

REPORT: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12th June 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

SUBJECT: Policy & Performance Board Work Programme 2013/2014

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider possible topics for scrutiny as part of the 2013/14 work programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDED THAT:

- (1) Members of the Policy and Performance Board indicate target topic areas for potential scrutiny in 2013- 2014.**
- (2) Details of topic briefs be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the PPB in conjunction with the Lead Officer for the Board.**
- (3) Members support the continuation of the Waste Management Working Party, as its work is still on-going, with nominations to sit on it being invited.**
- (4) Members endorse the recommendation that the Cemeteries Working Group is no longer required at this time.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Each year the PPB has the opportunity to identify topics or work areas that it would like to scrutinise in detail as part of its work programme for the year.
- 3.2 Good practice, based on experience, suggests that 2/3 Topics is manageable, however the choice lies with the Board depending on its priorities and commitments. The process for scrutiny is that, following their adoption by this Board, the topics selected are worked up as detailed topic briefs and agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the PPB in conjunction with the Lead Officer for this Board.
- 3.3 In considering which are good topics to include in the work programme Members will need to keep in mind the Overview and Scrutiny Guide/Toolkit. Guidance on Topic Selection is attached as an aide-memoire. In particular, the Board's attention is drawn to paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 which relate to added value, capacity and resources.

3.4 It should be remembered that much of the work of this PPB will be cross-cutting and will impact on or be of relevance to other PPBs.

3.5 It should also be noted that Performance Monitoring of the Reporting Departments (Policy, Planning & Transportation; Economy, Enterprise and Property; Prevention and Commissioning Services (Housing Strategy); and Community and Environment), will in any case be received by this PPB.

4.0 2012/13 Work Programme

4.1 At the meeting of this Board on 13th June 2012 it was resolved that the following would be included in the 2012/13 work programme:

- A Topic Brief was to be prepared for a Trees Working Party with the following membership: Councillors Thompson, Sinnott, Parker, MacManus, Fraser, Zygadlo and P. Hignett. This brief was subsequently agreed and the findings and recommendations of this Working Party are included as a separate item on this agenda.
- A Waste Management Working Party be established for 2012/13 with the following membership: Councillors Gerrard, Zygadlo, J. Bradshaw and Thompson. (Note: the Waste Management Working Party had been previously established but Board membership changes required a review of its membership. It was, however, recognised on the setting up of this Party that because of the nature of the Waste Management Policy, the work of this topic group would remain on-going and future reports might be brought to this Board for its consideration). The findings of this Working party are outlined in paragraph 4.2 below.
- A report on the findings of the Cemeteries Working Group was presented to the Board on the 13th June 2012 (following its final meeting on the 24th May 2012) and its recommendations were endorsed. It was agreed at that meeting that the Cemeteries Working Group would remain dormant. However, as there was no need for it to meet during the remainder of 2012/13, because it is anticipated that there will be no need for it to reconvene during 2013/14 and because two of the original members of the Group no longer sit on this Board, it is recommended that there is no longer a need for this Group at this stage and that it only be reconvened at some point in the future if there is felt to be sufficient justification.

4.2 WASTE TOPIC GROUP

4.2.1 During 2012/13, the Waste Management Working Party contributed to the review, and subsequent amendment, of the Council's Waste Management Policies.

4.2.2 Household Waste Collection Policy

Members scrutinised aspects of the Council's Household Waste Collection Policy, and in particular, the level of charges made for waste services. As part of the scrutiny process, Members considered that the charges applied did not cover the cost of service provision and also took into account the Council's significant financial difficulties and the need to maximise cost recovery. The work of the Group resulted in Members of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board being asked to consider and agree that changes to the level of charges for the collection of bulky items and the provision of new and replacement wheeled bins should be presented to the Executive Board for approval. Such changes were subsequently presented to, and agreed by, the Executive Board and implemented from 1st April 2013.

4.2.3 HWRC Vehicle Permit Scheme

The Topic Group reviewed the impact of the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) Vehicle Permit Scheme. Members considered information which demonstrated how the scheme was deterring abuse by traders and helping to reduce the amount of waste deposited at the Centres, thereby reducing the Council's costs of dealing with illegally deposited commercial waste.

4.2.4 Fixed Penalty Notices

As part of a review being undertaken by Officers, Topic Group Members' views were sought on the Council's Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) levels for waste and environmental offences. Members agreed that FPN levels should be set at the higher levels allowed by legislation and that discounts should be maintained for early payment. The Council's FPN levels were subsequently increased and set by Officers under delegated authority.

4.2.5 Charges for Waste Services

As part of a review and consideration of charging for other waste services where legislation allows, Members agreed that work should be carried out to examine the options and the impacts of charges for garden waste collections and this will form part of the work programme for the Topic Group in 2013/14.

4.3 As this Waste Management Working Party has continued to meet, with one meeting having already taken place this municipal year, on the 20th May 2013, it is recommended that Members formally endorse this topic group continuing its work.

4.4 Members are asked to endorse the proposal that there is no need for a Cemeteries Working Group for the reasons set out in 4.1 above, recognising that this could be reconvened at some point in the future if there was felt to be sufficient justification.

4.5 Members are asked whether they would like to suggest other suitable areas for scrutiny during 2013/14 and the Board is, in turn, asked to discuss these in the context of existing workloads. In doing so, it is assumed that the Waste

Management Working Party continue and the Cemeteries Working Group would no longer be required.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None at this stage.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None at this stage.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

There are none arising from this particular report.

7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

There are none arising from this particular report.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

There are none arising from this particular report.

7.4 A Safer Halton

There are none arising from this particular report.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are none arising from this particular report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are none arising from this particular report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.