

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 19 November 2014 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), Fry (Vice-Chairman), P. Hignett, V. Hill, C. Loftus, MacManus, Sinnott, G. Stockton and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Keith Morley

Officers present: G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs, S. Rimmer and W Rourke

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
EUR22 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 th September 2014 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.	
EUR23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
EUR24 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.	
Under Minute No EXB76, Grangeway Court Homeless Service, the Board requested that the revised service model of Grangeway Court give consideration to a possible future sale.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.	
	Strategic Director Policy and Resources

EUR25 ANNUAL ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION AND CASUALTY REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which gave detail of road traffic collision and casualty numbers within the Borough in the year 2013 and recommended a continuance of road traffic collision reduction work.

Members were advised that there had been large reductions in the numbers of people being slightly injured but with the overall numbers of those killed/seriously injured (KSI) remaining essentially the same as in the previous four years. Within the stable KSI total, the number of adults increased but the number of children (those aged under 16 years) reduced to the lowest recorded total known in Halton. This latter tally was known to be volatile and could fluctuate from year to year, but such a low number was unprecedented.

In summary during 2013:

- There were 267 road traffic collisions involving personal injury in Halton, this being the lowest number in over 20 years. These incidents produced 347 casualties, a large reduction on the 377 recorded in 2012;
- 39 of the casualties were classed as serious, and there was 1 death, giving a total of 40 killed or seriously injured (KSI) which was the joint lowest figure in over 20 years and the same KSI total as 2011 & 2012;
- The child serious injury (CKSI) total of 3 is the lowest number since modern records began and again there were no child fatalities in 2013. The CKSI annual total was subject to large relative variations but this figure goes some way to redressing what had been an upward trend in child serious casualties in recent years;
- The number of people of all ages being slightly (SLI) injured fell to 307 from 337 in 2012.

In terms of the overall casualty numbers, the results confirmed the success of the casualty reduction work, supported via revenue funds and the Local Transport Plan with targeted enforcement and local road safety education, training, publicity and traffic management initiatives undertaken independently and jointly with partner organisations.

Arising from the discussion, Members requested that a press release be issued on behalf of the Chair of the Board and the relevant Portfolio Holder highlighting the impact on the Council of recent Government reductions in road safety funding.

RESOLVED: That

1. the overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton be noted and welcomed;
2. the current programme of road safety collision reduction schemes and road safety education, training and publicity be endorsed; and
3. concerns with regard to the achievement of further casualty prevention, as a result of resource reductions, be noted.

EUR26 BUSINESS PLANS 2015-18

The Board considered a report which advised Members that the process of developing Directorate Business Plans for the period 2015-2018 had begun. It was reported that each Directorate developed a medium term business plan, in parallel with the budget that was subject to annual review and refresh. At this stage Members were invited to identify a small number of priorities for development or improvement that they would like to see reflected within those plans. Strategic Directors would then develop draft plans which would be available for consideration by Policy and Performance Boards early in the New Year.

Members were informed that plans could only be finalised once budget decisions had been confirmed in March and that some target information may need to be reviewed as a result of final outturn data becoming available post March 2015.

RESOLVED: That

1. Members' comments be taken into account when developing the Business Plan;
2. Members forward any comments to the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property; and
3. the draft plan be brought to a future meeting.

Strategic Director
Children and
Enterprise

EUR27 PETITION AND OBJECTION RELATING TO PROPOSED 'AT ANY TIME' WAITING RESTRICTIONS, PARKLANDS AND ASH PRIORS, WIDNES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which advised that an objection had been received, on behalf of Parklands Club, following public consultation on a proposed Traffic Regulation Order to introduce 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions on parts of Parklands and Ash Priors, Widnes near to the Parklands Club and to address concerns and suggestions put forward by nearby residents as amendments to the original proposal.

The Board was further advised that a petition had been received containing 27 signatures and a covering letter citing noise, disturbance and parking problems associated with Parklands Club. The petition was not an objection to the parking restriction proposal.

Members were advised that discussions were ongoing between the operators of the Club and Halton and Knowsley Councils to address the comments about licensing, planning, noise and disturbance issues. The Club had taken action to deal with some of the concerns including installing equipment to prevent noise exceeding the agreed limits and air conditioning to reduce the need to open doors during hot weather. In addition the Club had applied for permission to extend the existing car park but had been advised by Knowsley Council that it was likely that Sport England would object on the grounds of loss of part of the playing field area.

RESOLVED: That

1. Officers should carry out a wider consultation exercise for the introduction of waiting restrictions in Parklands & Ash Priors, over an area to be agreed with Ward Councillors, and a further report be brought back to the Board; and
2. the objector, lead petitioner and correspondents be notified accordingly.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

EUR28 PETITION FROM HALE PARISH COUNCIL REQUESTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A VEHICLE WEIGHT RESTRICTION IN HALE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which advised that a petition

had been received from Hale Parish Council containing 393 signatures requesting the introduction of a vehicle weight restriction in Hale Village. The three main concerns put forward related to safety, health and the local environment and were addressed as follows:

- between the years 2008 to 2013 inclusive there had been no road traffic collisions resulting in injury within the Parish that had involved heavy goods vehicles;
- there were speed-restriction/traffic calming features on both Hale Gate Road and Hale Road approaching the village;
- on the main east-west route through the village via Town Lane/High Street/Hale Road there was a footpath available next to the running carriageway;
- the introduction of a full system of traffic calming was rejected in a public consultation exercise in 2009;
- a classified traffic count conducted by independent surveyors on Town Lane for the week starting 8th September 2014 returned a total of just 23 heavy goods vehicles each working day travelling through the village. This total would include large delivery lorries, skip wagons and others with genuine business in the area that any vehicle weight restriction would not apply to, also agricultural vehicles which were common in an agricultural area;
- the traffic counter also recorded 52 two axle, double rear wheel vehicles that may or may not be over a weight of 7.5 tonnes unladen. An automatic counter cannot differentiate between an unladen skip lorry and a much lighter pickup truck, but again for many of the vehicles recorded it was reasonable to assume that they had business within the Parish area and would be entitled to be in the area even if a weight restriction were imposed;
- it was not considered reasonable that ground borne vibration was an issue in Hale and it had not been raised previously;
- concerns for the safety of cyclists and walkers had been expressed, however there was no history of complaints to the Council by members of either road user group in relation to HGVs; and
- the Council had not received complaints about vehicle fumes or pollution in the past.

In addition, it was noted that any weight restriction to span the village of Hale would need to start at Liverpool Airport in the west and extend to Hale Bank in the east, plan attached in Appendix 'B'. Cheshire Police had been consulted and had commented as follows:

“The Police do not support any form of environmental weight restrictions and would only consider such options on road safety grounds.

The logistics of such an area wide restriction across two force areas would negate any form of enforcement. To prove an offence a police officer, not a PCSO, would need to follow every vehicle for the full length of the restriction in either direction to ensure that they were not legitimately accessing any properties within the controlled area.”

In support of Hale Parish Council, Councillor Wharton addressed the Board and commented on:

- the high percentage of Hale residents who had signed the petition;
- the narrow roads and lack of pavements in Hale;
- the preference for a pro-active approach rather than waiting for an accident to happen;
- expressed disappointment with the Police response; and
- how the recent weight restriction on Hale Bank Road had made the situation in Hale worse.

RESOLVED: That

1. the request for a vehicle weight restriction in Hale be noted and the Parish Council be informed that it will not be supported due to the lack of available enforcement from Cheshire Police; and
2. a further traffic count be carried out in 12 months' time.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

EUR29 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which advised that following investigatory work a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) financial charge on new development was viable in Halton. The CIL charge was in £ per m² and varied between types of development (housing, offices etc) and geographic areas.

It was noted that further work was now required to set the specific CIL rates to be levied on development, as this information underpinned the preparation of a CIL Charging Schedule for Halton. Before CIL could be levied on development, a Charging Schedule must be independently examined and then formally adopted by the Council.

The Board received a presentation from Tim Gibbs

which outlined:

- types of development where CIL charges would be viable and could be levied;
- examples of CIL rates charged by neighbouring authorities;
- the importance of obtaining a balance between applying a CIL charge and potential developments; and
- the amount of potential income from CIL charges and how this could be spent.

RESOLVED: That

1. the accompanying presentation be received;
2. the preparation and adoption of a CIL Charging Schedule for Halton targeted at residential development in the viable areas of Halton be supported; and
3. a report be submitted to the Executive Board promoting the preparation and adoption of a formal CIL Charging Schedule.

Strategic Director
Policy and
Resources

Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.