

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

*At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 15 December 2011
in The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chairman) and Nelson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Harris

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Ferguson, G. Meehan, A. McNamara and R. Barnett

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
ES63	MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 st December 2011 were taken as read and signed as a correct record. CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO	
ES64	FOSTER CARE ALLOWANCES 2012-13 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which sought agreement to the proposed revised level of allowances to be paid to Foster Carers in 2012–13. As part of the department's Placement Strategy for Children in Care, the level of allowance paid to Halton Foster Carers was increased in September 2010. This was done for a number of reasons, but was ultimately aimed at increasing the number of Foster Carers available within the Borough and supporting their retention. Improved finance was just one component of the investment in the service which also included an improved range of support to carers, more training opportunities and improved engagement in service developments.	

It was noted that whilst the number of carers remained a challenge, the quality of the pool of carers available was now better than in previous years and was better able to meet the needs of our children. It therefore remained important that the allowances paid to carers were appropriate, competitive and attractive. In addition, it was important that the allowances paid to carers were increased to reflect actual costs incurred by them and it was therefore proposed that all allowances were increased by 4% (rounded down to the nearest pound).

Members were advised that the proposal to raise allowances by 4% would cost approximately £64,541. However, the failure to recruit and retain carers may result in the purchase of expensive Independent Fostering Agencies placements, where just one placement would cost on average £44,000.

RESOLVED: That the recommended level of increase in allowances is agreed.

Strategic Director
Children and
Enterprise

HEALTH AND ADULTS PORTFOLIO

ES65 PROCUREMENT OF CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR EXTRA CARE HOUSING

The Sub-Committee was advised that tenders were to be invited for the provision of day time care and support services in three Extra Care housing schemes. The estimated value of the tender would be in excess of £1m. The two new Extra Care housing schemes which were being developed were as follows:-

47 units by Halton Housing Trust at Liverpool Road in Ditton – should be ready in Summer 2012;

90 units by Cosmopolitan Housing Association at the Boardwalk, West Bank – should be ready early 2014.

Additionally, there was an existing Riverside Scheme of 40 units at Dorset Gardens in Palacefields where day time care and support services currently provided by the Council would also need to be tendered. Members were advised that there would be TUPE implications for some of the staff working at Dorset Gardens.

It was proposed that one provider would be sought to provide services across the three sites in order to secure maximum efficiency and economies of scale and a contract

period of five years was to be offered. The estimated value of the contract over the five years was £3.8m.

It was noted that tender submissions would be evaluated on both price and quality using a 70% price and 30% quality ratio.

RESOLVED: That the Board note that a procurement process was to be undertaken for the services set out in the report.

ES66 SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES

The Sub Committee had previously resolved to authorise the Operational Director Commissioning to enter into a contract with Crime Reduction Initiatives, who through an open tender process had been assessed as being the most economically advantageous and effective organisation to deliver the new substance misuse service. The Committee also resolved that in the light of exceptional circumstances procurement Standing Orders be waived, and the Operational Director, Commissioning be authorised to extend the following contracts direct and without competition for the current providers; ARCH Initiatives, Addaction and 5 Boroughs NHS Foundation Trust, in order to ensure continuous care and support to those currently in receipt of drug treatment. Contracts were extended up to December 31st 2011.

Following the award of the new contract to Crime Reduction Initiatives, clarification on a number of issues relating to the contractual process and the transfers of service had meant that the process had taken longer to conclude. In order to ensure that the transfer to the new substance misuse service was both clinically safe and complied with TUPE regulations, authority was sought for the Strategic Director Communities, in conjunction with the portfolio holder for Safer Halton, to extend the contracts of 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Addaction & Arch Initiatives on a month by month basis until 31st March 2012.

In addition, it was noted that the substance misuse service were currently delivered from Ashley House in Widnes. The property was leased by 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust from a private landlord and had been subject to considerable investment by the Commissioners over the preceding years. The Asset Management Group had supported a proposal whereby the lease for Ashley House was transferred to the Council from

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, at the conclusion of their contract. Under the proposed new arrangements, the Council would sub-lease Ashley House to the new incoming substance misuse service provider, Crime Reduction Initiatives, until March 2015, thereby ensuring a seamless continuity of service.

It was noted that if the lease was extended beyond its current term of March 2015, there would be a requirement to reinstate the premises to its previous function. The estimated cost of this based on a desk top exercise was £152,000. Contingency arrangements had been made for this sum in the current budget.

RESOLVED: That

(1) in the light of exceptional circumstances set out in the report for the purpose of Standing Orders 1.8.2b, Procurement Standing Orders 2.0.1 and 2.1 to 2.6 be waived, and the Strategic Director Communities be authorised to extend the following contracts direct and without competition for the current providers; ARCH Initiatives, Addaction and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, in order to ensure continuous care and support to those currently in receipt of drug and alcohol treatment;

(2) the contract extensions authorised in (1) be, on a month by month basis, over the period commencing 1st January 2012 and extending to 31st March 2012;

(3) the Strategic Director Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, be authorised to take such action as was necessary, to effect a smooth transition to the new substance misuse service; and

(4) the recommendation of the Asset Management Group be endorsed and the assignment of the lease from the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust for Ashley House until March 2015 be approved.

Strategic Director
Communities

MINUTES ISSUED: 16th December 2011

CALL IN: 23rd December 2011

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may
be called in no later than 23rd December 2011**

Meeting ended at 10.25 a.m.