

## HALTON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

### Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2005 at the Halton Stadium, Widnes.

#### Present:

<b>Board Members:</b> Andy Guile	Halton Together (In the Chair)
Bill Badrock	Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise
Alan Harrison	Halton College
Liz Gill	Government Office North West
Nick Ingram	Cheshire Police
Terry Parle	Halton Sports Partnership
David Parr	Halton Borough Council
Pauline Ruth	Halton Children's Fund
Diane Sproson	GM Connexions
Mike Fry	Halton Together
Kirsty Evans	LSC GM
Elaine Masterson	JCP

#### Advisors to the Board:

Matthew Atherton	Halton Borough Council
John White	Halton Borough Council
Ian Grady	Halton Borough Council
Rob MacKenzie	Halton Borough Council
Dwayne Johnson	Halton Borough Council
Shēlah Semoff	Halton Borough Council

#### In attendance:

Lynn Cairns	Halton Borough Council
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#### Apologies for absence:

Councillor Swain (HBC), D Seddon (PCT/HBC), R Tracy (NWDA) and N Townsend (Riverside Housing).

#### 187 MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Board held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

The following matters arising were noted:

- minute number 182 – the contract for Local Futures was now in place. It was hoped that the first draft of the system would be in place by January 2006 and meetings would be convened with partners to help shape it;

#### **Action**

- minute number 183 – the LSP Improvement Plan was to be circulated in January 2006; and
- minute number 184 – the Festival Sub-Group was analysing the funding of the Halton Festival and Show, and a report would be submitted to the next meeting for consideration.

I. Grady

## 188 PRIORITIES PROCESS

The Board considered a tabled report regarding the Community Strategy Priorities Process which had been produced following that morning's partner event. In light of discussions that had taken place, a number of recommendations were made, including a framework for priorities which focussed on cross-cutting themes.

Members discussed the priorities proposed which were organised under the following headings:

- Healthy Halton;
- Safer Halton;
- Children and Young People;
- Employment, Lifelong Learning and Skills; and
- Renewing Halton

and proposed a number of amendments including:

- adding the words "in Halton" to both the Children and Young People and the Employment and Lifelong Learning and Skills headings;
- adding "Thriving Communities and Neighbourhoods" under the Employment and Lifelong Learning and Skills heading; and
- moving "Environment and Liveability" from the Safe Halton heading to Renewing Halton.

In addition, it was noted that thought needed to be given to the make-up of the SSPs and how they were populated.

### **AGREED** that

- (1) the framework for the priorities which will form the basis of the Community Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the tabled report be agreed, subject to the amendments set out above;
- (2) a Sub-Group of the Board be created to focus on cross-cutting issues, such as wealth and equality, providing a focus for performance management in how the LSP/SSPs are achieving the aspirations for Halton as set out in the Community Strategy;
- (3) an initial draft of the Community Strategy be constructed on this basis and circulated to Partners for consultation by the end of November 2005;

I Grady

- (4) a Partner Event be held in January 2006 to examine the governance arrangements for the partnership;
- (5) a Finance Sub-Committee be convened in early December 2005 to evaluate progress to date on the NRF programme, to make recommendations about the future allocation of NRF across the five agreed themes and more pertinently towards the key investment priorities decided by the Group, to explore the aligned pooling of budgets and contributions from partners to the HSPB budget with a view to the eventual loss of NRF funding, and to look at Local Area Agreements;
- (6) the Finance Sub-Committee be made up of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, a business sector representative and principals from each of the 5 SSPs;
- (7) the current five Chairs bring through their priority bids to the meeting in December to fit into the new structure;  
(Lynn, this is covered at point 4)
- (9) thanks be extended to the Head of Strategic Partnership and Policy for effectively capturing the essence of the morning's debate.

#### 189 SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES FUND – NEIGHBOURHOOD ELEMENT

The Board considered a report providing an update on the need to develop proposals for the use of the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) Neighbourhood Element.

It was noted that the Fund was introduced in April 2005 bringing together ODPM and Home Office funding streams aimed at tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and drugs, empowering communities, improving the condition of streets and public spaces, and prioritising the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. However, the rollout of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) meant that areas now needed to review their arrangements and consider how to import SSCF agreements into a formal LAA.

In addition to the main part of the Fund, two new funding streams had been introduced; of these, Halton qualified for the neighbourhood element. It was noted that the Government was enthusiastic about extending neighbourhood management as a means to engage and empower local communities and it was suggested that an area with a population of around 10,000 was a suitable size for a neighbourhood management scheme.

The report outlined Halton's position and the need for the HSPB to take the lead on such an initiative. Although the funding was constrained, it could support two management schemes. However,

there would be a need to mainstream the Community Support Officers once NRF ran out, with or without neighbourhood management.

Possible neighbourhoods, how neighbourhood management would work and actions needed to be taken were all outlined for the Board's consideration. It was noted that this was fixed term funding and there would be costs to pick up once it expired.

**AGREED** that:

- (1) the requirements and opportunity offered through SSCF to pilot neighbourhood approaches be noted;
- (2) a sub-group be established to develop a proposal consisting of representatives from Halton Borough Council, Groundwork, Riverside Housing, CEN and the Police; and
- (3) the Housing Partnership Board's views on this issue be sought.

R MacKenzie

D Johnson

#### 190 HALTON TOGETHER PROTOCOL

The Board considered a report providing a draft protocol to be used between Halton Together and the Halton Strategic Partnership Board. The protocol outlined accountability and was a statement of how the two bodies related to each other. It was noted that this was part of the governance arrangements required by Government Office North West.

**AGREED** that the protocol be adopted and reviewed at the Governance Away Day.

#### 191 POLICE FORCE STRUCTURES

The Board considered a report regarding police force structures in England and Wales. It was noted that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) had been commissioned to undertake a piece of research to address the question as to whether the present 43 police force structure was the right one to meet the challenges posed by the current and future policing environment. The report had concluded that larger forces than those that existed at present were the preferred option for the future. A large force would be one employing more than 4,000 police officers of which there were currently only 7, excluding Cheshire.

The report was not, at this stage, a formal consultation document. However, it was assumed that there would be a formal consultation procedure in the new year.

Implications for Halton were outlined for the Board's consideration. In addition, it was reported that guidance had been received from the Home Office that day about the options it would like to see being taken

forward. As Cheshire had synergy with Merseyside Police Force, there were some opportunities to be gained if they were to merge. The intention was to rationalise support services, such as Human Resource and Finance functions, re-investing monies saved into front-line services.

**AGREED** that the report be noted.

#### 192 PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

The Board considered a report providing feedback on this year's Partnership Conference which took place at the Halton Stadium on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2005.

Feedback from conference evaluation forms was provided for the Board's consideration and it was noted that this had been good.

The Chairman thanked all those involved in organising the event for their work.

**AGREED** that the report be noted.

#### 193 QUARTER TWO REPORTS

The Board considered a report outlining progress and expenditure in Quarter 2 2005/06 of initiatives receiving Neighbourhood Renewal Fund monies. It was noted that all the co-ordinators and chairmen were confident that they were on target with their budgets. However, Quarter 3 figures would give a better indication for the end of year position.

**AGREED** that the report be noted.

*Meeting commenced at 1.25 p.m.  
and ended at 2.35 p.m.*