

SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 13 November 2012 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Osborne (Chairman), N. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chairman), Gerrard, Gilligan, V. Hill, Lea, M Lloyd Jones, Ratcliffe, Nolan, Sinnott and Mr Hodson (Co-optee)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Edge

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Andrews, S. Ashcroft, L. Derbyshire, P. Gandy, I. Mason, P. McWade, J. Sutton and Lucy Willis.

Also in attendance: Mr G O'Rourke and Mr A Waller – Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

SAF26 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2012 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

SAF27 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board were advised that no public questions had been received.

SAF28 SSP MINUTES

The minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership (SHP) meeting held on 25 September 2012 were presented to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(Note: Councillor M Ratcliffe declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following item of business as an employee of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Runcorn Fire Station and left the room during consideration of this item).

Action

SAF29 PRESENTATION: CHESHIRE RESCUE AND FIRE SERVICE

The Board received a presentation from Mr Alex Waller and Mr G O'Rourke, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service which:-

- Outlined the budget for 2012-13 of £44.1m which would be utilised as follows; Premises £1.9m; Transport £1.4m; Supplies and Services £4.1m; Capital Charges £0.9m, Employee related £33.7m 76% and Other Costs £2.1m;
- Set out the supply and demand of the service from 2004/5 to 2011/12 – the total number of incidents had reduced by 41.3%; fire fighters had been reduced by 1.3% and operational response resources had increased by 21.2%;
- Detailed the life risk incidents attended per week in 2011/12;
- Explained the concept of the 10 minute standard;
- Outlined the current station locations and crewing type;
- Highlighted the potential station locations and crewing type;
- Detailed the proposals for response standards and station locations; and
- Set out the consultation timetable.

The Board was advised that there were 24 fire stations in Cheshire and the proposals were to increase the number of stations to 29, with a mixture of full time and on call fire fighters. It was reported that the proposals resulted in a saving of £650,000 whilst maintaining similar capacity and improving the response time.

The following comments arose from the presentation:-

- It was noted that the proposals would not reduce the capacity to undertake and maintain community safety work;
- It was noted that good practice was shared with other fire authorities and that the proposals did not

reduce the level of service to the public or present any safety issues;

- Clarity was sought on what the impact of taking a pump out of Widnes and placing it in Penketh would have on a major incident. In response, it was reported that Chief Fire Officers from neighbouring authorities met on a regular basis to support each other. Solid agreements were in place and if a major incident occurred, all neighbouring authorities would respond;
- It was noted that subject to the spending review, it was hoped that there would be no compulsory redundancies as a result of the proposals. However, it was also noted that the Service were committed to avoiding redundancies;
- It was noted that under the proposals there would be a fire engine available at least 95% of the time in Widnes as the first response. It was also noted that the fire authority were aiming to achieve a 10 minute response time;
- It was noted that most of the personal reported incidents occurred in the early evening on a Saturday and Sunday and many were related to alcohol;
- It was noted that the cost of a new station was £2m and as a result of the previous spending settlement and a series of organisational changes throughout the Service, the Fire Authority had achieved a saving which was hoped could be used to purchase land and build new stations;
- It was noted that the Fire Authority no longer owned housing stock and on call fire fighters would be required to live within five minutes of the station in order to meet the response time. It was also noted that the salary of the on-call contract would increase in order to cover any removal expenses;
- The Board noted the proposals for Runcorn as set out on Page 17 of the report; and
- It was noted that Warrington and Halton had a high number of arson incidents but the number of life risk incidents was relatively low at less than one a day.

The Chairman reported that the Council would be formally responding to the consultation and that Members could also respond to the consultation individually.

In conclusion, the Chairman reported that the Board would consider a further report on the outcome of the proposals at the 12 March 2013 meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The presentation be received and comments made noted;
- (2) Mr Waller and Mr O'Rourke be thanked for their informative presentation; and
- (3) An update report be presented to the 12 March 2013 meeting of the Board.

SAF30 SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which gave Members an update on the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the scrutiny review into the private rented sector.

The Board was advised by the Vice Chairman, Councillor Norman Plumpton-Walsh, that a topic group had been formed in response to a number of issues relating to the private rented sector including poor property conditions, anti-social behaviour caused by private tenants and absentee landlords who were reluctant to take action against tenants who caused problems. The group had been chaired by Councillor Pamela Wallace, who was no longer a Member of the Board.

The Board was further advised that the findings and recommendations of the topic group had been reported to the Board in March 2012. At the time it was agreed that detailed cost implications associated with the appointment of additional staff to implement the recommendations be presented to a future meeting of the Board. However, since that time discussions had taken place at officer level regarding the reorganisation of existing staff which would increase the capacity within the enforcement team and negate the need to employ additional staff. A verbal update regarding the outcome of these discussions was given at the meeting.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that as a result of the negotiations involved in securing additional capacity, the team progress in implementing some of the recommendations, particularly around targeted work had been slower than originally anticipated. The Board noted the recommendations outlined in paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.13 of the report.

It was reported that Councillor Wallace had submitted a statement prior to the meeting. Mr John Tully, Legal Services had also issued legal advice concerning recommendation 3.1.12 (accreditation to the property not the landlord) which could result in a risk to the Council, and as a result of this, the statement was not read out at the meeting.

The Chairman informed the Board that a statement had been submitted, but that this had been superseded by legal advice. The Board was given the option of re-considering the item further in respect of paragraph 3.1.12 or to accept a new Officer's recommendation which was to remain with the current system (the landlord accreditation). The Officer's recommendation was agreed unanimously and therefore paragraph 3.1.12 would be changed to reflect this decision before it was submitted to the Executive Board for approval. The Chairman requested that a copy of the new recommendation and Appendix C to the report be circulated to all Members of the Board.

The following comments arose from the discussion:-

- It was noted that the current accreditation scheme had been in operation for six years and to date there had been no issues or problems;
- It was noted that 41 landlords had been accredited and that robust measures were in place to address rogue landlords. It was also noted that landlord accreditation was a voluntary scheme and it would not be viable to introduce it as a mandatory scheme as it would involve introducing licensing and this had not previously been successful; and
- Concern was raised that there appeared to be no control over failing private landlords and this was blighting neighbourhoods. In response, it was reported that the Environmental Health Team dealt with such matters and would take enforcement action, when appropriate, against failing landlords.

The Chairman reported that a progress report would be

presented to the 15 January 2013 meeting. He also requested that Officers identify money to undertake a poster campaign on the landlord accreditation scheme.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress made to date and the comments raised be noted;
- (2) paragraph 3.2.12 to be amended and recorded as:-

the existing Landlord Accreditation Scheme be retained;
- (3) the recommendations in the report (as amended in resolution (2) above) be supported;
- (4) the recommendations be forwarded to the Executive Board for approval; and
- (5) funding be identified to undertake a campaign on the Landlords Accreditation Scheme.

SAF31 HALTON SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (HSAB) :
ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which presented Halton's Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) Annual Report 2011/12 and gave an update on the progress of the establishment of Halton's Integrated Safeguarding Unit.

The Board was advised that the Annual report contained the following; the Forward; The Vision; The National Context; the Structure and Reporting Arrangements; the Outcomes; the Board priorities; the Safeguarding Data available and The Key Developments and Local Activity.

The Board was also advised of the six sections in the report regarding:-

- Learning & Development;
- Publicity and Communications;
- Quality and Performance;
- Policies and Procedures;
- Practitioners Network; and
- Safer Workforce.

The Members of the Board noted the comprehensive report. The Chairman requested that a letter be sent to the Strategic Director, Communities, on behalf of the Board requesting that a Member of the Board be nominated onto the Safeguarding Adults Board.

RESOLVED That:

- (1) the report, associated appendices and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) a letter be sent on behalf of the Board to the Strategic Director, Communities requesting that a Member of the Safer PPB be nominated onto the Adults Safeguarding Board.

SAF32 HALTON'S HATE CRIME STATISTICS FOR QUARTERS 1 AND 2 OF 2012-13

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which informed the Members of the Hate Crime statistics for the first and second quarter of this year, as reported to Cheshire Police.

The Board was advised that the attached figures in the appendices to the report were incidents reported to Cheshire Police for April – September 2012.

The Board was further advised that for some time there had been concerns raised regarding the role of other Partners in helping to reduce incidents of hate crime. The information that was currently supplied to various Boards and Partnership groups were only incidents as reported to the Police and there had been no third party reported incidents for some time.

It was reported that there had been a lot of activity that other Partners had undertaken that contributed towards making communities safer and more cohesive, and it was hoped that the reporting of these activities could be included in the contextual part of the Police's reports.

Furthermore, it was reported that in August 2011 the Equality and Human Rights Commission had published their report into Disability Hate Crime, entitled "Hidden in Plain Sight". This had several recommendations, some of which were quite Police specific, whilst others were more about how the Police worked with other Partners. The report also discussed how Partners identified and supported vulnerable individuals. In respect of some of the recommendations, it

was suggested that one or two individual cases could be selected and shared with the Partnership to encourage discussion regarding particular issues. These issues could include information sharing, support, partnership working, and improving the wider community's perception of these issues.

The Members of the Board requested that all jargon should be written out in full in future reports. Clarity was also sought on the classification of undetected crime in respect of hate crime as set out in paragraph two on Page 77. In response, it was reported that these had been incidents where it had not been possible to identify whether an incident had taken place or not.

The Chairman reported that the Vice Chairman was currently undertaking a night time economy review and he encouraged Members to attend the group.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted.

SAF33 BUSINESS PLANNING 2013-16

The Board held a briefing meeting at 4.30pm on 13th November 2012 to discuss their priority areas. The following priorities were identified for development or improvement in the Directorate Business Plans for the coming financial year:-

- To reduce alcohol abuse and domestic violence;
- Safeguarding (including Consumer Protection and quality assurance of residential and domiciliary care providers in Halton); and
- Community Safety.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The report and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) The three priorities service areas listed above be considered for development and improvement in the Directorate Business Plans over the next three years.

SAF34 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

The Board considered a report of the Strategic

Director, Communities which outlined the key issues and activities of the Environmental Health Service in 2011-2012.

The Board was advised that the Environmental Health Service was responsible for two main areas i.e. Environmental Protection and Food and Health and Safety. The service provided a range of regulatory and advisory services to the Council, local businesses and members of the public. The work of the teams comprised both programmed planned activities and reactive work in response to service requests.

In respect of Environmental Protection, the Board received information on; local air quality management; the inspection of industrial processes; planning consultations; service requests about pollution; other statutory nuisance, housing, animal welfare, stray dogs and pest control.

In respect of Food and Health and Safety, the Board received information on; food safety, gas and fire safety in takeaway food premises; health and safety enforcement; smoke free playgrounds; illegal cosmetic treatments; the enforcement of the Sunbed (Regulation) Act 2010; health and safety in residential care homes and retail violence.

In respect of Smoke Free Playgrounds it was agreed that information on the next stage of the scheme would be circulated to all Members of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted

(Note: Councillor M Ratcliffe declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business due to being a magistrate).

SAF35 DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which gave the Members an update in relation to the activities being supported across the Borough in response to domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Board was advised that Halton Domestic Abuse Forum (HDAF) Strategic Group had been established to provide an overall direction, control management and guidance for the response to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence within Halton. It acted as a multi-agency partnership board of lead officers and key representatives, which took strategic decisions aimed at tackling domestic

abuse and sexual violence in their widest forms and provided support to all victims within the Halton area.

The Board was further advised that the Forum was responsible for determining and implementing policy, coordinating activity between agencies, and facilitating training. It evaluated the responses locally for victims, children living in households where domestic violence was a feature and considered provision for perpetrators. The Forum promoted inter-agency co-operation, to encourage and help develop effective working relationships between different services and agencies, based on mutual understanding and trust. In order to develop and sustain a high level of commitment to the protection of victims of domestic abuse and affected children and young people.

It was reported that Dwayne Johnson, Strategic Director, Communities, Halton Borough Council had handed over the Chair position to Jane Lunt from Halton & St Helens Primary Care Trust Strategic Lead – Children, NHS Merseyside.

The Board noted the numerous activities that had taken place which were set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.8 of the report.

In respect of MARAC, the Chairman requested that Members be invited as observers. He requested that future dates be circulated to all Members of the Board.

It was reported that the definition of domestic violence would now include young people under 18 years of age and was the latest action by the Government to address violence against women and girls.

The Board noted the importance of the Sanctuary Scheme, and how, with multi agency work individuals were able to stay in their own environment whilst reducing the risk. It was also noted that Womens Aid had also provided training and advice for twenty years.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted.

(Note: Councillor Osborne declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business due to being a prospective Member of the Police and Crime Panel).

SAF36 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (PCC) UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which gave Members an update on the progress on the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Board was advised that the first elections of PCCs were scheduled to occur on 15 November 2012. PCCs would be elected for four years and would take office on 22 November 2012.

The Board was further advised that there were five candidates as follows:-

- Cllr John Stockton (Labour);
- Mr John Dwyer (Conservative);
- Mr Ainsley Arnold (Liberal Democrat);
- Louise Bours (UKIP); and
- Sarah Flannery (Independent Member).

The Board noted the Police and Crime Panel, the PCC elections, candidates and communications update set out in paragraphs 7.1 to 10.3 of the report.

The Chairman reported that Mr Hodson was attending his last meeting as co-optee of the Board prior to the Police and Crime Commissioner elections. He took the opportunity to place on record the Board's appreciation of the work undertaken by Mr Hodson during his time as co-optee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) the Board place on record its thanks to Mr Hodson and extend its best wishes to him for the future.

SAF37 TROUBLED FAMILIES / INSPIRING FAMILIES UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which gave Members an update on the development of the Troubled Families programme. It was also reported that locally the Troubled Families would be called 'Inspiring Families' and there would be a 'soft' launch of the programme from October 2012.

The Board was advised that in 2010 the Prime Minister confirmed his intention to ensure that 120,000 troubled

families were 'turned around' by 2015. The focus of the troubled families investment and initiative was to concentrate attention on a jointly agreed and named group of families to turnaround their lives and future outcomes. The expectation was that all organisations that had a stake or input into such families lives would collaborate both strategically and operationally to lead and deliver a step change in the way that we deal with troubled families in England.

The Board was further advised that as part of the Troubled Families programme, the Government had indicated that they had put in resources to incentivise and encourage local authorities and their partners to develop new ways of working with families.

It was reported that The Troubled Families Unit had provided criteria for identifying 'troubled families'. The proposed profile for the number of families it was intended to work with in Halton were as follows:-

- 2012/2013 - 145 Troubled Families of which 120 would be eligible for payment by results;
- 2013/2014 - 145 Troubled Families of which 120 would be eligible for payment by results; and
- 2014/2015- 85 Troubled Families of which 73 would be eligible for payment by results.

Furthermore, it was reported that it was estimated that for Halton with 375 troubled families it would cost the tax payer £28.125m (£75k per family) to pay for the support they would need because their problems had escalated to requiring more comprehensive services.

It was also reported that a number of delivery options had been discussed, with the decision being made to lead the project from the Children and Enterprise Directorate. The Board noted the approaches and activities being undertaken in respect of the delivery model as set out in paragraphs 3.5 to 3.8 of the report. The Board also noted the work being undertaken in respect of performance monitoring and outcomes.

In conclusion, it was reported that there was still a lot of work to be done in respect of the development and implementation of the programme. However the key next steps were as follows:-

- Steps to make it easier for agencies to share data;
- Continued development of the delivery model;
- To formalise links with the Clinical Commissioning groups;
- For partners to support the prioritisation of individuals and families;
- The development of a stronger evidence base on the effectiveness of interventions;
- Further develop the tracking and monitoring system and performance framework;
- Agree the financial model for the investment of PBR; and
- Communicate to partners including operational staff the ethos of Halton's Troubled Families programme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.