

## **COUNCIL – 2 NOVEMBER 2009**

### **MATTERS FOR NOTING**

#### **Minute 57 APPOINTMENT OF TECHNICAL ADVISER TO THE WIRRAL ACADEMY/BSF PROGRAMME UNDER THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOLS (PFS) FRAMEWORK**

The Director of Children's Services reported that there was a requirement for the Council to appoint a Technical Adviser to the Wirral Academy/BSF Programme under the national Partnerships for Schools (Pfs) framework, initially to implement the agreed capital works at Birkenhead High School Academy, but with the provision for further Academy and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) works. He outlined the advantages of joint procurement and reported that the capital allocations provided by Pfs included £400,000 for the procurement of Technical Adviser support to implement the approval and subsequent procurement process, using the Pfs Contractor Procurement Framework. He commented that the contract for the support would require careful management to ensure no additional financial risk to the Council, either through the allocation being overspent or through contractual issues.

#### **Resolved – That Cabinet:**

- (1) Approves the appointment of the Technical Adviser under the Partnership for Schools (Pfs) Framework in respect of works at Birkenhead High School (Academy 1).**
- (2) Approves the provisions for the same Technical Adviser to be appointed Academy 2 and BSF Phase 1.**

#### **Minute 64 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT PROPOSALS**

Further to minute 448 (9 April 2009), the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services provided an update in relation to the provision made by the Sustainable Communities Act for proposals to be invited from the public which required action from central government. He commented that although a number of submissions were received in response to the call for proposals, only one was received which could potentially be suitable for selection under the terms of the Act. He outlined the proposal, which related to Community Asset Transfer and reported that it had been endorsed by the Strategic Partnership Executive Board subject to consultation with the LSP Assembly and other interest groups.

#### **Resolved –**

- (1) That that the proposal for selection under the terms of the Sustainable Communities Act, in relation to Community Asset Transfer be endorsed.**

- (2) That delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Policy to submit the proposal to the LGA in consultation with the proposer by the deadline of 31 July 2009.**
- (3) That, in view of the need to submit the proposal to the LGA by the deadline of 31 July 2009, call-in be waived, and the Council be advised accordingly.**

#### **Minute 91 HOME PURCHASE ASSISTANCE LOAN SCHEME**

The Director of Regeneration sought Cabinet approval for the introduction of an equity-based 'Home Purchase Assistance' Loan. The loans would be available to support sustainable homeownership and would initially be targeted at 'Housing Market Renewal' new build schemes. A property appreciation loan of up to 30% of property value would be offered to potential buyers. That would assist those persons for whom a level of home ownership was a viable option but who were unable to access sufficient finance due to the current restrictions on mortgage lending.

The report also requested delegation to the Director of Regeneration to determine other residential property, owned by the Council, which might be included within the scheme. Examples of such property might include those 'Housed' properties which were proving difficult to sell.

If approved, the new loan product would be offered with immediate effect, using part of the Council's allocation of Growth Point funds totalling £740,000, as agreed by Cabinet, 25 June 2009 (minute 29 refers). It was proposed to use the existing contract with ART Homes Ltd, as the managing agent for this product, through a variation to the existing contract for Equity Relocation Loans and Equity Renewal Loans.

The loan product would only be offered to new applicants beyond 31 March 2011 if alternative funding was then available and a review of the mortgage market deemed it necessary.

The Leader of the Council emphasised that the money used for this scheme would all be from Government grants.

#### **Resolved -**

- (1) That the introduction of a Home Purchase Assistance Loan Scheme, within the terms set out in the report and the policy document appended to the report, be approved.**
- (2) That Cabinet agrees to prioritise Sevenoaks (formerly 'Fiveways'), 8 'Housed' properties and 3 Tudor Road decant properties acquired as part of the 'Fiveways' redevelopment scheme.**

**(3) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration for determination of future availability of Home Purchase Assistance Loans for Council-owned dwellings that are to be sold.**

**(4) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Law, Human Resources and Asset Management, to vary the existing contract with ART Homes Ltd to deliver the Home Purchase Assistance Loan Scheme until 31 March 2011.**

**Minute 98 PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (PACSPE)**

The Director of Regeneration presented a report informing members of the results of the Gateway O Review of the Parks and Countryside Service Procurement Exercise (PACSPE) undertaken by the 4ps Organisation and the Interim Business Case findings by Capita Symonds. 4ps had made eight recommendations which were discussed by the PACSPE Members Group at their meeting on 15 July 2009 and actions were agreed in response to the recommendations. These were attached in an appendix to the report.

Approval for funding for the next stage of the procurement exercise was requested from the Efficiency Investment Budget.

The Leader of the Council referred to the need to keep 'Friends' groups informed and the Head of Cultural Services stated that meetings with 'Friends' groups had been held and further meetings were being arranged.

**Resolved -**

**(1) That Cabinet supports the actions listed in Appendix 1 of the Director's report.**

**(2) That the PACSPE Members Group decision, in response to the 4ps recommendations, to instruct Capita Symonds to provide a more detailed analysis of three procurement options, be endorsed.**

**(3) That a further £115,000 be allocated from the Efficiency Investment Budget to pay for the cost of further Gateway reviews and additional consultancy support to be spent in 2009/10 and 2010/11.**

**Minute 105 REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM A COMPANY (2)**

The Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Services sought Cabinet approval to provide a grant from the Think Big Investment Fund to the company named in the report to assist towards their business expansion project.

**Resolved –**

**(1) That a Think Big Investment Fund Grant, paid over two years, be approved towards the business expansion project being undertaken by the company named within the report, subject to the conditions detailed in the report.**

**(2) That the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to draw up and sign a legal agreement between the Council and the business based upon the content of the Director's report.**

**(3) That "call in" be waived to enable the Council to proceed with negotiations with the company immediately.**

**Minute 106 TENDER REPORT - SUPPLY OF NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AGENCY INTENSIVE BUSINESS START UP SERVICE IN WIRRAL**

The Director of Regeneration submitted a report which sought Cabinet approval to:

(i) accept the grant offer from the NWDA in respect of funding for the new Intensive Business Start Up Programme (ISUS) from 2009/10 to 2011/12;

(ii) accept the tender from Enterprise Solutions to provide the ISUS Programme and to fund the Council's contribution to it and a complementary grant scheme from the Working Neighbourhood Fund, and

(iii) waive "call in" to meet the financial requirements of the NWDA with respect to the grant agreement and to ensure that the ISUS programme could commence in Wirral