

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

*At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 17 November 2011
in The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman), Harris and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, S. Riley and V. Buchanan

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
ES54	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2011 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p>CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO</p>	
ES55	<p>SOCIAL WORKER CRITICAL SKILLS TRAINING</p> <p>The Sub Committee was advised that in February 2011 Ofsted conducted a three yearly inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children services. Ofsted made 22 separate judgements with 12 areas graded as good and 10 as outstanding. An area identified as needing improvement was that social workers must:</p> <p>“Ensure that the quality of core assessment and plans for children in need and children in need of protection is consistently good and addresses both the risk and protective factors as well as the implications of the family history”.</p> <p>It was noted that the training needs of Social Workers were addressed by the Tools for Staff Working with Children & Young People training programme, most of which was delivered in house. However, occasionally there was also a</p>	

need to use an external specialised provider.

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

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

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

RESOLVED: That

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

Strategic Director
Children and
Enterprise

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

ES56 COMPUTER SALARY SACRIFICE SCHEME

The Sub Committee considered a report for a salary sacrifice scheme which allowed all permanent members of Halton Borough Council staff and temporary employees with a contract lasting longer than the lease to be included, to take the option to lease personal computer equipment for use within the home.

The scheme would allow those employees the opportunity to budget within their means, take advantage of discounted rates and spread payment options for modern

and up to date computer equipment whilst supported by the added benefit of maintenance and insurance options. Full details of the benefits of the scheme and how the scheme would operate in Halton were outlined in the report. It was noted that only eligible employees who earned a salary that would remain above the legally set National Minimum Wage once deductions had been taken would be eligible for the scheme.

Members were advised that it was proposed that 15% of the income received from this scheme would be set aside to insure against the potential for a small number of bad debts.

In addition it was noted that investigations were ongoing into developing a similar scheme within the Authority's schools which would benefit parents and pupils. The scheme could utilise the considerable education discount the Authority could gain from the major suppliers such as Microsoft and Apple. A pilot scheme of 4 schools within the Authority was in the planning stage.

In order to initiate the availability of the service prior to Christmas it was suggested that Standing Orders be waived.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Board supports the development of this scheme; and
2. the Board waives Standing Orders in relation to procurement allowing the Scheme to be developed and made available by the 30th November 2011, prior to Christmas.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

HEALTH & ADULTS PORTFOLIO

ES57 EXTENSION OF LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK) CONTRACT

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

MINUTES ISSUED: 22nd November 2011

CALL IN: 29th November 2011

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 29th November 2011

Meeting ended at 10.25 a.m.