

SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 16 June 2015 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Thompson (Chairman), Lea (Vice-Chairman), Edge, Gilligan, V. Hill, M. Lloyd Jones, Nolan, Sinnott and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Bradshaw and J Gerrard and Councillor D. Cargill (Portfolio Holder – Community Safety)

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Andrews, E. Anwar, L. Derbyshire, N. Hallmark, C. Patino and J. Williams

Also in attendance: Councillors: J. Lowe and S. Hill (Health PPB Chairman and Vice Chairman), PC J Lennox (Cheshire Police), Mr D Kitchen and Ms J Treharne (North West Ambulance Service) and Ms D Perchard (Trading Standards).

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

SAF1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Action

The Chairman took the opportunity to place on record, his thanks and appreciation to Councillor M Ratcliffe, who had been a Member of Halton Borough Council for many years. He highlighted the work she had undertaken both as a Ward Councillor and Member of the Board.

The Chairman, at the meeting, circulated a hardcopy of the new operating model for Cheshire Police. The document outlined changes that were proposed for an increase in the number of Police Officers. Overall it was a positive for Halton, which would now have two local policing units. In addition, the proposals showed that there would be a Beat Team in each ward (a mixture of constables, PCSO's and specials). He reported that he would be attending a meeting on Thursday, 18 June 2015, with Councillor D Cargill and the Assistant Chief Constable to discuss the new operating model and encouraged Members to email any comments/observations they may have on the proposed

model.

In conclusion, the Chairman reported that the Annual meeting of the Police & Crime Panel would be held on 26 June 2015.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The verbal update be noted; and
- (2) The Board place on record a vote of thanks to Councillor M Ratcliffe for the work undertaken by her during her time as a Borough Councillor and Board Member and also gave their best wishes to her for the future.

SAF2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2015 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

SAF3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

SAF4 SSP MINUTES

The minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership (SHP) meeting held on 16 February 2015 were presented to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

SAF5 OVERVIEW OF TRADING STANDARDS

The Board received a verbal update from Ms D Perchard, Trading Standards on the service they provided in Halton.

The Board was given information on the following:-

- The role and responsibility of Trading Standards; who was involved and that the service had transferred back to Halton on 1 April 2014 with only half the staff in post – one enforcement officer instead of four. However, by September 2014, they were fully staffed;
- The approach that Trading Standards had taken

was to look at issues that were affecting Halton residents and businesses and then try to use their skills and legislative powers to address these issues;

- Consumer Advice – the role of the service i.e. advise consumers on their rights and how to enforce them when things go wrong. In addition, it was reported that advice was also given to businesses on their responsibilities. Examples of cases last that had been considered year were available at the meeting ;
- Scams – general awareness and details of the Scam Victims Project. The project included 190 Halton residents who were thought to have been victims of mass marketing fraud scams;
- Doorstep crime and ecrime – what had been done and future plans to address this issue;
- Counterfeiting; under age sales; safety; iCAN; weights and measures and feeding stuffs.

Information on the above areas and what had been done to date and the Impacts of the Trading Standards Scam Victims Project – The First 6 Months was also circulated to Members of the Board

The Board noted that the Trading Standards Annual report would be presented to a future meeting. The Board discussed the increase in scams locally and nationally and that they very often involved the most vulnerable people i.e. people with mental health problems, the elderly and lonely people.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The verbal update and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) Ms D Perchard be thanked for her informative presentation.

SAF6 DANGEROUS DOGS - CHESHIRE POLICE

The Board received a presentation from PC Lennox, Cheshire Police on dangerous dogs and the law. The Board was advised that Halton was one of the biggest hotspot in the county in relation to dangerous dogs. The presentation:-

- Highlighted that there were over 200,000 reported dog bites per year which cost the NHS £3,000,000; 50% of attacks involved children under 12yrs; 70% of fatalities occurred in children under 10yrs; 92% of attacks were by male dogs 94% of which were unneutered; the number of people taken to hospital following a dog bite had almost doubled in a decade and there were 3-5 incidents per day reported in Cheshire;
- Outlined fatal dog attacks by breed – 1982-2013 listing with more than 10 deaths occurring;
- Set out Section 1 of the Dangerous Dog Act 1991;
- Detailed some of the prohibited breeds in the UK;
- Set out the Dangerous Dogs Amendment Act 1997; Section 3 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and the new sentencing;
- Highlighted newspaper coverage of the fatalities;
- Highlighted the categories of individuals who were the highest risk of being bitten and explained the law relating to seizure;
- Showed graphic images of dog bites; and
- Outlined the Dogs Act 1871 and detailed the Community Protection Notice.

The following comments arose from the presentation:-

- The Board noted that in respect of the Community Protection Notice (CPN), dog owners would be given a realistic time in relation to the offence to rectify the situation. This timescale varied according to the offence;
- The importance of Halton residents being aware of the situation in respect of dangerous and illegal dogs in Halton was noted and it was suggested that information on this matter be presented to schools and Colleges in the area. In response, PC Lennox reported that due to lack of resources this would be very difficult at the current time. However, it was highlighted that parents would also benefit from awareness training and the

Expect Programme delivered some aspect of this issue to schools;

- Concern was raised that there was only one reading device for dog microchips used by Cheshire police. The device was used to enable a clearer impression to be given on the status of dogs found to be causing a nuisance and where complaints had been made;
- Clarity was sought on whether Housing Associations took account of the issue with their housing tenants. In response, it was reported that Housing Associations gave permission for tenants to have a dog unless it was a prohibited breed. The Board noted that more work could be done with Housing Associations to address this issue i.e. via conditions in individual tenancy agreements;
- It was noted that the Borough had previously encountered incidents of dangerous dogs being kept and trafficked through Cheshire for dog fighting elsewhere. The Board also noted with some concern that children were most significantly the victims of dangerous dogs attacks; and
- The Board noted the challenges Cheshire Police faced in respect of illegal dogs and the ways in which individuals could get round the legislation governing this matter. It was also noted that 4/5 cases a month in Halton were referred to the court, with disappointing outcomes

The Members discussed the seriousness and severity of the situation in Halton and that there was no budget available to deal with this matter. The Members also noted that other organisations such as Housing Organisations also had the potential to influence this issue through tenancy agreements. In light of this, the Board agreed that the Chairman raise with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the potential to focus on this issue in Halton and Cheshire.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the presentation and comments raised be noted;

- (2) the Board expressed concerns at the severity and frequency of incidents in Halton and Cheshire and agreed that the Chairman raise with the PCC the potential for more focus on addressing this issue; and
- (3) PC Lennox be thanked for his informative presentation.

SAF7 NORTH WEST AMBULANCE SERVICE ANNUAL REVIEW

The Board received a presentation from Mr D Kitchin and Ms J Treharne, North West Ambulance Service, NHS Trust on the Annual Review of the service.

The presentation:-

- Gave details of the services provided and which covered Cheshire and Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Lancashire;
- Outlined that the service covered the North West footprint of 33 CCGs, 1,420 GP practices and 29 acute trusts; 1.3 million 999 calls were received each year; there had been 950,000 patient episodes; it represented a population of 7m people, with a growth of 3% by 2017; approximately 5,000 staff were employed with an annual income of £260 million; there were three emergency control rooms (virtual call taking) and 1.2 million PTS journeys has been undertaken in Cheshire, Lancashire, Merseyside and Cumbria;
- Set out the Performance Standards for 999 calls; Halton CCG Red Activity by week 2013/14 vs 2014/15; Healthcare professional activity by the hour; HCP Admissions – NHS Halton CCG for 2014/15 and 2015/16;
- Detailed the top five calls that had been received;
- Detailed the Halton Performance and the demand for various categories of calls;
- Outlined the Year end Performance 2014/15 and 2015/16;
- Highlighted Warrington and Whiston's Hospital Arrival Screen Information;

- Explained how work was undertaken with responders; how and why the ambulance service had changed and the evolving role and local initiatives that had taken place;
- Outlined the changes to emergency and urgent care and how the service was operating differently to achieve better outcomes; and
- Explained how work was taking place to educate the public and partners.

The Chairman reported that last year England's Chief Inspector of Hospitals had published his first report on the quality of care provided by North West Ambulance Service. Overall the Quality Care Commission (CQC) Inspection had found that the Trust provided safe and effective services which were well led with a clear focus on quality. The Inspection Team had included CQC Inspectors, doctors, nurses, paramedics, patient experts by experience and senior manager; over 60 people had spent four days visiting the Trust's three emergency operation centres.

The Board noted the challenges and delays in patients waiting to be transported home via ambulance and the steps that were being taken to address this matter.

The Board was advised that the three emergency call centres were based in Broughton - Preston, Parkway – Greater Manchester and Anfield – Liverpool. However, an urgent upgrade was required in respect of the building and environment in Anfield and it was anticipated that a new site, preferably on the Joint Command and Control Centre at Bridle Road Bootle, would be established by 2017.

The Board was also advised that there were 35 Ambulance services across Cheshire and Merseyside 7 of which were co-located with the Fire and Rescue Service. Clarity was sought on how many emergency ambulances were available in Halton during the evening. In response, it was reported that there were two vehicles in Runcorn; two in Widnes, two response cars in Runcorn and one in Widnes which ceased at 2 am due to lack of demand. However, the additional investment would also provide an additional 16 hour ambulance vehicle in Widnes and Runcorn and one further response car.

The Board noted the extensive training that was undertaken by all staff and that this included training in mental health issues, alcohol and drugs.

Clarity was sought on the vulnerability of the Patient Transport Service in light of losing the Manchester contract two years ago. In response, it was reported that the contract would cease in 2016 and NWAS would bid to retain the existing contracts and to gain the Manchester contract. It was reported that lessons had been learned and the bid would be as competitive as possible.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The contents of the presentation and comments raised be noted;
- (2) Mr D Kitchin and Ms J Treharne be thanked for their informative presentation; and
- (3) The Board re-affirm the support from the CQC in finding that the Trust provided safe and effective services which were well led with a clear focus on quality.

SAF8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS 2014-15 - QUARTER 4

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which presented the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Safer in Quarter 4 of 2014-15.

It was reported that the majority of the performance monitoring targets would be achieved by the end of the year.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SAF9 SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which provided Members with an overview of key developments for the Substance Misuse Service (Adults) during 2014/15.

The Board was advised that Halton Borough Council commissioned the substance misuses services (drug and/or alcohol) and the service supported local people who had substance misuse problems. The contract was delivered across the Halton area by Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI).

The Board was further advised that a key part of that programme was to focus on public health information and

prevention agenda to reduce the number of individuals taking drugs/misusing alcohol and ensuring robust and accessible information was provided to residents of Halton. The aim of the drug and alcohol service was to improve health and social care outcomes and reduce the impact caused by addiction or dependency to drugs and/or alcohol, with a clear drive on improving health inequalities for local people

It was reported that the Halton Brew (a coffee shop within the Halton area developed by the carers group) was ready to launch/start up as a working and sustainable enterprise supporting people in recovery and people affected by substance abuse. The Council had supported the Halton Brew initiative to apply for capital funding from Public Health England. The award had been successful and the scheme had awarded £15.935 capital funding from PHE to help with the start-up capital costs required to secure and furnish the venue that would house the Halton Brew.

Furthermore, it was reported that Commissioning Managers and CRI had worked with Probation colleagues to apply for £50k grant funding for a temporary post to co-ordinate and deliver advice, guidance and training interventions that met the needs of unemployed people who had a drug & alcohol issues or were in Halton treatment services; promote, coordinate and operate referral and liaison procedures with other agencies as required

In conclusion, it was reported that the substance misuse contract with Crime Reduction Initiates (CRI) was due to expire on the 31st March 2016. During 2015 the substance misuse contract would be tendered with a new contract start date of the 1st April 2016. During a period of procurement the service would continue to provide a responsive and invaluable service to the residents of Halton.

The Board noted the new service in Runcorn High Street and that a launch on the new service would be undertaken in summer in order to address some perception issues.

The Chairman reported that Mr John Williams was attending his last meeting of the Board prior to taking up his new role in Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council. The Chairman took the opportunity to place on record the Board's appreciation of the work undertaken by John during his time with the Authority.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) the Board place on record a vote of thanks to Mr John Williams and extend its best wishes to him for the future.

SAF10 NOVEL PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES (NPS)

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which sought support from Members to implement a total ban of any substance termed Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) also known as 'Legal Highs' across all Halton Borough Council services and venues.

The Board was advised that overall drug use had reduced in the UK. However, a significant recent development had been an increase in the range of new and easily available novel psychoactive substances (NPS), also known as "Legal Highs". These chemical substances were newly created, and hence, were not automatically controlled under legislation.

The Board was further advised that in the UK NPS could be purchased on the internet, via dealers on the streets and in clubs and pubs, and in shops. Test purchasing had found that NPS could contain legal substances, illegal substances, or a mixture of both. It was reported that evidence of potential harms was emerging, with indications that the health implications of NPS could be just as serious as illicit drugs and could cause a range of physical and psychological symptoms.

It was reported that Legal Highs were an emerging issue for Halton. There had been an increase in the use of small canisters of national Novel Psychoactive Substances within the Halton Stadium, local parks and other public areas. Council and Police Officers had provided basic information to raise awareness about the harm and risks associated with Legal Highs within the Borough with a focus on local businesses (shops, pubs and clubs).

Furthermore, it was reported that the Halton Substance Misuse Provider CRI (Crime Reduction Initiatives) conducted a workshop on the dangers of Legal Highs lead by CRI's national Novel Psychoactive Substances lead. The workshop had been attended by CRI Staff, YMCA, Cheshire Police and Young Addaction and had been successful in educating and refreshing knowledge on this subject matter.

A number of external stake holder services, including local hostels and young person's substance misuse services were also invited to attend sessions.

The Board noted the number of recent hospitalisations in Warrington as a result of legal highs and that it was on the increase across Cheshire.

After considerable discussion, Members of the Board supported and recommendation to Executive Board, that, with immediate effect, the use of Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) be banned across all Halton Borough Council services and venues.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) the Board recommend that Executive Board, with immediate effect, ban across all Halton Borough Council services and venues Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS).

SAF11 TOPIC GROUP UPDATE - (NPS) LEGAL HIGHS

The Board received an update from the Lead Officer of the Board, Mr Chris Patino on progress of the NPC Topic Group.

It was reported that at the last meeting the Board had established a Topic Group to address the issue of NPC (Legal Highs) in the Borough.

The Board was advised that two meetings had taken place and the third was scheduled on Thursday, 18 June 2015 at Halton Stadium. The previous report had been as a result of the Topic Group and their concern relating to Legal Highs in the Borough.

The Board was further advised that Mr John Bucknall would be attending the next meeting to inform Members of the use of drugs and why people used particular drugs. It was reported that a full and interesting programme had been developed for the Topic Group between July – October 2015 and a range of people would be attending to give Members information to enable them to establish firm recommendations on this issue.

It was reported that the meetings had been well attended to date and Members were encouraged to attend

future meetings.

The Board discussed the availability of Legal Highs and the increase of the use of them in the Borough and the serious consequences that could arise from such use.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report and comments raised be noted.

SAF12 ALCOHOL UPDATE

The Board considered a report which provided Members with an update on activity to reduce the harm caused by alcohol.

The Board noted the summary of key achievements during the last quarter relating to:-

- The Local Alcohol Action Area (LAA);
- Halton Alcohol Inquiry: Talking drink taking action;
- Ensuring the local licensing policy supported the alcohol harm reduction policy;
- The reducing drinking during pregnancy campaign; and
- Progress against related objectives and performance indicators for Quarter 3.

The Board was advised that the final report for the LAAA project was due in May 2015. This would be shared at the next Safer Halton Partnership Board meeting.

Work was also underway to consider the role of Nalmefene within local service provision. Nalmefene (also known as Selincro) was recommended as a possible treatment for people with alcohol dependence who:

- were still drinking more than 7.5 units per day (for men) and more than 5 units per day (for women) 2 weeks after an initial assessment;
- do not have physical withdrawal symptoms; and
- do not need to either stop drinking straight away or stop drinking completely.

It was reported that Nalmefene should only be taken if the person was also having ongoing support to change their behaviour and to continue to take their treatment, to help them reduce their alcohol intake. Work had commenced to consider the role of this treatment, and the availability of

behavioural change support services locally.

The Board noted the excellent work that was being taken to address alcohol abuse in the Borough and that the final report on the LAA would be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

It was suggested and agreed that consideration be given to improving the signage in relation to suicide attempts on the Silver Jubilee Bridge.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.