

REPORT TO: Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 19 September 2006
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Environment
SUBJECT: Environmental and Regulatory Services
Department
WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to explain to Members the functions undertaken within the Environmental and Regulatory Services Department, as set out on the attached Appendix, and to identify areas of work which will be regularly reported to the Board.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 As shown in the attached Appendix.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT

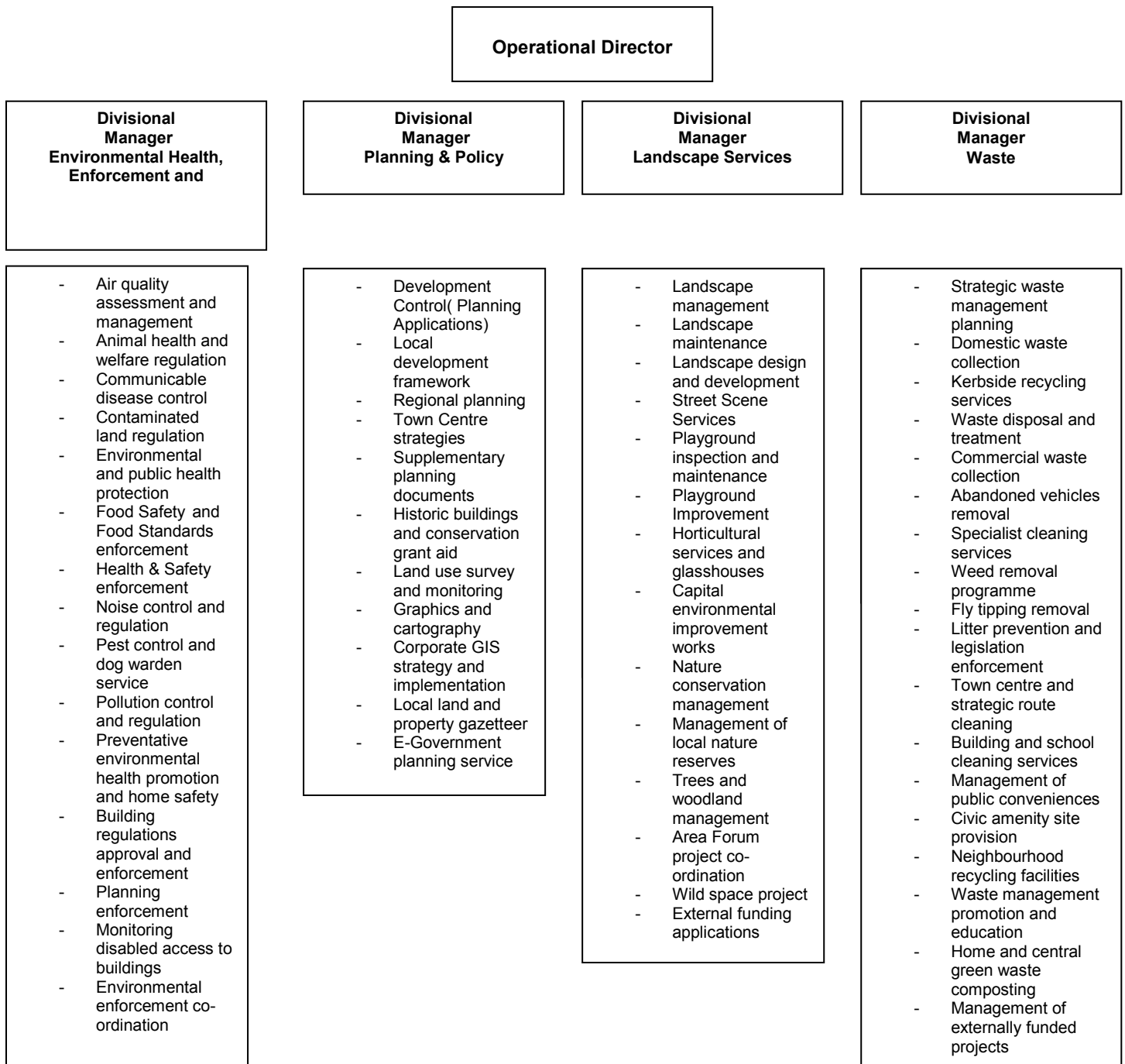
1.1 The Environmental and Regulatory Services Department was created on the 1 April 2006, with the purpose of co-ordinating a number of key services, which share as part of their wider objectives improving the environmental quality of the borough. In particular, the Service aims to support and deliver on the corporate objective/vision of providing a modern and high quality urban environment, which is safer and more attractive and which provides for a better quality of life for the borough's residents.

1.2 Within the Department there are four Divisions which collectively deliver this commitment:-

- Environmental Health, Enforcement and Building Control
- Landscape Services
- Planning and Policy
- Waste Services

1.3 The departmental structure is shown on the next page.

1.4 Environmental and Regulatory Services Department Structure



1.5 The Department as a whole employs 445* personnel, consisting of:

Building Control	7
Environmental Protection	17
Food/Health and Safety	16
Enforcement	3
Planning Policy and Information	12
Development Control	4
Special Support	7
Landscape (managerial, professional and technical)	20
Landscape- Operational	92
Landscape-Operational (temporary)	16
Waste(managerial , professional and technical)	16
Refuse	45
Cleansing	13
Toilet Attendants	2
Building Cleaning	62
School Cleaning	111
TOTAL	445

* there are a number of posts currently vacant.

2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL DIVISION

This division provides:

- a comprehensive and effective environmental health service ensuring that, through monitoring, regulation and enforcement, residents and businesses can enjoy an environment and services which are, so far as possible, safe and without risks to their health or welfare;
- a comprehensive and effective Building Control service ensuring high standards in construction work, protecting the health and safety of people in or about buildings and making sure that the requirements of people with disabilities are met;
- an effective and comprehensive planning enforcement service that is a fundamental part of the development control framework and is central to ensuring a fair and transparent development control system;
- oversees coordinated environmental enforcement across the directorate and facilitates a holistic approach to such enforcement at the time responding to a perception that some enforcement matters are not so proactively pursued as others and to identify

where within the directorate responsibility to enforce a particular matter clearly lies.

- is responsible for:

Building Control:

- Processing building regulation applications;
- Controlling and making safe dangerous structures;
- Processing building demolition consents;
- Safety at Sports Grounds;
- Advising and enforcing Disabled Access Legislation.

Food Safety & Standards Enforcement:

- Carrying out inspections of food businesses for food hygiene and food standards safety;
- Investigation of food complaints;
- Investigation of food based infections;
- Giving advice and guidance to all food businesses;
- Inspection and issue of approvals for certain food businesses.

Health & Safety Enforcement:

- Carrying out inspections of high risk business premises for health and safety;
- Carrying out topic based health & safety campaign projects around HSE Health & Safety Executive national programmes;
- Investigating occupational health & safety accidents;
- Responding to complaints about occupational health & safety;
- Registration of ear piercing, tattooists and acupuncture;
- Work in partnership with other Council Departments, the PCT, voluntary organisations, to carry out campaigns to improve the public health with reference to wider environmental health role.

Environmental Protection:

- Pollution control;
- Air quality management;
- Environmental nuisance control;
- Noise control;
- Contaminated land;
- Pest control, dog control;
- Animal welfare and disease and
- All related issues where the environment can impact on the health of populations.

Planning Enforcement:

- Protecting the amenity of the area with planning law;
- Regulating developments or agreements;
- Site monitoring;
- Investigating complaints;
- Regulating unlawful developments;

- Coordinate with development control planners evidence for appeals;
- Coordinated multidisciplinary environmental enforcement projects;
- Tackling environmental crime in coordination with key partners;
- Coordinating the work of the key departments, partners through programmed projects;
- Investigating joint projects with partners and community groups.

3.0 LANDSCAPE SERVICES DIVISION

The Landscape Services Division provides a single agency within the Council to manage the Borough's 'Natural Assets'. The Division does this by providing safe and attractive parks and open spaces for the enjoyment of the people of Halton and by providing an advice and maintenance service for the other Departments of the Council.

The Division is responsible for:

- Landscape Management;
- Provides Operational management of:
 - Parks and Open Space (including Pride of Place & Civic Pride Teams);
 - Playgrounds;
 - Trees, Woodlands & Ponds;
 - Victoria Park Glasshouses;
 - Streetscene – in conjunction with Cleansing Services to deliver environmental maintenance and improvement across the borough.
- Landscape Development & Conservation;
- Design & Implementation Service;
- Nature Conservation including woodland management & local nature reserves;
- Procurement of External Funding.

These services benefit everyone in Halton - who live, work and visit Halton.

4.0 PLANNING AND POLICY DIVISION

The Planning Division encompasses the professional services that provide Development Control (planning applications), the Local Development Framework (Spatial Planning), Survey and Monitoring (land use change and implementation of policy), plus a central corporate service for the management of electronic land and property information, using Geographic information Systems.

The Division is responsible for:

- **Development Control** – processing planning applications; enforcement action on breaches of planning control; defending appeals against Council planning decisions; land charge searches on planning matters; guidance and design advice and preparation of supplementary planning guidance; encouraging business development, and ensuring interpretation of statutes;
- **Spatial Planning** – preparation, adoption and monitoring of the Local Development Framework (LDF); Development Plan Documents; listed building and conservation advice; preparation of Town Centre Strategies, and input into Regional Spatial Strategies; and
- **Survey and Monitoring** – survey and analysis of changing land uses; monitoring of planning policy; monitoring of planning and building control applications to inform land use change survey; management of Department electronic data and information. Management of Uniform core planning system; management of e-planning projects; Corporate Geographical Information Systems; graphics and cartography; Ordnance Survey Liaison and copyright enforcement; Local Land and Property Gazetteer custodianship and maintenance, and maintaining the Department's website.

5.0 WASTE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

The Waste Management Division exists to bring together and develop policy and strategy to enable the Council to meet its statutory and non-statutory objectives concerned with waste management and environmental improvement. Local and global environmental issues are increasingly at the forefront of the individual's feeling of well-being and this is reflected in the priority now afforded to environmental improvement policy, by both local and national government.

The Division is responsible for:

Waste Management

- Strategic Waste Management Planning;
- Municipal Waste Management Strategy;
- Procurement of External Funding.

Waste Disposal

- Domestic Waste Disposal and Recycling Contracts;
- Recycling and Household Waste Centre Contracts;
- Abandoned Vehicles Removal.

Waste Recycling

- Education and Promotion of Recycling and Waste Minimisation;
- Neighbourhood Recycling Facilities;
- Kerbside Recycling Collection Services;
- Home and Central Green Waste Composting.

Refuse Collection

- Household Domestic Refuse Collection;
- Bulky Items Collection;
- Commercial Refuse Collection.

Street Cleansing

- Neighbourhood Cleansing;
- Fly Tipping Removal;
- Litter Prevention and Legislation Enforcement;
- Streetscene – In conjunction with Landscape Services Division to deliver environmental maintenance and improvement across the borough.

6.0 As can be seen much of the work undertaken contributes directly or indirectly to the objectives for a safer, as well as a renewed and regenerated Halton.

Of particular interest to this Board will be the Department's contributions towards wider corporate policies and responsibilities in respect of

- Crime and Disorder;
- Alcohol Reduction Strategy;
- Safer and Stronger neighbourhoods and
- Waste Strategy.

On these matters the Board will receive regular reports to enable them to be assured that a quality service is being provided in an efficient and effective manner.