

SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 4 February 2025
at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: N. Goodwin, S. Hill and K. Butler

Also in attendance: Councillor M. Lloyd Jones (observer), S. Heath (Cheshire Constabulary), D. Haddock (Cheshire Constabulary), D. Price (Police & Crime Commissioner's Office) and S. Whalen (Police & Crime Commissioner's Office)

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
SAF17 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
There were no Chair's announcements.	
SAF18 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2024 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
SAF19 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
SAF20 ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN HALTON	
Members of the Board received a report from the Director of Public Health on the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Services work that provided support for local people. In addition, the Board also received a presentation which highlighted the following main points from the report:	
• Partnership working; • Work within Adult Services;	

- Work within Children and Young People Services; and
- The impact of alcohol and substance misuse on hospital admissions.

The Board discussed the report and it was noted that Members:

- suggested that there needed to be more publicity, for example, in GP surgeries, to raise awareness of the long-term effects of alcohol and substance abuse;
- felt that the needle exchange had worked well in the West Bank ward; and
- expressed concerns about the rising use of Ketamine and suggested that lessons be taught in schools to educate young people about the physical health and mental health risks associated with Ketamine.

Members also asked a number of questions about the report and it was agreed that further information would be circulated after the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Board consider the information presented.

Director of Public Health

SAF21 CHESHIRE POLICE PERFORMANCE AND LOCAL POLICING UNIT UPDATES FOR RUNCORN AND WIDNES

The Board received a presentation from the Cheshire Police Halton Area Commander and the Widnes Local Policing Unit Commander, which provided an update on policing performance and priorities for Halton.

The presentation outlined:

- The Force priorities:
 - Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls;
 - Incident Management and Response Times;
 - Victims Code of Practice;
- Force performance data for 2024; Cheshire was the second best Police Force in the Country for charged/summonsed outcome rates for sexual offences and third best for charged/summonsed outcome rates for Violence Against the Person;
- Halton Performance – recorded crime rates for Widnes and Runcorn;
- Bringing offenders to justice journey – all crime and Domestic Abuse;

- Anti-Social Behaviour – although there had been a slight increase in 2024 in Widnes, there had been a decrease in Runcorn;
- Good News Stories which included a significant decrease in active County Lines in Halton;
- Public Confidence – Cheshire was the second highest ranking Police Force for overall confidence in local police and third highest which the public thought the police were doing an excellent or good job in their local area; and
- Examples of how the public could get involved e.g. Residents Voice; and Community Cohesion Groups.

Members noted the information presented and following discussions requested if Councillors could be provided with updates following incidents within their wards, as this was the practice previously. They also requested any updates on cybercrime and if “knife sweep” could be carried out in Runcorn, as one had not taken place for some time.

Members also raised concerns about parking issues within the Borough; the Police and Crime Commissioner informed Members that following a series of meetings it was anticipated that a resolution had been found to help tackle the issues and he would provide more information as part of his presentation.

The Board thanked Police colleagues for their attendance and hard work in keeping the Borough safe.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

SAF22 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Cheshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) attended the meeting to deliver a presentation to Members of the Board on the refreshed PCC Plan for Cheshire. The current PCC was elected in 2024 and was currently developing the Police and Crime Plan to 2028.

The Commissioner’s Office had consulted widely on the development of the new plan and the three core principles identified were:

- Listen to the public – to ensure locally informed policing priorities and support for victims;
- Modernise using technology and innovation and consider the police estate to be fit for the future; and
- Reduce crime – provide an accessible and

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

responsive policy service with prevention and intervention culture firmly embedded with a focus on supporting rehabilitation.

Members were reminded that the Council's Community Safety Team worked in partnership with the PCC Office to support crime reduction in Halton.

The PCC addressed the concerns of Members regarding parking issues around the Borough and acknowledged that although this was a frustration for many, he did not want to divert Police attention from other more serious crimes. However, in order to try and find a resolution to the issues, he suggested "hotspot policing" (overtime) to enhance Police presence but of course this would be subject to available funding.

Following discussions, it was agreed that parking issues would be added to the next agenda of the Community Safety Partnership.

The PCC also informed the Board that his Office would be moving from Winsford to Runcorn Town Hall later in the year.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

SAF23 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2024

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 16 January 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30 November 2024, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast. The report also described the reasons for key variances from budget.

The Executive Board had requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information, to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as outlined in the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.28 p.m.