

SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 20 June 2006 at the Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Osborne (Chairman), Stockton (Vice-Chairman), Edge, Lloyd-Jones, Morley, E Ratcliffe, Redhead, Thompson and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Rowan and Swift

Absence declared on Council business: (none)

Officers present: H. Cockcroft, J. Downes, S. Eastwood, J. Unsworth, A. Villiers, P. Watts, S. Baxter, A. Carr, S. Webster and L. Cairns

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
SAF1	<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>It was noted that no public questions had been received.</p>	
SAF2	<p>EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES</p> <p>The Board considered the minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee relating to the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.</p>	
SAF3	<p>TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>Members considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy outlining the Board’s Terms of Reference. It was noted that a number of changes had been made to the Council’s decision making structure in order to bring the Policy and Performance Boards into line with the Council’s Strategic Priorities as set out within the Corporate and Community Plans.</p> <p>The Board also received updates from the Drug Action</p>	

Team Co-ordinator, the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, the Divisional Manager – Consumer Protection, the Head of Risk and Emergency Planning, the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services, the Head of Service – Waste Management, and the Divisional Manager – Environmental Health, regarding their areas of work, highlighting issues that would need to be addressed in the forthcoming year.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the Terms of Reference be noted;
- (2) reports be submitted to the next meeting regarding
 - the Civic Contingencies Act; and
 - areas of the Environment and Regulatory Services Department within the Board's remit;
- (3) representatives from each of the emergency services be invited to give presentations at future meetings; and
- (4) a note outlining key areas of activity within divisions, and issues to be addressed, be circulated to members of the PPB for information.

Strategic Director
– Corporate and
Policy, and
Strategic Director
– Environment

SAF4 WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining possible areas to be scrutinised in the 2006/07 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That the following Working Parties continue/be established in the 2006-2007 Municipal Year with the Membership shown:

Anti-Social Behaviour (encompassing drug and alcohol issues)

Councillors Stockton (Chair), Edge, Lloyd-Jones, E Ratcliffe, Swift and Wallace (supported by H Cockcroft);

Bereavement

Councillors Morley (Chair), Lloyd-Jones, Osborne, Redhead, Swift and Wallace;

Waste

Councillors Thompson (Chair), Osborne, Redhead and Stockton; and

Environmental Health and Risk Assessment

Councillors Osborne (Chair), Morley, E Ratcliffe, Stockton and Swift.

SAF5 DRAFT ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining the Consumer Protection Service’s Enforcement Policy which had been subject to public and business consultation.

It was noted that the purpose of the policy was to set out the Service’s general approach to enforcement, based on the general principles of good enforcement, the Enforcement Concordat and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. The original policy was agreed in 2002 and it had been updated to take into account relevant case law and other experience of legal arguments raised over enforcement policies in recent years.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Executive Board be requested to agree to the adoption and publication of the revised Consumer Protection enforcement policy; and
- (3) contact be made with Legal Services to investigate the possibility of linking with the Designation Order replacing the Alcohol Byelaws.

Strategic Director
– Health and
Community

SAF6 WIDNES CREMATORIUM - CREMATIONS AND MERCURY ABATEMENT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community providing an update on the issue of cremations and mercury abatement.

It was noted that, following growing concern over the damaging health effects of mercury absorption on the human body, mercury emissions controls were to be introduced: at least 50% of all cremations carried out in the UK after 31 December 2012 must satisfy mercury emissions controls. The report outlined the options that the Council could consider with regard to the existing crematorium.

Members noted that the Authority was required to notify the individual regulator (the local Environmental Health Service) by 1 June 2006 as to how Halton intended to

implement the mercury abatement requirements. The Executive Board Sub-Committee had therefore agreed to notify the regulator that the Council planned to contribute to a national cremation burden-sharing (ie cost-sharing) scheme from 1 January 2013 and had no immediate plans to install mercury abatement equipment, though this position remained under review.

The Board was advised that this was a national issue and the Working Party would take this matter forward as more information became available regarding the cost of burden sharing schemes, taking into account the actions and practice of other authorities.

RESOLVED: That the Board maintain a watching brief on this subject and receive update reports as appropriate to inform ongoing policy development.

Strategic Director
– Health and
Community

SAF7 APPROVED MOTOR TRADING SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community outlining a proposal to support the operation of the Warrington Borough Council Trading Standards Approved Motor Trader Scheme in Halton.

It was noted that an agreement in principle had been reached with Warrington Trading Standards that their scheme could be extended to allow Halton businesses to join. In turn, the Council would support the scheme to the extent of:

- the production and distribution of flyers to potential members;
- promotion of the scheme during officers' routine visits; and
- liaising with Warrington prior to their annual inspection of members.

To launch the scheme in Halton, a minimum of three local members would be required. The Board noted that the extension of the scheme would allow Halton traders to benefit without the Authority incurring the associated operating costs.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Board in this respect for further consideration.

Strategic Director
– Health and
Community

SAF8 GREEN LANE WIDNES - PETITION FOR CLOSURE OF ACCESS POINT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community regarding a petition of 45 signatures which had been received from residents in Green Lane, Widnes, requesting the closure of a footpath leading from Green Lane to St George’s Playing Fields. The nature of the complaint was that the location attracted antisocial young people who caused nuisance criminal damage and general disorder in the area to the annoyance of residents.

In addition, a further petition with 15 signatures was received in February 2006 from residents occupying numbers 2 – 20 Green Lane requesting closure/alleygating of the rear of these properties where it adjoined the cul-de-sac St Thomas’ Court.

The Board was advised of the actions that had been taken. It was noted that, in respect of the first petition, the footpath referred to was a Strategic Route within the Greenways Project, linking with the Borough’s footpath network, and so could not be closed. However, the police had agreed to give the location attention.

With regards to the second petition, there was a partial fence and an alleygate with a broken lock separating the alley from St Thomas’ Court. The Local Housing Trust had commissioned work to complete the fence, which was in their ownership, and restoration work on the alleygate was to be put to the next appropriate Area Forum.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a legal view be obtained in this respect;
- (2) subject to the above, the decision to decline the closure request (footpath to playing fields) be supported;
- (3) the alleygating (originally commenced in 2001) be completed by replacing the lock and erecting a side panel to deny access; and
- (4) the Board’s thanks to Mr Carr, the Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator, for his service to the Authority be recorded and he be wished well for the future.

(NB Councillor Redhead declared a personal interest in the following item of business in respect of the tender for the

Strategic Director
– Health and
Community

Catalyst Museum.)

SAF9 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS FINAL
QUARTER

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive outlining the fourth quarter year-end performance management reports for the following services:

- Consumer Protection;
- Waste Management;
- Planning and Environmental Health; and
- Culture and Leisure.

The Board considered a number of issues as follows:

- The idea of a Culture and Leisure Trust had emerged through the Base Budget Review process and information was currently being gathered to present to Members at a seminar later in the year.
- There was a “managed vacancy” within the Environmental Health Division which had an impact on the Performance Indicators. Members were advised that an appointment to this post depended upon the year’s budget.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the fourth quarter year-end performance management reports be received; and
- (2) any further questions be submitted direct to the appropriate officers.

Meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.