

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee Minutes Relevant to the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 4 JUNE 2009

EXB 7 PARISH ISSUES - HALEBANK AND SANDYMOOR PARISH COUNCILS

The Board received a report from the Chief Executive which asked them to consider the following requests from Halebank and Sandymoor Parish Councils:

1. Halebank – to increase the number of Councillors on the Parish Council from five to eight and to move the date of the next election from 2010 to 2012.
2. Sandymoor – to increase the number of Councillors on the Parish Council from five to eight.

The Local Government and Rating Act 1997 empowers District Councils to vary the number of members of Parish and Town Councils. Halebank Parish Council had also requested that the Council consider moving the date for the next election to 2012, making it the normal four year cycle for a Parish Council term rather than two.

The Parish Council had advised that when it was established in 2009 there was a natural expectation, amongst electors, that the Council was being elected to fulfil a four year mandate. The Parish Council believed another election in 2010 was likely to confuse voters and undermine the transparency of the democratic system. The Council believed that there was a strong argument as to why a newly established Council should, in principle, be able to fulfil a four year mandate. An election in 2010 would give the Council only one year in which to set its own precept and begin to establish itself within the community. An election in 2012, would give the Council and its elected members, time to find their feet, develop their roles and establish a record, which could be properly subject to the democratic verdict of local voters.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) It be recommended to Council that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 53 of the Local Government and Public

involvement in Health Act 2007, the date of the next election for Halebank Parish Council be 3 May 2012; and

- 2) It be recommended to Council that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 17 (2) of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the number of Parish Councillors on Halebank and Sandymoor Parish Council be increased to eight with effect from 3 May 2012.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 18 JUNE 2009

EXB15 MID TERM REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which provided Members with an amended version of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Members were advised that local authorities were required to prepare and implement a Sustainable Community Strategy. Local authorities were expected to work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership to agree priorities and to engage and involve local communities. The current Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted in 2006. It contained a long-term vision with clear objectives with delivery targets for the period 2006-2011.

It was noted that since the strategy had been prepared a number of changes had taken place making it necessary to conduct a mid-term review. This was an update, not a complete revision. Recent perception surveys and the revised State of the Borough Report (2009) confirmed that the underlying vision and priorities from 2006 remained relevant. Widespread engagement had therefore not been undertaken for this mid-term review. However, in 2010/11 work would commence on a full review and roll forward of the strategy with wide engagement, linking up with work being done on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

Members were advised of the main objectives of the mid-term review which were set out in detail in the report. Members were advised that the attached draft of the mid-term review had been drawn up following consultation with partners and would be considered by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board on the 20th May 2009. The revised Sustainable Community Strategy had to be adopted by full Council (Local Government Act 200) and it was planned to take the final draft to the full Council meeting on the 22nd July 2009.

Members were further advised that the draft Strategy had been submitted to the Council's Policy and Performance Boards (PBB's) for scrutiny and a number of comments had been noted, particularly that the Employment, Learning and Skills PPB had requested the addition of a further local indicator for 'children and young people's satisfaction with Open Spaces and Parks'.

REASON FOR DECISION

The 2006 Sustainable Community strategy needs updating to take into account changes to the National Performance Framework, including the Halton Local Area Agreement, and recent statutory guidance.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED:

The following options were considered:

1. To leave the strategy unchanged. This would result in the need to monitor performance against two different sets of targets and would not be compliant with statutory targets; and
2. To conduct a full review of the strategy. This was rejected because the the Strategy was only adopted on 2006 and a full review would be premature.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The strategy will take effect following its adoption by Council (anticipated to be 22 July 2009).

RESOLVED: That the draft mid-term review of the Sustainable Community Strategy, subject to the addition of a further local indicator as set out above, be recommended to Council for adoption.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4TH JUNE 2009

ES2 AREA FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Corporate and Policy informing the members of the spending by the Area Forums for 2008/09.

The report advised that funding was allocated to the Area Forums to spend on small scale projects that were identified by the community. In 2008/09 a total of £600,000 was allocated to the Area

Forums, made up of £300,000 Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) and £300,000 from Halton Borough Council Priorities Fund. It was allocated on a per capita basis across the seven Area Forums that cover the Borough.

It was noted that the local community were invited to raise ideas for neighbourhood projects, which would help improve their local area. The Forum then considered these ideas, and an action plan agreed. Actions must have community support and not result in a long-term financial commitment.

The projects were divided into the following categories and the proportion spent on each category overall is indicated in brackets.

- 1) Landscape (24%)
- 2) Safety (7%)
- 3) Youth Facilities (20%)
- 4) Improved Parks (18%)
- 5) Pedestrian Access (4%)
- 6) Security (11%)
- 7) Other (16%)

The Area Forums were a key tool in engaging with local residents, and the budget provided a means of funding minor schemes in response to local needs. The projects funded were all required to demonstrate a contribution to priority areas such as safety, health and so on. There were no ongoing financial implications, as it was a strict criterion that area forum projects should not incur ongoing costs.

Members commented that it was important that the minutes from the area forums were circulated within the public arena. It was confirmed that the minutes were published on the HBC website and could also be included on the Members bulletin.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2008/09 4TH QUARTER

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Financial Services on the Treasury Management 2008/09 4th Quarter (January to March) which updated the Sub Committee on activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy (TMP). The Operational Director reported on the current investment market particularly in relation to building societies.

The report provided supporting information on the short term rates, longer term rates, temporary borrowing/investments, longer

term borrowing/investments and policy guidelines. It was noted that all the policy guidelines in the TMP had been complied with. Following the mergers of building societies the Council's exposure to Nationwide Building Society exceeded its limit; however this would unwind as investments mature.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES4 PURCHASE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SYSTEM

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Corporate and Policy informing the Sub-Committee of a decision to purchase a web based Performance Management Software System for use by the Council and the Halton Strategic Partnership.

To date the Council had operated an effective performance monitoring system, largely based upon internally developed templates, to provide performance information to relevant Officers and Members at an organisational and partnership level. Given a number of changes that had occurred within the operating environment it would be unlikely that such arrangements would remain effective in the medium term. These changes included:

- The introduction of a single National Indicator Data Set from April 2008. Such measures were no longer confined to the outputs of the organisation, as were the Best Value Performance Indicators that they replaced, but were much more outcome focused and relate to information that originates from both the Council and its partner agencies.
- The strengthening of Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework that places far greater emphasis upon the collaboration between the Council and its partners in achieving outcomes for the local communities that they serve.
- The ongoing need to make efficiency savings in light of tighter fiscal constraint.

Taking account of such changes the Council, as had most others, had recognised the potential benefits of acquiring a web based performance software system that would deliver medium-term benefits that would include:-

- Reducing the duplication currently incurred in the reporting of progress towards objectives in the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan and LAA.
- Improved quality, accessibility and timeliness of information required by the Council's decision making processes.
- Addressing issues raised in the most recent Corporate Performance Assessment concerning the need to improve partnership performance arrangements.

Ten tenders were submitted by vendors, costs ranging from £22,000 to £188,000. The evaluation led to the 4 lowest cost suppliers being shortlisted to present their system to a panel. As a result of this exercise and following visits to relevant reference sites by the performance specialists and the Corporate Performance Team, the two lowest cost suppliers were identified as primary options; namely 'Ten Software' and 'Inphase'.

The final decision was taken to acquire the Performance Plus software system as although the cost of acquiring the system was higher, it had medium term advantages in that it demonstrated superior IT and system specifications.

It was noted that the system implementation would begin in June and involve a series of training workshops for system use being delivered to staff both within the Council and within relevant partner agencies. Concurrent to such workshops, work would be undertaken in regards to system design and development and data transfer and it was envisaged that the system would become operational during the second quarter of the current financial year.

It was noted that the cost of the software would be shared equally between the Halton Strategic Partnership and Halton Borough Council. The Council's contribution over the three years could be met from within existing budgets. The system would be externally hosted to facilitate access by external partners, and so there were no additional hardware costs falling to the Council. It was also confirmed that there was no need to employ additional staff, as the administration of the system would be carried out by the Policy Team.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2009

ES7 DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy requesting Members to consider four applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The report advised that under the provisions of Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988m the Authority is allowed to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that are either a charity or a non-profit making organisations.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Under the provisions of Section 47, Local Government Finance Act 1988, discretionary rate relief be granted to the3 following organisation at the percentage indicated, for the period from 1 April 2009 or the commencement of liability, whichever is the later, to 31 March 2013; and

Halton Carers' Centre Ltd	20%
Halton Pentecostal Church Charity	20%
Shetland Rescue Horse and Pony Sanctuary	20%
Warrington Disability Partnership	20%;

- (2) In respect of the following organisations, it is also recommended that they should be granted discretionary rate relief for the backdated element of the charge:

Halton Carers' Centre Ltd	20%.
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ES8 OUTTURN REPORT 2008/09

The Board considered a report which reported the final revenue and capital spending position for 2008/09.

The report advised that the final accounts for 2008/09 were now complete and the revenue spending position for each Directorate, subject to external audit was set out in the Appendix to the report.

It was noted that as set out in the Budget Strategy, the planned overall underspend of £2m had been successfully achieved and had been transferred to the Invest to Save Fund to support efficiency measures.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16TH JULY 2009

ES13 PROCUREMENT OF EXTERNALISED PRINT SERVICES PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Corporate and Policy which stated that the existing arrangements for the Council’s printing requirements needed to be rationalised. It was proposed that a formal tender process be undertaken to achieve improved value for money. The report provided details of the estimated preliminary costs in accordance with Procurement Standing Order 2.1.

The Board was advised that print and copying requirements are currently fulfilled in a number of ways:-

- a) By accessing the in-house services offered by the print unit. The unit in effect provides a ‘copying’ service, producing committee papers; stationery (including pay slips); plus low quantity runs of leaflets, posters etc, where artwork is supplied;
- b) Where the requirement cannot be accommodated in-house, the print unit offers a ‘print management’ service, supporting officers in the procurement of appropriate externalised print services; and
- c) Finally, officers procure print direct from a supplier of their choice.

An analysis in area (c) showed that in one year, spend on externalised print services was in excess of £500,000 broken down by directorates and that the spend was currently spread over 92 separate external suppliers.

The Board was also advised that there were no formal arrangements in place for the procurement of these externalised print services, which encouraged inconsistent pricing throughout the Council for similar products, diluted purchase spend from lack of aggregation and increased administration costs from the high volume of transaction activity.

The report dealt with the requirement to establish a corporate contract arrangement for the procurement of externalised print services, split across a series of lots to ensure fair competition and transparency for our whole supply community.

Arising from the discussion Members raised a number of questions regarding the process. The Board agreed to defer the item in order to further explore a number issues.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The matter be deferred for clarification of procurement options;
- 2) and a further report be brought to a future meeting.