



Councillor
Hignett

ANNUAL REPORT URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD APRIL 2008 – MARCH 2009

“In thanking all of the Officers and Members of the Urban Renewal PPB for their support throughout the year, it is worth noting that for Urban Renewal this has been an exciting and productive year. Many of the Council’s programmes have been coming to fruition, making a significant contribution to Halton’s regeneration. The Board has considered many programmes and projects which contribute hugely to improving the quality of Halton’s environment. Tough decisions have had to be made in the light of the impact of external influences, particularly with regards to funding, but nevertheless continued progress in regenerating the urban infrastructure is to be welcomed.”

Councillor Hignett
Chairman, Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2008/9 the Board comprised eleven Councillors –

Councillor R. Hignett (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor K. Morley (Vice Chairman)	Labour
Councillor P. Balmer	Conservative
Councillor P. Blackmore	Liberal Democrat
Councillor E. Cargill	Labour
Councillor M. Hodgkinson	Liberal Democrat
Councillor D. Leadbetter	Labour
Councillor P. Murray	Conservative
Councillor P. Nolan	Labour
Councillor C. Rowe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor D. Thompson	Labour

The Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board’s primary function is to focus on the work of the Council (and its Partners) in seeking to bring about the Urban Renewal of the Borough. It is also charged with scrutinising progress against the Corporate Plan in relation to the Urban Renewal Priority. It is responsible for evaluating performance and formulating policy in relation to the following areas:

- Major Projects
 - Highways and Transportation,
 - Environmental Health and Planning,
 - Economic Regeneration,
- with the additional responsibility for
- the Park Ranger service (as from 2005/6)
 - Contaminated Land (as from 2005/06)
 - Strategic Housing (as from 2006/07).

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met six times during the year. As well as considering Executive Board decisions relevant to the work of the Urban Renewal Board, agreeing the Service Plans of the relevant Departments and monitoring their general activities and performance against them, set out below are some of the main activities and issues that the Board has worked on during the year:

Corporate Responsibilities

- The Board considered petitions from Residents regarding the future of St. Marie's Church, Widnes, from residents concerning traffic conditions in Dale Street, Runcorn. and from employers regarding the creation of the Astmoor Business Improvement District.
- The Board reviewed the Travel Policy and Procedure of the Health and Community Directorate
- The Board considered reports of Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which advised on progress towards targets set in the Community Strategy and 2007 Local Area Agreement.
- The PPB endorsed the Public Arts Strategy and referred it to the Executive Board for approval.
- The PPB received the minutes of the Urban Renewal SSP.
- The Board received and accepted a summary of the findings of the first Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Health.

Highways and Transportation

- the Board supported taking the Local Transport Plan (LPT2) Interim Review Report to Executive Board for approval to submit to Government Office North West.
- The PPB agreed nominations of Members to sit on the Council's Public Transport Advisory Panel for the 2008/09 municipal year.
- The Board received a report which highlighted the emerging key findings of the Halton Accessibility Study and agreed the options to be used as a basis for consultation at a key stakeholder event.

Major Projects Department

- The PPB received a presentation on the operations and developments of the Stobart Group on the 3MG site from Mr. Steve O'Connor, a Director of the Stobart Group.
- The Board received a presentation from Lynn Smith – Acting Director of Norton Priory Museum which outlined the research that had been carried out there over the past five years.
- The Board considered the North West Development Association-funded projects which were completed in 2008/9, and those which had been identified for funding in 2009/10. In addition the PPB agreed the Widnes Waterfront Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) Performance Plan for the financial year 2009/10.
- The PPB received a presentation on Urban Renewal activity in the Borough.

Economic Regeneration

- The Board agreed a 'Heart of Halton' Plaque scheme
- The Board approved the development of a logistics focused, proposition-based marketing and PR campaign.

Environmental and Regulatory Services

- The Board considered developments concerning Growth Point Status including submission of returns for Community Infrastructure Fund and Growth Fund, and recommended acceptance to the Executive Board.
- The Board considered developments in relation to the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, and the consequences of the adoption of it for Halton. .
- The Board considered and supported the drafting of the Core Strategy as a central enabling document in the delivery of Corporate priorities.
- Members considered how the Landscape Services Division and The Parks and Countryside Service performed during Year 10 of the APSE Performance Network's Benchmarking process in relation to Parks, Open Spaces and Horticultural Services, recording their thanks and congratulations on their success.
- Members considered the progress made with the Hale Park Restoration scheme.

Housing

- The Board considered and agreed the draft housing strategy which had been the subject of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.
- The PPB considered and agreed the Commissioning Strategy for Extra-Care Housing.

Other

- The Board agreed an Overview and Scrutiny Action Plan for 2008/9.
- Members undertook a guided tour of regeneration sites in the Borough

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2008-9

The Board established work groups to consider the following areas:

- Workforce and Skills for the Logistics Industry (Joint Group with Employment, Learning and Skills PPB);
- The Future of Town Centres Management (continuation of);
- Implications of de-linking the Silver Jubilee Bridge; and
- Housing Strategy (continuation of);

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2009-10

The Board agreed the following topic ideas for inclusion in its work programme for 2009-10 :

- Workforce and Skills for the Science Industry, with a focus on Daresbury (Joint Group with Employment, Learning and Skills PPB); and
- Continuation of the work of the Implications of de-linking the Silver Jubilee Bridge Group; and
- the LDF Working Party; and
- Housing Strategy (continuation of);

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 Committee Services in the first instance, telephone 0151 424 2061 extension 1125 or email michelle.simpson@Halton.gov.uk