

Annual Report

Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

April 2012- March 2013



Cllr John Gerrard
Chair

"I would like to thank all of the Members of the Environment and Urban Renewal PPB for their effort and support throughout my first year as Chair.

Members have played a significant role in the continued regeneration of the Borough and its environment in these particularly challenging times.

Over the last 12 months, the Board has responded to, and dealt with, a wide range of issues which demonstrates their level of commitment and positive attitude in reacting swiftly and effectively to matters that are brought before them. These, combined with the Board's experience and abilities help support a continuing improvement in the quality of life in Halton and the opportunities afforded to our communities."

Councillor Gerrard
Chair, Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2012/13 the Board comprised eleven Councillors:-

Councillor John Gerrard (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Keith Morley (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Frank Fraser	Labour
Councillor John Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Pauline Hignett	Labour
Councillor Andrew MacManus	Labour
Councillor Stan Parker	Labour
Councillor Pauline Sinnott	Labour
Councillor Dave Thompson	Labour
Councillor Bill Woolfall	Labour
Councillor Geoff Zygadlo	Labour

The Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board's primary function is to focus on the work of the Council (and its partners) in seeking to bring about the Environmental and Urban Renewal of the Borough. It is also charged with

scrutinising progress against the Corporate Plan in relation to the Environment and Regeneration Priority.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to the following areas:

- Highways, Transportation and Logistics (including road maintenance, street lighting, road safety, traffic management, supported bus services and flood risk management)
- Landscape Services, Parks & Countryside, Cemeteries & Crematoria
- Environmental and Regulatory Services
- Major Projects
- Economic Regeneration and Business Development
- Waste Management and Waste Strategy
- Derelict and contaminated Land
- Housing Strategic Policy
- Sustainability, Climate Change and Biodiversity
- Physical Environment and Planning policies

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The Board met 5 times during the year. As well as considering Executive Board decisions relevant to the work of the Environment and Urban Renewal Board, agreeing the Service Plans of the relevant Departments and monitoring their general activities and performance against them, set out below are some of the main activities and issues which have come before the Board during the year.

The Board received, considered reports, agreed decisions and put forward relevant actions on the following issues:-

Corporate Responsibilities

- Minutes of the Environment and Regeneration SSP.
- Regular progress reports on achieving targets contained with the Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton.
- Updates on Business Plans for the period 2013-16 and the Directorate priorities, objectives and targets for the services that fell within the remit of the Board for this period. It also considered and commented on Quarterly Monitoring reports which detailed progress against service objectives/milestones, performance targets and factors affecting the services that fell with the remit of the Board.

Highways and Transportation

- Nominations were agreed for Members to sit on the Council's Public Transport Advisory Panel for the 2012/13 Municipal Year. These were Councillors Gerrard, Morley, Stockton, Bradshaw and Woolfall.
- It was also agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair would sit on the Consultation Review Panel as may be required from time to time.
- Feedback on the results of a consultation exercise that had been undertaken on the proposed withdrawal of subsidised bus services in 2012-13. Members noted the proposal to reduce the budget by £70,000.
- An objection raised to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to introduce 20mph speed limits on roads in Hale Village.
- An objection to proposed waiting restrictions in Russell Court, Farnworth had been received following public consultation. It was agreed to implement an "At Any Time" waiting restrictions and a report be submitted to the Executive Board.
- Objections following public consultation for various locations across Widnes and Runcorn, including Cowan Way, Upton Lane, Green Lane, Cawfield Avenue, Primrose Close, Alder Avenue, Birch Road, Acacia Avenue, Lockett Road, Church Street, Upper Mersey Road and Mersey Road, Widnes, along with Kenilworth Avenue, Penrhyn Crescent and Ludlow Crescent Runcorn.
- Objections concerning off street parking places in Runcorn Town Centre.
- The Annual Road Traffic Collision and Casualty report showing overall progress on reductions. The Board was informed of the budget cuts from government which raised concerns with regard to the achievement of further casualty prevention. PPB Members were also informed of on-going work to review the use of fixed safety cameras and it asked for regular updates.
- The results of the National Highway and Transportation Survey for 2012. It was agreed a further "proposals" report be prepared and brought back to a later meeting.
- A petition signed by six residents from Coronation Road had been received. This concerned surface water drainage associated with a Doctors' surgery car park. It was noted that the Open Spaces Department had recently undertaking work and it was requested that the situation be monitored and Ward Members be informed.
- Recent changes to the Council's regulatory powers under the Land Drainage Act 1992 and endorsement was given to a proposal to consult on a set of local land drainage byelaws.
- Update on flood risk management issues and progress being made in relation to the Council's duties under the Flood and Water Management Act.

Economic Regeneration and Business Development

- Proposals for the development of an International Festival of Business in the Liverpool City Region and the opportunities that this could present for Halton. It was agreed to support Halton's participation in this initiative.

Environmental and Regulatory Services

- A report showing the benefits and implication of signing up to two climate change commitments:- 1) the EU Covenant of Mayors, which committed the Council and its Partners to preparing a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP); and 2) the Local Government Association's 'Climate Local'. It was agreed to recommend, to the Executive Board, that both these commitments be signed.
- An outline on how Halton's SEAP would sit underneath that being prepared by the Liverpool City Region, and how through the LEP's Low Carbon Economy committee, it be implemented.

Environmental Sustainability

- The PPB were advised that the Waste Topic Group had met in February 2013 concerning charges for the collection of bulky items and the provision of new and replacement wheeled bins, and agreed that the proposed charges should be presented to the Executive Board.

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Physical Environment and Planning

- Updates for the Local Development Scheme, which gave target dates for production of the Local Development Framework and Development Plan Documents.
- The Neighbourhood Planning process as brought in by the Localism Act 2011, and it was agreed responses to any requests be in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- Overview of the next key document to be produced in Halton's Local Development Framework, the "Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan".
- An overview of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and a proposal to investigate whether a CIL financial charge on new development was a viable option in Halton.

Communities

- The draft Housing Strategy for 2013-2018, as part of the wider consultation process, as well as fully supporting the draft strategy, the Board wished an additional priority be added to support the promotion of welfare and debt advice within the housing sector.
- Information concerning the Armed Forces Community Covenant and the Board was advised that Halton was part of the pan Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, and Warrington pact. The Board requested regular monitoring reports on progress on the key themes and pledges agreed as part of the Covenant.

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2013/2014

The Board is asked to consider whether it wishes to carry out Topic Reviews for the 2013/14 Municipal year at its next or subsequent meetings.

Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work please contact Mick Noone on 0151 471 7370 or mick.noone@halton.gov.uk