

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 21 September 2017 2.00 p.m.
The Boardroom, 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 Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
3. HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO	
(A) PROCUREMENT OF HALTON HEALTHWATCH AND ADVOCACY HUB SERVICE - KEY DECISION	1 - 5

*Please contact Angela Scott on 0151 511 8670 or
Angela.scott@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 19 October 2017*

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8. SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
PART II In this case the Board has a discretion to exclude the press and public and, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it is RECOMMENDED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Adult Social Services

PORTFOLIO: Health & Wellbeing

SUBJECT: The procurement of Halton Healthwatch and Halton Advocacy Hub

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to commission Healthwatch and an advocacy hub through an open tender process, with the contracts for these services commencing on 1st April 2018.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That Executive Board approves the commissioning of Halton Healthwatch and Halton Advocacy Hub through an open tender process.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The authority's statutory duties with regards to Healthwatch and advocacy is found within the following legislation;

- The Health & Social Care Act 2012
 - Healthwatch
 - Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy
- The Care Act
 - Independent Advocacy
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
 - Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCA)
- The Mental Health Act 1983 as amended in 2009
 - Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHA)

3.2 Halton has contracts with 4 agencies for the delivery of these functions. All these contracts are due to expire in March 2018. Table 1 shows a summary of the organisations currently providing these services.

Table 1

Service	Provider	Contract Expiry Date
Healthwatch	Healthwatch Halton	March 2018
Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy	Carers Federation	March 2018 with an option to further extend by 2 years
Independent Advocacy	SHAP	March 2018
Independent Mental Capacity Advocates	Together for Mental Health	March 2018
Independent Mental Health Advocates	SHAP	March 2018

- 3.3** Work has been undertaken with neighbouring authorities to identify opportunities for a collaborative approach to re-procuring and delivering these functions. However most authorities have secured new contracts for the delivering locality based advocacy services and Healthwatch contracts in other areas also include other functions..
- 3.4** With regards to advocacy services in the borough, the delivery of these services by 4 different providers has led to a fragmented approach which potential users find difficult to navigate.
- 3.5** The intention is to combine Healthwatch and the advocacy service into one single contract. The benefits of this approach include;
- improving access for local people through a single gateway to advocacy services
 - providing a seamless service to people who may have need of different aspects of advocacy at different times
 - enabling a more efficient and flexible use of resources for the successful provider
 - improving the financial sustainability of these services through the combining of contract values and an economy of scale
 - providing a more efficient contract and performance management arrangement for the authority

4.0 BUSINESS CASE IN RESPECT OF PROCUREMENT

4.1 Value for Money

If a market procurement route is agreed then the contract for the new service will be awarded on the basis of quality and price, thus ensuring value for money. It is anticipated that by reducing the number of providers operating in the Borough we will be in a position to reduce the overall current budget.

4.2 Transparency

Contracts will be recorded in the Council's Contracts Register accessible via The Chest, the Council's e-tendering portal.

All Council payments in excess of £500 are the published on the Council's Open Data and Financial Information Page on the Internet.

4.3 Propriety and Security

Compliance with anti-corruption practices will be adhered to and any of the contracts within the subject of this report will be terminated if there is any occurrence of corruption by any organisation or their staff.

4.4 Accountability

The contracts will be performance managed and service standards monitored by commissioners and the contracts team.

4.5 Position of the Contract under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015

The light-touch regime (LTR) is a specific set of rules for certain service contracts that tend to be of lower interest to cross-border competition. Those service contracts include certain social, health and education services, defined by Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes.

LTR will be applied to the Halton Healthwatch and Halton Advocacy Hub service as a provision of this type is included in the list of services to which the Light-Touch Regime applies as set out in Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Annex A).

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The method of procurement complies with both Public Contract Regulations, 2015 and the Council's Procurement Standing Orders.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The combined contract values of the services in Table 1 are £248k per annum. It is intended to commission Halton Healthwatch and Halton Advocacy Hub over a 5 year period; a contract value that will be in excess of £1 million. To comply with standing orders, approval is required by Executive Board.

6.1 Financial provision for the service is contained within the Directorate's current budgets. However, it is anticipated that commissioning these services in this way will reduce the overall cost to the authority

6.2 A contract for this new service will be awarded for five years with two one year optional extensions. TUPE regulations will apply for affected staff.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

None identified.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

Commissioning these services supports the authority in delivering its statutory duties

7.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The Quality Assurance Team will monitor this contract and ensure the Council and Halton residents receive value for money.

9.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

10.1 As the value of the proposed contract will exceed the EU threshold for services of this type, we are seeking Executive Board approval

10.2 To ensure business continuity and compliance with the authority's statutory duties.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

11.1 An option to commission Healthwatch across a wider geographical footprint was considered in section 3.3

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

12.1 The procurement process will commence from October 2017 with a contract commencement date of 1st April 2017.

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

13.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Public Health

PORTFOLIO: Health and Wellbeing

SUBJECT: Affordable Warmth -Publication of Statement of intent to utilise Energy Company Obligation Flexibility criteria (ECO2Flex)

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To outline the Energy Company Obligation, ECO, programme and the recent inclusion of a Flexibility component, ECO2Flex.
- 1.2 To outline how the flexibility component supports Halton's Affordable Warmth Strategy and how residents can benefit from
- 1.3 To seek support for a Liverpool City Region, LCR, approach to access the programme
- 1.4 To seek approval for a joint LCR Statement of Intent (Sol)

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) The Joint Statement of Intent is approved;**
- 2) Halton participates in a Combined Authority or similar City Region or devolution process to access the flexibility component of the Energy Company Obligation scheme**
- 3) The authority to deliver the flexible component of ECO 2 is delegated to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Health and Wellbeing.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 About the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Flexible Eligibility mechanism (ECO2Flex)**
 - 3.1.1 The ECO2Flex scheme supports the implementation of the Council's Affordable Warmth Strategy Action Plan. The Strategy enables households in Halton to achieve the heating levels they need to maintain comfort and good health, at an affordable cost. Living in cold homes can damage the health and wellbeing of the pregnant woman, the growing toddler, school-aged children, the long-term ill and the elderly. It can affect both the low income households

and households of people with greater heating needs due to ill -health and disability.

3.1.2 About one in ten households in Halton are living in fuel poverty. This means they are either unable to heat their homes to an acceptable level to maintain their health and wellbeing or they are spending so much on heating their homes that they do not have enough disposable income to pay for other essential household needs. Fuel poverty can have significant adverse effects on health and wellbeing of people, especially those considered to be vulnerable.

3.1.3 A Key strand of the Strategy is to Improve the energy efficiency of dwellings within the Borough. This will achieve the following objectives:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of Halton residents who are at risk of ill health from living in cold homes
 - Reduce fuel bills for households. This can increase money available for other needs such as eating
 - Help to tackle fuel poverty
 - Reduce CO2 emission within the Borough
 - Contribute to environmental sustainability.

3.1.4 The ECO2Flex is part of the Government licence requirements for those companies that supply gas and electricity to the public. It is an optional extension of the existing ECO scheme to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty through energy efficiency measures. It runs for 18 months, from April 2017 till September 2018.

3.1.5 Suppliers are given targets based on their share of the domestic gas and electricity market. The Scheme focuses on the installation of insulation and heating measures and supports vulnerable consumer groups.

3.1.6 Following consultation, the Government has determined that local authorities will be able to define eligible homes under the new 'flexible eligibility' mechanism. Suppliers can meet up to 10% of their Affordable Warmth Obligation targets through the flexible mechanism.

3.1.7 There is no cost to the Council in determining who is eligible (other than some internal administration), however there is no guarantee of what grant work energy companies will undertake, if any at all.

3.2 ECO FLEXIBILITY

3.2.1 The Government intends that flexible eligibility for local authorities should target the two main categories of private tenure households that may otherwise be excluded under Affordable Warmth:

- Fuel poor households, in particular, those not in receipt of eligible benefits; and
- Low income households that are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

- 3.2.2 Accountability for the accuracy of targeting is determined by local authorities who are required to identify eligible households and issue a declaration to prove eligibility.
- 3.2.3 In order to ensure accountability, reduce the scope for non-compliance and monitor the effectiveness of the mechanism, the Government will require local authorities to:
- Publish a **Statement of Intent (Sol)**, detailing the methodology and criteria they intend to use to identify eligible customers before they can provide a declaration to suppliers;
 - Issue a declaration to energy suppliers stating that they had determined a household as eligible under Affordable Warmth, and the reasons for determining them as eligible;
 - Produce annual reports on their use of flexible eligibility; and
 - Collect and maintain evidence on their targeting processes and participate in the evaluation of the mechanism.
- 3.2.4 Given the requirements of the wider ECO scheme it is expected that the majority of activity under ECO Flexibility will be cavity wall and loft insulation (there maybe scope for replacement storage heaters or first time central heating, but it is very unlikely to include replacement boilers or solid wall insulation).
- 3.2.5 Should the ECO2Flex scheme be deemed successful nationally then we would expect ECO3 to continue with this flexibility and potentially increase the impact across the borough.

3.3 DELIVERY OPTIONS

- 3.3.1 Assuming Halton would like residents to benefit from this opportunity, it first needs to publish a Statement of Intent (before available funds are allocated) and develop a partnership with an Energy company or one of their agents.
- 3.3.2 Halton could run a scheme as an individual Local Authority, within its own boundaries. This would allow it to run schemes on behalf of other authorities or sub contract to another Local Authority, or work in partnership with neighbouring Authorities.
- 3.3.3 Liverpool City Region (LCR) authorities met to discuss options and produced a LCR-wide scheme and Statement of Intent (Sol), which will ensure a consistent approach across the LCR. A draft Sol has been written (see attached appendix). The advantage of working with the LCR is that there is an existing procured ECO supplier contract in place through Liverpool City Council. Halton has been duly represented in this process.
- 3.3.4 Halton could still publish separately and use the draft Sol as the basis for its own Sol without many changes being required. However that would require a procurement exercise for appointing a delivery partner.

3.3.5 Given the timescales for delivery and the benefits of working together, it is recommended that the LCR approach is supported.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The ECO2FLEX is a potential opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of homes in Halton. This will reduce the risk of living in cold homes, especially for vulnerable people in the borough. As a result, the short and long term health and wellbeing of qualifying and successful households will be improved. The approach supports the work of the recently adopted Affordable Warmth Strategy.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There may be financial implications in the administration of this scheme. This will be assessed and managed within the Strategic Group and through partner agencies.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

For children, Fuel poverty and living in a cold home can affect normal development. This includes: unhealthy weight gain; worsened health problems like asthma; increased hospital admissions and reduced educational achievement. For adolescents and young people, living in a cold home can also lead to poor emotional and mental well-being resulting in reduced ability to cope with the stress of life.

Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People is a priority in Halton. Increasing Affordable warmth will help to achieve this goal.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Reducing fuel poverty and living in cold homes can improve educational achievements for children and young people. This is likely to improve life chances, including employment potentials for people in Halton

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Protecting the health of Halton's population is a statutory responsibility for Public Health and the Council. Increasing Affordable warmth through the ECO2FLEX programme will improve the health and wellbeing of individual households and contribute to a healthier community.

6.4 A Safer Halton

N/A

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The environment in which we live and the physical infrastructure of our communities have a direct impact on our health and wellbeing. Fuel poverty is greatly impacted by dwellings which are poor in terms of energy efficiency. Improving the energy efficiency of homes in Halton will reduce fuel poverty and living in cold homes. It will also contribute to reduction in the council's carbon footprint.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

There are no major risks associated with the participation in the ECO2FLEX scheme in Halton.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 This proposal has no negative impact on Equality and Diversity within the Council.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Liverpool City Region ECO2Flex joint Statement of Intent		Olukemi Adeyemi olukemi.adeyemi@halton.gov.uk

ECO Flexible Eligibility: Liverpool City Region Joint Statement of Intent

This joint Statement of Intent covers the following Liverpool City Region Authorities whose full addresses can be found in Annex A:

Halton Borough Council

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council E080000xx-(Version)-00001

Liverpool City Council E08000012-(Version)-00001

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council E08000014-(Version)-00001

St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council E08000013-(Version)-00001

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council E08000015-(Version)-00001

Version LCR 1.0.2017

1) Date of publication [DD/MM/YY]

2) Publication on website [provide specific link to website] HECA report links of each LA. Ultimately it may link to a LCR website

1. Liverpool City Region Joint Statement of Intent

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Local Authorities named above welcome the introduction of ECO Flexible Eligibility. With this joint Statement of Intent the Liverpool City Region Local Authorities (LA) named above wish to express their commitment to improving the energy efficiency of their residential properties within the Liverpool City Region, and thereby reduce fuel poverty. Energy efficiency improvements will be delivered in the most cost effective way possible, and maximise efficiency savings through a combined approach to maximise these savings utilising the procured Liverpool City Region approved process. Details of the approved procurement will be maintained on the same webpage where this statement resides. Although this is a joint Statement of Intent No LA listed above, may make a declaration on behalf of another.

It is also a Liverpool City Region ambition to reduce fuel poverty across all six of the local authorities and as such a combined approach whereby the same offer is available to all across the region is desirable. The advantages of the combined approach are that it offers economy of scale for funders, maintains a consistent message with the public and; uses the collaborative strengths and experiences of all the partners.

It is our intention that funding under the Help to Heat section of ECO2t within the Liverpool City Region Local Authorities will be available across the private housing sector, as our respective households across the region who are the most vulnerable can be found within any private tenure. By taking this approach, area based and street by street approaches will be more tenable, and likely to come to fruition as the funding offer will be the same cross tenure. However, the scheme will have to accept that the administrative authority of legislation and the regulator, currently OFGEM, may limit our desires particularly with regard to specific sectors such as registered social housing, static caravans, house boats and park homes.

An individual household which falls under a Local Authority Declaration (LAD) is not guaranteed to receive installed measures as a final decision will depend on:

- I. the resident meeting the criteria stipulated in this statement;
- II. the level of funding that can be offered dependant on the lifetime savings that can be achieved, the cost of the measure which relate to their property, the current heating systems and its state of repair;
- III. energy suppliers' obligation levels;
- IV. the technical capacity of the property and presence or absence of barriers which may impede physical delivery;
- V. the ability of the Liverpool City Region to secure a delivery partner/s.

2. How the LA intends to identify eligible households

We do not intend to target those on benefits for flexible eligibility as these households are captured under the Help to Heat portion of ECO2t.

In addition to those that would be Solid Wall (SWI) 'infill' as identified under the Government guidance and those identified to us from our existing energy delivery partner/s or local registered housing providers. The LCR Local Authorities intend to identify households, that may benefit from the installation of measures under "flexible eligibility", by identifying households that are living in fuel poverty (FP) or living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home (LIVC).

2.1. Criteria for identifying fuel poverty

To reduce the administrative burden on LA officers and to enable every contact to count, as per the NICE guidelines NG6 '[Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes](#)'. We intend to identify those who are in fuel poverty to be:

Living in an EPC Band C or less efficient property, in accordance with the Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy, and be required to spend 10%¹ of their

¹ In line with other UK government administered schemes.

disposable income (after rent or mortgage payment is taken in to account and excluding income payments for disability related needs) on fuel to maintain an adequate level of heating. SAP estimates of the cost to heat the property per annum². If no EPC Band is available then a similar adjacent property's SAP³ EPC Band may be used or the LA reserves the right to use appropriate and approved proxy software packages that can offer a suitable indicative SAP level.

2.2. Criteria for identifying low income and vulnerability to cold

To reduce the administrative burden on LA officers and to enable every contact to count, as per the NICE guidelines NG6. We intend to identify those who are deemed as LIVC to be:

Low Income:

- On a combined household income of less than £31,920⁴ based on mean equivalised household disposable income in 2016. For administrative purposes we know that disposable income is 85% of gross income therefore we will use a proxy gross income threshold of £37,553 and;

Vulnerable to Cold:

Having one or more of the following vulnerabilities:

- a. Those identified in Nice Guidelines NG6 as "Groups at greater risk of harm from cold weather";
 - people with cardiovascular conditions;
 - people with respiratory conditions;
 - people with disabilities;
 - people with mental health conditions or learning difficulties that reduces individual's ability to self-care (including dementia);
 - older people (65 and older);
 - households with young children (from new-born to school age);
 - pregnant women;
- b. People with pre-existing chronic medical conditions such as, but not limited to: diabetes, stroke, suppressed immune system, terminally ill;
- c. People who are housebound or otherwise low mobility;
- d. Families with school age children;
- e. People assessed as being at risk of, or having had, recurrent falls.

² An adequate level of heating is described as 21°C for 16 hours a day in a living room and no less than 18°C for all other rooms (World Health Organisation).

³ SAP Standard Assessment Process in this instance SAP refers to the standard calculation of a buildings energy performance, as reported in the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).

⁴

Where oversubscribed we reserve the right to prioritise those we determine to be at greatest risk as; households that are in Council Tax Band A-D, containing one or more of the following:

- Vulnerable to cold in **b** and **c** in section 2.2 above;
- Children under 5;
- Older people 85 and over;
- Pregnant women; or
- Terminally ill.

2.3. Identification of area based schemes and scheme requirements for SWI “in-fill” projects

The Liverpool City Region Local Authorities intend to support area based schemes through Local Authority Declarations (LADs) in order for “whole place” schemes to be realised. We believe that this is an effective solution to inclusion, regeneration of whole areas, improved community cohesion and subsequent benefits from an improvement in cohesion.

Area based schemes will be determined according to each local authority and or Registered Provider of social housing depending on the housing stock management within each authority and the needs of the residents. The following is a list of the targeting components which may be used to identify area based scheme locations that will be subject to Local Area Declarations:

- Lower Super Output Area (LSOA);
- RdSAP \leq D;
- Tower blocks, whole estates, streets by street projects;
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) statistics;
- Areas of regeneration; and
- Any regeneration approved grant initiative such as those from the Homes & Communities Agency or the European Regional Development Fund.

We would look to offer Local Authority Declarations to the following prescribed areas as these have already been identified as areas of regeneration and the targeting components used to determine these LADs is given with each scheme listed below:

- X,
- Y,
- Z,

Although this is a combined Statement of Intent the logical administrative actions of evaluating and signing of the local authority declarations would be undertaken by each local authority.

3. Governance

Although this is a combined Statement of Intent the logical administrative actions of evaluating and signing of the Local Authority (LA) Declarations would be undertaken by each local authority. No LA named in this Sol is permitted to act on behalf of another.

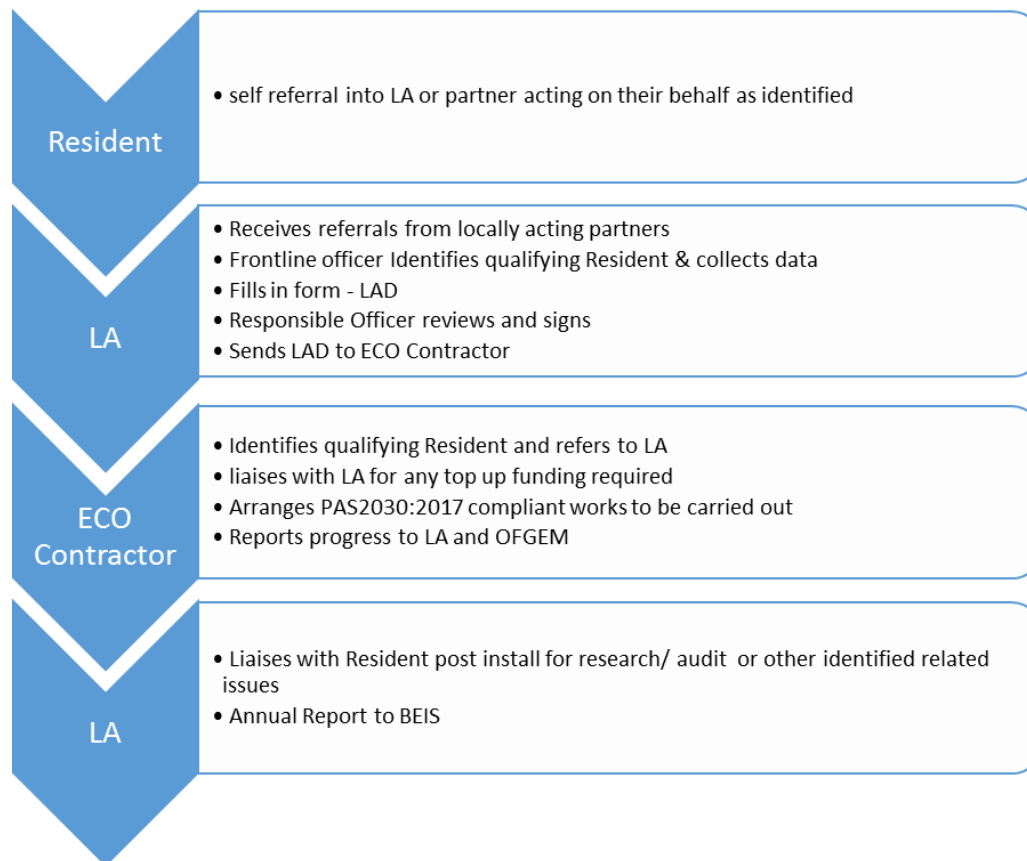
The posts of the Responsible Officer (RO) for signing “Local Authority Declarations” on behalf of the local authorities can be found below and each LA address can be found in Annex A:

- I. **Liverpool City Council:**
Principle housing officers, Head of Housing Strategy, Head of the Healthy Homes Programme Home Improvement Agency
- II. **Sefton Council Metropolitan Borough Council:**
Appointed HECA contacts as declared on Sefton’s Reporting webpage
- III. **Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council:**
TBC
- IV. **St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council:** St.Helens Council’s Affordable Warmth Unit Representative
- V. **Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council:**Energy Efficiency Officer, Strategic Housing Partnership Manager and Group Manager Strategic Housing
- VI. **Halton Borough Council:** Affordable Warmth Group representative, Public Health Division.

3.1. Governance structures

The structure given below, is an outline of the process across the Local Authorities. Specific referral routes are given in section 4 below by each Local Authority.

Individuals



Area based

Local Authority housing officers, in conjunction with Registered Providers (RP) where applicable, will determine area based schemes which are in need of retrofit and Energy Efficiency (EE) improvements.

A schematic and address list will be provided along with which properties can be included as infill and which will require a LAD in order to present an offer of a whole place scheme.

The RO will sign the LAD and provide a copy to the requesting Officer and sent to a Liverpool ECO Framework Contractor.

4. Referrals

Data sharing in accordance with the Data Protection Act is accounted for within the signed Liverpool ECO Framework; the Contractor becomes a data controller when client details are passed to it. The obligated supplier working on behalf of the Liverpool City Region Local Authorities would be expected to report quarterly on:

- I. Number of LADs unused and the reasoning for this;

- II. Costing of works, ECO Level of funding, any top-up funding and source of;
- III. Average timescales from receiving LAD to work completion;
- IV. Pre and post install SAP;
- V. CO₂ Savings;
- VI. X,Y,Z

The LA reserve the right to randomly select properties that LADs have been issued to, to receive follow up; this is in order to audit the data received by the installer is correct and that the information contained within the original LAD was correct at the time of writing by an independent officer to deter, prevent and detect fraud.

In order to administer this scheme the Local Authorities named within this document will collate evidence in accordance with the scheme including the following where appropriate:

- a. Income data;
- b. SAP Band;
- c. Estimated annual fuel costs;
- d. Vulnerability; and
- e. Equalities monitoring data.

4.1 Referral Routes

Residents and organisations who believe they know a household who may qualify are directed to contact their own Local Authority provider to self-refer to this scheme. Information about who to contact for each Local Authority is given below.

I. Halton Borough Council:

Halton Direct Link and the Contact Centre will act as the central point of contact for referrals. The Council will accept referrals from individuals or organisations, such as Energy Projects Plus, acting on behalf of individuals.

Halton Direct Link Offices are based in **Widnes Town Centre** and **Halton Lea**.

Phone: 0303 333 4300

II. Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council:

All referrals will be directed through Knowsleys Energy Officer

Phone: 0151 443 5817

Email: simon.rugen@knowsley.gov.uk

III. Liverpool Referrals:

Liverpool's Healthy Homes Home Improvement Agency will act as a central hub for a referrals route from fuel poverty/vulnerability/social care or health organisations, or any partnership with a selected obligated supplier across the City.

Freephone: 0800 012 1754

Email: www.healthyhomesprogramme@liverpool.gov.uk

IV. Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council:

All applications for LADs will be coordinated through the affordable warmth service at Sefton Council. The council will accept referrals from individuals or advocates, such as energy projects plus, on behalf of individuals.

Phone: 0151 934 2222

V. St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council:

All applications for LADs will be coordinated through the affordable warmth service at St.Helens Council. The council will accept referrals from individuals or advocates on behalf of individuals.

Phone: 01744 676555

Email: homeimprovementagency@sthelens.gov.uk

VI. Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council:

TBC

5. Signature

The Sol should be signed by the Chief Executive Officer for the local authority or other senior officer nominated on their behalf who is at least at Director Level.

Signed on Behalf of **Liverpool City Council**

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Position:

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Date:

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Signed on Behalf of **Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council**

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Position:

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Date:

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Signed on behalf of **Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council**

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Position:

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Date:

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Signed on behalf of **St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council**

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Position:

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Date:

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Signed on behalf of **Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council**

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Position:

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Date:

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Signed on Behalf of **Halton Borough Council**

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Position:

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Date:

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ANNEX A

Halton Borough Council

Public Health
2nd Floor, Runcorn Town Hall
Runcorn
WA7 5TD

Knowsley Council

Strategic Housing
1st Floor the Yorkon Building
Archway Road
Huyton
Knowsley
L36 9FB

Liverpool City Council

Healthy Homes HIA Team
Cunard Building
Water Street
Liverpool
L3 1DS

Sefton Council

Affordable Warmth Service
3rd floor, Magdalen House
30 Trinity Road
Bootle, Merseyside
L20 3NJ

St.Helens Council

People's Services - Private Housing Initiatives
Town Hall
Victoria Square
St.Helens
WA10 1HP

Wirral Council

Housing and Investment Team
PO Box 290
Brighton Street
Wallasey

CH27 9FQ

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Proposed Installation of Bus Shelters at Bus Stops located on Clifton Rd with the Junction of Malpas Rd

WARDS:

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Board of a request for bus shelters to be installed at the bus stops shown in appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.2 To inform the Board of the consultation that has taken place and comments received.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board consider the installation of the bus shelters in Clifton Road.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council received a request for the installation of a bus shelter installed at bus stop A identified in appendix 1 of this report in May 2016.
- 3.2 A period of consultation was undertaken with residential properties within the vicinity of the bus stop. At that time four responses were received. Two in support of the installation and two against. One of the resident in support of the installation also asked that a bus stop be installed across the road at Bus Stop B identified in appendix 1.
- 3.3 As a result of receiving the additional request a second round of consultation was undertaken in July 2016 across a wider area within the proximity of the bus stops with 75 properties consulted.
- 3.4 A further six responses were received. Of these responses four responses supported the installation of the stops and two were against the installation. Details of the responses to both consultations are set out in Appendix 2. The four residents supporting the installation in the 2nd consultation were different from the two who supported the installation in the first round

- 3.5 In total over the two consultations six separate letters of support from different individuals have been received. Four objections have been received.
- 3.6 The main concern of the objections is the fear of the shelters attracting anti-social behaviour. It should be noted that bus shelters were in place at this location some years ago and it is understood that the shelters were removed due to anti-social behaviour at that time.
- 3.7 Recent evidence from the Safer Halton Partnership identified over a 5 month period, that there was 1 reported ASB incident in the immediate vicinity or periphery of the bus stop location involving youths pushing bins over. The Partnership are of the view that this would suggest it is not an ASB hotspot area. Although, one of the respondents objecting to the proposal called the Transport Co-ordination Office at the time of the 2nd consultation to report anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of the bus stops. These comments can be found at appendix 2. The objectors indicate that evidence from the Safer Halton Partnership is contradicted by personal experience of anti-social behaviour and several incidents have been reported. See paragraph 3.12 below.
- 3.8 A report was taken to the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board (PPB) on 28th June 2017. The report considered the consultation responses and views in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour. The PPB supported the installation of the bus stops.
- 3.9 Since the report to the PPB the Council has received a complaint from those residents that objected to the installation of the shelters. Two of the complainants are members of the Council and for openness and fairness it is being brought to the Executive Board. The complaint raises a number of issues about the decision making process.
- 3.10 The complainants are concerned that the low level of responses to both consultation exercises makes the results of the consultations inconclusive. They also have asked if some of the residents that supported the installation in the 2nd consultation were included in the initial consultation. The Executive Board are advised that there has been no double counting of those in support of the proposal. In total, six separate residents have supported the installation over the two consultations. The details of individuals responding to the consultation cannot be included in the report as this constitutes personal data. However, to provide assurance that the six responses were from separate individuals the information will be provided to the Executive Board separately as background information.
- 3.11 The complainants consider that the need for shelters has not been established. They raise concerns that the transport usage data for Clifton Road was not made available to the PPB and in their view the

data shows low usage numbers. They are concerned that the data covers the six stops in Clifton Road not just the two where the stops are proposed and they may include both boarding and alighting data. The data is commercially sensitive and cannot be included in the report but has been shared with the Executive Board separately as background information. Whilst this data cannot be considered in a public forum it can be confirmed that the data is collected by operators in a different way with some data covering the six stops in Clifton and other data covering the stops in question. Additionally, it is collected over different time periods, therefore comparing data is difficult. None of the data includes alighting passengers. Whilst the data may show lower than average figures for the area compared to other areas of the Borough, a key consideration for a shelter is not usage figures but rather the improvement of the passenger journey particularly in inclement weather.

3.12 The complainants have also expressed concerns that the fears of anti-social behaviour are unfounded are contradicted by several incidents they have reported. These include damage to the bus stops signs and timetables, graffiti at the shelters at the next stop in Clifton Road, a school sign next to the bus stop in Clifton Road been reversed. In conclusion they consider that the case for bus shelters in this area has not been made.

3.13 The overall response to the two consultations was low but they do demonstrate that there is marginally more support for the stops. The Ward members have previously indicated support for the installation of the stops as they have received request in the past from residents for the installation of bus stops.. A key consideration for a shelter is not usage figures but rather the improvement of the passenger journey particularly in inclement weather.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The installation of the shelters will attract a cost of £1984 per shelter with ongoing maintenance costs which will be borne from within the existing bus stop maintenance budget.

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

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no risks associated with the report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Public transport infrastructure plays an important role for passengers with a wide range of disabilities who wish to access local public transport services.

8.2 The current Department for Transport (DFT) document “Inclusive Mobility” provides a guide to best practise in relation to making accessibility improvements to public transport infrastructure. The document provides guidance on number of accessibility improvements one of which is the recommendation to provide a bus shelter at bus stops where possible.

8.3 The document also identifies recommended walking distances without a rest for people with varying disabilities. The table below shows the distances identified;

Impaired group	Recommended distance limit without a rest
Wheelchair users	150m
Visually impaired	150m
Mobility impaired using stick	50m
Mobility impaired without walking aid	100m

8.4 Standing can also be difficult and painful for some people who have disabilities with the document also identifying that people can find it difficult to stand for a period as short as 1 minute. However, some people with disabilities were able to stand for a period up to 10 minutes.

8.5 Without these facilities passengers with disabilities may be excluded from using the local public transport network.

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

9.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.

Appendix 1

Bus Stop A



Bus Stop B



Appendix 2

Consultation Responses May 2016

Date	Comments
23/5/2016	Against shelter installation due to ASB. Shelter was removed some years ago regarding following complaints from residents in the vicinity of the shelter
23/5/2016	Received call 11/1/17 objecting to the shelters and will formerly write in.
May 16	Would like shelters at both stops and supports the proposal
April 16	Initially asked for shelter in April 16 via local Councillor

Consultation Response July 2016

Date	Comments
17/1/17	Received Email objecting to the Shelters being installed.
11/1/17	Call received stating witnessed ASB at the bus stop on the evening of the 10/1/17. 3 youths shaking information case and pole. Called at residents house who went out to the youths to remonstrate with regards to ASB. The resident was asked not to go out at the time but just wanted to witness the ASB. Further call received regarding ASB at the bus stop. School pupils kicking the post and entering the driveway to house.
11/1/17	Thinks bus shelters are a good idea and hopes they will be installed soon.
11/1/17	No objections to the shelters and supports the proposal
12/1/17	Received email in support of the shelter installation proposal.
14/1/17	Received email in support of the shelters being installed. Mum is elderly and uses buses.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Street Lighting Highway Electrical Term Maintenance Contract

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek approval from Executive Board to extend the current term maintenance contract for a period of one year from 1st November 2017 to 31st October 2018, and to notify the Board that the anticipated expenditure will be in excess of £1.0m.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board

- 1) **agree to the extension of the Street Lighting Term Maintenance Contract under Procurement Standing Order 1.15 for a period of 1 year from 1st November 2017 to 31st October 2018; and**
- 2) **It be recorded that the expenditure is anticipated to be in excess of £1.0m per annum.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In November 2010, Tarmac commenced a term maintenance contract to maintain all highway electrical equipment within the borough. It was initially for a period of 5 years but included options for up to five one year extensions. Two extensions have already been utilised. The Council's highway electrical assets covered by this contract includes the following equipment: -

- Over 20,000 conventional lighting columns plus 400 lighting columns for HHT
- 98 high mast lighting columns
- 1,400 illuminated traffic signs
- 450 illuminated bollards
- 18 Zebra crossings

3.2 The Contractor provides a good service and is responsive to the Council's needs. It meets the Performance Indicator for repairs, which is included in the Quarterly Monitoring reports. Extending the

Contract represents good value and saves the Council the cost of re-tendering the work.

3.3 The normal expenditure covered by this Contract has usually been around £0.5m each year. However due to capital funding being secured to install LED lanterns, which will be carried out through this Contract. This will increase the work carried out through the contract, therefore it is anticipated that the expenditure will now exceed £1.0m for the next extension period. In the longer term as result of installing LED lanterns there will be a reduction in street lighting maintenance costs.

3.4 There is no statutory duty to provide street lighting. The power to provide street lighting is set out in Section 97 Highways Act 1980 (see below).

Highways Act 1980

97 Lighting of highways.

(1) The Minister and every local highway authority may provide lighting for the purposes of any highway or proposed highway for which they are or will be the highway authority, and may for that purpose—

(a) contract with any persons for the supply of gas, electricity or other means of lighting; and

(b) construct and maintain such lamps, posts and other works as they consider necessary.

(2) A highway authority may alter or remove any works constructed by them under this section or vested in them under Part III of the Local Government Act 1966 or section 270 below.

(3) A highway authority shall pay compensation to any person who sustains damage by reason of the execution of works under this section.

(4) Section 45 of the Public Health Act 1961 (attachment of street lamps to buildings) and section 81 of that Act (summary recovery of damages for negligence) apply to a highway authority who are not a council of a kind therein mentioned as they apply to such a council.

However, if street lighting is provided under this Act, then it needs to be maintained in a serviceable condition, hence the need for the current maintenance contract.

4.0 **BUSINESS CASE FOR EXTENSION OF CONTRACTS**

4.1 **Value for money**

Value for money will continue to be assured through regular contract

monitoring by the Street Lighting Team.

4.2 Transparency

The Contract will be recorded in the Council's Contract Register accessible via the internet together with the publication of all spend in excess of £500.

4.3 Propriety and Scrutiny

The extension of the contract referred to in this report will be compliant with Halton Borough Council's Procurement Standing Orders. Compliance with anti-corruption practices will be adhered to and the contract within the subject of this report will be terminated if there is any occurrence of corruption by any organisations or their staff.

4.4 Accountability

The contract will be performance managed and monitored by the Street Lighting Team.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no policy implications.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The total financial cost to the authority of the contract and the recommended extension will be met from existing capital and revenue budgets, which have been approved previously, but there will be a need for future revenue allocations after 31st March 2018.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

There are no direct implications for this priority.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

There are no direct implications for this priority.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

There are no direct implications for this priority.

7.4 A Safer Halton

Street lighting can contribute to road safety and a reduction in accidents. It can also help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour which affects how safe people feel during the hours of darkness.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Street lighting is often part of Urban Renewal schemes and does have a positive impact on improving the environment and needs to be maintained once it is installed.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 Street lighting is not a statutory function and there is no legal requirement for roads to be lit, but once it is installed it must be maintained. There are no risks associated with this report as the funds for maintenance of all highway electrical equipment have been secured for the current financial year and therefore a risk assessment is not required. There will be a need for future revenue allocations to be approved for maintenance works after 31st March 2018.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

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

10.1 Report to Executive Board on 15th September 2016.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Halton Residents’ Funeral

PORTFOLIO: Environmental Services

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to set up and to operate a Halton Residents’ Funeral package as described in the body of the report.

2. RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board agrees to the setting up of a Halton Residents’ Funeral offer, as per section 4 of the report.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 3.1 The average cost of a funeral is currently £3,481 compared to £1,815 in 2005. Costs are expected to continue to rise in the coming years.
- 3.2 Following the death of a loved one, people are naturally deeply distressed. They face making financial decisions about funeral arrangements and may make choices that are not affordable out of respect for the person who has died. People on low incomes are increasingly finding that the death of a loved one plunges them into serious and long term debt, as they have little or no savings.
- 3.3 Some financial funding for families on low incomes is made by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) but it does not cover the whole funeral cost. Such payments are available to people on certain qualifying benefits such as Jobseeker’s Allowance and Income Support.

Public Health Funerals

- 3.4 As an Authority, we provide Public Health Funerals, for individuals who have no known family to pay for the funeral or for cases where no one can (or will) pay for the funeral. The deceased is given a simple, respectful funeral, either cremation at Widnes Crematorium or burial in a ‘public’ grave’ in Widnes or Runcorn Cemetery.

- 3.5 Whilst some of these funerals are carried out because the deceased has no living relatives there has been an increase in Public Health funerals being carried out because the family simply cannot afford the funeral after being given an estimate by a funeral director. Unfortunately, many families want to avoid the stigma attached to Public Health funerals, hence ending up in debt in order to pay for what they consider to be a 'decent' funeral.
- 3.6 We pride ourselves in Halton on our provision of such funerals, taking the utmost care and respect for the deceased. We often receive compliments from people attending these services. These funerals come at a cost to the Council when the deceased has no funds to pay for them. Even when money is recovered it is often very little and does not cover all costs.

Residents' Funerals

- 3.7 Neighbouring authorities such as St Helens and Wigan already provide 'residents' or 'municipal' funeral options for residents of their Boroughs, and the number of families accessing these services is on the increase year after year.
- 3.8 Councils have created residents' funerals in an effort to tackle funeral poverty. They have generally done so via a third party provider (a funeral director) who has been appointed to operate the service following competitive tender. The residents' funerals provide a dignified and reasonable cost alternative to what is offered in the marketplace.
- 3.9 The councils who have introduced residents' funerals have done so as they believe that access to a dignified funeral, without getting into crippling debt, is a basic human right. It is unacceptable that a bereaved family, trying to come to terms with the loss of a loved one, should go through the stress of worrying about how they can afford to pay for a funeral. Many people end up with expensive credit card or payday loan debts, or need to borrow from friends or apply to charities to pay for the funeral.
- 3.10 The Wigan Council residents' funeral has been the most successful locally. The current cost of a Wigan Residents Funeral is £1,892.83 for a cremation and £1,938.83 for a burial, making them almost 50% cheaper than the average cost of a funeral. Figures for the last three years speak for themselves:

Year 1

16 burials carried out, saving residents a total of £24,960.00
38 cremations carried out, saving residents a total of £61,142.00

Year 2

13 burials carried out, saving residents £28,433.21
109 cremations carried out, saving residents £154,362.53

Year 3

33 burials carried out, saving residents £69,477.44

135 cremations carried out, saving residents £189,159.95

Wigan have also increased their own revenue as funerals that had once gone to a private crematorium are now coming to them.

4. THE HALTON RESIDENTS' FUNERAL

4.1 The idea is to provide a reasonably priced dignified funeral service, which would be indistinguishable from any other funeral service.

4.2 Following the Wigan model we would go out to tender via the Chest to find a funeral director who would be willing to provide a Halton Resident funeral for us. The best tender in terms of low price and quality would be awarded the contract. The successful bidder would have to provide an office within the Borough, if they didn't have one here already.

4.3 The Halton Residents Funeral would be available to residents of the Borough. It would be available to any resident who wanted to purchase it regardless of means. For a fixed price an individual purchasing a Halton Residents Funeral the following would be included:

- Collection of the deceased from any location in the Borough or from Whiston or Warrington hospitals.
- Dressing of the deceased. Viewing of deceased at Chapel of Rest (*restrictions apply to latter – Based upon funeral directors operation. This would come out in the tender offers*)
- Provision of a suitable oak (or similar) finished coffin with handles and an engraved nameplate.
- The funeral directors professional fees for making all necessary arrangements for the funeral service including provision of all appropriate staff and facilities to ensure that the funeral service proceeds with dignity.
- Transportation of the deceased in a hearse from the funeral home to the funeral service and one following limousine.
- A funeral service of 30 minutes in the Widnes Crematorium chapel or a graveside ceremony at Runcorn cemetery.
- Cremation at Widnes Crematorium or burial at Runcorn, Widnes or Peel House cemeteries. Cremated remains would be scattered without attendance in the garden of remembrance at either Widnes or Runcorn cemeteries (*families would be free to make alternative arrangements with regards to ashes should they wish*).

4.4 The Halton Residents Funeral would be promoted through placing articles in the local press and the creation of a dedicated webpage on the Council's website. Information leaflets would also be displayed in Direct Link shops and at libraries. The webpages relating to Halton's cemeteries and crematorium would have to be updated and a new page created. This would require marketing and ICT resources.

4.5 An 'after funeral' function option could also be made available. This would include catering and would be held at the Select Security Stadium.

5. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no negative financial implications for the council. It is possible that extra revenue would be generated through Runcorn residents using Widnes Crematorium (*for cremation services over 90% of Runcorn residents use Warrington Borough Councils crematorium at Walton Lea*).

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no policy implications as a result of this report.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None identified

7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None identified

7.3 A Healthy Halton

The Halton Residents' Funeral would provide a more affordable option for low income families. This would take some of the stress out of the bereavement process which could reduce stress and anxiety. Funeral Poverty would be relieved.

7.4 A Safer Halton

None identified

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

8. RISK ANALYSIS

None identified

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 There are no equality and diversity issues.

10. REASON(S) FOR DECISION

10.1 To help to alleviate funeral poverty within the Borough.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

11.1 The council could simply do nothing and leave the delivery of this type of service to the market. If that option was taken prices for funerals would continue to rise putting more residents into debt.

12. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

12.1 January 2018.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Finance

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: 2017/18 Quarter 1 Spending

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30 June 2017.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- (i) All spending continues to be limited to the absolutely essential;**
- (ii) Strategic Directors take appropriate action to contain overall spending within their total operational budget by year-end; and**
- (iii) Council be asked to approve the revised capital programme as set out in Appendix 3.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Revenue Spending

- 3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the revenue budget up to 30 June 2017, along with individual statements for each Department. In overall terms revenue expenditure is £0.808m above the budget profile.
- 3.2 Given the overall variance position and continuing budget pressures, it is essential that Directorates restrict any non-essential spend over the remainder of the financial year. As there are three quarters of the financial year remaining it does give Departments the opportunity to slow down the rate of spending and thereby reduce the overspend against budget.
- 3.3 Based on current spend patterns, projections show the Council will have a year-end outturn overspend position in the range of £3m to £3.5m, if no corrective action is taken. As at 31 March 2017 the Council's General Fund balance was £4.830m. Unless the projected overspend is reduced and spending brought back into line with budget as far as possible, the

general reserve will be all but consumed giving the Council little scope to meet any future overspends.

- 3.4 The main budget pressure facing the Council continues to be within the Children & Families Department, in particular out-of-borough residential placements and out-of-borough fostering. These two services make up approximately 85% of the departmental overspend position of £1.210m for the first quarter.
- 3.5 Against the residential placements budget to date of £0.822m, actual costs are £1.434m (75%) in excess of budget. Latest information shows that children in care numbers have remained constant during the past quarter and over the remainder of the year there are a number of children who will leave the service as they reach their 18th Birthday. Work is continuing around children aged 16+ to move into semi-independent accommodation. Based on current service usage it is expected that the year-end overspend against this budget will be £2.448m.
- 3.6 Whilst numbers of children and costs for residential placements have plateaued recently, the Department has seen significant cost increases for out-of-Borough fostering placements. Since March 2017 11 new children have entered this service at an annual cost of £0.408m. It is forecast that annual spend will exceed the budget by £1.6m, compared to an overspend position of £1.2m for 2016/17.
- 3.7 Every effort is made to utilise in-house foster carers, but due to lack of available foster carers in the Borough it is not always possible and therefore out-of-Borough placements have to be used at higher cost. In an effort to recruit new foster carers, the Council is in discussions to set up a collaborative fostering service with Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East and Warrington Councils.
- 3.8 The Department is also experiencing high overall costs and demand for special guardianship orders and the Early Years' service. It is currently forecast that the Department's total spend for the year will be in the region of £4.8m in excess of the total available budget.
- 3.9 The Complex Care Pool Budget with Halton Clinical Commissioning Group is over budget by £0.276m as at 30 June 2017, although the Council is only liable for 61% of any final overspend position. The reason for the overspend to date relates to costs and demand for health and social care covering residential and domiciliary care, direct payments and day care. The number of clients receiving permanent residential care packages has increased to 599 at an average cost of £599 per week. Domiciliary care package numbers have also increased to 796 at an average cost of £300 per week.
- 3.10 Community and Environment Department spend for the first quarter of the year exceeds the profiled budget by £0.201m. There are a number of reasons for this including employee spend being over the available budget due to increased agency costs and staff turnover saving targets not being met. As in previous years income shortfalls against budget

targets are being experienced in a number of areas including stadium catering, bars, and fitness membership.

- 3.11 There are budget pressures on school transport within the Education, Inclusion and Prevention Department, where the Service is showing an overspend position of £0.084m as at 30 June 2017. There is high demand for special educational pupils transport provision which has been growing for a number of years. Efforts are in place to identify how efficiencies in the provision of the service can be achieved and a new contract will be in place for September 2017.
- 3.12 Corporate & Democracy is currently under budget by £0.7m, which is helping mitigate the budget pressures elsewhere across the Council. This is primarily due to capital borrowing costs being lower than forecast and a review of reserves has released some unused balances back into the general fund.
- 3.13 Total spending on employees is £0.058m below budget profile at the end of the quarter. This figure is only 25% of the underspend on staffing at this point last year, which indicates a reduced number of staff vacancies or the time vacancies are being held open for, compared to previous years
- 3.14 Included within the employees budget is a staff turnover savings target of 3.0% which reflects the saving made between a member of staff leaving a post and the post being filled. The target for the quarter has been achieved in all Departments with the exception of Community & Environment, Economy, Enterprise & Property, Legal & Democratic Services, Policy People Performance & Efficiency and Education Inclusion & Provision.
- 3.15 The council tax collection rate for the first quarter of 28.25% is marginally lower (0.21%) than at this stage last year. However, the collection rate for business rates of 29.59% is up by 0.17% from last year. The forecast retained element of business rates is in line with the estimate used when setting the 2017/18 budget. However, forecasting retained business rates through to the end of the financial year remains difficult due to the number of appeals outstanding with the Valuation Office Agency and the new process of appealing against rateable values from the 2017 valuation exercise.

Capital Spending

- 3.16 The Capital Programme has been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes have developed. These are reflected in the capital programme presented in Appendix 3. The schemes which have been revised within the Programme are as follows;
 - 1. Brindley Café Extension
 - 2. Open Spaces Schemes
 - 3. Children's Playground Equipment

4. Upton Improvements
5. The Glen Play Area
6. Runcorn Hill Park
7. Crow Wood Play Area
8. Peelhouse Lane Cemetery Enabling Works
9. Pheonix Park
10. Victoria Park Glass House
11. Sandymoor Playing Fields
12. Landfill Tax Credit Schemes
13. 3MG
14. Widnes Waterfront
15. Johnsons Lane Infrastructure
16. Decontamination of Land
17. Linnets Clubhouse
18. Former Crosville Site
19. Signage at the Hive
20. Advertising Screen at The Hive
21. Former Simms Cross Caretakers House
22. Development Costs – Mersey Gateway
23. Loan Interest during Construction – Mersey Gateway
24. Bridge & Highway Maintenance
25. STEPS Programme
26. Silver Jubilee Bridge – Major Maintenance
27. Vine Street Reconfiguration
28. Disabled Facilities Grant
29. Capital Repairs – Schools
30. Asbestos Management
31. Basic Need Projects
32. Lunts Heath Primary School
33. Fairfield Primary School
34. Weston Point Primary School
35. Small Capital Works - Schools

Capital spending at 30th June 2017 totalled £39.4m, which is 99% of the planned spending of £39.5m at this stage. This represents 33.8% of the total Capital Programme of £116.4m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).

Balance Sheet

- 3.17 The Council's Balance Sheet is monitored regularly in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Strategy which forms part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The key reserves and balances have been reviewed and are considered prudent and appropriate at this stage in the financial year and within the current financial climate.

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 There are no direct implications, however, the revenue budget and capital programme support the delivery and achievement of all the Council's priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There are a number of financial risks within the budget. However, the Council has internal controls and processes in place to ensure that spending remains in line with budget.

6.2 In preparing the 2017/18 budget, a register of significant financial risks was prepared which has been updated as at 30 June 2017.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

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

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Revenue Spending to 30 June 2017

Directorate / Department	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Expenditure to Date £'000	Variance to Date (overspend) £'000
Community & Environment	19,369	4,290	4,491	(201)
Economy, Enterprise & Property	1,451	543	509	34
Finance	4,447	-1,596	-1,685	89
ICT & Support Services	-4	-345	-371	26
Legal & Democratic Services	532	121	117	4
Planning & Transportation	7,629	1,996	2,050	(54)
Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency	0	-385	-394	9
Enterprise, Community & Resources	33,424	4,624	4,717	(93)
Adult Social Care	38,192	7,324	7,461	(137)
Children & Families	20,403	4,584	5,794	(1,210)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	7,750	115	193	(78)
Public Health & Public Protection	388	43	42	1
People	66,733	12,066	13,490	(1,424)
Corporate & Democracy	3,644	4,032	3,326	706
Mersey Gateway	0	-56	-59	3
Net Total	103,801	20,666	21,474	(808)

ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY & RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
Community & Environment

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual to Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	13,355	3,512	3,606	(94)
Other Premises	1,950	830	820	10
Supplies & Services	1,580	399	377	22
Book Fund	167	49	48	1
Hired & Contracted Services	1,127	230	235	(5)
Food Provisions	570	193	205	(12)
School Meals Food	1,903	291	288	3
Transport	55	21	16	5
Other Agency Costs	432	87	84	3
Waste Disposal Contracts	5,775	1,444	1,458	(14)
Other Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Grants To Voluntary Organisations	67	14	1	13
Grant To Norton Priory	172	87	88	(1)
Rolling Projects	0	74	74	0
Capital Financing	84	2	0	2
Total Expenditure	27,237	7,233	7,300	(67)
<u>Income</u>				
Sales Income	-2,125	-510	-487	(23)
School Meals Sales	-2,244	-482	-497	15
Fees & Charges Income	-5,588	-1,889	-1,830	(59)
Rents Income	-297	-50	-21	(29)
Government Grant Income	-1,186	-31	-31	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-663	-256	-255	(1)
Schools SLA Income	-84	-77	-74	(3)
Internal Fees Income	-216	-32	-20	(12)
School Meals Other Income	-2,096	-1,371	-1,386	15
Catering Fees	-182	-45	-8	(37)
Capital Salaries	-123	0	0	0
Transfers From Reserves	-8	0	0	0
Total Income	-14,812	-4,743	-4,609	(134)
Net Operational Expenditure	12,425	2,490	2,691	(201)
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	1,760	440	440	0
Transport Recharges	2,072	669	669	0
Departmental Support Services	9	2	2	0
Central Support Services	3,467	943	943	0
Asset Charges	85	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-449	-254	-254	0
Net Total Recharges	6,944	1,800	1,800	0

Net Department Expenditure	19,369	4,290	4,491	(201)
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Economy, Enterprise & Property

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	4,681	1,119	1,126	(7)
Repairs & Maintenance	2,219	420	418	2
Premises	41	1	1	0
Energy & Water Costs	650	109	84	25
NNDR	546	503	491	12
Rents	352	170	169	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	42	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	3,109	443	444	(1)
Grant to Non Vol Organisations	75	9	9	0
Agency Related	1	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	11,716	2,774	2,742	32
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-250	-34	-36	2
Rent – Markets	-789	-197	-197	0
Rent – Investment Properties	-187	-35	-35	0
Rent – Commercial Properties	-850	-152	-147	(5)
Government Grant	-3,156	-315	-315	0
Reimbursements & Other Income	-237	-180	-180	0
Recharges to Capital	-161	-18	-18	0
Transfer from Reserves	-830	-89	-89	0
Schools SLA Income	-517	-435	-440	5
Total Income	-6,977	-1,455	-1,457	2
Net Operational Expenditure	4,739	1,319	1,285	34
<u>Recharges</u>				
Asset Rental Support Costs	4	0	0	0
Premises Support Costs	1,746	438	438	0
Transport Support Costs	23	6	6	0
Central Support Service Costs	1,865	512	512	0
Repairs & Maintenance Recharge	-2,412	-603	-603	0
Income				
Accommodation Recharge Income	-2,624	-656	-656	0
Central Support Service Recharge	-1,890	-473	-473	0
Income				
Net Total Recharges	-3,288	-776	-776	0
Net Department Expenditure	1,451	543	509	34

Finance

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	5,417	1,312	1,268	44
Supplies & Services	361	147	125	22
Insurances	1,314	694	667	27
Concessionary Travel	2,160	346	346	0
LCR Levy Contribution	2,175	0	0	0
Rent Allowances	50,200	9,272	9,272	0
Non HRA Rent Rebates	65	12	12	0
Discretionary Housing Payments	386	95	95	0
Discretionary Social Fund	154	31	31	0
Total Expenditure	62,232	11,909	11,816	93
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-164	-65	-74	9
School SLAs	-837	-788	-775	(13)
NNDR Admin Grant	-166	0	0	0
Rent Allowances	-49,800	-11,374	-11,374	0
Clerical Error Recoveries	-400	0	0	0
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-65	-16	-16	0
Discretionary Housing Pmts Grant	-386	0	0	0
Housing Benefit Admin Grant	-510	-127	-127	0
Universal Credits	-130	0	0	0
Council Tax Admin Grant	-221	-221	-221	0
Transfer From Reserves	-251	0	0	0
Council Tax Liability Orders	-421	-264	-264	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-248	-171	-171	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-2,175	0	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-92	0	0	0
Total Income	-55,866	-13,026	-13,022	(4)
Net Operational Expenditure	6,366	-1,117	-1,206	89
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	199	50	50	0
Transport Recharges	6	2	2	0
Central Support Recharges	2,451	613	613	0
Support Recharges Income	-4,575	-1,144	-1,144	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,919	-479	-479	0
Net Department Expenditure	4,447	-1,596	-1,685	89

ICT & Support Services

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	6,838	1,719	1,712	7
Other Premises	56	48	48	0
Supplies & Services	726	117	111	6
Capital Financing	1,594	68	68	0
Computer repairs & Software	525	270	255	15
Communication Costs	385	96	98	(2)
Transfer To Reserves	15	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	10,139	2,318	2,292	26
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-1,116	-41	-41	0
Sales	-15	-2	-2	0
School SLAs	-509	-494	-494	0
Total Income	-1,640	-537	-537	0
Net Operational Expenditure	8,499	1,781	1,755	26
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	384	95	95	0
Transport Recharges	5	2	2	0
Central Support Recharges	1,036	259	259	0
Support Recharges Income	-9,925	-2,482	-2,482	0
Net Total Recharges	-8,503	-2,126	-2,126	0
Net Department Expenditure	-4	-345	-371	26

Legal & Democratic Services

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	1,634	417	422	(5)
Supplies & Services	304	86	84	2
Civic Catering & Functions	27	7	4	3
Legal Expenses	223	77	69	8
Mayoral Allowances	22	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	2,210	587	579	8
<u>Income</u>				
Land Charges	-105	-26	-22	(4)
School SLAs	-80	-80	-80	0
Licence Income	-261	-49	-49	0
Other Income	-26	-12	-12	0
Transfer From Reserves	-10	0	0	0
Total Income	-482	-167	-163	-4
Net Operational Expenditure	1,728	420	416	4
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	187	47	47	0
Transport Recharges	36	9	9	0
Central Support Recharges	313	78	78	0
Support Recharges Income	-1,732	-433	-433	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,196	-299	-299	0
Net Department Expenditure	532	121	117	4

Planning & Transportation

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	4,307	1,077	1,077	0
Other Premises	171	63	62	1
Contracted Services	244	10	11	(1)
Supplies & Services	172	59	50	9
Street Lighting	1,695	425	420	5
Highways Maintenance	2,365	620	619	1
Fleet Transport	1,397	349	295	54
Lease Car Contracts	40	8	7	1
Bus Support	660	165	186	(21)
Finance Charges	145	1	1	0
Grants to Vol. Organisations	68	34	34	0
LCR Levy	754	189	189	0
NRA Levy	63	16	16	0
Total Expenditure	12,081	3,016	2,967	49
<u>Income</u>				
Sales	-316	-81	-69	-12
Planning Fees	-562	-141	-89	-52
Building Control Fees	-209	-52	-30	-22
Other Fees & Charges	-592	-124	-129	5
Rent	-8	-2	0	-2
Grants & Reimbursements	-230	-61	-62	1
Government Grant Income	-129	-44	-44	0
Efficiency Savings	-60	0	0	0
Schools SLAs	-42	-42	-44	2
Capital Salaries	-317	0	0	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-754	-189	-189	0
Transfers from Reserves	-100	0	0	0
Total Income	-3,319	736	656	-80
Net Operational Expenditure	8,762	2,280	2,311	-31
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Recharges	579	145	145	0
Transport Recharges	484	121	109	12
Asset Charges	358	89	89	0
Central Recharges	1,573	393	393	0
Transport Recharge Income	-2,736	-684	-619	-65
Central Recharge Income	-1,391	-348	-378	30
Net Total Recharges	-1,133	-284	-261	-23
Net Department Expenditure	7,629	1,996	2,050	-54

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	1,818	437	442	(5)
Employees Training	133	7	5	2
Supplies & Services	138	38	28	10
Apprenticeship Levy	300	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	2,389	482	475	7
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-90	-32	-34	2
Schools SLAs	-416	-389	-389	0
Transfer from Reserves	-98	0	0	0
Total Income	-604	-421	-423	2
Net Operational Expenditure	1,785	61	52	9
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	60	15	15	0
Central Support Recharges	1,081	270	270	0
Support recharges Income	-2,926	-731	-731	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,785	-446	-446	0
Net Department Expenditure	0	-385	-394	9

PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

Adult Social Care

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
Employees	13,881	3,402	3,319	83
Other Premises	326	98	101	(3)
Supplies & Services	1,074	171	176	(5)
Aids & Adaptations	113	28	34	(6)
Transport	201	43	37	6
Food Provision	140	26	28	(2)
Contracts & SLAs	525	178	184	(6)
Emergency Duty Team	95	19	17	2
Other Agency	624	99	96	3
Payments To Providers	1,468	412	416	(4)
Contribution To Complex Care Pool	20,646	3,038	3,207	(169)
Total Expenditure	39,093	7,514	7,615	(101)
Income				
Sales & Rents Income	-204	-156	-151	(5)
Fees & Charges	-740	-183	-142	(41)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-1,102	-191	-198	7
Transfer From Reserves	-487	0	0	0
Capitalised Salaries	-111	0	0	0
Government Grant Income	-729	-161	-167	6
Total Income	-3,373	-691	-658	(33)
Net Operational Expenditure	35,720	6,823	6,957	(134)
Recharges				
Premises Support	516	129	129	0
Asset Charges	83	0	0	0
Central Support Services	3,352	844	844	0
Internal Recharge Income	-1,976	-596	-596	0
Transport Recharges	497	124	127	(3)
Net Total Recharges	2,472	501	504	(3)
Net Department Expenditure	38,192	7,324	7,461	(137)

Children & Families

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	8,853	2,037	2,029	8
Premises	264	82	77	5
Supplies and Services	914	179	190	(11)
Transport	6	1	17	(16)
Direct Payments/Individual Budgets	228	57	139	(82)
Commissioned Services	277	59	48	11
Out of Borough Residential Placements	3,665	822	1,434	(612)
Out of Borough Adoption	80	0	0	0
Out of Borough Fostering	414	67	472	(405)
In House Adoption	195	52	76	(24)
Special Guardianship	1,092	273	333	(60)
In House Foster Carer Payments	1,991	398	362	36
Care Leavers	140	46	36	10
Family Support	53	10	11	(1)
Emergency Duty Team	89	0	0	0
Contracted Services	4	2	2	0
Capital Finance	6	0	0	0
Early Years	97	17	77	(60)
Total Expenditure	18,368	4,102	5,303	(1,201)
<u>Income</u>				
Adoption Placements	-45	-11	0	(11)
Fees and Charges	-15	0	0	0
Sales Income	-19	-9	-11	2
Rents	-97	0	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-47	0	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-258	-46	-46	0
Government Grants	-26	-26	-26	0
Transfer from Reserves	-94	-94	-94	0
Total Income	-601	-186	-177	(9)
Net Operational Expenditure	17,767	3,916	5,126	(1,210)
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	374	102	102	0
Transport Support	47	12	12	0
Central Support Service Costs	2,215	554	554	0
Net Total Recharges	2,636	668	668	0
Net Department Expenditure	20,403	4,584	5,794	(1,210)

Education, Inclusion & Provision

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	5,946	1,495	1,496	(1)
Premises	112	9	8	1
Supplies & Services	2,599	165	151	14
Transport	5	1	0	1
Schools Transport	926	101	185	(84)
Commissioned Services	2,704	217	217	0
Agency Related Expenditure	1,595	514	507	7
Independent School Fees	2,463	427	427	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	175	0	0	0
Pupil Premium Grant	100	3	3	0
Nursery Education Payments	5,268	1,540	1,540	0
Capital Finance	1	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	21,894	4,472	4,534	(62)
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-301	-179	-176	(3)
Government Grants	-458	-458	-458	0
Reimbursements & Other Income	-790	-224	-224	0
Schools SLA Income	-181	-101	-88	(13)
Transfer to/from Reserves	-725	-589	-589	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-13,069	-3,267	-3,267	0
Inter Authority Income	-578	-59	-59	0
Rent	-104	0	0	0
Total Income	-16,206	-4,877	-4,861	(16)
Net Operational Expenditure	5,688	-405	-327	(78)
<u>Recharges</u>				
Central Support Services Costs	1,706	429	429	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-79	-20	-20	0
Premises Support Costs	226	57	57	0
Transport Support Costs	209	54	54	0
Net Total Recharges	2,062	520	520	0
Net Department Expenditure	7,750	115	193	(78)

Public Health & Public Protection

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	3,301	800	772	28
Premises	5	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	240	7	32	(25)
Contracts & SLA's	7,223	1,234	1,234	0
Transport	8	2	2	0
Agency	18	18	17	1
Total Expenditure	10,795	2,061	2,057	4
<u>Income</u>				
Sales Income	-19	0	0	0
Other Fees & Charges	-69	-13	-12	(1)
Government Grant	-10,454	-2,178	-2,178	0
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-69	-12	-12	0
Transfer from Reserves	-652	-30	-30	0
Total Income	-11,263	-2,233	-2,232	(1)
Net Operational Expenditure	-468	-172	-175	3
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	127	32	32	0
Central Support Services	739	185	185	0
Transport Recharges	20	5	7	(2)
Support Income	-30	-7	-7	0
Net Total Recharges	856	215	217	(2)
Net Department Expenditure	388	43	42	1

Corporate & Democracy

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	153	88	72	16
Contracted Services	35	9	13	(4)
Supplies & Services	-325	-58	75	(133)
Members Allowances	793	198	202	(4)
Interest Payable	1,979	509	282	227
Bank Charges	79	20	19	1
Audit Fees	144	36	36	0
Contingency	1,225	250	0	250
Capital Financing	1,869	1,869	1,887	(18)
Contribution to Reserves	4,713	2,344	1,948	396
Debt Management Expenses	34	9	11	(2)
Precepts & Levies	184	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	10,883	5,274	4,545	729
<u>Income</u>				
Interest Receivable – Treasury	-406	-102	-97	(5)
Interest Receivable – Other	-258	-64	-57	(7)
Other Fees & Charges	-52	-13	-7	(6)
Grants & Reimbursements	-85	-21	-16	(5)
Government Grant Income	-5,184	-1,295	-1,295	0
Transfer from Reserves	-500	0	0	0
Total Income	-6,485	-1,495	-1,472	(23)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,398	3,779	3,073	706
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Recharges	6	1	1	0
Central Recharges	1,420	355	355	0
Central Recharge Income	-411	-103	-103	0
Support Services Income	-1,769	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-754	253	253	0
Net Department Expenditure	3,644	4,032	3,326	706

Mersey Gateway

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Other Premises	136	34	34	0
Unitary Charge	19,784	0	0	0
DMPA fee	4,441	0	0	0
Insurance	748	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	3	1	1	0
MGCB Ltd	1,730	242	244	(2)
External Interest	4,010	0	0	0
Finance Charges	164	41	37	4
Total Expenditure	31,016	318	316	2
<u>Income</u>				
Toll Income	-15,554	0	0	0
Grants & reimbursements	-15,503	-385	-386	1
Total Income	-31,057	-385	-386	1
Net Operational Expenditure	-41	-67	-70	3
<u>Recharges</u>				
Property Support Recharges	3	1	1	0
Central Support Recharges	38	10	10	0
Net Total Recharges	41	11	11	0
Net Department Expenditure	0	-56	-59	3

APPENDIX 2

Complex Care Pooled Budget

Note – Halton BC's net contribution towards the Complex Care Pooled Budget is included within the Adult Social Care Department statement shown in Appendix 1.

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
Intermediate Care Services	4,040	808	714	94
End of Life	194	46	58	(12)
Sub Acute	1,734	382	378	4
Urgent Care Centres	815	3	3	0
Joint Equipment Store	616	39	32	7
CCG Contracts & SLA's	735	197	193	4
Carers Centre	359	90	90	0
Inglenook	121	0	0	0
Intermediate Care Beds	687	172	172	0
BCF Schemes	1,736	434	425	9
Additional Better Care Fund	2,974	0	0	0
Carers Breaks	434	80	80	0
Adult Social Care Services:				
Residential & Nursing Care	19,863	3,879	3,886	(7)
Domiciliary & Supported Living	13,016	2,272	2,413	(141)
Direct Payments	6,716	2,037	2,239	(202)
Day Care	410	46	70	(24)
Total Expenditure	54,450	10,485	10,753	(268)
Income				
Residential & Nursing Income	-5,214	-720	-721	1
Domiciliary Income	-1,867	-252	-240	(12)
Direct Payments Income	-308	-74	-77	3
BCF	-9,661	-2,415	-2,415	0
Improved Better Care Fund	-2,974	-744	-744	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-12,968	-3,242	-3,242	0
ILF	-699	0	0	0
All other income	-113	0	0	0
Liability as per Joint Working Agreement	0	0	-107	107
Total Income	-33,804	-7,447	-7,546	99
Net Department Expenditure	20,646	3,038	3,207	(169)

Capital Programme as at 30 June 2017

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2017/18 Cumulative Capital Allocation				Capital Allocation 2018/19 £'000	Capital Allocation 2019/20 £'000
		Quarter 1 £'000	Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
<u>Enterprise Community & Resources Directorate</u>							
Community and Environment							
Stadium Minor Works	0	0	0	0	30	30	30
Brindley Café Extension	0	0	0	0	80	0	0
Norton Priory	0	0	60	60	348	0	0
Norton Priory Biomass Boiler	0	0	0	0	107	0	0
Open Spaces Schemes	90	100	200	300	602	0	0
Children's Playground Equipment	0	0	25	35	55	110	65
Upton Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
The Glen Play Area	0	0	0	0	25	18	0
Runcorn Hill Park	5	0	50	60	75	75	50
Crow Wood Play Area	0	0	75	150	450	60	5
Runcorn Cemetery Extension	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery	0	0	50	100	350	750	296
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – Enabling Works	0	0	20	30	33	0	0
Pheonix Park	0	0	0	0	110	11	0
Victoria Park Glass House	0	0	5	15	150	120	10
Sandymoor Playing Fields	24	50	100	350	600	500	500
Widnes Recreation	7	0	0	0	0	0	0

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2017/18 Cumulative Capital Allocation				Capital Allocation 2018/19 £'000	Capital Allocation 2019/20 £'000
		Quarter 1 £'000	Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	0	0	0	0	160	340	340
Litter Bins	0	0	0	0	20	20	20
ICT & Support Services							
ICT Rolling Programme	379	379	620	860	1,100	1,100	1,100
Economy, Enterprise & Property							
Castlefields Regeneration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3MG	29	29	3,030	4,400	4,591	200	0
Widnes Waterfront	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	0
Johnsons Lane Infrastructure	0	0	66	66	66	0	0
Decontamination of Land	0	0	10	40	50	0	0
SciTech Daresbury – EZ Grant	0	0	200	483	483	0	0
Venture Field	6	6	6	6,000	6,000	0	0
Linnets Clubhouse	189	189	1,296	1,379	1,379	43	0
The Croft	0	0	0	0	30	0	0
Former Crosville Site	860	860	900	1,000	1,150	234	0
Signage at The Hive	0	0	77	87	87	0	0
Advertising Screen at The Hive	0	0	0	0	0	100	0
Widnes Market Refurbishment	38	38	457	918	1,294	10	0
Widnes Land Purchases	2	2	235	235	235	0	0
Former Simms Cross Caretakers House	0	0	14	14	14	0	0
Equality Act Improvement Works	33	33	83	113	300	300	300

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2017/18 Cumulative Capital Allocation				Capital Allocation 2018/19 £'000	Capital Allocation 2019/20 £'000
		Quarter 1 £'000	Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Mersey Gateway							
Land Acquisitions	130	130	222	313	2,254	11,284	0
Development Costs	366	366	1,718	2,557	2,861	0	0
Loan Interest During Construction	996	996	1,840	1,840	1,840	0	0
Construction Costs	35,000	35,000	67,500	67,500	67,500	0	0
Mersey Gateway Liquidity Fund	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	0	0
Other							
Risk Management	0	0	50	100	155	120	120
Fleet Replacements	143	145	600	900	1,500	556	1,317
Policy, Planning & Transportation							
Bridge & Highway Maintenance	212	225	698	2,108	4,236	1,546	0
Integrated Transport & Network Management	46	50	190	330	460	0	0
Street Lighting – Structural Maintenance & Upgrades	1	0	1,235	2,470	3,706	200	200
STEPS Programme	28	30	330	660	978	0	0
Silver Jubilee Bridge Major Maintenance	0	0	0	0	4,880	4,900	0
Total Enterprise Community & Resources	38,584	38,628	91,962	105,473	120,353	23,640	4,353

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2017/18 Cumulative Capital Allocation				Capital Allocation 2018/19 £'000	Capital Allocation 2019/20 £'000
		Quarter 1 £'000	Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
People Directorate							
Adult Social Care							
Upgrade PNC	6	6	34	34	34	0	0
ALD Bungalows	0	0	100	199	199	0	0
Grangeway Court	0	0	0	140	140	0	0
Bredon Reconfiguration	19	20	75	130	186	0	0
Vine Street Reconfiguration	0	0	0	102	102	0	0
Purchase of 2 adapted properties	0	0	0	0	520	0	0
Complex Pool							
Disabled Facilities Grant	110	150	150	225	899	0	0
Stairlifts (Adaptations Initiative)	27	50	150	225	300	0	0
RSL Adaptations (Joint Funding)	72	75	100	150	200	0	0
Madeline McKenna Residential Home	0	0	450	450	450	0	0

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2017/18 Cumulative Capital Allocation				Capital Allocation 2018/19 £'000	Capital Allocation 2019/20 £'000
		Quarter 1 £'000	Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Schools Related							
Asset Management Data	0	0	2	3	5	0	0
Capital Repairs	125	125	400	650	815	0	0
Asbestos Management	2	2	10	30	38	0	0
Schools Access Initiative	0	0	30	55	55	0	0
Basic Need Projects	0	0	0	0	556	0	283
School Modernisation Projects	19	19	30	68	68	0	0
Lunts Heath Primary School	1	1	75	150	200	5	0
Universal Infant School Meals	2	2	2	2	2	0	0
Early Education for 2yr olds	8	8	8	8	8	0	0
Hale Primary	0	0	3	3	3	0	0
Fairfield Primary School	371	371	655	655	655	10	0
Weston Point Primary School	2	2	70	110	128	4	0
Kitchen Gas Safety	0	0	10	30	50	0	0
Small Capital Works	6	6	30	75	106	0	0
Total People Directorate	770	837	2,384	3,494	5,719	19	283
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	39,354	39,465	94,346	108,967	126,072	23,659	4,636
Slippage (20%)					-9,714	-4,732	-927
						9,714	4,732
TOTAL	39,354	39,465	94,346	108,967	116,358	28,641	8,441

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy Statement

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To amend the Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy Statement, to reduce to nil the amount of council tax payable by young people leaving care from the age of 18 to 25.

2. RECOMMENDED: That the amendment to the Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy Statement, to reduce to nil the amount of council tax payable by young people leaving care from the age of 18 to 25, be approved.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 On 5th September 2017 the Corporate Policy & Performance Board received a report (see Appendix 1) in response to a recent Children's Society campaign, which identified a range of disadvantages that Care Leavers typically experience. The campaign calls upon local authorities to do more to support families who are struggling with council tax debt, in particular, care leavers.
- 3.2 The Council agrees with the campaign's principal sentiment that young people's transition out of care and into adulthood is extremely difficult and that managing money for the first time can leave Care Leavers vulnerable and at risk of falling into debt.
- 3.3 Corporate parenting is a statutory function of the Council. The underlying principle is that every local authority will seek the same outcomes for young people in care that every good parent would want for their own children.
- 3.4 Care Leavers who were looked after by a local authority rather than their parents are amongst the most vulnerable groups in our community. Outcomes for this group are generally poor and, as corporate parents, the Council wants to keep them safe, make sure their experiences leaving care and moving into independent living are positive and improve their ongoing life chances.
- 3.5 The Council accepts its role as a corporate parent and wants to further support those young people who have left care to be able to live independently as adults. As a result the Corporate Policy & Performance Board recommended changes to the Council Tax Section 13A Discount

Policy, such that Care Leavers should be exempt from paying council tax until their 25th birthday. The amended Section 13A Discount Policy is presented in Appendix 1.

3.6 Under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council has a general discretionary power to reduce liability for council tax in relation to individual cases or classes of case that it may determine where national discounts and exemptions cannot be applied.

3.7 The most cost efficient way of determining the value of Care Leaver's relief is to calculate how much council tax the Care Leaver still has to pay after any existing statutory discounts and council tax support (CTS) has been taken into account. Current estimates suggest this would cost the Council in total approximately £6,000 per annum and therefore does not represent a significant financial commitment for the Council

3.8 Care Leavers' relief would be available from the start of the 2018/19 financial year.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The policy statement presented in the Appendix would meet the requirements of Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The cost of any Care Leavers discounts awarded under the Section 13A Policy would be met in full by the council taxpayer.

5.2 The total cost of the relief proposed cannot be determined precisely as the number of Care Leavers who would continue to reside in Halton cannot be accurately determined and neither can the value of the national discounts and exemptions or CTS they would be entitled to.

5.3 Taking into consideration these uncertainties this relief is expected to cost the Council in the region of £6,000 per year.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Depending upon the specific circumstances, the award of discounts under the Section 13A Policy have the potential to affect all of the Council priorities above.

7. RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The total cost of awards granted may become significant, therefore the number and cost of awards will be closely monitored.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The eligibility criteria and application process relation to the Section 13A Policy will ensure that no particular groups of individuals are excluded.

8.2 In accordance with our equality duty, this proposal will result in more favourable treatment being applied to Care Leavers living in Halton, in order to advance equality of opportunity, with the overall aim of removing financial barriers, resulting in increased opportunities for employment, education and/or training opportunities.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Section 13A Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)	Revenues & Financial Management Division Kingsway House Widnes	Steve Baker

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 5th September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy Statement

WARD(S): Borough-wide

4. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 4.1. To amend the Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy Statement to reduce to nil the amount of council tax payable by young people leaving care from the ages 18 to 25.

5. RECOMMENDED: That Executive Board approve the amendment to the Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy Statement, to reduce to nil the amount of council tax payable by young people leaving care from the ages 18 to 25

6. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council is responding to a recent Children's Society campaign that identified a range of disadvantages that care leavers typically experience. The campaign calls on local authorities to do more to support families who are struggling with council tax debt, in particular, care leavers.
- 3.2 The Council agrees with the campaign's principal sentiment that young people's transition out of care and into adulthood is extremely difficult and that managing money for the first time can leave care leavers vulnerable and at risk of falling into debt.
- 3.3 Corporate parenting is a statutory function of the Council. The underlying principle is that every local authority will seek the same outcomes for young people in care that every good parent would want for their own children.
- 3.4 Care leavers who were looked after by a local authority rather than their parents are amongst the most vulnerable groups in our community. Outcomes for this group are generally poor and, as corporate parents, the Council wants to keep them safe, make sure their experiences leaving care and moving into independent living are positive and improve their ongoing life chances.

- 3.5 The Council accepts its role as a corporate parent and wants to further support those young people who have left care to be able to live independently as adults. The proposed scheme will reduce to nil the amount of council tax a care leaver pays and so this debt cannot become a problem for them in the future.
- 3.6 The Children's Society details the case for care leavers up to the age of at least 21 to be exempted from paying council tax. However, the Council has a parenting role in some circumstances that lasts until the care leaver is 24, for this reason and in order to keep the scheme administratively easier to support, it is proposed to apply care leavers relief to every care leaver until their 25th birthday
- 3.7 Under section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council has a general discretionary power to reduce liability for council tax in relation to individual cases or class (es) of cases that it may determine where national discounts and exemptions cannot be applied.
- 3.8 The most cost efficient way of determining the value of care leaver's relief is to calculate how much council tax the care leaver still has to pay after any existing statutory discounts and Council Tax Support (CTS) has been taken into account. Current estimates suggest this would be around £6,000 per annum and therefore this does not represent a significant financial commitment for the Council
- 3.9 Care Leavers relief will be available from the start of the 2018/2019 financial year.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The policy statement presented in the Appendix would meet the requirements of Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of any care leavers discounts awarded under the Section 13A Policy would be met in full by the council taxpayer.
- 5.2 The total cost of the relief proposed cannot be determined precisely as the number of care leavers who would continue to reside in Halton cannot be accurately determined and neither can the value of the national discounts and exemptions or CTS they would be entitled to.
- 5.3 Taking into consideration these uncertainties this relief is expected to cost the Council in the region of £6000 per year.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Depending upon the specific circumstances, the award of discounts under the Section 13A Policy have the potential to affect all of the Council priorities above.

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7.1 The total cost of awards granted may become significant, therefore the number and cost of awards will be closely monitored.

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8.1 The eligibility criteria and application process relation to the Section 13A Policy will ensure that no particular groups of individuals are excluded.

8.2 In accordance with our equality duty, this proposal will result in more favourable treatment being applied to care leavers living in Halton, in order to advance equality of opportunity, with the overall aim of removing financial barriers, resulting in increased opportunities for employment, education and/or training opportunities.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Section 13A Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)	Revenues & Financial Management Kingsway House Widnes	Stephen Baker

Council Tax
Section 13A Discount
Policy Statement

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) provides the Council with discretionary powers to reduce the amount of council tax liability, in exceptional circumstances where national discounts and exemptions cannot be applied.
- 1.2 This would only be applied in exceptional circumstances and would then be considered on a case-by-case basis or for several taxpayers who may fall into a group due to similar circumstances e.g. those who have had to leave their home due to flooding or fire or care leavers
- 1.3 Council tax legislation provides a wide range of discounts, exemptions and reductions that have the effect of reducing the level of council tax due. Applicants will therefore be expected to have exhausted all other options before making an application under this policy.
- 1.4 Prior to applying this policy, consideration should be given to whether alternative actions should be undertaken. Therefore, this policy will only consider exceptional circumstances, where it is appropriate and fair to provide a discretionary discount.

2. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Section 13A discount awards will be awarded when tax payers experience unforeseen or exceptional circumstances that threaten their ability to pay their council tax.
- 2.2 Given that the cost of any such award has to be met by the Borough's council taxpayers, any applications must meet the underlying principle of offering value for money to council tax payers. This will be achieved by asking for a range of information to support each application.
- 2.3 From time to time Government may introduce a specific scheme in response to an event such as a natural disaster (e.g. flooding). Where such schemes are introduced, funding is normally fully met by Government without impact upon the local council taxpayer.
- 2.4 Any such schemes that are introduced, in so far as they fall to be administered under Section 13A of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), will be administered in accordance with instructions and guidance set out by Government.
- 2.5 The Council will consider making a Section 13A award to applicants who meet the qualifying criteria set out below. All applicants will be considered on their individual merits.

2.6 Section 3 of this policy details classes of case which may be entitled to a reduction in accordance with Section 13A.

3. SECTION 13A (1) (C) DISCRETIONARY RELIEF FOR CARE LEAVERS

3.1 The Council may reduce to nil the council tax liability of care leavers who satisfy all of the following criteria:

- The person is a former relevant care leaver as defined within the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- The person is someone for whom Halton Borough Council has acted previously as a corporate parent
- The person has left care and is aged between 18 and 25
- The person resides within Halton and is liable to pay council tax to Halton Borough Council with effect from 1st April 2018.

3.2 Any award given to an individual case will end on the day before their 25th birthday

3.3 Where the care leaver is liable for more than one property the discretionary relief will be awarded in respect of only one property, that being the persons sole or main residence.

3.4 The amount of relief granted will be the amount of council tax the care leaver still has to pay after any existing statutory discounts and Council Tax Support (CTS) has been taken into account.

3.5 Any award given will be automatically granted and any change to the care leaver's circumstances during the financial year will be taken into consideration.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 The features of the Council's Section 13A Discount Policy are that:

- It is discretionary;
- An applicant does not have the statutory right to a payment;
- The operation of the scheme is for the Council to determine;
- The Council may choose to vary the way in which funds are allocated according to community needs;
- Other than the normal appeal against the application of discretionary function by Judicial Review, there is no right to a statutory appeal of any application decision. In the interest of fairness the Council will operate an internal review procedure for appeals in a non-discriminatory way;

4.2 In order for an application to be considered, there is no formal application form. All applications shall be made in writing, written or by email, by the Council Taxpayer or by somebody authorised to act on their behalf. It should be submitted to the Council Tax Team under the title of Section 13A Discount application. Applications should relate to the current council tax year, and should include the following information:

- The reason for the request;
- How long the discount is wanted for;
- The steps that have been taken to meet or mitigate the council tax liability;
- The cost of such a discount.

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

5.1 There are no pre-set criteria for the award of a Section 13A council tax discount. Each application will therefore be considered on its individual merits.

5.2 In deciding whether to award a Section 13A discount, the Applicant's particular circumstances will be considered. The Applicant will therefore be asked to provide supporting evidence to substantiate the answers that they give to the questions above. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Income and expenditure statements;
- Any sources of credit such as debit cards, credit cards, store cards, overdraft facilities and loan arrangements;
- Any financial assistance which is likely to be available to the Applicant from other sources.

5.3 Decisions on eligibility for an award will be made by the Operational Director Finance. All awards will be made by crediting the award value to the council tax account to which it applies.

5.4 The Council will notify the Applicant in writing of the outcome within 20 working days of the date the decision is made. Where the request for an award under Section 13A is unsuccessful or is not met in full, the Council will explain the reasons why the decision was made.

6. THE RIGHT TO APPEAL

6.1 Section 13A awards are administered under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and are not subject to a statutory appeals process. Appeals will therefore be decided by the Council.

6.2 The Council will operate the policy for dealing with appeals about either the decision not to make an award or the amount of an award.

- 6.3 An applicant who requires further explanation of a Section 13A Discount decision must request this in writing within 20 days of notification of the decision.
- 6.4 An applicant who disagrees with a decision may appeal the decision within 20 days of the original decision. Where possible, the Council will initially try to resolve the matter by explaining the reasons for the decision to the Applicant in writing.
- 6.5 Decisions on appeals will be made by the Strategic Director Enterprise, Community & Resources. If it is decided to reject the appeal, the reasons for the decision will be provided to the Applicant within 20 working days.

7. OVERPAYMENTS

- 7.1 If the Council becomes aware that the information contained in an application for a Section 13A discount award was incorrect or that relevant information was not declared, either intentionally or otherwise, the Council may seek to recover the value of any award made as a result of that application.
- 7.2 The award will be removed from the relevant council tax account and any resulting balance will be subject to the normal methods of collection and recovery applicable to such accounts.

8. FRAUD

- 8.1 The Council is committed to prevent fraud. Any applicant who tries to fraudulently claim a Section 13A discount might have committed an offence under the Fraud Act 2006. If the Council suspects that fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated as appropriate and this could lead to criminal proceedings.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to establish a local discretionary business rate relief scheme, in order to support businesses suffering hardship as a result of the 2017 Business Rates Revaluation. In addition, the report provides details of additional rate relief being provided for small businesses and public houses.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- (i) the Local Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme set out in the report and appendix, be approved, subject to consultation with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority;**
- (ii) Delegated authority be granted to the Operational Director – Finance, in liaison with the Resources Portfolio Holder, to finalise and implement the Scheme following appropriate consultation;**
- (iii) the scheme of business rates relief for public houses outlined in the report, be approved; and**
- (iv) the scheme of business rates relief support for small businesses outlined in the report, be approved.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 3.1 On 8 March 2017 the Chancellor announced within his Spring Budget that the Government would make available a discretionary fund of £300m nationally over four years from 2017/18. This was intended to support those businesses which faced the steepest increases in business rates, as a result of the April 2017 Business Rates Revaluation.
- 3.2 Businesses facing increases in their business rates following the Revaluation are already being supported through transitional arrangements put in place nationally, to phase-in the increase. Additional

support is also being provided to those businesses which have lost some or all of their small business rate relief and also to public houses.

- 3.3 The General Election delayed the detailed implementation of the Chancellor’s announcement, but the necessary guidance and funding arrangements are now in place to enable councils to establish and implement their schemes.

Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme

- 3.4 Each council has been allocated a share of £300m section 31 grant funding to support their local businesses, with the funding heavily weighted towards the first two years following the Business Rates Revaluation. It will be administered through billing authorities’ existing legal powers under section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988. Halton has been awarded grant funding totalling £285,000 spread over four years, as follows;

2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	Total £'000
166	81	33	5	285

- 3.5 The Government recently announced that any unused section 31 grant funding cannot be carried forward at year-end, but must be repaid to Government. It is therefore important that the Council makes full use of the available grant funding to support local businesses in need of this targeted relief.
- 3.6 In order to allocate the grant funding to each council the Government has made certain assumptions regarding the eligibility criteria which councils may adopt for this relief. They have assumed that councils will only award relief to those businesses facing the most significant increases in their bills and who also occupy lower rateable value properties. As a result, they have allocated the grant funding on the basis of businesses who both have a rateable value of less than £200,000 and whose 2017/18 rates bill is more than 12.5% higher than their 2016/17 bill (before any reliefs).
- 3.7 Whilst it is at the Council’s discretion as to the application criteria which should be applied for this relief, the above basis appears appropriate and therefore it is proposed to adopt the same application criteria for Halton’s Scheme.
- 3.8 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed Local Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme, including how applications should be made and the eligibility criteria to be applied. The Business Rates Team will identify those businesses who meet the eligibility criteria and will contact them
- 3.9 The Council is required to consult with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on the design of the

Local Scheme. It is proposed to do this via the relevant Chief Finance Officers, following which the Local Scheme will be finalised and implemented.

Business Rates Relief for Public Houses

- 3.10 The Government also announced a scheme of business rates relief for public houses. Under this arrangement, public houses with a rateable value of less than £100,000 will receive a £1,000 business rates discount. It is anticipated that 35 businesses will qualify for this relief in Halton and each will be contacted by the Business Rates Team. The total cost of rates relief provided under this scheme will be fully funded by additional section 31 grant.
- 3.11 Whilst this will also be administered using existing legal powers under section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988, it requires the Board to confirm that this new relief will be provided.

Support to Small Businesses Relief

- 3.12 The Government also announced further support for small businesses affected by the Business Rates Revaluation. This is to be known as Support to Small Businesses Relief. The relief is intended to help those ratepayers who as a result of the change in their rateable value following the Revaluation will lose some or all of their Small Business Rates Relief and are facing large increases in their bills.
- 3.13 For businesses that qualify their increase in rates will be limited to no more than £600 per annum. It is anticipated that 8 businesses will qualify for this relief in Halton and they will each be contacted by the Business Rates Team.
- 3.14 The Government has also taken steps to extend existing Small Business Rates Relief following the Revaluation. Prior to April 2017 small businesses with a rateable value of £6,001 to £12,000 received tapered relief from 100% to 0%. From April 2017 the thresholds have increased to £12,000 for 100% relief and £12,001 to £15,000 for tapered relief. This ensures that many ratepayers previously entitled to Small Business Relief will pay less following the Revaluation.
- 3.15 The total cost of rates relief provided under this Scheme will be fully funded by additional section 31 grant. Whilst this will be administered using existing legal powers under section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988, it requires the Board to confirm that this new relief will be provided.

Conclusions

- 3.16 The proposed three business relief schemes will enable the Council to support businesses within the Borough who have suffered disproportionately as a result of the Business Rates Revaluation in April 2017 and the three schemes will be fully funded by Government section 31 grant.

- 3.17 The Council's business rates software supplier is currently providing the necessary system updates to accommodate the operation of all three new business rates relief schemes. The costs of the systems changes will be met from New Burdens grant funding to be provided by the Government.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The above proposals will extend the range of business rates relief schemes operated by the Council and will be implemented using existing legal powers under section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988,

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The total cost of rates relief provided under the three schemes will be fully funded by additional section 31 grant.

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 total cost of business rates reliefs awarded could exceed the total available grant funding. Close financial monitoring will be undertaken to mitigate this risk.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 None.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

9.1 Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Various DCLG Business Rates Information Letters	Kingsway House, Caldwell Road, Widnes	Steve Baker Divisional Manager, Revenues & Financial

Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 8 March 2017 the Chancellor announced within his Spring Budget that the Government would make available a discretionary fund of £300m nationally over four years from 2017/18. This is intended to support those businesses which face the steepest increases in business rates, as a result of the April 2017 Business Rates Revaluation.
- 1.2 This assistance will be provided using existing legal powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- 1.3 The Scheme will be fully funded by Government grant under Section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003. Funding for the Scheme will only be available to the extent of the grant allocation provided to Halton by Government.

2.0 Eligibility

- 2.1 Assistance will only be provided to ratepayers who face an increase in their business rates bills following the April 2017 Revaluation. The assistance will be targeted at those ratepayers facing significant increases in rates in lower value properties. This will apply to properties with a rateable value of less than £200,000 and with a year-on-year increase of 12.5% or more.
- 2.2 The assistance will only be provided in relation to business rates liability net of all other business rates reliefs which may apply.
- 2.3 Applicants will be required to provide details of any State Aid provided to them in the current and previous two years.
- 2.4 Applicants should have been in 6 months continuous occupation of the property prior to 1st April 2017

3.0 Application of Rates Relief

- 3.1 The Council will identify from its system those ratepayers who qualify for assistance under this Scheme and will contact them to inform them of the rates relief which may be applied to their account.
- 3.2 The amount of relief to be applied will be calculated by considering the total available grant funding in each year, the number of eligible businesses, and their rates liabilities (after all other reliefs). The amount of relief will be tapered down as the grant funding reduces each year.

- 3.3 In making a decision regarding the award of discretionary rate relief the Council will take account of the following;
- (i) The overall cost of the Scheme will not exceed the funds provided by the availability of section 31 grant funding on an annual basis.
 - (ii) The financial position of the applicant;
 - (iii) The extent to which the business is likely to be financially sustainable;
 - (iv) The employment and other economic, social and environmental benefits provided by the business to the Borough.
- 3.4 Decisions regarding the award of discretionary rate relief will be made by the Divisional Manager, Revenues & Financial Management. In the event of a business requesting a review of the award decision, this will be considered by the Operational Director, Finance whose decision will be final and there will be no further right of review.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 September 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

SUBJECT: Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief

PORTFOLIO: Resources

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider an application for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the request for 100% discretionary rate relief from Bamboo Bear Childcare Limited for the period from 1st November 2016 to 31st March 2018, be refused on the grounds set out in paragraph 3.8 below.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council is able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. This relief had previously only been available to organisations that were a charity, a community amateur sports club or a not-for-profit organisation.

3.2 From 1st April 2017 the Council became responsible for meeting the full cost of all mandatory and discretionary rate relief granted, as part of the Liverpool City Region 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot Scheme.

Bamboo Bear Childcare Limited (Trading as Butterflies Nursery) East Lane, Runcorn

3.3 An application for 100% discretionary rate relief has been received as outlined below, from Bamboo Bear Childcare Limited who operate an Ofsted registered nursery, trading as Butterflies Nursery in East Lane, Runcorn. Butterflies Nursery was established in November 2016 and provides nursery and childcare facilities for children aged 0-5 years old.

3.4 The Organisation is not a registered charity and therefore does not receive mandatory rate relief. It is located in a purpose built nursery

building and currently employs six staff, but is seeking to grow the business to employ up to thirteen staff in future.

- 3.5 Officers from the Economy, Enterprise, and Property Department have met with the owners of Bamboo Bear Childcare Limited. They were able to confirm that the business is developing well and has a commitment to providing quality childcare and recruiting and training local people. The Organisation cannot at this stage provide any audited accounts, as these will not be available until the end of the calendar year.
- 3.6 The Organisation moved into the East Lane premises on 1st November 2016. They recently submitted an appeal to the Valuation Office Agency for a reduction in the property's rateable value, the outcome of which is still awaited.
- 3.7 Bamboo Bear Childcare Limited has requested that they be granted 100% discretionary rate relief for 2017/18 and that this is also backdated to 1st November 2016. The cost to the Council of providing 100% discretionary rate relief from 1st November 2016 to 31st March 2018 would be £15,790. This would comprise £4,266 relating to the 2016/17 part year and £11,524 relating to 2017/18.
- 3.8 The Organisation is already established within the Borough and developing well. It has ambitions to recruit additional staff irrespective of the provision of discretionary rate relief. There is no indication that the granting of such rate relief will influence the Organisation's business plans. The Council does not currently provide discretionary rate relief to any other private childcare providers within the Borough and therefore granting relief in this instance may also set a significant precedent. It is therefore recommended that the request for 100% discretionary rate relief is refused.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Board is required by the Regulations to consider each application on its own merit. Any recommendations provided are given for guidance only, are consistent with Council policy and, wherever possible, previous decisions.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The potential cost to the Council of granting discretionary business rate relief is as presented above.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

The organisation provides childcare facilities for children aged 0-5 years.

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 There are no key risks associated with the proposed action.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The applicant offers their services to all sections of the community, without any prejudice.

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

9.1	Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
	Application forms and supporting evidence	Kingsway House, Caldwell Road, Widnes	Louise Bate, Business Rates Manager

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	21 September 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Physical Environment
SUBJECT:	Murdishaw Regeneration
WARDS:	Norton North, Norton South

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval to amend the capital programme to allow funding for the improvement of the Murdishaw area to be included following the capital receipt from the sale of the former Jolly Brewer pub.

- 2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Council be recommended to amend the capital programme to include £46,000 for the Murdishaw Estate Regeneration programme to provide the Council's contribution to the actions and activities outlined in this report, to be funded from the Capital Receipt received for the Jolly Brewer Pub.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following the closure and subsequent demolition of the former Jolly Brewer Public House, the Council has been working closely with local partners to seek to reinvigorate Murdishaw local centre. This is in response to trader and resident concerns that the local centre was no longer a safe and attractive place to visit.
- 3.2 In 2014, Liverpool Housing Trust (LHT) secured planning permission to deliver 18 new homes and a new relocated car park to the front of the local centre retail units. The Council sold the former Jolly Brewer site to LHT and the capital receipt for this will be £46,000 to be received following the completion of the car park. Construction commenced in November 2016 and should be complete by November 2017.
- 3.3 Subsequently to this, the Council has been working closely with LHT and other key stakeholders to explore the potential for a wider regeneration programme for Murdishaw.
- 3.4 A series of workshops with stakeholders, including housing associations, the police, the CCG and a number of Council departments, identified the

strengths and weaknesses of Murdishaw and agreed the need for a 'collective vision' for the neighbourhood in order to ensure that respective partners' investments are targeted at the areas of greatest impact. In October 2016, Mott Macdonald were appointed as an independent consultant to drive this visioning process and undertake the pre-masterplanning activities such as baseline analysis, stakeholder engagement and an agreed vision statement.

- 3.5 On behalf of the partners, LHT submitted an application to the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) Estate Regeneration Fund for funding for the feasibility and masterplanning consultancy fees. An award of £72,240 enabling grant was awarded in March 2017. This funding will be used for housing market assessment, visioning document, development brief and initial spatial planning for key sites, resident and stakeholder engagement and a detailed masterplan and options for key sites.
- 3.6 To date, two pieces of work have been commissioned and completed – the Visioning Framework and a housing market analysis by consultants Arc4.
- 3.7 In conjunction with the visioning exercise, it is proposed that a series of small scale projects are identified and delivered in the Murdishaw area to target areas of most need, further improve the local environment and demonstrate the commitment to the further regeneration of the area.

The proposed 'quick win' projects have been identified as:

- Signage and improvements to the footpath network to make the area less intimidating for users and improve the existing key pedestrian linkages
- Improvements to existing green space to make the areas more accessible for leisure uses, particularly the Mersey Valley area and Gorsewood
- Existing local centre - possible improvement to the existing retail units and surrounding space
- Anti-social behaviour – explore other public realm enhancements to minimise and design out anti-social behaviour

The projects will be prioritised, costed and delivered by the Regeneration Team in collaboration with the Portfolio Holder and respective ward councillors.

- 3.8 In order to progress the scheme, a steering group with representatives from the key stakeholders will be formed. The steering group will oversee the development of the options, spatial planning and masterplan and also lead on resident engagement as proposals emerge.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The proposals accord with the Core Strategy and support the Corporate Plan and Urban Renewal corporate priority.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The projects identified as Murdishaw regeneration 'quick wins' will be funded through the reinvestment of capital receipts from the land sale. The projects will be costed and prioritised to ensure they are deliverable within the limit of the funding identified.

The vision and masterplanning exercise will identify funding and investment opportunities for the delivery of a wider regeneration programme.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Improvements to the Murdishaw neighbourhood will improve the life chances for children and young people in Halton. The local schools have been engaged in the discussions to date.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Improvements to the wider neighbourhood will exploit the excellent connectivity and improve access to employment opportunities across the borough and in neighbouring towns and cities.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Much of the Murdishaw neighbourhood is in the top 15% for the Index of Multiple deprivation and demonstrates poor health demographics in the key areas of cardio-vascular, mental health and diabetes. The CCG have been engaged as a key partner and improvements to the neighbourhood will impact on the improvement of people's health and wellbeing.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Improvements to the local centre including improvements to footpaths and removal of overgrown areas will improve the physical nature of the route and improve perceptions of safety.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The improvements to the local centre and wider neighbourhood contribute to Halton's urban renewal priority to transform the urban fabric

and infrastructure. The wider neighbourhood improvements will help to create a vibrant and accessible place where people are proud to live.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The risks associated with this are not deemed to be so significant as to require a full risk assessment. The local centre improvements will be fully costed and project managed by the Regeneration Team to ensure that the scheme is delivered on budget and on time.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The proposed improvements will benefit all members of the local community.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Murdishaw Visioning Framework	Regeneration, 5 th Floor Municipal Building	Helen Roberts
Arc4 Report The Regeneration of Murdishaw	Regeneration, 5 th Floor Municipal Building	Helen Roberts

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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