

**ANNUAL REPORT
SAFEER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
APRIL 2016 – MARCH 2017**



Councillor Dave
Thompson
Chair

Creating a 'Safer Halton' remains a key priority for the Council and its partners and empowers confidence in our residents and visitors that they are supported and protected from harm.

The Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board is focussed on meeting the needs of our communities to help keep them safe and it seeks to explore and anticipate emerging issues.

I am satisfied, as Chair of the Board that we have considered, responded to, and reported on the main issues affecting Halton and explored new areas that have not previously been scrutinised. We have also examined this year the work by the registered social landlords, all emergency services and the internal teams within the Council whose work most contributes to keeping Halton safe. The Board has also examined new areas of the work undertaken by Cheshire Police which have not previously been targeted for scrutiny, including those functions of the police that tackle Serious and Organised Crime (OCGs) and counter terrorism.

The Board also supported the planning and development of the National Recovery Walk 2016. The UK Recovery Walks had become an annual event that combined the celebration of recovery with advocacy activities. Each year, a new city or town took on the responsibility for hosting the walk and this year, in September, it was held in Halton.

I have ensured Chairman's Announcements' were added to the core agenda of all PPB meetings to ensure that feedback could be provided to members on actions or issues I have participated on in my role as Chair. This includes advising members on actions since the last meeting and providing updates on the representation I offer on other bodies.

I thank my colleagues who sit on the Board for their contributions to the work of the PPB and to those officers and guests who presented to the Board.

We have been extremely fortunate to have excellent support and reporting from our officers and I would place on record my thanks to: Mark Antrobus, Bill Seabury, Deana Pritchard, Elspeth Anwar, Gill Ferguson and Ann Jones. In

	<p>particular, to Chris Patino and Mike Andrews for their briefing and work in organising topics and reports.</p> <p>Finally, I want to make clear that Halton is a relatively safe place to live, visit and work due to the combined efforts of the Council and its many partners and that commitment will be just as robust in the year ahead.</p> <p>Councillor Dave Thompson Chair, Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board</p>
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MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During the municipal year 2016-17 the Board comprised of 11 elected members: Councillors Thompson (Chair), Plumpton-Walsh (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Baker, Edge, Gerrard, Hill, P. Lloyd-Jones, Loftus, Osborne and Zygadlo.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to Community Safety, Domestic Abuse, Safeguarding Adults, Environmental Health and Safer Halton Partnership. The Board is also represented on the Safer Halton Partnership and Cheshire Police & Crime Panel.

Topic Group Visits for 16/17 were:

- Night Time Economy Management
- Licensing Enforcement
- Creamfields – review of community safety practices
- Stadium Safety and Security– review of community safety practices

The board also agreed a programme of ‘scrutiny visits’ which are on-going at this time.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met 4 times during the year.

The programme of activity for the Board over the 2016/17 period covers the following:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The PPB has been of the view that it undertakes scrutiny topic visits rather than being focused on lengthy single item reviews. It was proposed to visit a number of areas to improve awareness and provide a direct ‘on-site’ means of scrutiny with the potential to offer feedback to the various agencies. The topic areas identified for visits were:-

Police Custody Suite;
Stay Safe;
Police Dog Operations;

Cream fields;
Match Day Operations – Select Security Stadium
Night Time Economy.

These visits would be Officer-lead and would be around two hours in duration. A summary report on observations would be presented to Future meetings of the Board. The Board undertook a number of these scrutiny topic visits throughout the year to scrutinise arrangements around Cream fields, the Night Time Economy, Licensing Enforcement and Stadium Safety.

Officers and partner agencies fed into these scrutiny visits so that the Board could see the enforcement options available and experience the activity and initiatives that take place.

The group were impressed by the outstanding work and wide spectrum of activity taking place. Work includes education and deterrent programmes, through to support and wellbeing services.

The topic group found that the Council had at its disposal sufficient powers to act against any premises and we had a means of influence to see actions being taken across local authority boundaries.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community Safety remains a high priority for the Council.

Increased concerns around fraud, scams and counterfeiting, and the impact of this on residents, was highlighted in a report from **Trading Standards**. The Board considered the report which outlined the work of the National Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) and the current level of activity in Halton. The IMLT was based in Birmingham Trading Standards and had the responsibility to investigate loan shark activity across England and to support the victims. A documented protocol existed between the IMLT and individual Trading Standards Services which allowed the team to operate in the local authority area. The work of our Trading Standards Officers was felt to be outstanding when set against the context of them having very limited resources.

In June the Board received a report which outlined how Taxi Licensing processes were operated in Halton. Members were advised that Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) legislation was based mainly around two Acts of Parliament:-

The Town Police Clauses Act 1847; and
The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

These two Acts set out the framework for the licensing of drivers, vehicles and operators and the report detailed how this was implemented by the Local Authority. In addition, the report also provided details on the role of the Local Authority with regard to enforcement, ensuring licence holders were compliant with the legislation and local conditions as well.

Drug use continued to be a focus of concern for the Board in 2016/17. The multi-agency approach taken in Halton was viewed to be highly successful in reducing drug offences, but also thefts, violence, criminal damage and other offences. The Council is also now equipped with new 'tools and powers' to tackle conduct in private lettings and this further supports actions against properties from which drug activity is noted.

In September the Board received details of the education and prevention work of the **Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service**. As with all the early intervention work taking place across the borough, the multi-agency working practices shared with this service are proving successful. The report focussed not only on the reduction of deliberate fires but also on the service's responsibilities to ensure safety in our homes and on the roads.

Anti-social behaviour figures continue to be monitored through the Safer PPB. The work of the Registered social Landlords was studied during a presentation in September. The presentation provided information on their work, in partnership with the Police and the Council, to deal with Anti-social behaviour involving their tenants:

Members were advised on recent property closure orders, possession orders, support for tenants, examples of anti-social behaviour and the consequences for tenants including enforcement action and examples of joint working with the Police and the Community Safety Team including Operation Treacle. The board found the partnership work was excellent and the Board thanked the RSL's for their informative presentations

As part of the ongoing scrutiny work of the board the Board received a report which provided an update on the work of the Halton Community Alcohol Partnership (HCAP) in Murdishaw. Community Alcohol Partnerships encouraged the collaboration of local agencies, communities and businesses to reduce alcohol consumption in young people and alcohol related anti-social behaviour. In Halton the CAP had made good progress in reducing underage drinking, with admissions for those under 18 falling significantly over recent years.

The Board discussed the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Victim and Witness Service which was designed to deliver independent and confidential support to residents aged over 10 years who were experiencing nuisance and/or anti-social behaviour in Halton. The service was part of the work of the Safer Halton Partnership Community Safety Team.

It was noted that since June 2008 the service had:

- received 622 referrals for support;
- provided advice to over 300 individuals;
- supported 30 individuals/families to secure more suitable accommodation;
- supported local policing units; and
- received recognition in 2009 in House of Commons for good practice in

supporting victims and witnesses.

The Board supported the options to extend the service to attend Ward Surgery meetings, to raise awareness of the Service with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and to develop a Service referral form for use by Members'.

Another key matter brought to the Board was concerned with the work of the major local housing providers. Halton Housing Trust, Riverside and other RSLs presented details of their work to the board, mainly focused in how they do and can act to support community safety.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

The reports heard by the Board covered domestic abuse figures and actions. The ongoing work of the Domestic Abuse team within Community Safety continues to challenge the issues faced; educating and informing, reporting and scrutinizing and supporting and facilitating. The Board continue to commend the continued work undertaken to reduce incidence and support victims.

The Board received an update in February on the progress made towards achieving the White Ribbon Local Authority Award for Halton. The principles of the award were that local authorities should express a commitment to involving men in anti-violence against women group and produce a preliminary action plan on how this commitment would be achieved. The Board expressed continuing support for the progress made towards achieving the White Ribbon Local Authority Award for Halton.

The Board have noted that there is potential for Cheshire becoming the first county to have all local authorities and the police receive corporate status.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

The Board retain an overview of the safeguarding of adults across Halton and received performance figures in respect of this.

A presentation was also received by North West Ambulance Service. To provide information on a scheme which aimed to identify and engage with frequent service callers. It was noted that there had been a substantial increase in demand for the ambulance service and this model was developed to help address that demand.

Individual teams for each area consisted of a specialist paramedic, the specialist role was to contact these frequent callers and implement an intervention method. It was reported that, due to the success of the scheme, Central Government had increased funding and the some CCG's had also funded an additional post. Members were pleased to note that the provision of two Urgent Care Centres in Halton had assisted the ambulance service with regard to demand on the service and had helped reduce demand for Accident and Emergency services.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The geography of Halton, and some of the issues this creates, was a running theme of the reports heard by the Board.

At our February meeting the Board received a presentation from the Emergency Planning Team which highlighted the Teams key duties and responsibilities, statutory duties, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH) 2015, key plans in place to ensure resilience within Halton, exercises that take place at COMAH sites in the borough, implications for the Council of the Major Accident Hazard Pipeline (MAHP) Regulations 1996, details of Emergency Centres and work with partners. In addition the team had responded to a number of major incidents in the previous 12 months, from incidents at Residential Care Homes, Silver Jubilee Bridge and major fires in the Borough.

The Council's plans to safeguard the welfare of residents during the Mischief Night/Halloween period and during Bonfire Night (Operation Treacle) are received annually, and feedback emphasised again that the proactive approach taken was successful.

SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP

The Board continue to monitor and note the actions of the Partnership, ensuring that significant agenda items are brought to PPB for scrutiny. Feedback from the Board is, in turn, made to the Partnership via my attendance at Partnership meetings.

CHESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

The Board received regular updates on the Police and Crime Panel, including taking the opportunity to comment on the Police and Crime Commissioners Annual Report.

A new operating model within Cheshire Police was introduced last year and the Board was pleased that two LPUs were formed in Halton. Overall, despite £38 million of cuts in government grant, policing in Halton was felt to be working well and the new Police & Crime Commissioner has a productive working relationship with the Council.