

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 25 March 2015 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Derbyshire, M. Noone, T. Gibbs, D. Houghton and J. Unsworth

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EUR38 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

EUR39 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.

Page 8 - EXB 132 - The Board noted that the Council was confident that the system for the collection of household waste was robust enough to maximise the economic opportunities and environmental benefits associated with higher quality recycling, both now and in the future.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

EUR40 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2014/15

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which detailed the third quarter

Action

performance management report for 2014/15 on progress against service objectives/milestones and performance targets, and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen in relation to:-

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services;
- Waste and Environment Improvement and Open Space Services; and
- Housing Strategy.

Members discussed traveller's sites throughout the Borough and noted that a report outlining the current situation in respect of the cost to the Council, the number of violations, police involvement and legal officer time would be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

Strategic Director,
Policy &
Resources

RESOLVED: That the third quarter management report be noted.

EUR41 BUSINESS PLANNING 2015-2018

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which provided Members with an update on Business Planning for the period 2015-18 and were asked to consider the Directorate priorities, objectives and targets for services for this period that fell within the remit of this Policy and Performance Board (PPB).

The Board was advised that each Directorate had developed a medium term business plan, in parallel with the budget that was subject to annual review and refresh. PPB input into the business planning process and the setting of priorities for the Directorate was an important part of this process. Key priorities for development or improvement for the various functional areas reporting to this PPB were presented to and considered by the Board in autumn 2014, from which the Draft Directorate Business Plans had been developed. Given the remit of this Board, Business Plans for the Children and Enterprise, Policy and Resources and the Communities Directorates were presented for consideration.

The Board was further advised 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.

Strategic Director,

RESOLVED: That the Draft Business Plan be noted and forwarded to the Executive Board for approval.

Policy
Resources

&

EUR42 GARDEN WASTE COLLECTIONS

The Board received a presentation from the Divisional Manager Waste and Environmental Improvement regarding the Council's garden waste collection service. The presentation:-

- gave Members an overview of the introduction of a charge for the collection of garden waste, which had been introduced as a result of Government budget cuts (£25 on line and £30 via alternative methods);
- highlighted that there was no duty on the Council to provide a Collection Service; the Council had the provision to charge if a service was provided and the service was entirely optional and only those receiving the service would pay;
- highlighted alternative opportunities for dealing with garden waste; and
- explained that the charge would ensure that the service provided was self-financing and would contribute towards meeting the budget savings target.

The Board was advised that a list of frequently asked questions and responses would be circulated to all Members of the Board. It was reported that the finalised list would be published on Halton's website in the near future.

The following points arose from the discussion:-

- It was noted that the additional £5 charge incurred for the charge for non-online payments was to cover administration costs;
- Clarity was sought on whether places of worship or churches would be charged for the service. In response, it was reported that the charge was for household collections only, but confirmation on this matter would be sought;
- The Board noted the safeguards that had been put into place to reduce the risk of theft and the potential to abuse the scheme;

- It was noted that vulnerable residents could apply online at the library, community centres and at Halton Direct Link Centres throughout the Borough;
- It was suggested that the charge may result in an increase in fly tipping in the Borough. In response, it was reported that research had not identified fly tipping as an issue relating to charges, but the scheme would be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis; and
- It was noted that the charge was reasonable and had been put into place to cover operating costs associated with the collection. The scheme would be reviewed on a regular basis and an update report presented to a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation be received and comments raised noted; and
- (2) Jimmy Unsworth be thanked for his informative presentation.

EUR43 JOINT WASTE LOCAL PLAN - MONITORING REPORT 2013/14

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which provided an update on the Joint Waste Local Plan (WLP) for Merseyside and Halton which was formally adopted by Halton with effect from 18th July 2013. The WLP Plan Period was from 2013 to 2027 and formed part of Halton's adopted development plan.

Members considered a copy of the first WLP Monitoring Report which covered the period from adoption to 31st March 2014. The report was prepared by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) on behalf of the six Liverpool City Region Councils. The first Monitoring Report showed progress with initial WLP implementation against several performance indicators and included information on Duty to Co-operate, as required by the Localism Act 2011, enabling communities and interested parties to be aware of progress across the Plan Area (Merseyside and Halton). Since this was the first WLP Monitoring Report, and in order

to satisfy legislative and policy requirements, evidence gathered during the WLP Preparation Period (set as 2008 to 2013) was also shown within the Monitoring Report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR44 POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT TRENDS IN THE HIGH STREET/RETAIL SECTOR

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Economy, which provided a summary of the report 'High street and retail sector: recent trends and policy implications' and the policy recommendations for improving town centres. The report had been commissioned by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and published in December 2014. The aim of the report was to understand how town centres were responding to broader trends in consumer behaviour and preferences and to recommend policy responses to these trends tailored to various types of town centres.

The Board was advised that the report presented a number of remarks and observations which could be considered in the context of improving town centre vitality in Halton. A summary of these observations and their suggested relevance to Halton was set out in the report.

The Board noted the impact of online shopping on town centres throughout the country. The Board also noted that Halton had been pro-active in town centres and improvements had been made within Halton over the last few years.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.