

**REPORT TO:** Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 6 January 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

**SUBJECT:** Topic Group – Transfer of Assets

**WARDS:** Borough-Wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To seek the Board's approval to a draft Asset Transfer Policy and to forward the draft onto Executive Board for consideration.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the draft Policy be endorsed and the Executive Board be requested to consider and adopt it as Council Policy.**

### **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 to consider the issue and comprised 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.

Attached at Appendix A is the draft Strategy and Policy Statement which is intended to provide both guidance and a process to follow if such transfers were deemed appropriate. It makes it clear for prospective applicants the type of business case the Council would like to see in place before any consideration is given to such requests. Any decision taken will always

have to balance the specific outcomes expected from the project against the overall aims of the Council and the ongoing need of the Council to maximise income and realise capital receipts through the disposal of assets.

#### **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 deals with the overall financial implications to the Council which will be a key part of the assessment process.

#### **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**

Sound use of the Council's assets makes a significant contribution to delivering the Council's Priorities.

##### **7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Sound use of the Council's assets makes a significant contribution to delivering the Council's Priorities.

##### **7.3 A Healthy Halton**

Sound use of the Council's assets makes a significant contribution to delivering the Council's Priorities.

##### **7.4 A Safer Halton**

Sound use of the Council's assets makes a significant contribution to delivering the Council's Priorities.

## **7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Sound use of the Council's assets makes a significant contribution to delivering the Council's Priorities.

## **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. If any transfer is not properly managed then projects run the risk of running into difficulty.

## **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.