

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 15 March 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: G. Ferguson, A. West, R. Barnett, S. Baxter, P. Bickerstaff, R. Dart, E. Dawson, J. Hatton and M. Curtis

Also in attendance: (none)

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

		<i>Action</i>
ES92	MINUTES The minutes of the meetings held on 22 nd February 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO	
ES93	CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES SHORT BREAK CONTRACTS The Sub-Committee considered a report which outlined a number of contracts which provided a range of short breaks for disabled children and their families in Halton commissioned by the Council from the voluntary sector. In 2006 quotations were sought from providers and contracts awarded based on this process. Contracts were awarded to provide these services for one year due to the annual nature of the funding (Carers Grant). The exception to the above was the Crossroads contract awarded in 2004 for three years at a cost of £12,333, ending on 31 st March 2007. Renewal of the Contract was sought at an increased value. Additional contracts to fund additional carers within the clubs was	

awarded in 2006 bringing the total value to £17,555. The cost of running the clubs however, exceeded the contract value, the balance having been funded by charitable funding which Crossroads had been able to secure. This charitable funding had now ended and Crossroads therefore required the full cost of the service provision to be provided by the Council in order to continue to provide the service.

The cost of the Contract for 2007-08 would therefore be £29,367. This price level was consistent with the pricing of other contractors and takes into account additional staffing and transport costs.

The report sought a waiver of the Council's Standing Orders to enable the extension of the existing contracts until 31st March 2008 due to the specialist services provided to meet the needs of disabled children and their families and as there were limited providers delivering these services in the Halton area.

In order to fulfil the requirements and comply with Standing Orders the existing providers would be required to submit a written quotation to provide the same service for 2007-08 as they have provided in 2006-07. Each of the existing service contracts had been monitored on a quarterly basis and all perform to a satisfactory standard or above.

RESOLVED: That the waiver of Council Standing Orders (S4.1) and a one-year extension for each of the contracts outlined in the report be agreed.

Strategic Director
Children and
Young People

ES94 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The Sub-Committee was advised that the Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed new duties on local authorities. Within these duties, the local authorities powers of intervention were strengthened. It was reported that these duties placed considerable challenges upon the existing structures within the Council for improving standards in schools.

Following initial work which had been undertaken with Steve Turnbull, EM Direct, it was proposed that there were a number of areas which required further development to deliver aspects of the Education and Inspection Act and expectations of the Joint Area Review.

It was proposed that specialist consultancy support was now required to remodel the service. Specifically, the

consulting support would be required to undertake developmental work whilst also bringing forward specific recommendations on service configuration. Specialist support had been sourced from SERCO.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 4.1 be waived in respect of the contract for securing the services of a consultant to undertake key development work relating to the remodelling of how the local authority undertakes its statutory function in relation to school improvement.

Strategic Director
Children and
Young People

ES95 CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES, SCALE OF CHARGES

The Sub-Committee considered the proposed admission charges for 2007/08 for the Council Libraries, the Kingsway Learning Centre, Leisure Centres, Parks and Playing Pitches, Community Centres and The Brindley Arts Centre.

RESOLVED: That the charges as outlined in the report be approved.

Strategic Director
Health and
Community

ES96 REVIEW OF FEES & CHARGES – CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

The Sub-Committee considered a report which outlined proposed increases in fees and charges for the Children's Services rates paid to foster carers.

RESOLVED: That the proposed changes in fees and charges outlined in the report be approved.

Strategic Director
Children and
Young People

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

ES97 FEES AND CHARGES

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the proposed increase in charges for services relating to Planning, Transportation and Development, Environment and Regulatory areas.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges detailed in the report be agreed and referred to the relevant Policy and Performance Boards for information.

Strategic Director
Environment

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES98 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2007/8

The Sub-Committee considered the Council's Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2007/08.

The Strategy covers the Treasury limits in force which would limit the Treasury risk and activities of the Council, prudential indicators, the current treasury position, the borrowing requirement, prospects for interest rates, the borrowing strategy, debt rescheduling, the investment strategy, and any extraordinary treasury issues.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to approve the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

ES99 LOCAL LAND CHARGES – FEES 2007/2008

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval for a new scale of fees for Local Land Charge Searches effective from 1st April 2006.

The LLC1 fee was set by central government but with effect from 1st April 2007 that power was devolved to Councils. The detailed guidance from Central Government outlining the basis for setting charges was still awaited. However, it was known that the charges for the LLC1 had to be set so as to cover costs rather than to generate income.

It was reported that the Council needed to respond to the new freedom to set the LLC1 fee and it was proposed to reduce the CON29 fee to £118.00 and increase the LLC1 fee to £26.00. Approval for a new maximum charge was also sought.

RESOLVED: That effective from 1st April 2007:

(1) taking account of the new discretion in relation to LLC1 charge the fees for Local Land Charges searches be set as follows:

Council Solicitor

LLC1:	£26.00 (currently £6.00);
CON29:	£118.00 (currently £134.00);
Part II Optional Inquiries:	£12.00 (no change);
Additional Inquiries:	£26.00 (no change) and equivalent increases

- (2) new maximum charge of £2,500 (£1500 since 2001);
- (3) the Council Solicitor, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, be authorised to review and amend the above charges in light of detailed Government guidance when issued; and
- (4) the Council Solicitor, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, be authorised to review and amend the Common Land Search Fee in light of detailed Government guidance when issued.

ES100 DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

Under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the authority was allowed to grant Discretionary Non Domestic Rate Relief to organisations who are either a charity or a non-profit making organisation.

The Sub-Committee considered a report which set out details of an application for Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief for University of Liverpool, Building 2, Daresbury Innovation Centre, Daresbury. An additional letter on behalf of the Daresbury Innovation Centre was circulated to Members for consideration.

RESOLVED: That under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, the following applications for discretionary rate relief be refused:

University of Liverpool 20%.

ES101 ST BEDES INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS

The Sub-Committee considered a report which proposed to regularise the situation in relation to the St. Bede' Infant and Junior School Playing Fields presently used by both schools to ensure they become school playing fields.

By formalising the arrangement, the schools would be able to attract funding to utilise the land more for the benefit of all pupils on both sites.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the playing fields be designated as school playing

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

fields and are used by both schools;

(2) the Archdiocese of Liverpool will become responsible for all maintenance, fencing and any planning consents required for the school use; and

(3) the land will remain in the Council's ownership.

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ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

ES102 TENDER FOR NEW REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLES

The Sub-Committee was advised on six tenders received for the purchase of 10 new refuse collection vehicles.

The 6 tenders had been measured against the criteria detailed in the tender specification, i.e. 40% price, 40% qualitative factors, including vehicle characteristics and performance meeting the specification, operational and maintenance requirements of the Council, 20% contractor suitability, to include experience, quality assurance and compliance with conditions of contract.

As a result, taking into consideration price, quality and suitability, the most economically advantageous tender for the procurement of the new refuse collection vehicles was Farid Municipal Vehicles Limited, and this tender had been accepted by the Operational Director, Highways and Transportation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES103 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Committee was advised that a matter had arisen which required immediate attention by the Committee because in this case a decision was required before the date of the next meeting (Minute 104 refers), therefore pursuant to Section 100 B (4) and 100 E Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman ruled that the item be considered as a matter of urgency.

CORPORATE PORTFOLIO

ES104 BRINDLEY MOUND

The Sub-Committee was advised on 6 tenders received for the removal of the Brindley Mound and for the construction of the retaining wall.

The work was expected to commence mid-April 2007 and would be a 10-week contract.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to appoint D. Morgan as the preferred contractor for the removal of the Brindley Mound and for the construction of the retaining wall.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
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MINUTES ISSUED: 27th March 2007

CALL IN: 2nd April 2007

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 2nd April 2007

Meeting ended at 10.53 a.m.