

URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board held on Wednesday, 21 November 2007 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Hignett (Chairman), Morley, P. Blackmore, E. Cargill, Leadbetter, Murray, Nolan, Rowe, Sly and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Bradshaw

Absence declared on Council business:

Officers present: C. Halpin, D. Sutton, I. Bisset, G. Collins, A. McNamara, M. Noone and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: Councillor Polhill (In accordance with Standing Order No. 33)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
URB19 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 th September 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.	
URB20 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
URB21 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board, Executive Board Sub Committee and 3MG Executive Sub Board relevant to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.	
URB22 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS	
The Board considered a report regarding the Second Quarter Monitoring Reports for the Highways &	

Transportation, Environment & Regulatory Services, Cultural & Leisure, Major Projects, Economic Regeneration and Health and Partnerships Services.

RESOLVED: That the quarterly monitoring reports be received.

URB23 FIREWORKS FESTIVAL 2008

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which set out proposals to relocate Halton's Fireworks Festival from its current site, adjacent to the Silver Jubilee Bridge, to Heath Park football fields in Runcorn, commencing in November 2008.

It was noted that a number of years ago, the two fireworks displays in Halton were merged on efficiency grounds. They were originally held in the Runcorn Town Hall grounds and at Spike Island, Widnes. A new venue was chosen on the River Mersey gantry wall, which enabled viewing from both sides of the river.

Over the past five years there had been a steady increase in the popularity of the event, and it now attracted some 45,000 people who took up vantage points on either side of the river and from various other points, including Weston Road, Pickerings Pasture, Wigg Island and the Catalyst Science Discovery centre.

The increase in numbers attending had given rise to concerns about traffic congestion, crowd control and health and safety and it was now considered appropriate to review the current arrangements.

The Board was updated on the main issues, in particular focusing on car parking and crowd safety and on the options available, namely to keep the event as it was, to split the event over two sites or move the event to an alternative single site.

It was further noted that having considered the alternatives it was proposed that the Fireworks Festival be transferred to The Heath Park Football Fields site from November 2008, as it was felt that this option was cost effective and would solve most, if not all, of the concerns regarding crowd safety and traffic congestion at the event.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to the comments made the previous evening at the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board (PPB), in particular

that the event was extremely successful and should remain at its current location and that work be undertaken to find alternatives to resolve the issues raised in the report, along with trying to attract sponsors to offset the additional costs.

Furthermore Members discussed likely issues that would arise from having a single site for the festival, such as the impact of the additional traffic crossing the Bridge, remedial works after the event at the football fields and that moving to the Heath Park Football Fields site may only offer a temporary solution, due to the expansion of the Heath Business Park which would mean the loss of car parking spaces.

The Board agreed with and endorsed the comments of the Safer Halton PPB, as detailed above.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received; and
- (2) the comments made by the Board that the Fireworks Festival remain at its current location and that work be undertaken to find alternatives to resolve the crowd control, health and safety and car parking issues, along with trying to attract sponsors to offset the additional costs be referred to the Executive Board.

Strategic Director,
Environment

URB24 MERSEYSIDE ACTION PLAN

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which gave details of the production of the Action Plan for the Liverpool City Region 2008-2011 (formerly the Merseyside Action Plan).

Members were advised of the purpose of the Action Plan, the strategic linkages and the key priorities.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to how projects could be prioritised within the Action Plan and at what stage risk analysis would need to be undertaken.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

URB25 STRATEGIC JOINT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Board considered a report which provided an overview of the requirement to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in line with Department of

Health guidance. The process and subsequent JSNA documentation would be managed jointly by the Local Authority and the PCT and would describe the future health, care and well-being needs of local populations and the strategic direction of service delivery to meet those needs, over 3 – 5 years. A strong and effective JSNA would:-

- Show health status of the local community;
- Define what inequalities exist;
- Contain social and healthcare data that was well analysed and presented effectively;
- Define improvements and equality for the community;
- Send signals to current or potential providers, who could have other relevant information or proposals for meeting needs;
- Supporting better health and well-being outcomes; and
- Aid decision-making and stages of the commissioning cycle, esp. to use resources to maximise outcomes at minimum cost.

The process of producing and subsequently utilising the JSNA was a systematic one and was outlined in the report. A three phase process was proposed with Phase 1 – Information Gathering, Phase 2 – Secondary Analysis and JSNA Production; and Phase 3 – Outputs and Commissioning Improvement.

The guidance from the Department of Health stipulated that the Director of Adult Social Services, Director of Children and Young People Services, Director of Public Health and Director of Commissioning from the PCT had a responsibility for co-ordinating the production of the document. Discussions had already commenced with a range of key stakeholders and the timetable and process for completion was outlined in the report.

In addition, the Department of Health had stressed the importance of the direct links with Elected Members, Local Strategic Partnerships and key people including Local Authority Chief Executives, Environmental Health staff and staff involved in Research and Intelligence.

Consequently, the Local Strategic Partnership had already received a similar report to own and understand the requirement to produce a JSNA. The Health Specialist Strategic Partnership would thereafter be the responsible and accountable group to ensure that the JSNA was produced. As the Health SSP already had key people on its membership, it was suggested that a small working group

would be tasked with producing a draft JSNA in the timescales identified.

Regular update reports to the Executive Board, Local Strategic Partnership, PCT Board and Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board would be produced which appraised individuals and groups of progress. The Healthy Halton PPB would scrutinise the process and ensure that effective community consultation was undertaken. However, a similar report to every PPB would be presented to ensure they were aware of this matter and provided them with an opportunity to be engaged.

It was noted that some financial costs to cover public consultation may be required and these would be determined at a later date.

RESOLVED: That the process as outlined in the proposed co-ordination section be supported and a draft Joint Strategic Needs Assessment be received in 2008.

Strategic Director,
Health and
Community

URB26 THE STRATEGIC PROGRESS OF THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy on the strategic progress of implementing the Council's Corporate Plan (2006-11).

It was noted that the overall policy direction for the Borough was captured in the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy. These were adopted by Council in May 2006 and have a timeframe of five years. The Corporate Plan set out the Council contribution towards achieving social, economic and environmental well being for the people of Halton. It set out the Council's priorities, 40 key areas of focus and 70 indicators through which strategic progress could be monitored.

Since the plan was adopted, the Council had also set in place a Local Area Agreement (LAA). This was an agreement with Central Government that spells out the priorities and targets for local well being, based on outcomes which reflect local and national priorities. It was an important part of the delivery chain for the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan. Arising out of the new Local Government Act all local authorities were required to develop with their partners a new Local Area Agreement for next year. The new LAAs would be part of a whole performance system for local government. It included LAAs, a new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) to replace Comprehensive

Performance Assessment (CPA) as well as sweeping away most existing performance indicators and reporting systems and replacing them with a new, single set of performance indicators. It was vital that members play a key part in developing the new Agreement which would need to be agreed with Government by June 2008.

It was further reported that a part of the changes that would be wrought by the new local Government Bill was the need for any Council to develop new relationships with partners and partnerships in its area. Local authorities were expected to take a leading role on LSPs with involvement of Members on both LSPs and thematic partnerships. In advance of this Halton had already taken steps to increase representation of members from the Executive and PPBs on the Halton Strategic Partnership Board and the Specialist Strategic Partnerships. Council's must prepare a LAA as the delivery plan for the community strategy and partners (named in the Bill) would have a duty to cooperate. The Council's overview and scrutiny role would be extended to cover the partners with a duty to cooperate in the delivery of the LAA. Hence the nature of relationships between members and the LSP in Halton becomes of ever increasing significance.

The Halton Mid Term Local Area Agreement Performance Review April 2007 – September 2007 in relation to urban renewal was circulated to Members of the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(NB: Councillor Murray declared a personal interest in the following item due to him being a resident in the area being discussed).

URB27 PETITION RELATING TO TRAFFIC CALMING STRATTON PARK, WIDNES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which gave details of a 25 signature petition which had been received requesting the installation of traffic calming on Stratton Park, Widnes.

It was noted that a petition carrying 25 signatures had been received from residents of Stratton Park, Widnes requesting the installation of 'speed bumps' on the highway with the work being funded through the local Area Forum. The petition was based on addressing a number of alleged risks to highway users and was critical of established Council policy relating to the retrospective provision of

physical traffic calming.

The Board was advised that the current Council policy relating to the installation of physical traffic calming was established primarily in June 2000 when the Executive Board adopted a prioritisation and qualification process with two central requirements for any location at which traffic calming was requested: the route must not be a cul-de-sac and it must have hosted a road traffic accident resulting in personal injuries, in the previous five years.

Furthermore at the Executive Board meeting of 29th July 2004, this qualification approach was again considered. The Board resolved that the current policy of traffic calming schemes being focused on reducing accident and casualty numbers in the Borough should be endorsed and requests be subject to each scheme addressing an identified casualty problem.

Requests for physical traffic calming measures on Stratton Park had been received over a two year period. However, these requests had always been declined because the route does not meet the established qualification criteria due to it being a cul-de-sac with no injury accident record in the last five years.

It was noted that police records showed only one injury accident on Stratton Park going back as far as 1990, and this involved a car/car collision at the junction with Cronton Lane due to a driver reversing into Stratton Park off the main road.

All new housing areas were constructed with integral traffic calming to allow a 20mph speed limit to be introduced on adoption. The possible methods of calming were many - geometry, surface finishes, gateways, mild humps etc. Stratton Park was constructed with speed reducing features incorporated through its alignment and the use of speed tables and speed readings when taken on the longest straight part were an average of 19mph. It was intended that a 20mph speed limit would be introduced at this location in the near future. However, given current recorded speeds it was extremely unlikely that driver behaviour would be significantly affected by this measure.

However, in order to enhance road safety and encourage drivers to further restrict their speeds, a scheme had been designed using extra signing and road markings, as shown in the Appendix to the report, which could be implemented at short notice utilising Area Forum funding.

Arising from the discussion reference was made to the operation of the Council's Traffic Calming Policy being effective in reducing casualties, whether there was a need to review the current policy and that the need to retain the policy in its current form in order to prioritise the limited resources available to be most effective in reducing casualties.

Furthermore it was noted that as with all Council's policies the Traffic Calming Policy would be reviewed in due course, as and when this was felt necessary.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the request for traffic calming on Stratton Park be declined due to it being contrary to the Council's policy on Traffic Calming;
- (3) an alternative scheme of enhanced signing and road markings be passed to the local Area Forum for consideration; and
- (4) the petitioners be informed accordingly.

Strategic Director,
Environment

Meeting ended at 7.37 p.m.