federation will be encouraged and facilitated by the Local Authority with a view to it commencing as soon as is practicable.

A hard federation would need to be agreed by the two schools. It would have one governing body, a strong leadership team with an Executive HeadTeacher and an associate Headteacher, a common set of goals and could continue to operate across split sites. Both schools would retain their separate identity, receive individual school budgets and Ofsted Inspections and report separately on performance.

If a Federation cannot be agreed, an alternative transitional safeguarding arrangement will need to be implemented.

**8. Wade Deacon**

The expansion of Wade Deacon High from 1125 to 1500 places for 11 –16 year olds funded through BSF capital investment.

A Statutory Notice will be required and this will be issued in February 2008.

The Notice will propose a planned admission number of 300 from September 2010.

From this date, Wade Deacon will operate across two sites; the current site and Fairfield site until the building work on Wade Deacon is complete.

All Fairfield pupils at the time of the closure will become pupils attending at Wade Deacon.

9. Ashley School

The co-location and rebuilding of Ashley School onto the Wade Deacon Site.

A Statutory Notice will not be required.

10. Introducing Zoning Admission

The introduction of Zoning Admission Criteria in Widnes.

Consultation on the admission criteria will be undertaken as part of the annual consultation on Admission Arrangements.

11. Saints Peter and Paul Catholic College

No recommendation.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

**CALL IN: 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

*Meeting ended at 10.38 a.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 13 December 2007 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Polhill (In the Chair) Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson, Polhill, Swain, Wharton and Wright.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors McDermott and D. Cargill

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Cook, A. Cross, B. Dodd, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr and D. Tregea and M. Simpson

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

EXB68 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

EXB69 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DIRECTORATE)

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, which detailed the outcome of the Children and Young People's directorate Annual Performance Assessment 2006/07.

It was reported that the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) of services for children focussed mainly on the operational responsibilities of the Children and Young People's directorate and how it achieved the five outcomes for children set out in Every Child Matters. The five outcomes were noted as follows:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe

*Action*

- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Wellbeing

It was noted that the APA of the Children and Young People's directorate also made judgements in relation to:

- The Council's services for children and the specific contributions they made to improving outcomes for Children and Young People; and
- The Council's management of its services for Children and Young People and its capacity to further improve those services.

The Board was advised that judgements were made on a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being the highest. The grades were reported as follows:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Overall effectiveness of children's services                         | 3 |
| • Being Healthy  | 3 |
| • Staying Safe   | 4 |
| • Enjoying and Achieving   | 3 |
| • Making a Positive Contribution                                       | 4 |
| • Achieving Economic Well-being  | 2 |
| • Capacity to improve, including the Management of Children's Services | 3 |

Members thanked the Children and Young People's directorate for all their hard work in gaining the excellent results.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board formally receives the Annual Performance Assessment of Children's Services undertaken by Ofsted.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

## **ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB70 MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment that contained the Draft Updated Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Halton. The report advised Members of financial consequences associated with the Draft Strategy and recommended that the Draft Strategy be subject to consultation as detailed within the report.

It was noted that the Council's current Municipal Waste Management Strategy was approved by the Executive Board on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2004 and adopted as an enabling document to provide a set of aspirations and principles to guide the Council's actions and activities on waste management issues.

The Strategy outlined plans for sustainable waste management service for Halton, with a high degree of waste reduction, recycling and composting that had been implemented throughout the Borough since its adoption. The Strategy did not set out the specific future waste treatment facilities to be procured, but outlined the types of facilities most likely to provide a solution, and a framework for Halton to plan and manage its waste services in an integrated manner. This approach provided the flexibility for the Authority to procure the best and most appropriate residual waste treatment solutions.

It was reported that HBC was working in partnership with the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority and, with the support of external consultants, the Authorities were updating their respective Strategies and aligning the strategic approaches within each. A copy of the draft updated Strategy for Halton, that had been produced with direct government consultancy support funding was detailed within the report.

A detailed review of the Council's strategy was proposed to take place in 2010. The purpose of the interim update was to ensure that the Council's Strategy document remained fit for purpose.

Members were advised of the new target for recycling / composting of a least 30% of waste by 2010 which replaced the previous target of 50%. The previous target was not founded on any modelling of the service but was an aspiration based on good practice in Europe. Since the publication of the current Strategy, detailed modelling had been carried out by external consultants that initially considered the potential for recycling in Halton using a variety of different kerbside collection recycling services and more recently, the effect of providing a multi-material recycling collection service to all properties in the Borough.

It was reported that the consultation exercise would be undertaken for a four week period during December 2007 and January 2008 and it was proposed that the consultation results would be reported to the Executive Board in

February 2008. It would be recommended that the Draft Strategy be refined to take account of the results, and any subsequent proposal for amendments, prior to seeking approval and adopting a final updated Strategy.

RESOLVED: That

1. Executive Board approve the Draft updated Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Halton for the purposes of public consultation;
2. A further report be presented to the Executive Board in February 2008, which will report the outcome of the consultation, together with a recommendation that the Executive Board endorse the production of a final Strategy that takes account of the consultation results; and
3. Members note the financial implications associated with the Council's Waste Management Strategy and consider them further in the preparation of the budgets for 2008/09 and beyond.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

## **PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

### EXB71 GROWTH POINT SUBMISSION OF INTEREST

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment providing detailed information of the recent submission of an Expression of Interest for Halton to be awarded Growth Point Status as part of a joint Merseyside Submission to Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

It was reported that the Housing Green Paper, July 2007 (previously reported to Members) included proposals to extend the Government's Growth Points and Eco-Towns programme to cover areas within the North of England. Local Authorities in the North West were subsequently invited to submit Expressions of Interest (EoI) to Government Office by 31<sup>st</sup> October. Due to the incredibly short timescale for submissions, authorisation was gained from the Leader (Cllr McDermott) and the Environment Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Polhill) for the submission of an initial EoI.

It was noted that Growth Points should be able to deliver in excess of 500 dwellings per annum at a rate representing at least a 20% increase on figures within Regional Spatial Strategy to 2016. Growth Points would have access to a share of a £300 million Community



Infrastructure Fund.

Following informal advice from GONW it was quickly decided that it would be most appropriate for the Mersey Policy Unit (MPU) to co-ordinate a joint submission on behalf of the Merseyside Authorities. This joint submission was divided into two potential growth areas centred on Liverpool and Wirral Waterfronts, and Halton and St Helens.

It was reported that Government Office had advised that they expected the decision, on which Authorities had been selected to work up their proposals in more detail, should be issued within a matter of weeks.

Members discussed the following points:

- the number, type and affordability of dwellings;
- assortment of other facilities;
- employment and residential led regeneration of the area; and
- access and egress to the development.

RESOLVED: That

1. Members ratify the actions taken regarding the submission of a Growth Point Expression of Interest; and
2. Members authorise officers to work with our partners on Merseyside and where appropriate private landowners to further work up proposals should Halton be selected by DCLG to progress to the next round.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

**Minutes Issued: 21<sup>st</sup> December 2007**

**Call in: 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008**

*Meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 10 January 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors McDermott (Chairman), Gerrard, Harris, McInerney, Nelson, Polhill, Swain, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor D. Cargill

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: B. Dodd, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, A. McIntyre, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney, D. Tregea, L. Cairns and G. Cook

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

EXB72 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

EXB73 CARE STANDARDS COMMISSION PERFORMANCE RATING

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Health and Community advising of the increase in the performance rating of the Health and Community Directorate.

It was noted that the Directorate had its performance rated annually by the Care Standards Commission Inspectorate (CSCI), which linked to how well the Directorate provided Social Care services to both adults and older people. The rating fed into the Comprehensive Performance Assessment for Halton Borough Council. A copy of the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

*Action*

Outcomes and domains that the Directorate was judged against were outlined for the Board's consideration and it was noted that performance in 2006/07 had been rated by CSCI as being 3 star. The actual performance judgement was:

- Delivering outcomes: Good; and
- Capacity for Improvement: Excellent.

Key strengths identified by CSCI were outlined in the report. In addition, an e-mail had been received from Ms Debbie Westhead of CSCI complimenting the Authority on its performance.

The Board congratulated all those that had been involved in this process.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Performance Assessment of Adults and Older People undertaken by CSCI be received.

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

*(Councillors Harris, Nelson, Polhill and Swain declared a personal interest in the following item of business due to being governors at Bankfield School, Grange School, Brookfields School and Pewithall Primary School respectively. Councillor Gerrard declared a personal interest due to being a governor of Simms Cross School and Ditton Nursery.)*

#### **EXB74 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2008/2009**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People providing a summary of the funding available for the Schools Capital Programme 2008/2009. The report outlined the process for prioritisation for capital repairs and the proposed programme, and provided an update of the Children's Personal Social Services Capital Allocation.

The Board was advised that the main source of funding for the Schools Capital Programme was the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Capital Allocation which, for 2008/2009, was a total of £1,900,713. The detailed capital repairs programme for 2008/2009 was identified in Appendix 2 of the report.

The costs shown against each project were currently provisional; however, based on these estimated costs, it was

likely that all projects could be funded in 2008/2009. Should the cost following receipt of tenders be less than the estimated costs, further projects would be brought forward from the reserve list. If the costs exceeded the total funding available once final costs had been obtained, the lowest scoring projects (lowest priority) would be deferred to 2009/2010.

Arising from this report it was noted that the GCSE results for the Authority had been published today and all those involved were congratulated on their outstanding achievement, in Halton being the most improved Council in the Country for GCSE performance.

RESOLVED: That Full Council be recommended to approve the Capital Programme detailed in Appendix 1 of the report for 2008/2009, and the Children's Personal Social Services Capital Allocation detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

Strategic Director  
- Corporate and  
Policy

#### **ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO**

##### **EXB75 LOCAL AUTHORITY CARBON MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (LACMP)**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment providing an update on progress with the LACMP and seeking approval for a range of measures to be included in the Carbon Strategy and Implementation Plan. The final Strategy and implementation Plan was to be submitted to the Executive Board in March 2008.

The overall aims of the programme were outlined for the Board's information and it was advised that steps 1 to 3 had already been achieved within existing staff resources and via free consultancy support from the Carbon Trust.

In 2007/08, the Council established an Invest to Save Budget of £1m which had been accessed for carbon reduction activities: two Invest to Save bids had recently been approved for the installation of powerperctors in buildings and for a programme of works to improve lighting and heating controls at Stobarts Stadium Halton. Approval was now sought for two further bids:

- (1) £10,000 to support a culture change programme in the Council's buildings, similar to the work that had already gone on at Stobarts Stadium Halton, to reduce the Council's consumption by 10%, resulting

in a reduction in energy costs of £100,000 per annum based on current prices; and

- (2) £60,000 to support the networking of printers to multi-functional devices, thus greatly reducing the number of desk-top printers within the organisation, to achieve savings in the region of £200,000 over the next few years.

A third bid to create a ring-fenced energy efficiency budget was pending subject to further quantification of measures.

The Board was advised that the final strategy and implementation plan would cover a five-year period (2008/2013) setting a target for reducing the Council's carbon emissions. A provisional target for a 33% reduction over the five-year period had been set: work to date had identified potential carbon savings of around 15%.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the range of opportunities in Appendix A of the report be endorsed for inclusion in the Council's Carbon Management Plan;
- (2) the Invest to Save bids for a Cultural Change Programme and the networking of printers as set out in paragraph 5.7 of the report be approved;
- (3) the Invest to Save bid for a pilot energy fund be noted and further work be undertaken to assess the potential payback;
- (4) the Council continue to explore further opportunities to reduce its carbon emissions to try to achieve its initial target of 33%; and
- (5) subject to budget considerations, the cycle mileage rate be increased to the equivalent of the lowest car mileage essential user rate.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

**MINUTES ISSUED: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

**CALL IN: 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008**

*Meeting ended at 2.10 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 24 January 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor McDermott

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Cook, B. Dodd, D. Johnson, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, D. Tregoe and C. Halpin

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

EXB76 MINUTES

*Action*

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2008 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

EXB77 OUT-BOROUGH SCHOOL TRANSPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People seeking approval to withdraw two bus services that currently operated between Halton and Frodsham High School, and Helsby High School, in Cheshire.

The Board noted that the Council had provided assistance with transport for Halton resident pupils attending these schools, by operating two buses from Halton to Frodsham and Helsby, since attaining unitary status in April 1998 as, prior to this time, Runcorn was part of Cheshire County Council; as such, Frodsham and Helsby High Schools were within Runcorn parents' home authority.

During the Local Government Review process it was

agreed that, in order to continue to facilitate the attendance of those children at Frodsham and Helsby schools until the end of their school career, the services would continue to operate with financial assistance being given to those already attending. In subsequent years, parents who expressed a preference for these schools had the opportunity to purchase any remaining spare seats on the services, the cost being paid by the parent to Halton Borough Council.

Members were advised that there were no longer any children receiving financial assistance from the Council to travel to these schools; however, there were a small number of remaining pupils using the service and the Authority currently subsidised the bus service at a cost of £36,400 per annum. The proposal was to withdraw the two bus services from the end of the Summer Term 2008, which would affect a total of 26 children. Transport Co-ordination had drawn up individual school travel plans for the children affected and these would be included with any correspondence to parents advising them of the cessation of the service.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received; and
- (2) approval be given to:
  - (i) withdraw the two bus services from the end of the Summer Term 2008; and
  - (ii) issue a letter to parents advising them of the withdrawal of the service.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

*(NB: Councillor Gerrard declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a Governor at Simms Cross Primary School).*

#### EXB78 STRATEGY FOR SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION FOR SCHOOLS IN HALTON

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Children and Young People setting out the methodology for co-ordinating the Local Authority's Support and Intervention Strategy for schools causing concern.

It was noted that, as previously reported to the Board on 1 November 2007, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlined in Part 4 new powers for a Local Authority to intervene and take action and provide support to schools causing concern.



The Council had now consulted with schools on the proposed Local Authority procedures for identifying and intervening in schools causing concern, with a view to a revised policy being approved by the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Strategy for Support and Intervention for Schools in Halton be approved.

### **LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB79 CPA CORPORATE ASSESSMENT AND JOINT AREA REVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy summarising the background to the forthcoming Corporate Assessment and Joint Area Review (JAR) inspections, the process and timetable, and arrangements for the preparation of a self assessment for the Corporate Assessment. It was noted that each of the two inspections would provide evidence to the other.

Members were advised that the Council was required to submit a self assessment to the Inspection Team by 4 February 2008. Work had been in hand for some time in this respect gathering evidence with a workshop for senior managers and interviews of a cross section of Members, staff and partners by experienced inspectors to find out how the Council appeared to outsiders. This information had helped officers to draft a self assessment and a copy was to be circulated to Executive Board Members for comment. However, due to the deadline for submission, it was recommended that authority to finalise the submission be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the arrangements for the CPA Corporate Assessment and the Joint Area Review of Children's Services be noted; and
- (2) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to approve the Self Assessment for submission to the Audit Commission.

Chief Executive

### **PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

*(NB: Councillor McInerney declared a personal interest in the following item due to his wife being an employee of North West Development Agency)*

EXB80 NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (NWDA)  
CORPORATE PLAN 2008

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy advising of the consultation being undertaken by the North West Development Agency (NWDA) of regional partners on its draft Corporate Plan.

It was noted that the NWDA was required by Government to produce a new Corporate Plan to cover the period 2008/09-2010/11. The report outlined implications of the Plan together with suggested comments to form part of the consultation response, which had to be returned by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2008.

RESOLVED: That the proposed response to the consultation be approved.

Strategic Director  
– Corporate and  
Policy

**MINUTES ISSUED: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

**CALL IN: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

*Meeting ended at 2.24 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 7 February 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: B. Dodd, D. Johnson, C. Lawley, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr, M. Reaney, D. Tregea, G. Cook and L. Cairns

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

EXB81 MINUTES

*Action*

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2008 were taken as read and signed as correct record.

**CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

EXB82 HALTON 2000 SURVEY ON THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy outlining the results of a Halton 2000 Survey. It was advised that, in November 2007, 2367 members of Halton's citizens' panel were sent a questionnaire on their opinion about a range of Council services: 992 people responded - a response rate of 42.5%.

A number of key questions and the responses were outlined for the Board's consideration. It was noted that the survey had sought the public's views on:

- their overall priorities for the Borough;
- their spending priorities; and
- their views on the impact on Council tax levels.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the results of the survey be noted;
- (2) the results be taken into account when considering the 2008/09 budget proposals; and
- (3) the results be drawn to the attention of the Policy and Performance Boards.

Strategic Director  
- Corporate and  
Policy

EXB83 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2008-2009

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy setting out a proposed calendar of meetings for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2008-2009 Municipal Year, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

EXB84 POLLING DISTRICTS/POLLING STATIONS REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive outlining the results of the formal Polling District, Places and Stations Review; highlighting recommended changes to the polling scheme; and putting forward a revised polling scheme for approval.

It was noted that the Electoral Administration Act 2006 required the Council to carry out a review of all its polling stations every four years. The main purpose of the review was to ensure that all residents had reasonable facilities for voting.

The consultation process was outlined for the Board's consideration. It was advised that comments had been required by 12<sup>th</sup> November and those received had been taken into account by the Polling Station Review Working Party on 18th December 2007 and 17th January 2008.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to adopt the amendments to the scheme detailed in the appendix to the report for the period 2008-2011.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

EXB85 PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Health and Community, and the Director of Public

Health, presenting the 'Promoting Mental Health' Strategy developed by the Primary Care Trust, which covered Halton and St Helens Local Authorities.

It was noted that the development of a 'Promoting Mental Health' Strategy was one of the requirements within the performance framework for mental health services and was monitored annually via a national self-assessment process, reported to the Strategic Health Authority. There was a high prevalence of mental illness in Halton and the strategy was a key component of the prevention agenda.

The consultation process undertaken was outlined for Members' consideration and it was noted that the strategy provided a framework for action to:

- co-ordinate mental health promotion and social inclusion activities across the Boroughs of Halton and St Helens;
- raise public awareness of how to look after our own and other people's mental health; and
- involve communities and organisations, across all sectors, in taking positive steps to promote and protect mental wellbeing.

Champions were identified for each setting and the action plan within the strategy would be implemented over a four-year period. Progress would be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the Strategic Health Authority via the annual self-assessment process. Reports would also be presented to the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board to chart progress.

In considering the strategy, Members requested an update report on mental health developments following the changes introduced in the service in 2007.

Strategic Director  
- Health and  
Community

RESOLVED: That the Strategy be endorsed.

## **LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB86 APPLICATION FOR TWINNING GRANT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy, which provided details of an application that had been made to the Twinning Grant Fund by Warrington Road Nursery School.

The application was for six members of staff and a governor to visit Tongling between 20th and 30th March

2008. The visit would further develop a friendship with St Mary's Primary School (Castlefields) and their newly twinned primary in Tongling (Shiyan Primary School) and assist in developing an English language programme for these schools. It would also explore aspects of hearing loss in primary aged children and explore aspects of child psychology including developmental delay and support offered in the twin schools.

Following this trip to Tongling, there would be information cascade and dissemination, sharing good practice amongst schools that were interested in developing such links.

The total cost of the exchange would be £10,360 and it was proposed that, in line with previous requests, £3000 be awarded, representing a grant of £428 per participant.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £3000 be awarded to Warrington Road Nursery School.

Strategic Director  
- Corporate and  
Policy

#### **PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

##### EXB87 TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME 2008/09

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Environment advising of the announcement of the three year Local Transport Settlement (2008/09 - 2010/11) that was made on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007; and seeking approval to the Transport Implementation Programme for 2008/09 being included in the Council's 2008/09 Capital Programme.

It was noted that the December 2006 Local Transport Capital Expenditure Settlement Letter provided indicative allocations for the Integrated Transport Block for the period 2008/09 - 2010/11, which were enhanced by reward funding of 25% due to the quality of Halton's delivery report for the first Local Transport Plan (LTP) and its second LTP. However, the Highways Capital Maintenance allocations were not provided for this period as they were to be subject to the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review and a reassessment of the formula on which allocations were made.

The November 2007 Settlement letter confirmed the LTP Integrated Transport Capital Block allocations for the period 2008/09 - 2010/11 as being unchanged from that previously indicated in the December 2006 letter, and these

were outlined for Members' consideration.

As the allocation of the Highways Capital Maintenance block was based on a new formula, there had been a reduction of £959,000 to Halton over three years to that previously indicated as the Provisional Planning Guideline to be used in the preparation of LTP2. However, Halton had also been allocated substantial additional funding from the Primary Route Network (PRN) Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation, totalling £14.28m over the three years, which was over 12% of the total available, off-setting the reduction outlined above.

Further information was provided in respect of the PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance Capital Allocation; the Road Safety Grant; and the Detrunked Roads Maintenance Grant 2008/09 - 2010/11. Schemes proposed to be implemented in 2008/09 were outlined in Appendix A to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the 2008/09 - 2010/11 Local Transport Settlement be noted; and
- (2) the Transport Implementation Programme for 2008/09 in the sum of £8,237,000 (shown in Appendix A to the report) be recommended to Council for inclusion in the Council's 2008/09 Capital programme.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**CALL IN: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

*Meeting ended at 2.26 p.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 13 December 2007  
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, G. Ferguson, I. Leivesley, M. Noone, P. Searing, L. Smallthwaite, D. Tregea and A. Williamson

Also in attendance: N/A

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

ES57 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO**

ES58 ENFORCEMENT OF PART III OF THE CONSUMER CREDIT ACT - LEGAL AUTHORISATIONS

The Sub-Committee was advised that the primary legislation governing the Consumer Credit Industry was the Consumer Credit Act 1974 and this was enforced, in each local authority area, by the Trading Standards (Consumer Protection) Service.

The Act was based upon a licensing system and all consumer credit and consumer hire businesses operating in the UK (with certain exemptions) must possess an appropriate licence issued by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). The OFT must be satisfied that an applicant for a consumer credit licence was a fit and proper person before issuing that person with a licence to trade.

*Action*

The Sub Committee was advised that the Birmingham Illegal Money Lending Team had been established as a pilot project, one of only two in Great Britain, the other pilot area being Glasgow. The remit of the team was to investigate illegal money lending, activity and establish if a problem existed and, if so, bring to justice those persons carrying out this activity.

In September 2007, the Business Secretary, John Hutton announced that a localised pilot would be extended to every region of the country, including the North West, up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. Given the timescale of the bidding process, Trading Standards North West approached the Birmingham Team to request that they submit a bid to undertake the work in the North West. The bid had proved to be successful.

The report sought approval for a scheme of delegation to authorise Birmingham City Council and officers of the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) to investigate and institute proceedings against illegal money lenders operating within the Halton Borough Council area. All associated legal processes and costs thereof would be delegated to Birmingham City Council. The draft protocol had been previously circulated to Members and contained all the required conditions and consents to enable Birmingham City Council officers to undertake investigations and legal procedures. This proposal, would supplement Halton's Consumer Protection resources (at no extra cost to Halton Borough Council) and would enable the Consumer Protection Officers to have access to a team of highly trained experts from the IMLT.

RESOLVED: That

(1) Council be recommended to amend the Council's Constitution in due course to include the delegation of the enforcement of Part 3 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 in Halton, to Birmingham City Council (pursuant to Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, Regulation 11 of the Local Authority (Arrangements for Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000, Section 20 of the Local Government Act 2000 and all other enabling powers) up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. This delegation related to the joint exercise of functions and does not affect the delegation of the enforcement of the Consumer Credit Act already furnished to officers of Halton Borough Council; and

(2) the protocol for illegal money lending team investigations be agreed and authority be delegated to the

Strategic Director  
Environment

Operational Director, Health and Partnerships, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Community, to enter into the agreement on behalf of Halton Borough Council and approve minor alterations if required.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

### **ES59 INTEGRATION OF ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICES**

The Sub-Committee was advised that Adults with Learning Disabilities (ALD) Services were guided by "Valuing People" the Government National Guidance published in 2001 which set out the priorities for the delivery of services for adult with learning disabilities.

This guidance recognised the need to work in partnership both across agencies and with the service users and carers. In Halton the importance of close working arrangements had long been recognised to ensure that the needs of people with learning disabilities were met and that the spirit of the guidance was adhered to. The Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Council had worked closely together; this had been achieved by:

- the establishment of a pooled budget since 2002, managed by HBC. The budget stands at £12.2m 2007/2008 and included most ALD Services and the Community Care Budget; and
- co-ordination of the PCT's Health Team and HBC's Care Management Team for ALD at the Bridges, Crow Wood Lane, Widnes. This was a Primary Care Trust Building and currently separate management arrangements were in existence for the two teams located there.

It was proposed that the partnership between the PCT and the Council could be further strengthened to offer a fully integrated service. The PCT was seeking to transfer up to 15 relevant staff to the Council and place them under the management of HBC. The staff in question would be mainly nurses who had developed an expertise in learning disabilities. This transfer would take place at the earliest at the beginning of the next financial year. There were a number of advantages for this proposal which were set out below:

- (i) the service would improve; as people with learning disabilities would only have one point of access and assessment, currently there were two systems for service

users and carers to navigate;

(ii) nurses and social workers would have one management system, thus avoiding duplication and inefficiencies; and

(iii) the person centred planning approach would be strengthened in line with national guidance "Valuing People 2001".

The proposal to transfer NHS staff into Halton Council would be subject to widespread consultation with staff and would be undertaken in partnership between the Council and the PCT. The integration of services for people with learning disabilities offered the Council the opportunity to be more efficient in its delivery of services. There would be an increased ability to be flexible and a decrease in duplication improving the experience of people with learning disabilities assessed to be in need of services.

It was noted that the existing agreement of a pooled budget and joint management between the PCT and the Council would be amended to reflect the new arrangements which would result in the Council providing all care and budget management. This would be undertaken by agreement between the Council and the PCT, and subject to formal notification by both parties.

The transfer of NHS staff would be subject to TUPE protection in the case of employees and a contract between the PCT and the Council that would cover all financial implications. Given the budgetary pressures on the service and the ALD pooled budget, there could not be any additional cost to the Council with this proposal.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the proposals to further integrate Health and Care Management Services be agreed; and

(2) authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, Health and Community to agree a contract between Halton Council and Halton and St. Helens Primary Care Trust to transfer up to 15 staff to the Council under the Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE), subject to there being no additional cost to the Council; and

(3) a further report be brought back to the Sub-Committee before a contract is entered into.

Strategic Director,  
Health and  
Community

**PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

ES60 REPORT AND ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS – A56 / A558 JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT SCHEME, DARESBUY

The Sub-Committee was advised on four tenders that had been received for the highway improvement scheme at the A56/A558 Junction, Daresbury.

The tenders had been assessed for both quality and price under assessment criteria described in the Instructions for Tendering.

Following assessment, the submission from NMS Civil Engineering Limited presented the most economically advantageous tender on the basis of quality, execution and price and was recommended for acceptance.

RESOLVED: That the tender received from NMS Civil Engineering Limited in the sum of £1,256,936.07 be accepted.

ES61 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Sub Committee considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Committee 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 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.

**PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

ES62 EXTENSION OF THE MERSEY GATEWAY PROJECT DIRECTOR'S CONTRACT

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought authority to extend the Mersey Gateway Project Director's Contract for three years from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 on the same general terms, (subject to inflation) as agreed in 2006. As the formal outcome of the public inquiry should be known in mid-2009, it was proposed that it would be prudent to have a formal review of the contract at that point should there be the unlikely conclusion from the inquiry that the project should not proceed.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Steve Nicholson's contract as Mersey Gateway Project Director be extended to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 with a formal review when the outcome of the public inquiry is known; and
- (2) the Chief Executive agree detailed terms and contractual arrangements for that contract extension.

Chief Executive

**CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

ES63 HALTON VILLAGE YOUTH CLUB FACILITIES, CAMELOT WAY, RUNCORN

The Sub-Committee considered a report which set out the circumstances that had arisen around a building on Camelot Way, Runcorn for which the Council held the freehold and where a dispute had developed between two third parties.

RESOLVED: That having given careful consideration to the issues raised and before making any decision, the Sub-Committee wish to look more widely at the future use of this building. A further report be brought back to the Sub-

Strategic Director  
Corporate and  
Policy

Committee at the meeting on 21st February 2008.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

**CALL IN: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may  
be called in no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007**

*Meeting ended at 11.50 a.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 10 January 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman) and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Harris

Absence declared on Council business: None.

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, A. Cross, M. Noone and P. Watts

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
ES64 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p><b>PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO</b></p>	
ES65 PURCHASE OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT VEHICLE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	
<p>This item was withdrawn and would be resubmitted to a future meeting.</p>	
ES66 SANDYMOOR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) APPROVAL FOR STATUTORY PERIOD OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION	
<p>The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval for the publication of a draft supplementary planning document (SPD): Sandymoor for the purposes of Statutory Public Consultation. The draft had been produced by collaborative working between numerous departments of the Council, English Partnerships and their consultants.</p>	

The Sub-Committee was advised that the current document required certain further amendments prior to publication, particularly regarding the inter-relationships with the emerging proposals for surrounding sites at Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus and Wharford Farm. It was requested that authorisation for these and any other technical changes be approved by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal as necessary, prior to publication for public consultation.

It was reported that following completion of the formal public consultation exercise the responses would be recorded and taken into account. It was intended that a further report would be taken to the Executive Board seeking formal adoption of the revised Sandymoor SPD.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Sandymoor, be approved for the purposes of statutory public consultation;

(2) the comments received at the Partnership Consultation Stage, as set out in the Statement of Consultation and responses to them are noted;

(3) further editorial and technical amendments that do not materially affect the content of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal as necessary, before the document is published for public consultation; and

(4) the results of the public consultation exercise and consequent recommended modifications to the draft SPD be reported back to the Executive Board for resolution to adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Strategic Director  
Environment

ES67 REPORT OF ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER – UPTON ROCKS LINK ROAD

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2007, Alan West, former Operational Director, Highways, Transportation and Logistics had accepted a tender under his delegated powers from NMS Civil Engineering in the sum of £971,382.35 for the construction of Upton Rocks Link Road. Due to a protracted land acquisition process the award of the contract to NMS

has been delayed.

The Sub Committee was advised that Completion of the Land Purchase Agreement was now anticipated in early January 2008. Subsequently, NMS had informed the Council of additional costs to the preliminaries, groundworks and surfacing operations due to price inflation, since the expiry of their tender offer. The additional costs totalled £36,500 and represented 4% of the accepted tender total, which was below the current inflation index for construction projects which was believed to be running at 12%.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the acceptance of the tender from NMS Civil Engineering Limited in the sum of £1,007,882.6 for the construction of Upton Rocks Link Road.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

**CALL IN: 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008**

*Meeting ended at 10.13 a.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 24 January 2008 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, G. Ferguson, B. Dodd, D. Hall and S Munikwa

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>ES68 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p><b>CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO</b></p> <p>ES69 REVIEW OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT (INSTITUTIONS APPROVED FOR INVESTMENT)</p> <p>The Authority operated a Treasury Management Policy in accordance with the recommendation of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice. One element of the policy dealt with the Council's policy on lending. This area was last subject to review in January 2006.</p> <p>The Authority had a clear policy of lending at minimum risk to its capital, and as such had only lent to a specific list of borrowers each with individual limits, which specified the maximum amount to be lent to each counterparty linked to the period of the investment.</p> <p>At the time of the last review the Council was</p>	

investing a sum of around £30m. The current level was around £50m, with a negative cash flow anticipated before the year-end, which would reduce this figure to an estimated level of £35 - £40m for the financial year 2008/9.

The current counterparty lending limits were therefore set a little on the low side, resulting in deals being split into smaller sizes and with multiple counterparties so as to keep within the individual counterparty limits. Generally, there was not a problem with this as it meant that the authority was spreading its risk. The downside however, was that the best rates available in the market could not always be secured, which would be deemed to be the price of security, and this should be considered when looking at the comparative performance indicators at the year end.

It was noted that the Council's requirements from the market, the counterparties that were interested in dealing with local authorities and the instruments that could be used were constantly changing. These were the main factors influencing the review of the counterparty lending list.

The different types of organisations and the present economic climate were briefly discussed in the report and were as follows:

- flight to quality;
- the role of the rating agencies;
- building society sector;
- bank sector;
- British banks;
- foreign banks;
- local authorities;
- central government – debt management account deposit facility; and
- private sector – money market funds

RESOLVED: That the list of institutions shown in the report be accepted.

Operational  
Director Financial  
Services

ES70 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2007/08 - 3RD QUARTER:  
OCTOBER-DECEMBER

The Sub-Committee considered a report which reviewed activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy. It was noted that all policy guidelines including the prudential indicators have been complied with.

The report highlighted key issues within:

- short term rates;
- longer term rates;
- temporary borrowing/investments;
- the position at the end of the month; and
- longer term borrowing/investments.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

## **PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

### ES71 WIDNES WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT ZONE LINEAR PARK RAILWAY TRACKS

The Sub-Committee was advised that one of the projects in the previously agreed Widnes Waterfront Masterplan was the creation of a Linear Park on a disused rail siding which ran west to east across the EDZ from Earle Road to Tanhouse Lane.

The Linear Park would be created as part of the wider landscaping scheme being implemented throughout the Widnes Waterfront and would include a combined footpath to show its cycleway. An application for planning permission had been agreed.

Negotiations had been on-going with Network Rail for four years regarding acquisition of the site by Halton Borough Council. This had finally been agreed and was now with solicitors. In addition, it was noted that £665,000 funding for this project had been secured from the North West Development Agency (350k), ERDF (204k) and Neighbourhood Renewal Funds (111k). There were claw back provisions in place from all of these funding bodies should there be any income generated from the site.

It was noted that the Council would take possession of the site with a considerable amount of old rail in situ. Property Services had estimated that the scrap value of the rail tracks was between £12,000 and £15,000 with the purchaser paying the Council's legal costs and their own removal costs.

Widnes Regeneration Limited had previously disposed of some redundant level crossing gates (from the former Blue Circle Cement Plant fronting onto the east side of Tanhouse Lane) to the Llangollen Railway Society, a charitable organisation which was restoring the former

Llangollen Railway. Whilst the proposed Linear Park Scheme incorporated a short length of track in recognition of the Heritage Site, the remainder of the rail was surplus to requirements.

It was therefore proposed that rather than merely disposing of the rail for scrap, it should be offered to the Llangollen Railway Society for reuse. All funding bodies for the scheme had agreed that if the rail tracks and level crossing gates were donated to the Llangollen Railway Society, they would waive their rights to claw back of the scrap value.

RESOLVED: That

(1) approval be granted to waive Part 7.9 of Standing Orders relating to Finance and Part 5 of the Procurement Standing Orders in relation to the disposal of the railway tracks, level crossing gates and ancillary equipment and materials at the proposed Widnes Waterfront Linear Park; and

(2) approval be granted to Llangollen Railway Society to remove the railway tracks and level crossing gates for use at the Llangollen Railway and Museum.

Strategic Director  
Environment

ES72 PURCHASE OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT VEHICLE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

The Sub-Committee was advised that two tenders had been received based on an open list system for the supply of new passenger transport vehicle communications equipment.

Both tenders were evaluated using a pre-determined assessment criteria (which was included with the tender documents based on price and quality criteria). In addition, both suppliers were then required to give a formal 30 minute presentation on their proposals to a Panel of Halton Borough Council's Officers drawn from the IT Business Management Team and Transport Co-Ordination Team. This represented the remaining 5% of the assessment scoring criteria.

It was reported that good references had been obtained on IKI Group Limited from other organisations (including local authorities) who were currently using the system and a site visit was organised to view the system in operation successfully at Lancashire County Council. Funding had been identified in the Halton Local Transport Plan during 2007/08 of £70,000 towards the purchase and



installation costs of the new proposed passenger transport vehicle communication equipment.

RESOLVED: That the award of the Contract for the supply of a new passenger transport vehicle communications equipment system to the IKI Group Limited for £61,375 be noted.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

**CALL IN: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

*Meeting ended at 10.35 a.m.*

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**MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board on Thursday, 24 January 2008 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman) and Wharton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor McDermott

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: B. Dodd, D. Parr, M. Reaney, D. Tregaea, S. Nicholson, M. Noone and C. Halpin

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

*Action*

**MGEB11 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**MGEB12 MAKING A PLANNING APPLICATION AND SUBMITTING THE DRAFT ORDERS FOR MERSEY GATEWAY**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Environment, which informed Members of the proposed programme for making planning and other applications and submitting draft Orders for Mersey Gateway (MG). These were needed to secure the powers required to construct and maintain the new crossing, to charge tolls, and to acquire all the land needed to construct, mitigate, maintain and operate the system. It was noted that the proposed applications did not include adjustment to the approach roads to the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB) in Runcorn. This was because the form of the de-linking proposals in this area was to be subject to further consultation as part of the consideration of alternative regeneration schemes for Runcorn Old Town.

It was noted that the proposed scheme to be covered in the Applications was the culmination of extensive options appraisals undertaken over many years. The development of the proposed scheme had been informed by public

consultation at each key stage in the preparation process, concluding with the Pre-Planning Application Public Consultation, which reported last November. The scheme also benefited from extensive engineering and environmental studies and assessments, which would be published in the Environmental Statement and associated documents to support the Applications.

The Board was aware that the most appropriate statutory process to apply for the MG project had been discussed at length with Department for Transport (DfT) officials since the scheme received Programme Entry approval in March 2006. In November last year, we reached a consensus with the Department on the statutory process that should be used to secure the powers and to deliver the project. The preferred statutory process was unavoidably complex and embraced several separate applications and draft Orders. The main components in the application programme were outlined within the report along with the target programme for Council resolutions.

It was noted that completing the Environmental Statement and securing the agreement of the DfT to commence the statutory planning process were both critical to achieving the target programme. The Environmental Statement (and supporting documents) was on target to be completed in time for a March publication. The project team was engaged with DfT officials on matters they had yet to endorse. It was expected that further progress would be made on the outstanding issues at the next progress meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and resolved before March 2008.

The main issues that would be reassessed by the DfT were value for money and the level of confidence that the project could be delivered within the funding limits agreed when Ministers granted Programme Entry status for the project. It was noted that robust evidence to support a favourable outcome for both these issues was currently being submitted to DfT for consideration.

The Board was advised that the Land required for the scheme had been identified, and land owners had been invited to discuss the programme for acquiring their land interest, in line with the policy for land acquisition agreed by the Mersey Gateway Executive Board. The impact of the proposed scheme on Council owned land, other than that dedicated as highway, was relatively small. The toll plaza along Speke Road would however require the existing road to be widened, mainly extending the highway boundary to

the south encroaching into the area of the closed golf course. It was proposed that the golf course would be reinstated in a modified form. The opportunity to reinstate the golf course was constrained by the land required for the toll plaza, and the land lost could be further exacerbated by drainage lagoons that may be required for flood attenuation. A study would be taking place to produce a revised course that would not be affected by the scheme, combined with the potential use of additional land in Council ownership that adjoined the golf course to the north. The results of the study into the opportunity to reinstate the golf course would inform the final design of the Mersey Gateway (MG) scheme in this area.

It was further advised that the funding required to promote the scheme through the statutory process was covered by the approved MG development budget. The profile of expenditure this year was higher than forecast. The DfT had recently changed its position and invited the Council to bid for a contribution towards development costs, in view of the exceptional financial challenge facing the Borough in promoting such a large project that had regional significance. The Council was requested to submit a bid for development costs at the earliest opportunity and the substance of such a bid would be discussed with DfT officials at the progress meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the programme for submitting the proposed Applications to the Executive Board, and where required to the Full Council, be agreed;
- (2) the application process commence at the earliest opportunity by preparing and making a Planning Application or Applications and a Listed Buildings Application for the MG scheme subject to receiving the necessary clearance from the Department for Transport; and
- (3) the Chief Executive be authorised to agree the form and content of the draft application, including its geographical scope.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

Chief Executive

MGEB13MERSEY GATEWAY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT OPPORTUNITIES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Environment, which informed Members that the scope of the Mersey Gateway (MG) Project to be taken forward

through the statutory planning process would identify considerable opportunity to establish improved sustainable transport across the Borough. To take advantage of the opportunities arising from MG, a study would be undertaken that would explore sustainable transport policies and potential interventions that would improve the travel choices available for cross river trips.

It was noted that the MG project had objectives that were intended to deliver improved and sustainable transport across the Borough. The key objectives were outlined in detail in the report.

Furthermore the current Local Transport Plan (LTP2) was drafted with some uncertainty over the likelihood that MG would be supported by Government. The confirmed funding support associated with the Programme Entry decision in March 2006 presented a step change in the prospects for delivering MG. Transport policy could now be refined to ensure the maximum potential benefit from MG was delivered across the total transport system in the Borough. The first deliverable towards this aim was to produce a draft MG Sustainable Transport Strategy. The document would need to be robust to support MG through the formal planning process that was about to commence.

The Board was advised that the development of a MG Sustainable Transport Strategy would be informed by the scheme assessment results. Introducing the new crossing and charging tolls would have a massive impact on travel patterns and behaviour. Policies and interventions would need to be developed and reinforce change where required, by improving travel choice and to encourage the move towards more sustainable transport modes. The MG Viable Demand Traffic Model provided a robust basis for a quantitative assessment of policy and intervention options.

In addition it was noted that policy options and draft proposals would be the subject of consultation and engagement with stakeholders in the community. An in-depth consultation exercise was proposed to explore perceptions and opinions of the MG scheme and to provide additional intelligence to support the broader consultation that was undertaken in the summer of 2007. The work would be taken forward in parallel with the policy and strategy review.

The initial study report would set out a draft sustainable transport strategy and action plan beyond 2010/11, and identify how the MG would help tackle

congestion in Halton and enable the sustainable transport strategy to be delivered.

RESOLVED: That the scope of the proposed study that is expected to identify the preferred options for a MG Sustainable Transport Strategy be noted.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

**CALL IN: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Any matter decided by the Mersey Gateway Executive Board may be called in no later than 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

*Meeting ended at 3.10 p.m.*

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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 7 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Drakeley, Gilligan, D Inch, J. Lowe, Parker, M. Ratcliffe and Stockton, and Mr. C. Chorley

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Horabin, Fraser and Higginson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Butcher, J. Kirk, A. McIntyre, J. Pearce and M. Simpson

Also in attendance: Cllrs McInerney and Wright in accordance with Standing Order 33.

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

CYP33 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.

CYP34 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

CYP35 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee relating to the work of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board were submitted for information.

The Board discussed EXB61: School Travel Pathfinder Bid and Sustainable School Transport Policy. Members asked whether the figures in the report were new figures and what was defined as low income. In reply it was noted that the Minute did refer to new figures and low income covered a lot of issues such as free school meals and receipt of various other benefits. Members requested a

*Action*

more detailed clarification be provided.

Members also queried whether travel expenses would be paid, for students from the Borough attending Thomas Boteler School in Warrington. In response, it was noted that the Council was paying fees to transport some children to Thomas Boteler as it was a Church of England secondary school. It was noted that this policy would be reviewed and would be looked into further in the near future.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

CYP36 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION - COUNCILLOR WRIGHT

Councillor Marie Wright – Community Portfolio holder, updated the Committee of the activities and achievements of the Youth Service.

Members were informed of the following:

- the Youth Service received the National Youth Quality Mark;
- there were 11 new members on the Youth Forum;
- during November there was a “Voice” weekend which attracted 200 attendees; and
- the Youth Bank had proved very successful and the young people provided a presentation at an Executive Board meeting.

Members discussed various issues as detailed below:

- whether Youths from both sides of the River Mersey were informed and involved of all the Youth Services available;
- the idea of having mentor schemes that could link young people to Connexions and other agencies;
- where there many youth clubs open;
- the need to utilise different strategies and engage with other agencies;
- the 14-19 agenda and NEETS; and
- the need to tackle hot-spot areas of anti-social behaviour in conjunction with the attainment agenda.

Councillor Marie Wright wished to thank all the officers and young people involved in the successes achieved so far.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

CYP37 HALTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Children and Young People which provided an overview of the role and work of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in Halton (HSCB).

It was reported that following the death of Victoria Climbe and the publication of the Children's Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Local Authority was responsible for establishing a Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The role of the Board was to establish new structures to more effectively safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The Board received an executive summary, which set out the following:

- The structure of the Board in Halton,
- The links the Board has with other planning and commissioning agencies,
- The key responsibilities of the Board,
- Key areas of activity,
- The performance reporting process, and
- The Board's achievements.

Members held a wide-ranging discussion in relation to the monitoring of privately-run care homes, support for staff working in care homes and the achievements of partner agencies within the HSCB.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the work of the Halton Safeguarding Children's Board and progress it has made in implementing government requirements and delivering agreed priorities.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

CYP38 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PRIORITIES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Children and Young People, which detailed information on the priorities for children and young people services in Halton, agreed with Government Office North West GONW. It was reported that there was a formal process for setting priorities for children's services at the Autumn Strategic Engagement Meeting with (GONW) and their field force. This meeting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and agreed eight priorities to focus the work of the Children and Young People Alliance Board for the next year. In addition, support from GONW to achieve the priorities was identified and agreed.

A number of priorities had already been agreed as part of the refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), completed in June. They were formulated from a wide evidence base including a strategic needs analysis, the views of children and young people, performance information, and feedback from external inspection and assessment. The CYPP priorities covered the five Every Child Matters outcomes and cross-cutting services management themes.

It was noted that in preparation for the meeting a long list of priorities was drawn up using all the available information and these were distilled down to the eight priorities put forward for negotiation at the meeting. The agreed priorities were noted as follows:

- CYPP BH1: Reducing health inequalities
- CYPP BH2: Improve sexual health
- CYPP BH3: Enhance emotional and psychological well-being.
- CYPP SS4: Improve quality of care for Children in Care.
- CYPP EA1: Improve educational outcomes for all children.
- CYPP EA2: Improve attendance at school of all children.
- CYPP EA3: Narrow the gap in educational outcomes for vulnerable children; and
- CYPP AEW1: Improved learning opportunities 14 – 19 and participation post 16.

The Board was advised that cross cutting services management themes such as workforce, finance and commissioning were not identified as priorities in their own right but were highlighted as enablers and risks. The priorities template listing the priorities mapped against the performance measures from the National Indicator Set and the risks and enablers was detailed in the report.

Members held a discussion regarding the significant enablers and the significant delivery risks and noted that various issues from the plan could be dealt with through the scrutiny topic group.

RESOLVED: That

1. the report, and the agreed priorities, be noted; and
2. the progress against the identified priorities be

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

supported.

CYP39 STRATEGY FOR THE INCLUSION OF PUPILS WITH SEN  
- REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, which noted that in 2003 the Executive Board supported the development of a Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN. It was reported that the strategy sought to realign the development of SEN resources across the infrastructure of funding formula, structural arrangements, service structures and critical identification and assessment processes to ensure that those children and young people with special educational needs had their needs identified and addressed earlier.

The Board was advised of the significant progress that had been made in implementing the Strategy and that the implementation of the strategy posed significant challenges, not least in addressing long standing practices across agencies, within schools and within local authority services also.

Outlined in the report was a review of the Strategy that summarised progress to date and set out the strategic direction for the next three years. Key achievements over the preceding three years were noted as follows:-

- A reduction in the reliance upon Statements of SEN as the means to securing additional resources for children;
- A reduction in the % of children with Statements of SEN;
- Release of resources earlier without the need to recourse to a Statement;
- Performance in the top quartile in the issuing of proposed statements within 18 weeks;
- A reduction in the number of children being educated in special provision out of the Borough;
- A re-cycling of fees saved from out of Borough placements to schools to meet the needs of pupils with SEN earlier; and
- Continued evidence of narrowing the gap in attainment for the most vulnerable learners, particularly at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

Members were advised that Halton Borough Council was in the top quartile in the country for completion of draft statements within specified timescales. Detailed within the report was the progress Halton had made to deliver the

programme. In particular it was noted that Halton had ensured the saving of £427,645 had been re-cycled to meet the needs of pupils with SEN earlier. Moreover, this money had been distributed to those schools identified as having the greatest need. It was also noted that Halton Borough Council had signed up to the Every Disabled Child Matters pledge and, furthermore, from a recent Ofsted inspection praise was given for the support provided to pupils with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) in the majority of schools in Halton. Some had been described as outstanding. A high percentage of schools graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted for progress of pupils with LDD.

Members discussed various issues such as whether the funding would be allocated on a termly basis, whether funding would cease once the child had made good progress and was there any information available on a ward by ward basis in relation to teenage pregnancies and alcohol consumption.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Board considers progress made to-date; and
2. the Board supports the continued direction of the Strategy as a key lever to narrowing the gap in learning outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

#### CYP40 PROGRESS OF EXTENDED SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT IN HALTON

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, which provided information on the progress towards the achievement of the Extended Schools Core Offer in Halton and the delivery of extended services through Children and Young People's Area Networks.

It was noted that evaluation of the Extended Schools Pathfinder Project (DFES April 2004) found that the provision of extended services delivered through clusters of schools could bring about a range of positive outcomes for children, young people, their families and local communities. The outcomes that were demonstrated through the project were detailed in the report as follows:

- Improvement in achievement and behaviour;
- Opportunities for children to develop new skills and widen their interests;
- Enhanced support for those children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk;
- Greater involvement of parents in their children's learning;
- Increased use by communities of sports, leisure and ICT facilities in schools;
- Support to parents to return to work, education or training; and
- Reduction in health inequalities through the provision of health promotion and support services.

The Board were advised that it was expected that by 2010 all secondary schools would be open from 8 am to 6 pm all year round to provide extended services. All children attending Halton primary schools would be able to access these services through their own school. These requirements in secondary schools were only applicable when a demand has been identified. Not all of these services would be free of charge although some may be free or subsidised when there was an agreement that attendance at an Extended School activity or service would have a positive impact on the child or young person's achievement.

Also detailed in the report was the targets towards the delivery of the Full Core Offer (FCO), that had been set by the Training and Development Agency (TDA). It was noted that by 2010 100% of Halton Schools should be delivering the FCO.

Arising from the discussion, reference was made for the need to tackle sickness and absence issues, the links that community centres had with schools in the area, and whether CYPAN Managers were working with schools to identify needs, ensure the provision of the Core Offer and the completion of the School Audit to ensure sound financial allocations were made.

RESOLVED: That the Board consider the progress made to date, and contribute any comments or observations as appropriate concerning the further development of this agenda.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

CYP41 NARROWING THE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which detailed information about the complexities surrounding narrowing the achievement and attainment gap. The Board received a presentation from the Operational Director Universal Learning Services which outlined the following:

- Summary statement;
- Foundation Stage;
- Percentage of Pupils below Level 2 compared to national expectations in Key Stage 1;
- Percentage below Level 4 compared to national expectations in Key Stage 2;
- Strategies being used to narrow the gap in Key Stages 1 and 2 (including the use of SIPs to challenge schools);
- Percentage below Level 5 compared to national expectations in Key Stage 3;
- SEN pupils in mainstream settings Key Stages 1, 2 and 3; and
- Combined approach to the raising of standards Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4.

The Board were advised of some of the key questions which Halton Borough Council were asking as follows:

- Which children were under-performing and why;
- What was being done to improve performance;
- What actions were being taken to narrow the gap; and
- When would under-performance begin.

Members were provided with statistics in relation to Key Stage 2 English and Maths, Key Stage 3 English and Maths and an overall summary of how Halton compared to the national statistics.

The Chairman thanked the Operational Director Universal Learning Services for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the Board consider the report and the actions that are being taken to narrow the gap.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

CYP42 SERVICE PLANS 2008-2011

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People that provided Members with the objectives and targets for services for the next three years. It was reported that the Departmental Service Plans were



currently being reviewed and rolled forward. They would go to Executive Board for approval on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008, at the same time as the draft budget. It was noted that this would ensure that decisions on Service Planning were linked to resource allocation.

Members were advised of the departments that reported to the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board were as follows:

- Universal and Learning
- Preventative Services
- Specialist Services
- Business Support and Commissioning

The Board discussed various issues such as, support for children with learning difficulties and the 14-19 agenda. It was noted that a report containing greater detail of the 14-19 agenda could be brought to a future Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Board identify any objectives and targets for the next three years that it wishes to see included in Service Plans by passing on comments to the relevant Operational Director; and
2. a detailed report on the 14-19 agenda be brought to a future Policy and Performance Board meeting.

Strategic Director-  
Children & Young  
People

*Meeting ended at 9.09 p.m.*

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**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 28 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Jones (Chairman), Fraser (Vice-Chairman), P. Blackmore, Edge, Findon, Howard, Lewis, Parker, Stockton and Worrall

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: H. Cockcroft, G. Collins, P. Reilly Cooper, G. Ferguson, N. Goodwin and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: None.

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

ELS35 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2007, having been printed and circulated, were signed as a correct record

ELS36 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Board relating to the work of the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy Performance Board were submitted for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

ELS37 PUBLIC ART PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from Ian Banks on behalf of BEAM consultants engaged by the Council to develop a strategic approach to the development of Public Art within the Borough.

The consultants had been funded by Arts Council North West to develop a strategic approach to public art in

*Action*

Halton. The presentation outlined how art in public places could be complementary to good urban and building design and how it provided environmental, artistic and economic benefits.

The Board discussed opportunities for public art throughout the Borough at key locations such as, 3MG Multi Modal, Building Schools for the Future, Widnes Waterfront, Castlefields Regeneration and Mersey Gateway. The Board also considered how the Public Art Strategy could be driven forward and it was suggested that funding possibilities should be investigated to create an additional post to assist with this.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation be received; and
- (2) funding for an additional post to drive forward the Public Art Strategy be investigated.

Strategic Director  
Health and  
Community

#### ELS38 LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL

The Board had been active in developing an understanding of skill issues in Halton, most recently by considering the content of the latest business survey. At its last meeting, the Board requested that the Learning and Skills Council be invited to a future meeting to enable a discussion on the future skill needs of the Borough.

Dr Kevin Mothersdale, Partnership Director Halton, attended the meeting on behalf of Learning and Skills Council and gave a presentation which highlighted, the background and role of the organisation, its statement of priorities, future targets and current activity. The Board was advised that in 2010/11 LSC would no longer exist as it does today. The current role of LSC involving 14 to 19 age group would transfer to local authorities. Whilst the role of LSC involving adults was still to be decided by Central Government.

Arising from the discussion the Board considered:

- LSC targets – were they achievable?
- Expansion of apprenticeships in the workplace; and
- Skills pledge.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation from the Learning and Skills Council regarding skills in Halton be noted;
- (2) the Executive Board be requested to consider that the Council should sign up to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) "Skills Pledge"; and
- (3) additional funding from the LSC budget be provided in Halton, in particular for basic skills.

Strategic Director  
Environment

ELS39 COMMUNITY CENTRES ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2006/07

There were currently 5 Council-run Community Centres, a service which employed 33 staff and a significant number of volunteers who were an integral part of the running of the Centre's. The Board received a report which outlined evidence of continual improvement across the Community Centre's service.

The report detailed attendance and usage figures at the five Council-owned Community Centres. Whilst individual centre performance was important the report recognised that overall attendances across Community Centres had increased by 5360. In addition, it was noted that Centre income had also increased across the service by £27,924 or 12% on total income in comparison to the previous year.

In addition Community Centres had also seen increased investment both locally to support organisational service delivery and through funding mechanisms, most recently successful applications to Area Forums and the Waste Recycling Environment Network (WREN). An additional £200,000 of investment to core funding in the last two years had ensured much needed building improvements had taken place.

In order to ensure that Community Centres continued to deliver services effectively, meet expectations and maintain a focus on support and facilitation, an evaluation and consultation exercise had been undertaken to further measure performance and feed into the Culture and Leisure Service (TAES) Towards an Excellent Services Improvement Plan. The consultation provided a snapshot of customer profile and enabled a review of service standards and a gauge of customer satisfaction levels with:

- Agencies with whom the Centres had Service Level

- Agreements; and
- Regular users and casual users.

Detailed results of the evaluation exercise were outlined in the report.

In addition to the direct user consultation through questionnaires, a Focus Group was to be established early in the new year. The focus would be to determine what participants felt about using public accessible spaces in community settings.

In addition, future developments for the services included:-

- (i) Quality Standards;
- (ii) A Dementia Café (piloted at Murdishaw Centre);
- (iii) Planning for the New Community Centre at Castlefields;
- (iv) Developing the Youth Academy at Grangeway with Youth Services; and
- (v) A youth led refurbishment of the Youth Hall at Ditton Community Centre.

RESOLVED: That Board expressed its support for Community Centre's and their future maintainance.

*NB: Councillor Stockton declared a Personal Interest in the above item of business as a Board Member of Murdishaw Community Centre.*

#### ELS40 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived.

#### ELS41 VOLUNTARY SECTOR CORE GRANT AND MID YEAR MONITORING

The Board considered a report which outlined the mid-year monitoring report for Voluntary Sector Core Funding.

Members considered a variety of issues and noted

the following comments:

- Halton Citizens Advice Bureaux received a core grant of £152, 403 and not as published;
- Halton Voluntary Action received a core grant of £63,586 and not as published; and
- the grant to Warrington Law Centre had proved to be an expensive service due to low customer take-up.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### ELS42 LIBRARY BOOKS ANALYSIS

At the previous meeting the Board requested a report on the quantity of children's books withdrawn from stock and the suitability of this material for distribution to targeted families in the community. Stock was withdrawn from the library service on the basis of condition, age and levels of use. If appropriate, the material was then offered for sale through the normal library book sale process. It was noted that children's stock was heavily used, over 35% of fiction was on loan at any one time and this figure rose to 55% for picture books, the stock was therefore subject to considerable wear and tear.

As a result of wear and tear 10% of withdrawn children's books had to be discarded straight away as they were only suitable for recycling. Of the remaining material approximately 45%, 1,700 items would be suitable for distribution to targeted families on the basis of their condition.

Diverting any quantity of material away from the normal book sale would result in a loss of income for the service, which was estimated at £1,000. Material suitable for distribution could be identified by Library staff at the withdrawal stage and sorted into target age categories and offered to the Children and Young People's Area Networks (CYPAN's) and the Family Learning Team for distribution/use by their targeted families as appropriate.

Members made the following comments:

- in light of local government review in Cheshire, the cost of replacing Cheshire County Council's Schools Library Service with a similar Halton Service should be explored; and
- the Library Service consult with the Adult Learning Team on adult books withdrawn from stock and

the suitability of this material for distribution to targeted families in the community.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) withdrawn children's books be distributed as outlined above;
- (2) approval be sought from the Executive Board Sub-Committee to waive the loss of income;
- (3) in light of local government review in Cheshire, the cost of replacing Cheshire County Council's Schools Library Service with a similar Halton Service be explored; and
- (4) the Library Service consult with the Adult Learning Team on adult books withdrawn from stock and the suitability of this material for distribution to targeted families in the community.

Strategic Director  
Health and  
Community

#### ELS43 CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT 2008/9 SERVICE PLANS

The Board was advised that the three-year Departmental Service Plans were currently being reviewed and rolled forward. Service Plans would be submitted to the Executive Board for approval on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008 at the same time as the draft budget. This would ensure that decisions on service planning were linked to resource allocation.

The Board had previously received a detailed seminar on both Service Plans and Local Area Agreement. Further each individual Operational Director gave an overview describing the key factors affecting their service and their main objectives for the coming three years for the following areas:

- Economic Regeneration; and
- Cultural Service

In respect of Cultural Service it was proposed that the following comment should be included in the Service Plans:

"ways to improve existing external built sports facilities be sought"

In addition the Board noted that the objectives within the Economic Regeneration Service Plans would be amended and a revised version circulated. It was proposed that a copy of the final Service Plan for Economic



Regeneration agreed by the Executive Board on 21<sup>st</sup> February would be brought back to the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the presentations on individual departments Service Plans be noted;

(2) Members pass any detailed comments that they may have on individual Service Plans to the Operational Director by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008; and

(3) a copy of the final Service Plan for Economic Regeneration agreed by the Executive Board on 21<sup>st</sup> February be brought back to the next meeting of the Board.

Strategic Director  
Environment

ELS44 EMPLOYMENT LEARNING AND SKILLS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2008/9

The Board considered a report which was the first step in developing a work programme of Topics for the Board to examine in 2008/9. It was noted that suggestions for Topics to be included in the Board's 2008/09 work programme should be brought to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That

(1) initial suggestions for Topics to be included in the Board's 2008/09 work programme be brought to the next meeting; and

(2) the Board develop and informally consult on a shortlist of its own and others 2008/09 Topic suggestions ahead of the Board's meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March, bearing in mind the Council's Topic selection criteria.

Strategic Director  
Health and  
Community/  
Environment

ELS45 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

The Board received a briefing on the timetable for the development of the new Local Area Agreement for Halton. The draft Local Area Agreement timetable was as follows:-

January LOG Meeting  
HVA Forum  
SSP Meetings  
GONW Lead Officers Meeting  
Draft SSP Action Plans

February Executive Board Report

HSPB Board  
LOG Meeting  
Advanced Draft LAA to GONW

March PPB Progress Report  
SSP Meetings  
GONW Lead Officers Meeting

April LOG Meeting  
Executive Board Report

May Final LAA submitted to GONW

June LAA sign Off by Ministers

RESOLVED: That NI 161 (literacy) and NI 162  
become a priority.

Strategic Director  
Environment

*Meeting ended at 9.37 p.m.*

**HEALTHY HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 15 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors E. Cargill (Chairman), Loftus, Gilligan, Horabin, C Inch, Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, Swift and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Higginson, Marlow and Gerrard (in accordance with Standing Order No. 33)

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Villiers, A. Williamson, C. Halpin, C. Ashton, P. St. Aubyn, L. Wilson and C. Taylor

Also in attendance: 1 Member of the Public

**ITEM DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

*Action*

HEA31 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.

HEA32 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

HEA33 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board Sub Committee relevant to the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

HEA34 HEALTH OF CHILDREN IN CARE SCRUTINY TOPIC

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community on the data and service

developments regarding the Health of Children in Care.

It was noted that in March 2006 the Health Policy and Performance Board was presented with the findings of the Health of Looked After Children Scrutiny Group. An in-depth audit of ninety Children in Care (CIC) case files was carried out resulting in an action plan.

It was further noted the Board agreed that the action plan be adopted and monitored. It was noted in November 2006 that all actions had been completed. At this time the Board requested updates on data and future developments in the service.

The Board was advised of the data regarding the Health of Children in Care and service developments in relation to health development group, assessments of Children's emotional and mental wellbeing, training for foster carers and the fast track dental service.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the report be presented to the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board.

Strategic Director,  
Health and  
Community

*(NB: Councillors Horabin and Loftus declared a personnel interest in the following item of business due to their employment with Halton College. Councillor Lloyd Jones declared a personnel interest in the following item of business due to her husband being a Non Executive Director of Halton and St. Helen's Primary Care Trust)*

#### HEA35 MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGY AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The Board received an overview of the Mental Health Promotion Strategy and framework for action from Ms C. Ashton of Halton and St. Helen's Primary Care Trust.

It was noted that the Strategy had been developed and driven by national policy drivers from Central Government and from public consultation with stakeholders. The Strategy covered a 4-year period from 2007 to 2011 and would be reviewed bi-annually.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to the availability of support for children whose parents have mental health issues and awareness training for nursing staff and the police.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

HEA36 ANNUAL REPORT OF ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community on the Annual Report of Halton's Adult Protection Committee (APC), for the year 2006/7, and on subsequent progression of the local Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults agenda.

The annual report of the APC outlined the operation of the arrangements for the protection of vulnerable adults in Halton, provided details of work undertaken from April 2006 to March 2007 and summarised planned activity for the year April 2007 to March 2008.

RESOLVED: That the 2006/7 Annual Report of the Adult Protection Committee be noted.

HEA37 CARERS SERVICES IN HALTON

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community on the work undertaken to date with regards to the future of Carers Services within Halton and on the proposed transfer of the Carers Centre to the Voluntary Sector.

It was noted that since the opening of the Carers Centre in 2004, it had been the intention that the management of the centres by the Local Authority would only be a temporary arrangement, until a voluntary sector organisation could be identified to undertake it. The reason for this was to ensure that Carers would be able to maximise their access to funding streams.

The Board was advised that during the last 12 months a number of activities, including meetings and consultation events had taken place to identify the options and their associated advantages, for the future provision of Carers Services within Halton.

It was further noted that three options had been examined regarding the future provision of the service, including:

- making no changes;
- establishing a Princess Royal Trust for Carers Centre in Halton; and

- merging with a Princess Royal Trust for Carers Centre in St. Helens.

Discussions with Stakeholders had indicated that the decision to transfer Carers Centres to the voluntary sector was generally welcomed so long as the service had adequate resources and high levels of commitment from all partners.

Option 2: to establish a Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre had been identified as the most favourable option. The main reasons for this were;

- as a charitable organisation the Centre would be able to access different funding streams, which the Local Authority was currently unable to; and
- an independent Carers Centre would not just be a provider of services but would be an important means of ensuring the voice of carers was heard. Carers were managed and the services provided there.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to the proposal to start with one centre with an aspiration to open a second one in the future, that staffing would remain the same with the addition of a Co-ordinator, who would act in a fundraising capacity and equality and diversity issues, mainly in relation to disability discrimination compliance.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report and the progress made to date be noted.

#### HEA38 DRAFT SERVICE PLANS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought comments on the draft service plans for the Health and Community Directorate for 2008-11.

RESOLVED: That the draft service plans be accepted.

#### HEA39 STRATEGIC PROGRESS OF THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy on the strategic progress of implementing the Council's Corporate Plan (2006-11).

It was noted that the overall policy direction for the

Borough was captured in the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy. These were adopted by the Council in May 2006 and had a timeframe of five years. The Corporate Plan set out the Council contribution towards achieving social, economic and environmental well-being for the people of Halton. It set out the Council's priorities, 40 key areas of focus and 70 indicators through which strategic progress could be monitored.

Since the plan was adopted, the Council had also set in place a Local Area Agreement (LAA). This was an agreement with Central Government that spelt out the priorities and targets for local well being, based on outcomes which reflect local and national priorities. It was an important part of the delivery chain for the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. Arising out of the new Local Government Act all local authorities were required to develop with their partners a new LAA for next year. The new LAAs would be part of a whole performance system for local government. It included LAAs, a new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) to replace Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) as well as sweeping away most existing performance indicators and reporting systems and replacing them with a new, single set of performance indicators. It was vital that members play a key part in developing the new Agreement which would need to be agreed with Government by June 2008.

It was further reported that a part of the changes that would be wrought by the new local Government Bill was the need for any Council to develop new relationships with partners and partnerships in its area. Local authorities were expected to take a leading role on Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) with involvement of Members on both LSPs and thematic partnerships. In advance of this Halton had already taken steps to increase representation of members from the Executive and PPBs on the Halton Strategic Partnership Board and the Specialist Strategic Partnerships. Council's must prepare a LAA as the delivery plan for the community strategy and partners (named in the Bill) would have a duty to cooperate. The Council's overview and scrutiny role would be extended to cover the partners with a duty to cooperate in the delivery of the LAA.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) progress reports from the Health Specialist Strategic Partnership be submitted to the Board for information.

Strategic Director,  
Health and  
Community

HEA40 BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought endorsement of the Directorate's definition of service users that would be classed as 'High Dependency' in the event of needing to trigger the Directorate's Business Continuity Plan (BCP).

The report set out the Council's responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act, that the BCP identified critical service areas and the actions to be taken to continue or recover the delivery of the services within specific timescales. In addition it set out the Directorate's definition of 'High Dependency'.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (2) the Directorate's definition of 'High Dependency', as outlined in 3.6 of the report, be endorsed.

HEA41 SCRUTINY WORK TOPICS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought to identify work topics for inclusion in the 2008/9 Work Programme.

A number of areas of interest were highlighted to the Board in respect of:

- Early onset dementia;
- Multi agency responses to Vulnerable Adults (joint topic with the Safer Halton PPB); and
- Oral Health

It was further noted that there would be additional work for the Board to undertake during 2008/9 in relation to Halton Campus and Local Improvement Networks (LINKs).

RESOLVED: That the topics detailed above be put forward as suggestions for inclusion in the 2008/9 Work Programme.

Strategic Director,  
Health and  
Community

HEA42 CARE STANDARDS COMMISSION PERFORMANCE RATING



The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which advised of the increase in the performance rating of the Health and Community Directorate and of the impending changes in the way performance of social care services would be assessed commencing in 2008/9.

The Health and Community have their performance rated annually by the Care Standards Commission (CSCI). The performance rating was linked to how well the directorate provides social care services to both adults and older people. The rating the Directorate received feeds into the Comprehensive Performance Assessment rating for the Council.

The Board was advised that for 2007 the authority rose from a 2 star to a 3 star authority. This meant that the authority was 1 of 8 in the North West rated as 3 star out of a total of 22 and 1 of the 2 authorities who had risen from a 2 star to a 3 star authority.

It was further noted that the Government had recently announced a new National Indicator set of 198 indicators, which the Council would be judged against for 2008/9. In addition to this new indicators for both health and social care were announced in October 2007 linked to the 'Our Health, Our Say' White Paper. CSCI have stated judgement for 2007/8 would be based on the current Self Assessment Framework but have indicated that proposals to change the performance framework would be consulted on early in the New Year.

The Board expressed its congratulations to the Health and Community Directorate for receiving an excellent performance rating.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the improvement performance of the Directorate be noted; and
- (2) the performance assessment framework is undergoing a period of continuous change and that the framework will change again in 2008/9 be noted.

Strategic Director,  
Health and  
Community

*Meeting ended at 7.50 p.m.*

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**SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 22 January 2008 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Osborne (Chairman), Stockton (Vice-Chairman), Edge, Lloyd Jones, Morley, Murray, E. Ratcliffe, M. Ratcliffe, Redhead, Swift and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Andrews, J. Downes, S. Eastwood, I. Grady, D. Parr, S. Rimmer, M. Simpson, J. Unsworth and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: Cllr Wright in accordance with Standing Order 33, T. Pybis, A Rooney, Superintendent Bertenshaw and Chief Inspector Bailey.

**ITEM DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
SAF37 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
SAF38 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.</p>	
SAF39 PRESENTATION - NIGHT STOP	
<p>Members received a presentation from Terri Pybis – Halton Nightstop Co-ordinator and Angela Rooney.</p> <p>Board Members were advised that Nightstop was the provision of emergency accommodation for single homeless 16 – 25 year olds, exclusively in the homes of approved volunteer hosts, until such time as permanent and</p>	

appropriate housing was secured.

The presentation also detailed the following:-

- Provision of Need;
- What services Nightstop provided;
- Services Nightstop did not provide;
- Referrals information and procedures;
- Mediation – launched Tuesday 4th September 2007;
- Mediation outcomes;
- Details of the set up of a volunteer management system;
- Necessary policies;
- Project achievements to date;
- Positive feedback received from various agencies;
- Responsibilities; and
- Funding.

It was reported that Nightstop was not a solution to homelessness. It was a short-term emergency response to a practical need; safe emergency accommodation for 16 – 25 year olds, to try and prevent them from being exposed to the dangers and downward spiral through rough sleeping.

The Board discussed various issues such as how volunteers were selected, how funding was obtained, and how closely Nightstop worked with other agencies. In response, it was noted that volunteers had to have three different risk assessments carried out and bedroom and washing facilities had to be provided. In addition, it was noted that sources of funding were being looked into and Nightstop was working alongside other agencies such as Vale Royal Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council. Members were advised that the nearest provision of the Nightstop facility was in Crewe and Wallasey.

The Board wished to thank Nightstop on the work being carried out as in the interventions, preventions and the success achieved so far.

The Chairman thanked Ms Pybis and Ms Rooney for a very informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

SAF40 STRATEGIC PROGRESS ON COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN

Members considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy which updated the Members on the

strategic progress of implementing the Council's Corporate Plan (2006-11). It was reported that the Corporate Plan was adopted in May 2006 and was to be brought in line with the new Corporate Strategy. The Corporate Plan set out the Council's contribution towards achieving social, economic and environmental wellbeing for the people of Halton. It set out the Council's priorities, 40 key areas of focus and 70 indicators through which strategic process could be monitored. Members were advised that since the plan was adopted the Council had also set in place a Local Area Agreement (LAA). It was noted that part of the LAA was a reflection on key statistics, for example Members were informed that the national crime level was still a problem with people in the Borough as people had concerns in the areas they lived in in relation to anti-social behaviour and general crime. It was noted that on a regional level Halton rated below average for crime statistics. However on a ward by ward basis a different picture was produced.

Members were advised that the new LAA's would be part of the whole performance system for local government. It was reported that there was a need to develop the new LAA's by June 2008 in conjunction with the Government.

Arising from the discussion Members were asked how they would like to be informed and involved with the new LAA process, whether it could be a seminar or a Members' Policy and Performance Board. Members of the Board discussed the idea and it was felt that a seminar would be the most appropriate way to address the issues. It was also noted that relationships with partners and agencies should be reinforced in order to enhance the whole service provided.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the information be received;
- (2) the Board question/comment on performance to date in towards achieving the strategic objectives of the Council and its key partners;
- (3) the Board provide a view on how Members would wish to be involved in developing the new Local Area Agreement; and
- (4) in light of the new proposed new duties in the Local Government Bill the Board consider its relationship to the Halton Strategic Partnership.

Strategic Director  
- Health and  
Community

## SAF41 COMMUNITY SAFETY - MULTI AGENCY PROBLEM SOLVING (MAPS)

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community which outlined the final report from the Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) Topic Group. The comprehensive report outlined the following:

Strategic Director  
- Health and  
Community

- summary of recommendations;
- Community Safety MAPS team indicative organisation chart;
- background, the MAPS concept - an outline;
- perceived benefits of community safety MAPS teams;
- a MAPS team model for Halton role and scope and proposals for discussion;
- referral criteria for the individual cases to MAPS;
- research into MAPS type teams in other areas;
- notes from the visit to West Lancashire MAPS team 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2006;
- financial considerations; and
- MAPS team proposals - location property considerations.

Members were introduced to Mr. Michael Andrews the new Community Safety Co-ordinator who started in post on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2008, in addition to Superintendent Bertenshaw (Co-Chair of the Safer Halton Partnership) and Chief Inspector Bailey. The Members were advised that there was very little mainstream funding at the present time and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund which was now called Working Neighbourhood Fund had taken a 12% cut.

Members held a wide-ranging discussion in relation to the public's perception of the issues of crime. The Council's Chief Executive thanked the Chairman and Members of the Anti-Social Behaviour Topic Team for their work involved and the production of the report.

It was noted that the report provided an important message that needed to be taken seriously. Members were advised that statistics proved there was a reduction in crime by 17.5% in the Borough, however, the public's fear of crime was still considerably high. Members were advised that the current Community Safety Team deserved credit for the achievements gained over the past several years.

Arising from the discussion it was agreed that a decision needed to be taken by the Partnership and perhaps a focus on data analysis was to be investigated. The

Community Safety Team at present was commended on their work and the many successes resulting from this such as the Prolific or Priority Offender (POPO) Team, Ashley House and The Parenting Practitioner.

Members were advised that a bid had been submitted for the Family Intervention Project. It was reported that this bid had been granted and would bring in an amount of over £500k over the next 3 years. The funding would enhance parenting activities. The Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and the Protection and Punishment and Deferments were also important projects covered under the Community Safety umbrella.

Members were advised of the guidance for Community Safety Teams that had to complete a Strategic Needs Assessment.

Members felt that Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) should play more of an active role as it was a multi-agency arrangement. The Board queried whether resources in our public buildings for example, HDLs could be used to spread the message to members of the public that crime levels were coming down in the Borough. In response, it was noted that this would be investigated.

The Board agreed that a cost benefit analysis of the Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) scheme would be beneficial, therefore a recommendation would be added to this report. It was also agreed that a seminar be set up for Members in order to digest all the ideas proposed and address any issues raised in response from the Topic Groups.

The Chairman of the Board wished to thank the agencies and all Councillors and Officers involved in the Community Safety MAPS agenda.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Members of the PPB comment on the content of the Topic Group's final report;
- (2) Members of the PPB comment on the response from the Chairs of the Safer Halton Partnership;
- (3) a cost benefit analysis of the Multi-Agency Problem Solving Team be carried out; and
- (4) a report be brought back to the June 2008 Policy and

Performance Board to summarise the proposed ideas.

SAF42 HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2008 - 2011 (NB RELEVANT SECTIONS - CONSUMER PROTECTION)

The Board agreed that the above item be deferred to a further meeting for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Service Plans 2008-2011 be deferred to a later Board meeting.

SAF43 SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community which informed Members of the strategic assessment process for the Safer Halton Partnership.

It was reported that the Home Office required Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) to carry out a strategic assessment and develop a Partnership Plan for 2008.

The Home Office had produced guidance “Developing a Strategic Assessment”, that set out the process and framework for the assessment. It was noted that partnerships were to include components detailed within the report, in the strategic assessment.

Members were advised that the purpose of the strategic assessment was to provide knowledge and understanding of community safety issues that would inform and enable partners to devise a partnership plan.

It was reported that a draft Strategic Needs Assessment would be produced by the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008. Arising from the discussion Members queried whether the Town Centre Strategy was also included in the Strategic Needs Assessment. In response, it was noted that this was the case.

Members were also advised that through working with a data analyst, issues could be flagged up such as hot spots and crime trend areas. In addition it was noted that John Moores University could also provide information in relation to public health, which would endorse the multi-agency



approach.

RESOLVED: That Members note the content of the report and support future work on preparing the Strategic Assessment document.

#### SAF44 3RD QUARTER FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Members received a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy that provided Members with the financial information for Culture and Leisure, Environmental and Regulatory Services, Highways and Transportation and tabled on the evening was the financial information for the Fair Trading and Life Events, (i.e. Consumer Protection Division).

Members discussed the savings being made in relation to Trading Standards moving to Warrington and it was noted that the Chief Officers at Management Team had requested that the KPMG Consultants examine the financial aspects of this project as part of the wider efficiency work they were carrying out within the Council.

It was noted that if a decision was to be made in relation to Trading Standards moving to Warrington the item would be brought back to Members for final decision. The Board also raised concerns in relation to the increase in competition from the Private Sector for certain planning / building control work. In response it was noted that this would be looked into further and a response be brought back to a future Policy and Performance Board Meeting.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

#### SAF45 NOTES OF WORKING PARTY MEETINGS

The Board considered the minutes from the Bereavement Working Party meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2007. Members were advised that positive feedback had been received from members of the public in relation to the Christmas and New Year arrangements.

Members were advised that the Working Party was considering all options in regards to future cemetery provision and an exploratory cemetery visit had been arranged. The Chairman commended the Bereavement Working Party on the work carried out so far.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

|

*Meeting ended at 8.53 p.m.*

**URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board held on Thursday, 13 December 2007 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Hignett (Chairman), Morley (Vice-Chairman), P. Blackmore, Leadbetter, Murray, Nolan, Rowe and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Bradshaw and E. Cargill

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: C. Halpin, D. Sutton, I. Leivesley and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: Councillors Polhill, Bryant, Nelson, E. Ratcliffe, Wallace, Wharton and Wright and 3 Members of the Public.

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

URB28 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.

URB29 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

URB30 STANDING ORDER 34

The Board agreed to suspend Standing Order 34 to allow the Ward Councillors and Executive Portfolio Holders present to speak in relation to the following item.

RESOLVED; That Standing Order 34 be suspended for the duration of the meeting.

URB31 POST OFFICE CLOSURES IN HALTON

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which gave details of the Post Office's

*Action*

proposal to close three Post Offices in Halton and which gave details of the case being put forward by the Council against the closure.

At its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007, the Executive Board considered a report which outlined the Post Office's proposals. The Board agreed that the Council should raise strong objections to the proposed closures and that the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, submit a detailed response supporting that view to the Post Office by 17<sup>th</sup> December 2007 and prior to this Performance Board be provided with the opportunity to comment on that submission. Members were provided with a copy of the draft Council's response and asked to comment on the submission prior to it being sent to the Post Office.

It was noted that the three Post Offices identified for closure in the proposals were Appleton Village and Hale Village in Widnes, and Stenhills Crescent in Runcorn.

The Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy read out statements from both Post Office Ltd and from the Councillors for the Appleton Ward.

Arising from the discussion the following points were raised, in particular that;

- during consultation on previous Post Office closures assurances were given that no further closures would be likely, however in light of these proposals it was felt that closures were becoming a trend and the Board were concerned about potential next phases;
- the Stenhills Crescent Post Office was the only Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant Post Office where the alternative offered were not;
- that there was a need to emphasise the impact that such closures would have on local communities;
- it would be helpful to engage community and voluntary groups such as age concern for their support and copies of the Council's Submission should be sent them and partners;
- this was unlikely to be the final closures of Post Offices, that there was a strong possibility of more closures in the future and that the Council needed to put a strong case forward against them at the present time; and
- it was felt that there was an opportunity for the Post Office to work in partnership with the Council and other partners in these areas to maintain services and

that dialogue should take place with the Council prior to any final decision being taken.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Post Office Ltd be invited to enter into a dialogue with the Council to explore how these vital services can be saved;
- (2) the submission be amended to include:
  - (a) a stronger stand regarding the concerns raised in relation to the trend of closures and about possible future of other Post Offices in the area; and
  - (b) the importance of DDA compliance and the practical difficulties for customers in accessing non compliant Post Offices; and
- (3) Post Office Ltd be requested to defer their decision and explore the possibility of working in partnership with the Council to secure the future of the post offices.

Strategic Director,  
Environment

*Meeting ended at 7.10 p.m.*

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**URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board held on Wednesday, 23 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Hignett (Chairman), Morley, P. Blackmore, Bradshaw, E. Cargill, Leadbetter, Murray, Rowe, Sly and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Nolan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: C. Halpin, D. Sutton, M. Curtis, P. Esseen, C. Leyshon, P. McWade, M. Noone, A. Villiers and P. Watts

Also in attendance: Councillor Polhill (in accordance with Standing Order No. 33)

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

URB32 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 21 November 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.

URB33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

URB34 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee relevant to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

*Action*

*(NB: Councillor Hignett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item due to his employment with CIC and left the room during consideration of the item).*

**COUNCILLOR MORLEY IN THE CHAIR**

URB35 SERVICE PLANS 2008-2011

The Board received a report of Strategic Director, Environment which enabled Members to consider objectives and targets for services for the next three years.

It was noted that the Departmental Service Plans were currently being reviewed and rolled forward. The plans were due to go to the Executive Board for approval on 21 February 2008, at the same time as the draft budget. This would ensure that decisions on service planning would be linked to resource allocation.

The Board considered the draft reports for the Major Projects, Economic Regeneration, Environmental and Regulatory Services (part) and the Health and Community (part) departments.

RESOLVED: That Board Members pass any detailed comments that they may have on individual draft service plans to the relevant Operational Director by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008.

**COUNCILLOR HIGNETT IN THE CHAIR**

URB36 CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which considered the issues facing contaminated land and the proposed strategy for the next five years.

It was noted that contaminated land was a major issue for Halton and there was not many new developments, large or small, carried out without some form of remediation being necessary. Over the past three years over 35 hectares of land had been reclaimed.

The funding for remediation work was constantly changing, as were the outputs required to justify that funding. Recent schemes had utilised funding from a wide variety of sources, as detailed within the report. With this in mind it was hard to predict which future works would be eligible for funding.

The Board was advised that Council Officers were



currently working with English Partnerships to explore new ways of facilitating brownfield remediation. One idea being explored was the possibility of swapping green field development for brownfield remediation. This could be using a gearing of say 1 acre of green field released for the remediation of 2 acres of brownfield. The cost of the remediation would fall to the developer of the green field site and in Halton's case the remediation of the brownfield would bring green space back into the heart of communities. This idea would require a change in national planning policies and was likely to be controversial. However, the overall effect would be energy saving, beneficial to the environment and economy.

It was noted that this would work particularly well in Halton as we have a high proportion of brownfield sites that were not suitable for hard end use and very few sites for greenfield development. English Partnerships had recently indicated that they would like to trial this idea in Halton and were working with Council officers to try to facilitate this.

The Board was also advised of the statutory duties of the Council and the 2008/9 Work Programme, in particular the main piece of work due to start would hopefully be the remediation of the Golf Course. This was dependent on the release of funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). In addition other work would include assisting in the design and remediation of development sites within the EDZ (such as Venture Fields) and for the 3MG Strategic Freight Park.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and the issues facing contaminated land remediation be noted; and
- (2) the Strategy and action plan be endorsed for consultation.

#### URB37 CASTLEFIELDS TREE STRATEGY

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought endorsement of the Castlefields Tree Strategy. The report gave details of the key actions which were to:

- To promote the values and benefits of trees to the local community;
- To promote the management of trees in accordance with good arboriculture practice;

- To ensure that the tree and woodland coverage within the Castlefields Action Area was sustained for future generations; and
- To ensure that new development schemes within the Action Area make provision for retaining the best of existing trees, and replace any trees felled to a minimum 2:1 and where feasible a 3:1 ratio.

It was noted that the Tree Strategy had been prepared under the umbrella of the Castlefields Regeneration Programme which had been ongoing since 2003. Its preparation was a recommendation of the Biodiversity Appraisal for the Action Area carried out in 2005, which noted the particular threat to tree coverage posed by the physical regeneration projects.

The Board was advised that the strategy had been prepared by environmental consultants The Environment Partnership (TEP), in full collaboration with the Council's Landscape Services, the Major Projects Department and the two main Registered Social Landlords, who have responsibility for tree management in the Action Area, CDS Housing and Liverpool Housing Trust (LHT).

In addition, recognising the value of the area's extensive landscaped setting, the Strategy had served to document and raise awareness of the environmental value of trees and woodland. Castlefields natural assets provide an attractive and interesting setting, with known social and health benefits being derived from them.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Strategy, as a document purely reinforcing the best practice principles already promoted by the Council borough-wide, be endorsed by the Board and published as a document available to the public;
- (2) the recommendations contained within the strategy be endorsed, conveyed to all services and followed by all Council activities in the Castlefields Action Area; and
- (3) the public launch of the document be endorsed.

URB38 SANDYMOOR SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING  
DOCUMENT (SPD) APPROVAL FOR STATUTORY  
PERIOD OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director,

Environment which informed the Members of the recent approval by the Executive Board Sub Committee for the publication of the draft Sandymoor Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the purpose of a statutory period of public consultation.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted and detailed comments concerning the detail of the draft SPD be submitted as representations during the forthcoming consultation exercise.

URB39 TRANSPORT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which reviewed the requirements for the production of a Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and the work carried out to date in its preparation. It was noted that the TAMP would be submitted to the Executive Board with a recommendation of adoption and for approval to be granted to embark upon the valuation phase of the plan.

It was noted that well maintained local transport assets, including roads, footpaths, streetlights and street furniture were essential to the delivery of better transport and accessibility, and make an important contribution to the quality and liveability of public spaces.

The Board was advised that the current Local Transport Plan (LTP) committed the Council to the production of a Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP), designed to demonstrate that it was managing its transport assets effectively. Extensive guidance on the preparation of asset management plans had been published and the TAMP for Halton presented with this report fully met this. There were several key areas in the TAMP including sections on assessing levels of service, future network changes, work programmes, risk management, lifecycle plans and future monitoring of the TAMP.

It was further advised that the TAMP was aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan and was supported by various management and operational procedures contained within the Highway Maintenance Strategy. The key information which would be included in the TAMP was detailed within the report.

RESOLVED: That the TAMP be noted.

URB40 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN SETTLEMENT 2008/09

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which informed Members of the announcement of the three year Local Transport Settlement (2008/9 – 2010/11).

It was noted that in previous years Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding had been dependent, in part, on annual assessments on the progress transport authorities had made on the delivery of their LTPs. New guidance issued recently by the Department for Transport (DfT) had confirmed a much less rigorous reporting requirement, based on a more collaborative approach between the DfT and local authorities to enable weaknesses in progress to be jointly addressed and strengths built upon. In addition the guidance made it clear that the levels of funding allocated throughout the remainder of LTP2 were not dependent on progress made.

The DfT had also indicated that it was vital that local authorities, along with Government Offices and local partners, incorporate local transport issues adequately and sufficiently in local area agreements.

The Board was advised that the November 2007 settlement letter confirmed the LTP Integrated Transport Capital Block allocations for the period 2008/9-2010/11 as being unchanged from that previously indicated in the December 2006 letter, further details of which were included in the report. In addition the allocations for the integrated transport capital block, highways maintenance capital block, PRN bridge strengthening and maintenance capital allocation, road safety grant and detrunked roads maintenance grant were outlined within the report.

RESOLVED; That the 2008/9 – 2010/2011 Local Transport Settlement be noted.

#### URB41 WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought consideration of progress on the 2007/8 work programme and to consider possible suggestions for the 2008/9 work programme.

It was noted that the report detailed three suggestions;

- Housing Growth Point (Runcorn Docks);
- Workforce and Skills for the Logistics Industry

(Joint Group with Employment, Learning and Skills PPB); and

- Implications of de-linking the Silver Jubilee Bridge.

However it was now felt that the Housing Growth Point would not be appropriate topic due developments in the process.

RESOLVED; That

- (1) the following topics be included in the 2008/9 Work Programme:

- Workforce and Skills for the Logistics Industry (Joint Group with Employment, Learning and Skills PPB); and
- Implications of de-linking the Silver Jubilee Bridge; and

- (2) details of the Topic Briefs subsequently be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board in consultation with the Operational Director, Major Projects.

Strategic Director,  
Environment

*Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.*

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**CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 8 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chairman), A. Lowe (Vice-Chairman), Bradshaw, Bryant, Edge, C Inch, Loftus, Nolan, Norddahl and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Dennett

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, R. Dart, B. Dodd, J. Hughes, R. Mackenzie, C. Patino, S. Riley and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: None

**ITEM DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
CS30 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CS31 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>It was noted that no public questions were received.</p>	
CS32 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee relating to the work of the Corporate Services Policy &amp; Performance Board since its last meeting were submitted for information.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.</p>	
CS33 JOB EVALUATION	
<p>The Board received a progress report on the implementation of the National Job Evaluation Scheme. A Joint Union/Management Workgroup had been established which met on a weekly basis to determine various</p>	

agreements in connection with the pay and grading review, such as the new pay structure, the Appeals procedure and pay protection.

Agreement had been reached on all these matters and the Trade Unions had consulted with both their regional and national offices regarding the outcomes of the evaluations and had balloted their membership to agree to the adoption of the new pay structure, the joint appeals process and the pay protection and other arrangements.

Unison and GMB had received a positive 'yes' vote of 78% and 73% accordingly to adopt the new pay structures. A Pay and Grading Framework Agreement had been drafted which would be signed by all parties.

The next stage of the process was to inform all staff and their managers of the outcomes of the review and it was intended that this would be done by issuing letters for all affected employees to the managers, to be handed to their staff. It was expected that this would be carried out during mid-January 2008.

These letters would also be accompanied by an information pack telling staff the full details of the pay agreement, how their job was assessed, what they should do if they wish to exercise their right of appeal etc.

It was reported that Non-teaching jobs in schools had been dealt with in a slightly difference way. A number of generic job descriptions for administrative and technical jobs, together with mid-day assistants, kitchen assistants/cooks etc. had been evaluated and would be recommended to schools for adoption. Schools would be strongly advised to adopt these grades, or if they have jobs which did not fit generic job descriptions, then to request that a separate valuation be completed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS34 RUNCORN TOWN HALL REFURBISHMENT  
(PRESENTATION)

The Board received a presentation from John Hughes (Property Services) on the progress of the Runcorn Town Hall Refurbishment Project.

The presentation outlined the main objectives of the project, the extent of the works, the factors affecting the design, the overall programme, and the budget and progress



to date. The newly refurbished building would include a number of environmental/sustainability factors such as roof insulation, Brise Soleil, lighting controls/energy saving lights, heating controls and photovoltaic panels. The result of these environmental/sustainability factors would be energy efficiency savings to the Council.

The works were expected to be completed by June 2008 and the building fully operational by July 2008.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

CS35 DRAFT SERVICE PLANS 2008-2011

The Board was advised that the three year Departmental Service Plans were currently being reviewed and rolled-forward. The Service Plans would be submitted to the Executive Board for approval on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008 at the same time as the draft Budget. This would ensure that decisions on service planning were linked to resource allocation.

The Board received a presentation from individual Operational Directors describing the key factors affecting their service and their main objectives for the coming three years for the following areas:

- Financial Services;
- Exchequer and Customer Services;
- IT Services;
- Policy and Performance;
- Property Services
- Hospitality and Stadium Services; and
- Legal, Organisational and Development and Human Resources.

Detailed draft service plans would be made available electronically in early January for comment by individual Members. Comments should be made to the relevant Operational Director by the end of January 2008.

Arising from the discussion, it was agreed that a meeting of the Board would be held in late January or early February to comment on the draft Budget proposals prior to them being submitted to Executive Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentations on individual departments service plans be noted; and

(2) Members pass any detailed comments that they may have on individual draft service plans to the relevant Operational Director by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008.

CS36 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received an update on the progress of the following programme topics:

(i) Learning from complaints – work was progressing in accordance with the project plan. The topic group meeting took place on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and a further meeting would take place in January for all Members;

(ii) Development of web-based service delivery – the lead member and lead officer had met and developed a proposed focus for this work;

(iii) Disabled access to Council buildings and services – a summary of the findings of a tour of facilities was outlined by Members; and

(iv) Performance Management – there had been two meetings of the Topic Group, and work was proceeding in accordance with the Project Plan. A consultation with Chairs took place on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS37 CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2008/9

The Board considered a report which was the first step in developing a work programme of topics for the Board to examine in 2008/09.

The following topics were suggested as initial ideas to be included in the work programme for 2008/09:

**Customer focus**

A follow-on from the 2007/08 topic on complaints which was highlighting the wider issue of the need to sharpen further the Council's customer focus in dealing with the public.

**Flexible Working Practices**

To take stock of, and explore ways to take forward, the Council's efforts to introduce more flexible and family

friendly working practices and achieve complementary improvements in productivity, job satisfaction and cost effectiveness.

### **Market And Industrial Units**

To review the Council's business of owning and managing market and industrial units within Halton and make recommendations for its future direction.

### **Access To Services**

To examine the way people currently access Council services and might prefer to access them in the future: explore the impact and opportunities for better service access provided by changing technology and media and pay special attention to people who were hard to reach and failing to access services they want and need.

### **Transfer Of Redundant Community Assets**

The Governing is encouraging local authorities to consider transferring redundant assets (especially land and buildings) to the community and voluntary sector where appropriate. This review would look at the emerging policy, examine the associated risks for both the Council and community, and propose a set of criteria or principles against which individual proposals for asset-transfer could be judged.

RESOLVED: That:

(1) The Board develop and informally consult on a shortlist of its own and others 2008/09 topic suggestions ahead of the Board's meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February, bearing in mind the Council's Topic Selection Criteria; and

(2) at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February, the Board decide on a work programme of 2 – 4 topics to be examined in 2008/09.

Strategic Director  
Corporate and  
Policy

*Meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.*

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**BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Business Efficiency Board held on Wednesday, 9 January 2008 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Leadbetter (Chairman), Lloyd Jones, Findon, Jones, A. Lowe, Norddahl, Philbin, Sly and Worrall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Cross and Osborne

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: I. Leivesley and C. Halpin

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

*Action*

**BEB24 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**BEB25 CPA - USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSMENT**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy on the process the Audit Commission would use annually to assess how well the Council uses its resources. In addition the Board was updated on the informal feedback received from the Audit Commission.

It was noted that 'use of resources' was an Audit Commission assessment of how well Council's manage their financial resources. It looked at how financial management was integrated with strategy and corporate management, supported Council priorities and delivers value for money.

Furthermore the use of resources work was carried out yearly by the Council's appointed external auditors. A judgement was then produced for each of the five themes, which were outlined in detail within the report.

The Board was advised that publication of this year's

assessment for the Council was due soon and informal feedback had been received from the Audit Commission, however the Council's formal score would be embargoed until national publication took place.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) an Action Plan be developed by the Audit Commission, be reported to the next meeting, and be monitored by the Board.

Strategic Director,  
Corporate and  
Policy

#### BEB26 ENGAGEMENT OF EFFICIENCY PARTNER

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which informed the Board of the decision of the Executive Board to engage some external support to work alongside the Council in identifying further efficiency savings. In addition the report sought to outline the steps the efficiency partner would take in developing a long-term efficiency programme.

It was noted that at the last meeting of the Board it was reported that as part of the announcement on the local government financial settlement for 2008/9 – 2010/11 the Government had published a document entitled "Delivering Value for Money in Local Government: Meeting the Challenge of CSR07".

Furthermore the paper outlined the Government's expectations that local authorities should make 3% cashable efficiency savings each year for the next three years. The Government expects local government collectively to save some £4.9 billion over the next three years.

In addition the Council's Executive Board considered the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The MTFS showed that the spending required to maintain existing policies and programmes was expected to increase at a faster rate than the resources available to support it. To balance the budget, the forecast showed there was a requirement to make significant efficiency and cash savings. Given the financial challenge the Council was likely to face over the coming years, it was considered prudent to review the way in which it did its business. The Executive Board agreed that external support be engaged to work alongside the Authority to assist in that process.

A number of potential partners were asked to present options as to how such a piece of work could be undertaken. As a result of that process, KPMG had been appointed to work with the Council to deliver a longer term efficiency programme.

It was further noted that KPMG work would be undertaken in three stages, which were outlined in detail within the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) further reports be brought to the Board on the progress of the work.

Strategic Director,  
Corporate and  
Policy

#### BEB27 TOPIC GROUPS - UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy on the work of the Topic Groups established by the Board.

It was noted that the Board had established two topic groups to examine procurement and workforce planning and structures. Both topic groups had had an initial meeting and would meet again shortly.

The Procurement Group had received a presentation on how the Council currently carries out its procurement function and would be looking at how other Authorities carry out that activity. It would also be examining the spend analysis that had recently been undertaken to look at how the Council gains the best value from its procurement processes.

The Workforce Planning and Structures Group had asked to look at the current management structures of the Council and how they have evolved and developed over recent years. The Group would be looking at structures in light of the recently published "Local Government Workforce Strategy" produced jointly by the Local Government Association, the Improvement and Delivery Agency and the Local Government Employers Association.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*Meeting ended at 7.18 p.m.*

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**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Development Control Committee on Monday, 17 December 2007 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Nolan (Chairman), Thompson (Vice-Chairman), P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, Hignett, Leadbetter, Morley, Osborne, Polhill, Rowan and Sly

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: P. Watts, M. Simpson, R. Cooper, J. Farmer, G. Henry, A. Pannell, A. Plant and J. Tully

Also in attendance: Cllr Wallace and 5 members of the public

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

	<i>Action</i>
DEV62 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meetings held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
DEV63 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
<p>The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties made the decisions described.</p>	
DEV64 - PLAN NO. 07/00714/FUL - PROPOSED 3 STOREY BLOCK, WITH FOURTH STOREY ELEMENT, COMPRISING 20 NO. TWO BED APARTMENTS TO THE LAND AT RUNCORN SERVICE STATION, BRIDGE STREET, RUNCORN WA7 1BP	
<p>The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was reported that United Utilities and Peel Holdings had raised no objections to the proposal.</p>	

The Environment Agency had raised no objections in principle, but had recommended conditions in relation to surface water drainage and arrangements around investigation.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Entering into S.106 Agreement for financial contribution towards off-site open space (BE1 and S25).
2. Provision of amended plans addressing highway issues (BE1).
3. Structural calculations to be approved prior to commencement (BE1).
4. Ground investigation and required remediation prior to commencement (PR14).
5. Prior to commencement existing and proposed levels (BE1).
6. Submission of material samples prior to commencement (BE2).
7. Scheme of foul and surface water prior to commencement (BE1).
8. Car parking drainage passed through trapped gullies as approved (BE1).
9. Tree protection measures to be agreed prior to commencement and implemented (BE1).
10. Tree protection method statement (BE1).
11. Tree replacement scheme (BE1).
12. Approval of additional boundary treatment (BE22).
13. Approval of any additional lighting to the external building elevations (BE1).
14. Prior to occupation details of scheme of recycling separation within each kitchen of residential unit to be approved (BE1).
15. Provision of bin storage within the site (BE1).
16. Vehicle, car parking and servicing to be laid out prior to occupation (BE1).
17. Wheel cleansing details and implementation (BE1).
18. Hours of construction and deliveries (BE1).

DEV65 - PLAN NO. 07/00726/FUL - PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 24 NO. DWELLINGS TOT HE LAND AT BROOKVALE AVENUE NORTH, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined

in the report together with background information in respect of the site. United Utilities had also been consulted and raised no objections.

It was reported that the Environment Agency raised no objections, however they did recommend conditions relating to the requirement for approval of a scheme for the disposal of foul and surface waters and that surface water drainage should be passed through trapped gullies to prevent pollution.

It was noted that three neighbour objections had been received details of which were outlined in the report.

Members raised issues relating to previous flood problems at properties near to the proposed development and the road safety around the busway. It was noted there would no issues in relation to flooding as these would be dealt with in the conditions. In addition should there have been any highway safety issues, the Council's Highways department would have objected to the proposal.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard commencement condition.
2. Condition specifying amended plans (BE1).
3. Construction hours (BE1).
4. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing (BE1).
5. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development (BE1).
6. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2).
7. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in writing (BE2).
8. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation of properties / commencement of use (BE1).
9. Details of traffic calming measures to be submitted and approved in writing prior to commencement (TP18).
10. Conditions relating to restriction of permitted development rights relating to boundary fences, extensions, enclosures and windows. ( BE1).
11. Site investigation, including mitigation and any remediation to be submitted and approved in writing (PR14).
12. Landscaping condition, requiring the submission of both hard and soft landscaping to include

- replacement tree planting (BE2).
- 13. Conditions relating to tree protection during construction and lifetime of the development (BE1).
- 14. Condition relating to a financial contribution towards open space provision (H3).
- 15. Drainage condition, requiring submission and approval of drainage (BE1).
- 16. Submission and agreement of finished floor and site levels (BE1).
- 17. Provision of bin storage and bin provision (BE1)

DEV66 - PLAN NO. 07/00739/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF NO. FIVE STOREY BUILDINGS (PIERS) COMPRISING 108 NO. ONE AND TWO BEDROOM APARTMENTS, LANDSCAPING, PARKING, BASEMENT PARKING AND WATERFRONT WALKWAY / CYCLEWAY STRUCTURE TO THE LAND AT RMC HOUSE, ST MARY'S ROAD, WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was noted that two letters of objection had been received, details of which were outlined in the report.

The Committee was advised that two further letters of objection had been received which raised issues detailed in the report in addition to noise, location of bins and whether relevant conditions had been recommended. Concern had been raised that the underground area car park would be used for anti-social behaviour. It was noted that this area would be secure and it would not be accessible by non-residents. One anonymous letter of objection had been received that raised concerns with sewage, drainage, highways and the impact on television aerial reception.

It was reported that an objection had been received from the Health and Safety Executive of safety grounds and it was currently being discussed and was expected to be withdrawn.

Mr Wilkinson – Secretary of West Bank Boat Club addressed the Committee and spoke against the application raising concerns about the walkway and whether the navigation rights would be maintained.

Ward Councillor Wallace addressed the Committee and spoke on behalf of the West Bank residents raising

concerns regarding the height and the intrusiveness of the building, the problem of bins attracting vermin, parking and traffic, what design the building would be and issues with the footpath.

It was decided that as a result of the issues raised at the Committee that a site visit was required.

RESOLVED: That the application be deferred in order for Members of the Committee to visit the site.

DEV67 - PLAN NO. 07/00767/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF 10 NO. NURSERY UNITS FOR B1 AND B8 USES ON THE LAND AT CATALYST TRADE PARK, WATERLOO ROAD, WIDNES.

It was reported that this item was withdrawn from the to enable further discussions with the Environment Agency to take place and the late representations could be considered.

DEV68 - PLAN NO. 07/00772/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF 10 NO. SINGLE / PART TWO STOREY DETACHED AND SEMI-DETACHED INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS (USE CLASSES, B1, B2 AND B8) AND UP TO 39 NO. OFFICE UNITS IN 5 NO. TWO STOREY BLOCKS (USE CLASS B1) ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL WORKS / STRUCTURES AND SUB STATION TO THE LAND AT BENNETFS LANE / DANS ROAD, WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was reported that a minor amendment had been received.

RESOLVED That

- a) Authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Environment and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Chair or Vice-Chair to determine the application following confirmation from the Environment Agency that they have no objections to any other appropriately recommended conditions.
- b) Subject to the conditions listed below:

1. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2)
2. Specifying amended plans (BE1)
3. Requiring that the scheme be implemented in full accordance with the approved plans/ details unless otherwise agreed. (BE1)
4. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in writing. (BE2)
5. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing and used during construction. (BE1)
6. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development. (BE1)
7. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation/ commencement of use. (BE1)
8. Agreement and implementation of cycle parking provision (TP6)
9. Agreement and implementation of bins and recycling areas, feature shelter, seating, planters and other street furniture. BE2
10. Requiring implementation of Travel Plan (TP16)
11. Restricting external lighting (BE1)
12. Restricting external security shutters (BE1)
13. Restricting external storage and working. (BE1)
14. Site investigation, including mitigation to be submitted and approved in writing.(PR14)
15. Protection of trees (BE1)
16. Drainage (PR16)

NB. Although councillor Polhill had no personal interest in this application, to avoid any suggestion of bias he decided to take no part in the consideration or voting on the item.

DEV69 - PLAN NO'S 07/00490/FUL, 07/00791/LBC AND 07/00831CAC - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXTENSIONS TO SOUTH OF SITE AND CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT TWO STOREY EXTENSION INCLUDING CHANGE OF USE TO MIXED USE INCLUDING HOTEL (C1), RESTAURANTS (A3) AND BARS (A4) TO THE LAND AT THE HALTON BUSINESS FORUM, VICTORIA SQUARE WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was reported that the proposal was for the conversion of the former Widnes Town Hall and Business

Forum to a mixed-use hotel including bars and restaurants. It was noted that demolition could be justified and the original Town Hall design could be retained.

RESOLVED: That

- a) Application 07/00790/FUL be approved subject to the following conditions relating to the following:
1. Specifying amended plans (BE1)
  2. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE2)
  3. Requiring that the scheme be implemented in full accordance with the approved plans/ details unless otherwise agreed. (BE1)
  4. Specifying the use to hotel (C1) with associated restaurants (A3) and bars (A4).
  5. Boundary treatments to be submitted and approved in writing. (BE2)
  6. Wheel cleansing facilities to be submitted and approved in writing and used during construction. (BE1)
  7. Requiring submission and agreement of ground and finished floor levels (BE1).
  8. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development. (BE1)
  9. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to occupation/ commencement of use. (BE1)
  10. Agreement and implementation of cycle parking provision (TP6)
  11. Restricting external lighting (BE1)
  12. Restricting external storage and working. (BE1)
  13. Site investigation, including mitigation to be submitted and approved in writing. (PR14)
  14. Requiring additional details relating to any associated plant and related noise (PR2)
- b) Application 07/00791/LBC be approved subject to conditions relating to the following:

That Authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services to approve the application subject to the Secretary of State not calling the application in and to conditions relating to the following:

1. Specifying amended plans (BE9)
2. Materials condition, requiring the submission and approval of the materials to be used (BE9)

3. Requiring that the scheme be implemented in full accordance with the approved plans/ details unless otherwise agreed. (BE9)
  4. Requiring submission and agreement of ground and finished floor levels (BE9).
- c) Application 07/00831/CAC be approved subject to conditions relating to the following:
1. Requiring that the demolition be implemented in full accordance with the approved plans/ details unless otherwise agreed. (BE13)

NB. Although councillor Polhill had no personal interest in this application, to avoid any suggestion of bias he decided to take no part in the consideration or voting on the item.

DEV70 - PLAN NO. 07/00815/FULEIA - PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION CENTRE AND ADDITIONAL WAREHOUSING FLOOR SPACE WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, VEHICLE PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING DIVERSION OF EXISTING WATERCOURSE TO THE LAND AT WIDNES INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT TERMINAL, WEST BANK DOCK ESTATE, WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was reported that the North West Regional Assembly had confirmed "in principle" support for the scheme subject to the local authority satisfying itself that the prime purpose of the development was to facilitate rail freight and the provision of satisfactory travel plan arrangements.

It was reported that one letter of objection had been received which raised concerns regarding the visual impact the proposal would have and the noise and air quality. The Committee was advised that the Highways and Environmental Agency had raised no objections.

Members discussed the potential problem of the current access road exiting into Halebank. It was noted that this could be solved by way of a condition.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) That the application be approved subject to:



- a) the applicant entering into a legal or other appropriate agreement for a developer contribution towards off site highway improvements and public transport provision, off site landscaping/ habitat works and upgrade of watercourses and associated landscape/ habitats.
  
- b) The following conditions:
  1. Specifying amended plans (BE1)
  2. Specifying approved use (E7)
  3. Requiring submission and agreement of materials (BE2)
  4. Requiring submission and agreement of boundary treatments (BE22)
  5. Requiring submission and agreement of street furniture, signage and equipment (BE2)
  6. Requiring submission and agreement of detailed landscape works (BE2)
  7. Requiring submission and agreement of landscaping and management plan including wildlife and habitat protection measures
  8. Restricting areas and height of external storage (E5)
  9. Control of installation/maintenance of external lighting (PR4)
  10. Protection of nesting birds (GE19)
  11. Agreement of waste management strategy (BE1)
  12. Ground Investigation and mitigation (PR14)
  13. Requiring implementation of an archaeological watching brief (BE6)
  14. Submission and agreement of cut and fill details and finished ground levels (BE1)
  15. Laying out of access/parking and servicing (BE1)
  16. Drainage (PR5)
  17. Submission and agreement of details relating to bin storage (BE1)
  18. Provision of disabled parking and cycle parking (TP6/ TP12)
  19. Requiring wheel cleansing facilities throughout construction phase (BE1)
  20. Restricting construction and delivery hours (BE1)
  21. Routing of traffic and vehicles during construction and operational phases to secure Foundry Lane access for staff and emergency use only (E7)

22. Agreement of details for reconfiguring/ rebuilding of bridge over Ditton Brook (BE1)
23. Agreement and implementation of travel plan (TP16)
24. Grampian condition/ method statement for securing and ensuring servicing by rail freight (E7)
25. Grampian conditions relating to agreement of details for upgrades to watercourse and associated landscaping/ habitat creation, off-site works to the Desoto Road Roundabout and off and on-site cycle and pedestrian works.

An additional condition was added as follows:

26. Restriction of HGV vehicle movements through the western access point.
  27. Conditions recommended by the Environment Agency.
- 2) That the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services be given delegated authority to negotiate an appropriate legal agreement in respect of improvements to March Brook and other watercourses, public transport / highway contributions and off site landscape and habitat works.
  - 3) That if the S106 Agreement or alternative arrangement is not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee to refuse the application on the grounds that it fails to comply with Policy S25 (Planning Obligations).

#### DEV71 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

It was reported that appeals were lodged following the Council's refusal of the following applications:

Decisions had been made as follows:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 06/00939/COU | Proposed change of use of car wash into take away (Class A5) at Halton Brow Service Station Halton Brow Runcorn |
|--------------|---|

**This appeal was dismissed**

07/00275/FUL Proposed demolition of rear existing annexe/workshop and erection of two storey side/single storey rear extension with balcony at 35 Runcorn Road Moore

**This appeal was allowed**

It was noted that the following applications had been withdrawn:

07/00087/COU Proposed conversion of existing flat over shop to commercial storage and alterations to existing shop frontage at 33-35 Alforde Street Widnes

07/00435/OUT Outline application (with all matters reserved) for residential development of up to 38 No.two storey houses on Land off Hallwood Link Road Runcorn

07/00575/FUL Proposed 6ft fence to side boundary at 11 Aster Crescent Runcorn

07/00665/FUL Proposed single storey rear extension at 109 Heath Road Widnes

07/00701/OUT Outline application (with appearance,landscaping and scale matters reserved) for erection of building for storage use including approval of siting and means of access on Land at Junction of Cromwell Street and Hutchinson Street Widnes

07/00709/FUL Proposed residential development comprising 7 No. two storey dwellings, with curtilage parking and hard/soft landscaping on Land to the rear of 82 Halton Road Runcorn

It was noted that a petition had been received on the following application:-

07/00068/ELC – A petition has been received from a number residents (54 names). The petitioners object to the proposed incinerator being built by INEOS Chlor.

This petition received after the 31 July 2007 and was forwarded to the Secretary of State for their information.

*Meeting ended at 7.05 p.m.*

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Development Control Committee on Wednesday, 16 January 2008 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Nolan (Chairman), Thompson (Vice-Chairman), P. Blackmore, S. Blackmore, Hignett, Leadbetter, Morley, Osborne, Polhill and Rowan

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Sly

Absence declared on Council business:

Officers present: L. Beard, L. Capper, R. Cooper, J. Farmer, P. Oldfield, A. Pannell, A. Plant, M. Simpson and P. Watts

Also in attendance: Councillors Wallace, Cross, M. Ratcliffe, Mr Brewin, Mr Lockett and Mr Newport.

Members of the public: 41

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

	<i>Action</i>
DEV72 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2007, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to it being noted that to avoid any suggestion of bias, Councillor Polhill decided to take no part in the consideration or voting on items DEV69 and DEV70.</p>	
DEV73 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
<p>The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties made the decisions described.</p>	
DEV74 - PLAN NO. 07/00739/FUL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF 3 NO. FIVE STOREY BUILDINGS (PIERS) COMPRISING 108 NO.	

ONE AND TWO BEDROOM APARTMENTS, LANDSCAPING, PARKING, BASEMENT PARKING AND WATERFRONT WALKWAY / CYCLEWAY STRUCTURE TO THE LAND AT RMC HOUSE, ST MARY'S ROAD, WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was reported that there had been five individual letters of objection details of which were outlined in the report. In addition it was noted that a petition had been received with 30 names objecting on the grounds of loss of views and highway safety.

Ward Cllr Pamela Wallace addressed the Committee in support of the residents of West Bank and noted her thanks to the Members of the Development Control Committee for arranging a site visit to RMC House.

It was reported that since the last Committee a letter had been received from the Environment Agency which confirmed that they had withdrew their objection subject to conditions listed in the resolution below.

It was reported that the site was appropriate for residential development given its characteristics, prominent waterfront location and residential surroundings. Members were advised that traffic levels generated by the development could be accommodated within existing highway capacity and it was not considered that the proposal would be detrimental to highway safety.

Members discussed the height of the development and it was noted that it would be in compliance with Policy H2 and the National Planning Policy. All Members of the Development Control Committee were in favour of the application with the exception of Cllr Leadbetter who wished to note on record that he was not in favour of this application.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following:

- A) The applicant entering into a legal agreement in relation to the payment of a commuted sum for the provision and improvement of off-site open space/improvements to the church and public realm in the adjacent conservation area, and a legal agreement for the provision of the footpath/cycleway to link up the Trans-Pennine Trail.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

- B) Conditions relating to the following;
1. Standard condition relating to timescale and duration of the permission.
  2. Submission of materials (BE2)
  3. Provision of recycling separation inside each apartment (BE1)
  4. Access and parking/layout, cycle parking provision (BE1)
  5. Trans-Pennine Trail/Cycle Way provision (TP12)
  6. Site investigations and remediation required (PR14)
  7. Environment Agency conditions (BE1)
  8. Details of drainage (BE1)
  9. Details of landscaping scheme (BE1)
  10. Conditions specifying construction hours and ours of deliveries for building materials. (BE1)
  11. Wheel wash facilities (BE1)
  12. Grampian condition regarding the cleaning up of the waterfront (BE1)
  13. Requirement for an archaeological investigation (BE1)
  14. Grampian off site highways condition (BE1)
  15. Details of site levels (BE1)
  16. Provision of bin storage and bin provision (BE1)
  17. Condition for the removal existing buildings (BE1)
  18. Condition relating too amended plans (BE1 and BE2).
  20. Condition relating to cycle storage.
  21. Condition in relation to boundary treatment and pedestrian visibility (BE1 and BE2).
  22. Condition relating to details of external lighting (PR4).
  23. Condition for obscured glazing on the Terraced Road elevations.
  24. Condition relating to television reception survey/mitigation (BE1 & BE2)
  25. Condition for the full details of roof terrace area including screening/fencing (BE1 and BE2).
- C) That if the legal agreement is not executed within a reasonable period of time authority is delegated to the Operational Director- Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman to refuse the application on the grounds that it fails to comply with UDP Policy S25 Planning Obligations.

Additional conditions were added as follows:

26. Measures and finished floor levels in the Flood Risk Assessment.

27. Disposal of foul and surface waters.
  28. Surface waters from the car park and roof shall pass through an oil interceptor.
  29. Scheme for the protection of the river Mersey from building materials.
  30. Site investigation in contamination, risk assessment and mitigation measures.
- D) The Environment Agency had also recommended additional informative in relation to rainwater downspouts, surface waters from disturbed ground and importation of material for construction.

DEV75 - PLAN NO. 07/00797/OUT - OUTLINE APPLICATION (WITH APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT AND SCALE MATTERS RESERVED), FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TOGETHER WITH CREATION OF WILDLIFE CORRIDOR GREENWAYS TO THE LAND ADJACENT TO 179 DERBY ROAD, WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was noted that United Utilities had raised no objection to the proposal.

Mr Brewin addressed the Committee on behalf of the residents of Derby Road and spoke in opposition of the application. Ward Councillor Cross also addressed the Committee.

It was noted that two further neighbour objections had been received which raised concerns that were detailed within the report. Members discussed various issues such as flooding, loss of use of foot paths, wildlife and traffic.

It was reported that the proposal would result in the inappropriate release of a Greenfield site for residential development contrary to policies H1 and S18. It would result in the loss of an adopted Greenspace and site of important nature conservation for which adequate compensatory measures had not been proven which was contrary to policies GE6 and GE19. It was noted that the proposal had not taken into account the provision of children's play, therefore contrary to policy H3. It would provide unsafe access into the site and inappropriate internal layouts that would conflict with policies BE1, BE2, TP7, TP12, and TP17. It was noted that the proposal had provided insufficient information with regard to surface water drainage and would result in development levels to enable a full assessment of the proposal to be made and would be



contrary to policies BE1 and BE2.

RESOLVED: That the application be refused.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

DEV76 - PLAN NO. 07/00821/COU - PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM INDUSTRIAL (B1, B2 AND B8) TO LEISURE (D2), TO THE LAND AT UNITS 3 AND 5 WESTGATE, EVERITE ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WIDNES.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was reported that the Council's Highway Engineer and Environmental Health Officer had been consulted. The Health and Safety Executive had also been consulted.

It was reported that the Council's Environmental Health Officer (Health and Safety) raised concerns on the grounds of a safety issue in relation the HGV's and other commercial vehicles that could potentially endanger the children.

Mr Mike Lockett from Focus Institute of Gymnastics addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the proposal.

Following consideration of the item it was noted that this type of sporting facility for young people was fully supported within the Borough of Halton. This was reflected in comments from the Council's Sport and Recreation Manager and the Advisory Teacher for PE and Sport as detailed in the report. However it was reported that the application site was unsuitable and unsustainable for the proposed use due to the highway safety issues and that the site was in a Primarily Employment Area.

Members felt that should a different location be sought that was not in a Primarily Employment Area and a safer location in relation to highway safety, the applicant could apply in the future. It was agreed that the applicant could work with the Planning Officer to seek another site.

RESOLVED: That

Strategic Director  
- Environment

1. the application be recommended for refusal due to the unsuitability of the use and location within a Primarily Employment Area and the likely adverse impact on the existing and potential town centre sports facilities; the

undesirable potential conflict with existing uses and unacceptable highway safety implications. The proposal would therefore conflict with policies BE1, LTC3, E3, E4, TP1 and TP17 of the Halton UDP and PPS6 "Planning for Town Centres".

2. The applicant work with the Planning Officer to seek another site.

DEV77 - PLAN NO. 07/00832/FUL - PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF FORMER MILK DEPOT TO PROVIDE 81 NO. APARTMENTS IN A SINGLE BLOCK (VARIABLE HEIGHT UP TO SEVEN STOREYS HIGH) AT THE FORMER EXPRESS DAIRIES SITE, SEWELL STREET / PERRY STREET, RUNCORN WA7 5SW.

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was reported that United Utilities had indicated that the proposal would require the diversion of a public sewer that would have to be achieved at the applicant's expense. The implementation of the scheme would be dependant on United Utilities requirements. It was reported that comments had been received from 6 local residents, details of which were outlined in the report.

Mr Newport addressed the Committee on behalf of the applicant and spoke in favour of the proposal.

The Committee discussed various issues such as the layout and design of the apartments, hours of construction and deliveries, and the impact of noise.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Section 106 Agreement to contribute towards off site improvements and public open space contribution (BE1 and S25).
- 2 Provision of amended plans removing Type A balcony detail and improvement of bin and cycle storage (BE1).
- 3 Submission of material samples prior to commencement (BE2).
- 4 Prior to commencement submission of existing and proposed levels (BE1).
- 5 Tree protection measures to be agreed prior to

Strategic Director  
- Environment

- 6 commencement and implemented (BE1).
- 6 Provision of and implementation of landscaping scheme x 3 (BE1).
- 7 Prior to commencement ground investigation and remediation where necessary (PR14).
- 8 Provision of highway works improving junction of Picton Avenue and Sewell Street prior to commencement of apartment block (BE1).
- 9 Provision of resident car parking, 5 spaces at junction of Picton Avenue and Sewell Street and 9 spaces to rear of Picton Avenue in accordance with approved plans prior to commencement of apartment block (BE1).
- 10 Approval of boundary treatment (BE22).
- 11 Approval of balcony and roof garden boundary treatment (BE22 and BE1).
- 12 Approval of secure bin store details prior to commencement (BE2).
- 13 Approval of secure cycle store details prior to commencement (BE2 and TP6).
- 14 Approval of any additional lighting to the external building elevations (BE1).
- 15 Prior to occupation details of scheme of recycling separation within each kitchen of residential unit to be approved (BE1 and BE2).
- 16 Prior to occupation provision of submitted and approved waste recycling separation receptacles in each kitchen of each residential unit (BE1 and BE2).
- 17 Prior to occupation implementation of noise attenuation measures (PR8).
- 18 Vehicle, car parking and servicing to be laid out prior to occupation (BE1).
- 19 Wheel cleansing details, including method statement and implementation (BE1).
- 20 Hours of construction and deliveries (BE1).

DEV78 - PLAN NO. 07/00835/FUL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDING AND ERECTION OF 14 NO. APARTMENT BLOCK TO THE LAND AT 1 - 5 OLLIER STREET, WIDNES WA8 7SE

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site. It was reported that United Utilities had raised no objection in principle to the proposal.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following conditions:-

Strategic Director  
- Environment

- 1 Prior to commencement provision of financial contribution towards off-site public open space (BE1).
- 2 Submission of material samples prior to commencement (BE2).
- 3 Provision of landscaping scheme x 3 (BE1 & BE2).
- 4 Approval of boundary details (BE2).
- 5 Approval of secure bin store details prior to commencement (BE2).
- 6 Approval of secure cycle store details prior to commencement (TP6).
- 7 Approval of any additional lighting to the external building elevations (BE2).
- 8 Obscure window details on west facing elevations to be submitted and approved prior to commencement (BE1).
- 9 Vehicle, car parking and servicing to be laid out prior to occupation (BE1).
- 10 Car parking areas and footways to be made up to an adoptable standard including dropped crossings (BE1).
- 11 Wheel cleansing details and implementation (BE1).
- 12 Hours of construction and deliveries (BE1).

NB: Although Councillor P. Blackmore had no personal interest in the application No. 07/00068/ELC, to avoid any suggestion of bias he decided to take no part in the following discussion and left the room.

#### DEV79 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

It was reported that the following applications had been withdrawn: -

07/00777/FUL Proposed single storey side/rear extension to form integral garage at 41 Shakespeare Road, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 7DQ

07/00813/HBCFUL Proposed erection of 1.2m high paladin style fencing to replace existing fence (to rear of Nos 2,4,6 and 8 Victoria Avenue) at Birchfield Road, Widnes, Cheshire

07/00828/FUL Proposed extension to L Block building at Daresbury Laboratory, Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus,

Keckwick Lane, Daresbury, Warrington,  
Cheshire

07/00839/FUL Proposed 3rd floor extension of office building within roof space at Clifton Road, Sutton, Runcorn, Cheshire

07/00857/FUL Proposed loft conversion including 2 No. dormer windows and 3 No. rooflights at 10 Rembury Place, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA4 4JT

Members were informed of additional information regarding application No. 07/00068/ELC in respect of DTI notification at INEOS Chlor.

Councillor Margaret Ratcliffe addressed the Committee and spoke about issues detailed within the report.

The information outlined the results from the following:

- The reptile survey;
- The amphibian survey;
- The Japanese Knotweed survey; and
- Comments on additional reports

After considerable debate and discussion by Members and the Lead Officer at the Committee summarised the views expressed and concluded that a letter would be sent to DBERR in response to their correspondence, which emphasised that: -

1. the Committee wished to fully re-endorse their original recommendations; and
2. the Committee still recommend the inclusion of all the 52 originally suggested conditions but also that if they were not to be imposed that they would wish to receive further evidence from the Secretary of State to see how the matters raised were to be controlled.

*Meeting ended at 7.39 p.m.*

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**REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Monday, 21 January 2008 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Philbin (Chairman), Wallace (Vice-Chairman), Bryant, Drakeley, Howard, A. Lowe, Nelson, E. Ratcliffe and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Cross and D Inch

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Ferguson, K. Cleary, J. Tully and L. Capper

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

REG18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2007 having been printed and circulated were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to Councillor Wainwright's apologies being recorded as apologies on Council business.

REG19 LEGAL SERVICES LICENSING IN TABLES

At a previous meeting of the Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2006, Members were advised of a document relating to various licences dealt with by Legal Services and resolved that the information as outlined be published on the Council's website.

Over the last twelve months there had been significant changes in legislation and these changes had been reflected in the amended Legal Services Licensing Tables, a copy of which was circulated to Members.

In addition the Committee considered a copy of the proposed member training programme 2008. It was agreed that race nights and poker be included in the list of topics for the training session on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

*Action*

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the amended information contained in Legal Services Licensing Tables be noted; and
- (2) the member training programme for Regulatory Committee during 2008 as amended be endorsed.

REG20 TAXI LICENSING – REPEAL OF THE “CONTRACT EXEMPTION”

The Committee was advised that Section 75 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 state that “nothing in this part of the Act shall apply to a vehicle used only for carrying passengers for hire or reward under a contract for the hire of a vehicle for a period of not less than 7 days.” This was known as the Contract Exemption and had meant that persons carrying on business under the Exemption had been exempted from all controls which would otherwise apply to private hire vehicles.

The Contract Exemption was to be removed by virtue of the Road Safety Act 2006. The date when the Contract Exemption would cease to exist had been set as 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008. As a result all vehicles formerly claiming contract exemption must from this date be licensed as private hire vehicles by their local authority. The types of businesses affected by the legislation could include chauffeur type vehicles, airport transfer, and executive cars which were used on a contractual basis to transport company executives and management etc.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

REG21 TAXI LICENSING – POLICY REVIEW OF MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS: STANDARDS AND FREQUENCY

The Committee were advised on the results of a consultation exercise on the medical standards and frequency of medical examinations required by Single Status Drivers. At a previous meeting of the Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2007, it was requested that a consultation exercise be undertaken on:

- (1) the appropriate medical standard to be adopted;
- (2) the appropriate ages for mandatory age related medical examination for Single Status Drivers; and



(3) the appropriate frequency of such examinations.

The Committee were also advised of the existing policy which enabled the Council's officers to require medical examinations at any time during a licence period should information received by the Council suggest that one is required. Conditions existed on Single Status Licences requiring holders to notify the Council of any change in medical condition and also not to drive when unfit.

The DVLA requirements for Group 2 medicals was that they applied to drivers on first application for a Group 2 driving licence and they must be repeated every five years from when a driver becomes 45 (referred to here as age related medicals).

The Council's current policy for medical standards was the requirement of a Group 2 medical examination on first application for a single status driver's licence. Further examinations were required every six years on the licence holder attaining the age of 45 (or will be 45 due in the period of the proposed existing licence).

The Council's existing policies allowed medicals to be carried out by applicants' own GPs (or GPs practice) or by the 5 Boroughs Partnership.

It was reported that the main difference in the frequency of medical tests required by the Council as compared with the DVLA applied to driver's aged 65 and over. The DVLA requires Group 2 medical examinations annually for driver's aged 65 and over, whereas the Council makes no distinction between younger and older drivers.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2007, the Licensing Section consulted with Members of the Taxi Consultative Group regarding medical standards requesting that they consult with their Members and report back. On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2007, members of the Taxi Consultative Group advised that their members were content with the existing policy.

In addition, comments were sought on the medical standards and frequency of examinations required by Single Status Drivers from the 5 Boroughs Partnership who are the Council's Occupational Health Medical Advisors. In the opinion of the 5 Boroughs Partnership initial examinations were a necessary requirement, but to reduce the frequency of such tests (i.e. to less than 5 years), contrary to the advice of the DVLA would be improper and could not be recommended.

Following the consultation exercise officers' concluded that there was no evidence of medical problems associated with the Council's existing policy on which to base a change in policy:

- on the appropriate medical standard to be adopted;
- on the appropriate ages for mandatory medical examinations for Single Status Drivers; and
- on the appropriate age for introduction of mandatory age-related medical examinations for Single Status Drivers.

Although the Council had a slightly reduced policy on the appropriate frequency of medical examinations, as compared with the DVLA, in order to have exactly the same standard would cause unacceptable administrative difficulties taking into account the Council's three-year cycle of renewing Single Status Driver's licences. The Committee were advised that the DVLA Guidance was written for the licensing arrangements applicable to HGV and PSV drivers and did not take account of the licence frequencies applicable to Single Status Drivers.

It was also reported that for drivers' aged 65 and over the Committee could consider medicals being required on an annual basis. However, in order to track such a change in policy this implied granting annual Single Status Drivers licences for this age group. Should this change in policy be considered appropriate, the administrative consequences of annual licences would have to be agreed by the Committee.

Arising from the discussion the Committee agreed that for Single Status Driver's aged 65 and over Group 2 medical examinations be required every two years and not every three as at present.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Group 2 medical examinations for Single Status Driver's under the age of 65 remain as: on the first application with further examinations every six years; and
- (2) Group 2 medical examinations for Single Status Drivers 65 and over be amended to every two years.

Council Solicitor

*Meeting ended at 7.20 p.m.*