

SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 18 November 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Osborne (Chairman), Stockton (Vice-Chairman), M. Bradshaw, Lloyd Jones, Morley, M. Ratcliffe, Redhead, Rowan, Shepherd and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Noone, M. Andrews, H. Cockcroft, J. Downes, S. Eastwood, C. Halpin, J. Hunt, A. Jones, R. Stevens, J. Unsworth, A. Villiers, P. Watts and S. Webster

Also in attendance: Councillor Wallace

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

SAF19 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 URGENT BUSINESS

The Board was advised that a matter had arisen which required immediate attention by the Board (Minute 23 refers), therefore, pursuant to Section 100 B (4) and 100 E and due to the receipt of a Petition, the Chairman ruled that the item be considered as a matter of urgency.

SAF20 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 September 2008 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

SAF21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board considered any questions submitted by the public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9). It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

SAF22 HALE ROAD PETITION

The Board was informed of the receipt of a petition relating to the closure of an alleyway in Hale Road.

The Chairman invited Ward Councillor Wallace to speak on behalf of the residents of Hale Road in relation to the petition. A copy of the petition was distributed to Board members for information.

She thanked Officers for their assistance since the matter was brought to the attention of the Council in 2006. It was noted that the initial application to close the alleyway was previously rejected by the Magistrates Court. The situation since the matter was first reported has deteriorated and the anti social behaviour and vandalising of property in the area still continues, examples of these incidents are mentioned in the petition.

Councillor Wallace explained that there was an alternative route available to residents and that pedestrians are currently using this pathway.

Based on the contents of the petition, the mental wellbeing and poor quality of life the residents were currently experiencing, she appealed to the Board to support the closure of the alleyway.

Following the discussion on the matter, the following comments were noted:

1. The petition, although informative, did not provide any clear documentation of incidents, ie dates, times etc; which would be required in order to initiate the closure of the alleyway; and
2. There was a need for information from Police and Fire Brigade responses to incidents that have been reported, to support the closure.

RESOLVED: That it was unanimously agreed that:

1. the Board fully support the measures looking into the closure of the alleyway, subject to receipt of the Police and Fire Brigade information of incidents;

2. a further update report be submitted to the next meeting, including options for deterrents; and
3. advice notes and guidance for Councillors and Members of the public be distributed as soon as is practicable.

SAF23 SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP MINUTES

As per minute SAF12/2008, the minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership meeting held on Tuesday 9 September 2008, were presented to the Board.

With regards to anti social behaviour, a recent article in the Runcorn World (dated 12/10/08) was raised, where a brick was thrown from a bridge injuring a passing motorist, highlighting the need for caged bridges, which it was noted had been raised by Councillors previously.

The Board was advised that since the 'stop the drop' initiative, which started in September 2007, there had been a dramatic reduction in incidents and that plans had been put in place for all High School in the Boroughs to be revisited in the near future.

RESOLVED: That:-

1. the minutes be noted: and
2. that a report item regarding the feasibility of caging the bridge footpaths be submitted to the next meeting.

SAF24 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive in respect of the 2nd quarter performance management reports on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services etc, for:

- Environment and Regulatory Services;
- Culture and Leisure;
- Health and Partnerships and Highways; and
- Transportation and Logistics.

The Board, in considering these reports, identified

areas of interest or concerned as detailed below;

Environment and Regularity Services:

The Board requested clarification on;

- EAR 5 and on the shortage of green bins
- EAR L12, did this represent value for money

Culture and Leisure:

The Board noted the need for up to date financial information to be included in the report.

In response to these requests it was noted that written responses would be provided.

RESOLVED: That the second quarter reports be received and the actions outlined above be noted.

SAF25 SERVICE PLANS 2009-12

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy, which offered an opportunity for Members to contribute to the development of Service Plans at the beginning of the planning process.

The three year departmental plans were reviewed and rolled forward annually. The plans would be developed in parallel with the budget. At this stage members were invited to identify a small number of areas for development or improvement that they would like to see built into those plans. Operational Directors would then develop draft plans that would be available for consideration by PPB's early in the New Year.

Each Head of Service gave the Board a short presentation setting out the key issues and challenges for their service over the coming three years.

Any members with questions arising from the presentations were invited to contact the Officer responsible.

Arising from Members comments, it was agreed that Halton and St Helens PCT be invited to the next meeting of the Board to give an outline of their prevention initiatives in relation to alcohol and drug misuse.

RESOLVED: That:

1. the Board would indicate priority areas for service development or improvement over the next 3 years; and
2. the Halton and St Helens PCT be invited to give an outline of their prevention, initiatives in relation to alcohol and drug misuse at the January meeting of the PPB.

SAF26 SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director Health and Community, which represented the Annual Report of Halton's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Partnership Board, for the year 2007/08, and which briefed the PPB of key issues and progression of the agenda for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

Following discussions it was noted that a recent training course was organised for members and was deemed successful and useful by those who have attended so far.

The Board thanked the Adult Protection Co-ordinator and her Team.

RESOLVED: That:

1. the report be noted; and
2. the Board receives an update in a years time.

SAF27 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY PROGRESS 2007/2008

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Research and Intelligence, which provided further clarification on comparing surveys from different sources conducted under different methodologies. This was requested following a full discussion on the targets set in the Community Strategy and 2007 Local Area Agreement, at a previous meeting of the Board.

Explanations were given into the difficulties experienced in measuring survey information from both telephone and paper methods, and the advantages of

telephone surveys over paper ones.

Central Government were presently conducting a survey on the quality of life of people in the UK, which was expected in the New Year and would be available to all Local Authorities in England.

Following the presentation it was noted that the observatory was a great asset to the Borough and that the Chairman invited Councillors to contact the Research and Intelligence Department for any answers to queries on the subject they may have in the future.

RESOLVED: That Mr Stevens be thanked for his presentation.

SAF28 ADDRESSING PROBLEMS OF LITTER AND DOG FOULING

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director, Environment, regarding the proposals to address the issue of litter and dog fouling by adopting a three-pronged approach of enforcement, communication and education.

Arising from the discussion the following was noted:

- That although the litter and dog fouling laws already exist, awareness and communication of the message was needed and that Councillors were in a good position to do this; and
- Members were in support of the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the proposal regarding the development of Litter Action Initiatives be noted, commented upon and supported by the Board; and
- 2) A report be presented to the Executive Board Sub-Committee containing proposals and recommendations in relation to adopting the following policies:
 - a) To take a minimum tolerance approach to environmental crime and to apply the

maximum penalty appropriate in each case;

- b) Where a fixed penalty fine is available for an offence, it will normally be applied at each opportunity;
- c) Where fixed penalty fines or advice are ignored, further action will be considered;
- d) These policy statements will apply to juveniles and where any formal action is taken the young persons parents will be involved in the process;
- e) A person who drops litter in a public place will be issued with a fixed penalty notice and may face prosecution if the penalty is not paid; and
- f) A person in charge of a dog who fails to remove faeces deposited on public land will be issued with a fixed penalty notice and may face prosecution if the penalty is not paid.

SAF29 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board 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 Part 1 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 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

SAF30 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived for 15 minutes.

SAF31 CEMETERY PROVISION FOR 2015 AND BEYOND

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director Health and Community presenting a cost benefit analysis of the main options available to the Council to address cemetery provision for 2015 and beyond.

RESOLVED: That the report be deferred.

Meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.