

SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 6 February 2024
at the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors N. Plumpton Walsh (Chair), Carlin (Vice-Chair), Baker, Bevan, Bramwell, Cargill, Goodall, A. Lowe, Ratcliffe and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, J. Gallagher, N. Goodwin and P. Wright.

Also in attendance: Councillor C. Plumpton-Walsh

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

SAF24 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Action

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some feedback from the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel meeting, which he attended along with Councillor Martha Lloyd-Jones on 2 February 2024.

The Panel received a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner which proposed a 4.99% increase to the policing element of the council tax bill 2024/25. This would amount to an extra £12.50 a year for a band D household and this was agreed by all four of Cheshire's borough councils.

SAF25 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

SAF26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

SAF27 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Board received a report from the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which gave an update on 'The Big Conversation', since it was presented at the last meeting in November 2023. The report shared the analysis of the consultation and outlined the next steps.

The report set out the five themes which had all been scored highly by stakeholders in terms of what they deemed to be a priority:

- Improving health, promoting wellbeing and supporting greater independence – 93%;
- Building a strong, sustainable local economy – 91%;
- Supporting children, young people and families – 89%;
- Tackling inequality, helping those who are most in need – 84%; and
- Working towards a greener future – 78%.

In addition to these, stakeholders were asked to identify any additional themes which they felt were significant and those were the environment, local economy and housing. This feedback resulted in a sixth priority being created called "Place and Community".

Members were advised that the consultation closed on 30 November 2023 and the total number of responses received was 1,076; an analysis of the feedback was outlined in the report.

A copy of the draft Corporate Plan was emailed to Members on 6 February 2024 for information and this would be presented to the Executive Board for approval on 22 February 2024. Thereafter, it would be launched in April 2024.

Members noted the information presented to them and the following comments were noted from discussions:

- it was felt that the priorities were similar to the current Council priorities and that not enough was being done to tackle issues such as environmental concerns, regeneration in the Borough and lack of social housing;
- a Member of the Board referred to "Halton 2000", a consultation exercise which was carried out in the year 2000 and they felt that little improvements had

been made as a result of this. It was suggested that the Council should learn from past experiences; and

- another Member suggested that there was a general complacency in the public, not just in Halton, because people did not have any faith that changes would be made and therefore this might have been a reason why more people did not complete the survey.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board continues to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan.

SAF28 SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration which provided an update on the development of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the Safer Halton Governance and Strategy.

CSP's were created when the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed responsibility on Local Authorities and Police Chiefs to meet regularly to discuss crime and disorder issues within their respective areas. The aim of the CSP in Halton was to make it a safe place to live and work; its functions were outlined in the draft strategy.

Members were advised that the Safer Halton Partnership Strategy had recently been revised along with its governance arrangements and priorities to ensure that it was fit for purpose. This work was supported by an additional resource, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and it had been agreed that focus would be given to:

- Safer Halton Governance structure;
- Strategic Needs Assessment;
- Community Safety Partnership Strategy/Partnership Plan; and
- Safer Halton Partnership Delivery Plan.

The draft Strategy set out the priorities which were data driven and governance led. To date, the priorities that had been agreed were:

- 1) Anti-Social Behaviour;

- 2) Domestic Abuse;
- 3) Serious and Organised Crime;
- 4) Integrated Offender Management;
- 5) Counter Terrorism;
- 6) Hate Crime;
- 7) Substance Misuse;
- 8) Serious Violence; and
- 9) Road Safety.

The three year over-arching Strategy would be implemented on 1 April 2024. Thereafter, annual delivery plans would be developed which would set out clear actions.

A number of workshops had been held with partners who sat on the SHP and these had been well received. Members were advised of the advantages of having such a partnership in place, including access to funding opportunities. Through work carried out in recent months, over £160,000 of funding had been secured.

The following additional information was provided in response to Members questions:

- There were data arrangements in place between Council systems and Cheshire Police;
- Dangerous dogs – if these were at a rented property and causing a nuisance then the matter needed to be reported to the landlord. If there was a safety concern then the matter should be reported to the Police;
- Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review – a tool available for residents to report unsatisfactory outcomes of anti-social behaviour. This would be reported to the Local Authority and the Enforcement Team would then work with agencies involved, for example housing providers, Police etc to review actions and assess if these had fallen short of procedures; and
- A presentation on Serious Violence Duty would be delivered to the next Board meeting and this would include details on the impact of knife crime. Cheshire Police had focussed on “stop and search” which had resulted in a significant number of weapons being confiscated. Work was also being carried out in schools to deliver educational programmes.

RESOLVED: That the draft Safer Halton Partnership Governance and Strategy be received and comments made be noted.

SAF29 DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on strategic and service developments in delivering the Council's duties on domestic abuse.

Members were reminded that the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service transferred to the Council in January 2023 and a report was presented to the Board in February 2023. The service underwent a restructure and recruitment was underway to increase capacity in the team, including a Case Worker who would work with perpetrators and a Domestic Abuse Advocate Educator, who would work with the 14 GP surgeries in Halton to raise educational awareness about domestic violence. The additional staff would help support the team and respond to service demands which were exceptionally high; Halton was the second highest in the country with 174 live cases and 90 cases pending.

The report also provided an update on the following areas:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - a workshop was held in November which focused on a significant piece of Halton research led by Safelives. This resulted in a high quality report which would help shape a work programme for the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and improve local services in Halton;
- White Ribbon – in October 2023, Council supported a motion to obtain accredited status from White Ribbon. The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board would govern the White Ribbon Steering Group and work was in progress; and
- Halton Resolve – this work had been commissioned to support an emotional health and wellbeing service for children, young people and families to reduce the impact of domestic abuse; this was being developed by the Children's Society. During July and September 2023, 30 children and young people received a referral.

The following additional information and comments were noted:

- Domestic abuse also affected older people;

- Members to be given the opportunity to be involved in the White Ribbon Steering Group;
- Members to be offered the opportunity to attend any future Workforce Development Sessions which were held to raise awareness on domestic abuse; and
- Men were also victims of domestic violence. Members were reassured that Halton operated a universal service and the Police also supported targeted approaches for individuals who presented as victims, for example, those in custody.

RESOLVED: That the Board note and comment on the report.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.