

Public Document Pack



Executive Board Sub Committee

Thursday, 4 June 2009 10.00 a.m.
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and, with personal and prejudicial interests (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members), to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
3. CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO	
(A) AREA FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09	1 - 4
(B) TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2008/09 4TH QUARTER	5 - 9

*Please contact Caroline Halpin on 0151 471 7394 or e-mail caroline.halpin@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 18 June 2009*

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(C) PURCHASE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SYSTEM	10 - 13
4. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO	
(A) NOTIFICATION OF WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS BY EXECUTIVE BOARD ON 2ND APRIL 2009 TO EXTEND EXISTING CONTRACTS FOR PROVISION OF MINOR ADAPTATIONS AND STAIR LIFTS	14 - 17

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 4 June 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Area Forum Annual Report 2008/9

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform members of the spending by the Area Forums for 2008/09.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Area forums were set up in 2001 as a way of bridging the gap between key agencies working within the Borough. Each Area Forum is led by local councillors and supported by a senior officer from the Council. Other partner organisations such as the Police, Fire Service, Housing Associations, Youth and voluntary sector bodies also attend Area Forums to keep the community informed of local developments and to respond to local concerns.

3.2 Funding was allocated to the Area Forums to spend on small-scale projects that are identified by the community. In 2008/9, a total of £600,000 was allocated to the Area Forums, made up of £300,000 WNF and £300,000 from Halton Borough Council Priorities Fund. It is allocated on a per capita basis across the seven Area Forums that cover the Borough.

3.3 The local community are invited to raise ideas for neighbourhood projects, which would help improve their local area. The Forum then considers these ideas, and an action plan agreed. Actions must have community support and not result in a long-term financial commitment.

4.0 AREA FORUM EXPENDITURE

4.1 The projects funded through the Area Forums are wide and varied.. They have been categorised into a number of key areas, which are listed below. . The proportion of the overall budget spent on each category is indicated in brackets after each heading.

4.2 Landscape (24%)

This covers a wide range of projects such as increased planting, improved allotments and provision of dog bins

4.3 Safety (7%)

This category includes road safety improvements, traffic calming and speed surveys.

4.4 Youth Facilities (20%)

Improvements to youth and community centres including facilities, lighting, creation of kick about areas, contribution to positive futures for local young people, and purchase of sporting equipment,

4.5 Improved Parks (18%)

This initiative puts gardeners into parks at the weekends, which helps deter vandalism, improves public reassurance and the general appearance of the parks. Funding has also been made available for improvements such as additional planting and seats..

4.6 Pedestrian Access (4%)

This funding has been used to make improvements to the local infrastructure, such as improving paths.

4.7 Security (11%)

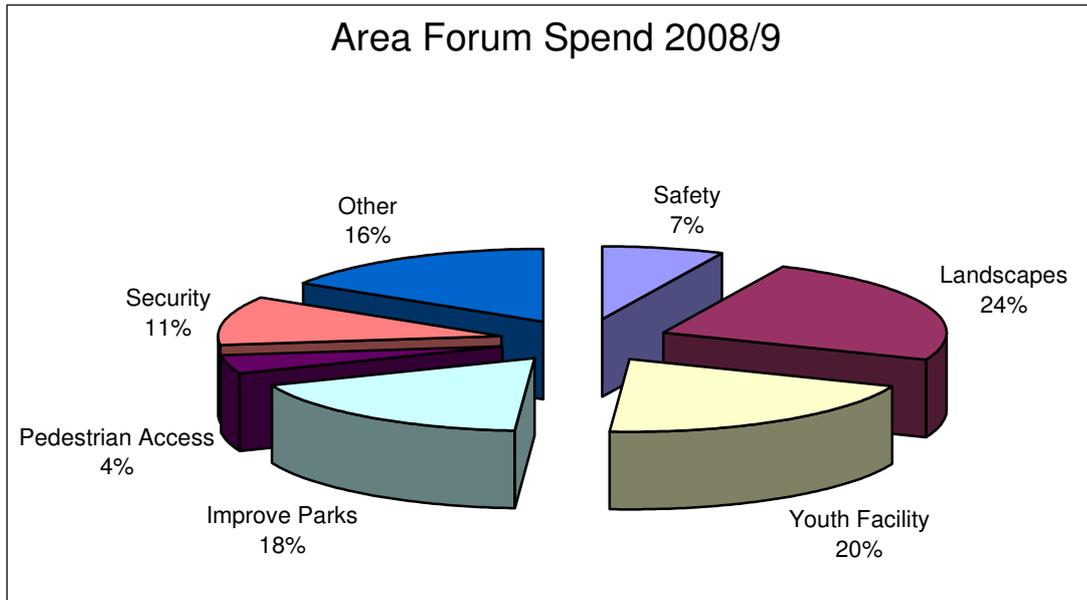
Area Panel funding has been used to continue the successful and highly valued Alley gating initiative as well as providing additional fencing.

4.8 Other (16%)

This includes general support for local initiatives for Community groups and Centres, local amenities, Parish Councils and facilities for older people

5.0 BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING

5.1 The graph illustrated in Appendix 1, show the breakdown of funding allocated across the above categories for 2008/09. The largest proportion of funding has been spent on Landscaping and youth facilities.



6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Area Forums are a key tool in engaging with local residents, and the budget provides a means of funding minor schemes in response to local needs. The projects funded are all required to demonstrate a contribution to priority areas such as safety, health and so on. There are no ongoing financial implications, as it is a strict criterion that area forum projects should not incur ongoing costs.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

There are no significant risks associated with this report which is for information only.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

Efforts are made to ensure that all sections of the community can benefit from Area Forum funding. For example participation by young people is encouraged through the youth forum

10.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 10.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**
- A Healthy Halton**
- A Safer Halton**
- Halton's Urban Renewal**

10.2 The eligibility criteria for Area forum Funding requires the projects should support one or more of the Council's priorities.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Minutes of Area Forums	3rd floor Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes	Rob MacKenzie Operational Director Policy and Performance, 0151 471 7416 Rob.mackenzie@halton.gov.uk

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 18th June 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Financial Services

SUBJECT: Treasury Management 2008/09
4th Quarter: January - March

WARDS:

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the Sub-Committee about activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Short Term Rates

The bank base rate was cut three times by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) during the quarter. It was reduced by 0.5% on the 8th January, 0.5% on the 5th February, followed by a third cut of 0.5% on the 4th March, reducing the rate from 2% to 0.5% during the quarter. The rate of 0.5% is uncharted territory for the policy makers, taking the rate to a level never seen before and leaving little room for future cuts. The Governor said after the last MPC meeting that it was “highly unlikely” that further cuts will be made.

The cuts have been accompanied by a radical new approach to monetary policy by the Treasury and the Bank of England, the most significant change in the conduct of policy for a very long time. This is because, with interest rates at 0.5% it is judged that additional tools of monetary policy are needed. The Bank has been given authority by the Treasury to conduct what is known as “Quantitative Easing”, and the programme began on March 11th with a £2bn reverse auction to purchase gilts in the market. This represents a major change in the way the Bank conducts its money market operations as it is the first time in its history that it has conducted transactions by reference to the quantity of central bank money rather than its price.

Short term investment rates have collapsed, bearing in mind call money was at 5.15% at the beginning of October.

	Start	January		February		March	
		Mid	End	Mid	End	Mid	End
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Call Money (Market)	1.90	1.70	1.60	0.90	1.00	0.60	0.65
1 Month (Market)	2.25	1.70	1.60	1.40	1.40	1.10	1.10
3 Month (Market)	2.85	2.25	2.10	2.10	2.00	2.00	1.70

3.2 Longer Term Rates

	Start	January		February		March	
		Mid	End	Mid	End	Mid	End
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 Year (Market)	3.00	2.40	2.35	2.40	2.30	2.30	2.15
10 Year (PWLB)	3.55	3.57	4.09	3.77	3.83	3.12	3.38
25 Year (PWLB)	4.08	4.19	4.66	4.38	4.55	4.00	4.28

The PWLB rates are for “lower quota” entitlements.

1 to 10 year rates generally eased through the period but longer dated money has been more volatile. Rates approached target levels but never quite dropped enough for new borrowing to be taken.

3.3 Temporary Borrowing/Investments

Turnover during period

	No. Of Deals Struck	Turnover £m
Short Term Borrowing	14	28.80
Short Term Investments	33	30.05

The turnover on investments was relatively low, reflecting the locking of the bulk of the council’s investments into fixed rate, fixed term deals before Christmas in anticipation of rates falling.

Position at Month End

	January £m	February £m	March £m
Short Term Borrowing	1.30	4.60	10.70
Short Term Investments	47.90	46.90	39.00

The overall cash flow through the period was significantly negative which is normal for the period as council tax and non domestic rates receipts slow down and capital expenditure accelerates. This was accentuated by the locking in of investments to counter the falling rates. Temporary borrowing at a cost of around 0.5% has been a bonus to the council to help it defer its long term borrowing plans until rates are at their lowest.

Investment Income Forecast

The forecast income and outturn for the quarter is as follows:

	Cumulative Budget £'000	Cumulative Actual £'000	Cumulative Target Rate %	Cumulative Actual Rate %
Quarter 1	458	674	5.08	5.87
Quarter 2	936	1,362	5.05	5.97
Quarter 3	1,474	2,114	5.00	5.98
Quarter 4	2,000	2,796	4.69	5.98

The target income was revised upwards to reflect the extra income that will be earned following the receipt of the 1 year £10m PWLB loan mentioned in the last report. The revised target was comfortably exceeded due to the excellent rate of interest earned on investments. Locking a high proportion of the council's investments into longer periods earlier in the year helped to protect the investment rate through to the end of the year, especially in view of dramatic falls indicated above. It will also help to secure higher than average investment returns well into 2009, although as investments mature and new investments are undertaken the average rate will fall to much more modest levels. Some of the extra investment income shown in the table above was offset by increased temporary borrowing costs (around £135k), which were incurred to service the 1 year PWLB loan mentioned above. The benchmark return for the year was exceeded by 1.29% the first time that the authority has exceeded the benchmark return by more than 1%.

At the end of March the Audit Commission reported on treasury management arrangements in local government following the collapse of the Icelandic banks. It concluded that the overarching treasury management framework is the right one – but the system needs to be adjusted rather than replaced. Revised guidance from CIPFA is expected in the summer.

In addition the Communities and Local Government Select Committee has been investigating local authority investments and its report is expected shortly.

3.4 Longer Term Borrowing/Investments

The authority did not borrow any new long term money.

3.5 Policy Guidelines

Interest Rate Exposure – complied with.

Approved Counterparty List – complied with. Since the counterparty list was reviewed in January, the Britannia BS has announced talks with the Co Op Financial services group and Dunfermline BS has merged with Nationwide BS. The council's exposure to the Nationwide BS now exceeds its limit, due to the Derbyshire BS, Cheshire BS & Dunfermline BS mergers over the past three months with the Nationwide BS. This will partly unwind in May 2009, when one investment matures and be back within limits by September 2009 when a second investment matures.

Borrowing Instruments – complied with.

Prudential Indicators – complied with:

- Operational Boundary for external debt;
- Upper limit on interest rate exposure on fixed rate debt;
- Upper limit on interest rate exposure on variable rate debt;
- Maturity structure of borrowing as a percentage of fixed rate borrowing;
- Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days;
- Maturity structure of new fixed rate borrowing

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The main risks associated with Treasury Management are security of investment and volatility of return. To combat this, the Authority operated within a clearly defined Treasury Management Policy and an annual borrowing and investment strategy, which set out the control framework.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no issues under this heading.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub - Committee

DATE: 4 June 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Purchase of Performance Management Software System

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

The purpose of the report is to inform the Sub-Committee of a decision to purchase of a web based Performance Management Software System for use by the Council and the Halton Strategic Partnership. The system in question was not the cheapest tendered.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report is noted

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

3.1 Background Information

To date the Council has operated an effective performance monitoring system, largely based upon internally developed templates, to provide performance information to relevant Officers and Members at an organisational and partnership level.

However given a number of changes that have occurred within the operating environment it is unlikely that such arrangements would remain effective in the medium term.

Such changes include:-

- The introduction of a single National Indicator Data Set from April 2008. such measures are no longer confined to the outputs of the organisation, as were the Best Value Performance Indicators that they replaced, but are much more outcome focused and relate to information that originates from both the Council and it's partner agencies.
- The strengthening of Local Area Agreements and the introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment framework that places far greater emphasis upon the collaboration between the Council and it's partners in achieving outcomes for the local communities that they serve.

- The ongoing need to make efficiency savings in light of tighter fiscal constraint.

Taking account of such changes the Council, as have most others, has recognised the potential benefits of acquiring a web based performance software system that would deliver medium-term benefits that would include:-

- Reducing the duplication currently incurred in the reporting of progress towards objectives in the Community Strategy, Corporate Plan and Local Area Agreement.
- Improving the quality, accessibility and timeliness of information required by the Councils decision-making processes.
- Addressing issues raised in the most recent Corporate Performance Assessment concerning the need to improve partnership performance arrangements.

3.2 Selection for shortlist

In response to an invitation to tender, that was advertised through the Council's website, 30 expressions of interest were received that led to 10 tenders being submitted by vendors, the costs of which ranged from £22,000 to £188,000. These costs are the costs of buying licences and maintaining the system for 3 years. They represent the total amount spread over three years, and are not annual figures. The tenders were evaluated on the basis of following criteria,

- Business practice and financial standing - 10%.
- IT Specification - 10%.
- System Specification - 25%
- Cost - 45%.

The evaluation led to the 4 lowest cost suppliers being shortlisted to present their system to a panel that comprised of the Operational Director (Policy & Performance), relevant officers, including performance specialists, from each of the 4 Directorates and representatives from ICT Services.

As a result of this exercise the two lowest cost suppliers were identified as primary options. The performance specialists together with the Corporate Performance Team then visited relevant reference sites and user groups to gather additional intelligence in advance of a final decision.

Details of the two preferred suppliers are as follows

Supplier	Criteria Score	Total Cost (spread over 3 years)
Ten Software	74.98%	£ 21, 800
Inphase	76.84%	£ 53, 000*

* Note: the cost of the Inphase system includes an optional Geographical Information System (GIS) module at an additional aggregate cost over 3 years of £8,000. The Ten system did not offer a similar module. The Halton Data Observatory will also use this GIS module leading to a saving for that project.

3.3 Final Selection

As a result of the process a decision was taken to acquire the Performance Plus software system as although the cost of acquiring the system was higher it had the following medium term advantages in that it demonstrated superior IT and system specifications that:

- Had additional functionality around risk management, outcome based budgeting and visual and graphical capability.
- Offered greater ease of integration with local information systems.
- Offered greater potential for use within specific Directorates and Departments across the Council as well as meeting Corporate and Partnership needs.
- Unlike the system offered by Ten, which had almost exclusively been adopted by small District authorities, had a user community of over 80, principally Unitary, Metropolitan and County authorities.

3.4 Implementation

System implementation will begin during June. This will involve a series of training workshops for system use being delivered to staff both within the Council and within relevant partner agencies.

Concurrent to such workshops work will be undertaken in regards to system design and development and data transfer and it is envisaged that the system will become operational during the second quarter of the current financial year.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None identified at this stage

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the software will be shared equally between the Halton Strategic Partnership and the Borough Council. The Council's contribution over the three years can be met from within existing budgets. The system is externally hosted to facilitate access by external partners, and so there are no additional hardware costs falling to the Council.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

The software allows for the effective monitoring and management of the priorities identified by both the Council and its Partners.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Failure to address issues concerning partnership performance arrangements may negatively impact on the outcome of the CAA and partnership performance management arrangements will remain deficient.

Over 80 authorities are using the software system and there are no reliability issues that would give cause for concern. In the unlikely event of system failure it

would still be practical to revert to the current method of data/information collection and reporting.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no specific Equality & Diversity issues associated with this report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

N/A

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub Committee

DATE: 4 June 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health & Community

SUBJECT: Notification of waiver of Standing Orders by Executive Board on 2nd April 2009 to extend existing contracts for provision of Minor Adaptations and Stair Lifts

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To notify the Executive Board Sub Committee of the decision by the Executive Board. To extend two contracts in the light of the exceptional circumstances.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

The Executive Board Sub Committee note:

i) the decision of the Executive Board;

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 On 2nd April 2009 the Executive Board agreed to extend the following contracts for a period of one year during which time the tendering process for new contracts will be undertaken :

- Contract for the provision of minor adaptations.
- Contract for the provision of stair lifts.

3.2 This decision was taken due to the exceptional circumstances; namely time being available, announcement of grant and capacity within the service.

3.3 Contract for the Provision of Minor Adaptations

3.3.1 A contract for the provision of minor adaptations has existed between Halton Borough Council and JC Construction Limited since April 2006. The awarding of the contract followed a full tendering process and a contract awarded for £52,000 per annum. The contract was due to expire on 31 March 2009.

3.3.2 Since the contract has been in place a responsive service has been provided for disabled people requiring minor adaptations, negating

the need to obtain prices for individual jobs and improving service performance for the provision of minor adaptations within 7 days.

- 3.3.3 The service has provided an average of 1,500 minor adaptations per year at an average unit cost of £35. These include mainly handrails and stair rails but floor fixed toilet frames have also been provided. Some people only require a single minor adaptation but in other cases several pieces of work have been carried out.
- 3.3.4 Feedback from people using the service has been extremely positive with comments about the speed of provision, the courtesy of the provider, satisfaction with the work carried out and the improvement this has made to independence.
- 3.3.5 Over the last 3 years, JC Construction have been providing additional services to be more effective and additional works awarded to the value of £20,000. As part of the tendering process the new specification for the provision of minor adaptations will be expanded to provide a more comprehensive services and will include external adaptations such as half steps and external rails.
- 3.3.6 It is proposed that the new contract will last for a period of 3 years and will offer an option to extend beyond that for a further 2 years, subject to specified outcomes being delivered and specified targets being met.
- 3.3.7 The cost of the contract for 2009/10 and subsequent years will be met from existing available budgetary provision.

3.4 Contract for the Provision of Stair Lifts for Disabled People

- 3.4.1 A contract for the provision of stair lifts has existed between Halton Borough Council and Lift Able Limited since 1 April 2008. The awarding of the contract followed a full tendering process. The contract was due to expire on 31 March 2009. This contract is on a non-exclusive basis. If required, for flexibility purposes, the Council can go to other suppliers Lift Able are not able to provide a lift.
- 3.4.2 Since the contract has been in place a responsive, timely service has been provided for disabled people requiring stair lifts. Stair lifts have been removed from the Disabled Facilities Grant process as a result and this has simplified and reduced the time scales involved in the process for installing stair lifts. This has improved the service for users including those with palliative care needs.
- 3.4.3 The service has provided 73 stair lifts to date in 2008/09. These have ranged in price from £1,500 to £4,000 depending on complexity. In palliative care cases it has been possible to install stair lifts within 10 days and more complex lifts have taken between 6-8 weeks to install. These figures compare with several months for

stair lifts provided through the Disabled Facilities Grant process.

- 3.4.4 Feedback from people using the service has been positive with comments about the speed of provision and the helpfulness of the Lift Able representative. Initial problems in the early stages of the contract have been resolved and regular monitoring arrangements are in place.
- 3.4.5 The new specification for the provision of stair lifts will provide the opportunity to consider taking advantage of the framework agreement for the provision of stair lifts that has been negotiated by the Northern Housing Consortium with a number of providers. This would offer greater flexibility and choice.
- 3.4.6 It is proposed that the new contract will last for a period of 3 years and will offer an option to extend beyond that for a further 2 years, subject to specified outcomes being delivered and specified targets being met.
- 3.4.7 The cost of the contract for 2009/10 and subsequent years will be met from existing available budgetary provision.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Handyperson Service will provide an opportunity to explore the extent to which the development of this service and the contract for the provision of minor adaptations can be combined to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Contract for provision of minor adaptations – The estimated cost of the 12 month extension of the contract for the existing service is £72,000.
- 5.2 Contract for provision of stair lifts – The estimated cost of the 12 month extension of the contract for the existing service is £92,000.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Minor adaptations and stair lifts will continue to be provided for children under these contracts.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Provision of minor adaptations and stair lifts will improve the independence of vulnerable people, enabling them to continue to bathe, improve access within the home, use other facilities safely and reduce the risk of falls.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Provision of minor adaptations and stair lifts will reduce the risk of falls both within and immediately outside the properties of vulnerable people.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 As more people with increasingly complex needs are enabled to continue to live at home independently there is a risk that the level of service required will expand beyond existing capacity. Monitoring demand will assist in planning for and managing this eventuality.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 These services will be provided to all service user groups.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Urgent authorisation of extension of Contracts for the provision of Minor Adaptations and Stair Lifts.	Municipal Building, Widnes	Dwayne Johnson Strategic Director Health & Community