

Public Document Pack



Corporate Policy and Performance Board

Tuesday, 12 November 2019 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David WR'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor John Abbott	Labour
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Martha Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Chris Loftus	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Angela McInerney	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Joe Roberts	Labour
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 511 8059 or gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 28 January 2020*

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

Part I

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2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion and voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 3 September 2019 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Howard, M. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, A. Lowe, A. McInerney and N. Plumpton Walsh

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Wainwright

Officers present: M. Reaney, I. Leivesley, E. Dawson, M. Foy, J. Yates, A. Jones and C. Dinsdale

Also in attendance: None

**ITEM DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
CS13 MINUTES	
<p>The minutes from the meeting of the Board held on 4 June 2019, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CS14 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CS15 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board was presented with the Minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board.</p>	
<p><u>EXB13 – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places incorporating the Ward Boundary Review</u> – Members discussed the new Ward Boundaries coming into force just 4 months prior to an election. They considered this timeframe too short for many reasons, not least informing the public of the changes to these. It was suggested that the matter be discussed with the MPs’ and a formal letter be sent from the Committee to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.</p>	
	Strategic Director - Enterprise,

RESOLVED: That the minutes and comments made be noted.

Community and Resources

CS16 AREA FORUM ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018/19

A report was presented to the Board by the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which informed Members of the project delivery of the Local Area Forums for the financial period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

Members were advised that Local Area Forums (LAF) provided a mechanism for Councillors to respond to community needs and aspirations. Community initiatives and projects were generated which were delivered collaboratively with other partner organisations to help secure funding from a variety of sources.

It was reported that in 2018/19, £250,000 was allocated to Area Forums, split on a per capita basis across all seven Forums which covered the Borough. Details of the funding for each of the LAF's, case study information and resident feedback was provided to demonstrate the impact LAF projects had made for Halton's communities. Projects funded through the LAFs were categorised into the following key areas:-

- Children and Youth Facilities;
- Community Events;
- Community Resource and Equipment;
- Community Initiatives;
- Improved Parks;
- Landscapes;
- Pedestrian and Highway Improvements; and
- Community Safety.

It was highlighted that the Area Forum budget had enabled the leverage of other grants and had secured funds from other bodies. Overall, an additional amount of £28,251.56 was 'levered' in to support Area Forum projects, providing a total spend of £250,548.36.

Members welcomed the positive report and commented that it was important they were able to encourage and participate in community activities, with the help of Area Forum funding, which was considered a very rewarding part of being a Councillor.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

CS17 ENERGY/CARBON REDUCTION UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on activities aimed at reducing Co2 emissions in the Borough.

It was reported that the Council's participation in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme had resulted in the Council implementing a number of actions to reduce its carbon emissions and the impact on the environment whilst delivering financial savings. A reduction of 43.7% had been achieved from a baseline in 2006/7 to 2015/16, partly due to carbon reduction measures being implemented by the Council and the rationalisation of buildings which the Council occupied. Members noted that some of the initiatives undertaken included conversion of street lighting to LEDs; solar PV on Council buildings; the installation of Biomass boilers at Brookvale Leisure Centre and Norton Priory; construction of a solar farm on the former St Michael's Golf Course which would provide energy via a private wire to Halton Stadium; and the replacement of the Council's fleet of vehicles to meet the latest European engine emission standards, as well as two electric vehicles added to the fleet.

In June 2019, the Council facilitated the recent North West Hydrogen event at The Heath Business Park in Runcorn. This event, featured on local and national television, attracted a large audience from across the UK and highlighted the size and scale of the opportunities within the wider hydrogen economy. It was further noted that in May 2019, the Liverpool City Region (LCR) declared a Climate Emergency which cited three hydrogen related targets as set out in the report. A number of LCR Authorities had followed this lead, with Halton considering the adoption of a similar motion. Many of the actions of the previously adopted Carbon Management Plan had been implemented, and although expired, was considered a timely opportunity to build on the successes to date.

After presentation of the item the following queries/points were made by Members:

- With regards to the future of the Hydrogen economy, a request was made for the Board to hear a detailed presentation on this in the future;
- Working within the LCR was identified as being beneficial in addressing climate change;
- The climate crisis was discussed and the Board was

supportive of the Council making a statement recognising this at its next full meeting; and

- It was suggested that a topic group be set up on climate change.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report and comments made be noted; and
- 2) a task and finish group be set up to review further actions the Council could take to address climate change.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

CS18 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an analysis of Corporate Complaints received during the 2018/19 financial year.

The report outlined the two stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints; a corporate complaints trend analysis from 2012 to 2019; the nature of those complaints received; and outcomes. In addition, the report also provided a summary on complaints and queries that had been received by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2018/19. It was noted that the Ombudsman had made 40 decisions during the year and undertook 9 investigations, five of which were not upheld. Members noted that these figures provided reassurance that the Council's internal complaints procedures were robust and effective in resolving fault where it occurred at a local level.

Arising from the report Members discussed:

- The feasibility of Ward Councillors receiving periodic information on corporate complaints being received from their areas. Members were advised that Officers would give consideration to the means of which information could be shared taking account of GDPR legislation;
- The requirement on Members to provide the personal details of constituents when contacting the Council on behalf of a constituent; and
- Issues around the level of detail sometimes provided to Members when they were making enquiries on behalf of constituents.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments made be noted.

Councillor M. Lloyd Jones declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item as she was a Governor at Beechwood Primary School, which was referred to in the report under EEP 07d.

CS19 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS - QUARTER 1 - 2019/20

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 1 of 2019/20.

The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets, and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period:

- Finance;
- Human Resources and Organisational Development;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Policy and Performance;
- Property Services; and
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services.

Members discussed the following:

- The success of the refurbishment of Millbrow Care Home;
- The fees and charges at the leisure centres; their usage; recruitment of staff and challenges experienced in relation to this. It was noted that the situation was now improving; and
- ICT and Administration Revenue Budget and current cost pressures.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring reports be received and noted.

Meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 12th November 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 12th November 2019
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes
WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19TH SEPTEMBER 2019

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB28 TERM MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources on the provision of term maintenance contracts across the Borough.

The Board was advised that the existing maintenance and minor works term contracts for mechanical, electrical and building elements would end on 31 May 2020. Members were asked to approve the use of The Chest to proceed with the procurement process. Details of the evaluation process were set out in the report; Members noted that the cost of works would be met from a variety of existing budgets. The contracts would ensure that the authority delivered the maintenance and servicing of plant and equipment in a cost effective manner.

RESOLVED: That Members approve the entering into of a procurement process via The Chest to secure the maintenance and minor works contract for mechanical, electrical and building elements for use across corporate and school buildings Borough-wide.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB29 2019/20 QUARTER 1 SPENDING

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which summarised the overall revenue and capital spending position at 30 June 2019.

In overall terms, the revenue expenditure was £1.247m above the budget profile. It was reported that based on current spend patterns, projections showed that the Council would have a year-end outturn overspend position of £6.772m if no corrective action were taken. There were a number of departments where net overspend for the quarter exceeded the budget profile. The main budget

pressure continued to be within the Children and Families Department, with a forecast outturn overspend in the region of £4.7m.

Council approved budget savings proposals at its meeting in March 2019, for the current year's budget. It was reported that the value of permanent savings was £4.432m, of which a number of savings proposals totalling £1.754m remained unallocated to specific budgets. The delay in implementation impacted detrimentally on the forecast position as set out in Appendix 1; Table A in the report listed the savings proposals still to be implemented.

The Capital Programme had been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles as schemes had developed; a list of those schemes that had been revised were set out in the report. Capital spending at 30 June 2019 totalled £6.4m which was 98% of the planned spending at this stage. It was noted that this represented 17.3% of the total Capital Programme of £36.8m.

The Council's balance sheet was monitored regularly in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Strategy, which formed part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The key reserves and balances had been reviewed and considered prudent and appropriate at this stage in the financial year.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to the absolutely essential items;
- 2) departments seek to implement as soon as possible the 2019/20 budget savings proposals listed in Table A, which were approved by Council in March 2019;
- 3) Strategic Directors take appropriate action to ensure overall spending is contained as far as possible within their total operational budget by year-end; and
- 4) Council be recommended to approve the revised Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix 2, attached to the report.

Operational
Director - Finance

ENFORCEMENT OF AGENT SERVICES - COUNCIL TAX
AN BUSINESS RATES

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which sought approval of a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders for the provision of Enforcement Agents Services.

It was reported that the current contracts for bailiff services expired on 4 September 2019. The service encompassed the collection of all council tax and business rates income where the Council could not directly collect it from the debtors.

To ensure continuity, it was proposed that the services of the current providers be retained. The success rate in terms of collections, were detailed in the report. It was noted that there were no costs incurred by the Council, as fees were charged to the debtor(s).

RESOLVED: That a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders to the value of £300,000 to cover a period of two years from 5 September 2019 to 4 September 2021 be approved, for the provision of Enforcement Agents Services, under the existing arrangements with Jacobs Ltd and Rossendales Ltd.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB31 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF
APPLICATIONS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on four applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief.

The Board was advised that, under the amended provision of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business rate payer. Since 1 April 2017, the Council had been responsible for meeting the full cost of all mandatory and discretionary rate relief granted, as part of the Liverpool City Region 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot Scheme.

The report set out details of four applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief for Members to consider.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the application from Halton Citizens Advice Bureau for 15% discretionary rate relief for Store E within Grosvenor House, Runcorn, from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2022, be approved;
- 2) the application from Trade Training UK for 15% discretionary rate relief for their premises at 122 Bancroft Road, Widnes from 8 January 2019 to 31 March 2022, be approved;
- 3) the application from Halton Credit Union Ltd for 90% discretionary rate relief for their premises at 110 Widnes Road, Widnes from 24 June 2019 to 31 March 2022, be approved; and
- 4) the application from United Living Ltd for 90% discretionary rate relief for their premises at 28A Albert Square, Widnes from 13 April 2019 to 31 March 2022, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB32 DISPOSAL, ACQUISITION, RETENTION STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval of the Disposal, Acquisition, Retention Strategy (the Strategy), attached to the report at Appendix A.

The Board was advised that the previous disposal programmes had been considered by the Board in 2010 and updated in 2013. The revised Strategy outlined the Council's approach to the disposal and/or purchase of assets, and would form part of the Council's overall Asset Management Plan.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approves the process as outlined in the Disposal, Acquisition, Retention Strategy attached to the report at Appendix A; and
- 2) authorises the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property, to prepare a disposal programme on the basis of the Disposal, Acquisition, Retention Strategy, attached to the report at Appendix A.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB36 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 items 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

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB37 LAND AT DAVY ROAD, ASTMOOR, RUNCORN

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the acquisition of the freehold interest in land at Davy Road, Runcorn.

Members were advised that the site referred to, edged red on the plan attached to the report, housed a derelict single storey building. The site provided an opportunity to improve access into adjacent handback land

from the Mersey Gateway so as to create a larger quality redevelopment opportunity.

The report set out a number of options for Members' consideration. It was noted that the proposal supported the Borough's regeneration objectives; Astmoor had been identified as one of eight locations where the new Mersey Gateway Bridge and the reconfigured road network had the potential to open up land and stimulate new development and an area for growth.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the acquisition of the freehold interest in land at Davy Road, Astmoor for the amount reported in paragraph 3.11 be approved;
- 2) the Board approves the land in Davy Road as surplus to requirements and to be sold for redevelopment included in the Astmoor Masterplan; and
- 3) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property be authorised to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB38 DISPOSAL OF EMPLOYMENT LAND AT JOHNSON'S LANE, WIDNES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval to the disposal of a plot of land at Johnson's Lane, Widnes.

The report set out details of the proposals for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approves the disposal of land shown edged red on the plan attached to the report, to the company and for the price set out in the recommendation, both subject to planning permission and subject to contract; and
- 2) authorises the Operational Director, Economy,

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

Enterprise and Property, to arrange all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

(N.B. Councillor R. Hignett declared a disclosable other interest in the following item of business, as he was on the board of the Sci-Tech Daresbury public sector joint venture board)

EXB39 SCI-TECH DARESURY: PROJECT VIOLET FUNDING UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on the next phase of the Sci-Tech Daresbury Enterprise Zone Masterplan – Project Violet.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Council be recommended to include the scheme in the 2019/20 Capital Programme, to be funded as set out in paragraph 3.2 to 3.4 of the report; and
- 2) Members note the procurement process undertaken by the Sci-Tech Daresbury Joint Venture.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17TH OCTOBER 2019

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB48 DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on progress against key milestones/objectives for the first quarter of 2019/20.

The Board was advised that the Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from performance in the relevant quarter for each Directorate, being aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's management arrangements, with the Board having a key role in

monitoring performance and strengthening accountability. Performance management would continue to be important in the demonstration of value for money and outward accountability.

RESOLVED: That the report and progress and performance information be noted.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 November 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Member Development Group Notes

WARDS: N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the notes of the Member Development Group held on 21 March 2019.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The notes of the last meeting of the Member Development Group are before CSPPB as stated in the Constitution.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS – None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS – None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton – None.**

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton – None.**

6.3 **A Healthy Halton – None.**

6.4 **A Safer Halton – None.**

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal – None.**

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS – None.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES – None.

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

None.

Member Development Group

At a meeting of the Member Development Group held on 21st March 2019
at the Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes

Present: Councillors J. Stockton (Chairman), J. Abbott, J. Bradshaw, C. Rowe, P. Wallace and M. Wharton.

Officer: K. Mackenzie.

Apologies for absence: Councillors P. Gilligan, K. Wainwright and G. Zygadlo.

Officer: Alison Scott.

MDG26	NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	The notes of the last meeting held on 6 September 2018 were approved as a correct record.	
MDG27	REVIEW OF CURRENT PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS	
	<p>LOD2 – Number of Members with a Member Action Plan (MAP)</p> <p>The Number of Members with a MAP to date since April 2018 was 55 of 56, which remained unchanged.</p> <p>MAP forms had been re-issued to all Members by electronic and hard copy. Members were encouraged to return the form.</p> <p>The Charter for North West Member Development held by the Authority since 2000 encouraged Members to complete a personal development review every 12 months for their own self-evaluation.</p>	KM
	<p>LOD3 – Percentage of Members attending at least one organised training event in the current financial year.</p> <p>Since April 2018, 92% (51 of 56 Members) had attended at least one training and development event. The target was 100% for the year 2018-2019.</p>	
MDG28	LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE	
	<p>Briefing Sessions had been provided for Members on Housing First and One Halton.</p> <p>Following the local election in May, a 2 day new Member Induction had been arranged.</p> <p>Sessions had been held for Members in February for Defibrillator Training and Dementia Friends.</p> <p>Mentoring Training E-learning:- This was available to any Members/ Officers who would like to become Mentors to newly elected Members.</p>	KM

	<p>Following a request for Officer Mentors, one new Mentor had volunteered. Further volunteers were most welcome as they would be required for the 2020 election.</p> <p>A member of the Group mentioned how useful their officer and Member Mentor had been for them, and what a valuable resource they were at what was a very busy time for newly elected Members.</p> <p>Any officer or Members wishing to become a Mentor should contact Kathryn Mackenzie. On-line training was available that could be completed at the users convenience.</p>	
MDG 29	ANY OTHER BUSINESS/MEMBER SUPPORT ISSUES	
	No other issues to report.	
MDG 30	DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING	
	RESOLVED: The next meeting to be held in September 2019 at 5.30pm – date to be confirmed.	
	The meeting closed at 5.55pm	

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 12th November 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise Community Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Corporate Accident / Incident Report 1.4.19 to 31.8.19

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on the performance of health safety management within the Authority for 1st April 2019 to 31st August 2019.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1 the report be received; and**
- 2 the Board notes the contents of the report including the recommendations and actions for 2019/20.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The health and safety report on the performance of health and safety management in relation to Key Performance Indicators for the current financial year is appended.

3.2 It highlights health and safety information.

3.3 The report includes information around the number of actual near misses, over 7 day and significant accidents.

3.4 It highlights a rise in complex DSE assessments.

3.5 It highlights a rise in Fees for Intervention from the HSE and also includes the HSE's national fatality statistics.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The report assists in the delivery of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

5.1 There are no financial implications.

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

The provision of a safe working environment and reduction in accidents is important in order to provide:

6.1 **A Healthy Halton**

6.2 **A Safer Halton**

6.3 **Efficient and Effective Delivery of Services**

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Accidents which lead to lost time have financial implications for the authority (although these are always secondary to our concern for the well-being of staff and customers).

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

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



**CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT
CORPORATE POLICY & PERFORMANCE BOARD
1st April 2019 to 31st August 2019**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 clearly places responsibility on those who create the risk to manage it. The HSE Strategy, 'Helping Great Britain Work Well' highlights that members of the board have both collective and individual responsibility for health and safety. As such, the need is for board-level members to champion health and safety and be held accountable for its delivery.

Part of this includes identifying areas for improvement in health and safety management with the intention of improving staff morale, reducing in work-related sickness absence and lowering insurance premiums for legal, moral and financial reasons. In particular having robust health and safety procedures in place provides safeguards against legal action being taken against the Authority.

1.2 Health and Safety Management System

In order to demonstrate how Halton Borough Council as an employer is delivering the HSE Strategy, this report is to provide Management Team with details of health and safety performance in relation to Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Details of KPI's are as follows:

LEAD INDICATORS

Proactive action taken and any outcomes

KPI

1. **Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems**
Rationale – creating a safe working environment
2. **Number of Near Misses**
Rationale – action taken to prevent further similar incidents and before injuries
3. **Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system**
Rationale – demonstrating effective management of lone working risks

REACTIVE [Lagging] INDICATORS

Reactive action taken in response to accidents/incidents

4. **Number of Significant¹ and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents²**
Rationale – identify accident/incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences
5. **Number of Violent Incidents**
Rationale – identify incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences

¹ Accidents that either require more than basic first aid, incur time lost or arise from a failure in health and safety management

² Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, (RIDDOR) 2013, including Fatalities, Specified Injuries, Over 7-day Injuries, Reportable Occupational Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences

National and Local Information together with performance gaps and incident trends form the basis for the Recommended Actions for 2019/20.

By responding positively to identified trends, the Authority can demonstrate compliance with the recommendations of the Health and Safety Executive's guidance HS(G)65 "Management for Health and Safety".

2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Summary

Earlier this year there has been an increase introduced by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) for Fees for Intervention from £129 to £154 per hour. This will become chargeable if the HSE has to take intervention action against an employer for Health & Safety breaches.

The Health & Safety Executive have also released the workplace fatal injury statistics for 2018/19 and the figures are showing that the national older workforce is an at-risk group. 147 employees were killed in their workplace and approximately a quarter were over 60 years of age.

Reportable and significant accidents for Halton Employees are currently at a total of 15 across both directorates plus 5 near misses. This compares to 44 last year with equal near misses at 5.

Violent Incidents are showing currently as 12 verbal and 5 physical incidents.

Lone Working Monitoring System update – registered users have decreased from the same period last year but actual percentage use has risen slightly.

Display Screen Equipment assessments completed up to 31st August are 24 compared to 23 for the whole of last year.

Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system are 1464 for both Enterprise, Community and Resources and People.

2.2 Recommendations 2019/20

The following recommendations are as a result of the accident analysis data for 2018/19 and will be actioned during the period 2019/20.

No.	KPI No.	ACTION	RATIONALE	RESPONSIBLE
1.	4	Waste & Environmental Services review of manual handling procedures	Accidents 2018/19	Waste & Environmental Services Team - ongoing
2.	4	Care Management review of manual handling procedures of persons	Accidents 2018/19	Care Management Team
3.	4	Ensure that Schools Catering Team conduct a review of Personal Protective Equipment and Risk Assessments to identify control measures for scalds and burns	Accidents 2018/19	Schools Catering Team - ongoing
4.	4	Ensure that Environmental Risk Assessments for offices are reviewed and updated to identify control measures for scalds and burns	Accidents 2018/19	Team Managers and Health and Safety Team - ongoing
5.	4	Review of Premises and Environmental Risk Assessments to identify control measures for slips, trips and falls	Accidents 2018/19	Team Managers and Health and Safety Team - ongoing
6.	2	Review of maintenance contract arrangements for cremators	Near Misses 2018/19	Divisional Manager and Health & Safety Team - ongoing
7.	3	Review Lone Working Risk Assessments and enforce the 'mandatory' use of the Contact Centre Monitoring system when required	Reinforce Management Team decision and safety of lone working employees	All managers – Management email reminder sent 2/9/19, ongoing monitoring in place.

GENERAL ACTIONS

Conduct Audit of Client Transport Team – Logistics Division	By Nov 2019	Health and Safety Team
Conduct Audit of First Aid Provision across the Authority	By Oct 2019	Health and Safety Team - completed
Action a series of Lockdown/Bomb Threat Exercises across main Council buildings	By Mar 2020	Health and Safety Team – in progress
Review and update Health and Safety policies (Corporate & Schools) requiring timescale or legislation reviews	By Aug 2019	Health and Safety Team - completed

3. INFORMATION**3.1 Local/National Information****3.1.1 DSE (Display Screen Equipment) Assessments and Musculoskeletal Disorders**

Following a rise year on year of complex assessments being completed for at risk staff who use display screen equipment the total completed for the first half of this year is 24. This compares with a total of 23 assessments completed for the whole of the previous year.

Guidance in the past has dictated that DSE users fall under the criteria of 3 or more hours per day on a regular basis of using PC's/laptops etc. With the progression of technology the relevant guidance has reduced this to 1 hour a day on a regular basis bringing more staff under the umbrella of DSE users.

Halton Borough Council has robust systems in place to ensure the safety of staff who are DSE users and continues to assist staff who require further support at their workstations.

3.1.2 Corporate Safety Bulletins

For a number of years the Health & Safety Team have been sending safety bulletins out to schools with various topics, legislations changes, court cases, high risk activities etc and it has resulted in a comprehensive library dating back to 2006. Corporately, safety alerts have historically been sent to managers on an ad hoc basis via email and where appropriate published in corporate communications such as the 'In Touch' magazine and more recently, 'News in Brief'.

In June of this year the school bulletin system was adopted corporately and when appropriate, communications are sent to managers for them to cascade

to their staff. This system will work alongside current corporate communication systems ensuring safety information is cascaded correctly.

3.1.3 HSE increases fee for intervention charge

The hourly rate which organisations found to be in material breach of health and safety laws must pay to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for its time has increased from £129 to £154 per hour, with effect from 6 April 2019.

HSE's fee for intervention (FFI) cost recovery scheme was designed to shift some of the costs of regulating workplace health and safety from the taxpayer to those responsible for breaches.

Health and safety law expert Natalie Walker of Pinsent Masons, the law firm behind Out-Law.com, said: "The increase in the recovery rate by almost 20% means that non-compliance now comes with more significant repercussions for companies".

"This emphasises the importance of organisations being proactive in their approach to safety and prioritising health and safety compliance," she said.

In a statement, the HSE said that the increased rate would enable it to recover more of its costs.

"HSE must set the FFI rate with the aim of recovering its full cost and in recent years it has operated at a deficit (i.e. cost more than recovered in income)," it said. "A combination of this and cumulative inflationary pressures support the increased hourly rate."

FFI was introduced on 1 October 2012. Under the scheme, those found to be in 'material breach' of health and safety laws are liable for payment of HSE's related costs, including those incurred as a result of inspection, investigation and taking enforcement action.

HSE defines 'material breaches' as those that would require it to issue notice in writing of that breach to the business, employer, public body or other 'duty holder'. Duty holders who comply with the law, or where no material breach is found, are not charged FFI.

3.1.4 HSE Workplace Fatal Injury Statistics

The Health & Safety Executive have released the workplace fatal injury statistics for 2018/19 and the figures are showing that the national older workforce is an at-risk group. 147 employees were killed in their workplace and approximately a quarter were over 60 years of age.

Thirty Seven of the 147 were in this age bracket despite this group forming only 10% of the UK workforce.

Workers aged between 60 and 64 were twice as likely to die in a workplace accident last year with 0.92 per 100,000 being killed, compared with the average for all groups

of 0.45. The rate for those 65 and over was even higher, with 1.99 in every 100,000 killed.

The figures also highlighted the most dangerous sectors with 32 in agriculture, 30 in construction and 26 in manufacturing.

4. LEAD INDICATORS

4.1 . Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems

4.1.1 An electronic risk assessment system, based on the Intranet, has been ‘live’ since September 2011.

- Actual number of assessments completed up to 31/8/19 are; 1464

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 1046
People – 418

See section 7 for position statements.

4.2 Number of Near Misses

4.2.1 The number reported in the last 3 years are:

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
9	9	16

From the 1st April 2019 to 31st August 2019 there have been 5 near misses.

4.3 Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system

4.3.1 Lone Working – Contact Centre Monitoring update – registered users have decreased from the same period last year but actual percentage use has risen slightly.

	June – Sept 2018		June – Sept 2019	
	Registered Users	No's Using System	Registered Users	No's Using System
Enterprise Community & Resources People	65	45	65	52
People	308	175	261	161
TOTAL USERS	373	220	326	213
% OF USE	59%		65%	

5 REACTIVE ['Lagging'] INDICATORS

5.1 Number of Significant and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents

5.1.1 The number of significant accidents and RIDDOR reportable to the HSE for each Directorate excluding schools that took place from 1st April 2019 to 31st August 2019 is 15. Within schools there were 2 reportable incidents.

Directorate	Specified Injury	> 7-Day	Significant
Enterprise, Community and Resources	0	3	11
People – excluding schools	0	0	1
TOTAL YTD 2018/2019	1	16	89
TOTAL YTD 2017/2018	2	13	46
TOTAL YRD 2016/2017	0	11	57

5.2 Number of Violent Incidents

5.2.1 From 1st April 2019 to 31st August 2019

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
Enterprise, Community and Resources	11	2
People	1	3

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2018/19	23	10
TOTAL 2017/18	35	11
TOTAL 2016/17	25	6

Of the 11 verbal incidents for Enterprise, Community & Resources 8 occurred in the Halton Direct Links. The 2 physical incidents comprised of books being thrown at a library assistant and an irate resident driving a vehicle towards a Waste Management operative. This incident was reported to the police.

The 3 physical incidents for the People directorate occurred within the Positive Behaviour Service.

5.2.2 Schools

From 1st April 2019 to 31st August 2019 there have been 11 physical violent incidents within schools and 1 incident of abuse via social media towards a teacher.

Schools	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2018/19	7	40
TOTAL 2017/18	4	28
TOTAL 2016/17	1	19

6. Risk Assessment Position Statements

Risk assessment position statements for both Directorates

	Enterprise, Community & Resources				People			
	Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review	Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review
Home Working Risk Assessment	143	107	74.83	06/09/2019	28	19	67.86	17/09/2019
Environmental/Fire Risk Assessment	64	31	48.44	04/10/2019	44	23	52.27	16/10/2019
Fire Risk Assessment								
Lone Working Risk Assessment	26	13	50	04/10/2019	26	4	15.38	15/05/2020
Manual Handling Risk Assessment	8	7	87.5	07/12/2019				
Occupational Risk Assessment	237	178	75.11	11/09/2019	31	16	51.61	14/11/2019
Ladder Checklist	12	9	75	24/09/2019				
General Risk Assessment	98	59	60.2	26/09/2019	108	73	67.59	10/09/2019
COSHH Risk Assessment	43	42	97.67	27/09/2019	54	13	24.07	03/11/2019
COSHH (Advanced) Risk Assessment	13	9	69.23	27/12/2019	3	3	100	15/05/2020
Transport in Depots Risk Assessment	2	1	50	23/08/2020				
Workstation Risk Assessment	719	590	82.06	05/09/2019	421	267	63.42	06/09/2019
Total	1365	1046	76.63	-	715	418	58.46	-

September 2018 – Enterprise, Community & Resources 1007 People 349

September 2019 – Enterprise, Community & Resources 1046 People 418

Lynn Pennington-Ramsden
Principal Health and Safety Advisor,
Risk and Emergency Planning
1st September 2019

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12th November 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Progress Updates regarding the Discretionary Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments and Universal Credit.

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. To provide updates regarding the delivery of the Discretionary Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments and Universal Credit

2.0 RECOMMENDATION That the latest position regarding the Discretionary Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments and Universal Credit, be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Discretionary Support Scheme

- 3.1 The Discretionary Support Scheme is now in its seventh year of operation. Over this period the Scheme has been developed and amended where necessary by the Board.
- 3.2 When responsibility was passed from the Department for Work and Pensions to the Council and the Discretionary Support Scheme (DSS) was established, the associated grant funding was significantly reduced by Government. The staffing cost of the DSS Team and a proportion of the DSS awards made, are grant funded. However, the Board previously agreed to carry forward any unspent DSS funds, in order to provide a reserve which would be used to sustain the Scheme for as long as possible.
- 3.3 Details of funding and expenditure during 2018/19 are provided in Section 1 of the Appendix. The DSS made 574 awards during 2018/19 totalling £137,238. The analysis of applications by type and awards granted are also set out in the Appendix.

Discretionary Housing Payments

- 3.4 In 2018/19 total grant funding of £536,534 was received for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). Actual expenditure totalled £535,414 representing 1,544 DHP awards and giving an under spend of £1,120. This compares with 2017/18 where 1,403 awards were made with total expenditure of £412,767.
- 3.5 The increase in the number of awards and total expenditure in 2018/19 compared to the previous year, has been caused by increasing numbers of Halton residents becoming eligible for Universal Credit. Section 2 of the Appendix provides further details of DHP spend during 2018/19 and a comparison with previous years.

Universal Credit

- 3.6 On 27th July 2016, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) commenced the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) Full Service in Halton. This meant that all new working age claimants must now claim UC, and all claims must be made on-line. According to the DWP as at September 2019 there were 10,179 Halton residents now claiming UC. Section 3 in the Appendix provides details of the UC caseload in Halton since April 2015.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 4.1 The Discretionary Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments and Universal Credit have the potential to affect all of the Council priorities.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 DSS and DHP payments will be monitored to ensure they remain within budget.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 The eligibility criteria and application process for DSS and DHP ensure that no particular groups of individuals are excluded.

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

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

APPENDIX

1.0 Discretionary Support Scheme

The funding and expenditure for the Scheme during 2018/19 is shown in the table below.

Available Funding and Actual Expenditure 2018/19

	£
B/f administration grant	1,014
2018/19 administration grant	<u>102,859</u>
Total grant available	103,873
Less DSS team staffing expenditure	<u>102,859</u>
C/f administration grant	1,014
B/f DSS reserve	812,373
2018/19 DSS grant funding	<u>106,140</u>
Total funding available	919,527
Less actual DSS awards expenditure	<u>137,238</u>
C/f DSS reserve (incl admin grant c/f)	782,289

1.1 Expenditure during 2018/19 was spread as follows;

Month	Total Awarded (£)
April	11,170
May	13,759
June	9,439
July	10,185
August	12,533
September	12,091
October	11,387
November	11,752
December	12,084
January	10,848
February	7,706
March	14,284
Total	137,238

- 1.2 The number of awards and average amount of each award paid during 2018/19 was as follows;

Type of Award	Number Granted	Cost (£)	Average Award (£)
Emergency Support	360	18,094	50.26
Community Support	214	119,144	556.74
Total	574	137,238	239.09

- 1.3 The following table shows the number of applications received during 2018/19, together with the number of awards granted, analysed between Emergency Support and Community Support;

Breakdown Of Applications		Emergency Support		Community Support	
		Runcorn	Widnes	Runcorn	Widnes
Applications received	2,751	903	933	473	442
Number of awards granted	574	181	183	102	108
Awarded amount	£137,238	£9,098	£10,083	£60,152	£57,905
Percentage awarded	100%	7%	7%	44%	42%
Applications rejected	2,177	722	750	371	334

- 1.4 Over two thirds of the applications received were rejected and the reasons for rejection are detailed below;

Reasons For Rejection	
Excess income	64
Non-dependent in the property	28
Not liable for council tax	150
Police reference required (e.g. if money lost or stolen)	45
Security check, I.D. validation failed	48
Relying too much on Discretionary Support Scheme	20
Homeless	11
White goods (washing machine & fridge for medical needs only)	123
Not receiving a means tested benefit	75
Alternative help available	487

Requested a replacement item	299
Non-Halton resident	286
Sanctioned by DWP	62
Two awards	65
Three awards	0
Requested cash	121
Application withdrawn	75
UC budgeting issue	179
UC delay issue	39
Total	2,177

- 1.5 Of those applications which were approved, the main categories of award were as follows;

Awarded Items	Number
One Adult to last up to 2 weeks food award	62
Child between 10 and 16 food award	65
Child up to the age of 9 food award	0
2 Adults food award	121
Toiletry Pack	75
Vegetarian food award	366
Gluten Free food award	39
Nut Allergy food award	0
Cold food award	0
Household Items	0
Bedding Only	249
Single Bed with Bedding	11
Single Bed	133
Single Mattress	68
Single Bed Frame Only	65
Double Bed	2
Double Bed with Bedding	1
Double Mattress	0
Double Bed Frame Only	1
Bunk Beds with Bedding	0
Bunk Beds	47
Cot with Bedding	139
Sofa	6
Set of Curtains	6
Cooker	2
Washing Machine	0
Fridge	4
Kitchen Equipment	26
Table and Chairs	8
Clothing	5
Pram	12
Fuel	154
Removal	132
Cooker Connection	55

1.6 The table below shows where referrals to the DSS were received from;

Sign posting (referrals received from)	Referrals
Food bank	5
Children's Duty Team	0
Citizens Advice Team	27
DWP	60
Fuel Supplier	48
Grangeway Court	7
HDL	19
HHT	0
Housing Solutions	0
HPIJ	21
Local Housing Association	54
Police	2
Changing Lives	54
SHAP	2
Social Services	4
Welfare Rights	34
Private landlord	2
Total	283

1.7 Based upon the experience of 2018/19, there is clearly a continued need for the Discretionary Support Scheme and it appears to be operating well. At this stage it is not proposed to make any changes to the Scheme's application criteria.

2.0 Discretionary Housing Payments

The table below shows an analysis of DHP expenditure for 2018/19;

Purpose of DHP award	Total amount of DHP award £
Benefits cap	64,762
Under occupancy (Bedroom Tax)	273,602
LHA reform	24,941
Other	172,109
Total	535,414

2.1 Of the 1,544 DHP awards made during 2018/19, 695 were to UC claimants with a total value of £280,372.

- 2.2 The table below provides a summary of DHP grant funding and expenditure since April 2013;

Year	Grant Funding £	Amount Spent £	Council contribution £	No. of awards
2013/14	382,452	413,562	31,110	2,620
2014/15	386,553	518,310	131,757	2,016
2015/16	343,725	361,381	17,656	1,516
2016/17	388,533	379,974	-	1,201
2017/18	406,692	412,767	6,075	1,403
2018/19	536,534	535,414	-	1,544
2019/20 (to 30/9/19)	469,587	263,748	n/a	756

- 2.3 We have continued to grant full year awards to those customers who are in properties adapted for a disability, those with foster carer responsibilities and those who are adopting (or going through the process of adoption).
- 2.4 Rent in-advance cases are only supported through DHP payments if the household are receiving assistance from Housing Solutions, either through statutory homeless duties or those where homeless prevention assistance has been granted.
- 2.5 The Council's DHP grant funding for 2019/20 has been reduced by £66,947 (-12.5%) compared to 2018/19.

3.0 Universal Credit

- 3.1 As of September 2019 there were 10,179 UC claimants in Halton. The table below shows the growth in the UC caseload in Halton since April 2015;

Date	UC caseload
April 2015	720
Sept 2015	1,592
Dec 2015	1,901
May 2016	1,990
Aug 2016	2,171
Oct 2016	3,330
Nov 2016	3,779

Dec 2016	4,122
April 2017	5,941
May 2017	6,185
Aug 2017	7,148
Nov 2017	7,492
Feb 2018	8,210
May 2018	8,969
June 2018	9,242
Nov 2018	10,390
March 2019	10,631
May 2019	9,702*
Sept 2019	10,179

*DWP Revision

The DWP revised the numbers of people on UC for the period January 2016 – December 2018 following an identification of an issue with their figures.

- 3.2 The UC caseload for working age claimants has been continually rising since April 2015, and the numbers increased after July 2016 when Halton became a Full Service UC area. The DWP are currently piloting a managed migration of legacy benefit claimants to UC in Harrogate. At this point we have had no indication from the Government when Halton will be affected by managed migration of legacy benefit claimants to UC.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12th November 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 2 of 2019/20

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the second quarter period to 30th September 2019.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2019-20 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Finance
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development
 - ICT and Administrative Support
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Policy & Performance
 - Property Services
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

The report details progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

- 1.3 Information concerning the implementation of high risk mitigation measures relevant to this Board is provided in Appendix 1

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the second quarter performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Thematic Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 At the time at which Annual Business Plans are developed Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated. Progress concerning the implementation of any high risk mitigation measures which are relevant to the Board are included as Appendix 1 of the performance management report for the second quarter period.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

The purpose of this report is to provide an update concerning the implementation of mitigation measures for those areas of risk relevant to the Board which have been assessed as high within the Directorate Risk Register.

Business Area – Financial Management

Assessment of current risk		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R1	Failure to set a balanced budget, capital programme and council tax in accordance with statutory requirements <i>(Strategic Priority: Corporate effectiveness and business efficiency)</i>	4	4	16		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
R1 a	<i>Medium Term Financial Strategy is updated regularly and informs the budget preparation process which is driven by Management Team and the Members' Budget Working Group.</i>	Ed Dawson Operational Director (Finance)	Annually	4	3	12
R1 b	<i>Given the current scale of Government grant reductions, a strategy for development of budget proposals has been adopted by Management Team and the process for identifying proposals commenced as early as possible.</i>					
R1 c	<i>The budget timetable is structured to ensure the budget preparation process results in approval by Council and in advance of statutory deadline. Regular monitoring ensures the process is kept on track.</i>					
R1 d	<i>Initial budget proposals are presented to Council in December, with further proposals presented to Council in March, to ensure delivery of a balanced budget, capital programme and council tax.</i>					
R1 e	<i>Detailed guidance is provided to all budget managers regarding the process and the timetable to be followed.</i>					
R1 f	<i>The budget is prepared in accordance with statutory requirements and the S151 Officer ensures a balanced budget and council tax is presented for approval by Council.</i>					
R1 g	<i>Collection Fund (Business Rates and Council Tax) balances are monitored on a monthly basis, so that early consideration can be given to the impact of actual collection rates on future budget setting.</i>					

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

Progress update

- R1a – The Medium Term Financial Strategy is being updated following the Chancellor’s 2019 Spending Review announcement and will be reported to Executive Board on 14th November 2019. This will inform the budget preparation process being driven by Management Team and the Members’ Budget Working Group.
- R1b – The process for identifying budget savings to meet the forecast budget gap for 2020/21 has been underway since March 2019, via Management Team and with meetings of the Budget Working Group.
- R1c & d – Initial budget proposals have been developed by Management Team and the Budget Working Group, which will be considered by Executive Board on 14th November 2019 and recommended for approval by Council on 11th December 2019. Further budget proposals to deliver a balanced budget will be considered by Council on 4th March 2020, along with setting the level of council tax.
- R1e – Detailed budget preparation guidance and a timetable has been issued to all Budget Managers, who are also being supported by their Finance Officers
- R1f – The estimated Council Tax Base for 2020/21 will be considered by Executive Board on 14th November 2019 and recommended for approval by Council on 11th December 2019. All budget saving proposals are scrutinised by the Finance Department to ensure their robustness, prior to them being presented for consideration by the Budget Working Group. The Local Government Grant settlement in early December 2019 will provide details of the level of funding available to support the Council’s budget. This will enable the S151 Officer to determine that a robust and sustainable budget is presented for approval by Council on 4th March 2020.
- R1g – Business rates and council tax collection rates are being monitored regularly and are reported quarterly to Executive Board and Corporate Policy and Performance Board. The Collection Fund has been monitored closely and as a result the current surplus will be used as a one-off saving to assist with balancing the 2020/21 budget. Police and Fire will be notified as to their respective shares of the Collection Fund surplus. The latest position on collection rates has been taken into account when preparing the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Assessment of current risk - (Financial Management cont’d)		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)
ECR R4	Failure to contain overall spending for the financial year within the Council’s annual net budget. <i>(Strategic Priority: Corporate effectiveness and business efficiency)</i>	4	4	16
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact
				Residual Likelihood
				Residual Score

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

Assessment of current risk - (Financial Management cont'd)		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R4	Failure to contain overall spending for the financial year within the Council's annual net budget. <i>(Strategic Priority: Corporate effectiveness and business efficiency)</i>	4	4	16		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
R4 a	Budget monitoring reports are prepared on a quarterly basis and reported to Management Team, Executive Board and Policy & Performance Boards.	Operational Director (Finance)	Annually	4	3	12
R4 b	A budget risk register is maintained with quarterly updates to Management Team.					
R4 c	Budget monitoring is undertaken on a day to day basis between Finance Officers and Budget Holders. Budget monitoring reports are sent monthly to all Budget Holders to assist them to check spend, highlight budget variances and review outstanding commitments.					
R4 d	Action plans put in place and monitored for services identified as potentially overspending significantly against budget, which includes regular monitoring of trends and forecasts for demand led services.					
R4 e	Reasonable levels of general and earmarked reserves are maintained in order to minimise the impact of budget overspends.					

Progress update

R4a/b – Quarter 1 budget monitoring reports have been reported as appropriate. The Councilwide quarter 2 budget monitoring report will be presented to Management Team and then to Executive Board on 14th November 2019. Thereafter each Department's financial position will be reported to the relevant Policy & Performance Board. The budget risk register will be updated at the end of Quarter 2 and presented to Management Team during November 2019.

R4c – Budget monitoring is being undertaken on a daily basis by Finance Officers in liaison with Budget Managers. The latter have been issued with budget monitoring reports for their areas on a monthly basis.

R4d – Management Team have received progress reports from those Departments who are currently spending over budget, which outline the steps being taken to bring spending back in line with budget as far as possible by year-end.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

R4e – The level of reserves is reviewed each quarter to ensure they remain reasonable given the spending pressures facing the Council and the outcome is reported to Executive Board. The Reserves and Balances Strategy is being updated and will be presented to Executive Board as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy on 14th November 2019.

Business Area – ICT Services

Assessment of current risk			Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R5	Network problems or failure prevents the delivery of Council Services. <i>(Strategic Priority: Corporate effectiveness and business efficiency)</i>		4	3	12		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score	
R5 a	Business Continuity Plans / Disaster Recovery Plans in Place		Operational Director (ICT & Admin)	Annually	3	2	6
R5 b	Key Services identified so that when network problems occur those areas are given priority						

Progress update

Resilience, Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery solutions within the technical environment now merge into similar solutions whereas only 7 – 10 years ago Disaster Recovery was considered to be at the forefront. Technologies are allowing Business Continuity solutions to come to the fore. Solutions such as the authorities Twin Active/Active data centre locations in turn supported by multi-vendor wide area network strategies provide an improved continuity solution in that if one Data Centre incurred issues the 2nd as a can continue to provide services and systems.

This is not to say such services such as system and data Back-Up can be ignored as the authority has invested recently in a new and highly improved back-up solution covering not only its data assets but its infrastructure. The department will continue to develop upon such technologies in a cost effective manner as well as assess the emerging cloud technology opportunities.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

Business Area – Legal & Democratic Services

Assessment of current risk		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R8	Failure to implement effective Corporate Governance Arrangements results in decision making which lacks transparency, accountability, and efficiency. <i>(Strategic Priority: Corporate effectiveness and business efficiency)</i>	4	3	12		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
<i>R8 a</i>	<i>Standard Report formats</i>	Operational Director (Legal & Democratic Services)	Annually	4	1	4
<i>R8 b</i>	<i>Adoption of a written Constitution reviewed annually</i>					
<i>R8 c</i>	<i>Implementation of statutory access to information requirements</i>					
<i>R8 d</i>	<i>Implementation of Overview and Scrutiny arrangements</i>					

Progress update

Standard report formats remain in place and are kept under review to ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose.

The revised Constitution was approved at Annual Council in May 2019 following a recommendation by Executive Board.

Access to information requirements are kept under constant review. Extensive work and training was carried out concerning the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation in May 2018 and all staff were required to complete an e-training module.

Overview and Scrutiny arrangements continue to operate effectively and necessary amendments are made as & when required.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

Business Area – Policy, Planning and Transportation

Assessment of current risk			Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R16	Lack of resilience in the event of a major disaster results in loss of services in the Borough. <i>(Strategic Priority: Safer Halton)</i>		4	3	12		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score	
<i>R16 a</i>	<i>Business Continuity Plans in place across the Council</i>		Operational Director (Highways and Transportation)	Annually	3	1	3
<i>R16 b</i>	<i>Major Emergency Plan in place and tested</i>						
<i>R16 c</i>	<i>Specialist Emergency Planning team in place</i>						
<i>R16 d</i>	<i>Regular training for key personnel</i>						
<i>R16 e</i>	<i>Joint exercises with other key partners</i>						
<i>R16 f</i>	<i>Severe Weather and Flood Response Plans in place.</i>						

Progress update

Business Continuity

The authority schedules an annual Corporate Business Continuity Management review every November (Quarter:2). The authority's Business Continuity Plans are available via a central Emergency Planning portal where documents can be updated by services as appropriate. There are 3 levels of resilience planning in relation to Business Continuity Management. All service areas have their own individual Business Continuity Plans, which highlights their Priority 1, 2 and 3 services. The Priority 1 and 2 services are captured with the second layer of resilience planning and detailed within the Overarching Directorate Plan for both Enterprise, Community & Resources Directorate and People Directorate. Next step for all Priority 1 and 2 services from the Directorate Plans are captured within the HBC Corporate Business Continuity Plan. The aim is for the whole Business Continuity process to be completed and agreed at Management Team by Quarter:4. This plan is aimed to be validated every 18 months as part of the Emergency Planning Work Programme, usually Quarter: 1.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

Major Emergency Plan in place and tested

The HBC Major Emergency Plan is the overarching plan for the response to Major Incidents / Major Incidents within the borough. This plan is the underpinning document which supports specific emergency response plans for the authority, for instance, severe weather, COMAH. This document is activated and used when responding to Major Incidents / Major Incident Standbys within the Borough. The principles of the plan have been used when responding to recent incidents, such as Golden Triangle Fire (Major Incident) during Quarter 1, and a large commercial fire at Tanhouse Lane, Widnes (Major Incident Standby) during Quarter 2. This plan is also activated and tested at Emergency planning events and exercises. This document is updated on an annual basis, usually at mid-year. This document can be accessed via the HBC internal and external websites.

Specialist Emergency Planning team in place

There is an Emergency Planning Team on duty to provide for the response to Major Incidents / Major Incident Standby's which may occur within the Borough. This team is in place for response to incidents, both in and out of office hours. The overarching Emergency Response rota for the authority, has 1 Chief Officer/ Strategic Officer on call, a First Responder and an Emergency Planning Officer. To support this response rota, there is a Communications & Marketing officer for Public Relations response and reassurance to the community available. In the event there is displaced people affected by an emergency within the borough and a place of safety is required, a Rest Centre Manager rota is also agreed on a monthly basis. The authority also has a list of admin support officers who have agreed to be called to support the administration within the Local Authority Emergency Centre, in an emergency situation.

Business Area –Community and Environment

Assessment of current risk		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R29	Cost of using the stadium to disadvantaged/community groups.	4	3	12		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
<i>R29 a</i>	<i>Ensure all community user groups are made aware of discounts available.</i>	Operational Director	Quarterly	2	2	4

Progress update

R29a The Stadium is presently producing a leaflet that will highlight the benefits of being a charity or charitable organisation and the discounts available to them, a number of groups presently benefit from these rates.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Enterprise, Community and Resources) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2019

Assessment of current risk			Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R31	Financial pressures on the school meals service to increase rate of return.		4	3	12		
ECR R33	The cost of a school lunch to low income families.		4	3	12		
Risk control measure(s)			Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
<i>R31 a</i>	<i>Look to source additional funding. Produce a healthy eating policy and have it formally adopted by the Council.</i>		Operational Director	Quarterly	3	2	6
<i>R33 a</i>	<i>Look to seek external/internal funding to help reduce the burden of cost.</i>				3	2	6

Progress update

The Government is presently funding KS1 Free School Meals. When a child moves up to KS2 the Universal Credit application has been short circuited, which allows them to have a free meal without waiting the normal 6 weeks.

The Service is guided by the National Nutritional Guidelines and all our menus, including Secondary Schools are governed by them.

A fundamental review has taken place that has seen the introduction of every child in Secondary School receiving a free re-usable water bottle that has gone well.

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring

Reporting Period: **Quarter 2 – 1st July 2019 to 30th September 2019**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the second quarter of 2019/20 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2015-18 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
- Financial Services
 - Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency
 - ICT Infrastructure
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property Services
- 1.3 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments during the period which include:-

Financial Services

Revenues and Financial Management

- 2.2 On 04 September 2019 the Chancellor of the Exchequer set out the Government's spending plans for 2020/21. The announcement included councils increasing core spending power by £2.9bn against 2019/20 allocations, including additional funding for social care and schools. Confirmation was also received of the continuation of the Liverpool City Region 100% business rate retention pilot for 2020/21.
- 2.3 Including major preceptors, the amount of council tax billed during 2019/20 annual billing was £62.7m. The cash collection rate for the period to 30 September 2019 is £34.5m (55.1%). A further £1.2m has also been collected from previous year arrears.

Including preceptors the amount of 2019/20 billed business rates as at 30 September 2019 is £61.0m. The cash collection rate for the period is £35.0m (57.4%).

- 2.4 For the financial year to 30 June 2019, overall Council net spending was £22.3m against a budget of £21.1m, resulting in an overspend position to date against budget of £1.2m. Spending on capital schemes for the same period totalled £6.4m, representing 17.4% of the total capital programme of £36.8m. Spending to 30 September 2019 will be reported to Executive Board on 14 November 2019

Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance

- 2.5 Each year the Council is required to publish information on its performance in terms of paying supplier invoices promptly. In 2018/19 approximately 79,500 invoices were processed by the Council. 90.15% of those invoices were paid within 30 days. During 2018/19 the Council paid just £37 to suppliers in interest due to late payment.
- 2.6 In July the Business Efficiency Board approved the Council's 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement (AGS). In the AGS the Council identifies developments that may affect the Council's governance arrangements and sets out an action plan explaining how the Council is to address those issues. The action plan in the 2018/19 AGS covers the following issues that may impact on the Council's governance arrangements: the ongoing funding pressures; the peer review; review of the Council's corporate priorities; and the Ward Boundary Review.

Benefits

- 2.7 At the end of September 2019 the Benefits Division introduced on-line facilities to enable claimants to submit new claims and report changes in circumstances for Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit. This will improve access for residents and allow new claims to be processed more quickly.

Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

Recruitment and Organisational Development

- 2.8 Recruitment work continues to be in high demand particularly within Adult Social Care Services (ASC) where this has resulted from increasing pressures within Social Care Services and the growth within the Care Homes Division. In addition a significant number of appointments have been made to teaching and other school staff posts.
- 2.9 From November 2018 to July 2019 a total number of 260 Council positions were filled, 86 of which related to ASC services. In addition appointments were made to 247 school related posts.
- 2.10 It remains the case that many adverts are placed for multiple vacancies and following recruitment, not all vacancies are filled. This is a general feature of the labour market from where we draw candidates, skills shortages in some areas, as well as the prevailing reputation of the local government sector as a challenging place to work due to the balance of demand and austerity. To tackle this, the Council continues to use and develop a multi-disciplinary approach to recruitment, using the expertise of HR, Marketing, Social Care and Customer Intelligence colleagues to tap into the local labour market through a range of channels to attract new applicants to advertised roles.
- 2.11 The ILM (Institute of Leadership & Management) Level 5 Award in Leadership & Management has now been completed. Of a cohort of 12 employees who started in April 2019, 10 have successfully achieved the qualification and further support and guidance is being offered to the remaining candidates to achieve the desired standards. An ILM Level 3 in Leadership & Management commenced in September 2019 with 11 candidates.
- 2.12 The ILM annual inspection took place during September 2019 and initial feedback from the external verifier has been extremely positive regarding the learning provision, candidate support and attainment levels.

- 2.13 The 2019 staff survey has recently been undertaken. Overall response was 46%, the best response rate since the 2011 survey. Data and findings will be used to contribute to the next iteration of Organisational Development Strategy for the Council, along with observations and findings from the recent Peer Challenge undertaken by the Local Government Association.
- 2.14 As part of ongoing Organisational Development within the Council, the Employee Recognition and Award scheme accepted nominations during the summer. Winners have been notified and an awards ceremony takes place on 24th October.

Employment Relations

- 2.15 Annual traded service level agreements with Halton schools for 2020/21 are now in development. As a result of the changing funding situation in schools, a surge in restructuring activity within schools continues to be experienced, placing resources in the HR Employment Relations Service under significant pressure. Contingent resources continue to be engaged within the service to manage this demand.
- 2.16 The service has undertaken a root-and-branch review of the resourcing mix across Council services, to examine the balance of permanent staff, temporary staff, casual and agency workers, with a view to determining where volatility exists and to explore the reasons for that. Plans are now being drawn up to share this with service areas with a view to obtaining a greater understanding of how staff are deployed against service priorities and how staffing costs may be optimised.

ICT Infrastructure

ICT Developments

- 2.17 The rollout of the VDI Desktop system is now nearing completion and this significant and highly technical infrastructure project which has been delivered in a short period of time requires a small number of users to be brought into the system within the next quarter. This project has been a great success enabling the centralisation of services and data assets across the desktop environment whilst saving the authority considerable sums in replacement devices.
- 2.18 Adult Learning, a long standing and complex programme driven by the authority has now also benefited from the use of VDi. This development is now in place, the project was considerably larger than expected but has been integrated within the new Halton Learning & Libraries platform. This has allowed for the development of a true Learning domain and technical environment to support both Halton Schools, Libraries and the Further Education environment allowing the authority to develop upon its community based Digital Strategies.
- 2.19 Eclipse is the new Social Care Support Application being adopted by the Council, this upgrade from the existing CareFirst Suite of products will support the authorities' objectives in further enabling and simplifying practitioner based systems that are key to the service improvement objectives of the People Directorate.
- 2.20 The project to develop this roll-out will be managed within the ICT service and work has commenced to develop Phase 1 of the project to deploy this new application suite into Children's Services, shortly followed by a deployment into the Adults Services environment. The department will continue to report against developments as they move forward with a target of March 2020 to complete this large and important development.

Contact Centre / One Stop Shops

- 2.21 During quarter 2 of 2019/20, the Contact Centre handled 21,662 calls, generating 29,078 cases with an average wait time for that quarter of 5 mins and 27 secs. The majority of calls related to issues concerning Council Tax (21%), Adult Social Care (16%) and Waste Management (16%). As may be expected the remainder of calls covered a wide variety of Council services in relatively equal measure.
- 2.22 During Quarter 2 One Stop Shops handled 21, 541 enquiries with average waiting times of 6 – 9 minutes across all facilities. The nature of enquires was slightly transposed when compared to the Contact Centre in that the majority of enquires related to Adult Social Care (27%) followed by those concerning Council Tax (25%).

Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

- 2.23 During quarter 2 new staffing structures were introduced at the Stadium which will result in significant operational budget savings moving forward. This has been complemented by further organisation savings being made through accommodations costs being reduced through the use of space at the Stadium by Property Services to relocate staff from externally provided premises.

Property Services

A number of developments continue to progress with regards to the Councils estate and these include:-

- 2.24 The feasibility study to convert Belvedere into a 30 bed care facility for older vulnerable people with complex needs has now been completed. The estimated total cost of the project is £3.23m. Capital funding is currently being sought for the project and unfortunately the bid submitted to the One Public Estate fund to help develop the project proved unsuccessful.
- 2.25 The additional works to Oakmeadow reported in the previous quarter are now completed and the proposed phase 1 refurbishment of Millbrow Care Home has now received approval at a cost of circa £1.5M. Works are now progressing in respect of developing the design, in order to get it ready for the procurement stage of the process.
- 2.26 Works to convert Orchard House, a large domestic bungalow, into 2 separate units for adults with substantial learning disabilities are now at tender evaluation stage, it is hoped that a contractor will be appointed within October. Works can then commence on site with a view to having the works completed by year end
- 2.26 The proposal put forward to build a new leisure centre on the site at Moor Lane has now been approved by Executive Board and is due to go to be presented to full Council in mid-October. An Initial meeting has taken place with Wates, the contractor, and subject to Council's approval, works will begin to start developing the design submitted at feasibility stage.
- 2.27 As previously reported works to the Halton Fitness Suite were being undertaken and are now almost complete. This will result in the remaining staff currently housed at Kingsway House being able to vacate the premises by 29th October as planned. When combined with staff previously locating to the Stadium and to newly created office space within Kingsway Learning Centre, this will result in a considerable annual reduction in organisational staff accommodation costs.

3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of services including:-

Financial Services

Revenues and Financial Management

- 3.2 Work is underway on revising the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS); this is being continually updated as new information is received on a regular basis. The MTFS will be reported to Executive Board on 14 November 2019. Work is underway on preparing the Council's 2020/21 revenue budget and three year capital programme.
- 3.3 On 03 October 2019 the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government issued the 2020-21 Local Government Finance Settlement: Technical Consultation. This consultation will run until 31 October 2019. The consultation document reflects the offer made to local government for 2020/21 following the 2019 Spending Review. The Council will respond to the consultation on an individual level and will also contribute to responses from the Liverpool City Region and others..

Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance

- 3.4 The UK government has implemented an EU directive on electronic invoicing in public procurement through The Public Procurement (Electronic Invoices etc.) Regulations 2019. This introduces a requirement that contracting authorities and other contracting entities (eg. utilities) are now required to receive and process supplier invoices which comply with the technical e-invoicing standard developed under the EU directive. Local government has until 18 April 2020 to comply with the new requirement but may voluntarily do so earlier. Finance is currently working with ICT Services to ensure that the Council is able to comply with the new requirement by the deadline.
- 3.5 The Department for Education is in the process of consulting on a proposal to extend the risk protection arrangements (RPA) currently operational for academy trusts to local authority maintained schools. If implemented this would provide schools with an alternative to purchasing commercial insurance directly or buying into the Council's Insurance Service Level Agreement (SLA). The DfE is of the view that extending the RPA will provide an opportunity for schools to realise savings. The impact on the Council would be a significant reduction in income from the Schools Insurance SLA. However, it is anticipated that there would also be a potential reduction in the cost of the Council's insurance premiums. The Council will be responding to the consultation which closes on 4 November.

Benefits

- 3.6 The DWP are currently developing their computer systems so that they can share claimants benefit data they hold with local authority benefits services. Specifically data shared with local authorities will relate to when there are changes to a claimant's bereavement benefit, incapacity benefit, maternity benefit, severe disablement allowance, state pension and widow's benefit. Local authority computer systems will be alerted to these changes and the appropriate adjustment made to a person's Council Tax Reduction and/or Housing Benefit entitlement. This is scheduled for implementation from 1st April 2020.

Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

- 3.7 April 2020 will see the implementation of some HR policy changes (a requirement for clear terms for all workers, a 52 week reference period for statutory holiday pay, and a lower threshold for setting up information and consultation arrangements). These can be implemented into the Council's HR procedures with relative ease.
- 3.8 Work continues in the sub region, in conjunction with the Regional Employers Organisation, to establish a position on holiday pay resulting from voluntary overtime. There remains an absence of clear direction in legal terms on this matter, with conflicting case-law resulting from recent cases. This remains an ongoing matter.
- 3.9 The engagement of agency workers to meet increased service demand in areas such as adult social care continues. The HR service is supporting operational areas to restructure services that were TUPE'd inwards and have been areas of high usage, with a view to establishing a more stable permanent staff structure. The recent acquisition of two more care homes is likely to mean that this method of resourcing will continue into the medium term.

ICT Infrastructure and Administration

- 3.10 Further to previous reports and following recent licensing changes under the new Microsoft Enterprise agreement, there is a need to co-locate systems and services within the Microsoft Cloud as well as within the Halton Data Centre locations. This is known as a Hybrid approach; allowing the vast majority of the system capabilities to stay under the control of the HBC technical teams with certain aspects located within Microsoft.
- 3.11 Work is now underway to transfer and integrate the use of Microsoft Email services and the use of Microsoft Office products into this new environment. This will also initiate a number of Security based projects that will be essential to safeguard the authority's data assets and limit any malicious attacks upon our data assets.
- 3.12 The email 'Phishing attack' is one of the main routes for unauthorised access into any organisation's ICT infrastructure. The risk is heightened considerably when users of that environment input their corporate or personal user names and passwords into web pages initiated by links contained within malicious emails. No software solution or security solution can defeat such a process, as user credentials are simply given away to the criminals involved. The costs and the time associated with the clean-up following these avoidable actions are now becoming a considerable overhead.
- 3.13 The ICT department will be putting forward technical as well as organisational solutions that will limit and reduce the spread of such attacks, however the department will also require the support of Members and Officers in improving user understanding of the corporate consequence of such actions and the potential harm such actions can bring to the authority and the services it provides.
- 3.14 The need for storage capacity within the Council's systems continues to grow at significant scale when compared to that which was required only 5 years ago. As a consequence work is underway to implement a new storage system that can accommodate the Council's existing and future needs.

Legal and Democracy

- 3.15 The order in respect of the boundary review is expected to be laid before Parliament early in Quarter 3, and Officers are prepared for the necessary implementation measures to be undertaken.

3.16 Additionally support continues to be provided regarding the exit from the European Union and in the event that a General Election is called all preparations are in hand to facilitate this.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Monitoring arrangements. As such Directorate Risk Registers were updated in tandem with the development of the suite of 2019 – 20 Directorate Business Plans.

4.2 Progress concerning the implementation of all high-risk mitigation measures is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

5.0 High Priority Equality Actions

5.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.

5.2 The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:







<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>

6.0 Performance Overview

- 6.1 The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.
- 6.2 It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget.
- 6.3 Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

Financial Management

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
FS 01a	Report 2020-23 Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2019.	
FS 01b	Report 2020/21 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council - March 2020.	
FS 02c	Provide quarterly monitoring reports on the overall budget to Executive Board.	
FS 03a	Publish the Statement of Accounts following external audit by 31st July 2019.	
FS 04a	Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2019.	
FS 05a	Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2019.	

Supporting Commentary











Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will be reported to Executive Board on 14 November 2019. The financial forecast is being regularly updated. Revenue budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax on track to be reported as planned.

Quarter 1 Monitoring of overall budget was reported to Executive Board on 19 September 2019, which highlighted a number of potential pressures emerging for which it will be required to keep spending within budget by year-end. Quarter 2 will be reported on 14 November 2019.

Due to a technical accounting issue with regard to the valuation on the Mersey Gateway Crossing the External Auditor was unable to publish an audit certificate or opinion by 31 July 2019. Work is ongoing with the external auditor to reach agreement on the issue. Government have confirmed that this year there will be no consequences from not meeting the deadline, as nationally the outcome of a recent court case has meant year-end pension figures have had to be recalculated for every council, causing a large proportion of councils to miss the 31 July deadline.

The 2019/20 Treasury Management Policy was approved by Council on 06 March 2019 and the half-year report will be presented to Executive Board on 14th November.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 01	Receive an unqualified external audit opinion on the accounts.	Yes	Yes	n/a		n/a
FS LI 02	Receive positive comment (annually) from the External Auditor relating to the financial standing of the Council and the systems of internal financial control.	Yes	Yes	n/a		n/a
FS LI 03	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected	94.75%	94.25%	55.05%		
FS LI 04	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received	98.32%	97.50%	57.40%		
FS LI 05	Average time for processing new claims (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction)	16.90 (Days)	20 (Days)	16.17		
FS LI 06	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	7.5 (Days)	9.0 (Days)	7.60		

Supporting Commentary

Audit of 2018/19 statement of accounts ongoing. The Council's external auditor commented in the 2017/18 Audit Findings report that it was satisfied that the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The external auditor also concluded that they were satisfied with management's assessment that the Council will continue for the foreseeable future and that the going concern basis was appropriate for the 2017/18 financial statements.

The Audit Findings report relating to the 2018/19 financial statements has not yet been published.

Whilst Council Tax collection is marginally lower than at the same time last year by 0.02% the budgeted level of collection for 19/20 is expected to be achieved. Business Rates collection is p by 0.39% when compared to the same period last year.

The processing of benefit claims and changes in circumstances remains positive.

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Service

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
PPPE 01a	Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy May 2019	
PPPE 01c	Regular engagement with service managers to identify areas of challenge and develop appropriate bespoke solutions April, September, December 2019, and March 2020.	
PPPE 01d	Implement Leadership and Management Development Programme September 2019.	
PPPE 02a	Establish 10 new apprentice placements within Council services, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2020	
PPPE 02b	Establish 20 new existing employee apprenticeships to enable up-skilling in a range of business areas, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2020	
PPPE 04b	Implement resourcing plans with service management in appropriate areas September 2019.	
PPPE 04c	Ongoing monitoring of agency usage and spend April, September, December 2019, and March 2020.	

Supporting Commentary













The actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy continued to be progressed as described within the Key Developments section of this report.

Regular engagement with Service Managers continues and a range of interventions have now been delivered or are in progress to meet operational requirements. The ILM Programme continues with 10 delegates commencing MBA studies in conjunction with John Moores University in September which is funded via the Apprenticeship Levy.

A further 2 apprenticeship placements were established during the quarter bringing the total to date for 2019 - 20 to 5. Additionally 10 existing employee apprenticeships are in place at mid-year with a further 35 in progress to be established during the second half of the year.

Please refer to the Key Developments section of this report for further information concerning Resourcing Plans and additional detail regarding agency usage is provided in the table below.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
PPPE LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (Corporate)	11.36	10	5.16		
PPPE LI 03	Percentage of Employees without sickness	N / A	TBC	85.68%	Refer to comment	Refer to comment
PPPE LI 04	Total Full Time Equivalent Staffing Establishment	3,470	For information Only	3,336	For information Only	For information Only
PPPE LI 05	Total Staff (head count)	4,648		4,401		
PPPE LI 06	Total Agency Worker Usage (number of placements – year to date)	1,411	650	425		
PPPE LI 07	Total Agency Worker Cost (gross cumulative cost – year to date)	£1.96m	£1.5m	£1.1M		
PPPE LI 08	Number of apprenticeship placements established in the Council. (Cumulative – year to date)	15	20 (Government target is 55)	5		
PPPE LI 10	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are: ¹					
	a) Women	57.74%	50.00%	60.63%		
	b) from BME communities	2.53%	1.50%	3.45%		
	c) with a disability	0.93%	8.00%	1.18%		
PPPE LI 13	Average time to recruit (Applicant Tracking System reported figure)	N / A	19 (Days)	12 (Days)	Refer to comment	Refer to comment
PPPE LI 14	Staff turnover rate (Permanent & temporary staff. Excludes casual)	N / A	N / A	Refer to comment	Refer to comment	Refer to comment

Supporting Commentary

Sickness levels are very similar to those when compared to the same point last year (5.13 days) and slightly above targeted mid-year level of 5 days. The number of staff without sickness remains relatively high and this measure will be monitored to determine any trends that may exist to inform future management action and support.

Number of agency worker placements should show a reduction over time. The number of placements from Q2 in 2018/19 was 457. When considered alongside the cost (LI 07) static levels of usage are evident.






Cumulative agency spend is slightly higher at half year point than in previous year (£1.05m). Placement costs have increased as a result of NJC pay award and revision of pay scales in April 19. Continuing pressure on adult care services continues to drive usage and the annual target is likely to be missed.

With regards to top 5% of earners there is positive movement on two of three component indicators (a) and (b), both of which are above target. Fluctuation exists in (c), due to turnover. It should be noted that recruitment in to 5% of earners is very limited, and as such scope for significant change is low.

Average time to recruit and staff turnover rate are new indicators for 2019-20. Unfortunately the latter measure cannot be reported at quarter 2 due to technical difficulties which are now being addressed.

ICT and Administrative Support Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
ICT 01a	Continued Enhancement of the virtualization platform to enhanced or new technologies - March 2020 .	
ICT 01b	Further development of Cloud Services Platform - March 2020 .	
ICT 01c	SharePoint and Records Management enhancements - March 2020 .	
ICT 01d	Interactive Web Services Enhancement and further SharePoint Integration - March 2020 .	
ICT 02a	Continuing improvements, enhancements and commercial use of Cloud system - March 2020 .	



Supporting Commentary







As discussed within the body of the report the virtualisation project is moving forward at great pace and is exceeding targets for its deployment – with new projects now being considered utilising these technologies. The Cloud Services Platform is now in place with technical upgrades to the underlying server infrastructure planned.

SharePoint and Records Management enhancements have been successfully implemented with software and hardware upgrades being deployed in both of the Council's data centres.

The development of the Cloud system has resulted in internal and external clients now utilising this solution delivering Council services to partners, clients and internal users.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.5%	99.00%	99.99%		




Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	100%	99.00%	99.98%		
ICT LI03	School Support SLA: % of calls responded to within <u>agreed</u> target*: a) Priority 1 b) Priority 2 c) Priority 3 d) Priority 4	100%	85.00%	100%		
		99%	90.00%	100%		
		100%	95.00%	100%		
		100%	95.00%	100%		
ICT LI04	Average working days from delivery to completion of a new PC.	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	1 Day		

Supporting Commentary

All measures are showing a positive outturn at quarter 2.

Legal & Democracy



Key Objectives / milestones







Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
LD 01	Review constitution - May 2019 .	
LD 02a	To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting where desired.	
LD 02b	To induct all new members by October 2019 .	

Supporting Commentary

The revised Constitution was approved at annual Council in May and all Members have had the opportunity to have a MAP meeting with inductions for new Members now being complete.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (56 Total).	55 (98.21%)	56 (100.00%)	55 (98.21%)		


Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	10 (Days)		
LD LI 04	Average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department (working days).	3 (Days)	3 (Days)	3 (Days)		
LD LI 05	% of Executive Board minutes published within 5 working days after the meeting.	100%	100%	100%		

Supporting Commentary

All indicators are showing positive performance at the half-year stage and there is no indication at this stage that annual targets cannot be achieved..

Community & Environment





Key Objectives / milestones





Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
CE 0 1a	Deliver a promotion and educational campaign (school meals) - September 2019 and January 2020 .	

Supporting Commentary

All Secondary Schools have received a visit and are being encouraged to eat more "Healthy".

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 01	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.	76.26%	TBC	84.22%		
CE LI 02	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.	84.14%	TBC	76.43%		

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 03	Take up of school lunches (%) – primary schools.	59.61%	TBC	59.62%		
CE LI 04	Take up of school lunches (%) – secondary schools.	74.68%	TBC	72.63%		



Supporting Commentary

The take up of free school meals in primary schools has been positively influenced by the Universal Offer for free Key Stage 1 pupils and further work is planned with regard to the take up of FSM in secondary schools.

The take up of school lunches generally is showing similar levels to that of 2018 – 19.

Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
EEP 07a	Complete the handback process for all the Mersey Gateway Temporary Use Areas (TUA's) by December 2019	
EEP 07b	Vacate Kingsway House, and relocate all staff to other Council buildings by October 2019	
EEP 07c	Deliver all annual programmed maintenance projects by March 2020	
EEP 07d	Deliver Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) projects at Halton Lodge & Beechwood Primary schools by September 2019	
EEP 07e	Deliver Crow Wood Park pavilion by June 2019	

Supporting Commentary





There has been some delay concerning the handback of TUA sites and a revised date is currently awaited from Merseylink.

The accommodation works at Halton Stadium are on programme, the completion of these will allow staff to vacate Kingsway House by October 2019. However in regards to the delivery of the annual programme of maintenance some works may have to be deferred to 2020 / 21 as a result of prevailing budget pressures.

The project at Beechwood Primary school is now complete but Halton Lodge has taken longer than anticipated to start site works and is now scheduled for completion in December.

Apart from minor snagging still to be undertaken works to the Crow Wood Park pavilion are almost complete.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 01	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions indicator (Tonnes CO ₂ e).	14,811 tonnes CO ₂ e (actual 17/18)	14,663 tonnes CO ₂ e (target 18/19)	11,730 tonnes CO ₂ e (actual 18/19)		
EEP LI 05	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	84%	84%	87%		
EEP LI 06	Unit Costs – office accommodation (reported annually).	£1,054	£1028	Refer comment	N / A	N / A

Supporting Commentary

The reporting requirements for emissions were amended last year whereby the figures for academies are no longer included. 2 schools have converted to Academy status in the reporting period as such the figures reflect this change.

The overall emissions for 2017/18 amounted to 14,811 tonnes. The emissions for 2018/19 are 11,730 tonnes which equates to a 20% overall reduction. Energy consumption has only reduced slightly however as the kw/h-CO₂ conversion factor has been amended to reflect the greater mix of renewable energy being generated the overall CO₂ emissions have reduced significantly.

The breakdown is as follows:- School Buildings 3531t, Corporate buildings 4624t, Unmetered supply 2173t, Fleet Transport 1088t, & Business Mileage 314t. The target for 2019/20 has been set at 11,612 tonnes CO₂e, a 1% reduction. The annual figure for this indicator is a year behind and therefore only reported in the following year.

Occupancy rates at Widnes Market Hall remain positive and as expected at quarter 2 and unit costs of office accommodation will be reported at year-end.

7.0 Financial Statements

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance to Date	Forecast Outturn Position
	£'000	£'000	£'000	(Overspend) £'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	5,497	2,700	2,746	(46)	(91)
Supplies & Services	371	246	239	7	14
Insurance	1,053	697	686	11	21
Rent Allowances	42,900	17,371	17,371	0	0
Non HRA Rent Rebates	65	30	30	0	0
Discretionary Social Fund	106	58	58	0	0
Discretionary Housing Pmts	470	216	216	0	0
Concessionary Travel	2,218	895	875	20	40
LCR Levy	2,241	2,241	2,241	0	0
Total Expenditure	54,921	24,454	24,462	(8)	(16)
<u>Income</u>					
Clerical Error Recovery	-400	-81	-81	0	0
Rent Allowances	-42,500	-16,095	-16,095	0	0
Fees & Charges	-228	-126	-145	19	37
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-65	-39	-39	0	0
Burdens Grant	-66	-66	-90	24	24
Dedicated Schools Grant	-102	0	0	0	0
Discretionary Hsg Payment Grant	-469	-156	-156	0	0
Hsg Benefit Admin Grant	-445	-223	-223	0	0
Council Tax Admin Grant	-204	-204	-208	4	4
Council Tax Liability Order	-406	-350	-350	0	0
Business Rates Admin Grant	-156	0	0	0	0
Schools SLAs	-818	-818	-855	37	37
LCR Reimbursement	-2,241	-2,241	-2,241	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-196	-107	-124	17	13
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-10	-10	0	0
Total Income	-48,323	-20,516	-20,617	101	115
Net Operational Expenditure	6,598	3,938	3,845	93	99
<u>Recharges</u>					
Premises Support	248	124	124	0	0
Central Recharges	2,493	1,246	1,246	0	0
Central Recharge Income	-4,877	-2,438	-2,438	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,136	-1,068	-1,068	0	0
Net Department Expenditure	4,462	2,870	2,777	93	99

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 2 is under the profiled budget.

Spend on employees is currently above the budget profile. There is low staff turnover across all divisions with a minimum number of vacancies hence the staff turnover saving target is not being achieved.

Budgeted employee spend is based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 152.

Supplies and services are currently underspent due to tighter control of spending from managers across the whole Finance Department.

Concessionary travel costs for the year are forecast to be under budget provision. Projections are based on passenger usage continuing at current numbers but there could be changes later in the financial year which cannot be projected at this point. Further analysis of passenger numbers in coming months will confirm figures.

Fees and charges income target is projected to over achieve as a result of income received within the Audit Procurement and Operational Finance Division specifically in relation to charges re external clients such as NCER and Manchester Port Health Authority.

Burdens Grant is in respect of legislative changes and the Department received more than initial allocations.

Schools SLA Income is above budget profile due to Insurance Balance of Risks income. The amount of income could reduce if school claims increase. Income levels for school insurance SLA could possibly drop significantly in next financial year if the DFE extend the risk protection arrangements offered to academy schools to all LA maintained schools.

Based on current projections it is forecast the Department's net spend will be under the available budget by £0.093m at year-end.

POLICY, PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn Position £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	2,000	1,015	1,064	(49)	(98)
Employees Training	133	45	24	21	43
Supplies & Services	137	65	58	7	14
Apprenticeship Levy	300	117	108	9	17
Total Expenditure	2,570	1,242	1,254	(12)	(24)
<u>Income</u>					
Reimbursement & Other Grants	0	0	-8	8	14
Fees & Charges	-95	-95	-107	12	31
Schools SLAs	-435	-435	-418	(17)	(17)
Total Income	-530	-530	-533	3	28
Net Operational Expenditure	2,040	712	721	(9)	4
<u>Recharges</u>					
Premises Support	89	44	44	0	0
Central Support Recharges	900	450	450	0	0
Support Service Income	-2,860	-1,440	-1,440	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,871	-946	-946	0	0
Net Department Expenditure	169	-234	-225	(9)	4

Comments on the above figures

At the end of the second Quarter, Policy, Performance, People and Efficiency Department is above the budget profile

Employee staffing costs are expected to exceed the budget as the staff turnover saving target cannot be achieved in full. It is expected the cost of the occupational health support contract will continue to increase as the need for referrals continues.

Budgeted employee spend is based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 43.

Schools SLA income has underachieved against budget as existing charges are based on staffing numbers. There has been a reduction in staffing so income has subsequently been reduced. The charging calculation has been reviewed for 2020/21. The underachievement in maintained schools SLA income has however been offset by an overachievement in fees and charges income in relation to Academy charges for HR and payroll services.

Based on current projections it is forecast the Department's net spend for the year will be marginally within the available budget.

ICT and Administration**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn Position £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	7,332	3,578	3,662	(84)	(168)
Supplies & Services	1,029	573	539	34	68
Capital Financing	78	24	14	10	19
Computer Repairs & Software	940	890	958	(68)	(135)
Communication Costs	17	17	30	(13)	0
Transfer to Reserves	15	0	0	0	0
Premises Costs	64	48	55	(7)	(13)
Total Expenditure	9,475	5,130	5,258	(128)	(229)
<u>Income</u>					
Fees & Charges	-1,107	-323	-108	(215)	(432)
Schools SLA Income	-532	-494	-514	20	41
Total Income	-1,639	-817	-622	(195)	(391)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,836	4,313	4,636	(323)	(620)
<u>Recharges</u>					
Premises Support Recharges	424	212	212	0	0
Transport Recharges	20	10	10	0	0
Central Support Recharges	1,116	558	558	0	0
HBC Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
Support Services Income	-10,873	-5,436	-5,436	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-7,819	-4,656	-4,656	0	0
Net Department Expenditure	17	-342	-20	(323)	(620)

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms spending is above the budget profile at the end of the second quarter
The main areas for this outturn position are as follows:

The negative variance on employee costs is primarily due to an under-achievement against an efficiency staff restructure saving originally actioned in the budget set for the 2017-18 financial year. Staff turnover saving targets are also not being met. However if present staffing levels within Admin continue and vacancies held within the ICT Department are not filled for the rest of financial year the savings from these could offset some of the efficiency target.

Computer repairs and software budget is above budget profile due to increases in costs relating to the Microsoft Licence Agreement. These costs are not controllable as are linked to service requirements.

The fees and charges income relates to the traded services agreement with Mersey Travel and Sefton MBC for ICT support in relation to continued system support for Agresso implementation and ongoing system support.

An authority has pursued a client procurement process for Agresso in which Halton Borough Council has put in an expression of interest and at this point in time awaiting a decision. The result of this could have an impact on the current projections for income generation.

Based on current projections it is forecast the Department's net spend will exceed the available budget by £0.620m if no corrective action is taken. This is reduced from the £1m overspend forecast at Q1 due to the number of additional staff vacancies and lower than expected costs for computer repairs and software.

Capital Projects as at 30th September 2019

Capital Expenditure	2019/20 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
ICT Rolling Capital Programme	700	159	159	541
Total Capital Expenditure	700	159	159	541

Comments on the above figures.

It is expected that this capital programme will fully spend by year end.

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn Position £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	1765	942	943	(1)	(2)
Supplies & Services	271	136	138	(2)	(3)
Civic Catering & Functions	49	20	11	9	18
Legal Expenses	215	180	180	0	0
Transport Related Expenditure	11	9	8	1	3
Total Expenditure	2,311	1,287	1,280	7	16
Income					
Land Charges	-80	-28	-32	4	8
School SLAs	-80	-80	-80	0	0
Licence Income	-250	-98	-107	9	18
Government Grant	0	0	-21	21	21
Fees & Charges Income	-56	-65	-70	5	10
Total Income	-466	-271	-310	39	57
Net Operational Expenditure	1,845	1,016	970	46	73
Recharges					
Premises Support	64	32	32	0	0
Central Support Recharges	363	181	181	0	0
Support Recharges Income	-1,727	-863	-863	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,300	-650	-650	0	0
Net Department Expenditure	545	366	320	46	73

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms, spending is below budget profile at the end of quarter 2.

Budgeted employee spend is based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 39.

Within the expenditure budget areas, civic catering and functions is subject to demand, the projected underspend at quarter 2 is based on known and historic expenditure patterns.

The legal expenses budget is forecasting a balanced budget position. The budget is dependent on number of cases, so cannot be easily projected at this point in financial year.

Within the income budget areas an overachievement of income targets is forecast. This is primarily due to unbudgeted election grant income and license and land charges. The land charges and license income are hard to project as dependant on applications but historically these areas have overachieved against income targets.

Overall it is expected net spend will be below budget at end of financial year.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn Position £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	14,453	7,150	7,228	(78)	(134)
Premises	2,034	1,169	1,236	(67)	(143)
Supplies & Services	1,005	636	647	(11)	(23)
Book Fund	135	74	71	3	5
Hired & Contracted Services	932	269	289	(20)	(40)
Food Provisions	450	208	207	1	4
School Meals Food	1,919	777	765	12	24
Transport	115	45	44	1	2
Agency Costs	394	245	196	49	64
Waste Disposal Contracts	6,140	166	166	0	(55)
Grants To Voluntary Organisations	67	12	12	0	47
Grant To Norton Priory	172	86	87	(1)	(1)
Rolling Projects	26	26	26	0	0
Capital Financing	46	46	56	(10)	(10)
Total Expenditure	27,888	10,909	11,030	(121)	(260)
<u>Income</u>					
Sales Income	-1,672	-846	-629	(217)	(434)
School Meals Sales	-2,305	-844	-789	(55)	(110)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,909	-2,911	-2,590	(321)	(651)
Rents Income	-207	-101	-107	6	12
Government Grant Income	-1,198	-1,198	-1,021	(177)	(177)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-675	-174	-142	(32)	(64)
Schools SLA Income	-1,349	-1,349	-1,405	56	56
Internal Fees Income	-141	-67	-89	22	43
School Meals Other Income	-254	-105	-103	(2)	(4)
Catering Fees	-114	-25	-20	(5)	(30)
Capital Salaries	-173	-86	-88	2	5
Transfers From Reserves	-106	-96	-96	0	27
Total Income	-14,103	-7,802	-7,079	(723)	(1,327)
Net Operational Expenditure	13,785	3,107	3,951	(844)	(1,587)
<u>Recharges</u>					
Premises Support	1,499	749	749	0	0
Transport Recharges	2,365	1,194	1,099	95	191
Central Support Services	3,892	1,946	1,946	0	0
Asset Charges	146	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-647	-434	-434	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,255	3,455	3,360	95	191
Net Department Expenditure	21,040	6,562	7,311	(749)	(1,396)

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £749k over budget at the end of Quarter 2 and the estimated outturn overspend for 2019/20 is £1.396 million.

Employees spend is over budget, primarily due to staff turnover saving target which is not being achieved in many areas due to the need to maintain front line services. This is a particular issue for Schools Catering due to the service operating over a large number of sites, with a small number of permanent staff at each site, meaning cover for staff absence is essential.

There has been a staffing restructure at the Stadium which came into effect in mid-June and this has resulted in a reduction in spend on permanent salaries. Spend on casual staff has decreased by 36k compared to the end of Quarter 2 in 2018/19, despite an increase in casual pay rates. The increase in casual pay rates continues to have a significant effect on The Brindley and the Stadium which rely on large numbers of casual staff due to the uncertain nature and timing of events.

There has been an error with the Matrix contract for agency staff which has led to the Council being undercharged over a number of years. The Department has incurred charges of £74k in respect of this error in the current year.

Budgeted employee spend is based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 481.

Premises costs are £67k over budget at the end of Quarter 2. Repair and maintenance costs at the leisure centres are significantly over budget due to the poor condition of the ageing buildings. There has been a significant increase in both electricity and gas costs, which have impacted all of the sites managed by the Department. The biomass boiler at Brookvale Recreation Centre has been out of order for part of the year, meaning that gas has had to be purchased at additional cost from the backup supply from Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy.

Hired & contracted services spend is currently £20k over budget, mostly due to spend on acts at The Brindley. Artists performing at The Brindley are paid based on a percentage split of ticket sales. Ticket sales have been increasing year on year, and are forecast to increase again in 2019/20, therefore payments made to artists have had to increase due to the contract terms.

No invoices relating to the main waste disposal and recycling contracts have been received for 2019/20 which makes this area extremely difficult to project for. Projections based on similar tonnages to 2018/19 would lead to an overspend of approximately £55k across all of the contracts once reconciliations have been carried out by Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority.

Sales income has underachieved by £217k in Quarter 2. The main issues are with catering sales at the Stadium and in the Commercial Catering division. Sales income at the Stadium has been adversely affected by lower attendances at Widnes Vikings matches since their relegation from Super League. Low Commercial Catering sales have been an issue for several years and the situation has not improved so far in 2019/20.

Registrars income appears to be recovering after a poor year in 2018/19 which was caused by a nationwide reduction in marriage rates. The General Register Office has increased statutory registration fees this year which is likely to lead to increased income for the service.

Fees and charges income is once again the main area of budgetary pressure within the Department. There is no major concert planned at the Stadium for 2019/20, therefore the associated £105k income target will not be achieved. Stadium executive suite hire dropped significantly last year due to the relegation of Widnes Vikings, and it is impossible to project anything more positive for the new season starting in early 2020. Fees income at the leisure centres is likely to underachieve in 2019/20.

A major reason for this is due to difficulties in the recruitment and retention of swimming and fitness instructors, leading to cancelled swimming lessons and a lack of fitness classes, and should therefore be considered alongside a significant staffing underspend across the centres. There is also a new gym opening in Widnes in the autumn which could adversely impact membership income at Kingsway Leisure Centre.

The cancellation of the Vintage Rally means that the associated income target of £38k will not be achieved, while some costs for the event have already been incurred. Although some areas are struggling to achieve their budgeted fees and charges income, there are other areas within the Department that are performing well.

Crematorium fees are up by £68k on their Quarter 2 position last year, with the new resident's funeral package proving popular, as well as growth in the contract to provide cremations for a supplier of forest funerals. The green waste collection licence fee was increased for 2019/20 which has led to £87k more income being achieved in the first two quarters this year in comparison to last year.

Government grant income will underachieve in 2019/20 due to a shortfall in the Universal Infants Free School Meals Grant due to more schools converting to academy status. The shortfall in 2019/20 is £179k. This has had a significant impact on the Schools Catering budget.

Transport recharges are currently lower than expected in Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement leading to an underspend of £96k at the end of Quarter 2.

The outturn forecast is currently projecting an overspend at 31 March 2020 of £1.4m.

Capital Projects as at 30 September 2019

	2019/20 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	39	20	0	39
Stadium Pitch	21	0	0	21
Children's Playground Equipment	154	85	42	112
Landfill Tax Credits Scheme	20	2	2	18
Upton Improvements	13	5	0	13
Crow Wood Park Pavilion	320	217	217	103
Crow Wood Park Play Area	20	10	10	10
Open Spaces Schemes	560	200	249	311
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery	939	400	92	847
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – Enabling Works	11	5	7	4
Phoenix Park	3	3	3	0
Victoria Park Glass House	305	144	144	161
Sandymoor Playing Fields	40	25	27	13
Bowling Greens	32	10	2	30
Widnes & Runcorn Cemeteries – Garage & Storage	190	100	179	11
Town Park	200	75	7	193
Litter Bins	20	0	0	20
Community Shop	50	0	0	50
Libraries IT Equipment	94	83	83	11
Total	3,031	1,384	1,064	1,967

Comments on the above figures.

Stadium Pitch - It was necessary to replace the iPitch last year as the previous pitch did not meet FIFA standards for football matches. The work is mostly complete and the pitch is now in use. The contractor needs to come back on site to complete some follow up works later this year.

Children's Playground Equipment - This is an ongoing project which includes spend on maintenance and improvements within the borough's playgrounds.

Crow Wood Park – This project comprises a replacement park building, upgrades to paths and entrances and further play provision, and is now more than 50% complete.

Open Spaces Schemes – This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including works to Runcorn Locks, Sunnybank Park, Phoenix Park BMX Track, Runcorn Station Quarter, Hale Lighthouse Approach and Runcorn Hill Bowling Green.

Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – Work on the drainage at the site has now been completed. The main cemetery infrastructure works have now commenced and should be largely completed by the end of 2019/20.

Phoenix Park – Work at the site has been completed and the retention payment has been paid.

Sandymoor Playing Fields – The all-weather pitches and courts have now been completed and the grass pitches and planting are now in the establishment phase.

Widnes & Runcorn Cemeteries - Garage & Storage – Work at the Runcorn site is now complete and at the snagging stage. Work at the Widnes site is substantially complete, although there are still some contract invoices to be received.

Town Park –. The first phase of works on the southern paths have commenced and should be completed by the end of the year.

Community Shop – It is anticipated that the Council will release the funding to Community Shop in Quarter 3.

Libraries IT Equipment – The equipment has recently been installed in the libraries and is now in use. Most of the equipment has now been paid for, although there is an invoice for new coin boxes that has yet to be received.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn Position £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	4,522	2,326	2,293	33	65
Repairs & Maintenance	2,137	1,059	936	123	246
Premises	63	53	53	0	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	683	275	278	(3)	(7)
NNDR	530	524	532	(8)	(6)
Rents	301	173	173	0	0
Economic Regeneration Activities	34	5	4	1	2
Supplies & Services	1,643	874	877	(3)	(7)
Grants To Voluntary Organisations	58	25	25	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	217	117	117	0	0
Total Expenditure	10,188	5,431	5,288	143	292
<u>Income</u>					
Fees & Charges Income	-348	-185	-185	0	0
Rent – Commercial Properties	-1,106	-436	-394	(42)	(84)
Rent – Investment Properties	-44	-21	-21	0	0
Rent – Markets	-771	-378	-373	(5)	(9)
Government Grant Income	-1,691	-400	-400	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-212	-129	-127	(2)	(4)
Schools SLA Income	-512	-485	-478	(7)	(13)
Capital Salaries	-113	-90	-90	0	0
Transfers From Reserves	-940	-592	-592	0	0
Total Income	-5,737	-2,716	-2,660	(56)	(110)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,451	2,715	2,628	87	182
<u>Recharges</u>					
Premises Support	1,868	934	934	0	0
Transport	28	14	14	0	0
Asset Charges	4	0	0	0	0
Central Support Services	1,975	1,003	1,003	0	0
HBC Support Income	-6,560	-3,185	-3,185	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,685	-1,234	-1,234	0	0
Net Department Expenditure	1,766	1,481	1,394	87	182

Comments on the above figures

Finance has worked closely with Departmental colleagues to update the projections to try and achieve a balanced budget. The department continues to identify financial resources available to support the delivery of the service and allocate resources where needed most, whilst ensuring budget pressures are met.

The repairs and maintenance budget is forecast to be under budget, due to the works for new office accommodation at the Stadium being funded from capital.

Whilst the department can maintain effective control over expenditure, income still remains a budget pressure as majority of the income is externally funded and difficult to project.

Budgeted employee spend is based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 127.

Due to a number of properties becoming vacant and some subsequently being disposed, rental income has reduced this financial year, causing budget pressures. Operating costs continue to be incurred where commercial properties become vacant.

School SLA income will not be achieved again this financial year. Although the department has increased the SLA charges for 19/20, 100% of the costs are not being recovered because of the need to use causal/agency staff to cover sickness/leave in delivering the service. A review of SLA charges will be undertaken ahead of the next financial year.

The Department has put a hold on all vacancies within the various service areas to ensure the staff turnover saving target is met and also help reduce the negative variance within the income budgets.

The 19/20 savings target put forward by the Department has been achieved in year and every effort will be made to ensure that expenditure on controllable budgets is kept to a minimum within the financial year.

The outturn forecast is currently projecting an under spend at 31 March 2020 in the region of £182k.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Capital Projects as at 30 September 2019

	2019-20 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
3MG	126	40	40	86
Sci Tech Daresbury – EZ Grant	96	40	40	56
Solar Panel Golf Course	1,209	21	21	1,188
Murdishaw Redevelopment	38	0	0	38
Venture Fields	41	0	0	41
Former Crossville Depot	127	127	127	0
Linnets Club House	50	32	32	18
Advertising Screen at The Hive	100	0	0	100
Equality Act Improvement Works	300	198	198	102
Widnes Market Refurbishment	100	32	32	68
Broseley House	15	12	12	3
Kingsway House Moves	464	119	119	345
The Croft	30	0	0	30
Moor Lane Depot	247	4	4	243
Manor Park	37	0	0	37
Total	2,980	625	625	2,355

Comments on the above figures.

Sci Tech Daresbury EZ Grant – The remaining draw down for the project is being progressed by the Joint Venture. The project is currently out to tender with a contract award expected in September. Final draw down is expected in Quarter 3.

Solar Panel Golf Course – A main design, build, install and maintenance contractor has now been awarded and a final design has been agreed. Construction is likely to start on site during November with a view to complete and connect by March 2020.

Linnets Club House – All works completed to the junior block, new water and electrical supply works completed and the generator has been removed from site. All works to the new Linnets changing pavilion and ventilation system completed (retentions and final payments still to be made).

Widnes Market Refurb – Re-roofing works (incl internal decoration works) complete; the remaining Widnes Market projects are currently being reviewed and prioritised in line with the remaining budget.

Murdishaw Regeneration – The department is exploring options for Council investment into projects which will further the masterplan. Currently costing up bus stops on Barnfield Way, new signage and improvement to the community centre. Will also cost further highways improvements to local centre.

Equality Act Improvement Works – Changing Places facilities at Catalyst Museum and Phoenix Park complete. New entrance doors at Catalyst Museum complete. DDA works at Crow Wood Park complete. Emergency escape staircase at Bredon complete. 11 of 23 access orders complete, so 12 outstanding which will be completed this year. Further accessibility works planned around assistive hearing technology. The budget is anticipated to be spent at year end.

Kingsway House Moves – Final staff move on 22nd October, following which Kingsway will be cleared out of all furniture etc. and handed back on 29th Oct.

Broseley House- Demolition works cannot commence until all the ground floor tenants have vacated. Only 2 tenants now remain, the final lease expiring in July 2021. The oil tank store building has now been demolished and the security measures enhanced to the upper floors.




3MG – Alstom are in the process of approving and confirming their land take. HBC Field will be marketed in the autumn, with an aim to have all land subject to option or sale by June 2020.

Former Crossville Depot – The Retention payments has now been made, works on the project are complete.





8.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green 	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber 	Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved</i>
Red 	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Green 	Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber 	Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red 	Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N / A 	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.