

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee on Thursday, 15 January 2009 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: M. Reaney, H. Cockcroft, R. Dart, D. Hall, C. Halpin and P. Reilly-Cooper

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
ES64	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meetings held on 4th, 18th and 23rd December 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
ES65	LIBRARY SERVICE – RFID CONTRACT	
	<p>The Sub Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which informed Members of the decision taken by the Operational Director, Culture and Leisure to award the contract for the supply of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) equipment for the Halton Lea Library lottery project to the non lowest priced tenderer. In accordance with Standing Order 3.2 the Sub Committee was advised of the circumstances surrounding this decision.</p> <p>It was noted that the Lottery funded refurbishment of Halton Lea Library provided the opportunity to introduce RFID technology to the building. This would allow for the installation of RFID self-issue and return machines, tags for all items of stock and stock management equipment. The tender covered all of these items as well as maintenance costs for a 5-year period.</p>	

Members were advised that RFID technology had proven benefits and was transforming the way libraries operated both in terms of efficiencies and frontline customer service. Examples in other local authorities show that 75% of transactions could be achieved through RFID self-service machines rather than via staffed terminals. This had opened up the possibility of extended opening hours and providing added value services.

It was anticipated that a high level of self-service could be achieved at Halton Lea Library. This would allow a more effective deployment of staff throughout the building and would free up time to provide an improved level of customer service by staff being able to fully support customers in their use of the library. The routine tasks of issuing/returning would be replaced in favour of added value services that were currently limited or not possible, for example formal and informal learning opportunities through ICT, homework clubs, community history and outreach work.

RFID also provided a range of stock management techniques and options, increasing efficiency with the use of a hand held reader identifying stock lists and books quickly and effectively.

It was noted that the tender attracted three responses, the 5 year project costs were:

▪ 3M	-	£72,507
▪ Intellident	-	£71,474
▪ 2CQR	-	£84,225

It was further noted that the selection criteria was 60% quality/40% cost. The contract was awarded to 3M on the grounds that they were the only company to offer:

- a fully integrated solution for issuing audio-visual materials. Their RFID machine can issue, desensitise and unlock audio cases; and
- a self-service machine with the ability to offer change rather than exact payment. To optimise customer service it was felt that it was essential to be able to offer change for transactions involving any payments.

RESOLVED: That the decision of the Operational Director, Culture and Leisure to award the RFID contract to the “non lowest priced” tenderer be supported.

ES66 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

The Sub Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which sought Members consideration of three applications for discretionary rate relief, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The Sub Committee was advised that under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Authority was allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that were either a charity or a non-profit making organisation. This relief may also be awarded to Community Amateur Sports Clubs. A summary of the applications was outlined within the report and a list of the associated figures was attached in Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the following organisation at the percentage indicated, for the period from 1st April 2008 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later, to 31st March 2009:

1st Weston & Weston Point Scouts	20%
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- (2) Under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, the following application for discretionary rate relief be refused:

Rathbone Training	20%
The Social Partnership Ltd	20%

ES67 JOINT WORKING WITH THE LEARNING & SKILLS COUNCIL (NATIONAL DISSEMINATION POST 16 TRANSPORT INFORMATION)

The Sub Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which informed Members of the joint working being undertaken by the Environment Directorate in partnership with the national Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to disseminate and develop best practice nationally, in terms of post 16 education transport provision for learners.

Members were advised that Halton Borough Council recently received Beacon Council status for the work it was

doing to improve accessibility by transport for local residents to a wide range of everyday facilities.

It was noted that the Council had been identified by the LSC as an Authority which had fostered an effective multi-agency partnership to deliver transport services for post 16 learners.

It was further noted that, building on this success, in 2007 the national Learning and Skills Council approached Halton Borough Council with a request that the Authority jointly work with the LSC to disseminate 'best practice' on post 16 learner transport nationally.

During 2008/9, the LSC had agreed to the payment of an additional £25,000 to enable Halton Borough Council to assist it deliver a number of dissemination activities at a national level, details of which were outlined in the appendix to the report.

It was noted that the work was progressing well, with final preparations being made to jointly host with the LSC a series of nine regional conferences in March 2009. In addition the Sub Committee was updated on issues of particular interest currently, as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the decision of the Operational Director (Highways, Transportation and Logistics) to enter into a contract with the Learning and Skills Council to disseminate good practice on post 16 education transport provision be supported; and
- (2) the programme of ongoing partnership working with the Learning and Skills Council be endorsed.

ES68 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Sub Committee considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Sub Committee during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed,

being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

ES69 LAND AT WATERLOO ROAD WIDNES

The Sub Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which reported the details of a covenant placed on land at Waterloo Road, previously sold by the Council for which a request had been made for it to be removed.

It was noted that the matter would normally be dealt with under delegated powers, however, as one of the parties involved an Elected Member it was felt necessary to report the matter to the Sub Committee.

RESOLVED: That the request to lift the restrictive covenant on land at Waterloo Road be noted and the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy be authorised to conclude the matter in the best interests of the Council.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

MINUTES ISSUED: 26th January 2009

CALL IN: 3rd February 2009

Any matter decided by the Executive Board Sub Committee may be called in no later than 3rd February 2009

Meeting ended at 10.40 a.m.