

SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 16 June 2009 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Osborne (Chairman), Stockton (Vice-Chairman), M. Bradshaw, Lloyd Jones, Redhead, Rowan, Shepherd and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Edge, Morley and M. Ratcliffe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Noone, M. Andrews, S. Baxter, H. Cockcroft, D. Cunliffe, A. Jones, R. Mackenzie, Y. Sung, J. Unsworth, A. Villiers and P. Watts

Also in attendance: Councillors Wright and Polhill (in accordance with Standing Order No. 33)

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
SAF1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2009 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
SAF2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	In relation to Minute number SAF 52 from the last SHPPB meeting dated 17 March 2009, the following public question had been submitted by a member of the public.	
	<i>“My seven year old daughter was viciously attacked and could have been killed by a dog, while she played in her local park play area. I want to know what measures will the Council take to ensure that our children are safe from dogs, while they play innocently in your parks and play areas”?</i>	
	The question was received by the Board and in response it was commented that the Environmental Health Division were hoping to adopt legislation that would apply to the restraint of dogs in certain areas of the Borough. It was noted that a full investigation of the incident and a report would be prepared for the next Safer Halton PPB and the	

Officers would maintain contact with the member of the public concerned throughout the process.

RESOLVED: That the public question be dealt with.

SAF3 A SAFER WAY: CONSULTATION ON MAKING BRITAIN'S ROADS THE SAFEST IN THE WORLD - PRESENTATION

The Board received the above presentation from Lisa Scott, Road Safety Officer.

The presentation introduced the vision, aims, targets and proposed new road safety measures which the Department for Transport believed would help reduce the number of individuals being needlessly killed or seriously injured (KSI) on our roads each year.

The Road Safety Strategy (post 2010) consultation document followed on from the previous 10 year strategy to reduce road traffic casualties;

40% reduction in KSI (Killed Seriously Injured);
50% reduction in CKSI (Children Killed Seriously Injured); and
10% reduction in Slight Casualties.

The presentation covered the following:

- National casualty trends - 38% of fatalities occurred on rural A roads with 62% on all rural roads, nearly 60% of all casualties occurred on urban roads;
- The fatal driver behaviours - In 2007 nationally over 700 deaths involved exceeding speed limits or inappropriate speed; 460 people were estimated to have been killed in a drink drive/drug drive accident; careless or dangerous driving contributed to at least 400 road deaths;
- The type and ages of road users;
- Progress made in Halton: the all age KSI trend, Halton CKSI trend and Halton slight injuries trend;
- That the new road safety strategy would contribute to making Britain's roads the safest in the world;
- The future national focus – reducing the number of road deaths, protecting children and young people, particularly in deprived areas, safety on rural roads and pedestrian and cyclist casualties in our towns and cities, particularly in deprived areas;
- The future focus – protecting motorcyclists, who represented 20% of road fatalities but just 1% of traffic; illegal and inappropriate speed; poor road user

behaviour amongst a minority, where drink driving and failure to wear a seatbelt remained a problem; bringing all areas up to the standard of the best;

- The aims of the new strategy – to create a system in which errors on the road did not lead to death or serious injury; focus on those roads, people and behaviours most associated with road deaths; to support responsible road use and tackle irresponsible behaviour; and
- The approach – that the existing legal and regulatory framework established in the previous road safety strategy was broadly fit for purpose; the post 2010 strategy would focus more on delivery; all aimed at bringing the standards of the less safe areas, roads and vehicles up to those of the best;
- What could we achieve – there were four new targets for 2008:
 - (1) To reduce road deaths by at least 33% compared to the baseline (2004-2008);
 - (2) To reduce the annual total of serious injuries by at least 33% compared to the baseline;
 - (3) To reduce the annual total of road deaths and serious injuries to children and young people (aged 0-17) by at least 50% compared to the baseline;
 - (4) To reduce by at least 50% the rate of KSI per km travelled by pedestrians and cyclists, compared with the baseline;
- Details of proposed new measures with regards to delivery, rural roads, 20mph limits and zones and safer vehicles.

The consultation document was distributed to Members who were invited to make comments. It was requested that these be forwarded to M Noone as soon as possible as the deadline for submission of the document was 10 July 2009.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation and comments made be noted; and
- (2) the proposal for the Strategic Director, Environment in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal to submit any comments to the Department of Transport by

Strategic Director
- Environment

SAF4 the deadline of 14th July 2009 be endorsed.
4TH QUARTER MONITORING REPORTS

The Board received a report from the Chief Executive on the Performance Management Reports for Q4 Year end 2008/09.

Members were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of the 4th quarter performance management reports on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services etc, for those aspects of the following services that are within the remit of the PPB:

Health and Partnerships;
Highways and Transportation;
Environmental and Regulatory Services; and
Culture and Leisure.

The following comments were noted after the presentation of the report:

- Queries were raised regarding the condition of some road markings and the way road marking work was prioritised. With regards to budget constraints for road markings and traffic calming requests, Members suggested that additional monies should be requested at next year's budget in order to address the needs of the communities;
- CL 5 – clarification was made with regards to the number of people offered Hep C screening. All 74 injectors were offered the screening, however only 14 had accepted;
- NI 40 – The service providers contracts had been extended by 1 year and the standard of service had dipped, resulting in the target not being met.

RESOLVED: That the Policy and Performance Board receive the 4th quarter performance management reports.

SAF5 SSP MINUTES

The minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership (SHP) meeting held on Tuesday 24 February 2009 and the special SHP Meeting held on 12 March 2009 were presented to the Board for information.

Following comments made from the minutes, the following was noted:

- The Chief Executive was driving the proposed project of labelling alcohol bottles with retailers' names, so that they could be traced back to them. This would be reported back to the Board in due course; and
- Confirmation of the appointment of the Alcohol Enforcement Officer and the name of the appointee would be circulated by the relevant officer to PPB Members.

Strategic Director
- Health and
Community

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

SAF6 HARRIS STREET PETITION

The Board received a report advising Members of the receipt of a petition containing 24 signatures, requesting the installation of alley gates adjacent to 22 Harris Street and to the rear of 29 St Ambrose Road. The report also advised of the proposed course of action.

A copy of the petition was appended to the report which outlined the reasons for the request as follows:

- Gangs of youths were using Harris Street as a short cut from St Ambrose Road to Halton View Road;
- Vandalism to property;
- Bottles, cans, beer glasses, chip papers, carrier bags all left on the road in the street;
- Car windscreens smashed, vehicles broken into and wing mirrors smashed off cars (all had Police involvement);
- Foul language;
- Spitting on cars, front door, and foot paths; and
- The path was seldom used, and never at night since a girl was attacked there.

The Board heard a representation from Cllr Polhill on behalf of the Harris Street residents. He felt compelled to attend the meeting as he felt that the recommendation (paragraph 3.6) was inadequate in this instance. He explained the four year history of the situation and appealed to the Board to support the petition.

In response it was noted that the installation of alleygates in other areas had in the past resolved much of the anti social behaviour mentioned above and therefore, it was suggested by Members that the Board support this

petition. The Members agreed to support the petition.

Members considered that the present arrangements for investigating complaints and assembling evidence, eg, to support the installation of alley gates, was often too long and bureaucratic, eroding the support of the public and confidence in 'the Authorities'. Beyond the immediate subject of the present petition the meeting proposed that the whole system should be reviewed and more streamlined and responsive methodology should be introduced. Clear, simple guidance should be produced to help those needing to gather evidence to support measures such as alley gates needed to reduce anti-social behaviour and, within the constraints of relevant legal requirements, more weight should be given to the views of ward councillors who knew their local areas and the history and seriousness of situations such controls were intended to tackle.

Officers advised that some work on this was already in hand and that a guidance note should be forthcoming by mid July.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The Board endorse the petition;
- (2) The Board requests that a review of the evidence requirements and methodology, and the whole system for making a case for the installation of alley gates be expedited and that this should give more weight to the input of ward Members who know the history and impact of the anti-social behaviour such measures aim to tackle; and
- (3) The Board requests that a clear and simple guidance note for Councillors and members of the public involved in gathering evidence to support such applications be produced (by mid July).

Strategic Director
- Environment

SAF7 WORKING PARTY MINUTES

The Minutes from the Waste Management Working Party Meeting were attached for information.

It was confirmed that the pilot scheme to deliver multi-material recycling collections to properties that cannot have blue bins would be introduced in August and that the scheme would be extended to 2010.

The MAPS Topic Group minutes were tabled at the meeting. Members were invited to direct any questions to Howard Cockcroft.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

SAF8 PAVEMENT CONDITIONS REPORT

The Board received a report in relation to the condition of footways in Halton in response to a recent press release from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP), which highlighted the condition of footways nationally to publicise problems that broken pavements pose to older and infirm people.

The press release from CSP alleged that Halton's pavements were the 'worst in the Northwest' and that 50% of our pavements were in need of repair. Their press release used data from best value performance indicator (BVPI) 187. This indicator, which measures the condition of walking routes, had its limitations in that it reports only on a small percentage of the footway network, where structural maintenance should be considered. These were the higher use, category 1 and 2 footways, ie, those usually associated with main distributor, classified roads and town centres, totalling around 46 km in length and forming less than 5% of the footway network in Halton. It did not generally include footways in residential areas or along unclassified roads. Although the indicator had been dropped from the new National Indicator set, it was acknowledged that the condition of footways was a very valuable indicator, not only in terms of accessibility and safety, but also in the contribution that well maintained footways make to the appearance of local neighbourhoods, and also of the level of public satisfaction with the Borough's highways service provision. It was proposed therefore, to develop a new local indicator that would measure the condition of all footways and which would be used as the basis for reporting performance for future service monitoring.

The report continued to cover details on the factors affecting the survey, footway safety inspections and repairs, footway survey and reconstruction programme, local performance indicators and footway reconstruction budgets.

Following discussions on the report the following was noted:

- That the Council was responsible for all adopted

- footpaths within the Borough;
- Footpaths that are located on HHT land are subject to the “Gulicksen ruling” and discussions were ongoing with HHT regarding inspection and repair;
 - Highway safety inspections and safety checks were carried out four times per year on all footways and footpaths within the Borough;
 - Members suggested that the Council make the public aware of the yearly safety inspections via ‘Inside Halton’.

RESOLVED: That the decision of Executive Board on 19 March 2009, to prioritise footway reconstruction within the Highways Capital Maintenance block budget allocation, doubling the area of footways to be reconstructed for the next two years, be endorsed.

Strategic Director
- Environment

SAF9 UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT OF THE SMOKE FREE PROVISION OF THE HEALTH ACT 2006

The Board received a report updating them on the enforcement of the smoke free provisions of the Health Act 2006, in response to a request made by Members at the January meeting of the PPB for an update on the enforcement of the smoking ban.

The report stated that the Government provided funding to the Environmental and Regulatory Services of Halton Borough Council of £11,951 in 2006/07 and £58,338 in 2007/08 to ensure compliance. A smoke free legislation Action Plan was produced in association with the PCT and a major publicity campaign was launched in November 2006. In June 2007 two smoke free enforcement officers were appointed. The smoke free enforcement officers commenced visits immediately, to all premises considered to be high risk according to guidance produced by Government, the Department of Health and LACORS. By 1 July 2007, as a result of the comprehensive campaign programme and schedule of visits, there was reasonable knowledge of the legislation throughout the Borough. Discussions at breakfast meetings and at licensing forums showed that businesses supported firm and consistent enforcement to ensure that a level playing field was available to all businesses. Enforcement intelligence and strategy was also shared with out neighbouring Merseyside and Cheshire authorities to this end.

The report went on to explain the enforcement of the Smoke Free Provisions of the Health Act through Fixed Penalty Notices and reasons for prosecution. It further

explained the visits made to premises since the Act was introduced and gave the statistics relating to FPNs issued to date.

It was noted that both enforcement officers had since moved on. However it was hoped that further funding would become available to recruit another Officer in September 2009. Also it had been reported that in recent months there had been a spate of complaints about premises allowing smoking and that the loss of the enforcement officers could have contributed to this.

Further to discussions resulting from the report the following was noted:

- Members commented that they thought the main problem areas in Halton were taxi drivers, bus drivers and smoking in car parks;
- It was confirmed that smoking in Halton Lea car parks was not allowed as this was considered an enclosed space;
- That litter enforcement officers could be used as smoking enforcement officers as well;
- Members supported the Smoke Free Halton Programme;
- Funding was now being finalised for an enforcement officer in Halton by the PCT under the Smoke Free Halton Programme; and
- Members observed that reports were still coming to the PPB merely 'to note' and requested an amendment to the recommendation that would at least include "that the report be commented upon" and that any future reports should include more substantial and expressive recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The requested report be noted; and
- (2) Members endorsed the proposal that other suitable officers, e.g litter enforcement be trained so they could integrate smoking enforcement duties into their roles.

Strategic Director
- Environment

SAF10 MID TERM REVIEW OF THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director Corporate and Policy on the Mid -Term Review of the Sustainable Community Strategy which provided the

Board with an amended version of the Sustainable Community Strategy for comment.

The report advised that Local Authorities are required to prepare and implement a Sustainable Community Strategy and were expected to work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership to agree priorities and to engage and involve local communities. It was explained that the current Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted in 2006 with a long term vision and objectives with delivery targets for the period 2006-2011. Since it was prepared, a number of changes had taken place making it necessary to conduct a mid-term review of the Sustainable Community Strategy. This was an update, not a complete revision. Recent perception surveys and the revised State of the Borough Report (2009) confirmed that the underlying vision and priorities from 2006 remained relevant. Widespread engagement had therefore not been undertaken for this mid-term review. However, in 2010/11 work would commence on a full review and roll forward of the strategy with wide engagement, linking up with work being done on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

The report explained that the main objectives of the mid-term review were to explain what the vision statement means – what would Halton be like in 2025 if we were successful, to review the indicators and targets for each priority, to incorporate the Housing and Homelessness Strategy and to ensure that appropriate cross cutting targets were agreed, covering social inclusion, cohesion, equalities and closing the gap.

The draft review was drawn up in consultation with partners and was considered by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board on 20 May 2009. Following consultation with the Policy and Performance Boards, it was planned to take the final draft to the full Council meeting on 22 July 2009, with a recommendation from Executive Board for final adoption.

One Member queried the Windmill Hill statistics and it was agreed that this would be dealt with by the relevant officer outside the meeting.

RESOLVED: That

(1) The report be noted; and

(2) That the Policy and Performance Board had no additional observations or comments to be

reported to Executive Board.

SAF11 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived for 15 minutes.

SAF12 LAA PROGRESS REPORT 2008 - 2009

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy advising on the progress towards meeting Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets at the end of the first year of the Agreement.

It was noted that the revised LAA was signed off by the Secretary of State in June 2008 and covers the period April 2008 to March 2011. The Agreement was 'refreshed' in March 2009. The indicators and targets were reviewed with Government Office. There were a number of gaps and estimates in the original agreement and the principle changes were to fill these gaps using information that had become available between June 2008 and March 2009. It was not expected that there would be many further changes, except in one respect. The economic downturn would inevitably have an impact on the likelihood of achieving some targets relating to the economy and house building, and Government had identified a list of indicators for which targets would be reviewed before the end of March 2010, by which time the impact of the downturn would be clearer.

Appended to the report were the 'Changes to Halton's LAA Outcomes Framework – March 09' and 'LAA Outcome Measures – Progress as at March 2009' reports.

Members were asked to bear in mind that all the national indicators were built into the quarterly service plan monitoring reports. The intention of this report was to pick out the LAA indicators from the different service plans so that it was possible to see a clearer picture of progress overall. Also, certain indicators were only reported some time after year end, so in those cases no progress report was available yet. There were also some survey based indicators for which no further data would be available until the survey was repeated in 2010.

The LAA reflected the priorities in our community

strategy for improving the quality of life in Halton. It was the main mechanism by which Government would performance manage local areas. It was therefore important that we monitor progress, and that members were satisfied that adequate plans were in place to ensure that the improvement targets were achieved.

It was commented that the development of young people's perception of the Borough was important and that NI 199 should be added to the Safer Halton local indicators at the review.

RESOLVED: That

(1) The report be noted; and

(2) NI 199 be added to the Sustainable Community Strategy local indicators.

SAF13 ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received the Annual Report from the Chairman and Strategic Director Health and Community and were asked to comment in respect of the same and make any changes it considered appropriate.

Members agreed that the report should be approved.

RESOLVED: That the report be approved.

Meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.