

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 12 June 2013 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Gerrard (Chairman), Morley (Vice-Chairman), Fraser, P. Hignett, Macmanus, Sinnott, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillor J. Bradshaw, T. McInerney and Zygadlo

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M Bennett, S. Johnson, M. Noone, G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs and P. Wright

Also in attendance: Councillor R Hignett under Standing Order No. 33

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
EUR1	MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 th March 2013 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.	
EUR2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
EUR3	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board. RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.	
EUR4	ANNUAL REPORT - ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD The Board considered a copy of the Annual Report from the Chair of the Environment and Urban Renewal	

Policy and Performance Board 2012/13. The full Board met five times during the year and the report set out the work carried out and recommendations throughout the Municipal Year April 2012 to March 2013. In addition the Board had established a Waste Management Topic Group and a Working Party to prepare a topic brief on trees. The findings and recommendations of these two Groups were reported as separate items on the agenda.

The Chair wished to note on record his thanks to Members and Officer for their continued support throughout 2012/13.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be accepted and the work of any agreed Topic Working Group be supported in 2013/14.

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NB: Councillor P Hignett declared a disclosable other interest in the following item of business as she attends the Big Local Windmill Hill Reference Group

EUR5 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2012/13

The Board received a report of the Chief Executive which detailed the fourth quarter Management Report on progress against objectives/milestones and performance targets, in relation to the Environment and Regeneration Priority and described factors affecting the following service functions:-

- Economic Regeneration (Development and Investment Services)
- Environmental (Open Spaces and Waste Management Services)
- Highways, Transportation and Logistics (Mersey Gateway/Core Strategy, Transport, Bridge and Highway Maintenance, Highway Development, Flood Risk Management)
- Physical Environment (Statutory Plans and Housing Issues).

In advance of the meeting Councillor MacManus submitted questions and responses were provided as follows:

1. Page 44 – What is the policy on use of s.106 monies?

Response from Tim Gibbs:

The origin of a section 106 is when a developer agrees to offset the impact of their development through a 'planning obligation'. The Planning Authority has to agree with the developer what the S106 money will be spent on and this is subject to a legal deed. S106 can only be spent on that defined purpose. Often the S106 has to be spent by a certain date. For these reasons there isn't a policy on the use of Section 106. There is a series of regulations on the use of S106 and a load of case law on their use and misuse. If S106 is misused it has to be refunded to the developer.

2. Page 63 – How effective has the Recycle Bank scheme been? Could it be made more attractive?

Jimmy Unsworth to provide written response

3. What work do we do with schools on educating students on waste matters and recycling?

Response from Peter Carr:

Regarding the education side,

- We have offered multi material recycling to all primary schools
- Started a trial of the recycling service in the high schools
- Developed an education programme to be offered and delivered to primary schools, which involves
 - A reduce, reuse, recycle assembly
 - Interactive dance mat package
- Promotion of school visits to the Gilmoor Discovery Centre (MRF)

We also have on our agenda

- Reducing Trade waste and replacing with recycling bins
- Fortnightly collection of Trade Waste
- Distributing compost caddies to schools that have gardens

4. Page 69 – Green Belt review: is there a target date for its completion and how will the findings be reported? Will there be a public consultation on the findings?

Response from Tim Gibbs:

The Green Belt review will take around 12 months to complete. The findings will be reported in the normal ways via PPB / Exec Board.

Public consultation will be part of the process. The results of

the Green Belt study will be fed into the Delivery and Site Allocations Local Plan.

RESOLVED: That the Board receive the fourth quarter performance management reports.

EUR6 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY YEAR END PROGRESS REPORT 2012/13

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which provided information on the progress in achieving targets contained within the 2011-2016 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Halton.

Members were advised that the SCS for Halton, and the performance measures and targets contained within it would remain central to the delivery of community outcomes. It was therefore important that progress was monitored and that Members were satisfied that adequate plans were in place to ensure that the Council and its partners achieved the improvement targets that had been agreed. The Board was also advised that Appendix 1 to the report outlined the progress for the period to year end 31st March 2013 which included a summary of all indicators for the health priority within the new SCS.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR7 TREE WORKING GROUP - CONCLUSIONS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which outlined the findings and recommendations of the Tree Working Group. The Working Group was established in June 2012, had met three times and had received a presentation on the estimated number of trees in Halton, considered the Council's legal duty of care under both civil law and criminal law to manage its tree stock, received details of the tree maintenance team, the number of calls which were recorded and directed to the Open Space Service in 2011/12, considered the issues of inspection and liability, how the Council manages its tree stock and the types of neighbour issues relating to trees.

Having considered all these issues, the Tree Working Group recommended that:-

- the Council develop a new tree strategy that clearly articulated how the Council managed its tree stock whilst adhering to guidance and recommendations

set out in the National Tree Safety Group – Common Sense Risk Management of Trees 2010;

- the post of Open Space Officer, who would hold the portfolio for trees and woodlands, be created to oversee the implementation of work;
- a tree inspection regime be implemented at a frequency that is deliverable with the resources available to the Council. This system would be robust enough to defend the Council from potential liabilities;
- new advice and guidance leaflets and webpages be produced to assist elected members and members of the public to understand how the Council manages its tree stock. This included explaining the Council's position on right to light, trees interfering with Sky reception, etc.;
- Officers identify a suitable tree management system (database) that allowed mobile working and resources be made available to procure such a system or develop one in-house. The system being able to speak with other Council IT systems be investigated, Members recognised budgets were tight at this time but the potential risk of more accidents and claims could be avoided by investment;
- the Operational Tree maintenance Team be strengthened so that more proactive maintenance work can be carried out;
- Officers explore all opportunities to derive income from the Council's tree stock through the sale of logs or arisings. In particular opportunities relating to biomass energy production should be explored.

Members were advised that following publication of this report two requests for tree work were received which were currently in the process of investigation and the members of the public would be advised on the outcome accordingly.

RESOLVED: That

1. the recommendations of the Tree Group be endorsed; and
2. a report be presented to the Executive Board recommending the adoption of the

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recommendations of the Tree Working Group.

EUR8 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2013/2014

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought to develop a work programme of topics for the Board to examine in 2013/14.

The Board had previously re-established the Waste Management Working Group to review the Council's Waste Management Policies. It was noted that during 2012/13 the Working Group had scrutinised aspects of the Council's Household Waste Collection Policy. In particular:

- level of charges made for waste services;
- the impact of the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres, Vehicle Permit Scheme;
- Fixed Penalty Notice levels for waste and environmental offences;
- consideration of charging for other waste services where legislation allowed, agreed to examine the options and the impacts of charges for garden waste collections (this would form part of the Work Programme in 2013/14).

It was proposed that as the Waste Management Working Party had continued to meet Members formally endorse this Topic Group continuing its work during 2013/14. It was noted that Councillor Sinnott was also in attendance at the Waste Management Working Party meetings.

In addition, Members were asked to endorse a proposal that there was no need for a Cemeteries Working Group at present, however recognising that the Group could be reconvened at some point in the future if it was felt to be sufficient justification.

RESOLVED: That

1. Members of the Board indicate target topic areas for potential scrutiny in 2013/14;
2. details of topic briefs be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board in conjunction with the Lead Officer;

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3. Members support the continuation of the Waste Management Working Party, as its work was still on-going, with the membership as previous; and
4. Members endorse the recommendation that the Cemeteries Working Group is no longer required at this time.

EUR9 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)
LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENT

The Board considered a copy of Halton's Local Planning Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which was approved by Executive Board on the 23rd May 2013 as a draft for public consultation.

It was noted that the SCI set out the way the Council would involve the local community, stakeholders and statutory bodies in the preparation and revision of Local Plans. The SCI described the Council's procedures and arrangements for involving the local community when considering planning applications and major proposals for development. In addition, Members were advised that the procedures contained within an adopted SCI must be followed for consultation on all local plan documents and all planning applications in Halton.

It was reported that the Council's first SCI was adopted in 2007 and was being updated in 2013 because there had been a number of legislative changes to the way that planning documents were prepared. Following public consultation for a four week period, the document would be re-submitted to Executive Board for approval.

Arising from the discussion, it was agreed that a copy of the information available to members of the public, prior to the consideration of a planning application at Development Control Committee, be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: That the draft Statement of Community Involvement be noted.

NB: Councillors MacManus and Woolfall declared a disclosable other interest in the following item of business as they are Directors of Halton Borough Transport.

EUR10 NATIONAL HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION SURVEY
- PROPOSALS REPORT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which advised on the current interventions and proposals to address specific Highways and Transport issues that were identified by the National Highway and Transportation (NHT) public satisfaction survey undertaken in the Borough in 2012 and reported to the Board in November 2012 (Minute EUR 27/12 refers). Whilst Halton's performance was generally very good, it was resolved that following a more detailed investigation of the survey results, a further Proposals Report would be prepared and presented to the Board. Members were advised that the survey had highlighted a number of services across the six key transport themes.

The Board considered a brief background analysis of the issues outlined in the November report, details of what actions or interventions had already been implemented and what further actions were planned to address the issues further.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes and welcomes the work being undertaken to address specific aspects of the Highways and Transportation service identified in the NHT survey and report and raise the levels of public satisfaction in those areas.

EUR11 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE IN HALTON

The Board considered a report which outlined how the Council's Highway Maintenance Service was developing in order to satisfy the demands of its statutory functions and public expectations in the face of increasing pressures to maximise efficiency and improve value for money. The report responded to the findings of the National Highway and Transportation Survey and to various enquiries made by Board Members regarding the Council's highways maintenance function.

The report detailed information on:

- Halton's Highways Network;
- Highway Maintenance Funding;
- Capital Funding;
- Revenue Funding;
- Bridge and Highway Maintenance Division;
- Programmed and Preventative Highway Maintenance;
- Reactive Highway Maintenance;
- Winter Highway Maintenance;

- The Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme;
- Annual Alarm Survey; and
- New Highways Term Contract.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR12 ELECTED MEMBERS' GUIDE TO ROAD SAFETY

The Board considered a report and a copy of a booklet that was produced in January 2013 by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, entitled "Road Safety: A Guide for Local Councillors in England". Whilst stressing the enormous cost to the Community of road traffic accidents and the substantial budget and spending restrictions that had been introduced in recent years, the guide set out to inform local Councillors as to how their Authorities could continue to deliver effective road safety services that were:-

- Evidence informed
- Co-ordinated with other public services
- Designed and delivered in partnership
- Evaluated to ensure effectiveness.

It was noted that within the RoSPA Guide there were sections relating to health services. With the recent transfer of public health responsibility to the Authority, new opportunities existed for the provision of funding to the road safety function. The principle of health services contributing to measures to reduce casualties was already established with Liverpool City Council and PCT jointly funding the widespread introduction of 20 mph areas as a casualty reduction initiative.

In addition to the RoSPA guide, the independent National Institute for Clinical Excellence had also published formal guidance to Directors of Public Health on strategies to prevent unintentional injuries. This covered 20 mph speed limits and engineering measures to reduce speed or make routes safer and support for coordinated working between health professionals and local highways authorities to promote changes to the road environment.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Guide be circulated to all Councillors.

EUR13 LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered an update report on the

preparation of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Halton, which was the Statutory Document required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA). It was noted that the emerging strategy was currently in first draft form and the objectives of the strategy had developed around a range of avoidance measures the principles of which could be summarised as:-

- prevention, through enabling an understanding of the risk;
- protection, through reducing flood risk and the impacts of flooding;
- preparation, through planning and appropriate and sustainable development; and
- response through planning and preparing for flood emergencies.

Members were advised that the next step would be to:

- consult with partner organisations and other stakeholders on the content and proposals of the draft Local Strategy;
- prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the developing strategy and the findings be set out in an Environmental Report;
- engage risk management partners in early consultation on the emerging draft strategy; and
- examine and assess for suitability of purpose the communication and Public Engagement Strategy.

It was anticipated that the four next steps would be undertaken over a period of the next three months and the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy consulted on in the Autumn, with further progress reports being brought before the Board in November 2013.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the progress being made in relation to the preparation of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Halton.

EUR14 NOMINATIONS OF MEMBERS TO THE HALTON PUBLIC TRANSPORT ADVISORY PANEL - MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which requested Members to agree nominations to sit on the Council's Public Transport Advisory Panel for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

RESOLVED: That

1. the nominations for Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel for 2013/14 be as follows: Councillors Gerrard (Chair), Morley, Stockton, J Bradshaw and Woofall; and for the Chair to nominate a deputy as may be required; and
2. the key issues discussed by the Panel during the Municipal Year 2012/13, be noted.

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EUR15 NOMINATIONS OF MEMBERS TO THE CONSULTATION REVIEW PANEL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources which requested nomination of two members to represent the Board on the Consultation Review Panel.

RESOLVED: That the Chair and Vice Chair of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, sit on the Consultation Review Panel as may be required from time to time.

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Meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.