

## SAFER HALTON POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 17 June 2008 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Stockton (Vice-Chairman), Lloyd Jones, Morley, Redhead, Rowan, Shepherd and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Osborne, M. Bradshaw, Edge and M. Ratcliffe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: P. Cornthwaite, S. Eastwood, M. Simpson, J. Unsworth, A. Villiers and P. Watts

Also in attendance: None

### ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
SAF1	MINUTES  The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2008, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
SAF2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME  It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
SAF3	PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS  The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons and factors affecting the services for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Highways, Transportation and Logistics;</li><li>▪ Environment and Regulatory Services;</li><li>▪ Health and Partnerships; and</li><li>▪ Culture and Leisure.</li></ul> It was reported that there was an intention to place	

executive summaries at the beginning of the reports, with the aim of reducing the amount of information Members received.

The Board's attention was drawn to pages 12 and 96 of the Performance Monitoring report in relation to errors with figures that did not add up. It was noted that this had been raised with the Officers and they would look into the matter to prevent this happening in the future.

Members raised concerns in relation to a request for the secondary schools in the Borough to take part in a survey regarding knives and solvents aimed at year 9 pupils. Out of 8 schools in the Borough only 2 schools had agreed to take part. It was noted that 3 schools specifically said no and 3 schools did not respond. Members felt that it important that schools took part in this questionnaire and requested that it be pursued, in writing, and a response be provided as to why schools would not participate. It was agreed that should a response from the schools be provided a copy would be distributed to all Members of the Board. Members suggested that the School Governors also be copied into the letter requesting this information.

The Board queried what stage the restructure of the Community Safety Team was at. In response it was noted that a review was still taking place, work was still ongoing and it was intended that a report be brought back to the September meeting. Members also referred to the meeting held in January in relation to a query of how Community Safety funds would be spread across the wards in relation to the amount of anti-social behaviour and crime issues. It was reported that this would be investigated and a response would be provided.

RESOLVED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- (1) receive the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter performance management reports;
- (2) consider the progress and performance information; and
- (3) a letter be sent to the secondary schools and governors requesting reasons why they would not take part in the questionnaire regarding knives and solvents, aimed at year 9 pupils.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

The Board considered minutes from the Domestic Violence, domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults working parties which outlined topics and issues raised.

Arising from the discussion the Board was advised that the two posts in the Domestic Abuse Section had been offered funding for another year and one of the posts could receive mainstream funding as it now became part of the 198 Best Value Indicators.

In relation to Waste Management it was reported that the Working Party met on 29<sup>th</sup> May and were looking at containerisation of waste. It was reported that investigations would be carried out on how other authorities dealt with containerisation and what measures authorities put in place. It was agreed that a report would be compiled and brought back to the next meeting in September that would detail the recommendations for the Best Practice on how to deal with wheeled bins in Halton.

The Board discussed the following issues:

- Cost of replacement wheelie bins;
- Mechanisms to identify bins;
- Monitoring of why or how bins were lost;
- Batches of faulty bins and suppliers of wheeled bins; and
- The roll out of recycling facilities across the Borough.

RESOLVED: That;

(1) the Minutes be received; and

(2) a report be brought back to the September meeting regarding the recommendations for best practice on how to deal with wheeled bins in Halton.

Strategic Director  
- Environment

#### SAF5 WASTE MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from the Divisional Manager – Waste and Recycling, which outlined the following:-

- Halton was both a waste collection and disposal authority;
- Halton currently dealt with 75,000 tons of municipal waste each year;
- Halton had been set targets for the recycling and

composting of waste and for the reduction of levels of biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) sent to landfill for disposal;

- There were costs associated with meeting those targets and there were financial consequences/penalties imposed for not reaching them;
- Halton currently spent £7m per year dealing with waste;
- Municipal Waste;
- Recycling in Halton;
- Last Year in Halton;
- Drivers for Continued Change;
  - Waste Strategy for England 2007;
  - Household Waste Recycling Act 2003;
  - Landfill Diversion Targets;
  - Future Cost of Waste Disposal;
- £1.9m was spent annually on disposing waste;
- Halton's Options;
- Future Cost Estimates;
- The Way Forward;
- Halton's Waste Action Plan;
- Multi Material Kerbside Recycling;
- Introducing the Scheme;
- Other Initiatives;
- The Challenge; and
- Meeting the Challenge.

Arising from the presentation Members queried the following:

- Has the recycling facility for tetra-packages that had been removed from Hough Green Road been replaced at Johnson's Lane?
- Could plastics and tin cans be processed on site such as Johnson's Lane and Picow Farm Road?
- Was there to be a facility in the future for houses that could not have access to wheeled bins to recycle?
- Could the Council provide incentives or penalise people that wilfully ignore requests to use wheeled bins?

In response the following was noted:

- It was advised that information relating to the receptacle for recycling tetra-packaging at Johnson's Lane would be provided to Members of the Board;
- Costs would be involved with processing materials on site. However, the Department was looking at contractual arrangements and through negotiation,

better solutions may be available. It was requested that Members forward any ideas to Jimmy Unsworth in relation to diverting waste;

- As part of the Waste Action Plan the Council will be providing kerbside recycling services to all properties throughout the Borough and was currently exploring options to provide the most suitable methods and pilot schemes could be implemented as a result; and
- Monitoring would take place in areas where participation with Council services was low and there was high levels of excessive waste;

The Chairman thanked the Head of Waste Management for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

#### SAF6 ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered the Annual Report for the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board. The report outlined the membership and responsibilities, the review of the year and work programme for 2008/09.

Members queried whether in future the Annual Report had to come to the Performance Board as opposed to going to the information bulletin. In response it was noted that this was a Constitutional requirement as per page 16 of the Constitution and inspectors could also view the document.

The Chairman thanked all the Officers and Members involved in producing an incredible amount of work throughout the year.

RESOLVED: That the PPB agree and endorse the Annual Report for the purposes of its adoption at a forthcoming meeting of the full Council.

Strategic Director  
- Health and  
Community

#### SAF7 CIVIL FUNERALS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community seeking support for the Registration Service to introduce civil funeral ceremonies.

It was noted that a civil funeral ceremony was a ceremony reflecting the wishes of the family who wanted to mark the passing of a family member or friend who did not have any religious belief. A trained celebrant, who may also be a registrar, would prepare and deliver a eulogy, usually at a local crematorium or at the graveside in a non-

denominational cemetery.

It was reported that the Government White Paper “Civil Registration: Vital Change” set out an agenda for a modern, effective and high quality registration service. To underpin this local authorities were to be given more responsibility for local service delivery that would meet both national standards and local community needs.

Detailed in the report were the levy fees for the ceremonies which were decided upon following benchmarking with neighbour authorities. It was advised that the initial fee for civil funeral on a weekday would be set at £165. This would cover the time taken to visit the family, write the eulogy, write the ceremony and facilitate the ceremony.

Members queried how many funeral directors had been approached. In response it was noted that only 3 funeral directors had responded and some funeral directors responded, one of which already used a “Humanist” celebrant for provision of non-religious ceremonies.

Members raised concerns in relation to the affect this service could have on Council staff as it would be an emotionally upsetting, challenging and demanding role. In response, it was noted that staff registered deaths daily when the bereaved family were often very upset. Staff had been trained to deal with these emotions sympathetically and with empathy. The Bereavement Services Manager currently took part in public health funerals and cremations. Members suggested whether counselling could be offered to Council staff if necessary. It was noted that this issue had not been discussed in depth and mechanisms could be implemented for staff to cope with these extra pressures.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board be requested to agree the Registration Service extending its offer of discretionary services to include civil funeral ceremonies as outlined in the report.

Strategic Director  
- Health and  
Community

#### SAF8 NATIONALITY CHECKING SERVICE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community seeking support for the Registration Service to enter into partnership with the Home Office to offer the Nationality Checking Service (NCS).

It was advised that the Nationality Checking Service (NCS) was a checking and advice service that helped those

seeking citizenship, make a good quality and complete application, which the Home Office's Nationality Group would be able to determine more quickly.

It was reported that a number of Registration Services already offered the NCS and the arrangement had proved to be a success for all concerned, but demand for the service still exceeded supply and the Home Office were keen to recruit more Council partners. It was reported that the aim was to create a more cohesive service for citizenship from application, through processing on to the citizenship ceremony, involving local authorities across the UK and the Nationality Group of the Home Office.

It was noted that the NCS was introduced due to the large number of flawed applications received by the Home Office, one consequence of which was that the applicant lost the statutory fee for that application. Such fees were presently £655 for a single person, £735 for a couple and £400 for one or more children – hence, from a financial point of view alone, the importance to the applicant of ensuring their application was right first time via the checking service was clear.

Detailed within the report were the processes to be followed for the Council to become an NCS partner. The Council would be able to set levy fees upon applicants for the provision of the NCS and the suggested initial fees were detailed within the report.

Members queried whether this service was available for people who lived outside of the Borough. In response it was noted that the service would be available to any applicant. Members queried how the fees were set for the Council's charges. In response it was noted that the figures detailed within the report were similar to surrounding authorities.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board be requested to agree to the Registration Service extending its offer of discretionary services to include the Nationality Checking Service, as outlined in the report.

Strategic Director  
- Health and  
Community

*Meeting ended at 8.23 p.m.*