

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 29 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, P. Barron, J. Downes, S Harris, P. Wright and C. Goodall

Also in attendance: (none)

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

Action

ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO

ES105 NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE HALTON REGISTRATION SERVICE

The White Paper Civil Registration: Vital Change, published in 2002, proposed that local authorities should be given responsibility for delivering the local registration service, and that Superintendent Registrars and Registrars should become local authority employees.

The Sub-Committee considered a report which set out the new Governance arrangements for the delivery of the Halton Registration Service. The new governance arrangements would provide for a more flexible, less prescriptive scheme allowing local authorities greater discretion to deliver local services which would meet both national standards and local community needs.

The Board were informed that in order to seek approval for the scheme under the new arrangements, local authorities must agree to the terms of the Code of Practice attached to the new scheme, deliver local registration services which would meet at least the national standards set out in the Good Practice Guide, prepare an annual

service delivery plan setting out the local authorities plans and targets for the year ahead, and have in place a reliable system for monitoring performance and annual reporting to the Registrar General.

Her Majesty's Inspectors had satisfied themselves that the Halton Registration Service was in a position to seek approval for a new registration scheme, in order to benefit from the new governance arrangements.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the pursuance of new governance arrangements for the delivery of the Halton Registration Service, be agreed and in doing so specifically agree the Council's commitment to the Code of Practice that would form part of the new scheme; and

(2) the Halton Registration District Service Delivery and Improvement Plan for 2007/08 be agreed.

Strategic Director
Health and
Community

ES106 BRITISH REGISTER OF ACCREDITED MEMORIAL MASONS (BRAMM)

In 2004 the national problem of unsafe headstones in the country's cemeteries lead to the setting up of the British Register of Memorial Masons (BRAMM).

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought the pursuance by the Council of burial authority registration with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons, and for the requirement that only BRAMM Accredited Memorial Masons would operate in the Council's cemeteries.

Detailed in the report were the primary aims of the BRAMM Registration Scheme. It was noted that at present burial authority registration was free but would represent a clear demonstration that the authority takes its responsibility for the safety of memorials as seriously as the masons who register on the scheme. In particular, the registration required the authority to meet obligations, which were detailed in the report.

Of particular benefit to the Council was that permitting only BRAMM accredited memorial masons to carry out memorial works within the cemeteries would mean that the Council no longer needed to maintain its own local register of memorial masons.

Members were made aware that there would be a loss of income of £470 per year as a result of no longer maintaining a local register of memorial masons. However, Bereavement Services collect approximately £580k and this loss of £470 would be offset by the general increases in fees and charges that were likely to be applied for the 2007/08 financial year.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Sub-Committee agrees to the Bereavement Services Manager submitting an application for Halton to be a registered burial authority with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons; and

(2) the Sub-Committee agrees to the re-wording of Section 7.5 of the Cemetery Rules as detailed in the report, with the proviso that the amended wording comes into effect on 1st October 2007.

Strategic Director
Health and
Community

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

ES107 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES – HEALTH & COMMUNITY DIRECTORATE 2007-2008

The Sub-Committee considered a report which outlined the proposed increases in fees and charges for the Health and Community Care Services and Consumer Protection Services.

A consultation exercise on the proposals for changes to the charges for Social Care services was undertaken in 2007. All service users/carers were sent a copy of a survey form to complete and 8 open forums were held. As a result of the consultation exercise, comments have been received by Service Users and their Carers and details of which were summarised in the report.

The results of the survey had been considered and recommendations for changes to charges for Social Care Services were outlined.

With regard to Bereavement, Consumer Protection and Registration Service charges most had increased, some above inflation.

The Sub-Committee was advised that para 3.8 and Appendix 2 to the report, "charges for transport" had been amended to remove the words "to those aged under 55".

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the results of the survey about charging for Social Care Services be noted;
- (2) changes to charges for Care Services outlined in the report be approved, subject to the amendment detailed above; and
- (3) the proposed changes in fees and charges outlined in the report be approved.

Strategic Director
Health and
Community

ENVIRONMENT, SPORT AND LEISURE PORTFOLIO

ES108 RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE MERSEY FOREST

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval to sign a new Mersey Forest Agreement.

Halton had been a partner in the Mersey Forest since its inception, and the current agreement was now due for renewal. The new agreement would run until 2010.

The Agreement empowered the nine local authorities involved to work together to support the work of the Mersey Forest.

RESOLVED: That the existing Mersey Forest Agreement be renewed and that the Strategic Director – Environment, be authorised to determine the terms of the new agreement following the principles outlined in the report.

Strategic Director
Environment

CORPORATE SERVICE PORTFOLIO

ES109 DISPOSAL OF ETHEL HANLEY CARE HOME, CORONATION DRIVE, WIDNES

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval to dispose of the Ethel Hanley Care Home.

The Council currently owned the freehold interest of the premises, which were recently occupied by CLC Care Services Group by way of an internal repairing and insuring fees at a rental of £35,500 per annum. The Lease contained a flexible break option in favour of the tenant to enable the lease to be terminated, which they exercised on 13th

November 2006.

There was a risk that the reserve price would not be achieved at the auction, in which case the property would remain unsold. However, potential purchasers of such property were more likely to be regular auction goers and this method of sale was likely to maximise the capital receipt for the Council.

RESOLVED: That

(1) approval be given to the Operational Director Property Services, in consultation with relevant portfolio holder, to determine the basis for disposal and to dispose of the property by auction; and

(2) approval be granted to the Operational Director Property Services, in consultation with relevant portfolio holder, to accept the highest offer with details being reported to the Sub-Committee at the earliest opportunity

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

ES110 DISPOSAL OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE - 9/11 LUGSDALE ROAD, WIDNES

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval to dispose of the Community Centre, 9/11 Lugsdale Road, Widnes.

The Council currently owned the freehold interest of the premises, which was currently occupied by Social Services as an Operational Building. Operations from Lugsdale Road transferred to Midwood House, on 23rd March 2007, which would save the Council £25,000 per annum in running costs.

It was noted that when disposing of a site by auction, there was a risk that it may not reach the reserve price in which case the property would not be sold. However, the auction market was quite popular at this moment in time and it was therefore considered that this risk was minimal.

RESOLVED: That

(1) approval be given to the Operational Director Property Services, in consultation with relevant portfolio holder, to determine the basis for disposal and to dispose of the property at auction; and

(2) approval be granted to the Operational Director Property Services, in consultation with relevant portfolio

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

holder, to accept the highest offer with the details being reported to the Sub-Committee at the earliest opportunity.

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

ES111 REQUEST TO APPROVE SINGLE QUOTE TENDER CONTRACT:- LOCAL BUS SERVICE 700

The Sub-Committee considered a request for a Single Quote Contract (Procurement Standing Orders 1.5 and 3.1), to be entered into with Arriva (North West and Wales) to divert an existing express coach service linking Manchester City Centre and Liverpool John Lennon Airport to serve the Borough.

There were currently no other local bus operators running similar services. The proposal was based on an agreed financial revenue contribution from the Council of £87,000 over three financial years (2006/07 – 2010/11). This arrangement followed a kick-start style funding profile, whereby the Council's revenue contribution would decline over three years as follows:

2007/08	£43,500
2008/09	£29,000
2009/10	£14,500

A service contract would be entered into with Arriva (North West and Wales) in line with the Council's standard supported local bus service contract terms and conditions.

In addition, Arriva (North West and Wales) had guaranteed to operate the service commercially for a minimum of 7 years after the initial grant period from 2010/11 onwards.

RESOLVED: That Procurement Standing Orders in relation to tendering be waived accordingly.

Strategic Director
Environment

ES112 RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH MERSEY WATERFRONT REGIONAL PARK

The Sub-Committee considered a request for approval to sign the new Mersey Waterfront Regional Park Agreement.

The Mersey Waterfront Regional Park was set up in 2004 to transform, energise and connect the collective potential of areas along the Mersey Waterfront. The initial

three-year period was funded by £8.5m from the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA) and £13.25m of European Regional Development Fund Objective 1 money. During this period, Halton had benefited from substantial grants towards Wigg Island Visitors Centre, Widnes Wharf Boardwalk and viewing platform, and the Waterfront Maintenance Scheme.

It was reported that £16.5m of NWDA Funding had now been secured for the succession programme, which would run until 2009.

Although no major schemes had been identified within Halton for this period, money may be available for smaller schemes within the 'Pride in our Promenades' and 'Coastal Spaces and Places' programmes. Halton would also benefit from marketing and publicity initiatives for the wider waterfront park. In addition, a spatial framework identified Halton as one of the key windows on the waterfront, which could help to draw in future funding.

RESOLVED: That the existing Mersey Waterfront Regional Park Agreement be renewed and that the Strategic Director, Environment be authorised to determine the terms of the new agreement following the principles outlined in the report.

Strategic Director
Environment

MINUTES ISSUED: 3rd April 2007

CALL IN: 10th April 2007

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 10th April 2007

Meeting ended at 10.45 a.m.