

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 13 March 2013 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall.

Present: Councillors Gerrard (Chairman), J. Bradshaw, Fraser, P. Hignett, Macmanus, Parker, Sinnott, Thompson, Woolfall and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Morley

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Noone, G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs, W Rourke and J. Unsworth

Also in attendance: 1 Member of the public

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
EUR41 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
EUR42 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 nd January 2013 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.	
EUR43 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board and Mersey Gateway Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.	
EUR44 SSP MINUTES	
The Board received the draft Minutes relating to the Environment and Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership from 5 th February 2013.	

Members requested clarification on the company Energy Projects Plus and were advised that they were a not for profit charity organisation.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

EUR45 WASTE TOPIC GROUP MEETING

The Board was advised that the Waste Topic Group had met on 13th February 2013 and considered information relating to charges for the collection of bulky items and the provision of new and replacement wheeled bins. Charging for these services was included within the Council Household Waste Collection Policy that came into effect on 1st April 2011.

Members of the Topic Group were advised that the current charge for a residual waste wheeled bin was £20 and this did not cover the full cost of purchasing and delivering bins which was approximately £30. Members were also provided with details of the charges made by other local authorities. It was reported that the Group recommended an increase in the charge for new and replacement bins to £25 from 1st April 2013.

In addition the Topic Group considered the bulky items collection charges in comparison to the charge made by other Council's within the region. It was noted that the Group recommended the following increase in charges for the collection of bulky household items from 1st April 2013:

- £20 for the collection of up to 3 bulky household items;
- Additional items at £5 per item;
- A maximum of 10 items per collection.

RESOLVED: That

1. Members receive the report; and
2. the proposed increases in charges for the collection of bulky items and the provision of new and replacement wheeled bins, as set out in the report, be presented to the Executive Board for approval.

Strategic Director
Communities

NB: Councillor P Hignett declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as she attends the Big Local Windmill Hill Reference Group.

EUR46 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR
QUARTER 3 OF 2012/13

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources which detailed the third quarter performance management reports to December 2012, on progress against service objectives/milestones and performance targets affecting the services.

The Board was advised that key priorities for development or improvement in 2012-15 had been agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various thematic areas and service functions reporting to this Board. The report detailed progress against service objectives/milestones and performance targets and described factors affecting the service.

The following comments arose from the discussion:-

- Page 51 – £252,000 on agency staff so far within Open Spaces and Waste Management divisions - Clarity was sought on the amount of money spent on agency staff. In response it was reported that historically the use of agency staff was seen as more cost effective than the alternative of employing permanent staff. Agency staff were employed to help cover sickness and holiday leave. However, Officers were currently working with the Human Resources Section to explore ways to reduce this figure.
- Page 36 locations of extra care housing and homeless hostel – It was noted that the extra care housing would be on the former Pingot site and the potential homeless hostel on Albert Road.
- Page 32 - Clarity sought on the benefits to the local community of Daresbury Science Park in particular the number of local people employed there. It was reported Officers shared the view that where possible local residents should benefit from job opportunities at Daresbury. In addition the Council was examining ways to support Daresbury with more accessible transport links and also encouraging Daresbury to become more involved with the local community, for example with local schools.

The Board noted that the formal process to secure a further five year Business Improvement District Programme at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates was completed and companies had voted in favour of extending the

programme.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted.

EUR47 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF BUSINESS 2014

The Board considered a report which advised on the proposals for the development of an International Festival of Business in the Liverpool City Region and to advise Members of the opportunities that the event could bring to the Borough. The Festival would take place in June and July 2014 and would provide a global forum where industries in key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, low carbon, and life sciences, professional and financial services could come together to trade ideas, products and contacts. The event had been described as a Mini Shanghai Expo and would bring together world and UK cities for 61 days of themed events, exhibitions and showcases. It was anticipated that the Festival would attract 250,000 visitors from across the globe and bring £100 million worth of investment. The Festival would be themed around three core business sectors: low carbon, global communications and knowledge economy.

It was noted that a draft version of the calendar of events would be available late spring/early September 2013 and first key sponsors and speakers announced in early March 2013. In addition three launch events were planned on 25th February, 18th March and 27th June 2013.

Within Halton, as the concentration of both business and facilities fell broadly within the sector designated the knowledge economy, it was proposed that two/three themed events could be planned. In consultation with the Chamber of Commerce, discussions had commenced with the Heath Business Park and Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus to hold events.

It was therefore proposed that a sum not exceeding £5,000 be allocated from existing budgets to support the delivery of events in Halton.

RESOLVED: That Halton's participation in The International Festival of Business 2014 be supported.

EUR48 DRAFT HALTON HOUSING STRATEGY 2013-2018

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which presented Halton's Housing

Strategy 2013-18 as a draft for public consultation.

The Board was advised that Under Part 7 of the Local Government Act 2003, local authorities were expected to produce a Housing Strategy which gave an overview of housing in their district and set out priorities for action.

The Board was further advised that there had been significant achievements since the last Housing Strategy had been published in 2008. The Board noted the changes set out in paragraph 3.1.6 of the report.

It was reported that the draft Strategy had taken a slightly different approach from previous years in that two documents had been produced. The Strategy itself (Appendix A of the report) was a short, easy to read document which focused on the strategic objectives, priorities and planned activities for the next three years and were detailed in an action plan. In addition, it was reported that this was supported by an evidence paper (Appendix B of the report) which set out the context in which the Strategy had been developed and brought together key data and information on housing issues and services which had helped to shape the strategic objectives and priorities.

The Board noted the next steps set out in paragraphs 3.4.1 - 3.4.3 of the report.

The following comment arose from the discussion:-

- An additional priority be added to strategically support the promotion of welfare and debt advice within the housing sector.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Board fully support the draft Housing Strategy; and
2. an additional priority be added to strategically support the promotion of welfare and debt advice within the housing sector.

Strategic Director
Communities

EUR49 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT - PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources which provided an update on flood risk management issues and informed Members of the progress being made in relation to the Council's duties under the Flood and Water Management Act (F&WMA)

2010. Members were provided with an update on:

- Legislation;
- Sustainable Drainage;
- Watercourse regulation;
- Governance;
- United Utilities Work Programme;
- Flood Risk Management Funding and Programme; and
- Flooding Incidents in 2012.

Arising from the discussion the following concerns were raised:

- Areas of Sandymoor had been declared a flood plain and residents could not obtain house insurance. In response it was reported that Officers had met with the Environment Agency to discuss the problems at Keckwick Brook. The Environment Agency had confirmed that resources to alleviate the problem were limited, however some works had been carried out; and
- Mottershead Road/Milton Road – properties here were flooded in previous years. It was noted that Officers were aware of the issues at these addresses and although at the present they had not been included on the list where work was to be carried out, they remained on the list for future years.

RESOLVED: That the progress being made in relation to the Flood and Water Management Act be noted.

EUR50 ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which informed the Members of the Armed Forces Community Covenant set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Board was advised that Halton was part of a pan Cheshire Covenant covering the Local Authorities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester, Warrington and Halton. In addition to local authorities, health, probation and Job Centre plus were involved in supporting the covenant.

The Board was further advised that the Armed Forces Community Covenant had been signed by dignitaries representing each of the authorities on the 30th June 2012, Armed Forces Day.

It was reported that each Local Authority was required to have a nominated Armed Forces Champion. In Halton, the Community Development Manager had been designated this role and would provide representation on a Community Covenant working group that covered the Cheshire area and provided a point of liaison for the forces.

The Armed Forces Community Covenant set out twenty pledges, around five key themes:-

- Housing;
- Employment & Benefit;
- Education;
- Health; and
- Wellbeing.

It was reported that the Council would work with partners to assist and support our armed forces and their families in line with the pledges set out in the covenant. It was noted that the lead Policy and Performance Board would be Employment, Learning, Skills and Community.

Members commented that within the covenant there was no reference to the two Regiments who had been awarded Freedom of the Borough in Halton. It was agreed that the comment would be forwarded to the Lead Officer - Armed Forces Community Covenant.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Board receive monitoring reports on progress on the key themes and pledges.

Strategic Director
Communities

Meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.