

REPORT TO: Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 4 November 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Topic Group – Transfer of Assets

WARDS: Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide a brief update to Members of the Board on the work of the Topic Group on Asset Transfer.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That:

- 1) **progress be noted; and**
- 2) **the draft policy be considered at the next meeting of the Board.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of the 2008/9 Work Programme the Board included a piece of work aimed at developing a policy for recommendation to the Executive Board as to how the Council might approach the issue of transferring assets to the third sector. The Government had raised the profile of this issue following publication of a report by Barry Quirk – “Making Assets Work”. The Council has already had to respond to a number of requests of this nature and the Board therefore felt it would be helpful to all concerned if the Council developed a policy and criteria to guide how such requests could be dealt with in the future.

3.2 The Topic Group has now met and comprises Councillors Bradshaw; Ellen Cargill; Gilligan and Alan Lowe. The Working Party reviewed model procedures from other Local Authorities and guidance produced by the Development Trusts Association. The Group agreed that the Council needed to develop a policy that had a clear set of criteria, against which any potential requests for asset transfer could be tested.

Following guidance from Members of the Topic Group, officers are in the process of drafting a policy for Halton which, subject to the agreement of the Topic Group, will be brought to the next meeting of this Board, the intention being that this Board will make a recommendation to the Executive Board as to an appropriate policy.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Developing a policy approach to this issue will provide clarity to any organisation who wishes to propose a transfer as to the criteria the Council will apply.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The criteria will deal with the overall financial implications to the Council.

6.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

6.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

7.4 A Safer Halton

None.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The risk of not having a policy in place is that insufficient information is provided to Members when making such decisions.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 The existence of a policy and criteria ensures that any requests are dealt with in a fair and transparent manner.