

HALTON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TOPIC GROUP

Report to Corporate Services PPB

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Corporate Services PPB, as part of their topic programme, took a decision to examine the role and function of the Halton Strategic Partnership (Halton's LSP) and identify where opportunities exist for future development and closer collaboration.
- 1.2 A cohort of elected members was selected and a programme of meetings arranged around the topic. At the first meeting, Terms of Reference for the group were established for the group as follows:
 - Understanding the Future Role of the HSP
 - Asking does it meet the Council's Partnership check list requirements for "Partnerships"
 - What its short and long term objectives are
 - How they dovetail and inter-relate to the Council
 - How its ongoing activities can be effectively scrutinised and how it is held to account.
- 1.3 During the meetings, the history, purpose, membership, objectives, activities and role of the Halton Strategic Partnership (HSP) were considered. Members also put forward proposals for how the relationship between the PPBs and the HSP could be strengthened, how agendas could be more closely interrelated and how ongoing activities could be effectively scrutinised. A report structure was agreed at the second meeting, with an agreement to prepare a draft report for discussion by Topic Group members prior to presentation to Corporate Services PPB in September.
- 1.4 This report presents the discussions and recommendations of the HSP Scrutiny Topic Group for consideration.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 Members initially considered the context and background to why the Halton Strategic Partnership was established and the role it has played to date.
- 2.2 Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) were established as non-statutory bodies following the Local Government Act 2000, as the best way of promoting the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of communities. LSPs consist of a range of public, voluntary and community, and private sector organisations working with the local community on issues that impact on the local area.

2.2 The intended benefits of LSPs as originally envisaged can be summarised as follows:

Intended Benefits of Local Strategic Partnerships		
<i>for local people</i>	<i>for local business</i>	<i>for partner agencies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better services • a stronger voice for disadvantaged communities and focus on their needs • greater influence over local strategies and spending priorities • new approaches and projects which tackle the roots of decline in neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a business voice and contribution in shaping strategies and spending priorities - and in making things happen • local strategies which strengthen local competitiveness and jobs • public investments in skills and infrastructure, influenced by LSP priorities • projects and improved services which tackle the roots of decline in neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater impact • achievement of organisational targets • improved use of resources • new and better ways of doing things through joint working • better solutions to local challenges

2.3 In Halton, the LSP has badged itself as the 'Halton Strategic Partnership' (HSP). The HSP has been in existence since 2001. The HSP built on the previous good work of the original 'Halton Partnership' which had been instrumental in developing and managing successful applications for Single Regeneration Budget funding, amongst other initiatives.

2.4 Membership of the HSP is drawn from representatives from across key sectors and organisations within the Borough and was recently revised in March 2012 to reflect the changes taking place within the structure of the public sector as a result of changes in policy from central government. The current membership list of the HSP Board is attached at **Appendix 1**.

2.5 Sitting underneath the main board of the HSP are five Specialist Strategic Partnerships (SSPs) The SSPs each take responsibility for co-ordinating the partnership agenda around each of Halton's 5 Strategic Priorities of Health,

Children & Young People, Employment Learning & Skills, Environment and Regeneration and Safer Halton. The SSPs report back to the HSP on progress on outcomes and targets. A structure diagram is attached at **Appendix 2**.

- 2.6 There are also a number of other thematic groups sitting underneath the HSP which take responsibility for co-ordinating some of the cross-cutting issues of the HSP such as Equality, Engagement & Cohesion, Transport, Housing and Child & Family Poverty. These also report back to relevant SSPs and the HSP on progress and activities.
- 2.7 A key reason for the original existence of LSPs was the national Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy together with the accompanying Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) and subsequent Working Neighbourhoods (WNF) funding which was made available to the 88 most deprived areas in England. The HSP, with HBC as the accountable body for the management and distribution of the funding, was awarded significant amounts of both NRF and WNF funding in the period up to 2010. Establishing HBC as the accountable body reflected HBCs leadership and influencing role, as well as recognising that the Council had the skills and expertise to carry out such a role. HBC has also taken on the roles of Chair and Secretariat for the HSPB as well as providing a support function in the form of officer time in the period since 2001.
- 2.8 As part of the Local Government Act 2000, a statutory duty was place upon local authorities to prepare and publish a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for their area, in consultation with partner agencies and other sectors. Despite their non-statutory role, guidance on the formation of LSPs was issued 2001 recommended LSPs as the most appropriate body to undertake the production of an SCS. Sustainable Community Strategies are intended to provide a 10-30 year strategic vision for the area, and also underpin the land use planning process. Since 2001 the HSP has been the vehicle for developing and overseeing the SCS. Halton revised and refreshed its 3rd SCS in April 2011.
- 2.9 Our SCS sets out a clear vision and aims for Halton as:

Halton will be a thriving and vibrant Borough where people can learn and develop their skills, enjoy a good quality of life with good health, a high quality, modern urban environment, the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential , develop greater wealth and equality sustained by a thriving business community and live in safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.

- 2.10 The SCS also establishes the five key strategic priorities of:
- A Healthy Halton
 - Environment and Regeneration in Halton
 - Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

- Children & Young People in Halton
 - A Safer Halton
- 2.11 The SCS for Halton forms part of the 'Golden Thread' hierarchy of plans running through HBC from the SCS, down through the Council's Corporate Plan and the Directorate Service Plans. The five priorities are also embedded throughout the work of the partners in Halton.
- 2.12 Guidance on preparing a SCS was last included as part of the 2008 publication 'Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities'. No more recent guidance on SCS preparation has been published, so this duty remains in force. The government have spoken of proposed their intention to repeal this but this has not happened to date.
- 2.13 The SCS for Halton was produced following extensive consultation with the community, elected members and partners. The SCS tells Halton's 'story of the place' for Halton – the distinctive vision and ambition of the area, backed by clear evidence and analysis and contains the following elements:
- the long-term vision based firmly on local needs – this will be underpinned by a shared evidence base informed by community aspirations
 - Key priorities for the local area, based upon this vision which may realistically be achieved in the medium term.
- 2.14 From 2008-2011, the local 'action plan' or implementation plan for the SCS took the form of a local area agreement (LAA), which was brought in a statutory duty for public bodies. LAAs ceased to be statutory at the end of March 2011, but within Halton we have continued to maintain a medium-term action plan for the SCS for the next five years, setting out local priorities, outcomes, and locally-defined targets for measuring progress. In 2011 a revised set of Performance Targets for both the SCS and Corporate Plan were developed and approved by both HBC and the HSP. In addition, the SSPs produce 5 year action plans setting out their priorities for action over the short and medium term.
- 2.15 The HSP has also had a significant role to play in Halton in helping to discharge The Duty to Involve, which came into force in April 2009, placed a statutory obligation on councils, requiring them to consult and involve individuals, groups, businesses or organisations likely to be affected by their actions and inform, consult and involve citizens in decision-making where appropriate. At one stage it appeared that the coalition government was planning to repeal the duty to involve, but the Localism Bill repeals only a separate set of requirements relating to local democracy. The HSP has been, and continues to be a useful vehicle for undertaking the statutory obligation.
- 2.16 LSPs have also traditionally been viewed as one of the main ways through which local authorities have exercised a wider 'community leadership' role, as reinforced by the 2006 White Paper Strong and Prosperous Communities, the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, and the Total Place programme of the previous government, which is continuing on in many

senses through current initiatives such as Community Budgets and Troubled Families.

3.0 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Since the general election in May 2010, the context for local partnership working has changed.

3.2 Alongside substantial cuts in public spending and a drive towards ever greater efficiencies, councils and their partners have been responding to:

- the Localism Act, with its plans for extended 'community rights' to challenge for services, changes to the planning system, and elected mayors for 12 major cities
- radical plans for NHS reform and for transfer of public health responsibilities to local government
- the Police and Social Responsibility Bill, and proposals for directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners
- the Big Society agenda
- Treasury and Cabinet Office proposals for public service reform, such as the Open Public Services White Paper and the Local Government Finance Reform Bill.

3.3 Some proposals are supportive of integration and collaborative working at the local level. Others will be more challenging in that they change accountabilities or shift responsibilities to different, and less coterminous, spatial levels.

3.4 They include the following:

- **GP commissioning Groups** enter the scene as a new player. Responsible for £80bn of NHS expenditure, and with limited involvement to date of local partnership working. Consortia will have no electoral accountability, although scrutiny arrangements for health services are due to be enhanced through the new Act.
- **Health and Wellbeing Boards** will be established within all first tier local authority areas. They will have statutory status, with duties and powers, conferred from April 2013. Their primary role will be a joint duty (with commissioning consortia) to prepare and implement the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the area, and (in future) a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS).
- **Children's Trusts** have been relieved of statutory requirements. The Department of Education is however giving out the message that Trust's should carry on as they are for now, including the preparation of Children and Young Persons Plans (CYPP). It is expected that where areas have found children's trust arrangements useful and constructive in pushing forward the strategic development of children's services they may well continue with this arrangement. However, in the absence of the LAA framework, coupled with

no formal requirement to prepare a CYPP, hard-pressed partner agencies may question the level of input they make to the work of Trusts. Oversight of joint commissioning with the NHS for children's care, public health, and health improvement, is due to become a responsibility of Health & Wellbeing Boards.

- **Police and Crime Commissioners** will replace Police Authorities, in 41 of the English and Welsh forces, from November 2012. They will be directly elected and hence with a separate mandate from the local authorities in the area. Commissioners will be expected to play an active role in local partnership working, but in practice this will be constrained by their extensive responsibilities and the number of LSPs and CSPs in any force area.
- **Police and Crime Panels**, also at force level, will be a further new addition. They will include a minimum of 10 elected members from local authorities in the area, along with a minimum of 2 co-opted members.
- In terms of **enterprise and economic development, Local Enterprise Partnerships** cover some parts of the country and not others. Their membership will be a 50/50 split of business and public sector members and these Partnerships are business-led.
- At regional and sub-regional level, the partnership landscape has also changed with the **abolition of RDAs and regional spatial Strategies**.
- Building on the ethos of Total Place, **Community (Place-based) budgets** related to families with complex and multiple needs were piloted across 16 areas of the country, with a number of new areas being announced for 2012/13. In addition, 4 pilots are underway looking at 'Whole Place'. 10 'Neighbourhood Level' budgets are also being trialled.
- The **Troubled Families** initiative is currently underway for 120 000 families in England. The programme will run primarily on a payment-by-results basis to incentivise local authorities and other partners to take action to turn around the lives of troubled families in their area by 2015. The Government is offering to pay up to 40 per cent of local authorities' costs of dealing with these families (Payment by Results Model) payable only when they and their partners achieve success with families.

4. THE CURRENT NEED FOR THE HSP.

- 4.1 Topic group members, as well as examining the history and original purpose of the HSP, felt that it would be beneficial to look in more detail at the current position of the LSP and determine whether there was still an accepted need. In doing so they considered the current political context as well as the potential future need for and benefit from the HSP
- 4.2 Since taking office in May 2010, the Coalition Government has continued to support the broad principles of partnership working at local level. But it has said little on the subject of LSPs. The abolition of LAAs from March 2011, along with the removal of WNF funding and the abolition of Government

Offices, has removed a substantive set of statutory tasks that LSPs used to undertake. In addition, as part of the move towards Localism, the coalition government, in addition to removing the LAA framework, has dismantled much of the previous national performance framework such as Public Service Agreements (PSAs), Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAAs) and the former national performance management regimes.

- 4.3 As a result, in common with Halton, councils nationally, regionally and locally, together with their partner agencies have been reviewing the role and responsibilities of local partnerships. In most cases partnership bodies have been retained, generally with different functions and modified roles, often involved in the search for cost savings or in reconfiguration of local public services. In some cases, LSPs have been wound up or replaced with a different body.
- 4.4 In Halton, the HSP was consulted during 2011 on what they felt was the value of the partnership and agreed that they would like the current arrangements to continue. Therefore, since 2011 extensive work has been undertaken in developing a development plan for the Board to ensure that it remains able to deliver and evolve in the rapidly changing world of the public sector. Governance documents have been refreshed and rewritten and now reflect the Council's Governance Checklist for Partnerships. Membership has been reviewed, communications replanned and meetings have been refocused to ensure that they are shorter, more strategic and focus on one or two key issues where collaborative working could potentially make the most difference to the community of Halton.
- 4.5 Many partnerships, including the HSP, have found it useful to maintain oversight and coordinate community consultation and engagement activities of individual partners and, where appropriate, combine them. This saves costs and helps avoid 'consultation fatigue' for local people. Work on community engagement culminated in the production of a new Community Engagement Strategy in 2011 which was endorsed by the HSP and the Council and which is being implemented by the HSP's Equality, Engagement and Cohesion group.
- 4.6 While the coalition government places less emphasis than the previous government on formalised local partnership arrangements, collaboration and joint working remain a key part of the national agenda on health reform, policing, and economic development. LSPs, in their own right are not statutory bodies - therefore, their success depends on the voluntary participation of partners. That said, increasingly the performance of a range of public agencies is being judged by government on their achievements through partnership working. Partnership relationships are central to government plans for the Big Society and delivering on the government decentralisation and localism agenda

- 4.7 Members of the group discussed the intended purpose of LSPs in bringing about more coherence to the diverse plans, services and initiatives of all the public agencies who contribute to promoting local quality of life. It was agreed that they offer an opportunity to join up partner activities which could be viewed as part of the overall government drive to improve the delivery of public services.
- 4.8 LSPs have always been encouraged to build up oversight of the alignment of resources in the locality - where relevant to delivery of the SCS – in order to achieve more effective and efficient commissioning and ultimately better outcomes. This role grew in significance under the Total Place programme of the previous government, and remains key to the development of Community Budgets. If, as seems likely, the Community Budget approach is rolled out further, the HSP could be the vehicle for coordination and delivery and our strong partner networks will be tested.
- 4.9 Topic Group members felt that Partnership working between councils and other local agencies could have potential in redesigning public services and commissioning to ensure good outcomes for residents at lowest cost, particularly critical at these times of austerity and dramatic cuts in public sector funding. This is something that will need to be explored further by the Partnership.
- 4.10 There are also a range of other potential benefits which were discussed by Topic Group members which could arise from continued working in partnership such as sharing skills and knowledge, designing creative solutions and creating social equity. These are often hard to quantify but are vital in helping to maintain a thriving, successful area.
- 4.11 It is therefore concluded that in relation to both local need and political drivers, a need remains for a forum in which key local decision makers are able to come together to share knowledge, expertise and help achieve our long term vision for Halton. The challenge is therefore to develop and harness the power of the partnership to achieve this vision.

5. SUCCESSES TO DATE

- 5.1 Topic Group members felt that it was important within their review to consider and reflect on some of the successes of the Partnership to date which have been achieved through working in partnership and which have added value to Halton. Some of these have been delivered as result of the regeneration funding Halton was able to access as a result of forming the HSP and some have come as a consequence of the robust relationships built by Halton partners over the years which have led to multi-agency solutions to issues. A number of these examples are discussed here.
- 5.2 In preparation for Halton's announced multi-agency Ofsted inspection, a working group was set up in 2009 to begin the planning needed to ensure a

successful inspection. This included representatives from all agencies within Halton Children's Trust and Halton Safeguarding Children Board

- 5.3 Halton's inspection took place in February 2011, with a two week preparatory period and the final report showed the level of planning and preparation had been worthwhile – Halton was graded as either 'outstanding' or 'good' against all 22 criteria for both Safeguarding and Looked After Children. This highlights the robust systems in place locally and the strength of partnership working across Halton within children and young people's services.
- 5.4 2012 and 2011 data from the Department of Education showed significant improvement in performance amongst young people from Halton at both Level 2 and Level 3. These improvements have exceeded expectations and indicate that the action plans implemented by the multi-agency 14-19 strategic partnership are focused on the right actions to build real improvements.
- 5.5 At level 2 74.8% of Halton learners achieved a qualification by age 19, a 7.6% increase on 2009 and the largest annual increase recorded nationally. The level of improvement has been achieved whilst trying to reduce the inequality gap, including those eligible for Free School Meals, which was reduced by 2%. Further growth in Level 2 attainment was achieved in 201, with 82.6% securing a level 2 qualification.
- 5.6 At Level 3, 42.3% of Halton learners achieved a qualification by age 19, an 8.4% increase compared to 2009, and the second highest level of increase recorded nationally. This level was exceeded in 2011, with 50.3% achieving this level, an 8.4% increase on 2010.
- 5.7 The Halton Health Partnership has recently been succeeded by the Health and Wellbeing Shadow Board as a result of the changes within public health. However, Some of the key successes and activities in Health during the lifetime of the Halton Health Partnership have included the major 2002 Health Study undertaken by Lancaster University to understand the factors affecting health in Halton, running a series of Healthy Halton weeks and supporting the targeted 'Get Checked' campaign which has led to more cancers being diagnosed and improving the smoking quit rate year on year for the past 5 years, with Halton and St Helens now having the 4th highest quit rate in the North west.
- 5.8 Recently, the Halton Partnership and its associated Transport Partnership have been instrumental in the preparation of a bid for £5.5 million to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund which is heavily based on partnership working to address carbon emissions and to improve access to employment. As part of the bid criteria there was a need to demonstrate how partners had been consulted and what match funding was available. Letters of support have been received from partners and match contributions have included free advertising space on buses which would otherwise cost £130k over 3 years, a contribution to clearer safer pathways and cycleways to Astmoor at a cost of £15k per year, a contribution to a bus servicing a business park costing 30k a

year and reduced travel costs to areas if employment to new employees coming of JSA. The outcome of the bid process is expected shortly.

- 5.9 A range of highly visible initiatives have been funded by, or coordinated by the Safer Halton Partnership in terms of practical support and advice, including the Blue Lamp project which funded a team of Police Community Support Officers across the Borough. A programme of Burglary Days of Action have taken place in a bid to help residents protect their homes including providing advice on keeping homes safe, fire safety advice and handing out Smartwater property marking kits. This provides an enhanced service to residents compared with other areas in Cheshire.
- 5.10 A series of Respect weeks have been held engaging local people with local partners to deliver a co-ordinated approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and associated environmental projects in communities where the perception of crime and ASB is the greatest. The Respect weeks have pulled together crime reduction activities and environmental improvement initiatives, activities for children and young people, opportunities for employment education and training and health and older people's projects. The Respect programme has focused on seasonal ASB periods including school holidays, Halloween and Bonfire Night and the lead up to Christmas.
- 5.11 An integrated offender management programme has also been operational aimed at looking at ways to work in partnership to reduce reoffending in Halton by ensuring an integrated offer from and information from partners in housing, employment, children and family support, community safety, social care etc. is available and considered in order to ensure that a full family package of support is available. This has been instrumental in helping to reduce crime.
- 5.12 Employment, Learning and Skills activity in Halton has been increasingly focused around the work of the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP) which was created through the ELS SSP. The HEP supports inward investors and local businesses with a 'complete employment offer'. Services include support with recruitment and training and the HEP have been involved in providing a full range of recruitment support to the Tesco Distribution Centre at 3MG in Widnes where 450 people were helped into employment of which 73% were Halton residents and more recently with Tesco Extra where as a result of negotiations open days, interviews skills workshops, interviews and pre-employment training were agreed with Tesco.. In total 94 unemployed Halton residents were moved into employment with Tesco as a direct result of HEP intervention. Out of 23 job offers made at Reel Cinemas, 20 went to Halton residents through the HEP, 15 of whom had previously been unemployed.

6. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 A key part of the remit of this Topic Group was to consider ways in which the accountability of the HSP could be increased, what activities could form part of its future role and to make recommendations to strengthen the relationship

between HSP, SSPs and PPBs. The group discussed a variety of methods and the main points of the discussion together with some recommendations are contained below.

- 6.2 Members felt that the changing policy landscape and emerging new public sector architecture means that **elected members will increasingly play a key role** (alongside others in the partnership) in bringing together the work of thematic SSPs and the HSP Board across a range of spatial levels. For instance at the sub regional level, elected leaders sitting on LEPs or Police and Crime Panels will need to balance strategic thinking with place-based priorities and ensure that the decisions made at a sub-regional level are actually delivered or deliverable locally. At the more local level, the role of non-executive elected members is also being recast, and enhanced, as more control over the way services are shaped and delivered is increasingly being devolved down to lower spatial levels through the Localism agenda.
- 6.3 The role of elected members within the Partnership arena is therefore critical and the work of scrutiny can add value and improvement, for example through:
- **Better outcomes:** improving the work of the partnership by finding new ways to tackle problems and improving strategies through wider community engagement
 - **Better processes:** improving how the HSP works structurally and improving councillor engagement with HSP.
 - Providing **democratic input** into non-council services
 - Creating greater **openness** of the partnerships
 - Providing a means, through scrutiny, for **community and user engagement** with partnerships
 - Exercising their democratic '**leadership of place**'
- 6.4 Councils have a unique community leadership role and our elected council members also provide a vital link between local people and service providers. Therefore the legitimacy of elected members and local authorities in driving this partnership agenda derives from their role as democratic bodies. All councillors have a role in community leadership and greater involvement in the overview and scrutiny of the Partnership through strengthened links with the HSP and SSPs is one vital way of ensuring councillors are engaged in this. The potential to **invite partners to PPB meetings around specific agenda topics** and items to further exercise the value of the scrutiny role could also be explored with partners.
- 6.5 Members felt that involvement with the HSP and SSPs should be strengthened beyond that of simply receiving minutes. It has been proposed that **meeting summary reports** are produced within 5 days of the HSPB or SSP meeting taking place. These summary reports will give brief details of the key issues discussed at the meeting, as well as proposed actions. It is suggested that these are also **distributed to PPB members** so that they have an awareness of the key decisions and discussions at meetings without

the need to wait for formal minutes, therefore giving them the opportunity to contribute and comment at an early stage.

- 6.6 In terms of further communications, an **annual report for the HSP** could be considered, focusing on progress against targets and the key achievements of the year and ensuring that the work of the partners and its impact on Halton is documented and made more visible. This can be tied into the annual performance reporting framework and be added to the revised communications programme for the partnership which aims to improve the ways in which we engage and communicate with the community of Halton and which is being taken forward by the Equality, Engagement and Cohesion Group.
- 6.7 Members suggested that **joint meetings could be arranged between HSPB and SSP members and PPB members. Taking place on an annual or bi-annual basis, and themed around a topic** or around performance targets, these could provide the opportunity to discuss Halton's priorities in a joined up fashion and to begin to understand more about partner and council priorities, motivations and contributions. It would also offer the opportunity to begin to further explore areas of joint working.
- 6.8 Partnerships, along with the rest of the public sector are of course faced with the additional pressure of managing a significant reduction in resources – both in terms of support staff and also the money available for joint activities (performance-related grants etc.) – at a time when, if anything, even greater effort needs to be put in to keep partners 'at the table'. Budget pressures, organisational change and conflicting priorities means there is a risk of individual partners slipping into a 'bunker mentality' which is why members felt that it was important that the Partnership develops a **practical focus on where joint endeavours can add most local value**. Partners are much more likely to stay at the table and be prepared to commit both time and resources to joint endeavours if the collaborative advantage is clearly evident (i.e. evidence of achievements that could not have been attained by any of the organisations acting alone).
- 6.9 While accountability is still important in partnerships, it is complicated to manage and to assess how the efforts of the partnership have added value. There are a variety of practical problems in working in partnership, which are well known, and which impact on managing performance. They include:
- having to work through trust and influence
 - partners being driven by different imperatives and reporting to different 'parent departments' across Whitehall
 - varying levels of commitment and 'buy-in'
 - a reliance on strong local leadership
 - differences in geographical boundaries
 - compatibility of different systems, cultures and languages
 - problems with data sharing

- 6.10 While an individual agency can be responsible and held accountable for its outputs, accountability is difficult to assess in relation to partnerships delivering complex outcomes. This is because of the practical and conceptual difficulty of knowing what difference the contributions each of the partners made to the final outcome, and the fact that most issues, (such as health, crime, environment etc.), are also the responsibility of non-public sector bodies and the general public themselves. Holding a partnership to account for non-delivery of complex outcomes is therefore complicated and **new systems for measuring performance and the value of partnerships and partnership interventions need to be developed.**
- 6.11 This does not mean that outcomes are unimportant. What is needed is a **greater sense of ownership, involvement and responsibility from all relevant partner bodies and the public.** All too often under the previous arrangements, partner agencies were able to be passive participants and the general public passive recipients. Instead, all now have to take responsibility for their part in delivering outcomes. Unless **all partners exercise some degree of leadership** to ensure that the decisions taken collectively, (at the partnership table), direct, or at least influence, relevant decisions taken back in each of their own respective organisations, the effect of the LSP will be minimal.
- 6.12 Members recognised that partners are being increasingly asked to bring a **greater contribution** to the partnership in terms of both their expertise and the resources their organisations can offer through improved joining up of activity and smarter working. Audits are underway around both **data sharing and communications** to ensure that we are making best use of available resources around shared use of data and making best advantage of partners' communication channels and staff in these times of budget cuts which have significantly reduced the budgets available for marketing and research. Partners are also being asked to take the lead in facilitating open forum topics around shared priorities.
- 6.13 Recognising the increasingly important role partnerships will need to play in delivering the emerging policy agenda, the potential could now be explored to **further increase this contribution from partners from a financial and support point of view.** Topic group members suggested that partners could be asked to **contribute to supporting the operational and running costs of the Partnership** and proposed that talks begin with partners to explore this possibility and reduce the burden upon HBC.
- 6.14 Topic group members wanted to examine how the HSP adds value. Recently, the HSP has been piloting a new approach to measuring and assessing the value of work undertaken by undertaking an approach of **mapping the resources** deployed in tackling some of our key issues such as approaches to tackling anti- social behaviour and addressing the issues associated with skills development. Customer journey mapping exercises are carried out to develop understanding of what the intervention is, who is involved and what systems are in place. Mapping of resources then takes place across each stage of the customer journey to understand the costs of the intervention and

where resources are deployed. This pilot project aims to help identify duplication, improve efficiency, identify new ways of working and understand more of the benefits associated with the intervention, not just financial but also of the social value created. In this way, alongside the traditional Performance Management Framework adopted in 2011, it is hoped that a better understanding of the value of Partnership working will assist with this aspect of the Topic group's enquiry. **Results of this exercise could be reported back to PPBs as well as the HSP.**

- 6.15 Members discussed the communications of the HSP and awareness levels of it. It was suggested that the HSP should do more to celebrate its successes, whilst still ensuring that its constituent agencies' identities are not subsumed. It is recommended that this is further examined by HSP.
- 6.16 **It is recommended that the work of the HSP is reviewed again in 12 months' time to assess the contributions made by the partners, the work achieved by the HSP and SSPs** and to examine the issue of both funding of and officer support for the HSP in more detail. This will allow us to consider the implications of the work of the Partnership and to make a more accurate assessment of the resource needs of the Partnership when weighed against Council and Borough priorities.
- 6.17 **These recommendations are summarised on at Appendix 3**

7.0 Resource Issues and Implications

- 7.1 Support for the Halton Strategic Partnership and associated SSPs is currently met from within Halton Borough Council. This includes the time of one full time Partnership Officer with support from the Lead Policy Officer for Corporate and Organisational Policy, as well as support from Policy Officers to each of the SSPs. Additional resource also comes in the form of support as needed from council's Communications and Marketing team, Committee Services, Finance and Research and Intelligence
- 7.2 In addition to staff time, there are costs associated with meeting the running costs of Partnership activity, including room hire, refreshments, printing etc. These have previously been met via Working Neighbourhoods Funding (WNF), however, the removal of the funding means that from 2013 onwards these costs will need to be met elsewhere.
- 7.3 The Policy and Strategy Division currently responsible for providing the majority of Partnership Support are currently undergoing an Efficiency Review of the service, the outcome of which, and its impact on Partnership delivery, is not yet known.
- 7.4 One of the recommendations contained within this report is that the possibility of partners making either a financial or in-kind contribution is explored from the 2013/14 period onwards in order to recognise the strategic importance and contribution the HSP makes in improving outcomes for partners and

residents of Halton and to alleviate some of the financial burden on Halton Borough Council in these times of diminishing resources.

- 7.5 All of the recommendations contained within the report are either procedural improvements to process as a way of improving communications and strengthening links between Council members and the HSP, or will be facilitated as part of the normal Partnership work programme development cycle. As such all can be met from within existing resources.

Appendix 1

Halton Strategic Partnership Membership List – Revised March 2012

	Sector	Agency
1	Health	Health and Wellbeing Board
2	Health	Clinical Commissioning Consortia
3	Health	Director of Public Health
4	Health	Health Care Provider ²
5	Health	PCT
6	Employment, Learning and Skills	ELS SSP
7	Employment, Learning and Skills	Jobcentre Plus
8	Employment, Learning and Skills	Riverside College
9	Safer Halton	Safer Halton SSP
10	Safer Halton	Cheshire Police Authority/Police and Crime Commissioner
11	Safer Halton	Cheshire Constabulary
12	Safer Halton	Cheshire Fire and Rescue
13	Environment and Regeneration	Environment and Regeneration SSP
14	Environment and Regeneration	Environment Agency
15	Children and Young People	Children's Trust
16	Children and Young People	Halton Youth Cabinet
17	Children and Young People	School Sector Representative
18	Local Government	Halton Borough Council
19	Local Government	Halton Borough Council
20	Business Sector	Halton Chamber of Commerce
21	Business Sector	Employer
22	Voluntary and Community Sector	Halton and St Helens VCA
23	Voluntary and Community Sector	Faith Community
24	Voluntary and Community Sector	Halton Sports Partnership
25	Voluntary and Community Sector	Community Representative
26	Housing	Halton Housing Partnership

Appendix 2



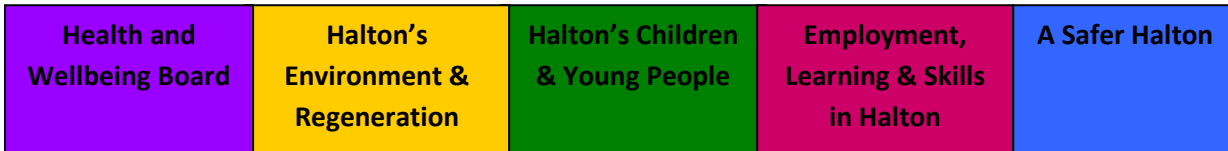
Halton Strategic **PARTNERSHIP**

The Virtual Organisation

Halton Strategic Partnership Board

Halton Partnership Support

SSP Chairs Group



Sector Based Partnerships

- Child & Family Poverty
- Business Forum
- Equalities, Engagement & Cohesion
- Strategic Housing

Area	Area	Area	Area	Area	Area	Area
Forum 1	Forum 2	Forum 3	Forum 4	Forum 4	Forum 6	Forum 7

Resources Management

Appendix 3

HSP Topic Group – Table of Recommendations

Action	How	By Whom
Enhance the role of elected members within the Partnership environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing together Partnership activity across different spatial levels (e.g HSPB. Police and Crime Panels etc) • Increasing control over shaping local services via localism agenda • Providing democratic input • Enhancing community engagement and leadership of place 	HSPB and Elected Members to explore.
Explore further opportunities for Joint working and achieving collaborative advantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying areas where we can develop a practical focus on where joint working can add local value that could not be achieved by one partner alone 	PPB members HSPB members Policy and Strategy Support.
Design new ways of assessing the impact and effectiveness of the Partnership to be explored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore new systems for measuring and evaluating complex outcomes such as Social Value measurements, Cost Benefit analysis approaches and Systems thinking alongside traditional Performance Frameworks and progress reports 	Policy and Strategy Staff to support the process and make recommendations to PPB and HSP.
Increasing the leadership role and contributions of partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage partners to ensure that decisions taken collectively by the HSP direct, or at least influence, decisions taken within individual partner operations • Review whether a financial or in kind contribution should be requested from partners to support the operational and 	PPB Members and Council officers to explore and make further recommendations

	running costs of the HSP.	
Review Full Programme of Activity after 12 month period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a further review to scrutinise progress of the Partnership, including running costs, outcomes achieved and assess future support arrangements. 	PPB Members and Council officers
Partners invited to attend PPB meetings on specific topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To further strengthen the scrutiny role and improve partnership links 	PPB/ HSP members
Meeting Summary Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be produced and distributed within 5 working days of the meeting and to be distributed to PPB members to improve sharing and communication of information 	Policy and Strategy Staff / Communications and Marketing Staff
Annual Report Produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce report at end of financial year to highlight and emphasise the achievements of the HSP and partners 	Policy and Strategy Support
Joint meetings of HSPB/ PPB/ SSP to be explored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On an annual or bi-annual basis and to be themed in order to join up discussions about key issues in Halton 	PPB members HSPB members Policy and Strategy Support
Data Sharing and Communications Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve sharing and communication of information and ensure data is effectively shared and communications joined up and efficient. to further enhance and recognise the contribution partners make to achieving our outcomes 	Policy and Strategy Support