

## URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board held on Wednesday, 21 January 2009 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Hignett (Chairman), Morley (Vice-Chairman), Balmer, P. Blackmore, E. Cargill, Hodgkinson, Leadbetter, Nolan and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Murray

Officers present: G. Collins, A. McNamara, M. Noone, M. Simpson, D. Sutton, A. Villiers, P. Watts and P. Wright

Also in attendance: Councillor Polhill in accordance with Standing Order 33 and Ms Lynn Smith – Norton Priory Museum

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
URB82 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2008, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
URB83 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
URB84 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub Committee relevant to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.	
<i>(NB: Councillor Nolan declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a member of the trustee board for Norton Priory</i>	

*Museum Trust.)*

*(Councillor Morley declared a personal interest in the following item due to his son being an employee of Norton Priory Museum.)*

#### URB85 PRESENTATION - NORTON PRIORY

Members received a presentation from Lynn Smith – Acting Director of Norton Priory Museum which outlined the research that had been carried out over the past five years. The presentation detailed the following:

- a brief history;
- a unique site – one of the largest excavated monastic sites in Europe;
- regionally significant twelfth century undercroft;
- internationally important St. Christopher statue;
- finest Norman arch in Cheshire;
- Halton Castle;
- award winning museum service;
- award winning staff and volunteers;
- details of other listed buildings and acres of site, woodlands, meadowland, developed planting and unique sculptured trail;
- Halton's portfolio of Heritage Projects;
- matched with the aims and objectives of the Local Area Agreement for Halton;
- progress towards the Trust's vision;
- Conservation Management Plan (CMP);
- CMP key recommendations;
- their recommendations from CMP;
- the site today;
- where do we want to be, our vision and mission; and
- progress to date.

The Chairman thanked Ms Smith for an informative presentation.

Members noted that work carried out at Norton Priory was excellent and suggested that the Museum could reach out to further audiences by way of linking together and having more collaboration with other museums such as Catalyst. It was also noted that Norton Priory gave local residents a sense of place and history a more joined up thinking work would be beneficial. It was also suggested that there was potential for Norton Priory Museum to become a resource for certain places and a body for information. Members also discussed the mooring opportunities at the Museum.

Members wished Norton Priory Museum well in future endeavours.

Ms Lynn Smith noted that Members were welcome to have a look around Norton Priory Museum at any time.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

URB86 PETITION RELATING TO TRAFFIC CONDITIONS IN DALE STREET, RUNCORN

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – Environment which provided details of a petition relating to traffic conditions in Dale Street, Runcorn.

It was noted that a 26 signature petition requesting engineering work to be carried out in Dale Street, Runcorn to create a turning area within the cul-de-sac head and to improve drainage within the same un-adopted road area had been received. It was advised that the majority of Dale Street was adopted highway, though the area fronting numbers 33, 35, 26 and 28 plus the adjacent area used for turning was not adopted highway. The un-adopted area was not surfaced to adoption standards and was in a state of severe neglect and subject to flooding due to the lack of drainage facilities. It was noted that the eastern perimeter of the area was supported by a retaining wall of unknown condition which backed onto the gardens of nearby properties in Hawthorn Avenue. It was reported that if the ownership of the road could be established, this would put the onus on whoever owned the road. However, this would be difficult as ownership was believed to be unregistered.

It was further advised that “H” bar markings had been implemented in front of the alleygates, which would effectively provide two turning heads provided people respected the markings and did not park on them. A letter drop would be carried out at the end of the week to advise residents.

Members discussed the Highway Code, in that vehicles were not permitted to park within 25 metres of a junction. It was suggested that residents be reminded of this in the leaflet drop scheduled for the end of the week.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the request for engineering works to be carried out be declined as the land in question was not an

adopted highway and responsibility for maintaining or improving the area rested with the owners (currently unknown);

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- (2) the necessary steps be taken to establish ownership of the un-adopted road area (including the retaining wall) and once this was done, the owners be contacted with a view to expressing the Council's concerns over various aspects of the area's condition;
- (3) once ownership is established, all matters associated with the un-adopted area be referred to the local Area Forum for consideration;
- (4) Officer action in implementing the 'H' bar markings to assist turning traffic and the future introduction of parking restrictions at the Dale Street/Norman Road junction be endorsed; and
- (5) the petitioners be informed accordingly.

#### URB87 APSE PERFORMANCE NETWORKS YEAR 10 ANNUAL REPORT

Members considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which detailed how the Landscape Services Division and The Parks and Countryside Service performed during Year 10 of the APSE Performance Network's Benchmarking process in relation to Parks, Open Spaces and Horticultural Services.

It was reported that Councils were grouped into Families so that they could be compared on a more equal basis. Halton currently sat with Family Group H2 which included other local authorities with similar characteristics. Based on the year 10 data submitted Halton was nominated for "Best performing Council" and "Most Improved Performer" in relation to its delivery of Parks, Open Spaces and Horticultural Services. It was a finalist for the former and won the latter for the second year in succession. Detailed within the report was a table which showed how Halton's Landscape Services had compared with other local authorities in year 10.

The Board discussed the bid for contract for landscaping in the New Town of Runcorn which was unsuccessful. It was reported that the Council was awaiting feedback from the meeting which had made the decision on the contract. It was advised that when feedback was

received a report would be presented to the Board.

Members noted that the Halton score for playgrounds per thousand children was below the average score. In response it was noted that there used to be a lot of playgrounds of 'low' quality. However, improvements had been made to the existing playgrounds making them 'high' quality and the upcoming Playbuilder programme would have a positive effect on this statistic in the future.

The Board wished to note their thanks and congratulations to the staff involved in gaining the achievements made to date.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the APSE Performance Networks report be noted; and
- 2) feedback from the meeting which made the decision on contract work in relation to the New Town in Runcorn be brought to a future meeting.

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URB88 HALTON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT REVIEW UPDATE  
URBAN RENEWAL PPB FINAL (PC)

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which highlighted the emerging key findings of the Halton Accessibility Study. It was advised that this Study was being funded by the Halton Strategic Partnership (Healthy Halton SSP) and the report highlighted a range of issues identified by the consultants undertaking the Study, which were proposed to form the basis of a consultation exercise with key stakeholder groups planned for the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.

It was reported that the Council had provided core grant funding to Halton Community Transport (HCT) for several years to provide a range of accessible transport services for local residents, details of which were outlined in the report.

It was reported that the current value of the core grant funding to HCT during the current financial year was £121,610. Residents using these HCT services were also eligible to use their concessionary travel passes to travel free after 9.30 am Monday to Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday.

It was reported that in addition to services provided by HCT, the Council's "in house" passenger transport fleet provided accessible door to door transport, mainly for vulnerable adults and young people.

In addition, it was noted that Halton Borough Council carried out a comprehensive Best Value review of transport/ accessibility arrangements in 2006. This introduced a number of improvements which were detailed in the report for Members' consideration.

Members were advised that the Council had been jointly awarded with the Merseyside Authorities Beacon Council status in 2008/09 for transport accessibility.

It was further noted that following on from the Best Value Review a Halton Accessible Transport Study was commissioned in May 2008. This was to evaluate the current and potential future demand for accessible transport across the Borough up to the year 2015/16. Members were further advised that a study was being carried out in five key stages each of which was detailed in the report. It was noted the first three stages had now been completed and results of which were detailed as an appendix to the report.

It was advised that in order to develop an Improvement Action Plan for the delivery of future accessible transport services, consultants were holding a key stakeholder consultation event on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009 at the Stobart Stadium, Halton. At this event the consultants were proposing to consult on several alternative models of future accessible transport delivery based on scenarios which were detailed within the report.

Members were asked to endorse the scenarios to be taken forward. In addition, Members were invited to attend the event on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.

RESOLVED: That the options as set out in paragraph 3.10 be used as a basis for consultation at the key stakeholder event planned for the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.

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#### URB89 ADOPTED REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE NORTH WEST

Members considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which detailed the consequences of the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West for Halton.

Members were advised that a report was brought before the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Resolution URB69 of the Urban Renewal minutes subsequent to that meeting resolved that a further report be produced detailing the implications of the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for Halton. RSS was subsequently adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and a six week period whereby the document could be subjected to legal challenge expired after the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Therefore this report was now required.

It was noted that the RSS had taken over four years to draft but had some deficiencies in its policy content, so that it was presently subject to an early review. This covered matters of regional car parking standards and accommodation for travelling show people, gypsies and travellers. In addition, as explained in the report of the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008 the new Regional leaders Forum, 4NW was required to produce a Single Regional Strategy (SRS). It was advised that this would deal with matters including housing policy, housing market areas, waste policies (specifically regionally significant waste management facilities) and broad locations for renewable energy. It was noted that presently the two separate processes of progressing of the Partial Review and the SRS were running concurrently.

A summary of the main policy implications from the RSS were detailed as an appendix to the report for Members' consideration. This briefing note was presented to the Local Development Frame Working Party on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2008 and was subsequently circulated to all Members by e-mail.

The Board raised concerns in relation to considering the health and well-being of residents. It was noted that any health assessment being carried out should be done so independently and that the Council should have some say in who is selected to carry out the assessment. In response, it was noted that the Council would ensure that a thorough impact assessment would be carried out.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Board be updated periodically regarding future policy formulation at the regional level.

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URB90 POLICY & PERFORMANCE BOARD WORK PROGRAMME  
2009/10

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which requested that Members consider progress on the 2008/09 Topic Reports and the possible 2009/10 work programme.

It was reported that the Logistics Skills Topic Group would produce a final report, which would be presented to the next Board. As Science and Innovation was one of the largest growing sectors in the Borough, the same model which had been used for this Topic Group could be applied to a similar joint Topic Group between the Urban Renewal PPB and the Employment Learning and Skills PPB to look at science skills, with a focus on Daresbury. The Town Centre Management Report would also be presented to the Board in March. Members were advised that the work of the De-linking of the Silver Jubilee Bridge Topic Group was likely to continue beyond the current Council year. Additionally, all Members of the Board were invited to attend all meetings of the Local Development Frame Working Party in the coming year, with a crucial element of the LDF to be completed.

Members were advised that following the Board's selection of Topics for 2009/10, the Terms of Reference for these groups would be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the PPB in conjunction with the Operational Director for Major Projects.

RESOLVED: That the following Topic Groups for 2009/10 be agreed:

- 1) a joint Topic Group between the Urban Renewal PPB and the Employment Learning and Skills PPB looking at science skills with a focus on Daresbury in the Terms of Reference;
- 2) continuation of the De-linking of the Silver Jubilee Bridge Group; and the LDF Working Party; and
- 3) the Terms of Reference of the Topic Groups are to be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the PPB in conjunction with the Operational Director for Major Projects.

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## URB91 JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT - HEALTH

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – Health and Community which provided a summary of the findings of the first Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Health.

It was noted that Directors of Adults' Social Services, Public Health and Children and Young People's (CYP) Services in every Local Authority and Primary Care Trust (PCT) had a statutory duty from April 2008 to work together to develop a JSNA for their area.

For the production of the first JSNA Halton focused on refining, improving and bringing together the information we had available which highlighted overall population needs. This information was from national and local sources and included a wealth of information we had collected directly from services across Halton. This information was used to take a longer term view of population trends and the likely impact on demand over the next years and decades.

Members were advised that JSNA was intended to identify the big picture in terms of the health and well-being needs and equalities within the local population. It was not intended to describe how we would address the needs, demonstrate outcomes or showcase our services. The aim was that the information contained in the JSNA would encourage partner agencies to use the findings to inform a number of local authority and PCT strategies, Client Group Commissioning Plans, Local Area Agreement etc. It had already been used within Halton to feed into Ambition for Health and the Joint Commissioning Plan.

The development of the JSNA was not a single, one-off exercise but was an ongoing piece of work, which would add to our commissioning "intelligence". As we continued to develop our JSNA we would:-

- Build upon service user and care views
- Include information about service usage
- Ensure we have information at a local level as well as overall trends.

It was further noted that the approval process for the JSNA within the PCT was currently being reviewed. It was anticipated that would go to the PCTs Management Team and then the Trust Board, once the St. Helens JSNA was ready.

Members were advised of the consultation process undertaken and it was noted that a key element of this was the production of an accessible public document on the local priorities detailing how the JSNA would feed into commissioning plans for the future and the evidence based investment decisions taken. This had been achieved through the development of the summary of findings documents, which was available as an Appendix to the report.

It was proposed that the consultation process be in four states as follows:

- 1) Professionals
- 2) Members via all Policy and Performance Board (January 2009)
- 3) Key stakeholders
- 4) General public

At each stage the document would be revised and updated accordingly.

Members queried whether the high cancer rate was due to the industrial environment of Halton. In response, it was noted that the Public Health groups had determined that the cancer rates were due largely to lifestyle factors. It was noted that although the Borough had seen an improvement Halton's poor position was due to the rest of the country improving at a greater level.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be accepted.

## URB92 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE BOARD

Members received a report from the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which detailed progress towards meeting Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets over the first six months of the agreement. It was reported that the revised Local Area Agreement was signed off by the Secretary of State in June 2008. The purpose of the LAA was to agree a set of targets for Halton Borough Council and its local partners. Named partners had a duty to cooperate in striving to achieve these targets.

Detailed within the report was an appendix covering the indicators which fell within the responsibilities of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

Members were advised that given that the agreement

was only signed in June 2008, the first progress report reflected a very early stage in the Agreement's life.

RESOLVED: That the report be accepted.

#### URB93 SERVICE PLAN REPORT

Members received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment covering the relevant services Service Plans which enabled Members to consider objectives and targets for services over the next three years.

It was reported that Members had access to the Service Plans over the past few weeks and were still able to make comment regarding Service Plans to the relevant Operational Director before the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

Members queried the delay with work at the Canal Quarter in Runcorn. In response it was reported that this was due to the nature of some of the site investigations which require monitoring for 12 months.

The Board also discussed the parking situation at Runcorn Railway Station. In reply it was noted that several options had been considered by officers, elected Members, residents and the police but had been rejected because of the potential impact on residents. This issue was still unsolved but would continue to be actively investigated.

RESOLVED: That the Board Members should pass any detailed comments which they may have on individual draft Service Plans to the relevant Operational Director by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009.

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#### URB94 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of

the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### URB95 HALE PARK RESTORATION

Members considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment which outlined the progress made to date with the Hale Park Restoration scheme.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) that progress on the restoration scheme is welcomed;
- 2) the PPB recommends to the Executive Board Sub Committee that the Council enter in to a lease or other instrument with the Hale Estate for the land necessary for the main path through Hale Park and related accommodation works and that the lease / instrument be on such terms as the Strategic Director

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Corporate and Policy approves; and

- 3) the PPB recommends to the Executive Board Sub Committee that Council exchanges the land identified on the plan attached to the report and referred to in paragraph 3.8.

*Meeting ended at 8.16 p.m.*