



Cllr. Shaun  
Osborne  
Chairman

**ANNUAL REPORT  
SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD  
APRIL 2012 – MARCH 2013**

This year has seen significant change, with the abolishment of the Police Authority and the election of the new Police and Crime Commissioner, John Dwyer, and the publication of the Police and Crime Plan for Cheshire for 2013-16.

The Board has had a very challenging programme of monitoring, scrutiny, and policy development in these times of change, as 'Safer Halton' is a truly cross-cutting agenda. I believe it is making a considerable contribution to improving the way the Council and its partners work together to improve the quality of life in Halton.

I would like to thank everybody who has contributed to the work of the Board in 2012/13 and to Members who have given up their time to serve on Topic Groups. I want to offer particular thanks to Cllr Plumpton Walsh for his help and support during the last 12 months and Mr B Hodson from the Police Authority.

Councillor Shaun Osborne  
Chairman, Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board

**MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

During 2012/13 the Board comprised eleven Councillors – Councillors Osborne, Plumpton Walsh, Edge, J Gerrard, Gilligan, Hill, Lea, Lloyd Jones, M Ratcliffe, Nolan and Sinnott.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to Community Safety, Domestic Abuse, Safeguarding Adults, Environmental health and the Safer Halton Partnership.

Topic Groups for 12/13:-

- Night Time Economy
- Finalise the recommendations of the Anti Social Behaviour in the Private Rented Sector topic Group

**REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

The full Board met 5 times during the year.

The main initiatives of the Board’s work for 2012/13 are as follows: -

- The election of the new Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire and establishment of the Police and Crime Panel.
- Night Time Economy Scrutiny Review
- Update of the Directorate Business Plan 2013 – 16

**Overview and Scrutiny**

The Board continued its scrutiny and policy development role, the Anti-Social Behaviour in the Private Rented Sector Topic Group was completed and a Scrutiny Group looking at the Night Time Economy was established. This Topic Group is looking at what works well in Halton’s night time economy and what could be improved to provide a safe, accessible, well managed night time economy, that meets the needs of residents and businesses and attracts visitors to the borough.

The Anti-Social Behaviour in the Private Rented Sector Topic Group recommended that the existing landlord accreditation scheme be retained and promoted to all landlords and enforcement action taken, where appropriate, against failing landlords. The Night Time Economy topic group is on-going and is due to report its recommendations later in 2013.

John Dwyer has now been elected as Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cheshire. A new Police & Crime Panel (Panel) has been established, with two Halton representatives, Cllr Osborne and Cargill, which scrutinises the activities of the PCC. There is also a new un ring fenced ‘Community Safety Fund,’ paid directly to the PCC. However this fund will be pass ported directly back to the Community Safety Team under a twelve month Service Level Agreement. The primary aim of the SLA is to focus the funding on tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service outlined proposals to save £650,000 through changes to fire service operations across Cheshire, including those at Widnes and Runcorn. The Fire Service stated that the proposals will maintain similar capacity and improve response times.

The Communities Directorate Business Plan was reviewed by members and the priorities for 2013 – 16 were agreed as;

- 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.

**Domestic Abuse**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which provided members with an awareness of the increasing acknowledgement that initiatives aimed at ending domestic abuse and violence also needed to target and engage with men as the primary perpetrators of abusive behaviour. There is an existing statutory perpetrator programme run by probation services who take

	<p>referrals from criminal courts. However there is a significant gap in service provision for many domestic abuse perpetrators and members supported a new voluntary treatment programme which will be operated to the same rigorous standards as the statutory programme. This scheme should make a considerable impact to the lives of domestic abuse victims and their children.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults</b></p> <p>The Board endorsed the establishment of a 12 month pilot for an Integrated Adults Safeguarding Unit within Halton. The Unit provides a hub and spoke model which is flexible and responsive to the needs of the local population. The Unit leads on adult safeguarding and dignity at work and is 50/50 funded by health and social care. Following the 12 month pilot an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Unit will take place.</p>
	<p><b>Community Safety</b></p> <p>The Board supported the establishment of a Neighbourhood Resolution Panel in the Grange ward, which is one of 15 English pilot areas. The Panel is designed to resolve anti-social behaviour and low level crime affecting local communities, including neighbour disputes, noise and nuisance parking. The Panel is made up of volunteers trained in restorative justice who facilitate meetings between victim and offenders. The scheme has empowered the community to take ownership and reduce the fear of crime in the area.</p> <p>The Board received a very informative presentation from the Halton Credit Union, which has issued over 25,000 loans since its establishment in 2002 and has over 4,000 active adult members and junior members from two of the borough's schools. Their role is seen as particularly important in these times of austerity and with the benefits reforms imminent.</p>
	<p><b>Environmental Health</b></p> <p>The Board considered a report on how well Halton's food businesses were performing against the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, which Halton was the first authority in Cheshire and Merseyside to launch in April 2011. In total there are 1051 registered food premises in Halton of which 822 have been included in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. Businesses are scored 0-5, with 5 being the highest rating. The rating is based on how hygienically the food was handled; the structure and cleanliness of the building and how well business was managed and its track record. All ratings are published on the internet site <a href="http://www.food.gov.uk/ratings">www.food.gov.uk/ratings</a></p> <p>The Board was advised of the current regulatory arrangements to control the safety and hygiene of cosmetic treatments which pose a risk of infection or physical injury in the borough. The treatments included tattooing, body piercing, botox injections and teeth whitening. It was noted that treatments were generally well controlled by Halton's Environmental health Department when they were carried out in commercial premises, however problems did arise when unlicensed activities were carried out in domestic homes.</p>
	<p>Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work, please contact Paul McWade (0151 471 7437) or email at <a href="mailto:paul.mcwade@halton.gov.uk">paul.mcwade@halton.gov.uk</a>.</p>

