

SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 11 November 2014 Council Chamber, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Thompson (Chairman), Edge, Gerrard, Gilligan, V. Hill, M. Lloyd Jones, Nolan, Ratcliffe, Sinnott and Zygadllo

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Lea

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Andrews, E. Anwar, L. Derbyshire, C. Patino, J. Unsworth and P. Wright

Also in attendance: Mr J Heritage (5Borough Partnership) and Kate Woods (Cheshire Police)

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

SAF22 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Action

The Chairman reported that an engagement event by Cheshire Police would take place on 3 December 2014 at Riverside College at 6.45 pm. The event would also be webcast from 7 pm and the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner would be available to answer questions. This event, it was reported, would give members of the public the opportunity to influence some of the Police priorities during the next few months. An event was also being arranged early in the new year in Runcorn.

The Board was advised that some of the members of the Police and Crime Panel were dissatisfied with the administration of the Panel undertaken by Warrington Borough Council, suggesting that it did not represent value for money.

In conclusion, the Chairman reported that a Fees and Charges Working Group had been established, chaired by Councillor Gilligan. He encouraged Members of the Board to email suggestions to the Chairman, himself or Ian Leivesley.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

SAF23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2014 were taken as read and signed as a correct record subject to Councillor Ratcliffe's apologies being recorded.

SAF24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

SAF25 SSP MINUTES

The minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership (SHP) meeting held on 14 May 2014 were presented to the Board for information. The Chairman reported that these minutes had been considered at the previous meeting and that there were no further minutes available for the Board to consider since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

SAF26 OPERATION EMBLEM

The Board received a presentation from Mr John Heritage, 5Borough Partnership and Kate Woods, Cheshire Police which provided Members with an update on Operation Emblem Street Triage.

The presentation:-

- Explained the issue – the increased use of Section 136 of the Mental Health Act across Cheshire; the poor experience of those needing support; the significant inter-agency tension and political anxiety and the resources being deployed in the wrong place for the wrong reason;
- Outlined the Section 136 Mental Health Act and detailed the demand and the impact of the demand;
- Set out the solution and explained how Operation Emblem Street Triage operated; and
- Detailed the outcomes since December 2013 to date and other related outcomes.

It was reported, that due to the success of the scheme

in Halton, Cheshire East and Cheshire West had gone live yesterday and Merseyside and Greater Manchester Police were also establishing the scheme.

The Board was advised that the Chief Executive of Halton Borough Council (HBC) had been very supportive in obtaining funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner. Mr Heritage took the opportunity to place on record the Partnerships' appreciation for the support that had been received to date, indicating that the scheme would not have been successful without the support from Halton Borough Council.

The following comments arose from the presentation:-

- Concern was raised that an enhanced CRB check would list anyone who had been detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act and it could not be removed, even if it had been a mistake. In response, it was reported that the Police were challenging this issue nationally with the Home Office, to enable them to be removed wherever appropriate;
- The Board noted that the scheme saved a significant number of resource hours in respect of GP, Police and Social worker time, who prior to the scheme would have been involved in a mental health assessment which was very often not required;
- Clarity was sought on whether any work had been done with veterans or military personnel. In response, it was reported that as a health provider, priority access to mental health services was given to veterans. In respect of the scheme, consideration was being given to working with North West Ambulance Service, as a third person on the team in order to provide further support;
- The Board congratulated all concerned for the success to date and indicated that they fully supported the scheme. Clarity was sought on funding for the scheme beyond March 2015 and what the Board could do to further support the scheme. In response, it was reported that it was not an issue in Halton as the Chief Executive and Members of Halton Borough Council were fully committed to continuing the scheme; and

- It was agreed that an update report be presented to the Board in 12 months.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation be received and comments raised be noted;
- (2) Mr J Heritage and Kate Woods be thanked for their informative presentation;
- (3) the Board place on record their support for the scheme;
- (4) thanks and appreciation be given to the Chief Executive and Halton Borough Council for the support given to the scheme to date; and
- (5) an update report be presented to the Board in 12 months.

SAF27 HALTON ALCOHOL STRATEGY: REDUCING ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE, 2014-2019

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which presented the final draft of the Halton Alcohol Strategy: Reducing alcohol-related harm across the life course.

The Board was advised that the Halton Alcohol Strategy, set out in Appendix A to the report set out actions aimed at rebalancing the relationship Halton had with alcohol. The harm caused by alcohol in Halton was not a problem of a small minority. It was a problem that cut across the entire population and affected local residents of all ages. For this reason, it was reported, the strategy took a life course approach to reducing alcohol-related harm at all stages of life from birth to old age. A 'Communities' chapter was also included to cover issues that affected people of all ages i.e. alcohol-related crime and community safety.

The Board was further advised that the Strategy built upon the effective work that had been undertaken by partners locally. Therefore the strategy had been written in collaboration with all partners who had agreed the vision, outcomes, objectives and actions. The strategy was also supported by a detailed action plan outlining actions, responsible leads, timescales and outcomes to be achieved which was set out in Appendix B to the report. The plan

would also be monitored by the Alcohol Strategy Implementation Group, and outcomes reported to the Safer Halton Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board and all other relevant bodies. The Board noted the vision, objectives and priorities set out in the Strategy.

It was reported that a formal public consultation was also being undertaken to enable local people to provide feedback and insight to the final version of the strategy and action plan. In addition, it was reported that the Strategy would also be presented to the following Boards for further input and discussion:-

- Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Safer Halton Partnership Board;
- Children's Trust Board;
- Halton Clinical Commissioning Group Executive Board; and
- Executive Board.

The following comments arose from the discussion:-

- It was noted that the Strategy was informed by best practice, not just on health but in all areas. However, it was also noted, that a significant amount of good practice was undertaken by Halton Borough Council and the Strategy built on that success;
- Clarity was sought on whether it was possible in business investment areas to apply a subsidy fee. In response, it was reported that this had been considered and it was felt that it would not be financially viable and that there was also a possibility that it would result in financial difficulty and closure for some small businesses; and
- It was noted that the Strategy ensured that local licensing policy and enforcement activity supported the alcohol harm reduction agenda. It was also noted that Halton Borough Council did not have a saturation policy in place currently to deal with excessive amounts of licensed premises. However, it was reported that this could be a future consideration.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and comments raised be noted; and

- (2) the Strategy outcomes, objectives and actions be supported.

SAF28 MISCHIEF NIGHT/ BONFIRE NIGHT

The Board received a brief verbal report from Mr J Unsworth, Divisional Manager, Waste and Environmental Improvement on incidents of arson and anti-social behaviour following Mischief Night/Bonfire Night.

The Board was advised that it was a brief report due to the short timescale since the event. It was reported that a pro-active preventative approach had been taken in respect of bonfires and there had been a significant reduction in comparison to last year. The success highlighted that people had not built a bonfire as they knew that they would be removed prior to bonfire night. This had resulted in over a 50 % reduction.

The Board was further advised that nine incidents had been reported, seven of which had been reported prior to bonfire night and there were only two on bonfire night itself. This it was reported highlighted the success of the numerous preventative measures that had been put in place prior to the event.

It was reported that unfortunately, there had been 64 wheelie bin losses, approximately the same as last year. Next year consideration would be given to ways of improving security of wheelie bins and further work would be undertaken with RSL's in respect of their communal areas.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service had attended 26 incidents this year in comparison to 37 incidents last year, which represented a 30% reduction. It was reported that details of specific areas etc were not as yet available, but more information would be reported to the Board in due course. Planning for next year would also commence in February 2015.

In respect of anti-social behaviour, it was reported that there had been a significant reduction this year, with only 30 incidents throughout Halton. However, it was reported that incidents of criminal damage had reduced but had been more targeted towards police cars and buses, with 18 incidents reported.

The following comments arose from the discussion:-

- It was suggested that consideration could be

given to HBC undertaking a procurement process on wheelie bin locks and offering them to the public to purchase at a cheaper rate than on the internet or the high street. It was highlighted that the lock would have to be cheaper than a new bin. In response, it was reported that this was a good idea and would be considered. It was also reported that Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service could be approached for funding to subsidise such locks as they would enable them to make a saving by reducing the number of call outs to bin fires;

- The Board noted that hotspot areas were leafleted prior to mischief night and bonfire night on the dangers of leaving bins unsecured. It was also noted that bin collection times in these areas were changed to help address this issue. Clarity was sought on whether HBC would have to replace the bins without a charge. In response, it was reported that each incident would be considered on its own merit but it was anticipated that some of the bins would be replaced at a cost to HBC i.e. communal area bins; and
- The Board noted the success of the initiative and it was also noted that information on possible hotspots could be sent to Mr Jimmy Unsworth directly so that it could be incorporated in the preventative measures for next year.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the verbal report and comments raised be noted;
- (2) the Board place on record their support for the initiative; and
- (3) the Board support the exploration of a procurement exercise to provide low cost locks to the public for wheelie bins.

SAF29 THE ROLE OF THE RNLI

The Board received a presentation from Mr P Wright, Divisional Manager, Open Spaces, on the role of the RNLI organisation and how it impacted on Halton. Mr Wright was also a serving Hovercraft Commander with the RNLI.

The Board was advised that the RNLI existed to save

life at sea. It covered all of the coastal waters (and some inland waters) of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. The River Mersey within the Borough of Halton was an estuarine river and was covered by the RNLI's New Brighton station. It was reported that the RNLI had carried out a number of rescues within the Borough boundary.

The presentation showed photographs of the RNLI delivering a rescue service. It was reported that the RNLI had saved more than 140,000 lives since its foundation in 1824. The islands of Britain and Ireland had always suffered from numerous shipwrecks a year around the coasts. After witnessing the destruction of dozens of ships from his home on the Isle of Man, and getting involved in rescue attempts himself, Sir William Hillary formed 'a national institution for the preservation of lives and property from shipwreck' and the charity was founded on 4 March 1824.

The Board was advised that people who manned or staffed lifeboats were volunteers and had to live within two miles of the lifeboat station. It was reported that the RNLI had state of the art equipment and the fastest in the fleet was the Atlantic 85 class lifeboat, which would remain in service for 14 years, and would undertake refits every five years. All lifeboats, it was reported, had two engines and the Atlantic 85 could operate in up to Force Gale 11.

The Board was further advised that the hovercraft could operate on water and solid ground and as there was a lot of mud on this part of the river in Halton, it was very effective in this area. There had been an average of 60 incidents a year from New Brighton, nine of which had been in Halton.

In conclusion, it was reported that the RNLI relied on public donations and legacies to maintain its rescue service.

The following comments arose from the presentation:-

- The Board noted that 20% of the incidents were calls from Halton; and
- Clarity was sought on what HBC could do to support the RNLI role. In response, it was reported that out of the nine incidents, seven had been issues on the bridge, possible jumpers. If the hovercraft was deployed to the bridge and had to wait a significant time it could have implications for incidents in other areas due to the delay getting there. Therefore, it was suggested

that it would be helpful to raise awareness of the role of the RNLI in Halton and that it was also a charitable organisation that relied on public funding. In response, the Chairman suggested that an article could be placed in Inside Halton in order to raise the profile of the RNLI. It was also suggested that a collection box could be placed at Halton Stadium.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentation be received and comments raised be noted;
- (2) Mr Paul Wright be thanked for his informative presentation; and
- (3) The Board place on record their appreciation of the role the RNLI undertake in Halton.

SAF30 ASB NEW TOOLS AND POWERS

The Board considered a verbal update report from Mr M Andrews, Community Safety Team on the Anti-social Behaviour (ASB), Crime and Policing Act 2014: Reform of anti-social behaviour powers, the new ASB tools and powers act which had commenced on the 20th October 2014. This Act had introduced new powers that may be useful in dealing with problem premises.

The Board was advised that Part 1-6 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("the Act") had created new tools and powers that organisations were able to use in order to deal with ASB in their communities thereby replacing a number of other existing tools and powers.

One of the purposes of the Act was to ensure that any response to ASB was victim focussed. In light of this it was important to ensure that there was a co-ordinated approach to dealing with ASB so that local areas could meet the needs of victims of ASB.

The Board was further advised that the injunction under Part 1 of the Act was a civil power which could be applied for to deal with anti-social individuals. The injunction could offer fast and effective protection for victims and communities and set a clear standard of behaviour for perpetrators, stopping the person's behaviour from escalating. In addition, it was reported that a number of agencies could apply for the injunction to ensure that the body best placed to lead on a

specific case could do so as follows:-

- A local council;
- A housing provider;
- The Chief Officer of police for the local area;
- The Chief Constable of the British Transport Police;
- Transport for London;
- The Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales; and
- NHS Protect and NHS Protect (Wales).

The Board noted how the injunction could be applied, the two stages of the Closure Power, the community trigger and the reporting thresholds.

It was reported that seminars for Members on the new powers as they developed would be arranged in the future. The Board would also receive regular update reports on the powers as they progressed.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the verbal report be noted; and
- (2) update reports be presented to the Board on a regular basis.

SAF31 DRAFT DOMESTIC ABUSE SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which presented the Members with the draft Scrutiny Review of Domestic Abuse report for approval to go forward to Executive Board.

The Board was advised that the report attached as Appendix 1 to the cover report had been commissioned by the Safer PPB as domestic abuse had been identified as a particular problem for the Borough.

The Board was further advised of the work and methodology undertaken by the Working Group whilst completing the review.

The following recommendations were set out in the report:-

- (1) That Members continue to monitor data but not take it in isolation or without further analysis from officers;

- (2) To apply for Corporate White Ribbon status;
- (3) To action plan towards achieving Town White Ribbon status;
- (4) That proposals are progressed with the CCG and Public Health for financial support of the work;
- (5) That work undertaken further influences the Borough submission for White Ribbon status; and
- (6) The draft Halton Domestic Abuse Strategy be ratified by Members and held up as a flagship approach across the Borough

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Members and Officers who had been involved in the review. It was also agreed that an update report be presented to the Board in 12 months.

It was reported that for 17 weeks commencing on 1 December 2014, an awareness message would be printed on the back of shop receipts. In Widnes, they would be printed on Poundland receipts and in Runcorn on Argos receipts as they were the retailers with the biggest footfall over the Christmas period.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and comments raised be noted;
- (2) the Board endorse the recommendations set out in 1 – 6 above and that these recommendations be presented to the Executive Board for approval; and
- (3) an update report be presented to the Board in 12 months.

Meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.