

SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 19 January 2016
at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Thompson (Chairman), Lea (Vice-Chairman), M. Bradshaw, Edge, J. Gerrard, Nolan, Sinnott and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Gilligan, V. Hill and M. Lloyd Jones

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Unsworth, M. Andrews, C. Patino, P. Kenny, G. Ferguson and S. Shepherd

Also in attendance: Councillors McDermott and D. Cargill. Also 4 members of the public

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
SAF32 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2015, having been circulated were taken as read and signed as a correct record. Arising from a previous meeting, the Chairman announced that on behalf of the Board, Mr Twigg MP had written to Jane Ellison, MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health), regarding food standards. The Chairman read out the reply from Ms Ellison.</p>	
SAF33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>It was confirmed that two public questions had been received and would be submitted and addressed as part of Minute No 38.</p>	
SAF34 OPERATION TREACLE - BONFIRE INITIATIVE	
<p>The Board received an update on the annual work of the Safer Halton Partnership during the period of Halloween and Bonfire Night. The overall aim of the multi-agency action plans was to reduce the impact of these events on the residents of Halton. Each of the plans for each night was</p>	

different as there were individual issues that needed to be addressed from a Widnes and Runcorn perspective. The Board was advised on a number of initiatives which had been carried out by the Fire Service, Police, Trading Standards, the Youth Service, the bus companies, Halton Housing Trust and various Council departments which saw a reduction in the number of incidents of criminal damage in the Borough compared to previous years.

On behalf of the Board, the Chairman, congratulated all those involved in Operation Treacle for their significant work and the success they had achieved in 2015.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

SAF35 INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT SCHEME (NAVIGATE)

The Board received a presentation on the work of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Team from PC Burdekin. The IOM was an overarching framework for bringing together agencies in local areas to prioritise interventions with offenders who caused crime in their locality. PC Burdekin outlined the role of the Prolific Offender Team which dealt with 49 offenders throughout Halton. Prolific offenders were usually heroin/crack users who regularly committed crimes to fund their drug habit.

The Team consisted of representatives from the Police and Probation Service assisted by Drug Services as and when necessary. The role of the Team was to prevent prolific offenders from re-offending by assisting them or ensuring they were swiftly returned to prison if they were not prepared to change.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received and noted.

SAF36 SCRUTINY REVIEW - NOVEL PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Community and Resources, which presented a draft final report of the findings of the Scrutiny Group formed to review the current and emerging issues around the use of Novel Psychoactive Substances, also known as "legal highs", across the Borough and on a wider, national scale. The report contained a number of recommendations from the Topic Team with regard to:-

- Usage and prevalence enforcement options;
- Schools and Young People;
- Activity and Action across the wider community and region; and
- National Agenda.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be approved and the findings noted; and
- 2) the Board agree to monitor issues around the topic over the course of the municipal calendar.

SAF37 RISK AND EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Community and Resources, which provided an outline on the work undertaken by the Risk and Emergency Planning Team. Members were advised on the structure of Emergency Planning, the key duties and responsibilities of the Team, such as control of major accident hazards and incidents in Halton during 2015.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SAF38 PETITION CONCERNING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT MULTI USE GAMES AREA (MUGA) AT ROYAL AVENUE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Community and Resources, which advised that a 50 signature petition had been received requesting the installation of security gates and to lock the football pitch each night, as it did in other parks, at the multi use games area (MUGA) at Royal Avenue, Widnes. The petition expressed concern that the area had been the centre of anti-social behaviour at night.

It was reported that some of the Council's formal parks and two of its cemeteries were locked at night but MUGAs were not. They were designed to be accessible and not have gates. Locking of parks and cemeteries was carried out by a security contractor and incurred a significant cost. It was reported that the Open Space Service did not have the means to pay for the installation of gates and the on-going locking of the facility.

In addition, Members were advised that there had been no reports of anti-social behaviour throughout the month of December in the area of the MUGA and for a distance of 200 metres around it. The last report relating to

the MUGA was on the 24th April 2015. In the period prior to July 2015, there had been enhanced police patrols in the area, additional CCTV cameras installed (at Queens Avenue and at a nearby Youth Centre) and community meetings. The area was currently not an Anti-Social Behaviour priority area.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 34 (9), a public question had been submitted to the Board. On behalf of the petitioners, Councillor McDermott addressed the Board and read the following public question:-

Question – Janet McNulty

What actions are you going to put in place to prevent anti-social behaviour on, and in the vicinity of Derwent Road/Royal Avenue football pitch at night, that would ensure the health, safety and peace of the residents, and in doing so address the concerns of the petitioners who live in the area surrounding the pitch?

Response

In response Mr Andrews advised the Board that:

- there had been an increase in Police patrols in the area;
- a partnership task vehicle had been employed at various 'hot spots';
- Young Addaction had visited the area;
- residents meetings had been held and further meetings could be arranged;
- he had contacted the Council's licensing department to discuss the nearby Social Club and premises which sold alcohol;
- Halton Housing Trust had issued 11 acceptable behaviour contracts with residents;
- Environmental Services had agreed to carry out a clean-up of the area near the MUGA; and
- Steps were being taken to facilitate residents to report incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Ms McNulty submitted the following supplementary public question; "residents had heard all of this before, had the Board received her letter in support of the petition?"

Mr Andrews advised that the Board had received Ms McNulty's supporting letter and also an email of support from Ms Davies and letters from Mr Twigg, Member of Parliament and David Parr, Chief Executive. He also

reported that following residents meetings held in 2015 the following actions had been undertaken:

- 21 youths had been spoken to;
- the Social Club had installed CCTV equipment and work had been carried out with nearby premises selling alcohol;
- further residents meetings would be arranged with Officers, other agencies and local Councillors; and
- consideration would be given to increase Police patrols in the area.

On behalf of residents Councillor McDermott expressed concern that following residents meetings held in April and June 2015, certain assurances were given which did not appear to have worked. He was also concerned that, although it was clear there were problems in the MUGA area, it had not retained its status as an anti-social behaviour area.

Arising from the discussion Members agreed the following:

- the Planning Department would be contacted to enquire what enforcement action could be taken with regard to the Rossi building;
- an environmental clean-up would take place at the MUGA and surrounding area;
- a Task Group would be re-instated involving local partner agencies, local Councillors and residents to produce sustained outcomes for residents in this area; and
- consideration be given to the use of Locality Area Forum funds towards the introduction of a lockable fence around the MUGA.

RESOLVED: That

1) the Multi Use Games Area should not be locked for the following reasons:-

- It is there to provide some space for young people to socialise;
- The Council does not have the resources to lock the MUGA;
- The practicalities of locking and unlocking the MUGA can't be easily managed. Also it is not designed to be locked.
- We have had no reports of Anti-Social Behaviour in recent months;

- Locking would prevent use for young people who wanted to use them for the purposes they were put up.
- 2) a Task Group would be re-instated involving local partner agencies, local Councillors and residents to produce sustained outcomes for residents in this area; and
 - 3) an update report be brought back to a future meeting of the Board.

SAF39 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS - QUARTER 2
2015-16

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Community and Resources which presented the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Safer Halton in Quarter 2 of 2015/16. Appendix 1 to the report contained a progress update regarding the implementation of all Directorate high-risk mitigation measures that were relevant to the remit of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.