



Cllr. Shaun
Osborne
Chairman

**ANNUAL REPORT
SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
APRIL 2013 – MARCH 2014**

“Safety and people’s perception of being safe in all its forms remain a major issue in Halton. The Board has, and will continue to focus its energy on making Halton residents feel safe. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Board members who have worked hard to this end.

The Board has had a very challenging programme of monitoring, scrutiny, and policy development, because ‘Safer Halton’ is a truly cross-cutting agenda. I believe it is making a considerable contribution to improving the way the Council and its partners work together to improve the quality of life in Halton.

I would like to thank and congratulate Norman for his contribution and his comprehensive Night Time Economy report and his support as Vice Chair. Thank you also to Chris Patino, Mike Andrews, Emma Sutton-Thompson, Janet Guy and Lynn Derbyshire for all the support, advice and knowledge and of course all the other members whose contribution and debate make a difference to outcomes without which we would not make progress as a scrutiny and policy board. To all the other staff and members, who have contributed throughout this year, thank you.”

Councillor Shaun Osborne
Chairman, Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2013/14 the Board comprised eleven Councillors – Councillors Osborne, Plumpton-Walsh, Edge, J Gerrard, Gilligan, Hill, Hodge, Lea, Lloyd-Jones, Nolan and Sinnott.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to Community Safety, Domestic Abuse, Safeguarding Adults Environmental Health and the Safer Halton Partnership.

Topic Groups for 13/14:-

- Night Time Economy

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met 5 times during the year.

The main initiatives of the Board's work for 2013/14 are as follows: -

Overview and Scrutiny

The Board continued its scrutiny and policy development role in this crucial area, and completed a Topic Group focussing on the **Night Time Economy**, what works well in Halton and what could be improved to provide a safe, accessible, well managed night time economy that meets the needs of residents and businesses and attracts visitors to the borough. The Topic Group developed an Action Plan with recommendations that will be monitored through the Board.

The **Police and Crime Commissioner** (PCC), John Dwyer, has been in place since November 2012, along with the Police and Crime Panel. Councillor Osborne and Cargill are Halton representatives on the panel which scrutinises the activities of the PCC. Throughout 2013/14, the Board has received regular updates from the PCC and Panel, including a presentation from John Dwyer at the Board on 12th November 2013.

The Board received the Safer Halton Partnership **Drug Strategy** 2014 – 2018. The strategy was designed to be a short document that focussed on the strategic objectives and priorities linking to a drugs service action plan that would be monitored by the Substance Misuse task group with quarterly themed updates to the Safer Halton Partnership Board.

The Board received the **Dementia Strategy** 2013 – 2018. This strategy has been developed as a direct response to the National Dementia Strategy – Living Well with Dementia (DH 2009). The local strategy has adopted the national targets as well as developing a specific implementation plan to deliver a range of improvements for people diagnosed with dementia and their carers.

The **Communities Directorate Business Plan** was reviewed by members and priorities for 2014/15 were agreed as follows:

- Reduce alcohol abuse and domestic violence;
- Safeguarding; and
- Consumer Protection.

Community Safety

The multi-agency **Hate Crime and Harassment Reduction Strategy** has been reviewed and updated, following the launch of the Government's plan to tackle Hate Crime "Challenge It, Report It, Stop It: The Government's Plan to Tackle Hate Crime" March 2012. The revised strategy continues to promote effective and co-ordinated action against hate crime. Work continues with the Safer Halton Partners, including the Police, Housing, voluntary sector support groups and the Council to gain a better understanding of reported incidents within Halton. In line

with this a new Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel has been established.

The Board considered the **Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report** for 2012/13 and an update of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The report highlighted that there had been a 25% reduction in primary fires, which represented the lowest number ever recorded. Injuries had also reduced and had been categorised as slight with no serious injuries. In respect of the IRMP it was reported that the delivery plans were on track as follows:

- Widnes – remove the second fire engine and provide additional cover from the new whole time station at Penketh; and
- Runcorn – change how the second fire engine was crewed from whole time to On-call (24/7).

The Board received an update regarding the **Bonfire Removal Initiative** from the proposed operation for 2013. This initiative sets out to improve community safety by removing unauthorised and uncontrolled bonfires before they are ignited. It was reported that discussions had taken place with housing partners, the Police and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and funding had been jointly established to deal with issues around Mischief Night and Bonfire Night.

The Board considered a report regarding an **Alleygate Proposal** for Elkan Road, Widnes. A request had been made for the installation of a gate on Elkan Road to reduce the incidents of anti-social behaviour on the pathway that runs between two properties. After much discussion, the Board unanimously supported the installation of the alleygate and recommended that consideration be given to a spring lock and that the decision on a partial or full closure be decided by Ward Councillors.

Domestic Abuse

The Board received regular updates regarding Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence which included:

The locally delivered **Perpetrator Programme** was currently under development with funding in place to deliver a 26-week programme for eight male perpetrators. The programme would initially be delivered as a pilot. If successful, the NHS Halton CCG had agreed to assist in determining a sustainable pathway.

The Children and Enterprise Directorate were currently commissioning a service for children and young people affected by domestic violence, based on an analysis of need in Halton.

With an amendment to the definition of domestic violence to include 16 and 17 year olds, the Government has funded **Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse** (CAADA) to support local authorities to train a **Young Persons Independent Domestic Violence Advocate** (YIDVA) and to develop performance reporting systems to help each area to identify their local issues. The YIDVA for Halton had recently started and would be attending training in September 2013.

	<p>The Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) had published a review of the service. The report summarised the hard and soft findings of the review and the importance of the service in the current environment. The profile of sexual violence had increased on the political, health and criminal justice agenda, but better funding was required to enable RASASC to support and counsel more survivors through the legal system and beyond.</p> <p>Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults</p> <p>The Board received regular updates regarding Safeguarding Adults. The Integrated Safeguarding Unit is now in its second year, funded jointly with the NHS Halton CCG. There was now a strong and growing evidence base for the effectiveness of behaviour analytic approaches and these had been shown to significantly reduce the frequency, intensity and duration of challenging behaviour.</p> <p>The Board was advised that an internal peer challenge review had been undertaken during June – August 2013 based on the “Standards for Adult Safeguarding Peer Reviews”. A Peer Challenge Team had been formed to take forward the review and undertake a self-assessment against the Adult Safeguarding Standards and to write a report for the Challenge Team.</p> <p>Recommendations from the report had been converted into an Action Plan which would be progressed during 2014 and monitored through the Safeguarding Adults Board.</p>
	<p>Environmental Health</p> <p>The Board considered an update report on the safety and control of cosmetic treatments. The Board was advised that considerable progress had been made in addressing illegal tattooists, e.g. the health and safety team were using new powers which allowed Local Authorities to obtain a court order to intervene where a premises, person or thing presented a risk of contamination or infection. Local Authorities, however, had to apply to a magistrate for a court order and demonstrate that a risk to health existed. In the last six months the team had executed seven warrants with support from Cheshire Police and seized tattooing equipment from five illegal tattooists. In August 2013, the Health and Safety Team with support from Trading Standards had undertaken a test purchase operation on nine sunbed operators, using a 16 year old volunteer. Unfortunately, five of the operators had failed the test purchase and allowed the 16 year old to purchase sunbed sessions. The Board noted that currently 90.3% of Halton premises were broadly compliant with the law in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.</p>
	<p>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 Chris Patino (0151 511 8556) or email at Chris.Patino@halton.gov.uk</p>