Public Document Pack

Business Efficiency Board

Wednesday, 25 July 2018 at 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Martha Lloyd Jones (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Andrea Wall (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor M. Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Ellen Cargill	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Andrew MacManus	Labour
Councillor Tony McDermott	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Joe Roberts	Labour
Councillor John Stockton	Labour

Please contact Angela Scott on 0151 511 8670 or e-mail angela.scott@halton.gov.uk for further information.

The next meeting of the Board is on Wednesday, 26 September 2018

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

Part I

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.

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

At a meeting of the Business Efficiency Board held on Wednesday, 7 February 2018 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors M. Lloyd Jones (Chair), Joe Roberts (Vice-Chair), J. Bradshaw, C. Loftus, MacManus, McDermott and J. Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Philbin, N. Plumpton Walsh and Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, I. Leivesley, M. Murphy and A. Scott

Also in attendance: G.Jones and M.Heap, Grant Thornton, External Auditors

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

BEB25 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2017 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

BEB26 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update from Grant Thornton (External Auditors) regarding:

- Progress made in delivering their responsibilities as the Council's External Auditors; and
- A summary of emerging national issues and developments that could be relevant to the work of the Board.

Georgia Jones, Audit Manager and Mark Heap, Engagement Lead from Grant Thornton, attended the meeting to present the report and then dealt with Members' questions.

The requirements and preparation associated with implementation of the new General Data Protection Regulation were considered. It was agreed that a briefing note would be prepared for all Members which explained what the legislation was for, how the Council was preparing for its introduction in May 2018 and the Council's ability to demonstrate compliance and governance.

Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

BEB27 EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN - 2017/18 YEAR-END

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval of the Audit Plan proposed by Grant Thornton.

The Board was advised that the report set out details of Grant Thornton's strategy and plan to deliver the 2017/18 audit of the Council's financial statements. It also provided details of their approach to the value for money conclusion.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the External Audit Plan for 2017/18 be noted.

BEB28 APPOINTMENT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which confirmed the appointment of the Council's External Auditor.

The Board was advised that, following the procurement process undertaken by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), Grant Thornton had been awarded the contract for the Council's external audit. This was subject to a consultation period as previously reported to the Board.

It was reported that the consultation period had ended and that on 14 December 2017 the PSAA Board confirmed the appointment for a period of five years commencing 1 April 2018.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of Grant Thornton (UK) LLP as the Council's external auditors, for five years commencing 1 April 2018, be noted.

BEB29 INTERNAL AUDIT PEER REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Divisional Manager, Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, which informed Members of the outcome of the recent Peer Review.

The Board was advised that it was a requirement of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) that an external assessment of the Council's internal audit arrangements be carried out every five years. To fulfil this requirement, an independent peer review was conducted in September 2017 by senior Internal Audit representatives from other North West authorities.

The approach taken, findings and agreed actions from the peer review were set out in the report, and it was noted that the conclusion was that the Council's internal audit arrangements did conform to the PSIAS. A small number of actions were agreed to further develop conformance with the PSIAS, detailed at Appendix 3. It was reported that, during the peer review, four additional recommendations were agreed, which were considered contributory to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the internal audit service. These were detailed at Appendix 4.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the attached peer review report, which confirms that the Council conforms to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, be noted.

BEB30 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2018-19

The Board considered a report of the Divisional Manager, Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, which sought approval for the planned programme of internal audit work for 2018/19.

A risk based Audit Plan had been prepared, designed to enable internal audit to deliver an overall opinion on the Council's risk management and control and governance arrangements.

A copy of the draft Audit Plan for 2018/19 was attached as an appendix to the report and provided information on the role of internal audit and the factors taken into account in developing the plan. It was noted that the plan also incorporated a number of reviews originally included in the 2017/18 Audit Plan that had not been completed during the year, due to capacity issues.

It was reported that the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards required that the internal audit service was delivered and developed in accordance with the internal audit charter. The Council had formally agreed that section 6.2 of Finance Standing Orders constituted the Council's internal audit charter. However, it was further noted that the recent peer review recommended that the charter should be updated, as detailed in the report. The updated version was attached to the report and would be included as part of the current review of the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED: That

1) the Board approves the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2018/19; and

2) the updated Internal Audit Charter be approved.

Divisional Manager, Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance

BEB31 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

(N.B. Councillor John Stockton declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as he was a Governor of Murdishaw West Primary School)

BEB32 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Divisional Manager, Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, which provided Members with a summary of internal audit work completed since the last progress report in November 2017. The report also provided details of progress against the 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan.

It was noted that a total of ten Internal Audit reports had been finalised since the last progress report. An overall assurance opinion was provided for each audit engagement. It was reported that at the end of the third quarter, 62.4% of the total planned audit days for the year had been completed. The full number of audit days would not be delivered by year end, with the remaining planned work for the year being prioritised so as to support a robust annual internal audit opinion on the Council's governance, risk management and control framework.

The Board was advised that some of the lower priority reviews from the current Audit Plan would be proposed for inclusion in the draft 2018/19 Audit Plan. It was noted that the restructure of the Finance Department in July 2017 had an impact on the planned audit work for the current year.

RESOLVED: That the update on progress against the 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan be received.

Meeting ended at 7.05 p.m.

Agenda Item 3

REPORT TO:	Business Efficiency Board
DATE:	25 July 2018
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	External Audit Fee – 2018/19
WARDS:	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides details of the planned external audit fee for 2018/19. Grant Thornton will attend the meeting to present the report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the 2018/19 audit fee and the scope and timing of the planned external audit work be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 provides the framework for local public audit following closure of the Audit Commission. The Council opted-in to a procurement arrangement undertaken by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), from which Grant Thornton were appointed as the Council's external auditors for five years commencing on 1st April 2018.

3.2 PSAA will now oversee the audit contracts and their responsibilities include setting fees and monitoring the quality of auditors' work.

3.3 The attached letter sets out details of the audit fee proposed by PSAA, along with the scope and timing of external audit work and details of the team from Grant Thornton who will be working on the audit.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council's scale fee for 2018/19 has been set at £81,076 which is a reduction of £24,218 from the previous year. There will in addition be a separate fee for certification of the Housing Benefit Subsidy claim, which is estimated at £8,500.

5.2 Any additional work identified by the Auditors in 2018/19 will be subject to approval by PSAA under the normal fee variations process.

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

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Grant Thornton

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23 March 2018

Dear Ed

Planned audit fee for 2018/19

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act) provides the framework for local public audit. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) has been specified as an appointing person under the Act and the Local Authority (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 and has the power to make auditor appointments for audits of opted- in local government bodies from 2018/19.

For opted- in bodies PSAA's responsibilities include setting fees, appointing auditors and monitoring the quality of auditors' work. Further information on PSAA and its responsibilities are available on the PSAA website.

From 2018/19 all grant work, including housing benefit certification, now falls outside the PSAA contract, as PSAA no longer has the power to make appointments for assurance on grant claims and returns. Any assurance engagements will therefore be subject to separate engagements agreed between the grant-paying body, the Council and ourselves and separate fees agreed with the Council.

Scale fee

PSAA published the 2018/19 scale fees for opted-in bodies in March 2018, following a consultation process. Individual scale fees have been reduced by 23 percent from the fees applicable for 2017/18. Further details are set out on the PSAA website. The Council's scale fee for 2018/19 has been set by PSAA at £81,076.

PSAA prescribes that 'scale fees are based on the expectation that audited bodies are able to provide the auditor with complete and materially accurate financial statements, with supporting working papers, within agreed timeframes'.

The audit planning process for 2018/19, including the risk assessment, will continue as the year progresses and fees will be reviewed and updated as necessary as our work progresses.

Scope of the audit fee

There are no changes to the overall work programme for audits of local government audited bodies for 2018/19. Under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the National Audit Office (NAO) is responsible for publishing the statutory Code of Audit Practice and guidance for auditors. Audits of the accounts for 2018/19 will be undertaken under this Code. Further information on the NAO Code and guidance is available on the NAO website.

The scale fee covers:

- our audit of your financial statements;
- our work to reach a conclusion on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources (the value for money conclusion); and
- our work on your whole of government accounts return (if applicable).

PSAA will agree fees for considering objections from the point at which auditors accept an objection as valid, or any special investigations, as a variation to the scale fee.

Value for Money conclusion

The Code requires us to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the Value for Money (VfM) conclusion.

The NAO issued its latest guidance for auditors on value for money work in November 2017. The guidance states that for local government bodies, auditors are required to give a conclusion on whether the Council has put proper arrangements in place.

The NAO guidance identifies one single criterion for auditors to evaluate:
In all significant respects, the audited body had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

Billing schedule

Fees will be billed as follows:

Main Audit fee	£
September 2018	20.269
December 2018	20,269
March 2019	20.269
June 2019	20,269
Total	**81,076**

Outline audit timetable

We will undertake our audit planning and interim audit procedures in January – February 2019. Upon completion of this phase of our work we will issue a detailed audit plan setting out our findings and details of our audit approach. Our final accounts audit and work on the VfM conclusion will be completed in June to July 2019 and work on the whole of government accounts return in July 2019.

Phase of work	Timing	Outputs	Comments
Audit planning and interim audit	January – February 2019	Audit plan	The plan summarises the findings of our audit planning and our approach to the audit of the Council's accounts and VfM.
Final accounts audit	June – July 2019	Audit Findings (Report to those charged with governance)	This report sets out the findings of our accounts audit and VfM work for the consideration of those charged with governance.
VfM conclusion	June – July 2019	Audit Findings (Report to those charged with governance)	As above
Whole of government accounts	July 2019	Opinion on the WGA return	This work will be completed alongside the accounts audit.
Annual audit letter	August 2019	Annual audit letter to the Council	The letter will summarise the findings of all aspects of our work.

Our team

The key members of the audit team for 2018/19 are:

	Name	Phone Number	E-mail
Engagement Lead	Mark Heap	0161 234 6375	mark.r.heap@uk.gt.com
Engagement Manager	Georgia Jones	0161 214 6383	georgia.s.jones@uk.gt.com

Additional work

The scale fee excludes any work requested by the Council that we may agree to undertake outside of our Code audit. Each additional piece of work will be separately agreed and a detailed project specification and fee agreed with the Council.

Quality assurance

We are committed to providing you with a high quality service. If you are in any way dissatisfied, or would like to discuss how we can improve our service, please contact me in the first instance. Alternatively you may wish to contact Sarah Howard, our Public Sector Assurance regional lead partner, via sarah.howard@uk.gt.com.

Yours sincerely

Mark Heap

Engagement Lead

For Grant Thornton UK LLP

REPORT TO: Business Efficiency Board

DATE: 25 July 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director, Finance

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: 2017/18 Statement of Accounts, Audit Findings Report and Letter of Representation

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Council's Letter of Representation, to consider the Audit Findings Report of the External Auditor (Grant Thornton), and to approve the Council's 2017/18 Statement of Accounts.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

1) the draft Letter of Representation in Appendix 1 be approved and any subsequent additions or amendments be approved by the Operational Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Business Efficiency Board;

2) the External Auditor's draft 2017/18 Audit Findings Report in Appendix 2 be received and any subsequent additions or amendments be approved by the Operational Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Business Efficiency Board; and

3) the Council's draft 2017/18 Statement of Accounts in Appendix 3 be approved and any subsequent additions or amendments be approved by the Operational Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Business Efficiency Board.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Statement of Accounts sets out the Council's financial performance for the year in terms of revenue and capital spending and presents the year-end financial position as reflected in the balance sheet.

3.2 The format of the Statement of Accounts is heavily prescribed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (The Code), which makes it a very technical document and not particularly easy to understand. Therefore the key elements are outlined below.

3.3 The Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 has been prepared in full compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and there have been relatively few changes in the format from last year.

3.4 The draft 2017/18 Statement of Accounts was passed to the Council's External Auditor (Grant Thornton) on 31 May 2018, since when they have commenced the audit. Grant Thornton will attend the meeting to present the report of their findings, the Audit Findings report, as shown in Appendix 2.

3.5 Section 2 of the Audit Findings report presents the findings of the External Auditor in respect of matters and risks identified at the planning stage of the audit and additional matters that arose during the course of their work.

3.6 Each year the Council is required to provide the External Auditor with a Letter of Representation relating to the financial statements, as shown in Appendix 1. This provides a number of assurances to the External Auditor in connection with the preparation of the Council's accounts. The letter is required to be signed by the Chair of the Board on behalf of the Council.

4.0 KEY SECTIONS WITHIN THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

4.1 The Council's 2017/18 Statement of Accounts is presented in Appendix 3. The Narrative Report by the Operational Director, Finance summarises the Council's financial performance for 2017/18, including revenue and capital spending.

4.2 In overall net terms the Council reported an overspend of £1.026m on the 2017/18 revenue budget (2016/17 - £0.559m overspend). The overall outturn report was presented to Executive Board on 14 June 2018 and departmental outturn reports are available on the Council's Intranet. Following the outturn position and a review of the Councils earmarked reserve balances the Council's general fund balance at 31 March 2018 stands at £5.0m (2016/17 - £4.8m).

4.3 Capital expenditure was £114.7m (2016/17 - £84.8m) which is 99.4% of the total capital programme allocation of £115.4m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years.

4.4 School balances as at 31 March 2018 totalled £3.8m (2016/17 - £4.8m). In addition, £0.4m (2016/17 - £1.6m) of unspent schools related funding is held centrally and will carry forward into 2018/19.

4.5 The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) presents gross expenditure, gross income and net expenditure for 2017/18 along with the previous year's comparison. The Net Cost of Continuing Operations is adjusted by a number of appropriations to give the Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. The CIES reports on how the Council performed during the year and whether its operations resulted in a surplus or deficit.

4.6 The Council's Balance Sheet sets out the Council's financial position as at 31 March 2018, along with a comparison to the position as at 31 March 2017. The balance sheet is a snapshot of the Council's financial position at a specific point in time, showing what it owns and owes at 31 March.

4.7 The Movement in Reserves Statement presents a summary of the changes in the Council's main reserves during the year. Reserves represent the Council's net worth and show its spending power. Reserves are analysed into two categories: usable and unusable.

4.8 The Cashflow Statement provides an overall analysis of the movements in cash and cash equivalents during the year.

4.9 Detailed notes relating to items within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Movement in Reserves Statement and Cashflow Statement are shown under Notes to the Core Financial Statements.

4.10 The Collection Fund and associated notes summarise the transactions in respect of the collection of Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax, along with the distribution to the Council's own General Fund, to central government (non-domestic rates only) and to the Precepting Authorities (Fire, Police and Parishes).

4.11 The Statement of Responsibilities outlines the basis upon which the Statement of Accounts has been prepared and is followed by a statement of the Council's Accounting Policies.

4.12 The External Auditor has used the draft Statement of Accounts as the basis for undertaking the annual audit of accounts, for which their Audit Report and Certificate is included within the final Statement of Accounts.

4.13 The final section presented within the Statement of Accounts is a Glossary of Terms.

5.0 VALUE FOR MONEY

5.1 Section 3 of the Audit Findings report presents the External Auditor findings on the Value for Money (VFM) conclusion. It considers if the Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

5.2 The External Auditor evaluates the VFM conclusion against one single criterion, being "The Council has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources".

5.3 The overall conclusion from the External Auditor is the Council had proper arrangements in all significant respects to ensure it delivered value for money in its use of resources.

6.0 **NEXT STEPS**

6.1 Following the meeting, the Letter of Representation will be signed and the External Auditor will provide their audit opinion. The Statement of Accounts will then be published and made available to the public via the Council's website.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**
There are no specific implications for any of the Council's priorities.

7.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**
See 7.1

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**
See 7.1

7.4 **A Safer Halton**
See 7.1

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**
See 7.1

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS
The Accounts and Audit Regulations require that the Statement of Accounts is certified by the External Auditor and published by 30th September 2018.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES
There are no equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

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

Document	**Place of Inspection**	**Contact Officer**
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015	Kingsway House Kingsway Widnes	Steve Baker Divisional Manager, Revenues and Financial Management
Code of Practice on	Kingsway House	Steve Baker

Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2017/18	Kingsway Widnes	Divisional Manager, Revenues and Financial Management

APPENDIX 1

Grant Thornton UK LLP
4 Hardman Square
Spinningfields
Manchester
M3 3EB

Date: 25 July 2018

Dear Sirs

Halton Borough Council

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of Halton Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2018 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18 and applicable law.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

Financial Statements

i We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18 ("the Code") which give a true and fair view in accordance therewith.

ii We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the Council and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the financial statements.

iii The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance.

iv We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.

v Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

vi We are satisfied that the material judgements used in the preparation of the financial statements are soundly based, in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements. There are no other material judgements that need to be disclosed.

vii Except as disclosed in the financial statements:
  a there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
  b none of the assets of the Council has been assigned, pledged or mortgaged
  c there are no material prior year charges or credits, nor exceptional or non-recurring items requiring separate disclosure.

viii We confirm that we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities for IAS19 Employee Benefits disclosures are consistent with our knowledge. We confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. We also confirm that all significant post-employment benefits have been identified and properly accounted for.

ix Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

x All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

xi Actual or possible litigation and claims have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

xii We have considered the adjusted misstatements, and misclassification and disclosures changes schedules included in your Audit Findings Report. The financial statements have been amended for these misstatements, misclassifications and disclosure changes and are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

xiii We have considered the unadjusted misstatements schedule included in your Audit Findings Report and attached. We have not adjusted the financial statements for these misstatements brought to our attention as they are immaterial to the results of the Council and its financial position at the year-end.

The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

xiv We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.

xv We believe that the Council’s financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the Council’s needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

Information Provided

xvi We have provided you with:
- a access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- b additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
- c unrestricted access to persons within the Council from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

xvii We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware.

xviii All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

xix We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

xx We have disclosed to you all our knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
- a management;
- b employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
- c others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

xxi We have disclosed to you all our knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, regulators or others.

xxii We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.

xxiii We have disclosed to you the identity of all the Council's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.

xxiv We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Annual Governance Statement

xxv We are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

Narrative Report

xxvi The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect our understanding of the Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was minuted by the Council's Business Efficiency Board at its meeting on 25 July 2018.

Yours faithfully

Name……………………………

Position………………………….

Date…………………………….

Name……………………………

Position…………………………

Date…………………………….

Grant Thornton

DRAFT

This version of the report is a draft. Its contents and subject matter remain under review and its contents may change and be expanded as part of the finalisation of the report. This draft has been created from the template dated DD MMM YYYY

Audit Findings

Year ending 31 March 2018

Halton Borough Council

25 July 2018

Contents

Your key Grant Thornton team members are:

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Headlines

This table summarises the key issues arising from the statutory audit of Halton Borough Council ('the Council') and the preparation of the Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 for those charged with governance.

Financial Statements	Under the International Standards of Auditing (UK) (ISAs), we are required to report whether, in our opinion: • the Council's financial statements give a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and Council's expenditure and income for the year, and • have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting and prepared in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. We are also required to report whether other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.	Our audit work is taking place during July. Our findings are summarised in this report. At the time of writing we are in the process of completing our testing and will update the Business Efficiency Board on the final results of our work at the July meeting. Subject to outstanding queries being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion following the Business Efficiency Board meeting on 25 July 2018. These outstanding items include: - completion of sample testing in a number of areas; - receipt of letter of representation and - review of the final set of financial statements and narrative report. We have concluded that the other information published with the financial statements, which includes the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report, are consistent with our knowledge of your organisation and with the financial statements we have audited.
Value for Money arrangements	Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to report whether, in our opinion: • the Council has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources ('the value for money (VFM) conclusion')	We have completed our risk based review of the Council's value for money arrangements. We have concluded that Halton Borough Council has proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We therefore anticipate issuing an unqualified value for money conclusion. Our findings are summarised on pages 12 to 14
Statutory duties	The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ('the Act') also requires us to: • report to you if we have applied any of the additional powers and duties ascribed to us under the Act; and • certify the closure of the audit	We have not exercised any of our additional statutory powers or duties. We have completed the majority of work under the Code. We expect to be able to certify the completion of the audit when we give our audit opinion providing the work in respect of the Whole of Government Accounts is complete.

Acknowledgements
We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance provided by the finance team and other staff during our audit.

Summary

Overview of the scope of our audit

This Audit Findings presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 and the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'). Its contents have been discussed with management..

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements.

Audit approach

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the Council's business and is risk based, and in particular included:

- an evaluation of the Council's internal controls environment including its IT systems and controls

- substantive testing on significant transactions and material account balances, including the procedures outlined in this report in relation to the key audit risks

Conclusion

We have substantially completed our audit of your financial statements and subject to outstanding queries being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion following the Business Efficiency Board meeting on 25 July 2018. These outstanding items include:

- completion of sample testing in a number of areas;
- receipt of letter of representation and
- review of the final set of financial statements and the narrative report.

Our approach to materiality

The concept of materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to the monetary misstatements but also to disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.

Materiality calculations remain the same as reported in our audit plan. We detail in the table below our assessment of materiality for Halton Borough Council.

	Council Amount (£)	Qualitative factors considered
Materiality for the financial statements	7.116,000	This equates to 2% of your gross expenditure for the 2016/17 year.
Performance materiality	5.337,000	Previous quality of the working papers and response to audit process. Quality of financial systems and processes and the nature of the Council's expenditure and income streams.
Trivial matters	355,000	Standard level of 5 per cent of materiality used.
Materiality for specific transactions, balances or disclosures	See aside	Updated to reflect the latest guidance. The remuneration report is an item of special interest and sensitivity. We have set a lower level of materiality so that our testing ensures individuals are reported on within the correct bands. Senior manager remuneration £174,000

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Significant audit risks

	Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
1	**Improper revenue recognition** Under ISA 240 (UK) there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.	Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at the Council, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted, because: • there is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition • opportunities to manipulate revenue recognition are very limited • the culture and ethical frameworks of local authorities, including Halton Borough Council, mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable Therefore we do not consider this to be a significant risk for Halton Borough Council.
2	**Management override of controls** Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities. We identified management override of controls as a risk requiring special audit consideration.	We have undertaken the following work in relation to this risk: • gained an understanding of the accounting estimates, judgements applied and decisions made by management and considered their reasonableness • obtained a full listing of journal entries, identified and tested unusual journal entries for appropriateness • evaluated the rationale for any changes in accounting policies or significant unusual transactions. Our audit work has not identified any issues in respect of management override of controls.

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Significant audit risks

	Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
3	**Valuation of property, plant and equipment** The Council revalues its land and buildings on a quinquennial basis to ensure that carrying value is not materially different from fair value. This represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements. We identified the valuation of land and buildings revaluations and impairments as a risk requiring special audit consideration.	We have undertaken the following work in relation to this risk: ▪ reviewed management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work ▪ considered the competence, expertise and objectivity of any management experts used ▪ discussed with the valuer the basis on which the valuation is carried out and challenged the key assumptions ▪ reviewed and challenged the information used by the valuer to ensure it is robust and consistent with our understanding ▪ tested revaluations made during the year to ensure they are input correctly into the Council's asset register ▪ evaluated the assumptions made by management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different to current value. At the time of writing we are still completing our testing in this area.
4	**Valuation of pension fund net liability** The Council's pension fund asset and liability as reflected in its balance sheet represent a significant estimate in the financial statements. We identified the valuation of the pension fund net liability as a risk requiring special audit consideration.	We have undertaken the following work in relation to this risk: ▪ identified the controls put in place by management to ensure that the pension fund liability is not materially misstated. We have also assessed whether these controls were implemented as expected and whether they are sufficient to mitigate the risk of material misstatement ▪ evaluated the competence, expertise and objectivity of the actuary who carried out your pension fund valuation. We have gained an understanding of the basis on which the valuation is carried out ▪ procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made ▪ checked the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in notes to the financial statements with the actuarial report from your actuary. Our work has not identified any significant issues in this area.

DRAFT

Reasonably possible audit risks

	Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
7	**Employee remuneration** Payroll expenditure represents a significant percentage (35%) of the Council's operating expenses. As the payroll expenditure comes from a number of individual transactions there is a risk that payroll expenditure in the accounts could be understated. We therefore identified completeness of payroll expenses as a risk requiring particular audit attention.	We have undertaken the following work in relation to this risk: • evaluated the Council's accounting policy for recognition of payroll expenditure for appropriateness • gained an understanding of the Council's system for accounting for payroll expenditure and evaluated the design of the associated controls • obtained year-end payroll reconciliation and ensured amount in accounts can be reconciled to ledger and through to payroll reports. Investigated significant adjusting items • agreed payroll related accruals (e.g. unpaid leave accrual) to supporting documents and reviewed any estimates for reasonableness • performed substantive analytical review. At the time of writing we are still completing our testing in this area.
8	**Operating expenses** Non-pay expenses on other goods and services also represents a significant percentage (50%) of the Council's operating expenses. Management uses judgement to estimate accruals of un-invoiced costs. We identified completeness of non- pay expenses as a risk requiring particular audit attention:	We have undertaken the following work in relation to this risk: • evaluated the Council's accounting policy for recognition of non-pay expenditure for appropriateness • gained an understanding of the Council's system for accounting for non-pay expenditure and evaluated the design of the associated controls • obtained and reviewed the year-end reconciliation, and investigated any significant reconciling items • tested a sample of non-pay payments made in April to test whether they are accounted for in the correct year • tested a sample of non pay expenditure to confirm it is accurately accounted for in the financial statements. At the time of writing we are still completing our testing in this area.

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Other issues

This section provides commentary on issues and risks which were identified during the course of the audit that were not previously separately communicated in the Audit Plan

	Issue	Summary of work performed	Findings & conclusion
1	As part of our review of the Council's non current assets we have undertaken work to review the valuation and accounting treatment in respect of the Mersey Gateway Bridge.	We have undertaken the following work: • test the appropriateness of basis of the valuation and the accuracy of the figures used • ensure the valuation complies with Code requirements • ensure the bridge is accounted for correctly throughout the financial statements • test the validity of the model used to calculate the unitary charge and that all elements of the repayments are accounted for correctly	Our review identified that depreciation had not been charged on the bridge in 2017/18. The bridge opened for use on 13 October 2017 and under Code requirements an asset should be depreciated from the time it is available for use. Officers have calculated depreciation for the period from the opening of the bridge to 31 March 2018 which results in a depreciation charge of £12.052m. Officers have undertaken to amend the financial statements to reflect this. At the time of writing we are awaiting sight of the contract in order to verify the amounts within the accounts back to the agreement. We have not identified any other significant issues in relation to the accounting treatment of the bridge.

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Accounting policies

Accounting area	Summary of policy	Comments	Assessment
Revenue recognition	• The Council's accounting policy for income is as follows: • Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Council transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council. Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Council can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council • This should include all material sources of income, e.g. fees and charges, grants Council Tax, NNDR.	• The Council's accounting policy is in line with the requirements of the CIPFA code and is adequately disclosed in the accounts. • Our testing of income, grants income and debtors confirmed that the Council is recognising income in line with its accounting policy.	**Green** ●
Judgements and estimates	Key estimates and judgements include: • Useful life of Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) • Revaluations • Impairments • Accruals • Valuation of pension fund net liability • Provision for National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) appeals • Pension liabilities	We have: • reviewed the estimates and judgements made in the accounts as part of our work with no matters arising • reviewed/sample tested valuations undertaken in the year to confirm they are appropriately included in the statement of accounts • reviewed the calculation of your provision for business rate appeals • reviewed assumptions and information in relation to the pension fund liability to assess reasonableness and check the liability figures are accurately reflected in the accounts. Our work has not identified any significant issues.	Green ●

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Assessment

- ● Marginal accounting policy which could potentially be open to challenge by regulators
- ● Accounting policy appropriate but scope for improved disclosure
- ● Accounting policy appropriate and disclosures sufficient

Accounting policies

Accounting area	Summary of policy	Comments	Assessment
Going concern	• The Operational Director - Finance has a reasonable expectation that the services provided by the Council will continue for the foreseeable future. Members concur with this view. For this reason, the Council continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.	We have reviewed the Council's assessment and are satisfied with management's assessment that the going concern basis is appropriate for the 2017/18 financial statements.	**Green** ●
Other critical policies		We have reviewed the Council's policies against the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice. The Council's accounting policies are appropriate and consistent with previous years and with Code requirements.	Green ●

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Assessment

- ● Marginal accounting policy which could potentially be open to challenge by regulators
- ● Accounting policy appropriate but scope for improved disclosure
- ● Accounting policy appropriate and disclosures sufficient

DRAFT

Other communication requirements

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by auditing standards and the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

	Issue	Commentary
1	**Matters in relation to fraud**	• We have previously discussed the risk of fraud with the Business Efficiency Board. No issues have been identified during the course of our audit procedures.
2	**Matters in relation to related parties**	• Our work identified some related parties who whilst the Council's transactions with them were not material, would likely be material to the other party and as such should be disclosed. • No other issues were identified
3	**Matters in relation to laws and regulations**	• You have not made us aware of any significant incidences of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations and we have not identified any incidences from our audit work.
4	**Written representations**	• A standard letter of representation has been requested from the Council, which is included on the agenda for the Business Efficiency Board.
5	**Confirmation requests from third parties**	• We have previously requested from management permission to send confirmation requests to your bank and those bodies with which you hold investments. • We have received the required external confirmations.
6	**Disclosures**	• We have not identified any significant issues in relation to disclosure.
7	**Audit evidence and explanations**	• All information and explanations requested to date from management have been provided.
8	**Significant difficulties**	• None identified

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Other responsibilities under the Code

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

	Issue	Commentary
1	**Other information**	We are required to give an opinion on whether the other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. No inconsistencies have been identified. However some areas for improvement in terms of disclosure within the narrative report were identified and officers made some adjustments to reflect these matters. At the time of writing, these adjustments were under review. We plan to issue an unqualified opinion in this respect subject to final review of the changes to the report.
2	**Matters on which we report by exception**	We are required to report on a number of matters by exception in a number of areas: • If the Annual Governance Statement does not meet the disclosure requirements set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance or is misleading or inconsistent with the other information of which we are aware from our audit • If we have applied any of our statutory powers or duties We have nothing to report on these matters.
3	**Specified procedures for Whole of Government Accounts**	We are required to carry out specified procedures (on behalf of the NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidation pack under WGA group audit instructions. As the Council exceeds the specified group reporting threshold of £500m we examine and report on the consistency of the WGA consolidation pack with the Council's audited financial statements. The work has not yet been completed; the deadline for completion is the end of August.
4	**Certification of the closure of the audit**	We are unable to certify the closure of the 2017/18 audit of Halton Borough Council until the completion of the procedures in relation to Whole of Government Accounts. We expect to certify the closure of the audit by the end of August.

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Value for Money

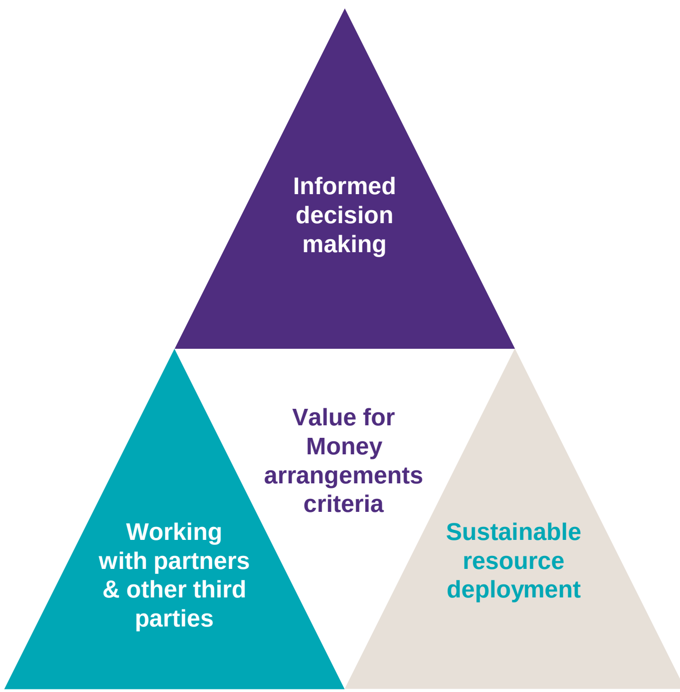
Background to our VFM approach

The NAO issued its guidance for auditors on Value for Money work for 2017/18 in November 2017. The guidance states that for local government bodies, auditors are required to give a conclusion on whether the Council has proper arrangements in place.

The guidance identifies one single criterion for auditors to evaluate:

"In all significant respects, the audited body takes properly informed decisions and deploys resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people."

This is supported by three sub-criteria, as set out below:



Risk assessment

We carried out an initial risk assessment in January 2018 and identified one significant risk in respect of specific areas of proper arrangements using the guidance contained in AGN03. We communicated these risks to you in our Audit Plan dated January 2018.

We have continued our review of relevant documents up to the date of giving our report, and have not identified any further significant risks where we need to perform further work.

We carried out further work only in respect of the significant risk we identified from our initial and ongoing risk assessment. Where our consideration of the significant risks determined that arrangements were not operating effectively, we have used the examples of proper arrangements from AGN 03 to explain the gaps in proper arrangements that we have reported in our VFM conclusion.

Value for Money

Our work

AGN 03 requires us to disclose our views on significant qualitative aspects of the Council's arrangements for delivering economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

We have focused our work on the significant risk that we identified in the Council's arrangements. In arriving at our conclusion, our main considerations were:

- review of budget monitoring reports and updates to the Medium Term Financial Plan
- consideration of plans to address future potential budget gaps and how the Council is identifying, managing and monitoring financial risks
- review and monitoring of revenue and capital reports

We have set out more detail on the risks we identified, the results of the work we performed and the conclusions we drew from this work on page 14.

Overall conclusion

Based on the work we performed to address the significant risks, we concluded that:

- the Council had proper arrangements in all significant respects to ensure it delivered value for money in its use of resources.

The text of our report, which confirms this can be found at Appendix E.

Recommendations for improvement

We discussed findings arising from our work with management.

Significant difficulties in undertaking our work

We did not identify any significant difficulties in undertaking our work on your arrangements which we wish to draw to your attention.

Significant matters discussed with management

There were no matters where no other evidence was available or matters of such significance to our conclusion or that we required written representation from management or those charged with governance.

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Key findings

We set out below our key findings against the significant risks we identified through our initial risk assessment and further risks identified through our ongoing review of documents.

	Significant risk	Findings	Conclusion
1	**Financial position and sustainability** The Council does not have a history of financial difficulty but the position is beginning to become more challenging. At the latest review of budget performance the Council was forecasting a £3-4m over spend against budget mainly due to pressures on Children's Social Services and Adult Social Services. Plans have been put into place to try to reduce the potential over spend before the end of the year. The Council is in the process of setting the budget for 2018/19	The financial position of the Council is becoming increasingly challenging. In 2017/18 the Council overspent its budget by £1.026m compared to an overspend of £0.559m in 2016/17. This was an overall improved position from the forecast overspend reported in quarter 3 of £3.5m. At that time the Council identified and implemented corrective action to reduce the final overspend to just over £1m. The over spend was due to a number of spending pressure areas against the Council's budget; the most significant of these was within the Children and Families department. The over spend was funded from the general reserve. This initially reduced the general fund reserve to a relatively low level but the Council was able to review their current earmarked reserves and identify reductions which could be transferred to the general fund reserve to bring it up to around £5m. Although the Council over spent in 2017/18, arrangements were in place to identify this and monitor it through the year and via this the Council was able to reduce the forecast over spend. Therefore we are able to conclude appropriate arrangements are in place. A balanced budget has been set for 2018/19 including a £600,000 contingency and an additional £3m of funding to assist with meeting the current overspend in Children's Services costs. Initially there was a £11.7m gap in the budget funding for 2017/18. The gap in the Medium Term Financial Plan over the subsequent three financial years (2019/20 to 2021/22) is forecast to be around £23m. The Council are working on identifying savings and alternative ways of working in order to bridge these gaps.	**Auditor view** • On this basis we have concluded that the risk was sufficiently mitigated and the Council has proper arrangements. • The Council will need to continue to monitor spending and the achievement of savings closely through the coming year to ensure budgeted spending is met.

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Independence and ethics

Independence and ethics

- We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention. We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and confirm that we, as a firm, and each covered person, are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

Further, we have complied with the requirements of the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 01 issued in December 2017 which sets out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

Details of fees charged are detailed in Appendix D

.

Independence and ethics

Audit and Non-audit services

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the Council. The following non-audit services were identified.

Service	£	Threats	Safeguards
Audit related			
Teachers' Pension return	3,750 (TBC)	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £3,750 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £105,294 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.
Mersey Gateway (Department for Transport)	2,500 (TBC)	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £2,500 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £105,294 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.
Housing Benefit Subsidy Return	6,828	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	This fee is set by Public Sector Audit Appointments and is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is 6,828 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £105,294 and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.
Non-audit related			
CFO Insights	12,500	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	The fee is a subscription, planned to be recurring and is therefore high self-interest threat. However, the fee for this work is negligible in comparison to the total fee for the audit and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. It is also a fixed fee with no contingent element. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level.

The amounts detailed are fees agreed to-date for audit related and non-audit services to be undertaken by Grant Thornton UK LLP in the current financial year. These services are consistent with the Council's policy on the allotment of non-audit work to your auditors. All services have been approved by the Operational Director – Finance. Any changes and full details of all fees charged for audit related and non-audit related services by Grant Thornton UK LLP and by Grant Thornton International Limited network member Firms will be included in our Audit Findings report at the conclusion of the audit. None of the services provided are subject to contingent fees.

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Audit Adjustments

We are required to report all non trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Impact of adjusted misstatements
All adjusted misstatements are set out in detail below along with the impact on the key statements and the reported net expenditure for the year.

	Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Balance Sheet £' 000	Impact on total net expenditure £'000
1	Depreciation in relation to the Mersey Gateway Bridge It should be noted that Depreciation is reversed out of the CIES and so has no overall impact on net expenditure.	12,052	(12,052)	0
	Overall impact			

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DRAFT

Audit Adjustments

We are required to report all non trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Misclassification and disclosure changes

The table below provides details of misclassification and disclosure changes identified during the audit which have been made in the final set of financial statements.

Disclosure omission	Detail	Auditor recommendations	Adjusted?
Accounting policies	Accounting policies - one area for improvement identified in relation to Mersey Gateway. The valuation is partly historical cost and partly unitary payments. As this is not a typical measurement basis for an infrastructure asset, which would be at historical cost, the accounting policy needs to set out clearly the split between historical cost and unitary charges	The accounting policy should be updated to reflect the Council's treatment of the asset	Yes
Grants – note 7	During our review and testing of grants we identified that note 7 includes within the analysis £2,462,000 that relates to trade creditors. This should not be included in the grants note as it does not relate to grant income; it should be included within the creditors note. This is a disclosure issue and does not impact on the figures in the balance sheet.	Note 7 and note 25 require amendment.	Yes
Related Parties – note 13	Our work identified some related parties who whilst the Council's transactions with them were not material, they would likely be material to the other party and as such should be disclosed.	Where transactions are material to the other party these should be disclosed within the note.	Yes
Creditors - note 25	Note 25 – Creditors should separately disclose the short term liabilities in relation to PFI and Mersey Gateway. These amounts are currently included within 'Other Entities and Individuals' in the note.	Short term liabilities in relation to PFI and Mersey Gateway should be disclosed separately.	Yes
Contingent Liabilities – note 33	Financial instruments includes a long term loan from the Council to an SME for £2,000,000. This has not been valued at fair value. The difference in carrying value and fair value will not be material.	The council should disclosure fair values for long term assets where appropriate.	No

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Fees

We confirm below our final fees charged for the audit and provision of non-audit services.

Audit Fees

	Proposed fee	Final fee
Council Audit	£105,294	£105,294
Grant Certification	£6,828	£6,828
Total audit fees (excluding VAT)	**£112,122**	**£112,122**

The proposed fees for the year were in line with the scale fee set by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA). Our fees for grant certification cover only housing benefit subsidy certification, which falls under the remit of Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Fees in respect of other grant work, such as reasonable assurance reports, are shown under 'Fees for other services'.

Non Audit Fees

Fees for other services	Fees £
Audit related services:	
• Mersey Gateway (Department for Transport)	2,500 (TBC)
• Teachers' Pension return	3,750 (TBC)
Non-audit services	
• CFO Insights	12,500
	£18,750

DRAFT

Audit opinion

We anticipate we will provide the Council with an unmodified audit report - TBC

Independent auditor's report to the members of Halton Borough Council

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Halton Borough Council (the 'Authority') for the year ended 31 March 2018 which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2018 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014..

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Who we are reporting to

This report is made solely to the members of the Authority, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Authority's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the Authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Operational Director - Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Operational Director - Finance has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Authority's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The Operational Director - Finance is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts set out on pages 15 to119, the Narrative Report and the Annual Governance Statement, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge of the Authority obtained in the course of our work including that gained through work in relation to the Authority's arrangements for securing value for money through economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)' published by CIPFA and SOLACE or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements and our knowledge of the Authority gained through our work in relation to the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts, the Narrative Report and the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice we are required to report to you if:

- we have reported a matter in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we have made a written recommendation to the Authority under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we have exercised any other special powers of the auditor under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

Responsibilities of the Authority, the Operational Director - Finance and Those Charged with Governance for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities set out on page 98, the Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Operational Director – Finance. The Operational Director - Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18, which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Operational Director - Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Operational Director - Finance is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Authority lacks funding for its continued existence or when policy decisions have been made that affect the services provided by the Authority.

The Business Efficiency Board is Those Charged with Governance.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - Conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Conclusion

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2017, we are satisfied that *the Authority* put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2017, as to whether in all significant respects the Authority had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2018.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to be satisfied that the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice until we have completed the work necessary to issue our Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) Component Assurance statement for the Authority for the year ended 31 March 2018. We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements or on our conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Signature

for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Appointed Auditor

Grant Thornton UK LLP
4 Hardman Square
Spinningfields
Manchester
M3 3EB

Date:

DRAFT

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HALTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

2017/18

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Narrative Report by Operational Director - Finance

Introduction

The aim of this narrative is to provide an understandable guide to the Councils year-end financial position and future outlook which are relevant to the performance of the Council.

The Statement of Accounts sets out the Council's income and expenditure for the year and also provides a snapshot of the financial position as at 31 March 2018. Included are core financial statements supported by supplementary statements, which will help provide an analysis of the financial performance of the Council over the financial year 2017/18.

Whilst the publication of the Statement of Accounts is a statutory requirement, the purpose behind the requirement is to provide stakeholders with clear information regarding the Council's financial performance over the past year. The Council has continued the work of past years in reviewing the style and content of the information included within the Statement of Accounts to ensure the content included is relevant and material from both a quantitative and qualitative viewpoint.

The format and content of the financial statements is prescribed by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2017/18 (known as The Code), which in turn is underpinned by International Financial Reporting Standards.

The Core Statements are:

- **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement** – this statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount which is funded from taxation. The end result is a very different position to how net outturn spend compared to budget is reported. A reconciliation between the two is provided as part of this narrative statement and the Expenditure and Funding Analysis Statement, included within Note 1.

- **Balance Sheet** – this statement shows the value as at the 31 March 2018 of the assets, liabilities and cash balances recognised by the Council.

- **Movement in Reserves Statement** – this statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into "Usable Reserves" i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure (both capital and revenue) or reduce local taxation, and "Unusable Reserves", reserves which highlight changes to unrealisable gains or losses.

- **Cash Flow Statement** – this statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents (cash invested for 3 months or under) of the Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Council.

- **Notes to the above Statements** – extensive notes to support the core statements are set out in accordance with the requirements of the Code. The notes shall:

  1. Present information about the basis of preparation of the financial statements and the specific accounting policies used.
  2. Disclose the information required by the Code that is not presented elsewhere in the core financial statements.

The Supplementary Financial Statements are:

- **Collection Fund Account** – this is a statement that reflects the statutory obligation for the Council as a billing authority to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statements show the transactions of the Council in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to major and local preceptors and the Government of council tax and non-domestic rates.

- **Pension Fund Account** – reports the contributions received, payment to pensioners and the value of net assets invested in the Local Government Pension scheme on behalf of Council employees.

- **Group Accounts** – the purpose of this statement is to present the consolidated position of the Council's activities, in accordance with the Code. This would involve consolidating the accounts of Halton Borough Transport Limited (HBT) and Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd (MGCB) with the Council's accounts by grossing up the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Balance Sheet whilst eliminating intra group transactions. For 2017/18 the group account statements are excluded as the transactions relating to group entities are not considered material.

- The materiality of the transactions has been assessed based on quantitative and qualitative factors. Activities of group entities are not significant to the representation of the operational activities of the Council. In addition the Council does not depend significantly on group entities for continued provision of statutory services and grouping the accounts would not provide any more useful disclosures than already included.

Other Statements:

- **Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts** – this statement sets out the responsibilities of the Council and the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer).
- **Statement of Accounting Policies** – this statement explains the basis for the recognition, measurement and disclosure of transactions and other events in the accounts.
- **Independent Auditor's Report to Members** – this is the report and certificate following the external audit of the Council's accounts, carried out by Grant Thornton UK LLP.

Financial Performance 2017/18

The Council incurs both revenue and capital expenditure. Revenue expenditure is generally on items which are used in the year and net expenditure is generally financed by Council Tax, Retained Business Rates, Top-Up Funding and Revenue Support Grant. Capital expenditure generally has a life beyond one year and increases the value of an asset. The financing of capital expenditure is charged to revenue over a number of years in accordance with statutory requirements.

On 01 April 2017 the Council entered into a pilot scheme for the retention of 99% business rates (the remaining 1% going to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service). The pilot was part of a scheme with all six member authorities of the Liverpool City Region. Government gave a guarantee that as a result of the pilot the Council would be no worse off than had it continued with business rate retention of 49%.

The impact of the pilot scheme for the Council was that both Revenue Support Grant and the Improved Better Care Fund would no longer be paid as separate grants but instead be replaced by the additional retained business rates and an increased element of top-up funding. It has since been agreed the pilot scheme will continue for the financial year 2018/19.

On 8 March 2017 Council set the original budget for 2017/18 of £103.4m. At the same time Council approved a council tax requirement for the year of £44.4m, setting the Band D rate at £1,312.27.

With continuing reduced levels of funding from Government together with increased service demand particularly from Children's & Adult Social Care and the Community & Environment Department, the Council's net spend position for the past year in comparison to the available budget has continued to be an issue and risk to its finances. The Council continues to monitor the spend position on operational activities and as at 31 December 2017 it was forecast that outturn spend would be £3.5m over the budget position. Corrective action and close monitoring undertaken by Members and Officers and the action taken to curb spending except where absolutely essential has resulted in total spending for 2017/18 being £104.4m, £1.0m above the budget for the year (compared to £0.6m above budget in the previous year).

This position resulted in the Council's General Fund Balance decreasing to £3.8m. At this level it is considered the General Reserve is insufficient given the level of increasing service pressures, continuation of public spending cuts and risk to the Council of fluctuations in the level of business rates retained on an annual basis. Therefore, a number of earmarked reserves have been reviewed and reductions made where possible, to enable a further £1.2m to be moved into the General Reserve, taking the balance to a more prudent £5.0m.

The table below shows the movement on the Council's General Fund position compared to budget.

	2017/18 Original Budget £000	2017/18 Actual £000
Net Expenditure	103,249	104,308
Parish Precepts	88	88
Total	**103,337**	**104,396**
Financed by Local Taxpayers – Council Tax	(44,466)	(44,466)
Financed by Local Taxpayers – Business Rates	(49,722)	(49,756)
Financed by Local Taxpayers – Collection Fund Surplus	(1,712)	(1,711)
Financed by Top-Up Funding	(7,437)	(7,437)
(Surplus)/Deficit for Year	**-**	**1,026**
General Fund Balance Brought Forward	**(4,830)**	**(4,830)**
Transfer from Earmarked Reserves to General Fund	**-**	**(1,200)**
General Fund Balance Carried Forward	**(4,830)**	**(5,004)**

The largest pressure on the budget during the year again related to children's social care costs. The outturn position reported an overspend against budget of £4.3m, the key pressure on the budget being out of borough residential placements, although out of borough fostering, special guardianship and direct payments are also significant budget pressures.

The 2018/19 budget approved by Council on 7th March 2018, included an additional £3.0m of budget provision for children's social care which will help to alleviate the overspend position and service demand pressures for the forthcoming year. It is intended that as far as possible this additional budget provision and ongoing reviews in service provision will be used to limit the overall financial pressure brought about by increased service demand.

Services pressures continue to be evident in Adult Social Care with a particular pressure on the Complex Care Pool Budget which the Council host in partnership with Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG). Contingency budget from the HCCG minimum contribution to the Better Care Fund and Additional Better Care Fund monies have been used to offset 2017/18 budget pressures. There are one-off measures and service pressures which will continue into 2018/19. A financial recovery plan has been put into place by the Pool Manager, which will look at reducing adult health and social care costs.

Staffing expenditure is below budget across the Council, as posts were held vacant to assist with achieving a balanced budget and in many cases to provide efficiency savings for 2018/19. Over the past three years the Council has made a conscious effort to reduce spend and reliance on agency employee placements. Spend on agency staff for the past year totalled £1.6m, a reduction of 44% on agency costs since 2015/16.

Redundancy costs incurred during the year totalled £0.5m (2016/17 - £0. 4m). These were met from the Transformation Fund Reserve which the Council established to meet the costs associated with structural changes. Posts vacated from staff electing to take up voluntary redundancy terms have been deleted from the Council's staffing structure to provide on-going savings. Further details on exit packages can be found in supporting note 11 to the financial statements.

Given the financial challenges which the Council has had to deal with since 2010/11 and the continued public spending austerity measures, it is vital that high quality financial management is provided to the Council. Quarterly financial spending reports are presented to Members and the Council's Management Team which highlight budget pressures as they develop during the year. A budget risk register is maintained on a quarterly basis, key risks are evaluated and control measures put in place.

Schools

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) expenditure incurred in relation to the Schools budget, both by individual schools and the Council totalled £79.0m and is shown in more detail in Note 8.

School balances at 31 March 2018 total £3.7m (£4.8m 31 March 2017). In addition, £0.5m (£1.6m 31 March 2017) of unspent schools related funding is held centrally and will carry forward into 2018/19

Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement

Whilst the General Fund shows a net deficit for the year of £1.0m (before transfers from earmarked reserves), the accounting position presented in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement (CIES) shows a deficit for the year of £16.0m. The CIES takes a wider view of financial performance than that shown in the General Fund and shows the true accounting position for the year. This deficit represents the total amount by which the Council's equity has decreased over the year as shown in the Balance Sheet .

Supporting the CIES is the Expenditure and Funding Analysis included at Note 1 to the accounts. It shows the movement by Council directorate from the year-end outturn position reported to the Council's Executive Board to what is included to the deficit position on the provision of services, included as part of the CIES.

The table below reconciles the General Fund overspend via the deficit position on the provision of services to the total deficit for 2017/18 on the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement. Included below the table are supporting notes to the amounts within the table.

	2017/18 £000
General Fund Overspend	**1,026**
Transfer from Earmarked Reserves	**(1,200)**
Accounting Adjustments Provision of Services:	
Adjustment for Capital Purposes	
- Depreciation, Impairment and Revaluation Losses of Non-Current Assets	37,472
- Capital Grant Income	(12,935)
- Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital	1,701
- Loss on De-Recogntion of Non-Current Assets	21,416
- Minimum Revenue Provision	(6,073)
- Other Capital Adjustments	(832)
Pension Adjustments	8,037
Movement in Reserves	3,049
Other Differences	191
Deficit on the Provision of Services	**51,852**
Accounting Adjustments Other:	
Surplus on Revaluation of PP&E	(17,024)
Gain on Pension Asset	(5,634)
Loss on Pension Assumptions (Demographic, Financial and Other)	(12,940)
Revaluation of Available for Sale Financial Instruments	(219)
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure	**16,035**

- **Adjustment for Capital Purposes**
  - Depreciation and Revaluation Loss of Non-Current Assets – Reflects the annual cost of assets consumed during the year
  - Capital Grant Income – Used to help fund the capital programme, recognised in the CIES in line with proper accounting practice.
  - Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital – Capital funded expenditure charged to the CIES under statute.
  - Loss on De-Recognition of Non-Current Assets – Transfer of fixed assets relating to The Grange transferring to academy status from 01 January 2018.
  - Minimum Revenue Position – Amount set aside in the General Fund to recognise the repayment of debt. In line with proper accounting practice this is not required to be included in the CIES.

- **Pension Adjustments** - denotes the difference between the accounting cost of pensions (included in the CIES) and the actual employer contributions to the pension fund. More information on pensions is included elsewhere within the narrative report.
- **Movement in Reserves** - As per proper accounting practice, changes to reserves are not required to be included in the CIES.
- **Other Differences** – Includes the Collection Fund adjustment, difference between amounts credited to the CIES and amounts to be recognised under statutory provisions relating to Council Tax and Business Rates

- **Surplus on Revaluation of PP&E** - Increase in the value of those non-current assets that have been revalued during the year.
- **Gain on Pension Assets / Gain on Pension Adjustments** – Information on these adjustments is included within the Pension Liability heading as part of the narrative report.
- **Revaluation of Available for Sale Financial Instruments** – Increase in the value of available for sale financial instruments held, in-year decrease has no impact on the Council's general fund.

Capital Planning

The Council prepares and reports a rolling capital programme to forecast the probable level of capital spend over the next three years, along with the likely sources of funding. The Council also maintains a capital reserve, which has been generated from revenue contributions in order to support funding the capital programme. The forecast shows that there are sufficient resources over the medium term to cover the current capital programme, funded from borrowings, grants, revenue contributions, capital receipts and use of reserves.

At 31st March 2018 unused capital receipts were £10.8m, and the balance on the capital reserve was £3.9m. A significant percentage of the capital receipts are earmarked for future capital projects, the forecast level of receipts as at 31 March 2019 is £7.3m

The Council considers any new additions to the capital programme in light of the resources available.

Capital Expenditure

The Council spent £104.7m on capital schemes (excluding finance leases and Mersey Gateway) in 2017/18 compared with planned expenditure of £114.8m. This represents slippage against the capital programme of 9%. Major reasons for the slippage were due to delays in commencing maintenance and reconfiguration work on the Silver Jubilee Bridge, land and developments costs for the Mersey Gateway and delays to the purchase of property and land assets. The approved budget and outturn capital position together with the various sources of funding is as follows:

	2017/18 Budget £000	2017/18 Actual £000	2017/18 Variance £000
Expenditure:			
Schools Related	2,096	1,933	163
People Directorate	3,720	2,691	1,029
Enterprise, Community and Resources Directorate	31,215	23,069	8,146
Mersey Gateway	77,741	76,971	771
Total Expenditure	**114,772**	**104,664**	**10,109**
Funded By:			
Borrowing	(86,924)	(85,211)	(1,713)
Capital Receipts	(9,159)	(5,894)	(3,265)
Revenue	(878)	(626)	(252)
Grants and Other Contributions	(17,811)	(12,933)	(4,879)
Total Funding	**(114,772)**	**(104,664)**	**(10,109)**

The above table excludes the unitary charge element of the Mersey Gateway. Analysis of capital expenditure is included in note 16 of the financial statements.

Non-Current Assets Valuation

The Balance Sheet shows the current value of property, plant & equipment as £1,101.7m as at 31 March 2018 compared to £398.1m at the same point a year ago. The significant increase in the value of non-current assets is as a result of the acquisition of the Mersey Gateway.

Pension Liability

Under International Accounting Standard 19, the Council is required to restate its accounts to reflect the activities of the two major pension providers, the Cheshire Pension Fund and the Teachers' Pension Agency

As at 31 March 2018 the Council has defined pension net liabilities of £98.5m, this is a decrease of £10.5m to the net liabilities of £109.0m from 31 March 2017. The movement in the net liability is relatively minor compared to previous years due to overall default financial assumptions being similar to 31 March 2017 and returns over the year being broadly in line with the 2017 accounting expected return assumption.

Funding levels of the pension fund are monitored on an annual basis. Following the triennial review in 2016 Council approved the payment of past service deficit cost as a lump sum for the period 2017-2020, rather than paying these on a monthly basis as has been the historical preferred method. This resulted in a cash saving over the period given the forecast low level of investment returns and strong cashflow position of the Council.

Treasury Management

The Council operates within a Treasury Management framework, which requires that each year a strategy is prepared including setting prudential indicators to form a framework for the Council's borrowing and lending activities. The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. Performance is regularly monitored throughout the year with reports presented to the Council's Executive Board at the halfway point of the year and a report on the final outturn position. The Council has had another successful year and actual borrowing costs for the year were less than budgeted whilst income from investments exceeded the budgeted income target.

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19 was approved by Council on 07 March 2018. The aim of the treasury management operation is to ensure that cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments, security being prioritised over yield.

As at 31 March 2018 long term borrowing totalled £172m, well within the authorised borrowing limit of £250m. Borrowing comprises loans from the Public Works Loan Board of £162m and a Lenders Option Borrowers Option loan with Commerzbank for £10m.

Of the £172m, total borrowing of £142m relates to the contribution from the Council towards the Mersey Gateway Bridge construction costs. This borrowing has been taken with a maturity period of between 26-30 years and will be re-paid fully using toll income from the Mersey Gateway Crossing.

The Council's cashflow position continues to be well managed, cash held and deposits payable within 3 months) total £27.3m (£54.2m in 2016/17). The larger balance last year was due to delays in receipt and payment of invoices associated with the Council's capital programme. As at the balance sheet date short term debtors total £30.7m an increase of 53% from 2016/17 and short term creditors total £64.9m, an increase of 62% from the previous year. The increase in debtors relates to a variety of sources including sums due for VAT repayment and increases to debtors on council tax and business rates (mainly due to the business rate retention pilot scheme and collection of 99% of business rates billed). The increase in creditors reflects approximately £13m in payments due to the Mersey Gateway project and £10m due to Government for business rate transitional relief.

The Council has a prompt payment discount scheme where in agreement with suppliers it will arrange early payment of invoices in return for a percentage discount on the invoice total, a scheme that is equally beneficial to both parties.

The cash flow position is also impacted by an increase to the value of grants the Council has received in advance of need. This has increased from £4.7m in 2016/17 to £27.4m as at 31 March 2018. The large increase is due to Availability Support Grant received from Government by way of a contribution towards the annual financing costs for the Mersey Gateway Crossing.

All transactions relating to investments and borrowings complied with the approved guidelines for the year. Further details of these transactions are contained in notes 22, 26 and 33 to the core financial statements.

Collection Fund

The transactions on this fund record the collection of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The Business Rate Retention Scheme was implemented on 1st April 2013. As part of the scheme the Council acts as an agent and collects Non Domestic Rates on behalf of Central Government, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and itself.

The Council as the Billing Authority collects Council Tax on behalf of Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner and itself.

The balance on the Collection Fund as at 31 March 2018 is a surplus position of £10.3m compared to a surplus position of £11.4m from the previous year. Further details on the Collection Fund can be found within the supplementary financial statements. The Collection Fund position will be reviewed during 2018/19 and estimates will be provided in the second half of the financial year of the value of the balance which will be available for distribution in the following financial year. The value of the surplus position which is attributable to the Council is only £6.4m, of this £4.9m has been used in balancing the 2018/19 budget. In addition the increase in gross business rates has been taken into account in setting and balancing the Council's 2018/19 budget position.

In accordance with accounting guidelines, the Collection Fund is required to identify a provision for NNDR valuation appeal claims. The provision as at 31 March 2018 is £5.5m, a decrease of £2.5m from the previous year. The reduction in the appeals provision reflects the higher number of appeals being finalised from the 2010 rating period. The new rating period began on 01 April 2017 but in comparison to previous periods there have been a lower number of appeals as a result of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) introducing a new appeal system. Despite this the Council has taken a prudent view and provided for appeals which we expect to happen over the next year as the new appeal system develops.

Performance Measures 2017/18

The vision of the Council and its partners is "Halton will be a thriving and vibrant borough where people can learn and develop their skills; enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality; sustained by a thriving business community; and safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods."

The Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 18 identifies the Council's vision, values and principles and six strategic themes which underpin the work of the various departments and service areas across the authority.

These strategic themes provide the basis for the development of key actions and activities, and performance measures, which are reported on a quarterly basis to the Policy and Performance Board with responsibility for scrutiny in each of these strategic areas. These Priority Based Performance Reports also contain information concerning the key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period of reporting.

These reports are placed on public deposit and are available on the Council's website via the relevant Policy and Performance Board agenda packs. The reports identify what progress is being made throughout the year in relation to the delivery of predetermined actions and the progress of a range of measures including direction of travel and achievement of targets.

The reports provide financial statements identifying variation in planned spend during the quarter and providing an explanatory comment.

Policy and Performance Boards also receive a mid-year update concerning the implementation of mitigation measures for those risks contained within the Directorate Risk Registers which have been assessed as high.

This approach allows the opportunity for the effective scrutiny of the Councils performance during the course of the year in order that any underperformance can be addressed in a timely manner and or resources can be realigned in response to prevailing conditions or pressures.

Listed below are a number of key performance indicators used in assessing the Council putting in place economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources:

- The number of working days lost during the year due to sickness absence has increased from 8.66 in 2016/17 to 10.28. The increase was as a result of the new absence management procedures introduced on 1st July 2017 expected to eradicate under-reporting. A full review of the impact of the new procedures is underway with a report to be formulated during 2018/19.
- Collection of council tax for 2017/18 was 94.62% marginally behind the set target of 94.75%, and a slight decrease from the 2016/17 collection rate of 95.04%. The collection of council tax continues to be adversely affected by 2013 national reforms to council tax benefit. The actual amount of council tax collected is however higher than was forecast at the start of the year due to continued active collection of previous year debts and continued growth to the tax base.
- The percentage of business rates collected during the year was 98.21% against a target of 95.00%, this is an improvement on the 2016/17 collection rate of 97.65%.

Financial Planning

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a major element of the Council's corporate planning process. It brings together resources and spending plans and identifies financial constraints over the medium term. Its purpose is to ensure that resources are properly targeted towards Council priorities, to avoid excessive council tax rises, to deliver a balanced and sustainable budget, and to continue to identify efficiencies.

The public spending austerity programme has had and will continue to have a significant impact upon the Council's finances over the medium term and this has been reflected in the MTFS.

The Council's Efficiency Programme has continued to review services across the Council, changing the way in which the Council delivers services in order to realise efficiencies. In addition, the Council has continued to seek improved procurement, better utilisation of assets, changes to staff terms and conditions, collaborative working with other Councils and partner agencies and increased income from external sources in order to manage costs within the funding constraints imposed by Government.

The MTFS was reported to the Council's Executive Board in November 2017 and subsequently updated as part of the budget report in March 2018. The latest report identified potential shortfalls in funding for the Council over the following three years of approximately £12.8m (2019/20), £6.7m (2020/21) and £3.6m (2021/22).

The 2018/19 net budget requirement of £109.2m was approved by Council on 7 March 2018. The budget will be funded from £47.5m of Council Tax (increase of 5% on the 2017/18 Band D level and inclusive of a 3% precept towards the funding shortfall for Adult Social Care), business rates of £49.5m, top-up funding of £7.4m and share of the collection fund surplus of £4.8m.

In October 2016 the Council published an Efficiency Plan which set out how it would put in place and develop efficiencies over the four year period from 2016/2020 to deliver a balanced budget. In return Government confirmed details of a four year settlement agreement, giving Councils certainty of available funding for the period to March 2020. The Settlement Funding Assessment provided by Government results in a loss of funding for the Council of £3.0m (6.3%) in 2019/20. In addition the cost of providing for an increasing demand for services continues to rise, which results in the budget shortfalls mentioned earlier.

The funding outlook for Halton over the medium term continues to be bleak and significant budget savings will again need to be found, which are likely to have a considerable impact upon the services delivered by the Council. A review of Local Government finance is currently being undertaken which will include changes to the business rate retention system and a review of the distribution of funds according to relevant needs.

Conclusion

Despite reduced levels of funding, escalating demand for services and increasing costs the Council has continued to manage its finances well and continued to deliver essential public services. The overspend position on the revenue budget for the second year running is an indication of how tough the challenge is to continue to deliver a balanced budget position after eight years of funding cuts with ever increasing demands. I would like to thank all Members and Officers that have assisted greatly over the past year, which has helped contribute to and form this set of financial statements.

Ed Dawson

Operational Director – Finance

Core Financial Statements

Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement as at 31st March 2017

Services	Note	Gross Expenditure 2016/17 £000	Gross Income 2016/17 £000	Net Expenditure 2016/17 £000
CONTINUING OPERATIONS				
Enterprise, Community and Resources		132,111	(81,486)	50,625
People		127,656	(61,506)	66,150
Schools		92,879	(80,542)	12,337
Corporate and Democracy		3,159	(5,707)	(2,548)
Net Expenditure of Continuing Operations		**355,805**	**(229,241)**	**126,564**
Other Operating Expenditure	**3**			(397)
Financing and Investment Income & Expenditure	**4**			5,742
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	**5**			(107,931)
(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services				**23,978**
(Surplus) or Deficit on revaluation of Non-Current Assets	**37**			(5,464)
(Surplus) or Deficit on revaluation of Available for Sale of Financial Assets	**37**			285
Remeasurement of net defined benefit liability	**32**			40,978
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure				**35,799**
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME & EXPENDITURE				**59,777**

Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement as at 31st March 2018

Services	Note	Gross Expenditure 2017/18 £000	Gross Income 2017/18 £000	Net Expenditure 2017/18 £000
CONTINUING OPERATIONS				
Enterprise, Community and Resources		124,352	(67,362)	56,990
People		137,154	(58,979)	78,175
Schools		82,305	(80,532)	1,773
Corporate and Democracy		3,607	(6,945)	(3,338)
Mersey Gateway		11,580	(28,483)	(16,903)
Net Expenditure of Continuing Operations		**358,998**	**(242,301)**	**116,697**
Other Operating Expenditure	**3**			6,245
Financing and Investment Income & Expenditure	**4**			40,357
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	**5**			(111,447)
(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services				**51,852**
(Surplus) or Deficit on revaluation of Non-Current Assets	**37**			(17,024)
(Surplus) or Deficit on revaluation of Available for Sale of Financial Assets	**37**			(219)
Remeasurement of net defined benefit liability	**32**			(18,574)
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure				**(35,817)**
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME & EXPENDITURE				**16,035**

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2018

31/03/2017 £000		Note	31/03/2018 £000
398,137	Net Fixed Assets – Property Plant & Equipment	17	1,102,558
1,185	Heritage Assets	18	1,233
1,541	Investment Properties	19	1,541
3,011	Intangible Assets	20	2,288
-	Assets Held of Sale > 12 months		-
5,119	Long Term Investments	22	17,315
11,521	Long Term Debtors	23	8,191
420,514	**Total Long Term Assets**		**1,133,126**
	Current Assets		
254	Inventories		412
9,394	Assets held for Sale < 12 months	21	7,759
19,996	Short Term Debtors	23	30,664
-	Intangible Current Assets		-
68,000	Short Term Investments	22	45,026
54,221	Cash/Cash Equivalents	24	27,347
151,865	**Total Current Assets**		**111,208**
	Current Liabilities		
(10,000)	Short Term Borrowing	26	(5,401)
(40,025)	Short Term Creditors	25	(64,894)
(4,666)	Revenue Grants Receipts in Advance	7	(27,410)
(4,440)	Provisions < 1 year	27	(3,754)
-	Bank Overdraft		-
(59,131)	**Total Current Liabilities**		**(101,459)**
92,734	**Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)**		**9,749**
513,248	**Total Net Assets**		**1,142,875**
(148,401)	Long Term Borrowing	26	(172,000)
-	Provisions > 1 year	27	(2,252)
(22,297)	Capital Grants Receipts in Advance	7	(24,343)
(129,380)	Other Long Term Liabilities	29	(747,145)
213,170	**Total Assets Less Liabilities**		**197,135**
(59,097)	Usable Reserves	35	(55,977)
(154,073)	Unusable Reserves	37	(141,158)
(213,170)	**Total Equity**		**(197,135)**

Movement in Reserves Statement

	General Fund	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	TOTAL USABLE RESERVES (Note 35)	TOTAL UNUSABLE RESERVES (Note 37)	TOTAL COUNCIL RESOURCES
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 31st March 2016	**(46,069)**	**(5,298)**	**(2,692)**	**(54,059)**	**(218,888)**	**(272,947)**
Movement in Reserves during 2016/17						
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	23,978	-	-	**23,978**	35,799	59,777
Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations (**note 34a**)	(24,807)	(3,513)	430	**(27,890)**	27,890	-
Other Adjustments	(4)	(1,122)	-	**(1,126)**	1,126	-
(Increase)/Decrease in the year	**(833)**	**(4,635)**	**430**	**(5,038)**	**64,815**	**59,777**
Balance at 31 March 2016 carried forward	**(46,902)**	**(9,933)**	**(2,262)**	**(59,097)**	**(154,073)**	**(213,170)**
Balance as at 31st March 2017	**(46,902)**	**(9,933)**	**(2,262)**	**(59,097)**	**(154,073)**	**(213,170)**
Movement in Reserves during 2017/18						
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	51,852			**51,852**	(35,819)	16,033
Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations (**note 34b**)	(48,979)	1,799	1,086	**(46,094)**	46,093	**(1)**
Other Movements	2	(2,641)	1	**(2,638)**	2,641	**3**
(Increase)/Decrease in the year	**2,875**	**(842)**	**1,087**	**3,120**	**12,915**	**16,035**
Balance at 31 March 2018 carried forward	**(44,027)**	**(10,775)**	**(1,175)**	**(55,977)**	**(141,158)**	**(197,135)**

Cash Flow Statement as at 31st March 2018

2016/17 £000		Note	2017/18 £000
23,978	**Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services**		**51,852**
(60,962)	Adjustments to net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	**38**	(106,016)
18,905	Adjust for items in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	**38**	9,356
(18,079)	**Net cash flows from Operating Activities**		**(44,808)**
(12,816)	Net cash flows from Investing Activities	**39**	82,264
(1,278)	Net cash flows from Financing Activities	**40**	(10,582)
(32,173)	**Net (increase)/decrease in cash and cash equivalents**		**26,874**
(22,048)	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	**24**	(54,221)
(54,221)	**Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the reporting period**	**24**	**(27,347)**

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

1. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis demonstrates how the funding available to the Council for the year (including government grants, Council Tax and Business Rates) has been used to provide services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned under generally accepted accounting practices. This also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's Directorates.

Expenditure and Funding Analysis 2016/17

	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balances 2016/17 £000	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounts Basis 2016/17 £000	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expendiure Statement 2016/17 £000
Enterprise, Community and Resources	47,477	3,148	50,625
People	73,394	(7,244)	66,150
Schools	-	12,337	12,337
Corporate and Democracy	(21,843)	19,295	(2,548)
Net Cost of Services	**99,028**	**27,536**	**126,564**
Other Income and Expenditure	(98,469)	(4,117)	(102,586)
Surplus or Deficit	**559**	**23,419**	**23,978**
General Fund (excluding Earmarked Reserves)	(5,389)		
Earmarked Reserves	(40,680)		
Opening General Fund Balance	**(46,069)**		
Less/Plus (Surplus) or Deficit on General Fund Balance in Year	559		
Add General Fund used to balance budget			
Movement (to)/from General Fund to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(1,392)		
Movement on General Fund Balance	**(833)**		
General Fund (excluding Earmarked Reserves)	(4,830)		
Earmarked Reserves	(42,072)		
Closing General Fund Balance at 31st March	**(46,902)**		

Note to Expenditure and Funding Analysis 2016/17

Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Other Income and Expenditure £000	Movement in Reserves £000	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £000	Net change for the Pension Adjustments £000	Other Differences £000	Total Adjustments £000
Enterprise, Community and Resources	184	1,144	1,427	378	15	**3,148**
People	(17)	(3,846)	(3,746)	376	(11)	**(7,244)**
Schools	-	904	11,029	208	196	**12,337**
Corporate and Democracy	(2,570)	412	21,379	74	-	**19,295**
Net Cost of Services	**(2,403)**	**(1,386)**	**30,089**	**1,036**	**200**	**27,536**
Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	2,403	(4)	(5,557)	2,282	(3,241)	**(4,117)**
Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**-**	**(1,390)**	**24,532**	**3,318**	**(3,041)**	**23,419**

Expenditure and Funding Analysis 2017/18

	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balances 2017/18 £000	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounts Basis 2017/18 £000	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expendiure Statement 2017/18 £000
Enterprise, Community and Resources	48,512	8,478	56,990
People	74,337	3,838	78,175
Schools	-	1,773	1,773
Corporate and Democracy	(18,541)	15,203	(3,338)
Mersey Gateway	-	(16,903)	(16,903)
Net Cost of Services	**104,308**	**12,389**	**116,697**
Other Income and Expenditure	(103,282)	38,437	(64,845)
(Surplus) or Deficit	**1,026**	**50,826**	**51,852**
General Fund (excluding Earmarked Reserves)	(4,830)		
Earmarked Reserves	(42,072)		
Opening General Fund Balance	**(46,902)**		
Less/Plus (Surplus) or Deficit on General Fund Balance in Year	1,026		
Transfer from Earmarked Reserves to General Fund	(1,200)		
Movement on General Fund	**(174)**		
Movement (to)/from General Fund to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	1,849		
Transfer from Earmarked Reserves to General Fund	1,200		
Movement on Earmarked Reserves	**3,049**		
Total Movement on General Fund Balance	**2,875**		
General Fund (excluding Earmarked Reserves)	(5,004)		
Earmarked Reserves	(39,023)		
Closing General Fund Balance at 31st March	**(44,027)**		

Note to Expenditure and Funding Analysis 2017/18

Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Other Income and Expenditure £000	Movement in Reserves £000	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £000	Net change for the Pension Adjustments £000	Other Differences £000	Total Adjustments £000
Enterprise, Community and Resources	(2,907)	1,881	5,808	2,144	1,552	**8,478**
People	(17)	2,323	(275)	1,670	137	**3,838**
Schools	-	1,076	239	1,035	(577)	**1,773**
Corporate and Democracy	1,068	(3,486)	17,326	290	5	**15,203**
Mersey Gateway	(16,965)	62	-	-	-	**(16,903)**
Net Cost of Services	**(18,821)**	**1,856**	**23,098**	**5,139**	**1,117**	**12,389**
Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	18,821	(7)	17,651	2,898	(926)	**38,437**
Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**-**	**1,849**	**40,749**	**8,037**	**191**	**50,826**

2. Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
	Expenditure	
134,326	Employee Benefits	141,560
183,560	Other service expenses	202,598
40,155	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	37,472
3,239	Interest Payments	16,529
373	Precepts and levies	3,303
361,653	**Total Expenditure**	**401,462**
	Income	
(59,245)	Fees and charges and other service income	(71,331)
(1,270)	Gain on disposal of non-current assets	(1,293)
(72,033)	Income from Council Tax and Business Rates	(95,483)
(204,274)	Government grants income	(180,692)
(853)	Interest and investment income	(811)
(337,675)	**Total Income**	**(349,610)**
23,978	**Surplus or Deficit on the Provison of Servcies**	**51,852**

3. Other Operating Expenditure

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
84	Parish Council Precepts	88
289	Levies	3,215
500	Movement in value of Assets Held for Sale	4,235
(1,270)	(Gains)/Losses on the Disposal of non-current assets	(1,293)
(397)	**Total**	**6,245**

4. Financing and Investment Income

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
3,239	Interest payable and similar charges	16,529
2,282	Net interest on the net defined benefit liability	2,898
(853)	Interest receivable and similar charges	(811)
(46)	Income & Expenditure in relation to Investment Properties and changes in their fair value	48
1,199	Loss on transfer of academies	21,416
(79)	Other investment income	277
5,742	**Total**	**40,357**

5. Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(42,774)	Council Tax income	(46,193)
(29,259)	Non domestic rates	(49,290)
(22,251)	Non-ringfenced government grants	-
(7,511)	NNDR Top Up Grant	(7,437)
(6,136)	Capital grants and contributions	(8,527)
(107,931)	**Total**	**(111,447)**

6. Material Items of Income and Expenditure

There are no individually material items of Income and Expenditure to report beyond those disclosed on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and supporting notes.

7. Grant Income

The Council has received a number of grants and contributions that have yet to be recognised as income. At the balance sheet date, conditions existed which remain to be satisfied. The balances at year end are as follows:

	31 March 2017	31 March 2018
	£000	£000
Capital Grants Receipts in Advance		
Grant - Housing, Communities and Local Government	(12,632)	(12,530)
Grant - Department of Transport	-	(1,471)
Grant - Department of Health	(1,278)	(855)
Grant - Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	(46)	(46)
Grant - Department for Education	(366)	(366)
Grant - Other Grants	(226)	(217)
Contributions	(7,749)	(8,858)
	(22,297)	**(24,343)**

	31 March 2017	31 March 2018
	£000	£000
Revenue Grants Receipts in Advance		
Grant - Department for Education	(2,285)	(957)
Grant - Housing, Communities and Local Government	-	(77)
Grant - Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	(42)	-
Grant - Department of Energy & Climate Change	-	(42)
Grant - Department of Health	(150)	(270)
Grant - Department for Transport	(368)	(20,261)
Grant - Other Grants	(274)	(176)
Contributions	(320)	(3,165)
Other Creditors	(1,227)	(2,462)
	(4,666)	**(27,410)**

The Council credited the following grants to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2017/18.

	2016/17	2017/18
	£000	**£000**
Revenue Grants Credited to Services		
Housing, Communities & Local Government	(5,637)	(10,921)
Dedicated Schools Grant	(77,695)	(77,870)
Department for Education	(22,970)	(18,044)
Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	(31)	-
Department for Transport	(907)	(3,455)
Department for Works & Pensions	(1,794)	(1,819)
Department of Health	(10,929)	(10,946)
Home Office	(39)	(421)
Department of Energy & Climate Change	(67)	-
Rent Allowance Subsidy	(46,685)	(38,843)
Other Grants	(1,622)	(2,409)
Total	**(168,376)**	**(164,728)**

8. Disclosure of Deployment of Dedicated Schools Grant

The Council's expenditure on schools is funded by grant monies provided by the Department for Education, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). DSG is ring-fenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget. The Schools Budget includes elements for a restricted range of services provided on an authority-wide basis and for the Individual Schools Budget, which is divided into a budget share for each school. Overspends and underspends on the two elements are required to be accounted for separately.

Details of the deployment of DSG receivable for 2017/18 are shown below:

Total 2016/17 £000		**Central Expenditure 2017/18 £000**	**Individual Schools Budget 2017/18 £000**	**Total 2017/18 £000**
(103,567)	Final DSG before academy recoupment			(107,760)
25,872	Academy figure recouped in year			29,890
(77,695)	**Total DSG after academy recoupment**			**(77,870)**
(1,584)	Plus brought forward			(1,636)
-	Less carry forward agreed in advance			-
(79,279)	**Agreed budgeted distribution**	**(29,366)**	**(50,140)**	**(79,506)**
-	In Year Adjustments	14,143	(14,143)	-
(79,279)	**Final Budget Distribution**	**(15,223)**	**(64,283)**	**(79,506)**
11,948	Less actual central expenditure	14,757	-	14,757
65,695	Less actual ISB deployed to schools	-	64,283	64,283
	Plus Council Contribution	-	-	-
(1,636)	**Carry Forward**	**(466)**	**-**	**(466)**

9. Pooled Budgets

Better Care

In 2015 the Government introduced a £3.8 billion Better Care Fund, a pooled budget for health and social care services, shared between the NHS and local authorities, to deliver better outcomes and greater efficiencies through more integrated services for older and disabled people.

From April 2015 the pool budget between Halton Borough Council (HBC) and the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was expanded to incorporate this Better Care Fund (BCF) under a Section 75 agreement for health and social care services provided to the residents of Halton. The pooled budget continued to provide a fully integrated system enabling resources to be used efficiently and effectively in the delivery of personalised, responsive and holistic care to those who are most in need within the community. This results in the alignment of systems, improve pathways, speeding up discharge processes, transforming patient/care satisfaction and ensuring the future sustainability of meeting the needs of people with complex needs.

The iBCF was first announced in the 2015 Spending Review, and is paid as a direct grant to local government, with a condition that it is pooled into the local BCF plan. The iBCF grant allocations were increased in the 2017 Spring Budget. The grant determination enables the funding to be spent on three purposes:

- Meeting adult social care needs
- Reducing pressures on the NHS, including supporting more people to be discharged from hospital when they are ready
- Ensuring that the local social care provider market is supported

In addition to the BCF and iBCF allocations, the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group each contributed funds equal to 62% and 38% respectively of the Better Care Pool budget for 2017/18. In accordance with the partnership agreement, the same proportions are used to meet any deficit or share any surplus arising on the pooled budget at the end of the financial year unless agreement is given by the partners to carry the deficit/surplus to the following financial year.

The pooled budget is hosted by the Council on behalf of the partners to the agreement.

		2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
Balance Brought Forward		**(3)**		**55**
Funding provided to the pooled budget:				
- Halton Borough Council		(20,452)		(21,347)
- Halton Clinical Commissioning Group		(12,196)		(13,224)
- Better Care Fund		(9,491)		(12,635)
		(42,139)		**(47,206)**
Income raised through the pooled budget:				
- Halton Borough Council		(8,280)		(8,738)
		(8,280)		**(8,738)**
Expenditure met from the pooled budget:				
- Halton Borough Council		28,769		30,138
- Halton Clinical Commissioning Group		12,217		13,257
- Better Care Fund		9,491		12,635
		50,477		**56,030**
Net (surplus)/deficit arising on the pooled budget during the year		**58**		**86**
Share of the (surplus)/deficit for the year:				
- Halton Borough Council	63%	37	62%	53
- Halton Clinical Commissioning Group	37%	21	38%	33
		58		**86**

10. Officers Remuneration

The number of employees whose remuneration, inclusive of redundancy payments and car benefit but excluding pension contributions, was £50,000 or more, grouped in rising bands of £5,000 is shown below. This list is inclusive of officers reported in the senior officer's disclosure note.

Remuneration Band		2016/17 Number of Employees		2017/18 Number of Employees	
		Teaching	Non-Teaching	Teaching	Non - Teaching
£50,000	£54,999	33	16	36	5
£55,000	£59,999	23	11	22	13
£60,000	£64,999	13	13	12	13
£65,000	£69,999	8	4	14	5
£70,000	£74,999	4	3	2	4
£75,000	£79,999	1	-	3	-
£80,000	£84,999	1	4	-	3
£85,000	£89,999	1	4	2	4
£90,000	£94,999	-	3	-	2
£95,000	£99,999	-	-	-	2
£100,000	£104,999	-	-	-	-
£105,000	£109,999	-	-	-	-
£110,000	£114,999	1	-	-	-
£115,000	£119,999	-	1	-	-
£120,000	£124,999	-	1	-	2
£125,000	£129,999	-	-	-	-
£130,000	£134,999	-	-	-	-
£135,000	£139,999	-	-	-	-
£140,000	£144,999	-	-	-	-
£145,000	£149,999	-	-	-	-
£150,000	£154,999	-	-	-	-
£155,000	£159,999	-		-	-
£160,000	£164,999	-	-	-	-
£165,000	£169,999	-	-	-	-
£170,000	£174,999	-	1	-	1
£175,000	£179,999	-	-	-	-
		85	**61**	**91**	**54**

Halton Borough Council is required to disclose to local taxpayers the total remuneration package for the senior officers charged with the stewardship of the organisation.

A senior employee has a significant level of responsibility for contributing to the strategic decision making of the Council. Senior officers will include those that have a statutory duty under legislation.

Senior employees whose salary is between £50,000 and £150,000 are disclosed by job title. Senior employees whose salary is more than £150,000 are disclosed by job title and name.

These notes refer to the detailed note overleaf:

Note 1: The Strategic Director People & Economy left Halton Borough Council on 30/06/16. Following his departure there was a restructure and the post of Strategic Director People was filled on 24/10/16.

Note 2: During 2016/17, the Operational Director Prevention & Assessment was re-designated as Statutory Director of Adult Services.

Note 3: During 2016/17, the Operational Director Children & Families Services was re-designated Statutory Director of Children's Services. She held this title until March 2017 at which point the Strategic Director People undertook this role. Thereafter the Operational Director Children & Families was re-designated Statutory Operational Director Children & Families.

Note 4: The Operational Director for Commissioning & Complex Care took redundancy on 31/12/16.

Note 5: During 2017/18 the Operational Director Children's Organisation & Provision was re-designated Statutory Operational Director Children's Organisation & Provision.

Note 6: During 2016/17 & 2017/18, the Operational Director ICT & Support Services continued the implementation of a new finance system at Sefton Council. He was awarded an honorarium for this which is included in the remuneration figures overleaf. This will be reimbursed from Sefton Council. During 2017/18 he also undertook additional work for Merseytravel.

Note 7: During 2017/18 the Operational Director for Planning & Transportation undertook additional work for Merseytravel. He was awarded an honorarium for this which is included in the remuneration figures overleaf. This will be reimbursed from Merseytravel.

Post Title		Salary (including fees & Allowances)		Compensation for loss of employment		Benefits in Kind		Total Remuneration excluding pension contributions		Employers Pension contributions		Total Remuneration including pension contributions	
		2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Chief Executive - David Parr		170,600	172,700	-	-	-	-	170,600	172,700	3,100	-	173,700	172,700
Strategic Director - People & Economy	1	39,800	-	-	-	-	-	39,800	-	7,500	-	47,300	-
Strategic Director - People	1	51,300	120,300	-	-	-	-	51,300	120,300	11,000	22,200	62,300	142,500
Strategic Director - Enterprise, Communities & Resources		120,200	120,700	-	-	-	-	120,200	120,700	25,700	22,200	145,900	142,900
Operational Director - Planning & Transportation	7	84,100	89,800	-	-	2,600	-	86,700	89,800	18,000	16,500	104,700	106,300
Operational Director - Legal & Democratic Services		84,200	84,800	-	-	3,500	-	87,700	84,800	18,000	15,600	105,700	100,400
Statutory Operational Director - Prevention & Assessment	2	94,600	95,500	-	-	-	-	94,600	95,500	20,200	17,600	114,800	113,100
Statutory Operational Director - Children & Families Services	3	91,600	95,500	-	-	-	-	91,600	95,500	19,600	17,600	111,200	113,100
Operational Director - Commissioning & Complex Care	4	52,000	-	-	-	-	-	52,000	-	6,700	-	58,700	-
Statutory Operational Director - Children’s Organisation & Provisio	5	84,200	95,500	-	-	-	-	84,200	95,500	18,200	17,600	102,400	113,100
Operational Director - Finance		82,100	85,002	-	-	-	-	82,100	85,002	17,500	15,600	99,600	100,602
Operational Director - ICT & Support Services	6	93,200	93,800	-	-	-	-	93,200	93,800	19,700	17,100	112,900	110,900
Operational Director - Economy, Enterprise & Property		83,700	85,500	-	-	2,700	-	86,400	85,500	18,000	15,600	104,400	101,100
Operational Director - Community & Environment		84,200	84,800	-	-	-	-	84,200	84,800	15,900	14,700	100,100	99,500
Operational Director - Public Health		87,900	88,400	-	-	-	-	87,900	88,400	12,400	12,500	100,300	100,900
		1,303,700	**1,312,302**	**-**	**-**	**8,800**	**-**	**1,312,500**	**1,312,302**	**231,500**	**204,800**	**1,544,000**	**1,517,102**

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11. Exit Packages and Termination Benefits

The numbers of exit packages with total cost per band and total cost of compulsory and voluntary redundancies and early retirements are set out in the table below:

Exit package cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of voluntary redundancies		Number of early retirements		Total of number of exit packages by cost band		Total cost of exit packages in each band	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
£0 - £20,000	3	8	5	47	-	-	8	55	42	309
£20,001 - £40,000	-	-	4	5	-	-	4	5	105	157
£40,001 - £60,000	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	57	69
£60,001 - £80,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£80,001 - £100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,001 - £150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£150,001 - £200,000	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	160	-
£200,001 - £250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£250,001 - £300,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**4**	**8**	**10**	**53**	**-**	**-**	**14**	**61**	**364**	**535**

The total cost of exit packages in 2017/18 is £0.535m (2016/17- £0.364m) charged to the authority's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). Costs associated with redundancies include officers aged 55 or over being able to access their pensions immediately, the costs of which amounted to £0.179m, charged to the CIES in 2016/17. There were no early retirements taken in 2017/18 (2016/17 - £0.000m).

Termination Benefits

In addition to the cost of exit packages the Council incurred liabilities of £0.048m relating to past early retirements charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This resulted in in total costs for the year of £0.583m.

12. Members Allowances

During the year £778,144 (2016/17 £760,843) was paid to Members including Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral allowances.

13. Related Party Transactions

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties, bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Council or to be controlled or influenced by the Council. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council.

Once these relationships are brought to the attention of users, transactions are disclosed so that readers can assess for themselves whether these relationships might have had an effect or could have an effect in the future.

Central Government

UK Central Government has significant influence over the general operations of the Council. It is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. council tax bills, business rates, housing benefits).

Grants received from government departments are set out in Note 7.

Members and Officers

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The Council operates a system of self-regulation which requires each Executive Director and Member to complete a declaration highlighting whether they or any members of their family have been involved in any material financial transactions between the Council and any external bodies they are affiliated to during the financial year.

The total of members allowances paid in 2017/18 is shown in Note 12. The total of senior officers remuneration paid in 2017/18 is shown in Note 10.

For 2017/18 the system has highlighted that 18 Members had interests in various organisations and voluntary sector bodies involving payments worth £1.953m and receipts worth £3.435m for various works and services.

In 2017/18 the declarations also showed that one Executive Officer represented the Council on the boards of two bodies within the borough. Payments between HBC and those bodies totalled £0.179m and receipts totalled £0.636m in 2017/18.

Other Public Bodies

The Council had one pooled budget arrangement with Halton Clinical Commissioning Group during 2017/18 under section 75 of the Health Act 2006. Transactions and balances are highlighted in Note 9.

Entities Controlled or Significantly Influenced by the Council

Details of the Council's interests in companies are disclosed in Note 41 – Interest in Companies and Other Entities.

14. External Audit Fees

The Council paid the following amounts to Grant Thornton in 2017/18 in relation to fees relating to external audit, inspection and additional services.

	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
Fees payable for		
- Audit	105	105
- Grants and returns	13	6
- Benchmarking Service	-	13
- Non-audit work	14	-
	132	**124**

Due to the timing of the audit of grant claims, the audit fee for Grants and Returns is based on an estimate and may include amounts relating to previous years.

15. Events after the Balance Sheet Date

These accounts have been authorised for issue by the Operational Director Finance, on the 31st May 2018 and reflect all known events for the financial year. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes.

Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31st March 2018, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

At the time of authorisation there were no material post balance sheet events.

16. Capital Expenditure and Financing

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below, together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

	2016/17	2017/18
	£000	£000
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	**111,606**	**167,975**
Capital Investment:		
Property, Plant & Equipment	77,210	746,711
Investment Properties	-	-
Intangible Assets	827	64
Revenue Expenditure funded from Capital under Statute	6,791	1,701
Source of Finance:		
Capital Receipts	(5,548)	(5,895)
Government Grants & Other Contributions	(19,681)	(12,935)
Direct Revenue Contributions	(759)	(627)
Minimum Revenue Provision	(2,471)	(6,073)
Closing Capital Financing Requirement	**167,975**	**890,921**
Explanation of movement in year:		
Increase in underlying need to borrow	58,759	85,207
Minimum Revenue Provision statutory set a side	(2,471)	(6,073)
Deferred Liability Voluntary set a side	-	-
Assets acquired under Finance Leases	81	-
Mersey Gateway unitary charge	-	643,812
Increase/(Decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	**56,369**	**722,946**

The table above shows the Council spent £748.47m on capital during 2017/18 (including £643.81m in relation to the Mersey Gateway capitalised unitary charge).

Disposal of Assets/Capital Receipts

Land/Dwellings/Recovered Advances – the Council received £3.522 from the sale of land and various properties.

Under residual arrangements, the Council received £0.299m (£0.170m in 2016/17) from Halton Housing Trust for the sale of homes during the year, and a further £0.275m (£0.235m in 2016/17) under VAT Shelter arrangements.

Capitalisation of Borrowing Costs

The Council had undertaken borrowing of £113m in 2014-15 in advance of need to secure favourable interest rates available from the Public Works Loans Board. These loans were invested until the payments were made to Merseylink Consortium to fund the contribution from the Council towards Mersey Gateway Crossing construction costs. The Council's final contribution payment was made in autumn 2017.

The interest capitalised during 2017/18 is shown below:

2016/17		**2017/18**
£000		**£000**
(695)	Interest received	(155)
4,370	Interest paid	2,347
3,675	**Net interest capitalised**	**2,192**

17. Non-Current Assets, Property, Plant and Equipment

Movements during 2016/17

	Land and Buildings £000	Community Assets £000	Infrastructure Assets £000	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment £000	Surplus £000	Under Construction / Development £000	Total 2016/17 £000	Service Concession Assets included in PPE £000
Cost or Valuation								
As at 31st March 2016	**212,671**	**8,904**	**172,382**	**19,592**	**3,950**	**82,044**	**499,543**	**22,563**
Additions and Enhancements	8,571	177	5,507	3,551	-	59,385	**77,191**	-
Revaluations Recognised in the Revaluations Reserve	2,484	2	-	-	1,221	-	**3,707**	-
Revaluations Recognised in the Provision Services	(11,164)	-	-	-	(561)	(8,558)	**(20,283)**	-
Derecognition – Disposals	(9,487)	-	-	-	-	-	**(9,487)**	-
Derecognition – Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	-
Assets Reclassified (to)/from held for sale	(1,115)	-	-	-	(1,495)	-	**(2,610)**	-
Other Movements	1,677	-	-	-	764	(1,675)	**766**	
As at 31st March 2017	**203,637**	**9,083**	**177,889**	**23,143**	**3,879**	**131,196**	**548,827**	**22,563**
Depreciation								
As at 31st March 2016	**(10,530)**	**(3,634)**	**(104,912)**	**(12,847)**	**(261)**	**-**	**(132,184)**	**-**
Depreciation for the year	(11,023)	(577)	(8,709)	(2,179)	(75)	-	**(22,563)**	(680)
Depreciation written out to revaluation reserve	567	-	-	-	-	-	**567**	-
Depreciation written out to Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	3,451	-	-	-	-	-	**3,451**	-
Derecognition – Disposals	30	-	-	-	-	-	**30**	-
Derecognition – Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	-
Other movements in depreciation	(37)	(1)	(2)	(1)	50	-	**9**	-
As at 31st March 2017	**(17,542)**	**(4,212)**	**(113,623)**	**(15,027)**	**(286)**	**-**	**(150,690)**	**(680)**
Balance Sheet Amount as at 31st March 17	**186,095**	**4,871**	**64,266**	**8,116**	**3,593**	**131,196**	**398,137**	**21,883**
Balance Sheet Amount as at 1st April 16	**202,141**	**5,270**	**67,470**	**6,745**	**3,689**	**82,044**	**367,359**	**22,563**

Movements during 2017/18

	Land and Buildings £000	Community Assets £000	Infrastructure Assets £000	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment £000	Surplus £000	Under Construction / Development £000	Total 2017/18 £000	Service Concession Assets included in PPE £000
Cost or Valuation								
As at 31st March 2017	**203,637**	**9,083**	**177,889**	**23,143**	**3,879**	**131,196**	**548,827**	**22,563**
Additions and Enhancements	8,646	113	728,196	1,209	-	3,988	**742,152**	643,812
Revaluations Recognised in the Revaluations Reserve	7,839	(2)	-	-	7	-	**7,844**	-
Revaluations Recognised in the Provision Services	(7,006)	(1,758)	-	-	(6)	(1,936)	**(10,706)**	-
Derecognition – Disposals	(23,654)	-	-	(2,745)	(1,226)	-	**(27,625)**	(22,563)
Derecognition – Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	-
Assets Reclassified (to)/from held for sale	589	-	-	-	-	-	**589**	-
Other Movements	3,146	-	125,650	-	1,038	(128,641)	**1,193**	-
As at 31st March 2018	**193,197**	**7,436**	**1,031,735**	**21,607**	**3,692**	**4,607**	**1,262,274**	**643,812**
Depreciation								
As at 31st March 2017	**(17,542)**	**(4,212)**	**(113,623)**	**(15,027)**	**(286)**	**-**	**(150,690)**	**(680)**
Depreciation for the year	(10,938)	(583)	(8,628)	(2,394)	(63)	-	**(22,606)**	(680)
Depreciation written out to revaluation reserve	8,690	-	-	-	140	-	**8,830**	-
Depreciation written out to Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	521	336	-	-	-	-	**857**	-
Derecognition – Disposals	1,360	-	-	2,533	-	-	**3,893**	1,360
Derecognition – Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	
Other movements in depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**	
As at 31st March 2018	**(17,909)**	**(4,459)**	**(122,251)**	**(14,888)**	**(209)**	**-**	**(159,716)**	**-**
Balance Sheet Amount as at 31st March 18	**175,288**	**2,977**	**909,484**	**6,719**	**3,483**	**4,607**	**1,102,558**	**643,812**
Balance Sheet Amount as at 1st April 17	**186,095**	**4,871**	**64,266**	**8,116**	**3,593**	**131,196**	**398,137**	**21,884**

Depreciation

The following useful lives and depreciation rates have been used in the calculation of depreciation:

Buildings and Other Operational Properties	10-60 years
Community Assets	15 years
Infrastructure Assets	15-30 years
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	3-10 years
Intangible Assets	5 years

Capital Commitments

At 31st March 2018, the Council has entered into a number of contracts for the construction or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment.

The major commitments are:

Street Lighting upgrades	£ 3.3m
Mersey Gateway	£ 4.5m
Silver Jubilee Bridge Major Maintenance	£ 7.3m

At 31st March 2018 the capital commitments totalled £25.0m (£130.8m at 31st March 2017).

Revaluations

The Council carries out a rolling programme that ensures all Property, Plant and Equipment required to be measured at fair value is revalued at least every 5 years using the rota below with 2017/18 being year 2 in the cycle. All valuations are carried out internally by the Council's in-house valuer Louise Risk MRICS. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Valuations of vehicles, plant and equipment are based on current prices where there is an active second-hand market or latest list prices adjusted for the condition of the asset.

Year 1 – Amendments and general updates
Year 2 – Corporate Properties
Year 3 – Children's centres, Children's homes and miscellaneous properties, land and open spaces
Year 4 – Day care centres, homes, leisure centres, sports fields and changing rooms, allotments, community centres, libraries and cemeteries
Year 5 – Nursery, infant, junior, primary, secondary, special and PRU schools.

All assets are subject to an annual review to ensure valuations have not materially changed in the years they are not valued and that the carrying value is not significantly different to their fair value.

Assets which were subject to a revaluation in 2017/18 are dated the 1st April 2017. The valuation report which is used in the preparation of the Council's Statement of Accounts takes account of all known events throughout 2017/18 which could subsequently affect the assets value and is therefore dated the 31st March 2018.

Land & Buildings

Non specialised property is valued at Fair Value – Existing Use Value. Specialised Property is valued on the basis of Depreciated Replacement Costs.

Community Assets

This group includes parks, cemetery land and other identifiable assets held in perpetuity, usually at Depreciated Historic Cost.

Infrastructure

These are included on the balance sheet at Depreciated Historical Costs in accordance with the guidelines contained in the RICS Appraisal and Valuation Standards.

Vehicles, Plant and Equipment

The majority of the Council's plant and equipment is included in the valuation of the buildings. The vehicles and other equipment are valued at Depreciated Historical Cost.

Intangible Assets

This group consists mainly of software licences for computer systems held at Depreciated Historical Cost.

Surplus Assets

Assets held for sale have strict criteria to be met before any assets can be included under this heading. Where assets are not in use but do not meet the criteria, they are accommodated within surplus assets. They are held at highest and best use value.

Assets under Construction/Development

These schemes are held temporarily on the balance sheet at Historic Cost, until the asset is completed, when it is replaced with a formal valuation.

Fair Value Hierarchy for Investment Properties, Surplus Assets and Assets Held for Sale

Investment Properties, Surplus Assets and Assets Held for Sale have been value assessed as Level 2 on the fair value hierarchy for valuation purposes (see Statement of Accounting Policies 10 – Fair Value)

Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 2 Fair Values.

The fair value of Investment Properties, Surplus Assets and Assets Held for Sale have been measured using a market approach, which takes into account quoted prices for the existing or similar assets in active markets, existing lease terms and rentals, research into market evidence including market rentals and yields, the covenant strength for existing tenants, and data and market knowledge gained in managing the Council's Asset portfolio. This information is contained within the Valuation Assumptions and Evidence note agreed between the authority's Asset Manager and professional staff. Market conditions are such that similar properties are actively purchased and sold and the level of observable inputs are significant, leading to the properties being categorised as level 2 on the fair value hierarchy.

There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for Investment Properties, Surplus Assets or Assets Held for Sale.

Highest and Best Use

In estimating the fair value of the Council's Investment Properties, the highest and best use is their current use, though Assets Held for Sale have been valued taking their development potential into account.

De-minimis Assets

At 31st March 2018, the Council had 165 assets that fell below its de-minimis level of £35,000 which totalled £1.298m. These assets are not recorded on the Balance Sheet.

18. Heritage Assets

Reconciliation of the Carrying Value of Heritage Assets Held by the Council

	2016/17			2017/18		
	Civic Regalia £000	Outdoor Sculpture £000	Total £000	Civic Regalia £000	Outdoor Sculpture £000	Total £000
Cost or Valuation						
1st April	**858**	**310**	**1,168**	**858**	**327**	**1,185**
Additions	-	17	**17**	-	48	**48**
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment Losses/(reversals) Recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment Losses/(reversals) Recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
31st March	**858**	**327**	**1,185**	**858**	**375**	**1,233**

Other Heritage Assets

For the following classes of Heritage Assets no valuation is held as the records for the cost of acquisition / construction are no longer available and they are not insured as individual items and therefore are not recorded on the Council's balance sheet.

War Memorials
Duck Decoy (Hale Village)
Outdoor works of Art
Halton Castle

19. Investment Properties

The following items of income and expense have been accounted for in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(327)	Rental income from Investment Property	(152)
209	Direct operating expenses from investment property	200
(118)		**48**

Investment Properties are not directly involved in the delivery of a service. They are valued annually by the Council's in-house valuer.

There are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Council's right to the remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property or repairs, maintenance or enhancement.

The following table summarises the movement in the fair value of investment properties over the year:

	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
Balance at the start of the year	**1,679**	**1,541**
Additions:		
- Purchases	-	-
- Construction	-	-
- Subsequent expenditure	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Net gain/losses from fair value adjustments	(138)	-
Transfers:		
- (To)/from Inventories	-	-
- (To)/from Property, Plant and Equipment	-	-
Other changes	-	-
	1,541	**1,541**

For details of the fair value valuations used for Investment Properties, see Note 17.

20. Intangible Assets

The Council accounts for its software as intangible assets, with the exception of software which is an integral part of a particular IT system and accounted for as part of the hardware item of Property, Plant and Equipment.

All software is given a finite life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the Council. The useful lives assigned to the major software suites used by the Council are:

Useful Life	Internally Generated Assets	Other Assets
5 years	None	Software Licenses

The carrying amounts of intangible assets are amortised on a straight-line basis. The amortisation of £0.787m charged to revenue in 2017/18 was charged to various cost centres and then absorbed as an overhead across all service headings in the Net Cost of Services.

The movement on Intangible Asset balances during the year as follows:

	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
Balance at start of year:		
Gross carrying amounts	8,064	8,891
Accumulated amortisation	(5,191)	(5,880)
Net carrying amount at start of year	**2,873**	**3,011**
Additions:		
Purchases	827	64
Amortisation for the period	(689)	(787)
Net carrying amount at end of year	**3,011**	**2,288**
Comprising:		
Gross carrying amounts	8,891	8,955
Accumulated amortisation	(5,880)	(6,667)
	3,011	**2,288**

21. Assets Held for Sale

	2016/17	2017/18
	£000	£000
Balance outstanding at start of Year	**19,347**	**9,394**
Assets newly classified as held for sale:		
- Property, Plant and Equipment	2,609	4,511
- Intangible Assets	-	-
Revaluation Losses	(500)	(4,235)
Revaluation Gains	1,607	350
Impairment Losses	-	-
Assets declassified as held for sale:		
- Property, Plant and Equipment	-	(589)
- Intangible Assets	-	
Assets Sold	(12,903)	(487)
Transfers from non-current to current	-	
Other Movements	(766)	(1,185)
Balance outstanding at year-end	**9,394**	**7,759**

For details of the fair value valuations used for Assets Held for Sale, see Note 17.

Please note all Assets Held for Sale are due to be sold within a year and are shown as Current Assets on the Balance sheet.

22. Investments

Long term investments consist of:

	Balance at 31/03/2017	Balance at 31/03/2018
	£000	£000
Halton Borough Transport Ltd		
- Share Capital	430	430
- Debenture 2	43	29
Municipal Bonds Agency	10	10
CCLA Property Fund	4,626	4,846
Mersey Gateway Share Capital - de minimis	-	-
Halton Development Partnership Limited – de minimis	-	-
Widnes Regeneration Limited – de minimis	-	-
Long Term Deposits	10	12,000
	5,119	**17,315**

Halton Borough Transport Ltd was set up in October 1986 as a public transport undertaking, with an issued share capital of £430,100, wholly owned by Halton Borough Council. There is one debenture remaining which is being repaid at £14,286 per annum with interest. Extracts from their accounts are detailed below:

	31/03/2017 Restated £000	31/03/2018 £000
Profit and Loss Account		
Turnover	(7,007)	(6,949)
Operating and Other Expenditure	7,078	7,415
Net (Profit)/Loss (before Taxation)	**71**	**466**
Taxation	(20)	-
(Profit) / Loss for Financial Year	**51**	**466**
Balance Sheet as at 31st March		
Fixed Assets	2,297	1,844
Current Assets less Current Liabilities	(634)	(596)
Net Assets	**1,663**	**1,248**
Long Term Liabilities	(936)	(987)
Provisions for Liabilities and Charges	(95)	(95)
Pension Scheme Liability	-	-
	632	**166**
Represented by:		
Share Capital	(430)	(430)
Profit and Loss Account	(202)	264
	(632)	**(166)**

Please note that as the Halton Borough Transport Ltd's accounts were not finalised when the Council's draft accounts were published, the figures above have been produced using management accounts from Halton Borough Transport. The table above will be updated in the final audited accounts.

Further details can be obtained from Halton Borough Transport Limited, Moor Lane, Widnes. Telephone 0151 423 3333.

Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Limited was set up in October 2013 with an issued share capital of £100, wholly owned by Halton Borough Council. Extracts from their accounts are detailed below:

	31/03/2017 £000	31/03/2018 £000
Profit and Loss Account		
Turnover	(2,872)	(2,663)
Operating and Other Expenditure	2,735	2,745
Net (Profit)/Loss	**(137)**	**82**
Other Comprehensive Income	287	(92)
Total Comprehensive loss	**150**	**(10)**
Balance Sheet as at 31st March		
Fixed Assets	1	1
Current Assets less Current Liabilities	-	(14)
Net Current Assets	**1**	**(13)**
Long Term Liabilities	-	-
Provisions for Liabilities and Charges	-	-
Pension Scheme Liability	(440)	(416)
	(439)	**(429)**
Represented by:		
Share Capital	-	-
Profit and Loss Account	439	429
	439	**429**

Please note that as Mersey Gateway Crossing Board Limited's accounts were not finalised when the Council's draft accounts were published, figures above have been produced using draft accounts for 2017/18. The table above will be updated in the final audited accounts.

Further details can be obtained from Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Limited, Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes. Telephone 0151 511 8377.

Short term investments consist of:

	31/03/2017 £000	31/03/2018 £000
Nationalised Banks		
Royal Bank of Scotland Plc	-	5,000
UK Banks & Building Societies		
Goldman Sachs	8,000	10,000
Lloyds/Bank of Scotland Plc	20,000	-
Santander	10,000	10,000
Standard Chartered	-	5,000
Non-UK Banks		
Toronto Dominion	10,000	-
United Overseas Bank	5,000	-
Local Authorities		
Lancashire County Council	5,000	-
Birmingham City Council	10,000	-
Thurrock Council	-	5,000
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	-	5,000
Blackburn and Darwin		5,000
Other Investments	-	26
	68,000	**45,026**

23. Debtors

	Gross Debtors	Impairment	Net Debtors	Gross Debtors	Impairment	Net Debtors
	31st *March 2017*			31st March 2018		
	£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Short Term						
Central Government Bodies	2,236	-	2,236	1,824		1,824
Other Local Authorities	1,838	-	1,838	3,492		3,492
NHS Bodies	482	-	482	440		440
Other Entities & Individuals	23,882	(8,442)	15,440	38,784	(13,876)	24,908
	28,438	**(8,442)**	**19,996**	**44,540**	**(13,876)**	**30,664**
Long Term						
Housing Associations	266	-	266	256		256
Mersey Gateway working capital	600	-	600	600		600
Other Entities	10,655	-	10,655	7,335		7,335
	11,521	**-**	**11,521**	**8,191**	**-**	**8,191**

24. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018
	£000	**£000**
Cash held by the Council	50	24
Bank current accounts	1,521	873
Short-term deposits	52,650	26,450
	54,221	**27,347**

25. Creditors

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018
	£000	**£000**
Central Government Bodies	(14,452)	(21,219)
Other Local Authorities	(3,265)	(2,578)
NHS Bodies	(1,883)	(2,506)
Public Corporations & Trading Funds	(1,212)	(1)
Other Entities & Individuals	(19,213)	(38,590)
	(40,025)	**(64,894)**

26. Borrowings

Short term borrowings consist of:

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018
	£000	**£000**
Source of loans:		
Public Works Loans Board	(10,000)	-
Liverpool City Region - LEP	-	(5,401)
	(10,000)	**(5,401)**

Long term borrowings consist of:

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018
	£000	**£000**
Source of loans:		
Public Works Loan Board	(133,000)	(162,000)
Eurohypo	(10,000)	(10,000)
Liverpool City Region - LEP	(5,401)	-
	(148,401)	**(172,000)**
Analysis of loans by maturity:		
Maturing in 1-2 years	(5,401)	-
Maturing in 2-5 years	-	-
Maturing in 5-10 years	-	-
Maturing in more than 10 years	(143,000)	(172,000)
	(148,401)	**(172,000)**

27. Provisions

	Short Term		Long Term
	NNDR Appeals £000	Other Provisions £000	NNDR Appeals £000
Balance at 1 April 2017	**(3,935)**	**(505)**	**-**
Movement in use of provision in year	682	4	(2,252)
Amounts reclassified as <12 months	-	-	-
Amounts reclassified from >12 months	-	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2018	**(3,253)**	**(501)**	**(2,252)**

NNDR Appeals

The Council is required to make a provision for NNDR valuation appeal claims. It is thought that all claims relating to the 2010 list will be settled in 2018/19, and all claims relating to the 2017 list will be settled after one year.

28. Contingent Liabilities

At 31st March 2018, the Council had 2 categories of material Contingent Liabilities:

Mersey Gateway

The Mersey Gateway project is a major capital scheme which saw the completion of the new six lane toll bridge over the river Mersey. The bridge opened in October 2017. The new bridge will provide a multitude of economic and regional benefits whilst relieving the congested and ageing Silver Jubilee Bridge.

Under an agreement with Merseylink, the organisation awarded the contract to deliver the Mersey Gateway Project, Halton Borough Council have a maximum liability of £7m towards the cost of remediation work in respect of contamination on any of the land that falls within the Mersey Gateway Project. As construction of the Mersey Gateway project has been completed there is now only a very remote possibility that this liability is likely to materialise.

The Council places a charge on each crossing over the Mersey Gateway Bridge; failure to pay incurs a penalty charge notice (PCN). In a decision in May 2018 in respect of 5 Appeals the Adjudicator (Traffic Penalty Tribunal) decided that certain Mersey Gateway PCNs are potentially compromised by a procedural impropriety. The Council is taking further legal advice on the recent decision by the Adjudicator. However, the possible obligation on the Council is valued at £5.2m.

Under Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 the council is expecting to receive claims from a number of residential properties in the proximity of the Mersey Gateway and relevant project roads. These claims can only be submitted twelve months after the Mersey

Gateway opened i.e. October 2018. A budget of £3.5m has been allocated for dealing with such claims.

NHS and Foundation Trusts Applications for Mandatory Relief from Business Rates

A hereditament that is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes is entitled to 80% mandatory relief from business rates. There is an ongoing issue as to whether NHS and Foundation trusts fall into this category. Under Local Government Act 1988 the central issue is whether a foundation trust or NHS trust is an "institution or other organisation established for charitable purposes only." If so such establishments would be entitled to 80% mandatory relief.

Legal advice has been received from the Local Government Association (LGA) which concludes that NHS Trusts and Foundations are not charities and therefore are not entitled to mandatory rating relief regardless of the precise use being made of the hereditament in question. The Council has received a small number of applications from health trusts for mandatory relief which have to date all been refused. However, if any applications were successful there would be a potential liability of approximately £0.860m with claims being backdated over seven years. The LGA are acting on behalf of Councils nationally in defending the current position on these applications.

29. Other Long Term Liabilities

	31/03/2017	**31/03/2018**
	£000	**£000**
Defined Benefit Pension liability	(109,015)	(98,478)
Finance PFI Lease liability due more than 12 months	(19,942)	(19,356)
Finance Leases liability due more than 12 months	(363)	(306)
Mersey Gateway unitary charge due more than 12 months	-	(628,957)
Deferred liabilities	(60)	(48)
	(129,380)	**(747,145)**

30. Leases

Operating Leases – Authority as lessee

The Council has acquired a number of properties by entering into operating leases.

The future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018
	£000	£000
Not later than one year	366	352
Later than one year not later than five years	877	699
Later than five years	10,640	10,491
	11,883	**11,542**

Operating Leases - Authority as a Lessor

The Council leases out property under operating leases to supplement the Council's income, to allow short term use of assets being retained for longer term asset strategy and to allow the use of the Council assets by the third sector.

The future minimum lease payments receivable under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

	31/03/2017	31/03/2018
	£000	£000
Not later than one year	2,010	2,073
Later than one year not later than five years	2,808	2,977
Later than five years	11,830	11,851
	16,648	**16,901**

31. Private Finance Initiatives and Similar Schemes

Halton Grange School PFI Scheme

On 20 June 2011 the council entered into a 25 year Private Finance Initiative (PFI) arrangement with HTP Grange Ltd for the provision of 1 new high school. There is a 25 year PFI contract for the construction, maintenance, and facilities management of Grange School. The new school building was handed over to the Council on 15th April 2013 and on 1st January 2018 the school converted to an academy.

The Grange PFI School was removed from the Council's Property Plant and Equipment during 2017/18 at a cost of 21.4m. As the Council is party to the contract with the PFI Operator, the PFI liability is retained on the Council's Balance Sheet and the income from the Academy school is recognised to reduce the overall charge in the year.

The contract specifies minimum standards for the services provided by the contractor to the school. The contractor took on the obligation to construct the school and maintain it in a minimum acceptable condition and to procure and maintain the plant and equipment needed to operate the school. The buildings and any plant and equipment installed in them at the end of the contract will be transferred to the Council for nil consideration. The Council only has rights to terminate the contract if it compensates the contractor in full for the costs incurred and future profits that would have been generated over the remaining term of the contract.

Payments

The Council makes an agreed payment each year which is increased annually by inflation and can be reduced if the contractor fails to meet availability and performance standards in any year but which is otherwise fixed.

Payments remaining to be made under the PFI contract at 31 March 2018 (excluding any estimation of inflation and availability/performance deductions) are as follows:

	Payment for Services £000	**Reimbursements of Capital Expenditure £000**	**Interest £000**	**Total £000**
Payment in 2018/19	980	589	1,711	3,280
Payable within 2-5 years	4,584	2,183	6,351	13,118
Payable within 6-10 years	5,904	3,697	6,797	16,398
Payable within 11-15 years	6,064	5,435	4,899	16,398
Payable within 16-20 years	6,165	8,037	2,203	16,405
Payable within 21-25 years	-	-	-	-
Total	**23,697**	**19,941**	**21,961**	**65,599**

Although the payments made to the contractor are described as unitary payments, they have been calculated to compensate the contractor for the fair value for the services they provide, the capital expenditure incurred and interest payable whilst the capital expenditure remains to be reimbursed. The liability outstanding to the contractor for capital expenditure incurred is as follows:

	£000
Balance outstanding at 1st April 2017	20,495
Payments during the year	(554)
Capital expenditure incurred in the year	-
Balance outstanding at 31st March 2018	**19,941**

The carrying value of the PFI liability is the present value of the payments due using the interest rate implicit in the contract. It is considered, therefore, that the carrying value of the liability is the same as the fair value.

Mersey Gateway – Unitary Payments

On 13 October 2017 the Mersey Gateway Bridge opened. The project was funded through a mixture of capital payments from Halton Borough Council and monthly unitary charge payments to Merseylink paid using the toll income raised. Unitary Charge payments cover the costs of construction and ongoing maintenance of the bridge for the next 27 years.

The Mersey Gateway Bridge is recognised in Infrastructure Assets on the Council's Balance Sheet.

Payments

The Council makes an agreed payment each month to Merseylink which is increased annually by inflation and can be reduced if traffic flows fall below an agreed level.

Payments remaining to be made under the scheme at 31 March 2018 (excluding any deductions) are as follows:

	Payment for Services £000	Reimbursements of Capital Expenditure £000	Interest £000	Total £000
Payment in 2018/19	3,175	11,532	22,317	37,024
Payable within 2-5 years	16,371	69,655	104,877	190,903
Payable within 6-10 years	17,204	92,453	90,957	200,614
Payable within 11-15 years	18,079	120,061	72,678	210,818
Payable within 16-20 years	19,004	153,474	49,124	221,602
Payable within 21-25 years	19,935	193,314	19,211	232,460
Total	**93,768**	**640,489**	**359,164**	**1,093,421**

Please note the maintenance element of the contract is calculated using the estimated costs over the life of the agreement.

Although the payments made to the contractor are described as unitary payments, they have been calculated to compensate the contractor for the fair value for the services they provide, the capital expenditure incurred and interest payable whilst the capital expenditure remains to be reimbursed. The liability outstanding to the contractor for capital expenditure incurred is as follows:

	£000
Initial valuation of liability	643,812
Payments during the year	(3,323)
Capital expenditure incurred in the year	-
Balance outstanding at 31st March 2018	**640,489**

The carrying value of the liability is the present value of the payments due using the Green Book Cost of Capital of 3.5%. It is considered that the carrying value of the liability is the same as the fair value.

32. Pension Schemes

Disclosure of Net Pensions Asset/Liability

Participation in pension schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers and other employees, the council makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment retirement benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the council has a commitment to make the payments that need to be disclosed at the time that employees earn their entitlement.

The Council participates in three pension schemes, all of which offer defined benefit schemes:

The Local Government Pension Scheme administered by Cheshire West and Chester Council - this is a funded career average revalued earnings (CARE) benefit defined scheme, meaning that the Council and its employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.

The Teacher’s Pension Scheme – this is a centralised scheme administered by Teachers Pensions Agency. Although the scheme is unfunded, the Agency uses a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employers’ contribution rate paid by Local Education Authorities.

The NHS pension scheme relates to 40 employees. The scheme operates on a similar basis to the Teacher’s pension scheme

Local Government Pension Scheme

Please note that the figures for the Cheshire Pension Fund shown below include amounts relating to the The Grange School which transferred to Academy Status in January 2018. As the school has only 90 members in the scheme the impact on the calculations is considered to be immaterial, and the figures will be updated for the 2018/19 accounts.

Transactions Relating to Post-Employment Benefits

In 2017/18, the Council paid an employer's contribution to the Cheshire Pension Fund of £17.740 m (£12.936m in 2016/17). The 2017/18 contribution includes a lump sum payment of £6.684m paid to the Cheshire Pension Fund in recognition of the past service deficit cost for the three years from 2017/18 to 2019/20. Previously this cost would have been spread out over three years but payment by way of a lump sum realised a small efficiency saving for the Council.

The cost of retirement benefits is recognised in the Net Cost of Services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge that is required to be made against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement		
Cost of Services		
Current Service Costs	13,898	22,592
Past Service Costs/(Gain)	127	287
Losses/(Gains) from Settlements	(53)	-
Finance & Investment Income & Expenditure		
Net interest expense	2,282	2,898
Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**16,254**	**25,777**
Other Post-employment Benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		
Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:		
Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(56,603)	(5,634)
Actuarial (gains) and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(567)	-
Actuarial (gains) and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	106,789	(12,940)
Other experience	(8,641)	-
Total Post-employment Benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	**40,978**	**(18,574)**
Movement in Reserves Statement		
Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	**(16,254)**	**(25,777)**
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:		
Employers' contributions payable to scheme	**12,936**	**17,740**

Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the Council's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

Please note that the 2016/17 figures for the net liability have been restated to correct a disclosure error.

	2016/17 Restated £000	2017/18 £000
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(657,746)	(671,620)
Fair value of plan assets	548,731	573,142
Sub Total	**(109,015)**	**(98,478)**
Other movement in the liability / (asset)	-	-
Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation	**(109,015)**	**(98,478)**

Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets

	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	476,791	548,731
Interest income	16,654	14,315
Remeasurement gain / (loss)	-	-
The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	56,603	5,634
Contributions from employer	12,936	17,740
Contribution from employees into the scheme	3,516	3,598
Benefits Paid	(17,475)	(16,876)
Effect of Settlements	(294)	-
Closing fair value of scheme assets	**548,731**	**573,142**

Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation)

	2016/17 Restated £000	2017/18 £000
Opening balance at 1 April	(541,510)	(657,746)
Current service cost	(13,898)	(22,592)
Interest Cost	(18,936)	(17,213)
Contribution from scheme participants	(3,516)	(3,598)
Remeasurement (gains) and losses:		
- Actuarial gains / losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	567	-
- Actuarial gains / losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	(106,789)	12,940
- Other	8,641	-
Past service cost	(127)	(287)
Benefits paid	17,475	16,876
Liabilities extinguished on settlements	347	-
Closing balance at 31 March	**(657,746)**	**(671,620)**

Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised

	Fair value of scheme assets 2016/17			Fair value of scheme assets 2017/18		
	Quoted prices in active markets £000	Quoted prices not in active markets £000	Total £000	Quoted prices in active markets £000	Quoted prices not in active markets £000	Total £000
Cash and cash equivalents	**-**	**12,854**	**12,854**		**20,247**	**20,247**
Equity securities						
- Consumer	17,577	-	17,577	11,896		11,896
- Manufacturing	13,127	-	13,127	7,935		7,935
- Energy & utilities	2,737	-	2,737	1,122		1,122
- Financial institutions	15,090	-	15,090	10,495		10,495
- Health & Care	4,140	-	4,140	3,496		3,496
- Information technology	47,830	-	47,830	40,498		40,498
- Other	2,113	-	2,113	2,071		2,071
Sub-total equity	**102,614**	**-**	**102,614**	**77,513**	**-**	**77,513**
Debt Securities						
- Corporate Bonds	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Government Bonds	-	-	-	-	-	-
- Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub-total bonds	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Property						
- UK property	-	36,178	36,178	-	43,160	43,160
- Overseas property	-	953	953	-	876	876
Sub-total property	**-**	**37,131**	**37,131**	**-**	**44,036**	**44,036**
Private Equity	**-**	**24,173**	**24,173**	**-**	**18,301**	**18,301**
Other investment funds						
- Equities	80,227	-	80,227	59,350		59,350
- Bonds	158,881	39,912	198,793	214,814	40,887	255,701
- Hedge funds	-	66,936	66,936		72,696	72,696
- Other	-	26,003	26,003		25,298	25,298
Sub-total investment funds	**239,108**	**132,851**	**371,959**	**274,164**	**138,881**	**413,045**
Total Assets	**341,722**	**207,009**	**548,731**	**351,677**	**221,465**	**573,142**

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc. The liabilities have been assessed by Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries.

The principal assumptions used by the actuary are shown below:

	2016/17	2017/18
Long-term expected rate of return on assets in the scheme		
Investment Returns		
- Equity Investments	2.6%	2.7%
- Bonds	2.6%	2.7%
- Property	2.6%	2.7%
- Cash	2.6%	2.7%
Mortality Assumptions		
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:		
- Men	22.3 years	22.3 years
- Women	24.5 years	24.5 years
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:		
- Men	23.9 years	23.9 years
- Women	26.5 years	26.5 years
Rate of inflation	2.4%	2.4%
Rate of increase in salaries	2.7%	2.7%
Rate of increase in pensions	2.4%	2.4%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.6%	2.7%
Take-up of option to convert annual pension into retirement lump sum		
- Service to April 2008	50%	50%
- Service from April 2008	75%	75%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all the other assumptions remain constant. The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice, this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis overleaf did not change from those used in the previous period.

Change in assumptions at 31 March 2018	Approximate % increase to Employer Liability	Approximate monetary amount £000
0.5% decrease in Real Discount Rate	10%	67,493
0.5% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	2%	11,408
0.5% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	8%	55,104

Impact on the Authority's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contribution at a constant rate as possible. The Council has agreed a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve a funding level of 100% over the 20 years following the last valuation. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis and the next triennial valuation will be completed on 31 March 2019.

The scheme will need to take account of the national changes to the scheme under the Public Pensions Services Act 2013. Under the Act, the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales and other main existing public service schemes may not provide benefits in relation to service after 31 March 2014 (or service after 31 March 2015 for other main existing public service pension schemes in England and Wales). The Act provides for scheme regulations to be made within a common framework, to establish new career average revalued earnings schemes to pay pensions and other benefits.

The authority is anticipated to pay contributions of £10.558m to the scheme in 2018/19.

The weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation for scheme members is 18.7 years in 2017/18 (18.7 years in 2016/17)

Further information can be found in Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council's Pension Funds Annual Report which is available from Cheshire Pension Fund, Cheshire West and Chester Council, HQ, Nicholas Street, Chester, CH1 2NP.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Defined Contribution Scheme

In 2017/18, the Council paid an employers' contribution to the Teachers' Pension Agency of £4.736m (£4.864m in 2016/17) in respect of teachers' pension costs. The contribution rate for 2017/18 was 16.5% (16.5% in 2016/17) of teachers' pensionable pay.

The scheme is a defined benefit scheme. Although the scheme is unfunded, Teachers' Pensions use a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employers' contribution rate paid by Local Education Authorities. It is not possible for the Council to identify a share of the underlying liabilities in the scheme attributable to its own employees. For the purpose of the statement of accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme.

The Council is responsible for any additional benefits granted upon early retirement, outside the standard terms of the scheme. For the year 2017/18 the cost was £0.133m (£0.131m in 2016/17).

NHS Pension Scheme

Defined Contribution Scheme

In 2017/18 the Council paid an employers' contribution to the National Health Service Pensions Scheme in respect of 40 employees, the amount paid was £0.169m (£0.171m in 2016/17) in respect of these former NHS employees' pension costs. The contribution rate was 14.4% (14.3% in 2016/17) of pensionable pay.

The scheme is a defined benefit scheme. Although the scheme is unfunded, NHS use a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employers' contribution rate paid by local authorities.

It is not possible for the Council to identify a share of the underlying liabilities in the scheme attributable to its own employees. For the purposes of this Statement of Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme.

33. Financial Instrument

Nature and Extent of Risks from Financial Instruments

The Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks:

Credit Risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Council

Liquidity Risk – the possibility that the Council might not have enough funds available to meet its commitments to make payments

Market Risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Council as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements

The Council's overall risk management programme focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the resources available to fund services. Risk management is carried out by the treasury management section, under policies approved by the Council in the treasury management strategy. The Council provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as written policies covering specific areas, such as interest risk, credit risk and the investment of surplus cash.

Fair Value

The Code requires that each class of financial asset and liability should disclose the “fair value” in a way that permits it to be compared with its carrying amount, as well as the method used in determining such fair values. The Council has used Link Asset Services, its treasury management advisors to calculate these values and they have based the calculation on the appropriate PWLB rate for new loans as at 31st March 2018.

Credit Risk

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures from the Council’s customers.

Risks are minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy by ensuring that cash deposits are only placed with financial institutions identified on the Council’s Approved List of Counterparties that meet identified minimum credit criteria and imposes a maximum sum to be invested with a financial institution located within each category. This list was established as one of the series of controls recommended by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) which the Council has adopted. The Annual Investment Strategy is regularly reviewed, as is the approved counterparty list, to help minimise the Council’s exposure to risk.

Customers for goods and services are assessed, taking into account their financial position, past experience and other factors, with individual credit limits being set in accordance with parameters set by the Council.

The Council’s maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments held in banks and building societies of £81.450m cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of non-recoverability applies to all Council deposits, but there was no evidence at 31st March 2018 that this was likely to crystallise.

During the year the Council complied fully with the requirements laid out in the Code and no counterparty indicated any problem with repaying any deposit placed by the Council.

The counterparties on the Councils' list are grouped and ranked by a mixture of credit ratings and size and are set out below:

Maximum Deposit per institution £000	Counterparties	Exposure at 31/03/2018 £000
40,000	UK Government	-
	Nationalised and Part Nationalised Banks	
40,000	- Minimum Rating A	-
20,000	- Minimum Rating BBB	5,000
	UK Banks and Building Societies	
30,000	- Minimum Rating AAA	
25,000	- Minimum Rating AA	
20,000	- Minimum Rating A	36,450
10,000	- Minimum Rating BBB	
	Foreign Banks (with Soverign Rating of AAA)	
20,000	- Minimum Rating AAA	
10,000	- Minimum Rating AA	5,000
5,000	- Minimum Rating A	
	Money Market Funds	
20,000	- Minimum Rating AAA	
40,000	Local Authorities	35,000
		81,450

The counterparties on the list are under constant assessment using a variety of sources including rating agencies and professional advice.

The following table analyses the Council's potential maximum exposure to credit risk on other financial assets, based on experience of default and non-collection over recent financial years, adjusted to reflect current market conditions.

	Estimated maximum exposure to default and non-collection at 31/03/2017 £000	Amount Outstanding at 31/03/2018 £000	Historical experience of default %	Estimated maximum exposure to default and non-collection at 31/03/2018 £000
Deposits with Banks	-	46,450	0.00	-
Deposits with Building Societies	-	-	0.00	-
Deposits with Local Authorities	-	35,000	0.00	-
Deposits with Property Funds	-	4,846	0.00	-
Customers/Clients	225	15,784	2.50	395
	225			**395**

None of the Council's counterparties had any difficulty in repaying their liabilities during 2017/18. There has been no impairment of any financial assets during the course of the year. The Council does not anticipate any losses due to non-performance of its counterparties.

An analysis of the customer/client debt is shown below. As at 31st March 2018 £15.390m of this debt is overdue:

	31/03/2017 £000	31/03/2018 £000
Less than 3 months	4,825	6,574
3 to 6 months	541	3,138
6 months to 1 year	1,127	1,098
More than 1 year	2,491	4,974
	8,984	**15,784**
Provision for non-payment	(2,880)	(6,148)

Liquidity Risk

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected movements happen, the Council has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). There is no significant risk that the Council will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Instead, the risk is that the Council will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates. The Council sets limits on the proportion of its fixed rate borrowing during specified periods.

The maturity analysis of financial liabilities is as follows:

	31/03/2017 Restated £000	31/03/2018 £000
Less than 1 year	(38,763)	(52,770)
Between 1 and 2 years	(6,072)	(12,963)
Between 2 and 5 years	(1,834)	(43,553)
More than 5 years	(160,716)	(764,099)
	(207,385)	**(873,385)**

All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

Please note that the 2016/17 figures above have been restated to include financial instruments relating to lease liabilities and PFI Schemes, which had not been included in previous years.

Market Risk

Interest Rate Risk

The Council is exposed to interest rate movements on its borrowing and investments. Movements in interest rates can have a complex impact on the Council. For example a rise in interest rates would have the following effects:

Borrowing at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement will rise

Borrowing at fixed rates – the fair value of liabilities will fall (with no impact on revenue balances)

Investment at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise

Investment at fixed rates – the fair value of assets will fall (with no impact on revenue balances)

Borrowings are not carried at fair value on the Balance Sheet, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, changes to interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments are posted to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and affect the General Fund Balance. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments that have a quoted market price will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

The Council has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. The Annual Treasury Management Strategy draws together the Councils' prudential and treasury indicators and its expected treasury operations, including an expectation of interest rate movements.

From this strategy, a treasury management section monitor interest rates within the year and adjust exposures accordingly. During periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate loans will be repaid early to limit exposure to losses and fixed rate investments may be taken for longer periods to secure better long term results, similarly the drawing of longer term fixed rate borrowing would be postponed.

According to an assessment strategy at 31st March 2018, if interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be:

	2017/18 £000
Increase in interest payable on short-term borrowings	16
Increase in interest receivable on short-term Investments	(994)
Impact upon Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	**(978)**

The impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as shown previously but with movements being reversed.

Price Risk

The Council has invested £5m in the CCLA property fund as at 31st March 2018. The price of the investment is subject to potential gains and losses based on market volatility. The investment is shown in the accounts at its value as at 31st March 2018 and any gains or losses relating to this investment are shown in the Available for Sale reserve (see Note 37).

The Council have no other holdings that are subject to market volatility, an example of which would be shares traded on the equity market.

Foreign Exchange Risk

Other than £2k held in petty cash, the Council has no financial assets or liabilities, denominated in foreign currencies and thus has no exposure to loss or movement in exchange rates.

Financial Instrument Balances

Categories of Financial Instrument

The following categories of financial instrument are carried in the Balance Sheet:

	Long Term 31/03/2017 £000	Current 31/03/2017 £000	Long Term 31/03/2018 £000	Current 31/03/2018 £000
Investments				
Loans and receivables	10	68,000	12,000	45,026
Available for Sale Financial Assets	4,626	-	4,846	-
Unquoted equity investment at cost	483	-	469	-
Total	**5,119**	**68,000**	**17,315**	**45,026**
Assets				
Cash & Cash Equivalents	-	54,221	-	27,347
Loans and receivables	11,395	15,610	8,191	19,973
Total	**11,395**	**69,831**	**8,191**	**47,320**
Borrowings				
Financial liabilities at amortised cost	**(148,401)**	**(10,000)**	**(172,000)**	**(5,401)**
Other liabilities				
Finance lease liabilities & PFI	(20,221)	(777)	(19,658)	(642)
Mersey Gateway unitary charge	-	-	(628,957)	(11,532)
Total	**(20,221)**	**(777)**	**(648,615)**	**(12,174)**
Current Liabilities				
Financial liabilities at amortised cost	**-**	**(27,986)**	**-**	**(35,195)**

Material Soft Loans Made by the Council

There were no material soft loans made by Halton Borough Council in 2017/18 (£0 2016/17)

Reclassifications

There were no reclassifications of financial instruments made by Halton Borough Council in 2017/18 (£0 2016/17).

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

	2016/17			2017/18		
	Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost £000	**Financial Assets: Loans and Receivables £000**	**Total £000**	**Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost £000**	**Financial Assets: Loans and Receivables £000**	**Total £000**
Interest expense	7,609	-	**7,609**	18,876	-	**18,876**
Interest income	-	(1,548)	**(1,548)**	-	(966)	**(966)**
Net Gain/(Loss)	**7,609**	**(1,548)**	**6,061**	**18,876**	**(966)**	**17,910**

Fair values of Financial Assets

Some of the authority's financial assets are measured at fair value on a recurring basis and are described in the following table, including the valuation techniques used to measure them.

Recurring fair value measurements	Input level in fair value hierarchy £000	Valuation technique used to measure fair value £000	31/03/2017 £000	31/03/2018 £000
Available for Sale: Property Fund	Level 1	Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical shares	4,626	4,846

Gains and losses included in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the current year relate to the valuation of the above asset and are taken to the Available for Sale Financial Instruments Reserve. These are reported in the surplus or deficit on the revaluation of available for sale financial assets line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

There have been no transfers between input levels during the year, and no change in the valuation technique used.

The fair values of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities that are not measured at Fair Value (but for which Fair Value disclosures are required)

Except for the financial assets carried at fair value (described in the table above), all other financial liabilities and financial assets held by the authority are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that will take place over the remaining term of the instruments (Level 2), using the following assumptions:

- Estimated ranges of interest rates at 31st March 2018 for loans from PWLB and other loans receivable and payable based on new lending rates for equivalent loans at that date.
- PFI Valuation is assumed to be carried at fair value (see Note 31 for further details).
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised for loans or investments.
- Short Term Investments, Cash and Cash Equivalents are held at carrying value.

- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount less a provision for impairment.
- Short term creditors are carried at cost.

The fair values are shown below:

	2016/17		2017/18	
	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
Financial Liabilities - short term	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Borrowings	(10,000)	(10,086)	(5,401)	(5,401)
Finance lease liabilites & PFI	(777)	(777)	(642)	(642)
Mersey Gateway unitary charge	-	-	(11,532)	(11,532)
Other financial liabilities	(27,986)	(27,986)	(35,195)	(35,195)
Financial Liabilities - long term				
Borrowings	(148,401)	(188,060)	(172,000)	(212,762)
Finance lease liabilities & PFI	(20,221)	(20,221)	(19,658)	(19,658)
Mersey Gateway unitary charge	-	-	(628,957)	(628,957)
Other financial liabiltiies	-	-	-	-

The fair values of the liabilities is higher than the carrying amount because the Council's portfolio of loans includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate payable is higher than the prevailing rates at the Balance Sheet date. This shows a notional future loss (based on economic conditions at 31st March 2018) arising from a commitment to pay interest to lenders above current market rates.

	2016/17		2017/18	
	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
Financial Assets - short term	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Investments - loans and receivables	68,000	68,247	45,026	45,026
Cash and Cash Equivalalents	54,221	54,221	27,347	27,347
Loans and receivables	15,610	15,610	19,973	19,973
Financial Assets - long term				
Unquoted equity investment at cost	483	483	469	469
Loans and receivables	11,405	11,405	25,037	25,168

The fair value of assets is higher than the carrying amount because the Council's portfolio of investments includes a number of fixed rate investments where the interest receivable is higher than the rates available for similar loans at the Balance Sheet date. This shows a notional future gain (based on economic conditions at the 31st March 2018) attributable to the commitment to receive interest above current market rates.

34. Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under regulation

This note details the adjustments that are made to total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the Council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Council to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

2016/17

	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	**Movement in Usable Reserves £000**	**Movement in Unusable Reserves £000**
Capital adjustment account reversal of items debited or credited to the CIES:					
Charges for depreciation and impairment on non-current assets	(22,563)	-	-	**(22,563)**	**22,563**
Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(16,903)	-	-	**(16,903)**	**16,903**
Movements in the Market Value of Investment Properties	(138)	-	-	**(138)**	**138**
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(689)	-	-	**(689)**	**689**
Capital Grants and Contributions applied	19,681	-	-	**19,681**	**(19,681)**
Revenue Expendutre Funded by Capital Under Statute	(6,791)	-	-	**(6,791)**	**6,791**
Amounts written off on disposal of Academies to CIES	(1,199)	-	-	**(1,199)**	**1,199**
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	1,269	(9,061)	-	**(7,792)**	**7,792**
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CIES:					
Statutory provision for the financing of Capital investment	2,471	-	-	**2,471**	**(2,471)**
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund Balance	759	-	-	**759**	**(759)**
Capital Grants Unapplied Account					**-**
Capital Grants and Contributions unapplied credited to the CIES	(430)	-	430	**-**	**-**
Application of Grants to Capital Financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	-	-	-	**-**	**-**

	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	**Movement in Usable Reserves £000**	**Movement in Unusable Reserves £000**
Capital Receipts Reserve					
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to Finance new Capital Expenditure	-	5,548	-	**5,548**	**(5,548)**
Contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve towards the administration cost of non-current asset disposals	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Transfer from the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve upon the receipt of cash	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Pensions Reserve					
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited/credited to the CIES	(16,254)	-	-	**(16,254)**	**16,254**
Employers pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners	12,936	-	-	**12,936**	**(12,936)**
Collection Fund Adjustment					
Amount by which council tax income credited to the CIES is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	3,243	-	-	**3,243**	**(3,243)**
Accumulated Absences Account					
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES on an accruals basis is different from remuneration with statutory requirements	(199)	-	-	**(199)**	**199**
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	**(24,807)**	**(3,513)**	**430**	**(27,890)**	**27,890**

2017/18

	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	**Movement in Usable Reserves £000**	**Movement in Unusable Reserves £000**
Capital adjustment account reversal of items debited or credited to the CIES:					
Charges for depreciation and impairment on non-current assets	(22,606)	-	-	**(22,606)**	**22,606**
Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(14,079)	-	-	**(14,079)**	**14,079**
Movements in the Market Value of Investment Properties	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(787)	-	-	**(787)**	**787**
Capital Grants and Contributions applied	12,935	-	-	**12,935**	**(12,935)**
Revenue Expendutre Funded by Capital Under Statute	(1,701)	-	-	**(1,701)**	**1,701**
Amounts written off on disposal of Academies to CIES	(21,416)	-	-	**(21,416)**	**21,416**
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	1,292	(4,096)	-	**(2,804)**	**2,804**
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CIES:					
Statutory provision for the financing of Capital investment	6,073	-	-	**6,073**	**(6,073)**
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund Balance	627	-	-	**627**	**(627)**
Capital Grants Unapplied Account					
Capital Grants and Contributions unapplied credited to the CIES	(1,086)	-	1,086	**-**	**-**
Application of Grants to Capital Financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	-	-	-	**-**	**-**

	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	**Movement in Usable Reserves £000**	**Movement in Unusable Reserves £000**
Capital Receipts Reserve					
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to Finance new Capital Expenditure	-	5,895	-	**5,895**	**(5,895)**
Contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve towards the administration cost of non-current asset disposals	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Transfer from the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve upon the receipt of cash	-	-	-	**-**	**-**
Pensions Reserve					
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited/credited to the CIES	(25,777)	-	-	**(25,777)**	**25,777**
Employers pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners	17,740	-	-	**17,740**	**(17,740)**
Collection Fund Adjustment					
Amount by which council tax income credited to the CIES is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(450)	-	-	**(450)**	**450**
Accumulated Absences Account					
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES on an accruals basis is different from remuneration with statutory requirements	256	-	-	**256**	**(257)**
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	**(48,979)**	**1,799**	**1,086**	**(46,094)**	**46,093**

35. Usable Reserves

Usable reserves are those reserves that contain resources that the Council can apply to the provision of services, either by incurring expenses or undertaking capital investment. Usable reserves include the General Fund Balance, any earmarked reserves under the General Fund umbrella, the Capital Receipts Reserve and any Capital Grants Unapplied.

General Fund Balance

The General Fund Balance records the Council's accumulated income over expenditure for each financial year. The fund manages the reversal of a number of transactions that are required to be included in the preparation of the financial statements but subsequently removed under statutory mitigation.

Earmarked Reserves

These reserves help to meet specific known or predicted future requirements and are legally part of the General Fund Reserve. The earmarked reserves also include unspent school balances of budgets delegated to individual schools.

The movements in earmarked reserves are analysed in Note 36.

Capital Receipts Reserve

This reserve holds the proceeds from the sale of assets and can only be used for funding capital investment or the repayment of borrowing.

Movements in the Council's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement

Capital Grants Unapplied

This reserve holds Capital Grants income for which all conditions have been met, but the funding has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure.

2016/17		**2017/18**
£000		**£000**
	General Fund	
(4,830)	- Excluding Earmarked Reserves	(5,004)
(42,072)	- Earmarked Reserves	(39,023)
	Capital Reserves	
(9,933)	- Capital Receipts Reserve	(10,775)
(2,262)	- Capital Grants Unapplied	(1,175)
(59,097)	**Total Usable Reserves**	**(55,977)**

36. Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2017/18.

General Fund	Balance at 31st March 2016 Restated £000	Movement (to)/from Reserve £000	Balance at 31st March 2017 Restated £000	Movement (to)/from Reserve £000	Balance at 31st March 2018 £000
Schools Reserves (Balances held by schools under the scheme of delegation)	**(5,718)**	944	**(4,774)**	1,060	**(3,714)**
Capital (To support Capital Programme)	**(5,046)**	518	**(4,528)**	1,630	**(2,898)**
Insurance General Fund (To fund self possible self insured claims)	**(3,385)**	28	**(3,357)**	-	**(3,357)**
Building Schools for the Future Capital (To fund future capital costs)	**(1,731)**	(280)	**(2,011)**	(1,335)	**(3,346)**
Invest to Save (To fund investments in revenue saving initiatives)	**(737)**	126	**(611)**	30	**(581)**
Supporting People (Earmarked to fund future schemes)	**(803)**	600	**(203)**	128	**(75)**
Enterprise and Employment (To fund E&E activities for future years)	**(823)**	279	**(544)**	(174)	**(718)**
Health & Community (To support future revenue budgets)	**(1,554)**	989	**(565)**	(813)	**(1,378)**
Equal Pay (To fund costs arising from equal pay claims)	**(2,364)**	581	**(1,783)**	-	**(1,783)**
Revenues & Benefits Development (To fund ongoing systems development and benefits reform changes)	**(736)**	-	**(736)**	435	**(301)**
A&C Section 256 Monies (Contribution from H&StH PCT with joint outcomes)	**(770)**	-	**(770)**	-	**(770)**
A&C Savings (To help finance A&C budget)	**(2,571)**	(662)	**(3,233)**	1,016	**(2,217)**
Transformation Fund (To fund costs arising from future efficiency reviews)	**(747)**	286	**(461)**	(539)	**(1,000)**
Enterprise, Resources & Resources (Contribution to Savings Target)	**(2,596)**	(482)	**(3,078)**	2,529	**(549)**

General Fund	Balance at 31st March 2016 Restated £000	Movement (to)/from Reserve £000	Balance at 31st March 2017 Restated £000	Movement (to)/from Reserve £000	Balance at 31st March 2018 £000
Public Health (To fund the public health responsibilities of the Council	**(1,352)**	515	**(837)**	475	**(362)**
Fleet Replacement (Rolling replacement programme for Council fleet vehicle)	**(1,768)**	90	**(1,678)**	5	**(1,673)**
Superfast Broadband (To provide matched funding to the Superfast Broadband project)	**(519)**	518	**(1)**	1	**-**
European Match Funding 2014-2020 (Contribution to the European 2014-2020 Programme)	**(2,116)**	396	**(1,720)**	473	**(1,247)**
Discretionary Social Fund (To continue to provide the hardship fund once Government support ceases)	**(933)**	101	**(832)**	14	**(818)**
Troubled Families (Will be utilised during 16/17 to deliver various services)	**(459)**	83	**(376)**	(218)	**(594)**
Enterprise Zone (To support development of Daresbury Science Park)	**(452)**	(19)	**(471)**	(240)	**(711)**
Pension Past Service Deficit (To enable pension deficits to be funded as a lump sum, resulting in finance efficiencies)	**-**	(5,634)	**(5,634)**	4,710	**(924)**
Revenue Efficiencies (To help fund budget gaps over the medium term)	**-**	(550)	**(550)**	(4,372)	**(4,922)**
NNDR Pilot Scheme (To fund No Detriment policy as part of the Liverpool City Region 100% business rate retention scheme)	**-**	-	**-**	(2,452)	**(2,452)**
Other Earmarked Reserves (Total of reserves under £500k)	**(3,500)**	181	**(3,319)**	686	**(2,633)**
TOTAL ALL RESERVES	**(40,680)**	**(1,392)**	**(42,072)**	**3,049**	**(39,023)**

In order to streamline the note any reserves under £500k have been summarised as ‘Other Earmarked Reserves’ in the table above, the 16/17 figures have been restated to reflect this.

37. Unusable Reserves

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(75,076)	Revaluation Reserve	(80,961)
373	Available for Sale Financial Instruments Reserve	154
109,016	Pensions Reserve	98,479
(170,219)	Capital Adjustment Account	(143,498)
(13,412)	Deferred Capital Receipts	(10,771)
(6,859)	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	(6,409)
2,104	Accumulated Absences Account	1,848
(154,073)	**Total Unusable Reserves**	**(141,158)**

Revaluation Reserve

The revaluation reserve contains the gains and losses made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment (and Intangible Assets). The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

Revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost.

Used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation.

Disposed of and the gains are realised.

The reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1st April 2007, the date that the reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

2016/17 £000		£000	2017/18 £000
(83,044)	**Balance at 1 April**		**(75,076)**
(6,755)	Upward revaluation of assets	(17,328)	
1,291	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus/(Deficit) on the Provision of Services	304	
(5,464)	**Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus/(Deficit) on the Provision of Services**		**(17,024)**
9,539	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost deprecation	9,519	
192	Accumulated gain on academies transferred	37	
3,701	Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	1,585	
13,432	Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account		**11,141**
(75,076)	**Balance at 31 March**		**(80,959)**

Available for Sale Financial Instruments Reserve

The Available for Sale Financial Instruments Reserves contains the gains and losses made by the Authority arising from changes in the value of its investments that have quoted market prices or otherwise do not have fixed or determinable payments. The gain or loss will not be realised until the investments are sold (though the asset could be impaired if there is a prolonged decline in the unit price under which the asset was purchased.)

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
88	**Balance at 1 April**	**373**
-	Upward revaluation of investments	(219)
285	Downward revaluation of investments not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	-
-	Accumulated gains on assets sold and maturing assets written out to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Other Investment Income	-
373	**Balance at 31 March**	**154**

Capital Adjustment Account

The capital adjustment account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption on non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions. The account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Council as finance costs of acquisition, construction or enhancement.

The account contains accumulated gains and losses on investment properties and gains recognised on donated assets that are yet to be consumed by the Council.

The account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on property, plant and equipment before 1st April 2007, the date the revaluation reserve was created to hold such gains.

2016/17 £000		£000	2017/18 £000
(197,772)	**Balance at 1 April**		(170,219)
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:		
22,563	Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	22,606	
16,903	Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	14,079	
689	Amortisation of intangible assets	787	
6,791	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	1,701	
1,199	Carrying value of Academies transferred	21,416	
21,161	Carrying amount of non-current assets sold	2,803	
69,306			**63,392**
(13,432)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve		(11,141)
55,874	**Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year**		**52,251**
	Capital financing applied in the year:		
(5,548)	Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(5,895)	
(19,681)	Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(12,935)	
	Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account		
(2,471)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	(6,073)	
(759)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund	(627)	
(28,459)			**(25,530)**
138	Movements in the market value of investment properties debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		
-	Movement in the Donated Assets Account credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		-
(170,219)	**Balance at 31st March**		**(143,498)**

Pension Reserve

The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Council accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs.

However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Council makes employers contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Council has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that the funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

2016/17 £000		**£000**	**2017/18 £000**
64,720	**Balance at 1st April**		**109,016**
	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:		
(567)	Changes in demographic assumptions	-	
106,789	Changes in financial assumptions	(12,940)	
(8,641)	Other experience	-	
(56,603)	Returns on assets excluding amounts included in net interest	(5,634)	
40,978			**(18,574)**
16,254	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		25,777
(12,936)	Employers pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year		(17,740)
109,016	**Balance at 31st March**		**98,479**

Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve

Deferred Capital Receipts are amounts derived from the sale of assets which will be received in instalments over agreed periods of time.

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(266)	Castlefields Equity Advances	(256)
(522)	Castlefields Lakeside	(251)
(3,550)	Former Fairfield High School Land	(1,420)
(1,454)	3MG - Mersey Multi Modal Gateway	(1,454)
(7,620)	Scitech Daresbury Lease	(7,390)
(13,412)		**(10,771)**

The Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve holds the gains recognised on the disposal of non-current assets but for which cash settlement has yet to take place. Under statutory arrangements, the Council does not treat these gains as usable for financing new capital expenditure until they are backed by cash receipts. When the deferred cash settlement eventually takes place, amounts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(1,164)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(13,412)**
(13,370)	Transfer of deferred sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	-
1,122	Transfer to the Capital Receipts Reserve upon receipt of cash	2,641
(13,412)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(10,771)**

Collection Fund Adjustment

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from Council Tax payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(3,616)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(6,859)**
334	Amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income collected in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(205)
(3,577)	Amount by which Non Domestic Rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from Non Domestic Rates income collected in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	655
(6,859)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(6,409)**

Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund balance accruing from compensated absences earned but not yet taken in year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31st March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the account.

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
1,905	**Balance at 1 April**	**2,104**
(1,905)	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(2,104)
2,104	Amount accrued at the end of the current year	1,848
	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	
2,104	**Balance at 31 March**	**1,848**

38. Cash Flow Statement – Operating Activities

The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following non-cash movements:

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(22,563)	Depreciation	(22,606)
(16,903)	Impairment and downward valuation	(14,079)
(689)	Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(787)
(138)	Movement in market value of investment properties	-
(616)	Impairment Debtors	5,434
(1,066)	(Increase)/Decrease in Creditors and Receipts in Advance	(40,518)
11,235	Increase/(Decrease) in Debtors	2,124
15	Increase/(Decrease) in Inventories	158
(3,318)	Movement in Pension Liability	(8,037)
1,213	Contributions (to)/from Provisions	(1,566)
(21,161)	Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or de-recognised	(2,803)
(1,199)	Loss on transfer to academies	(21,416)
(5,772)	Other non-cash adjustments	(1,920)
(60,962)	**Total non-cash movements**	**(106,016)**

The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following items that are investing and financing activities:

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
10,779	Capital Grants credited to the surplus or deficit on the provisions of services	5,260
9,061	Proceeds from the sale of non-current assets	4,096
(935)	Other cash flows from investing or financing activities	-
18,905	**Net Cash flows from investing or financing activities**	**9,356**

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(1,724)	Interest received	(1,130)
5,974	Interest paid	3,551
-	Dividends received	-
4,250		**2,421**

39. Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
84,828	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	104,664
143,724	Purchase of short term and long term investments	112,020
(9,061)	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(4,096)
(221,031)	Proceeds from short term and long term investments	(123,018)
(11,276)	Other receipts from investing activities	(7,306)
(12,816)	**Net Cash flows from Investing Activities**	**82,264**

40. Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities

2016/17 £000		2017/18 £000
(15,800)	Cash receipts of short and long term borrowing	(39,000)
(2,476)	Other receipts from financing activities	4,340
935	Cash payments from the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases and on balance sheet PFI contracts	4,078
16,063	Repayments of short term and long term borrowing	20,000
-	Other payments for financing activities	-
(1,278)	**Net Cash flows from Financing Activities**	**(10,582)**

41. Interest in Companies and Other Entities

The Council is involved with several companies over which it has varying degrees of control and influence. The Council is required to classify the entities according to whether they are subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures

Subsidiary

An entity is only a subsidiary if the Council has power over the entity, exposure, or rights, to variable returns from its involvement with the entity and ability to use its power over the entity to affect the amount of the Council's returns.

As at 31st March 2018 the following were subsidiaries of the Council:-

- Halton Borough Transport Ltd - In accordance with the Transport Act 1985, Halton Borough Transport became a separate legal entity from the Council, with the Council holding 100% of the shares within the company. The principal activity of the company is the provision of local bus services in the Halton area.
- Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd - The principal activity of the company is to deliver the Mersey Gateway Bridge project, and to administer and oversee the construction and maintenance of the new tolled crossings, including the tolling of the existing Silver Jubilee Bridge. The Council holds 100% of the shares issued by the company. An amount of £600k is held as a long term debtor on the Council's Balance Sheet, this is the amount which has been passed to Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd as working capital.

In accordance with paragraph 9.1.1.7 of the Code, the subsidiaries have not been consolidated into group accounts as they are not considered to be of material value.

For more information on the financial performance of the above two companies, see Note 22, where a summary of the companies accounts are provided.

Joint Ventures

These are arrangements under which two or more parties have contractually agreed to share control, such that decisions about activities that significantly affect returns require the unanimous consent of the parties sharing control, and joint parties have rights to the net assets of the arrangement.

As at 31st March 2018 the Council were party to the following joint ventures:-

- Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus Ltd - The principal activity of the company was to assist, promote, encourage, and develop the Science Park at Daresbury, Cheshire. The company is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee having no share capital. The Council is currently in the process of terminating the joint venture.

- Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus (Pub Sec) LLP - The principal activity of the company during the year was to assist, promote, encourage, and secure the development of the International Science Park at Daresbury, Cheshire. Members of the partnership are Halton Borough Council and the Science and Technology Facilities Council.

In accordance with paragraph 9.1.1.7 of the Code, the Council's equity within the joint ventures has not been consolidated into group accounts as it is not considered to be of material value.

Associates

Associates are entities for which the Council is an investor and has significant influence. The Council can have an associate relationship with an entity that is a joint venture under the control of other investors.

As at 31st March 2018 the Council had associate relationships with the following:-

- Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus LLP - The principal activity of the LLP is the management and development of the Sci-Tech Daresbury Campus. Designated members of the partnership are Langtree Daresbury Ltd and Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus (Pub Sec) LLP, for which the Council is an equal partner in. An amount of £7.4m is held as a long term debtor on the Council's Balance Sheet. This relates to a long term lease agreement between the Council and the company for a property asset based at the Sci-Tech Daresbury Campus.

In accordance with paragraph 9.1.1.7 of the Code, the Council's equity within the associate relationship has not been consolidated into group accounts as it is not considered to be of material value.

The cumulative value of non-current assets held by group entities is £9.780m which is equivalent to 0.9% of non-current assets held by the Council and therefore considered to be not of material value to be consolidated into group accounts. The value of cumulative equity held by the group entities is £4.49m

Note that although the Council does have an investment in Widnes Regeneration Ltd and Halton Development Partnership, it was determined that there is no group relationship as the Council does not have a significant influence over the organisations and holds only a minority shareholding in the entities.

Collection Fund

The Collection Fund is an agents statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and the distribution to local authorities and the Government in relation to Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates.

Collection Fund Statement

2016/17				2017/18		
Council Tax £000	Non Domestic Rates £000	Total £000		Council Tax £000	Non Domestic Rates £000	Total £000
			Income			
(51,458)		(51,458)	Council Tax	(55,102)		(55,102)
	(58,627)	(58,627)	Non Domestic Rates		(53,296)	(53,296)
	85	85	Transitional Protection Payment		5,897	5,897
(51,458)	**(58,542)**	**(110,000)**		**(55,102)**	**(47,399)**	**(102,501)**
			Expenditure			
			Precepts, Demands & Shares			
-	26,048	26,048	Central Government		-	-
41,217	25,681	66,898	Halton Borough Council	44,378	49,756	94,134
5,312	-	5,312	Cheshire Police Authority	5,561		5,561
2,368	524	2,892	Cheshire Fire Service	2,479	503	2,982
84	-	84	Parish Precept	88		88
			Apportionment of Previous Year's Surplus			
-	-	-	Central Government		195	195
1,808	-	1,808	Halton Borough Council	1,522	191	1,713
235	-	235	Cheshire Police Authority	197		197
106	-	106	Cheshire Fire Service	89	4	93
			Charges to Collection Fund			
153	746	899	Write off uncollectable amounts	192	24	216
586	2	588	Increase / (Decrease) in Bad Debt Provision	351	376	727
	(2,174)	(2,174)	Increase / (Decrease) in Appeals Provision		(2,469)	(2,469)
	165	165	Cost of Collection		158	158
	157	157	Disregarded Amounts		-	-
51,869	**51,149**	**103,018**		**54,857**	**48,738**	**103,595**
(3,953)	**(495)**	**(4,448)**	**Balance Brought Forward**	**(3,542)**	**(7,888)**	**(11,430)**
411	**(7,393)**	**(6,982)**	**Movement on Fund Balance**	**(245)**	**1,339**	**1,094**
(3,542)	**(7,888)**	**(11,430)**	**Balance Carried Forward**	**(3,787)**	**(6,549)**	**(10,336)**

Collection Fund Balance Sheet

2016/17				Council Tax	2017/18			
Halton BC	**Cheshire P&CC**	**Cheshire Fire**	**Total**		**Halton BC**	**Cheshire P&CC**	**Cheshire Fire**	**Total**
£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**		**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
5,606	702	313	6,621	Arrears	6,606	846	362	7,814
(3,341)	(418)	(186)	(3,945)	Provision for Doubtful Debts	(3,632)	(465)	(199)	(4,296)
(475)	(59)	(24)	(558)	Overpayments / Prepayments	(535)	(69)	(29)	(633)
(2,993)	(381)	(168)	(3,542)	(Surplus)/Deficit	(3,199)	(410)	(178)	(3,787)
1,203	156	65	1,424	Cash	760	98	44	902
-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-

2016/17				Non-Domestic Rates	2017/18			
Central Gov	**Halton BC**	**Cheshire Fire**	**Total**		**Central Gov**	**Halton BC**	**Cheshire Fire**	**Total**
£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**		**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
2,062	2,020	41	4,123	Arrears	-	4,367	44	4,411
(1,394)	(1,366)	(28)	(2,788)	Provision for Doubtful Debts	-	(3,133)	(32)	(3,165)
(4,015)	(3,934)	(79)	(8,028)	Appeals Provision	-	(5,505)	(55)	(5,560)
(205)	(201)	(5)	(411)	Overpayments / Prepayments	-	(258)	(3)	(261)
(3,945)	(3,864)	(79)	(7,888)	(Surplus)/Deficit	(3,275)	(3,209)	(65)	(6,549)
7,497	7,345	150	14,992	Cash	3,275	7,738	111	11,124
-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-

Notes to the Collection Fund

1. Introduction of the Council Tax

The property based Council Tax was introduced on the 1st April 1993, replacing the personal liability Community Charge. The Council determined its Band D equivalent tax base for 2017/18 at 33,817 (2016/17 – 32,948)

2. The Council Tax Base Determination

Band	Properties	Ratio	Band D Equivalents
Disabled	65	5/9	36
A	16,252	6/9	10,834
B	9,365	7/9	7,284
C	6,739	8/9	5,990
D	4,366	9/9	4,366
E	3,278	11/9	4,007
F	1,029	13/9	1,486
G	352	15/9	586
H	30	18/9	61
Total	41,476		34,650
Reductions relating to Non-Collection and changes in assumptions			**(833)**
Tax Base set for 2017/18			**33,817**

The parishes' individual tax bases are shown below:

	2016/17	**2017/18**
Hale	659	662
Daresbury	159	174
Moore	326	328
Preston Brook	336	332
Halebank	499	522
Sandymoor	966	1,020

3. Precepting Authorities

Halton Borough Council has two precepting authorities, Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner and Cheshire Fire Authority. The Band D charge and total precept are shown in the table below:

	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
Cheshire Police and Crime Commisioner		
- Band D Charge	161.23	164.44
- Precept	5,312,206	5,561,032
Cheshire Fire Authority		
- Band D Charge	71.86	73.29
- Precept	2,367,643	2,478,521

4. Non-Domestic Rates

The non-domestic rate replaced locally fixed rates from 1st April 1990. The rateable value at 31st March and the business rate multiplier, which is fixed by the Government, are shown in the table below:

	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
Rateable value at 31st March	135,800,761	133,146,479
Non Domestic rating multiplier	49.7	47.9
Small Business Non Domestic rating muliplier	48.4	46.6

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required:

To make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Council, the Operational Director – Finance has that responsibility;

To manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets;

To approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Operational Director – Finance Responsibilities

The Operational Director – Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Council's statement of accounts which, in terms of CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain ("the Code of Practice"), is required to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year (ended 31^{st} March 2018).

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Operational Director – Financial Services has:

Selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;

Adopted the principal of "True and Fair" regarding the Council's financial position;

Made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;

Complied with the Code of Practice.

The Operational Director – Finance has also:

Kept proper accounting records which were kept up to date;

Taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

I certify that this Statement of Accounts presents a true and fair view of the financial position and income and expenditure of Halton Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2018

There are a number of accounting standards which will be adopted by the code in 2018/19. It is not anticipated these will have a material impact on the Council's financial statements.

Signed by: ....
Operational Director – Finance

Date: 31st May 2018

Statement of Accounts Policies

1. General

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2017/18 financial year and its position at the year-ending 31 March 2018.

Halton Borough Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, which is required to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice of Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18 and the Service Reporting Code of Practice 2017/18, supported by International Financing Reporting Standards (IFRS).

The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

2. Changes to the 2017/18 Accounting Policies

The Council's accounting policies are subject to regular review arising from changes in the way costs are accounted for and changes in the requirements of the Code of Practice.

3. Accruals of Income and Expenditure

Activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received.

3(a) Revenue Recognition

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Council transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council. Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Council can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.

3(b) Employee Costs

The full cost of employees is charged to the period which the employees worked. Accruals are made for pay awards awaiting settlement and for the cost of holiday entitlements and time off in lieu earned by employees but not taken before the year-end. To ensure that the actual costs to the Council falls in the year in which they are paid a transfer is made to an Employee Benefit Reserve.

3(c) Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits. They are charged on an accrual basis at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the

Council recognises costs for a restructuring. Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund Balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, appropriations are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end.

3(d) Interest

Interest payable on external borrowings and interest receivable on investments is accrued and accounted for on a basis which reflects the costs and benefits of the treasury management activity during the period.

3(e) Supplies and Services

Supplies and services are accounted for in the period that they are consumed or received. Accruals are made for all material sums unpaid at year end for goods and services received or works completed. Where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and consumption, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.

3(f) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature within 3 months or less from the date of acquisition and are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change of value.

In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and form an integral part of the Council's cash management.

3(g) Debtors and Creditors

Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

Known uncollectable debt is written off with a charge being made to the Bad Debt Provision.

4. Acquired/Discontinued Operations

Income and expenditure relating to acquired or discontinued operations will be shown separately on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement under the heading of acquired/discontinued operations. Any liabilities in respect of discontinued operations will be disclosed separately in the notes to the Balance Sheet.

5. Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council a possible asset whose existence can only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council.

Contingent assets are not recognised on the Balance Sheet but by way of notes to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefit or service potential.

6. Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised on the Balance Sheet but disclosed by way of notes to the accounts.

7. The Collection Fund

The Council is required by statute to maintain a separate fund (i.e. The Collection Fund) for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates.

7(a) Council Tax Income

In its capacity as a billing authority the Council acts as an agent. It collects council tax income on behalf of the major preceptors (The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service) and itself.

7(b) National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)

As part of the Liverpool City Region Business Rate Retention Pilot Scheme the Council acts as an agent and collects National Non Domestic Rates on behalf Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and itself.

7(c) Accounting for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates

While the council tax and non-domestic rates income for the year credited to the Collection Fund is the accrued income for the year, regulations determine when it should be released from the Collection Fund and transferred to the General Fund. The amount credited to the General Fund under statute is the Council's demand for the year plus the Council's agreed share of the surplus (or less its share of the deficit) on the Collection Fund.

The difference between the income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the amount required to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account and included as a reconciling item in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

8. Events after the Reporting Period

Events after the Balance Sheet date are those events, both favourable and adverse, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Statement of Accounts are authorised for issue. Two types of events can be identified:

Those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events.

Those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts are not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

Events taking place after the date of authorisation are not reflected in the Statement of Accounts.

9. Financial Instruments

The Council invests and borrows money as part of its day to day business and Treasury Management Strategy. It is required to present on the balance sheet at fair value its outstanding financial obligations and assets in relation to these transactions. Assets exclude short term investments i.e. invested for periods of less than 3 months at inception and not due for repayment at balance sheet date. These investments are treated as cash equivalents due to their liquid nature.

The Council uses Link Asset Services to provide independent valuations of the position at the period end.

Link use the Net Present Value valuation technique to value borrowings. The discount rate used within the calculation is the Public Works Loans Board new borrowing rate.

9(a) Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. Financial liabilities due to be settled within 12 months of the Balance Sheet date , along with accrued interest on all financial liabilities is recorded as a current liability.

9(b) Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified into two types:

Loans and receivables – assets that have fixed or determinable payments but are not quoted in an active market.

Available-for-sale assets – assets that have a quoted market price and/or do not have fixed or determinable payments.

9(c) Loans and Receivables

Loans and receivables are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost.

10. Fair Value

The Council measures some of its assets and liabilities at fair value at the end of the reporting period. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either:

a) in the principal market for the asset or liability, or
b) in the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market for the asset or liability.

The Council measures the fair value of an asset or liability using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, assuming that market participants act in their economic best interest.

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the Council takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest or best use.

Inputs to the valuation techniques in respect of the Council's fair value measurement of its assets and liabilities are categorised within the fair value hierarchy as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the authority can access at the measurement date.
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability

11. Government Grants, Other Contributions and Donated Assets

Whether paid on account, by instalments or arrears, government grants and third party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Council when there is reasonable assurance that:

- The Council will comply with the conditions attached to the payments, and
- The grants or contributions will be received.

Amounts recognised as due to the Council are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential are required to be consumed by the Council as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

Monies advanced as grants or contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried on the Balance Sheet as creditors. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (attributable revenue grants and contributions) or Taxation and Non-specific Grant Income (non-ring-fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant is yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund expenditure.

12. Interest in Companies and Other Entities

The Council has an interest in subsidiaries, joint ventures and associated entities that would require it to prepare group accounts. As the transactions relating to group entities are not material, no group financial statements are being produced for the 2017/18 accounts.

The definition of materiality as per the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting is:

The relevance of information contained in the financial statements is affected by its nature and materiality. Omissions or misstatements of items are material if they could, individually or collectively, influence the decisions or assessments of users made on the basis of the financial statements. Materiality depends on the nature or size of the omission or misstatement judged in the surrounding circumstances. The nature or size of the item, or a combination of both, could be the determining factor. Therefore, materiality provides a threshold or cut-off point rather than a primary qualitative characteristic which information must have if it is to be useful. An authority need not comply with the Code, as to both disclosure and accounting principles, if the information is not material to the true and fair view of the financial statements and to the understanding of users.

In assessing the materiality of group entities an assessment has been undertaken of the following quantitative and qualitative factors:

Quantitative Factor

- The activities of group entities are not significant to the representation of the operational activities of the authority as a whole.
- Gross Value of the investments in gross entities are not significant in terms of the balance sheet of HBC.
- Gross Value of the borrowings or other liabilities of group entities are not significant to the balance sheet of HBC.
- An adjustment to usable reserves that would arise on consolidation would not be significant.

Qualitative Factor

- The authority does not depend significantly on group entities for continued provision of statutory services.

- There is no concern to which the Council has passed on control of its assets to other parties.
- There is no concern about the extent to which the Council is exposed to commercial risk.
- Not consolidating group entities does not mask significant trends.
- Grouping the accounts would not provide any more useful disclosures.

13. Intangible Assets

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the Council as a result of past events (e.g.: software licences) is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Council.

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held by the Council can be determined with reference to an active market. In practice, no intangible asset held by the Council meets these criteria, and they are therefore carried at amortised cost. The depreciable amount of any intangible asset is amortised over its useful live to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

14. Inventories

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

15. Leases

15(a) Finance Leases

Leases are classified as Finance Leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee.

Where a lease covers both land and buildings, the land and buildings elements are considered separately for classification.

Although the Code is not prescriptive it gives examples of situations which would lead to a lease being classified as a finance lease. These are:

1. The lease transfers ownership of the asset to the lessee by the end of the lease term
2. The lessee has the option to purchase the asset at a price that is expected to be sufficiently lower than the fair value so as to make it reasonably certain the option will be exercised
3. The lease term is for the major part of the economic life of the asset
4. The present value of the minimum lease payments amounts to at least substantially all of the fair value of the leased asset, and
5. The leased assets are of such a specialised nature that only the lessee can use them without major modifications.

Property, plant and equipment held under finance leases is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the leases inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Initial direct costs of the Council are added to the carrying amount of the asset. Premiums paid on entry into a lease are applied to writing down the lease liability. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Rental payments under finance leases are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding liability. The finance charge is allocated to the Finance and Investment Income line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Depreciation is charged to cost of services over the life of the asset. Any receipts are subject to the same test.

For the purposes of assessment of finance leases for plant, vehicles and equipment it is taken that consumption of greater than 75% of the economic life of the asset will constitute the major part of the economic life of the asset. There is also a de-minimis of £5,000 net present value of the future lease payments at the inception of the lease where the lease will not be treated as a finance lease.

15(b) Operating Leases

Operating leases are all leases which are not categorised as finance leases. Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to Net Cost of Services on a straight line basis over the term of the lease. Receipts are treated as revenue income.

16. Non-Current Assets, Property, Plant and Equipment

16(a) Recognition

Non-current assets are assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes and that are expected to be used during more than one financial year are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment.

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of a non-current asset is capitalised on an accruals basis. Expenditure is only capitalised when it adds to or extends, and not merely maintains the value of an existing asset.

16(b) Measurement

Acquired non-current assets are initially measured at cost, which includes costs that are directly attributable to bringing the asset into working condition for its intended use. Non-current assets acquired by finance lease are valued at discounted present value of future lease payments using PWLB rates for annuities at the date of acquisition. Whilst acquired infrastructure assets, vehicles, plant, equipment and community assets remain in the balance sheet at historical costs net of depreciation, other assets will be subject to periodic revaluation of no more than five years using the appropriate method for that class of asset.

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its fair value, unless the acquisition does not have commercial substance (ie it will not lead to a variation in the cash flows of the Council). Where an asset is acquired via an exchange, the cost of the acquisition is the carrying amount of the asset given up by the Council.

Assets are then carried on the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Infrastructure is measured on the basis of depreciated historic cost.
- Assets under construction are measured on the basis of historic cost.
- Community assets (assets that the Council intends to hold in perpetuity and have no determinable useful life) are valued at historic cost or a nominal value where the historic cost is not known.
- Surplus asset, investment properties and assets held for sale are based on their fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective. (See Policy 10 – Fair Value).
- All other assets are measured at current value which is determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use ("existing use value" – EUV).

Where there is no market-based evidence of fair value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value. For non-property assets (e.g. vehicles, plant and equipment) that have short useful lives or low values (or both) depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for current value.

Assets are subject to an annual impairment check. A proportion of the assets will be subject to revaluation each year to allow for the workload of revaluation to be more evenly spread and the balance sheet to be more accurate. Each asset will be re-valued on a 5 year cycle.

All assets are subject to an annual review to ensure valuations have not materially changed in the years they are not valued and that the carrying value is not significantly different to their fair value.

Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Exceptionally, gains might be credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services where they arise from the reversal of a loss previously charged to a service.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for by:

- Where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).
- Where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Council operates a de-minimis level of £35,000 at acquisition, in respect of land and property, and a qualified valuer certifies the valuation. In respect of vehicles, plant & equipment theses are carried at depreciated historic cost subject to an initial recognition de-minimis of £5,000.

16(c) Impairment

Assets are assessed at year end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated and, where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, the carrying amount of the asset is written down first against the accumulated gains in the revaluation reserve.

Where there is no longer a balance in the revaluation reserve to consume the loss, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

When an impairment loss is reversed, the reversal is credited to the relevant services lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss and adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had never been recognised.

16(d) Non-Current Assets Held for Sale

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered through the sale of a transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value at highest and best use, less costs to sell. Where there is a subsequent decrease to fair value less costs to sell, the loss is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previous losses recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

To be classified as held for sale an asset must meet all of the following criteria:

- The asset (or disposal group) must be available for immediate sale in its present condition subject to terms that are usual and customary for sales of such assets (or disposal groups).
- The sale must be highly probable; the appropriate level of management must be committed to a plan to sell the asset (or disposal group) and an active programme to locate a buyer and complete the plan must have been initiated.
- The asset (or disposal group) must be actively marketed for a sale at a price that is reasonable in relation to its current value.
- The sale should be expected to qualify for recognition as a completed sale within one year of the date of classification and action required to complete the plan should indicate that it is unlikely that significant changes to the plan will be made or that the plan will be withdrawn.

If assets no longer meet the criteria to be classified as assets held for sale, they are reclassified back to non-current assets and valued at the lower of carrying amount before they were classified as held for sale; adjusted for depreciation, amortisation or revaluations that would have been recognised had the asset not been classified as held for sale, and their recoverable amount at the date of the decision not to sell.

Receipts from the disposal of PPE assets greater than £10,000 are credited to the useable capital receipts reserve on an accruals basis. Lower amounts are treated as de-minimis and credited to the revenue account.

16(e) Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all assets with a finite useful life. The provision for depreciation is calculated by allocating the cost less any estimated residual value of the asset over its useful life. The useful lives of assets are estimated on a realistic basis and reviewed regularly, and where necessary revised.

The estimated useful lives of assets by class are as follows:

Buildings & Other Operational Properties	Up to 60 years
Infrastructure and Community Assets	15 years
Mersey Gateway Crossing	30 Years
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	3-10 years
Intangible Assets	5-10 years
Finance Leases – vehicles, plant and equipment	
of lease	3-10 years equal to length
Finance Leases – buildings	Up to 60 years

All assets are depreciated on a straight line basis, with depreciation commencing the year after acquisition. In exceptional circumstances, for example, if a particularly expensive asset is acquired with a short life expectancy, then a charge may be levied in the year of acquisition to ensure the charge to the service is more in line with the consumption of the asset.

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with an amount equal to the difference between current value depreciation charged on assets and the depreciation that would have been chargeable based on their historical cost being transferred each year from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

An exception to depreciation is made for assets without a determinable finite useful life (ie freehold land and certain community assets) and assets that are not yet available for use (ie assets under construction), these are not depreciated.

16(f) Charges to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

As defined in CIPFA's Service Reporting Code of Practice, each service is charged with a capital charge for the consumption of all assets used in the provision of the service. The charge is the annual provision for depreciation or impairment.

Finance costs (interest payable) are a direct charge to Financing and Investment Income within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, whilst repairs and maintenance are charged to the appropriate service revenue account.

16(g) Investment Property

Investment property is property (land or a building – or part of a building – or both) held solely to earn rentals or for capital appreciation or both, rather than for:

(a) Use in the production or supply of goods or services or for administrative purposes; or

(b) Sale in the ordinary course of operations.

Investment properties are initially measured at cost and subsequently at fair value, being the price that would be received to sell such an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. As a non-financial asset, investment properties are measured at highest and best use. Properties are not depreciated but revalued annually according to market conditions at the year end. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal.

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the Financing and Investment Income line and result in a gain to the General Fund balance. Revaluation and disposal gains and losses are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund balance. The gains and losses are reversed out of the General Fund in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000 the Capital Receipts Reserve).

16(h) Componentisation

The objective of component accounting is to follow proper accounting practice by ensuring that items of Property, Plant and Equipment are accurately and fairly included in the Balance Sheet and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Consumption of economic benefits should be properly reflected over the assets individual useful lives, through depreciation charges.

The overall value of an asset must be fairly apportioned over significant components, which need to be accounted for separately, with their useful lives and the method of depreciation being determined on a reasonable and consistent basis.

Having identified individual material assets or groups of similar assets with similar characteristics, each component part of an item of Property, Plant and Equipment with a cost that is significant in relation to the total cost of the asset shall be depreciated separately.

Once individual material assets and asset groups have been identified, items of Property, Plant and Equipment will be categorised as follows based on their significance, useful life and depreciation method:

Component	**Detail**
Superstructure and substructure	Frame, upper floors, roof, stairs, external walls, external windows and doors, internal walls and partitions, internal doors

Internal Finishes and Fittings	Wall, floor, ceiling finishes, fittings and furnishings
Services	Sanitary appliances, services equipment, disposal installations, water installations, heat source, space heating and air conditioning, ventilating systems, electrical installations, fuel installations, fire and lightening protection, communication and security installations, builders work in connection and management and commissioning of services
Land	Land upon which the property is constructed

The basis upon which the calculation of the value of components will be made is replacement cost. The actual split will be determined following individual valuation of the property.

Land is a separate component in its own right, but is not considered for deprecation purposes. Generally, land is considered to have an infinite life.

When an asset is enhanced or replaced, the cost of the replacement component is compared with the cost of the total asset. If the cost of the enhancement or replacement is above 15% or £35,000 of the overall cost of the asset, a proportion of the relevant component's carrying value is derecognised and replaced by the cost of the new replacement asset.

When an asset is acquired or re-valued, the cost of its component parts will be broken down into Superstructure and Substructure, Internal Finishes and Fittings and Services. Land will be identified as a separate component in its own right.

16(i) Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

- depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service
- revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off
- amortisation of intangible assets attributable to the service.

The Council does not raise council tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisations. However, the Council is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Council in accordance with statutory guidance.

Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisations are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund balance from Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

16(j) Schools (Land & Buildings)

Section 20 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 established the following categories of maintained schools in England and Wales:

(a) Community Schools
(b) Foundation Schools
(c) Voluntary Schools comprising Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled
(d) Community Special Schools, and
(e) Foundation Special Schools

In order to recognise a non-current school's asset on the Council's Balance Sheet, the Council has followed the recognition criteria of the Code and determined the extent to which the Council has control of the service potential associated with the schools assets.

The Council has concluded that a) Community Schools and d) Community Special Schools will form part of the Council's non-current Assets.

For all other schools the Council is merely using the non-current asset under licence. A licence passes no interest in the non-current asset to the Council and is always revocable, therefore these schools will not form part of the Council's non-current assets.

16(k) Accounting for Schools Transferring to Academy Status

The accounting standards on group accounts and consolidation mean all types of school are now considered to be entities controlled by the Council. When a school transfers to academy status this control is transferred to a third party. As a result the school as an entity needs to be derecognised in the Council's accounts by writing off the net assets of the school to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

17 Overheads and Support Services

The costs of overheads and support services are charged to those that benefit from the supply and service. The total absorption costing principal is used – the full cost of overheads and support services are shared between users in proportion to the benefits received.

18 Pension Costs

General

The cost of providing pensions for employees is charged in accordance with the requirements of IAS19 Retirement Benefits subject to the interpretation set out in the Code governing the pension schemes. The Council pays an employer's contribution to the Cheshire Pension Fund; Teachers' Pension Agency and National Health Service Pension Scheme.

Pensions Reserve

Where there is a difference between the amount charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year and the amount payable to the pension funds, that sum is taken to the Pension Reserve. This additional debit or credit to the services is shown as a reconciling item in the Movement in Reserves Statement within the Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under regulations note.

Classification of Schemes

Defined Benefit Schemes

Accounting policies set out as below apply in respect of pension costs arising from the Local Government Pension Scheme and unfunded discretionary benefits paid:

(i) The liabilities of the Cheshire Pension Fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – ie an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc, and projections of projected earnings for current employees.

(ii) Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate of 2.7%

(iii) The assets of Cheshire pension fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value

a. Quoted securities – current bid price
b. Unquoted securities – professional estimate
c. Unitised securities – current bid price
d. Property – market value

(iv) The change in the net pensions liabilities is analysed into the following components:

a. Service cost comprising:

i. Current services cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement of the services for which the employees worked

ii. Past service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of services earned in earlier years – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non Distributed Costs

iii. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), ie net interest expense for the authority – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of the contribution and benefit payments.

b. Remeasurements comprising:
i. The return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
ii. Actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their associations – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
c. Contribution paid to the Cheshire Pension Fund – cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities: not accounted for as an expense.

(v) In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provision require the General Fund Balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensions in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year end. The negative balance that arises on the Pension Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather that as benefits are earned by employees.

Defined Contribution Schemes

The arrangements for the Teacher's Pension Scheme and the NHS Pension Scheme means that liabilities for these benefits cannot ordinarily be specified by the Council. The scheme is therefore accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme and no liability for future payments or benefits is recognised on the Balance Sheet. The relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is charged with the Council's contributions payable to Teachers Pensions and NHS Pension Scheme in the year.

19 Pooled Budgets

Under Section 75 of the Health Act, the Council is able to establish joint working arrangements with NHS bodies and other Councils to pool funds from both organisations to create a single pot. Where pooled budgets are established, the Councils accounts reflect only the Councils share of the overall pot and exclude the share attributable to partner organisations.

20 Prior Period Adjustments

Prior period adjustments may arise as a result of a change in accounting policy or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimate are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment.

Changes in accounting policy are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of its transactions, other events and conditions on the financial position or performance. When a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

21 Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. Provisions are created by a charge to a service and as such appear in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the Cost of Services in the year the Council becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking account of risks and uncertainties. Where it becomes apparent that a lower settlement is anticipated than first thought, the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet.

22 Repurchase of Borrowing

Gains or losses arising on the repurchase or early settlement are charged in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the period during which the repurchase is made. If the repurchase was coupled with refinancing or restructuring, gains or losses are charged over the life of the replacement loan.

23 Reserves

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by apportioning amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from the reserve is incurred, it is charged to the apportionment service in that year to score against the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The reserve is then appropriated back in the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.

The Council maintains two kinds of reserve, Usable and Unusable Reserves.

Usable reserves comprise:

Usable Capital Receipts Reserve
General Fund Balance
Schools Balances
Earmarked Reserves
Capital Grants Unapplied

Unusable reserves comprise:

Revaluation Reserve
Available for sale Financial Instruments Reserve
Capital Adjustment Account
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account
Pensions Reserve
Collection Fund Adjustment Account
Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve
Employee Benefit Reserve

Usable reserves are available to fund expenditure, either revenue or capital incurred by the Council. Unusable reserves are not available to fund expenditure since they do not represent new resources available to the Council.

24 Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

Legislation allows some expenditure to be classified as capital for funding purposes when it does not result in the creation on a non-current asset on the Balance Sheet. Such expenditure is charged to the appropriate service account within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in accordance with the provisions of the Code.

Where the Council has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from existing capital resources or borrowing, a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses the amounts charged so that there is no impact on the Council Tax.

25 Senior Officers

The Council is required to disclose senior officers who are paid a salary of more than £150,000 by name. The requirement also extends to those officers whose salary is more than £50,000 and have a statutory role defined by legislation or is responsible for directing and controlling the day-to-day operations of the Council.

26 Service Concessions

PFI and similar contracts are agreements to receive services, where the responsibility for making available the property, plant and equipment needed to provide the services passes to the PFI contractor. As the Council is deemed to control the services that are provided under PFI schemes, and as ownership of the property, plant and equipment will pass to the Council at the end of the contracts for no additional charge, the Council carries the assets used under the contracts on its Balance Sheet as part of Property, Plant and Equipment.

The original recognition of these assets at fair value (based on the cost to purchase the property, plant and equipment) is balanced by the recognition of a liability for amounts due to the scheme operator to pay for the capital investment.

Non-current assets recognised on the Balance Sheet are re-valued and depreciated in the same way as property, plant and equipment owned by the Council.

The amounts payable to the PFI operators each year are analysed into five elements:

- Fair value of the services received during the year – debited to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
- Finance cost – an interest charge on the outstanding Balance Sheet liability, debited to the financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
- Contingent rent – increases in the amount to be paid for the property arising during the contract, debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
- Payment towards liability – applied to write down the Balance Sheet liability towards the PFI operator (the profile of write-downs is calculated using the same principles as for a finance lease)
- Life cycle replacement costs – where material, a proportion of the amounts payable is posted to the Balance Sheet as a prepayment and then recognised as additions to Property, Plant and Equipment when the relevant works are eventually carried out.

27 Value Added Tax

VAT is included in income and expenditure accounts, whether of a capital or revenue nature, only to the extent that it is irrecoverable from the HM Revenue and Customs.

28 Heritage Assets

Where applicable, heritage assets are measured at insurance valuation on the Balance Sheet.

Unlike other non-current assets depreciation is not required on heritage assets which have infinite useful lives. Similarly, impairment reviews are only required in limited circumstances, for example if a heritage asset has suffered breakage of physical deterioration.

29 Accounting Standards that have been issued but not yet adopted

Under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18 (the Code), the Council is required to disclose information setting out the impact of an accounting change required by a new accounting standard that has been issued but not yet adopted by the Code.

There are a number of accounting standards which will be adopted by the code in 2018/19. It is not anticipated these will have a material impact on the Council's financial statements.

30 Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

In applying the accounting policies set out in above, the Council has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

30(a) Future levels of funding

There is a continued high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government. The Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision.

30(b) Mersey Gateway Unitary Payments

On 13 October 2017 the Mersey Gateway Crossing opened. The project is funded through a mixture of capital payments from the Council and monthly unitary payments to Merseylink. Unitary payments cover the costs of construction of the bridge.

To calculate an initial valuation of the liability of future unitary payments the Council has estimated the present value of payments due using the Government Green Book cost of capital figure of 3.5%. The Green Book is used to appraise and evaluate large capital projects and to help support decision making. The carrying and fair value of the liability will be reduced on an annual basis in line with unitary payments.

31 Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Council about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made by taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because some balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2018 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

31(a) Property, Plant and Equipment

The carrying amount in the Balance Sheet at the 31 March 2018 is £1,103.6m, of which £643.8m relates to the Unitary Charge element of the Mersey Gateway Crossing

Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives of those assets. Ongoing maintenance for the Mersey Gateway Crossing is covered by unitary payments and therefore has no impact on the Council's on-going repairs and maintenance spending.

Excluding Mersey Gateway, if the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the asset falls. It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for buildings could increase between 10%-15% equating to an additional £2.26m to £3.39m for every year that useful lives had been reduced.

31(b) Pensions Liability

The carrying amount in the Balance Sheet at the 31 March 2018 is £98.5m

Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. Hymans Robertson LLP is engaged on behalf of the Council by Cheshire West and Chester Council to provide expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.

Glossary of Terms

For the purposes of the Code of Practice the following definitions have been adopted:

Accruals

The concept that income and expenditure are recognised as they are earned or incurred, not as money is received or paid.

Accounting Policies

Those principals, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an entity that specify how the effects of transactions and other events are to be reflected in its financial statements through:

(a) Recognising;
(b) Selecting and measurement bases for; and
(c) Presenting.

Assets, liabilities, gains, losses and changes to reserves.

Accounting policies do not include estimation techniques.

Accounting policies define the process whereby transactions and other events are reflected in financial statements. For example, an accounting policy for a particular type of expenditure may specify whether an asset or a loss is to be recognised; the basis on which it is to be measured; and where in the Income and Expenditure account or Balance Sheet it is to be presented.

Acquired Operations

Operations comprise services and divisions of service as defined in SerCOP. Acquired operations are those operations of the Council that are acquired in the period.

Actuarial Gains and Losses

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the changes in actuarial deficits or surpluses that arise because:

(a) Events have not coincided with the actuarial assumptions made for the last valuation (experience gains and losses); or

(b) The actuarial assumptions have changed.

Capital Expenditure

Expenditure on the acquisition of a non-current asset or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing non-current asset.

Class of Non-Current Assets

The classes of non-current assets required to be included in the accounting statements are:

Property, Plant and Equipment:

- Other land and buildings
- Vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment
- Infrastructure assets
- Community assets
- Assets under construction
- Surplus assets

Other classes of assets:

- Investment properties
- Assets held for sale
- Heritage assets

Community Assets

Assets that the Council intends to hold in perpetuity, that have no determinable useful life, and that may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings.

Consistency

The concept that the accounting treatment of like items within an accounting period and from one period to the next are the same.

Constructive Obligation

An obligation that derives from a Council's actions where:

(a) By an established pattern of past practice, published policies or a sufficiently specific current statement, the Council has indicated to other parties that it will accept certain responsibilities; and
(b) As a result, the Council has created a valid expectation on the part of those other parties that it will discharge those responsibilities.

Contingent Asset

A contingent asset is a possible asset arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Local Authority's control.

Contribution

A contribution may be received from a partner to help perform a particular function (i.e. PCT and third sector in health/education, S106 developers etc…)

Contingent Liability

A contingency liability is either:

(a) A possible obligation arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control; or
(b) A present obligation arising from past events where it is not probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Corporate and Democratic Core

The corporate and democratic core comprises all activities which Local Authorities engage in specifically because they are elected multi-purpose Authorities. The cost of these activities are thus over and above those which would be incurred by a series of independent, single purpose, nominated bodies managing the same services. There is therefore no basis for apportioning these costs over or across services.

Current Service Cost (Pensions)

The increase in the present value of a defined benefit scheme's liabilities expected to arise from employee service in the current period.

Curtailment

For a defined benefit scheme, an event that reduces the expected years of future service of present employees or reduces for a number of employees the accrual of defined benefits for some or all of their future service. Curtailments include:

(a) Termination of employees' services earlier than expected, for example as a result of closing a factory or discontinuing a segment of a business; and
(b) Termination of, or amendment to the terms of, a defined benefit scheme so that some or all future service by current employees will no longer qualify for benefits or will qualify only for reduced benefits.

Deferred Charges

Expenditure which may properly be deferred, but which does not result in, or remain matched with, tangible assets. Examples of deferred charges are expenditure on items such as improvement grants and the expenses of private acts.

Defined Benefit Scheme

A pension or other retirement benefit scheme other than a defined contribution scheme. Usually, the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable, and the benefits are not directly related to the investments of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded (including notionally funded).

Defined Contribution Scheme

A pension other retirement benefit scheme into which an employer pays regular contributions fixed as an amount or as percentage of pay and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the scheme does not have sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Depreciation

The measure of cost or revalued amount of the benefits of the non-current asset that have been consumed during the period.

Consumption includes the wearing out, using up or other reduction in the useful life of a non-current asset whether arising from use, effluxion of time or obsolescence through either changes in technology or demand for the goods or services produced by the asset.

Discontinued Operations

Operations comprise services and divisions of service as defined in CIPFA's Standard Classification of Income and Expenditure. An operation should be classified as discontinued if all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The termination of the operation is completed either in the period before the earlier of three months after the commencement of the subsequent period and the date on which the financial statements are approved;
(b) The activities related to the operation have ceased permanently;
(c) The termination of the operation has a material effect on the nature and focus of the Local Authority's operations and represents a material reduction in its provision of services resulting either from its withdrawal from a particular activity (whether a service of division of service or its provision in a specific geographical area) or from a material reduction in net expenditure in the Local Authority's continuing operations;
(d) The assets, liabilities, income and expenditure of operations and activities are clearly distinguishable physically, operationally and for financial reporting purposes

Operations not satisfying all the conditions are classified as continuing.

Discretionary Benefits

Retirement benefits which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award which are awarded under the Council's discretionary powers, such as The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996, the Local Government (Discretionary Payments and Injury Benefits) (Scotland) Regulations 1998, or the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Estimation Techniques

The methods adopted by an entity to arrive at estimated monetary amounts, corresponding to the measurement bases selected, for assets, liabilities, gains losses and changes to reserves.

Estimation techniques implement the measurement aspects of accounting policies. An accounting policy will specify the basis on which an item is to be measured; where there is uncertainty over the monetary amount corresponding to that basis, the amount will be arrived at by using an estimation technique. Estimation techniques include, for example:

(a) Methods of depreciation, such as straight-line and reducing balance, applied in the context of a particular measurement basis, used to estimate the proportion of the economic benefits of a tangible non-current asset consumed in a period
(b) Different methods used to estimate the proportion of debts that will not be recovered, particularly where such methods consider a population as a whole rather than individual balances.

Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Those events, both favourable and unfavourable, which occur between the balance sheet date and the date on which the Statement of Accounts is signed by the responsible financial officer.

Exceptional Items

Material items which derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the Council and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give a fair presentation of the accounts.

Exit Packages

Exit packages are defined as amounts payable as a result of either an employer's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date, or an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits. Exit packages also include enhancement of retirement benefits, when an employee retires early without actuarial reduction of pension.

Expected Rate of Return on Pensions Assets

For a funded defined benefit scheme, the average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

Extraordinary Items

Material items, possessing a high degree of abnormality, which derive from events or transactions that fall outside the ordinary activities of the Council and which are not expected to recur. They do not include exceptional items nor do they include prior period items merely because they relate to a prior period.

Fair Value

The fair value of an asset is the price at which it could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction less, where applicable, any grants receivable towards the purchase of use of the asset.

Finance Lease

A finance lease is one where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment form the lessor to the lessee. A lease would be classified as finance lease if:

- The lease transfers ownership of the asset to the lessee by the end of the lease term.
- The lessee has the option to purchase the asset at a price that is expected to be sufficiently lower than the fair value so as to make it reasonably certain the option will be exercised.
- The lease term is for the major part of the economic life of the asset.
- The present value of minimum lease payments amounts to at least substantially all of the fair value of the leased asset.
- The leased assets are of such a specialised nature that only the lessee can use them without major modifications.

Notwithstanding the fact that the lease meets the definitions above, the presumption that an asset should be classified as a finance lease may in exceptional circumstances be rebutted if it can be clearly demonstrated that the lease in question does not transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership (other than legal title) to the lessee.

Going Concern

The concept that the Council will remain in operational existence for the foreseeable future, in particular that the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet assume no intention to curtail significantly the scale of the operations.

Government Grants

Assistance by Government and Inter-Government Agencies and similar bodies, whether local, national or international, in the form of cash or transfers of assets to a Council in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Council.

Heritage Assets

Heritage Assets are assets that have historical, artistic, scientific, technological, geophysical or environmental qualities. Examples of heritage assets held by the Council include civic regalia, paintings and artefacts.

Impairment

A reduction in the value of a non-current asset below its carrying amount on the Balance Sheet.

Infrastructure Assets

Non-current assets that are inalienable, expenditure on which is recoverable only by continued use if the asset created. Examples of infrastructure assets are highways and footpaths.

Interest Cost (Pensions)

For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period of present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

Inventories

The amount of unused or unconsumed stocks held in exception of future use. Comprise the following categories:

(a) goods or other assets purchased for re-sale;
(b) consumable stores;
(c) raw materials and components purchased for incorporation into products for sale;
(d) products and services in intermediate stages of completion;
(e) long-term contact balances; and
(f) finished goods.

Investments (Non-Pensions Fund)

A long-term investment is an investment that is intended to be held for use on a continuing basis in the activities of the Council. Investments should be classified only where an intention to hold the investment for the long term can clearly be demonstrated or where there are restrictions as to the investor’s ability to dispose of the investment.

Investments, other than those in relation to the pensions fund, that do not meet the above criteria should be classified as current assets.

Investments (Pensions Fund)

The investments of the Pensions Fund will be accounted for in the statements of that Fund. However, councils are also required to disclose, as part of the transitional disclosures relating to retirement benefits, the attributable share of the pension scheme assets associated with their underlying obligations.

Investments Properties

Interest in land and/or buildings:

(a) In respect of which construction work and development have been completed; and
(b) Which is held for its investment potential, and rental income being negotiated at arm’s length.

Liquid Resources

Current asset investments that are readily disposable by the Council without disrupting its business and are either readily convertible to known amounts of cash or close to the carrying amount, or traded in an active market.

Long-Term Contracts

A contract entered into for the design, manufacture or construction of a single substantial asset or the provision of a service (or a combination of assets or services which together constitute a single project), where the time taken substantially to complete the contract is such that the contract activity falls into different accounting periods. Some contracts with a shorter duration than one year should be accounted for as long-term contracts if they are sufficiently material to the activity of the period.

Net Book Value

The amount at which non-current assets are included in the balance sheet, i.e. their historical cost or current value less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation.

Net Current Replacement Cost

The cost of replacing or recreating the particular asset in its existing condition and in its existing use, i.e. the cost of replacement or of the nearest equivalent asset, adjusted to reflect the current condition of the existing asset.

Net Debt

The Council's borrowings less cash and liquid resources. Where cash and liquid resources exceed borrowings, reference should be to net funds rather than debt.

Net Realisable Value

The open market value of the asset in its existing use (or open market value in case of non-operational assets), less the expenses to be incurred in realising the asset.

Operating Lease

A lease other than a finance lease.

Past Service Cost

For a defined benefit scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities related to employee service in prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvements to, retirement benefits.

Prior Period Adjustments

Those material adjustments applicable to prior years arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of fundamental errors. A fundamental error is one that is of such significance as to destroy the validity of the financial statements. They do not include normal recurring corrections or adjustments of accounting estimates made in prior years.

Projected Unit Method

An accrued benefits valuation method in which the scheme liabilities make allowance for projected earnings. An accrued benefit valuation method is a valuation method in which the scheme liabilities at the valuation date relate to:

(a) The benefits for pensioners and deferred pensioners (i.e. individuals who have ceased to be active members but are entitled to benefits payable at a later date) and their dependants, allowing where appropriate for future increases; and
(b) The accrued benefits for members in service on the valuation date.

The accrued benefits are the benefits for service up to a given point in time, whether vested rights or not. Guidance on the projected unit method is given in the Guidance Note GN26 issued by the Faculty and Institute of Actuaries.

Related Parties

Two or more parties are related parties when at any time during the financial period:

(a) A party has direct or indirect control of the other party; or
(b) The parties are subject to common control from the same source; or
(c) One party has influence over the financial and operational policies of the other party to an extent that the other party might be inhibited from pursuing at all times its own separate interests; or
(d) The parties, in entering a transaction, are subject to influence from the same source to such an extent that one of the parties to the transaction has subordinated its own separate interest.

Examples of related parties of a Council include:

(a) Central government;
(b) Local authorities and other bodies precepting or levying demands on the Council Tax;
(c) Its subsidiary and associated companies;
(d) Its joint ventures and joint ventures partners;
(e) Its members
(f) Its chief officers; and
(g) Its pension fund.

Examples of related parties of a pension fund include its:

(a) Administering authority and its related parties
(b) Scheduled bodies and their related parties; and
(c) Trustees and advisors

This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

For individuals identified as related parties, the following are also presumed to be related parties:

(a) Members of the close family, or the same household; and

(b) Partnerships, companies, trusts or other entities in which the individual, or a member of their close family or the same household, has a controlling interest.

A related party transaction is the transfer of assets or liabilities or the performance of services by, to or for a related party irrespective of whether a charge is made. Examples of related party transactions include:

(a) The purchase, sale, lease rental or hire of assets between related parties;
(b) The provision by a pension fund to a related party of assets of loans, irrespective of any direct economic benefit to the pension fund;
(c) The provision of a guarantee to a third party in relation to a liability or obligation of a related party;
(d) The provision of services to a related party, including the provision of pension fund administration services;
(e) Transactions with individuals who are related parties of the Council or a pension fund, except those applicable to other members of the community or the pension fund, such as council tax, rents and repayments of benefits.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

The materiality of related party transactions should be judged not only in terms of their significance to the Council, but also in relation to its related party.

Remuneration

All sums paid to or receivable by an employee and sums due by way of expenses allowances and the money value of any other benefits received other than in cash. Pension contributions payable by the employee are excluded.

Residual Value

The net realisable value of an asset at the end of its useful life. Residual values are based on prices prevailing at the date of acquisition (or revaluation) of the asset and do not take account of expected future prices.

Retirement Benefits

All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after completion of employment. Retirement benefits do not include termination benefits payable as a result of either (i) an employer's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date, or (ii) an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits, because these are not given in exchange for services rendered by employees.

Scheme Liabilities

The liabilities of a defined benefit scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured using the projected unit method reflect the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

Settlement

An irrevocable action that relieves the employee (or the defined benefit scheme) of the primary responsibility for a pension obligation and eliminates significant risks relating to the obligation and the assets used to effect the settlement. Settlements include:

(a) A lump-sum cash payment to scheme members in exchange for their rights to receive specified pension benefits;
(b) The purchase of an irrevocable annuity contract sufficient to cover vested benefits; and
(c) The transfer of scheme assets and liabilities relating to a group of employees leaving the scheme.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy.

Total Cost

The total cost of a service or activity includes all costs which relate to the provision of the service (directly or bought in) or to the undertaking of the activity. Gross total cost includes employee costs, expenditure relating to premises and transport, supplies and services, third party payments, transfer payments, support services and capital charges. This includes an appropriate share of all support services and overheads, which need to be apportioned.

Useful Life

The period over which the Council will derive benefits from the use of a non-current asset.

Vested Rights

In relation to a defined benefit scheme, these are:

(a) For active members, benefits to which they would unconditionally be entitled on leaving the scheme;
(b) For deferred pensioners, their preserved benefits;
(c) For pensioners, pensions to which they are entitled.

Vested rights include where appropriate the related benefits for spouses or other dependants.

Agenda Item 5

REPORT TO:	Business Efficiency Board
DATE:	25 July 2018
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources
SUBJECT:	Draft Annual Governance Statement - 2017/18
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

Local authorities are required to produce an annual statement of corporate governance. This statement is a public document and is available on the Council's website.

This report presents the Council's draft 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement (AGS). It reflects changes to structures, governance procedures and policies since the 2016/17 AGS and also highlights the governance issues the Council is facing in the current financial year.

The format of the statement has been amended slightly from last year's document to better reflect the 2016 best practice guidance issued by CIPFA / Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board is asked to consider and approve the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement subject to any changes or additions that Members feel appropriate.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework, published by the CIPFA / SOLACE, sets the standard for local authority governance in the UK. The Council's draft AGS for 2017/18 has been developed with reference to this guidance and is attached as an appendix to this report.

3.2 The AGS provides an overview of the governance framework in place for 2017/18 and up to the date the accounts are signed off by the Council's external auditor. A key aspect of the statement is the identification of any areas where the Council's governance arrangements need to be developed and to provide a commitment to addressing those issues.

3.3 The process followed in producing the AGS was the same as in previous years being led by a group of officers who have key roles in the maintenance and development of the Council's governance framework:

- Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community & Resources
- Operational Director - Finance

- Operational Director - Legal & Democratic Services
- Divisional Manager - Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance

3.6 In producing the draft AGS consideration has been given to various sources of assurance over the Council's governance arrangements. Consideration has also been given to identifying any areas where these arrangements require further development.

3.7 The Council's Constitution delegates the responsibility to review and approve the AGS to the Business Efficiency Board. Once approved, the AGS is signed by the Council Leader and Chief Executive and is published on the Council's website.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Local authorities have a legal responsibility to conduct, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of their governance framework including their system of internal control (Regulation 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015). Following the review an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) must be produced, approved and published.

4.2 The powers and duties of the Business Efficiency Board include responsibility for considering the Council's corporate governance arrangements and agreeing necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice. The AGS provides a commitment to address the governance challenges identified by the Council.

4.3 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, although the AGS makes reference to the key financial challenges faced by the Council.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Good governance leads to good management, good performance and good stewardship of public money. It therefore enables the Council to implement its vision in accordance with its values and to engage effectively with its citizens and service users and ensure good outcomes for them.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

See 5.1 above

5.3 A Healthy Halton

See 5.1 above

5.4 A Safer Halton

See 5.1 above

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

See 5.1 above

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The AGS provides assurance that the Council has a sound system of risk management, control and governance. The document provides a public statement of how the Council directs and controls its functions and relates to its community.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

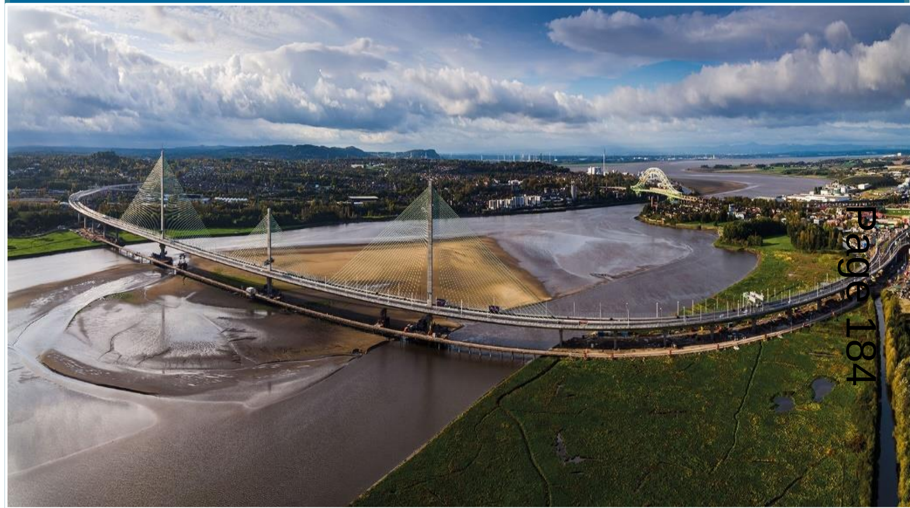
7.1 The Council has to have regard to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and harassment and the promotion of equality under the Equalities Act 2010 and related statutes. Proper governance arrangements will ensure that equality and diversity issues are appropriately addressed.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact
CIPFA / SOLACE – Delivering good governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)	Kingsway House, Widnes	Merv Murphy
CIPFA / SOLACE - Delivering good governance in Local Government: Guidance note for English authorities (2016)		

2017/18

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT



What is Governance?

Governance is about how we ensure that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. Good governance leads to:

- effective leadership
- good management
- good performance
- good stewardship of public money
- good public engagement, and
- good outcomes for our citizens and service users.

The governance framework comprises the culture, values, systems and processes by which an organisation is directed and controlled. The framework brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, good practice principles and management processes.

Halton Borough Council acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance. The Council has developed a Local Code of Corporate Governance that defines the principles that underpin the governance of the organisation. The Local Code forms part of the Council Constitution and can be accessed on the Council's website.

The Council's governance framework aims to ensure that in conducting its business it:

- Operates in a lawful, open, inclusive and honest manner;
- Makes sure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively;
- Has effective arrangements for the management of risk;
- Secures continuous improvements in the way that it operates.

What is the Annual Governance Statement?

The Council is required by the Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 to prepare and publish an annual governance statement. This is a public document that reports on the extent to which the Council complies with its own code of governance.

In this document the Council:

- Acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance;
- Summarises the key elements of the governance framework and the roles of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- Describes how the Council has monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes in the coming period;
- Provides details of how the Council has responded to any issue(s) identified in last year's governance statement;
- Reports on any significant governance issues identified from this review and provides a commitment to addressing them.

The annual governance statement reports on the governance framework that has been in place at Halton Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2018 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

How has the Annual Governance Statement been prepared?

The initial review of the Council's governance framework was carried out by a group of officers. This group comprised:

- **The Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources**

  This post is designated as the Council's Statutory Scrutiny Officer as required under Section 31 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

  This role involves promoting and supporting the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

- **The Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services**

  This post is designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by paragraph 24 of schedule 5 Local Government Act 2000.

  The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring that that the Council acts and operates within the law.

- **The Operational Director – Finance**

  This post is designated as the s151 Officer appointed under the 1972 Local Government Act.

  The Operational Director – Finance is the Council's Chief Financial Officer and carries overall responsibility for the financial administration of the Council.

- **The Divisional Manager – Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance**

  This post is responsible for the Council's internal audit arrangements, including the development of the internal audit strategy and annual plan and providing an annual audit opinion on the Council's governance, risk management and control processes.

In preparing the annual governance statement the Council has:

- Reviewed the Council's existing governance arrangements against its Local Code of Corporate Governance;
- Identified any areas where the Local Code of Corporate Governance needs to be updated to reflect changes in the Council's governance arrangements and best practice guidance;
- Assessed the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and highlighted any planned changes in the coming period.

Management Team, which is chaired by the Chief Executive, has also reviewed the annual governance statement and considered the significant governance issues facing the Council.

The Business Efficiency Board, which is designated as the Council's Audit Committee, provides assurance to the Council on the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control environment. As part of this role the Board reviews and approves the annual governance statement.

What are the key elements of the Council's Governance Framework?

The Council aims to achieve good standards of governance by adhering to the following key principles set out in the best practice guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016':

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits;
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
- Developing the Council's capacity, including capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management;
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The following pages provide a summary of key elements of the Council's governance framework and how they relate to these principles.

Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:
• Behaving with integrity • Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values • Respecting the rule of law	• The Council has a Constitution that sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed to ensure that these are efficient, proportionate, transparent and accountable. The Constitution was reviewed and updated in May 2017. • The Council has a Standards Committee with co-opted independent members. The role of the Committee is to promote high standards of member conduct. No matters were brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer during the year which required formal investigation. • Elected members follow a Code of Conduct to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. The Monitoring Officer provides training to new elected members on the Code of Conduct. • Officer behaviour is governed by the Employees' Code of Conduct. All new employees attending the corporate induction process were made aware of the Code. • Roles and responsibilities relating to the Council's executive and non-executive functions are defined in the Council's Constitution. Decisions and actions taken during the year were made in accordance with these arrangements providing clear accountability. • The Council takes fraud, corruption and maladministration seriously and has established a suite of policies and processes which aim to prevent or deal with such occurrences. Key elements of the suite of policies and processes were updated during the year and approved by the Business Efficiency Board. The Board also received an annual report on the Council's counter fraud and corruption arrangements. • A corporate complaints procedure operated throughout the year to receive and respond to any complaints received. • Arrangements exist to ensure that members and officers are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders. These include: - Registers of disclosable pecuniary interests were maintained - Registers of gifts and hospitality were maintained - Opportunities to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and disclosable other interests were provided at the start of meetings • The Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services provided legal advice to the Council as the Council's Monitoring Officer. One of the key functions of that role is to ensure the lawfulness and fairness of decision-making.

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:
• Openness • Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders • Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively	• Information on the Council's performance, finances and the democratic running of the Council is routinely published on the Council's website. The Council also fully complies with the reporting requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. • The Council engages with key partners and institutional stakeholders in various ways. Formal partnerships include the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Safer Halton Partnership and the Children's Trust. The Council's management team also holds a joint monthly meeting with the management team of Halton Clinical Commissioning Group. • The Care and Quality Commission (CQC) completed a Local System Review (LSR) of Health and Social Care in Halton in 2017. The Council worked collaboratively with its statutory partners, and with support from Social Care Institute for Excellence, to develop an associated Action Plan to respond to the issues highlighted within the report. • The Health and Wellbeing Board provides a key forum for public accountability of the NHS, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Public Health and other commissioned services relating to the wider determinants of health in Halton. During the year the Terms of Reference for the Board were updated and its membership widened to include GP Federations. • Engagement with citizens and service users is carried out using a variety of methods, including a range of survey techniques (online, paper, face to face) and sampling techniques. The Council also uses qualitative techniques, such as focus and discussion groups. During 2017/18 the Council consulted on a range of issues, which included: - Widnes Market opening days and times - Social care assessment feedback - The Direct Payments scheme - Intermediate care - The visitor economy (attractions that people visit in Halton) - Children's Centre timetable - Halton Direct Link (Contact Centre / One Stop Shop) - Food expenditure, eating habits and affordability of eating • In setting its budget the Council listens to the views of the public and the experience of elected members through their ward work. Individual consultations took place in respect of specific budget proposals and equality impact assessments were completed where necessary.

Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:
• Defining outcomes • Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits	• The long-term vision for Halton is set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, which defines the Council's priorities and how it hopes to achieve them. It also explains the Council's values and principles. • The Council's Corporate Planning Framework provides the means by which the Council's activities are developed and monitored. Quarterly performance monitoring reports were produced during the year recording progress against key business plan objectives and targets. These were reported to the Council's Management Team, to the Executive Board and to the Policy and Performance Boards. • Directorate and Departmental Business Plans were produced for 2017/18 that described key developments and emerging issues relating to each department of the Council. The plans formally set out key objectives, milestones and measures for each business area. • The Executive Board approved the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy at its meeting on 16 November 2017. The Strategy had the following objectives: - Deliver a balanced and sustainable budget - Prioritise spending towards the Council's five priority areas - Avoid excessive Council Tax rises - Achieve significant cashable efficiency gains - Protect essential front line services - Deliver improved procurement • The Council routinely publishes information on the Council's vision, strategy, plans, finances and performance on its website and in the Council newspaper that is distributed to all households in the borough.

Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:
• Determining interventions • Planning interventions • Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	• The Council's Corporate Planning Framework in operation during the year provided the means by which the Council's activities were developed and monitored. • There is a well-established overview and scrutiny framework with six Policy and Performance Boards (PPBs) aligned to the Council's six corporate plan priorities. Throughout the year they held the Executive to account, scrutinised performance and developed policy proposals for consideration by the Executive. • Quarterly performance monitoring reports were produced throughout the year recording progress against key business plan objectives and targets. These reports were presented to the Council's Management Team, to the Executive Board and to the Policy and Performance Boards. • The Council operates a corporate complaints procedure and specific complaints procedures for Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, schools and complaints relating to elected members. These procedures allow the Council to identify areas where things may have gone wrong and to put them right and prevent them from happening again. • The Council aims to ensure that the purchase or commissioning of goods, services or works required to deliver services is acquired under Best Value terms. The Council's procurement activity is undertaken in line with the Council's Procurement Strategy and within clearly defined rules set out in Procurement Standing Orders. • The Council's internal audit team carries out a comprehensive programme of audits each year reviewing the Council's front line and support services. The implementation of recommendations arising from this work assists the Council in identifying and managing risks that may impact on the achievement of outcomes. • A second road crossing over the River Mersey was a long held aspiration of the Council. After successful lobbying over many years a project to deliver a new six-lane toll bridge between Runcorn and Widnes was approved by Government in 2010. In October 2017 the new Mersey Gateway crossing opened on schedule. This has relieved the congested Silver Jubilee Bridge and removed constraints on local and regional development by providing a much improved transport infrastructure.

Developing the Council's capacity, including capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES

- Developing capacity
- Developing leadership
- Developing the capability of individuals

EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:

- The Council retained the NW Charter for Elected Member Development Exemplar Level status.
- Newly elected members attend a two-day induction programme with follow-up mentoring.
- Elected members were also provided with the opportunity for an annual review to identify their development requirements, which are set out in a Member Action Plan.
- A comprehensive elected member development programme provided a wide range of learning and development opportunities.
- Members of the Business Efficiency Board received regular training throughout the year to assist them in their role as the Council's Audit Committee.
- The Council's Organisational Development Strategy (2016 – 2020), includes an Organisational Development Charter. The Strategy confirms the Council's commitment to the ethos that, by underpinning everything the Council does, its workforce will be part of the solution to providing excellent services.
- The Council operates ongoing processes to identify the personal development needs of employees. The information gained from these processes is used to inform the design of the corporate training programme and to source specialised professional training.
- The Council's Learning & Development Team offers continuous leadership development through its accreditation with the Institute for Leadership & Management (ILM). Specific qualifications have been delivered during 2017/18, such as Level 3, Level 5 and Level 7 in Leadership and Management and Level 3 in Coaching. As a result, 51 employees continue to develop specific skills and knowledge regarding leadership and gain recognised qualifications.
- The Council provides 1-1 coaching to support leaders, managers and employees to maximise potential and enhance performance. During 2017/18, 13 leaders have taken advantage of 1-1 coaching to focus on improving their leadership capabilities.
- The Council offer its employees the opportunity to apply for funding to support their academic development that is linked to the Council's priorities thereby increasing individual capacity and supporting succession planning. During 2017/18, the Council supported 19 employees to gain a variety of academic qualifications, such as Masters Degrees, BA Degrees and Diplomas.

Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:
• Managing risk • Managing performance • Robust Internal Control • Managing data • Strong Public Financial Management	• The Council provides decision-makers with full and timely access to relevant information. The executive report template requires information to be provided explaining the policy, financial and risk implications of decisions, as well as implications for each of the corporate priorities and any equality and diversity implications. • The Council has embedded risk management arrangements. Directorate and corporate risk registers outline the key risks faced by the Council, including their impact and likelihood, along with the relevant mitigating controls and actions. The risk registers are also used to inform the internal audit planning process. • The Council has a well-established Audit Committee (the Business Efficiency Board), which met regularly during 2017/18. The Board has clearly defined responsibilities and provides oversight and challenge in regard to the Council's governance, risk management, audit, procurement and counter fraud and corruption arrangements. • The Council has a Head of Internal Audit and a continuous internal audit service, which was assessed during the year as conforming to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Internal audit plays a key role in reviewing and improving the effectiveness of the Council's risk management, governance and control arrangements. • During 2017/18 the Council commenced an extensive project to ensure that it was in a position to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This included engaging with all departments of the Council, providing a series of awareness raising sessions for key officers and regular updates to all staff and elected members. • The Council's External Auditor provided an unqualified opinion on the 2016/17 accounts and reported their findings to the Business Efficiency Board in September 2017. They also completed a review of the overall control environment relevant to the preparation of the Council's financial statements and concluded that their work had identified no material weaknesses. • Despite significant funding reductions and increasing demand for services the Council managed to set a balanced budget for 2018/19 via a robust process led by the Members' Budget Working Group. Outturn spending was marginally higher than the 2017/18 revenue budget, primarily due to continuing pressures within Children's and Adult Social Care. The position was monitored throughout the year through reports to Management Team, the relevant Policy and Performance Boards and Executive Board.

Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLES OF HOW WE DID THIS IN 2017/18:
• Implementing good practice in transparency • Implementing good practice in reporting • Assurance and effective accountability	• The Council fully complies with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and publishes a wide range of information on its website. This includes details of meetings, minutes and agendas, policies and plans, the Council Constitution, the Statement of Accounts, details of members' allowances and expenses, details of senior staff pay, contract awards, and details of land and building assets. • The Council operates clear and effective processes for dealing with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Subject Access Requests (SAR). • All Council meetings are open and can be attended by members of the public with the exception of those where confidential or personal matters may be disclosed. • The Council's external auditor provides an annual assessment on how well the Council is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people. In September 2017, the external auditor concluded that the Council had proper arrangements in all significant respects to ensure it delivered value for money in its use of resources. • The Council has developed robust procedures to respond positively to the findings and recommendations of external auditors and statutory inspectors. Action plans are developed in response to external inspections and their implementation monitored. • The Council has established various ongoing arrangements that provide effective assurance. These include the work of internal audit, the Council's risk and performance management arrangements, the work of the Information Governance Group, the work of the Policy and Performance Boards and the work of the Standards Committee. • The Council operates a whistleblowing procedure and has well-publicised arrangements for employees and the wider community to raise any concerns.

What are the roles of those responsible for developing and maintaining the Governance Framework?

Council	- Approves the Corporate Plan - Approves the Constitution - Approves the policy and budgetary framework
Executive Board	- The main decision-making body of the Council - Comprises ten members who have responsibility for particular portfolios
Business Efficiency Board	- Designated as the Council's Audit Committee - Provides assurance to the Council on the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, risk management framework, procurement strategy and internal control environment.
Standards Committee	- Promotes high standards of member conduct - Assists members and co-opted members to observe the Council's Member Code of Conduct
Policy & Performance Boards	- There are six Policy & Performance Boards aligned to the Council's six Corporate Plan priorities - They hold the Executive to account, scrutinise performance and develop policy proposals for consideration by the Executive
Management Team	- Implements the policy and budgetary framework set by the Council and provides advice to the Executive Board and the Council on the development of future policy and budgetary issues
Internal Audit	- Provides assurance over the Council's governance, risk management and control framework - Delivers an annual programme of audits - Makes recommendations for improvements in the management of risk and value for money
Managers	- Responsible for maintaining and developing the Council's governance and control framework - Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council

How does the Council monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its governance arrangements?

The Council annually reviews the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The key sources of assurance that inform this review are outlined below:

Internal Audit

- Annual opinion report
- Internal audit reports

External Audit

- Financial statements audit
- Value For Money conclusion

Information Governance

- Information Governance Annual Report

Counter Fraud Arrangements

- Whistleblowing arrangements
- Annual report on Fraud and Corruption

Risk Management

- Corporate Risk Register Progress Reports

Complaints

- Corporate complaints procedure
- Ombudsman investigations

External Reviews

- External reviews from various regulators and inspectorates

Monitoring Officer

- Legal and Regulatory Assurance

Section 151 Officer

- Financial Controls Assurance

Overview & Scrutiny

- Performance monitoring
- Policy development and review

How has the Council addressed the governance issues from 2016/17?

The 2016/17 annual governance statement contained two key governance issues. Details of these issues and how they were addressed are provided below:

What the issue was:

Funding

The Council continued to face significant funding reductions whilst facing increasing demand for Council services. It was forecast that the Council would need to identify £10m in savings to be able to set a balanced budget for 2018/19.

In light of these financial pressures, a key challenge for the Council was to maintain capacity and robust governance arrangements so that it could continue to deliver its corporate objectives and strategic priorities in 2018/19 and beyond.

What we did:

Despite significant funding constraints and increasing demand for services, resulting in the need to make significant budget savings, the Council managed to set a balanced budget for 2018/19.

Throughout 2017/18, reports to Management Team, Policy and Performance Boards and Executive Board highlighted forecasts that by year-end spending may have been up to £3.5m above budget. Action was therefore implemented across the Council to restrict spending wherever possible to absolutely essential items only. This resulted in actual spending being only £1m above budget by year-end.

Given the Council's challenging financial position during the year, it has been essential to maintain sufficient capacity within support services such as Finance, Legal, ICT, Administration, Property and HR to ensure that correct procedures continue to be followed and that adequate control is maintained over the Council's financial and non-financial resources.

This has also assisted with supporting a robust governance framework and enabled the Council to continue to deliver its corporate objectives and strategic priorities. During 2017/18 a prime example was the delivery, on schedule, of the Mersey Gateway bridge project, along with the remainder of the approved Capital Programme.

What the issue was:

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

The Mayoral Combined Authority adopted its revised Constitution that put in place the governance arrangements required to deliver its original powers and duties, together with its new powers and duties which have arisen through the Devolution Deal.

It was recognised that it would be important for Halton's Members and Officers to be fully conversant with those powers and duties to ensure that Halton benefits from being within the LCR arrangements.

It was also recognised that it would be important to ensure that the Council retained the capacity to fulfil its role within the LCR, which may in turn mean reviewing some of its own priorities.

What we did:

The Council has continued to take a proactive role with the Liverpool City Region Mayoral Combined Authority. It has Elected Member representation on all key bodies and officer representation on all key advisory groups. The Leader of the Council holds the LCR Portfolio for "Energy and Renewables" and the Chief Executive is the Lead Chief Executive on a number of key issues.

When necessary, reports have been taken to Halton's Policy and Performance Boards in relation to LCR policy matters to ensure that Halton's interests are reflected within these areas. Examples include reports on the LCR's work on the visitor economy and culture and inward investment.

What the issue was:

Cyber Resilience

The Council recognised that cyber-attacks were becoming both more frequent and more sophisticated and that the impact of a cyber-attack could be significant in terms of potential disruption to the delivery of vital services. A cyber-attack could also result in substantial response costs, reputational harm, and potential litigation and fines should there be any resulting data breaches.

The Council acknowledged that an increasingly important element of its governance arrangements is the framework of standards, processes and activities that, collectively, secure the organisation against cyber risk. The Council therefore committed to continue to review and strengthen its IT governance framework in response to the rapidly evolving risks in this area.

What we did:

As part of the legislative compliance requirements under the Public Services Network Security compliance plan, the Council's ICT provision, its networks and physical security measures are externally audited for compliance on an annual basis.

In response to the well-publicised email based attacks across the world the Council has commissioned its external security auditors to carry out regular social engineering attacks. The purpose of these attacks is to gauge the levels of training required for the user base and to establish the time requirements for the removal of the attack once implemented.

Technology based security can and will block the vast majority of the thousands of attacks the Council receives per day. However, social engineering, by its very nature, is directed toward the user who will click on a suspect email and enter key security identifiers such as their user name and password. It is acknowledged that no technical solution can defeat this kind of attack vector. Technology will limit the impact of any successful attack but user training remains a key factor.

Users within the Council are constantly reminded of the dangers of such attacks through email correspondence initiated by the IT Service Desk. Key IT policies and user guidelines are regularly updated and published. All policies are available to all employees with a links embedded on all user desktop screens to the HBC ICT Policies and ICT Security Policies.

What are the significant governance issues from 2017/18?

The review of the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework has identified the following significant issues to be addressed during 2018/19.

Issue	Lead Officer	Timescale
<u>Funding</u> The Council continues to face significant funding reductions whilst demand for Council services is increasing. The Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts that the Council will need to identify £9m of budget savings in order to set a balanced budget for 2019/20. In light of these financial pressures, a key challenge for the Council is to maintain sufficient front-line and support service capacity and robust governance arrangements in order to continue to deliver its corporate objectives and strategic priorities for 2019/20 and beyond.	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources	Ongoing
<u>Liverpool City Region Combined Authority</u> It will remain important for the Council to ensure that it continues to play a proactive role within the City Region. It will need to review and influence LCR policy ensuring that Halton's interests are well represented. It will also need to review, comment and decide on its position in relation to any further developing devolution 'asks' of City Region as they emerge. It will remain important to be fully engaged in the development of future LCR policies.	Chief Executive	Ongoing

Issue	Lead Officer	Timescale
<u>Local Code of Corporate Governance</u> The Council recognises that the guidance document 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016' defines the principles that should underpin the governance of each local government organisation. In producing the 2017/18 annual governance statement the Council has reviewed its governance arrangements against the core and sub-principles contained within that Framework. This process has identified the need for the Council to update its Local Code of Corporate Governance to better demonstrate that its governance structures comply with the core and sub-principles contained in the Framework. The Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance forms part of the Council Constitution. It will therefore be updated as part of the 2018/19 review of the Constitution.	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources	March 2019

Certification

We have been advised on the implications of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by the Business Efficiency Board. The review provides good overall assurance that the Council's arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

Specific opportunities to maintain or develop the Council's governance arrangements have been identified through this review. We pledge our commitment to addressing these issues over the coming year and we will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed on behalf of Halton Borough Council:

David Parr - Chief Executive

Rob Polhill - Leader of the Council

REPORT TO:	Business Efficiency Board
DATE:	25 July 2018
REPORTING OFFICER:	Divisional Manager – Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Internal Audit Annual Report – 2017/18
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require the Head of Internal Audit to deliver an annual audit opinion and report, which can be used to inform the Annual Governance Statement.

1.2 This report summarises the work of internal audit during 2017/18 and presents the Head of Internal Audit's opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's overall risk management, control and governance processes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board considers and approves the Internal Audit Annual report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 This report is presented to the Business Efficiency Board for information and provides one of the sources of assurance that underpins the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

3.2 The Internal Audit Annual Report (attached as a separate appendix) provides an overall opinion on the Council's risk management, control and governance processes. The report also includes details of the evidence base supporting the overall opinion.

3.3 Summary details of the audit assignments and the 'follow-up' audit assignments completed in the year are also provided.

3.4 Based upon the work completed in the year, internal audit has been able to conclude that the Council continues to maintain adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes.

3.5 It is a requirement of PSIAS that the Internal Audit Annual Report provides details of the internal audit 'Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme' (QAIP). The purpose of a QAIP is to enable an evaluation of the internal audit activity's conformance with professional standards and an evaluation of whether internal auditors apply the Code of Ethics. The programme also assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal audit activity and identifies opportunities for improvement.

3.6 The results of the QAIP provide assurance that internal audit activity has been undertaken in 2017/18 in accordance with the relevant professional standards.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Under Regulation 6 of the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015, the Council 'must undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control'. This responsibility is delegated to the Operational Director – Finance.

4.2 There are no direct policy implications arising from this report. However, the Head of Internal Audit's opinion on the Council's risk management, control and governance processes is one of the key sources of assurance that supports the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

4.3 The internal audit work carried out during the year provides assurance that the Council's main financial systems are operating effectively.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Internal audit provides assurance over the Council's risk management, control and governance processes, which help to support the achievement of the aims and objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

See 5.1

5.3 A Healthy Halton

See 5.1

5.4 A Safer Halton

See 5.1

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

See 5.1

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Internal Audit adopts a risk based approach to its work and provides assurance over the Council's key business risks. In the course of its work, internal audit raises issues which have risk implications for the Council. The regular internal audit progress reports to the Business

Efficiency Board summarise these issues and provides details of the actions agreed with management to mitigate any risks identified.

There are no direct risk implications arising from this report.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact
Internal Audit Plan 2017/18 Internal Audit reports Public Sector Internal Audit Standards Local Government Application Note for the UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards	1st Floor, Kingsway House, Kingsway, Widnes	Merv Murphy

Internal Audit Annual Report

Business Efficiency Board - 25 July 2018

2017/18

Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

In accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, the Head of Internal Audit is required to provide an annual opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes. This is achieved through delivering a risk-based plan of work (the Internal Audit Plan), which has been agreed with management and approved by the Business Efficiency Board.

The opinion does not imply that internal audit has reviewed all risks and assurances relating to the organisation. However, the Head of Internal Audit's opinion forms one of the sources of assurance that underpins the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

1.2 Overall assurance

In providing an opinion it should be noted that assurance can never be absolute. The work of internal audit can only provide reasonable assurance that there are no major weaknesses in the Council's risk management, control and governance processes.

The opinion provided is based on the work completed by internal audit and reported to the Business Efficiency Board. It must be noted that there may be weaknesses in the Council's systems of internal control that have not been identified if they did not form part of the programme of audit work completed or were excluded from the scope of individual internal audit assignments.

1.3 Opinion

In the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit, the Council continues to maintain adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes.

There has been positive engagement with management in agreeing recommendations where weaknesses in the design or application of controls were identified. Action plans are in place to address all issues identified during the year.

The results of the follow up audits completed during the year provide substantial assurance that agreed actions in response to audit reports are actually implemented.

Basis of the opinion

2.1 Planned coverage and output

Internal audit delivered 991 of the 1,151 planned days of audit work during 2017/18. The level of audit coverage achieved was less than originally planned for two main reasons. Firstly, a member of the team took an extended period of unpaid leave, which could not have been anticipated when the Plan was produced. Secondly, a significant amount of time was used to provide management support to the investigations function, which transferred into the Audit team in July 2017.

To mitigate the reduction in staffing resource the Business Efficiency Board agreed to defer the following reviews and include them in the 2018/19 Audit Plan:

- Learning & Development
- Apprenticeships
- Plant, machinery and work equipment
- Halton People Into Jobs
- Governance framework
- Tele-healthcare

The audit work completed during the year is considered sufficient and wide-ranging enough to allow a confident and evidence-based annual audit opinion.

2.2 Summary of work supporting the opinion

The audit work undertaken that forms the basis of the opinion includes:

- Assessment of the design and operation of the Council's governance framework and the Local Code of Corporate Governance and supporting processes;
- Review of the Council's risk management arrangements and overall assurance framework;
- Assessment of the range of audit opinions arising from risk-based audit assignments that have been reported to the Business Efficiency Board throughout the year. This assessment has taken account of the relative materiality of each area audited.
- Assessment of management's responses to audit recommendations and the progress made in addressing risks and issues identified through audit work.

Basis of the opinion

2.3 Audit assignments completed

A full list of the audit assignments that have helped inform the opinion is provided in Appendix A. Each audit is graded in terms of how well risks were managed in the area under review. Three different assurance levels are used: substantial, adequate and limited. Definitions of the assurance levels are provided in Appendix C.

55 audit reports were finalised and reported to the Board:

- 35 areas received substantial assurance opinions;
- 18 areas received adequate assurance opinions;
- Two audits received limited assurance opinions.

The two audits that received limited assurance opinions are not considered to be sufficiently significant or material to impact on the overall opinion on the Council's risk management, control and governance processes.

2.4 Follow-up audit assignments completed

16 'follow-up' audit assignments were completed during the year and are listed in Appendix B. These audits examine the progress that management has made in implementing previously agreed audit recommendations. A revised assurance opinion is issued for each 'follow up' audit, which is informed by the extent to which the issues identified in the original audit report have been addressed. The opinions issued are summarised below:

- 15 areas received substantial assurance opinions;
- One area received an adequate assurance opinion.

2.5 Limitations placed on internal audit

During the year, there have been no matters arising which have impacted on the independence of the internal audit service and there have been no inappropriate scope or resource limitations on internal audit work.

As previously reported to the Board, the Head of Internal Audit also has managerial responsibility for a number of other finance functions. Arrangements to safeguard the independence of internal audit have been established and were agreed by the Business Efficiency Board in June 2017. These arrangements have operated effectively throughout the year.

Basis of the opinion

During 2017/18, the following audits were completed on areas which are managed by the Head of Internal Audit:

- Accounts Payable
- Bank Mandates
- Adult Social Care Charges
- Accounts Receivable
- Income Control

Terms of reference for each of these audits were agreed with the Operational Director – Finance who approved the scope of the audit. Similarly, the draft report for each audit was shared with the Operational Director – Finance at the same time as being presented to Head of Internal Audit for review. This ensured that there was no opportunity for the suppression of any audit findings.

2.6 Conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

Under PSIAS, internal audit services are required to have an external quality assessment every five years. The Council's external assessment was completed during 2017/18 and the overall conclusion was that the Council's internal audit arrangements substantially conform to the standards. The full external assessment report was presented to the Business Efficiency Board at its meeting in February 2018.

2.7 Quality Assurance

Internal Audit operates a Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP) to ensure that it maintains consistently high standards. Key elements of the quality assurance arrangements are described below:

- The internal audit team is made up of appropriately trained and qualified staff with significant local government experience. The majority of the team are members of professional institutes and comply with ethical rules, technical standards and professional practice laid down by those bodies.

- Internal audit work is based upon a detailed risk-based audit plan, which is agreed in consultation with management and is approved by the Business Efficiency Board;

- Internal audit employs an audit methodology that is in accordance with professional standards;

Basis of the opinion

- Terms of reference are agreed with management for each audit assignment to ensure stakeholder “buy in” and involvement;
- Robust management review is undertaken of all audit files and reports prior to issue;
- There is a system of regular reporting of progress against the plan to the Business Efficiency Board;
- All internal audit staff complete annual declarations confirming their compliance with the Code of Ethics;
- There is a commitment to the continuing professional development of all internal audit staff through a range of learning and development opportunities. These include professional training, on the job training, e-learning and attendance at relevant training events and workshops. During 2017/18 two members of the internal audit team qualified as accredited counter fraud investigators.
- Internal Audit invites feedback on the quality of service provided by issuing a ‘satisfaction questionnaire’ at the end of each audit. 41 surveys were completed and returned since 1 April 2018, which is a very high response rate. The feedback received was extremely positive and indicated an overall satisfaction level of 95%. There were no common themes in the questionnaires returned that highlighted any particular areas for improvement.

  A sample of comments received through the questionnaires is included below:

  - *“The auditor was very thorough in his questioning and had clearly spent time to understand the finer points of GDPR. The audit report greatly assists the Council in understanding what we have done and still need to do.”*
  - *“Always a positive experience with helpful and knowledgeable staff that support and offer challenge to the processes.”*
  - *“Very good communication and support throughout the process. We worked together to ensure we focused on key areas and to help the auditor understand our business. It was good to have somebody impartial looking through our processes and procedures. We have been able to work with the auditor to improve service delivery/financial controls.”*
  - *“We found the audit a useful experience particularly as it was the first one for our Business Manager. Areas highlighted for development were fair.”*

Basis of the opinion

- *"The timing of the audit was particularly helpful as it enabled us to focus our attention on implementing the bank's new arrangements for managing bank mandates. The Auditor kept me informed of the findings throughout the process which enabled any queries to be resolved along the way. Good communication throughout the process. Additionally, the auditor provided a useful recommendation around linking up with HR information for leavers which we have implemented and is working well."*
- *"Many thanks for the help and development that has been given to us throughout the process."*
- *"A comprehensive and effective audit."*
- *"Kept well informed at all stages of the audit and discussions took place over the practicality of the recommendations."*
- *"The auditor had a really good grasp of the service area. I was kept involved at every step. Good, practical recommendations which we can deliver."*
- *"Our Auditor was very informative and supportive."*
- *"The audit report was clear and concise about what was required and there was very little disruption to the team during the audit. It helped that the auditor had a good understanding of the business."*
- *"The auditor demonstrated a sound understanding of the system and our processes and we are happy with the time taken to complete the review."*
- *"This audit has helped to identify specific risks which involve a number of services within the Council; with the use of the report and recommendations I hope this can be taken forward and the risks reduced. Thank you."*
- *"The auditor was extremely thorough but also fair and approachable. She was also a good listener, taking on board any issues discussed."*

Basis of the opinion

- *"It was a very thorough audit of what is a very complex subject matter. The auditor very quickly got an understanding of the processes and identified the key areas. I was involved at all stages of the process and kept up to date with progress. The auditor identified the key issues and some that had not been considered previously."*

- *"Very clear and supportive process."*

Appendix A

Summary of audit assignments

A summary of the audit assignments completed in the year is set out below showing the assurance ratings and the number and priority of recommendations. The audits are grouped according to the Business Efficiency Board meeting at which they were presented:

27 September 2017

Assignment		Assurance Rating	Recommendations made		
			High	Medium	Low
1.	Support to Care Leavers	Substantial	0	1	5
2.	Subject Access Requests (SARs)	Adequate	2	1	0
3.	Accounts Payable	Substantial	0	0	1
4.	Apprenticeship Hub	Adequate	0	1	0
5.	Troubled Families Grant Claim	Substantial	0	0	0
6.	Atlantis Grant Claim	Substantial	0	0	0
7.	Farnworth CE Primary School	Substantial	0	2	1
8.	Brookvale Primary School	Adequate	0	6	2
9.	Chesnut Lodge Primary School	Adequate	0	4	2
10.	Astmoor Primary School	Substantial	0	1	1
11.	St. Mary's Primary School	Substantial	0	1	2
12.	Fairfield Primary School	Substantial	0	0	2
13.	Ditton Primary School	Adequate	0	5	4

Summary of audit assignments

22 November 2017

Assignment		Assurance Rating	Recommendations made		
			High	Medium	Low
14.	St Chad's Catholic & Church of England High School	Limited	3	5	2
15.	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	Adequate	1	6	0
16.	Bus Subsidy Ring-Fenced (Revenue) Grant	Substantial	0	0	0
17.	Local Growth Fund Grant Claim Quarter 2 - Silver Jubilee Bridge	Substantial	0	0	0
18.	Moore Primary School	Substantial	0	1	1
19.	Payroll	Substantial	0	2	4
20.	Supporting People	Substantial	0	0	3
21.	Bank Mandates	Substantial	0	1	1
22.	Troubled Families Grant Claim	Substantial	0	0	0
23.	Local Growth Fund STEP Grant Claims - Quarter 2	Substantial	0	0	0

Summary of audit assignments

7 February 2018

Assignment		Assurance Rating	Recommendations made		
			High	Medium	Low
24.	Brookfields School	Adequate	0	4	3
25.	Runcorn All Saints Primary School	Adequate	0	1	5
26.	Murdishaw West Primary School	Substantial	0	0	1
27.	Gypsy Traveller Sites	Limited	4	4	0
28.	The Brindley Theatre	Adequate	0	5	2
29.	Local Growth Fund Grant Claim Quarter 3 - Silver Jubilee Bridge	Substantial	0	0	0
30.	Bankline Payments System	Substantial	0	0	3
31.	Adult Social Care Charges	Adequate	0	2	2
32.	Trading Standards	Adequate	0	2	2
33.	Local Growth Fund STEP Grant Claim	Substantial	0	0	0

Appendix A

Summary of audit assignments

25 July 2018

Assignment		Assurance Rating	Recommendations made		
			High	Medium	Low
34.	Alternative Day Services	Adequate	1	3	3
35.	Troubled Families Grant Claim	Substantial	0	0	0
36.	Mersey Gateway Regeneration Plan – Governance Arrangements	Substantial	0	1	2
37.	Accounting Journal Transfers	Substantial	0	0	0
38.	Accounts Receivable	Substantial	0	0	0
39.	Council Tax	Substantial	0	0	2
40.	Fees & Charges	Adequate	0	4	0
41.	Non-Operational Property Assets	Adequate	0	3	1
42.	Hale CEVC Primary School	Substantial	0	0	0
43.	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour RC Primary School	Adequate	0	3	1
44.	The Holy Spirit RC Primary School	Adequate	0	2	4
45.	All Saints Upton CE Primary School	Adequate	0	5	4
46.	STEP Grant – Quarter 4 2017/18	Substantial	0	0	0
47.	Silver Jubilee Bridge (Stream 1 Funding) Grant - Quarter 4 2017/18	Substantial	0	0	0
48.	Silver Jubilee Bridge (Stream 2 Funding) Grant - Quarter 4 2017/18	Substantial	0	0	0
49.	Troubled Families Grant (May 2018)	Substantial	0	0	0
50.	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction	Substantial	0	2	0
51.	Business Rates	Substantial	0	0	2
52.	Governance Framework	Substantial	0	1	0
53.	Income Control	Substantial	0	1	1
54.	Leisure Centres	Adequate	0	2	6
55.	General Data Protection Regulation	Substantial	0	1	1

Summary of follow-up audit assignments

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require the 'chief audit executive' to establish a follow-up process to monitor and ensure that management actions have been effectively implemented or that senior management has accepted the risk of not taking action. This process involves internal audit carrying out work to determine the progress that management has made in implementing recommendations previously agreed. A follow-up audit report is then issued summarising the results of this work.

Each follow-up audit provides an overall assurance opinion, which is based on the extent to which the risks identified in the original audit have been addressed. The following table summarises the results of the follow-up assignments completed during the year:

Assignment		Assurance Rating	Status of agreed actions			
			Implemented	Ongoing	Outstanding	No longer relevant
27 September 2017						
1.	St. Clement's Catholic Primary School	Substantial	6	2	1	0
2.	Foster Care & Special Guardianship Allowances	Substantial	3	2	0	0
3.	Free Early Years Entitlement Funding	Substantial	3	2	0	0
4.	School Meals Service	Substantial	5	2	0	0
5.	Performance Reporting	Substantial	6	0	0	0
22 November 2017						
6.	Children with Disabilities (Short Breaks)	Substantial	2	3	0	0
7.	Out of Borough and Independent Placements	Adequate	3	3	1	0
8.	Public Health	Substantial	6	0	0	0
9.	Health Improvement Team	Substantial	7	0	0	0
25 July 2018						
10.	Matrix Agency Contract	Substantial	5	2	0	0
11.	Cash Security - Ashley Green Residential Housing	Substantial	3	1	0	0
12.	Halton Apprentice Hub	Substantial	1	0	0	0

Summary of follow-up audit assignments

	Assignment	Assurance Rating	Status of agreed actions			
			Implemented	Ongoing	Outstanding	No longer relevant
13.	St. Martin's Catholic Primary School	Substantial	8	0	0	0
14.	Subject Access Requests	Substantial	2	1	0	0
15.	Saints Peter & Paul Catholic College	Substantial	8	4	0	0
16.	Halton Heritage Partnership: Working Lives Project	Substantial	3	0	0	0

Appendix C:

Assurance Level Definitions

Conclusions from Audit Findings	*Assurance Level*	
Improvements in procedures and controls are required to strengthen the management of risk(s) fundamental or material to the activities reviewed.		**Limited**
In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks to the activities reviewed. However, some opportunities were identified to improvement the management of some risks.		**Adequate**
Effective procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks to the activities reviewed.		**Substantial**

 Agenda Item 7

REPORT TO:	Business Efficiency Board
DATE:	25 July 2018
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Enterprise Community & Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Corporate Risk Register 2018/19
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To report on the reviewed and updated Corporate Risk Register for 2018/19.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

1) the progress of actions are noted;

2) the Board review the robustness of the Corporate Risk Register and the adequacy of the associated risk management arrangements; and

3) the Board make such recommendations to the Executive Board as is necessary and appropriate.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The report contains a progress commentary on the corporate risks for this year.

3.2 The Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage both internal and external risks as a key component of good corporate governance.

3.3 Risk is defined as being the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk Management is defined as the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled.

3.4 At Directorate level arrangements are in place for the high-risk mitigation measures on the Directorate Risk Registers to be reviewed and updated at mid-year in line with Directorate Business Plans. Progress on these is reported to Management Team and

Policy and Performance Boards.

3.5 Together with consultation with internal stakeholders, Directorate Risk Registers are central to any reviews and updates of the Corporate Risk Register. This ensures that the council maximises its opportunities whilst minimising and controlling the associated risks in delivering the council's vision and services for Halton.

3.6 The Risk Control Measures have been reviewed and updated in line with current changes within the Authority and as proposed by managers and internal stakeholders.

3.7 The risks have been grouped in order of priority and the scores relate to 'Unmitigated Risk Scores' and then to 'Mitigated Risk Scores'. As a result once the mitigation measures have been implemented, it reduces the scores and highlights the remaining 'Residual Risk Scores'.

3.8 In particular the risks have been reprioritised so that people, i.e. the community and staff, take priority. The headings and scores in order of priority are:

i. Delivery of Services to Vulnerable Adults (16:12);

ii. Safeguarding Children and Adults (16:12);

iii. Capacity and Resilience (16:12);

iv. Budget Reductions (16:12);

v. Making Halton Community Safe (12:8)

vi. Changes to Government Arrangements (16:8);

vii. Mersey Gateway (12:8);

viii. Community Expectations (12:6);

ix. Partnerships (12:4);

x. Fraud (9:6); and

xi. Funding and Income Generation (9:4).

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 To provide a framework through which effectively manages the actual and potential opportunities and threats that may affect the achievement of the Council's strategic priorities and operational objectives.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency**

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Failure to review and monitor the performance of the Corporate Risk Management could result in service development opportunities being lost and existing service delivery being compromised.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Within the risk register there are a number of implications for Equality and Diversity issues, e.g. Budget Reductions and Capacity and Resilience.

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

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Corporate Risk Register

Lead Strategic Director:	**Ian Leivesley**
Risk Management Coordinator:	**Tony Dean**
Initial Register Completion Date:	**November 2011**
Register Review Date:	**March 2018**
Progress update:	

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DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO VULNERABLE ADULTS

Item	Identified risk	Impact (*Severity*)	Likelihood (*Probability*)	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
1	Failure to deliver quality services to vulnerable adults could negatively affect their health and wellbeing	4	4	**16**	A Healthy Halton / A Safer Halton

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact (*Severity*)	Likelihood (*Probability*)	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Effectively allocating and using available finances and resources in the delivery of services • Integration of Health and Social Care with a view to improving the outcomes for people using the services • Transformation of provider markets so that responsive and sustainable markets in adult social care can be developed and supported • Delivery of prevention and early intervention to vulnerable adults • Effective use of alternative funding streams and community assets	4	3	**12**	6 monthly	Strategic Director - People (Milorad Vasic)

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Item	Identified risk	Impact (*Severity*)	Likelihood (*Probability*)	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
2	Failure to support and protect children and adults could adversely impact on their health, safety and opportunity to reach their potential	4	4	**16**	A Healthy Halton / Employment, Learning and Skills / Children and Young People / A Safer Halton

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact (*Severity*)	Likelihood (*Probability*)	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Halton's Children's and Adult's Safeguarding Boards fully operational with appropriate resources and are operating within statutory guidance and towards identified priorities • Representatives from the Children's and Adult's Safeguarding Boards to work in partnership through attending corresponding boards • Children's and Adult's Safeguarding Board's to work with strategic groups within the Borough to ensure accountability and effectiveness of safeguarding • Services regularly audit Children's and Adult's cases for quality and consistency of practices • Comprehensive suite of performance reports for Children's and Adult's are reviewed at least monthly and compared with regional and national benchmarks	4	3	12	6 monthly	Strategic Director - People (Milorad Vasic)

• Progress reports for Children's and Adult's are taken to the Board and Members for their attention • Adults Safeguarding board has been restructured with view to enhancing representation, participation and, ultimately, information sharing with partner agencies and stakeholders • In order to provide a multi-agency response to the needs of children at risk of or being sexually exploited, multi agency team initiated overseen by project board • Improving the health and wellbeing of children and adults through early intervention and treatment services delivered in house and externally via a range of providers and partners					

CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE

Item	Identified risk	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
3	Inability of the Council to sustain the delivery of services and respond to emergency situations in line with Council Priorities as a result of the impact of budget cuts	4	4	**16**	Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Maintaining a supportive working environment through shared service organisational ethos, pride and value across Members, staff, management, Unions and partners • Focusing delivery of performance on the council's corporate vision and key strategic priorities leading to a clearly understood and shared set of priorities • Emphasis on management and leadership standards with recognition of the challenges faced by the Authority leading to managers who are able to direct, inform, develop and support staff • Maintaining a workforce that are skilled, informed, flexible and competent in order to ensure that they deliver efficient and effective services	4	3	**12**	6 monthly	All Strategic Directors

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BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Item	Identified risk	Impact[1] *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
4	A significant reduction in the Council's funding from Government grant and/or locally raised business rates/council tax, leads to an inability to deliver the Council's key service priorities, especially those services essential for the support of the most vulnerable members of the community	4	4	**16**	Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Financial Planning is undertaken to compare available financial resources with spending requirements over the medium term (3 years), resulting in preparation of the Medium Term Financial Strategy which allows overall budget gaps to be identified at an early stage and appropriate plans put in place to tackle them • Effective Business Planning to ensure that appropriate resources are directed towards the Councils key strategic priorities • Budget setting is aligned to the annual Business Planning Cycle in order to ensure that the value of financial resources are maximised • Budget Risk Register works in conjunction with the Budget Setting Cycle to ensure that emerging budget risks are identified together	4	3	12	6 monthly	Strategic Director - Enterprise Community Resources (Ian Leivesley)

[1] For scoring mechanism see Appendix 'A'

with relevant mitigating measures • Exploring the potential for collaboration with neighbouring Local Authorities • Developing iterative processes to ensure that opportunities for partnership working are explored and, where appropriate, embraced					

MAKING HALTON COMMUNITY SAFE

Item	Identified risk	Impact[2] *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
5	A failure to monitor and appropriately manage the risks created by global, national and local events, and how these might impact on local community tensions, could potentially lead to a threat to security and have an adverse effect on the stability of Halton's communities.	4	3	**12**	A Healthy Halton / Environment and Regeneration / A Safer Halton

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• The Safer Halton Partnership (SHP) involves joint working, clear communications and information sharing across partner agencies, including emergency services, and assists to implement the Sustainable Community Strategy to ensure that there is community cohesion with safe and secure neighbourhood environments • Multi agency Community Safety team that addresses anti-social behaviour and crime thus supporting the SHP agenda • The Chanel Panel is a multi-agency group which provides support for those who are vulnerable to be drawn into terrorism through a programme of early intervention and diversion • Emergency Planning team have developed and tested multi-agency	4	2	**8**	6 monthly	Chief Executive (David Parr)

[2] For scoring mechanism see Appendix 'A'

plans in place for all risks within the borough that assist in the response • To respond to 'Major Accident' at Upper Tier COMAH sites; Emergency Planning Officers have tested and validated Emergency Plans • Emergency Planning Team work in partnership with the Cheshire Resilience Forum to provide an integrated approach for dealing with emergencies across Cheshire. • Critical Incident Management procedures, including 'lockdown', have been developed, communicated and tested for Council buildings and schools • Security surveys conducted for main council buildings and schools					

CHANGES TO GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Item	Identified risk	Impact (*Severity*)	Likelihood (*Probability*)	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
6	Changes to Government arrangements and other public sector organisations could potentially lead to a deterioration of local services	4	4	**16**	A Healthy Halton / Employment, learning and skills / Children and Young People / A Safer Halton / Corporate effectiveness and business efficiency

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact (*Severity*)	Likelihood (*Probability*)	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Ensuring that both Members and officers from the Council plays an active role in the Combined Authority for the Liverpool City Region • The potential impact on resources of schools moving to Academy status is being monitored through early engagement to gain an understanding of the level of risk	4	2	**8**	6 monthly	Chief Executive (David Parr)

MERSEY GATEWAY

Item	Identified risk	Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
7	Lack of effective management of and adherence to governance arrangements / contractual requirements or disrupted journeys could lead to increased project costs. In addition these could also lead to adverse publicity and reputational risks to the Council	4	3	**12**	Environment and Regeneration / Employment, Learning and Skills

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
Demand Management Participation Agreement (DMPA) • Base line is realistic and achievable • Agreed contract is designed to incentivise an increase in volumes of traffic • Mersey Gateway Crossings Board has a role in managing the DMPA • Effective publicity around speed and reliability of bridge Tolling Risk • In order to mitigate the risk of the project not delivering sufficient toll revenue each year to meet project costs, a liquidity reserve of £19m has been established jointly by the Department for Transport and	4	2	**8**	6 monthly	Strategic Director - Enterprise Community Resources (Ian Leivesley)

Halton Borough Council (through borrowing funded from future toll revenues). If necessary the reserve will be topped-up periodically by undertaking further borrowing. <u>Conclusion of Construction Phase to Subsequent Operating Phase</u> • Dedicated company (Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd) now established, with suitably experienced staff and directors, both Executive and Non-executive, and supported by class leading professional advisers. The relationship between Council and MGCB is detailed within a Governance Agreement • Routine project assurance monitored through external bodies including specialist non-executive directors and advisers on the Board of Directors of MGCB, external Gateway Reviews (4Ps) Department for Transport and HM Treasury scrutiny at specific project milestones • Delivery within the Funding Framework agreed with Government that is reviewed at regular intervals and managed through the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board's Risk Register, which is reviewed regularly by both the Audit Committee and the Board of Directors • Maintenance of effective relationships with Government Departments (as co funders for MG) maintained by both Department for Transport and HM Treasury being represented on the Board of Directors of MGCB					

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Item	Identified risk	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
8	Failure to effectively realise community expectations could lead to damage to the Authorities reputation and credibility resulting in negative views towards the transparency of the decision making process	4	3	**12**	Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Consultation and community engagement embedded in the partnership constitution • Utilising recognised mediums to identify, communicate and coordinate community expectations and priorities. These include: Surveys; Customer analysis; On line services including consultation finder; Local and social media; Target consultation exercises for specific projects; Engagement through the activities of the specialist Strategic Partnerships; Service user groups;	3	2	**6**	6 monthly	All Strategic Directors

Elected member surgeries; and Other meetings • Conducting Equality Impact Assessments with new and revised Policies • Honesty and integrity by the Authority in communicating with the public having regard to reducing budgets including promoting a self-help agenda • Any decisions to cease or amend service provision that has a significant impact on communities; early warning of intended actions through direct engagement with relevant communities to invite views					

PARTNERSHIPS

Item	Identified risk	Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
9	Ineffective and poorly controlled partnerships with statutory and non-statutory organisations will lead to a lack of accountability and ineffective use of resources resulting in a failure to meet the needs of and improve outcomes for local communities. In particular partnership work could be at risk where funding streams have discontinued	3	4	**12**	A Healthy Halton / Employment Learning and Skills / Children and Young People / A Safer Halton / Environment and Regeneration

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Having efficient and effective arrangements with external partners through a shared strategic vision and action plans enables and influences partners to deliver at local levels • Maintaining financial probity with the 'pool' budgets, as appropriate, with partners through effective governance arrangements • Engagement with communities and partners on service priorities in order to identify and design alternative forms of delivery, as appropriate, maximising opportunities for joint working • Collaborating with partners to identify and address community issues	2	2	**4**	6 monthly	Chief Executive (David Parr)

FRAUD

Item	Identified risk	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
10	Inadequate control systems lead to an increase in fraud and financial loss	3	3	**9**	Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures implemented			Timescale / Review frequency	Lead Officer/s
	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• The Business Efficiency Board monitors and reviews the adequacy of the Council's anti-fraud and corruption policies and arrangements External • The Authority is an active participant in the National Fraud Initiative • Dedicated Fraud Investigation officers focus on external fraud committed by users of Council services • The Council runs regular fraud awareness campaigns encouraging members of the public to raise any concerns about fraud and corruption • The Council collaborates with other local authorities across the region and shares best practice in regard to tackling fraud and corruption Internal	3	2	**6**	6 monthly	Strategic Director - Enterprise Community Resources (Ian Leivesley)

• The Council maintains an effective system of internal control, which includes: • Relevant policies and systems, e.g. Procurement Standing Orders, Finance Standing Orders, etc. • Rigorous pre-employment checks of new employees • Whistleblowing arrangements • Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Strategy • Fraud Response Plan • Fraud Sanction and Prosecution Policy • Fraud and bribery awareness training • A continuous internal audit of the Council's systems and services					

FUNDING AND INCOME GENERATION

Item	Identified risk	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Unmitigated Risk Score (I x L)	Council Priority Area(s)
11	Failure to maximise and identify funding opportunities in light of government cuts resulting in a potential challenge of the Councils capacity to delivery its priorities	3	3	**9**	A Healthy Halton / Employment, Learning and Skills / Children and Young People / A Safer Halton

Risk control measures	Residual score with measures	Timescale /	Lead

	implemented			Review frequency	Officer/s
	Impact *(Severity)*	Likelihood *(Probability)*	Mitigated Risk Score (I x L)		
• Continuing to identify funding streams and income generating options through horizon scanning alternative untapped funding opportunities and shared partnerships with 3rd sector, private sector, and other public sector bodies • During the budget setting process Directorates identify and prioritise funding requirements biannually including ensuring that there are systems to capture and report when funding comes to an end • Corporate Funding Development team has meetings with all Departments to identify funding requirements and signpost to specific funding streams • Commercially focussed through establishing trading and income generation possibilities in order to protect and effectively use funds • Intelligent procurement processes for spending of goods and services that leads to annual savings targets • Corporate procurement practices to be consistently utilised	2	2	4	6 monthly	All Strategic Directors

Version Control Record

Version	Date Created	Date of Amendment:	Nature of Amendment	Date of Next Review:
1.0	13.10.11			
1.1		28.8.12	Progress Commentary	

2.0		**13.3.13**	**Reviewed and updated**	**13.10.13**
2.1		**20.9.13**	**Progress Commentary**	
3.0		**31.3.14**	**Reviewed and updated in line with the Corporate Peer Challenge and the revised Business Planning Process and associated guidance notes**	**13.10.14**
3.1		**15.9.14**	**Progress Commentary**	
4.0		**10.4.15**	**Reviewed and updated**	**12.10.15**
4.1		**10.9.15**	**Progress Commentary**	
5.0		**01.4.16**	**Reviewed and updated**	**01.4.17**
5.1		**10.9.16**	**Progress Commentary**	
6.0		**01.4.17**	**Reviewed and updated**	**01.9.17**
6.1		**10.9.17**	**Progress Commentary**	
7.0		**01.4.18**	**Reviewed and updated**	**01.9.18**

Appendix 'A'

Scoring Mechanism

Once the business risks are identified and analysed they are scored by multiplying the impact and likelihood. They will then establish a final score (or significance rating) for that risk:

Risk Score	Overall Rating
12-16	High
6-9	Medium
1-4	Low

Those that have been placed in the red boxes are the primary or Top Risks followed by the medium and low risks.

Measures to control the risks are identified from the following options;

1. Reducing the likelihood; or
2. Reducing the impact; or
3. Changing the consequences of the risks by,
    - Avoidance
    - Reduction
    - Retention
    - Transference; or
4. Devising Contingencies, i.e. Business Continuity Planning

The risks are scored again to establish the effects the measures have once implemented on reducing the risks and identify a score rating for residual risks.

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

Document is Restricted

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