

Public Document Pack



Corporate Policy and Performance Board

Tuesday, 5 September 2023 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn

S. Young

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor John Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Rosie Leck	Labour
Councillor Geoffrey Logan	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Angela McInerney	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Sharon Thornton	Labour
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

*Please contact Kim Butler on 0151 511 7496 or
kim.butler@halton.gov.uk for further information.*

The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 7 November 2023

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

Part I

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1. MINUTES	1 - 6
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, 6 June 2023
in the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), J. Bradshaw, Leck, Logan, A. Lowe, Thornton and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Hutchinson, A. McInerney and N. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, E. Dawson, J. Gallagher, P. Garnett, C. Hill and M. Reaney

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
CS1	MINUTES The Minutes from the meeting held on 24 January 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CS2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
CS3	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES 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. RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.	
CS4	ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 The Board considered a copy of the Annual Report from the Chair of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board for 2022/23. The Board had met four times during the year and the report set out the work carried out during the Municipal Year April 2022 to March 2023.	

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be noted.

CS5 CORPORATE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT - 01.04.22 - 31.03.23

The Board was provided with a report from the Interim Divisional Manager – HR Operations Division, Chief Executive’s Delivery, which presented details of health and safety management within the Authority from 1 April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

The report highlighted health and safety incidents that had taken place over the past 12 months and as a result of those incident, proposed actions for the future. In addition, the report included information around the number of actual near misses, accidents that had resulted over 7 day absences, together with significant accidents.

It was noted that in December 2022, the authority changed from 2 to 5 Directorates. The figures quoted in the report were given as overall figures. It was anticipated that a more detailed picture would emerge in the next report.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted including the recommendations and actions for 2023/24.

CS6 THE BIG CONVERSATION UPDATE

The Board received a presentation on “The Big Conversation” which was the Council’s approach to formulating a new Corporate Plan to take effect from April 2024.

“The Big Conversation” would engage with the public so that they understand the challenges of the Council. It would be an approach between the Council and everyone who lives or works in Halton to work together in order to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life.

The Corporate Plan Survey would consist of 5 themes and 6 questions. There would be different consultation methods depending on the audience. Responses will be monitored during the consultation period and any low response area will be targeted with iWalkers which proved to be an effective consultation method during the elections. Staff within the One-Stop-Shops and Libraries would be able to offer assistance to anyone who required help to complete the survey.

All feedback and responses would be scrutinised and evaluated and then in conjunction with North West Employers, be summarised accordingly to establish a number of key objectives to form the Council's new Corporate Plan.

Following the presentation, Members' discussions and comments included the following:

- The 5 themes were broad; consideration to be given to linking transport with the work of the Liverpool City Region;
- The Council needed to manage expectations and to not become unrealistic on what it could deliver;
- Work with forums already in existence e.g. children and young people.

The new Corporate Plan would be launch in April 2024.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the approach to facilitate "The Big Conversation".

CS7 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

The Board received a report which provided an update regarding delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 and spending plans for the Fund during 2023/24.

The Board noted the final expenditure of the Household Support Fund from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023. £167,314 was awarded by the Discretionary Support Scheme through its telephone application process. £536,592 was spent on school meal vouchers which were issued during school holidays and £405,500 was spent on supporting those vulnerable pensioner households who were in receipt of a council tax reduction.

The Benefits Division co-ordinated the use of the grant on behalf of the Council and Appendix A outlined how the grant funding was utilised via a combination of Council departments and the Voluntary Sector.

In February 2023, it was confirmed that Halton had been allocated grant funding of £2.6M. In April 2023, the Council's Executive Board approved a Spending Plan on how the allocation would be utilised. It was agreed to allocate £356,000 to the Discretionary Support Scheme

which would cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners and people with disabilities. It was estimated that the free school meals vouchers would cost approximately £1,170,000 and this would provide approximately 7,500 children with free school meals throughout all of the school holidays over the next 12 months.

In order to support vulnerable pensioner households, it was decided that all those in receipt of a Council Tax reduction would be provided with a one-off award of £120. It was estimated that 4,181 pensioner households would benefit from this award, at a total cost of £501,720.

In 2023/24, there would be additional funding allocations to Public Health, Care Leavers and Voluntary Sector Partners. It was agreed to allocate £100,000 to Public Health who would support vulnerable households who may fall outside those covered by the rest of the Spending Plan. They would also target support to those families who had pre-school aged children and who were flagged on the Income Deprivation Index affecting children. In addition, families who had disabled pre-school aged children. £82,126 was allocated for this project.

£82,127 was allocated to make a cost of living award to recent care leavers and to those young people who would become care leavers in the next 12 months.

Voluntary Sector partners would be again, asked to assist the Council with the delivery of support to residents. The grant allocations made for the previous 6 month period to Citizens Advice, Food Banks, Affordable Warmth etc had doubled for the coming year. Each organisation would be asked to provide a detailed proposal of how they intended to utilise the funding and provide a regular update to the Council with monitoring information for submission to the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP).

The Benefits Division would co-ordinate use of the grant on behalf of the Council and progress with delivery of the Household Support Fund during 2023/24 would be reported regularly to the Board. If the grant was not fully spent by 31 March 2024, and/or not spent in accordance with the grant guidance, it would be clawed back by the DWP.

RESOLVED: That:

- i) The actual delivery of the Household Support

Fund for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, as outlined in the report, be noted; and

- ii) The Spending Plan for the Household Support Fund for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 as presented in Appendix 2, be noted.

CS8 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES

The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 28 November 2022.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CS9 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 3 of 2022/23. 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;
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services; and
- Property Services.

Members of the Board subsequently commented on the report which included the following:

- Living Wage - It was suggested that in the next tranche of tender contracts for Domiciliary Care, consideration should be given as to whether there should be a stipulation regarding the Living Wage. However, it was stressed that this would inevitably result in significantly increased contract costs for the Council, which could not be funded.
- Recruitment Issues – concerns were raised about recruitment issues. It was noted that in order to address the problems, some roles have moved a rolling advert recruitment method. This would mean that any interested candidates would be asked to provide their CV, instead of completing an online

application, and thereafter any suitable applicants would be invited for an interview. So far, this operation has proved to be successful in the Adults Directorate, by speeding up recruitment processes and appointing candidates more quickly. These job opportunities are advertised on LinkedIn but Members also suggested that they could promote them via their social media sites.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 3 Performance Management report be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.30 p.m.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 5 September 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

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: 5 September 2023

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.

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2023

EBX2	DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW RERPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 2022-23
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the fourth quarter period to 31 March 2023, for the People Directorate (Social Care Health); and the Enterprise, Community and Resources Directorate.

The Board was advised that the Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from the relevant quarter for each Directorate and was aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council’s performance management arrangements and Executive Board had a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability. Performance Management would continue to be important in the demonstration of value for money and strengthening accountability.

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

EBX3	TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director: Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit, which provided an update on the following progress made within the Council’s Transformation Programme:

- a structure had been developed and appointed to. Further appointments would be made as projects progressed;
- projects had been set up and scoping completed. Appendix A set out a list of the projects and Appendix B set out a list of the initial savings estimated for the programme;
- reporting and governance arrangements had been agreed and a monthly report would be provided to the Board; and
- bi-monthly briefings would be provided to all Members.

The Board noted that all Members would receive bi-monthly updates on the work of the Transformation Team and update reports would also be submitted to Scrutiny Chairs’ meetings. It was therefore recommended that for the near future, the Budget Working Group meetings would not be required.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the contents of the update.

EBX4	2022/23 FINANICAL OUTTURN POSITION
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The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Finance, advising of the Council’s overall revenue net spending outturn position for the year 2022/23.

It was reported that preparation of the statutory statement of accounts for 2022/23 was nearing completion. The revenue spending position for each Department was shown in Appendix one; which presented a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget. Appendix two provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms, the outturn position for the year showed that operational net spend was over the approved budget by £5.161m. Appendix 3 contained the Capital Programme for each Directorate as at 31 March 2023.

The outturn position was a significant improvement on the forecast overspend of £7.586m reported at the end of quarter 3. There were a number of reasons for the improved financial position; these were detailed in the report. The key budget variances for the quarter were outlined for the Board, from the following Departments:

- Children and Families Department;
- Adult Social Care Department;
- Education, Inclusion and Provision;
- ICT & Support Services; and
- Corporate and Democracy;

Members were also advised on the reasons for the reliance on agency employees over the past year and the cost to the Authority for 2022/23.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council’s 2022/23 outturn position as presented in the report be noted, along with the importance of early delivery of the Re-imagine Halton Transformation Programme, to help reduce future costs and provide a balanced, sustainable budget position;
- 2) the proposal to replenish Council reserve balance within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, be noted; and
- 3) consideration is given by relevant Departments to utilise external enforcement agencies to help reduce the value of outstanding debt and improve debt recover times.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2023

EBX15	TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director: Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on the progress made within the Council's Transformation Programme. Work had continued to develop the scope of projects alongside service areas with a view to supporting changes that were designed to optimise operations, align service provision with demand and reduce the cost of service provision.

The Board noted the initial programme structure had been augmented to increase capacity as projects came on stream. The schedule of projects set out in Appendix A to the report had been updated to reflect this.

The programme methodology had also now become embedded and it balanced service involvement and ownership, with project support and challenge. The focus was now on applying the methodology through robust arrangements to identify and realise financial savings and service optimisation.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the contents of the update.

EXB16	TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23
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The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented the Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23.

The report updated Members on the activities undertaken on the money market, as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

Information was provided on the economic outlook, interest rate forecast, borrowing and investments, budget monitoring, policy guidelines and treasury management indicators. The Council's approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2022-23 were set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and was attached as Appendix one.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	5 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director, Environment & Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment & Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Programmes Office Update
WARD(S)	All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to Corporate PPB on the work of the Programmes Office in securing external funding resources into Halton.

The Report covers the following areas:

- An update on the Programmes Office key activities and priorities.
- Emerging issues in external funding.
- Funding statistics for the period 2022-2023.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board note the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Report focuses on the period April 2022-March 2023; statistics are included for this period and a comparative review of the last five-year financial period (between April 2018 and March 2023).
- 3.2 The Programmes Office's role is to help maximize external funding into the Borough and to undertake the monitoring for large-scale grant programmes to ensure compliance and eliminate clawback. The Office, formerly the External Funding Team, was established in October and consists of the following posts:

- Programmes Office Manager
- Senior Funding Development Officer
- Funding Development Officer
- Senior Monitoring Officer
- Monitoring Officer x 1.5
- Funding Support Assistant
- Promotions Officer 0.5

A Team Structure chart is provided at Appendix 1.

- 3.3 The Team is responsible for preparing medium to large-scale funding bids (primarily over £50,000) on behalf of Council colleagues, public sector partners, the voluntary sector and the private sector, with the aim of maximising external funding opportunities for Halton.

The Team focuses mainly on the following funding sources: Government, European, National Lottery, Landfill Funding, Trusts and Foundations.

Key functions of the Team include:

- Drafting or Proofing of large-scale funding bids.
- Monitoring of strategic grant programmes, including the submission of claims, in order to ensure compliance and eliminate clawback.
- Maintaining a strategic approach to funding to ensure the most appropriate bids from Halton are submitted and internal competition is averted.
- Undertaking funding searches for specific projects; bid writing and development of supporting documents, e.g., policies and business plans etc.
- Dissemination of funding information to target audiences, mainly via the production of monthly Funding Bulletins on a range of themes, including targeted Cost of Living and Climate Change Bulletins.
- Lobbying funders, developing strong relationships with key funding bodies, and participating in key forums to ensure Halton gets its fair share of funding.
- Developing strong partnerships with Council colleagues, and the voluntary and private sectors where appropriate, to submit joint bids.
- Develop and deliver a training programme for HBC colleagues and partner organisations to enable capacity building.

- 3.4 Key Priorities 2022-23

Emphasis over the period 2022-23 has been on:

- Embedding the new Programmes Office function, including recruitment to new posts
- Supporting the delivery of the Government's levelling up agenda, including Towns Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- Disseminating details of funding that will support the Cost of Living crisis
- Disseminating details of funding that will help mitigate climate change and help deliver HBC's Climate Change Action Plan
- Ensuring the remaining ESIF (European Strategic Investment

Fund) is secured, spent and monitored.

- Supporting the development of the HBC Cultural Strategy and Heritage Open Days programme.

Examples of schemes supported include:

- Town Deal Monitoring and servicing of Town Deal Board
- UKSPF programme delivery and monitoring
- Completion of Ways to Work employment support programme
- Destination Marketing Programme delivery
- Supporting HBC colleagues and voluntary sector partners with a range of schemes

We continue to look at how we can further support HBC colleagues to bid for funding for priority schemes in order that we do not miss out on any appropriate funding streams. We are now tracking funding secured by the whole Economy, Enterprise and Property Dept, rather than just Programmes Office and this will be included in the next Report.

4.0 FUNDING CONTEXT AND EMERGING ISSUES

4.1 External Funding Environment – Challenges and Opportunities

- 4.1.1 Much funding, including National Lottery, now has a Cost of Living focus and we responded to this by producing a separate funding bulletin for a period of time which highlighted funding for organisations to support people experiencing difficulties relating to cost of living issues. An example of the Cost of Living Bulletin is included at Appendix 2.

Funders are also generally placing more emphasis on environmental sustainability /impact across all types of projects and programmes; this aligns with the Government's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and the Team will be looking to ensure that all bids supported consider green measures in relation to their projects. We are supporting the Council's Climate Action Plan through identifying and helped to secure four grants from LCR's Community Environment Fund. We also sit on HBC's Climate Action Plan Group and produce a Climate Change Bulletin which identifies funding that could support this work – an example of the Bulletin is included at Appendix 3.

Additionally, funders are expecting bids to address EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) in all funding bids and again the Team is supporting potential bids to meet these requirements.

The Team continues to keep abreast of Government's levelling up agenda and any funding associated with this, e.g Towns Fund, UKSPF, Levelling Up Fund and Community Ownership funding. The

Team is tracking all of these funds and prioritizing bids that HBC wishes to submit.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) continues to be the conduit for funding streams including One Public Estate, SIF, Community Environment Fund etc and the Team supports colleagues to access these funds where appropriate.

The Programmes Office, working in close collaboration with other Departments, needs to ensure well-planned, competitive, sustainable and, where possible, innovative projects are put forward for Halton's priorities.

The Programmes Office aims to respond to any changes in the current funding environment and maintain knowledge of new strands of funding; the Team maintains regular contact with some of the key funders, including landfill funders, Lottery funders and European and Government funding bodies.

The Programmes Office is able to provide the necessary expertise and experience regarding current bid-writing best-practice and key funder priorities and act as a liaison point with the funders. In a highly competitive field, the Team provides a critical yet objective eye to highlight both the threats and opportunities within each organisational plan, project proposal and chosen funding body. The Team has introduced a Business Justification Case to be completed by the lead officer before any support is initiated; this ensures that potential bids have been approved by senior management and have the resource in place to develop and deliver the project. A copy of this is included at Appendix 2.

Projects supported during 2022-23 in which the Team played a key role in securing and monitoring important grant investment to the Borough include:

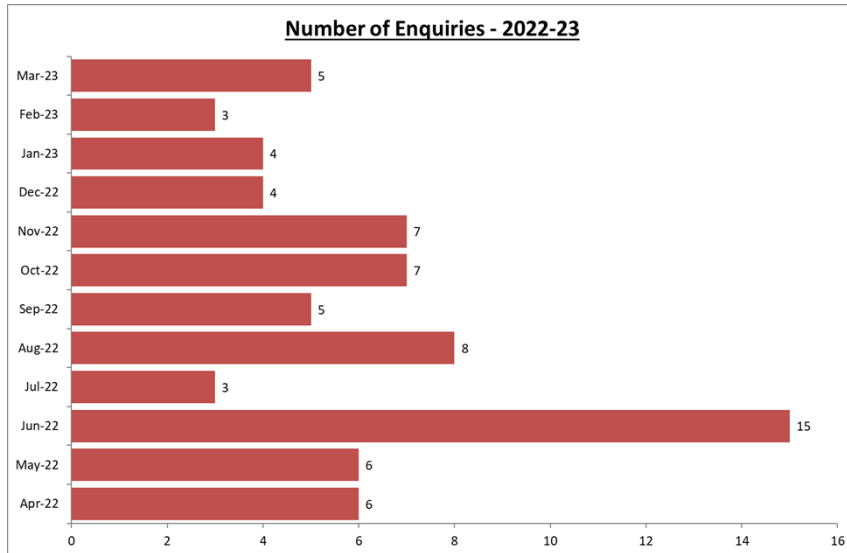
- St Berteline's Windmill Hill for the reconfiguration of the church building;
- Wat Phra Singh Buddhist Temple for replacement windows and a community garden;
- Trinity Safe Space to deliver support and activities for vulnerable people;
- LCR Community Environment Fund – four grants secured to deliver green projects in Halton;
- Development and Delivery of Halton's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation;
- Delivery of Halton's element of an LCR-wide Destination Marketing campaign to promote the Borough to residents and visitors.

The work of the Team is summarised in our Annual Funding Review

which goes out to our networks – the latest version is included at Appendix 4.

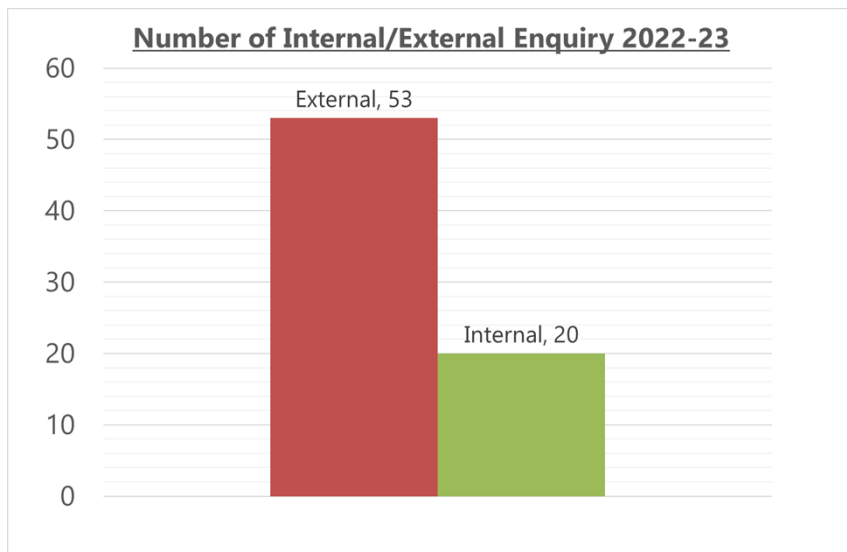
4.1.2 Capacity and Demand

Demand for the service remains steady; the Team received 73 requests for funding in 2022/23, many of which remain active with ongoing support. They are broken down by month in the table below.

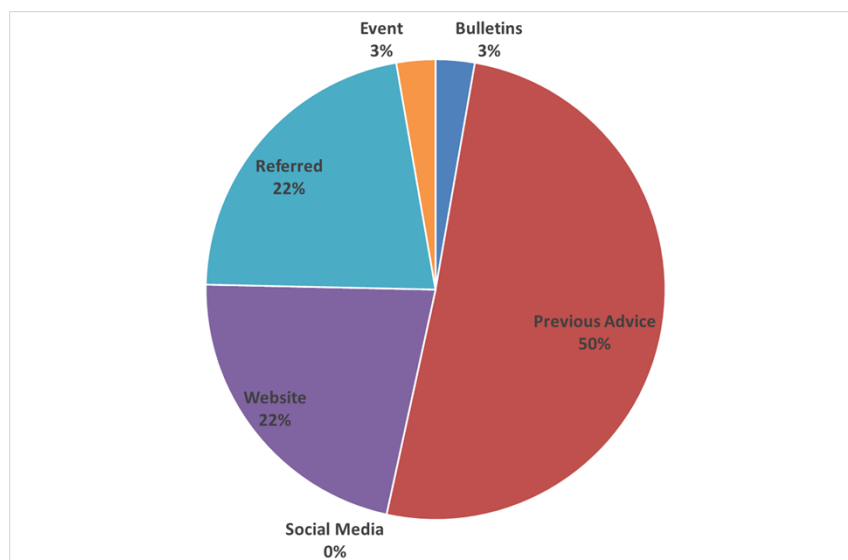


The Team works to full capacity which means decisions need to be made at times about where to allocate support, allowing the ability to respond to new enquiries and priorities, manage tight deadlines for bids, horizon scan to ensure opportunities are not missed etc.; Importantly, the Team does not drive projects, but specialises in sourcing funding and bid-writing; the Team does not 'own' bids, the 'owner' needs to drive the project as the specialist in that particular area.

Enquiries can be broken down into internal and external as follows:



This table shows a breakdown of the sources of funding.



Funding secured this year by the Programmes Office is £1.499m; this is lower than usual which sometimes is the case; the Team can be dealing with bids that take a long time to develop and then to receive a decision. Our current work profile includes the following:

Bids submitted awaiting a response - £5.2 million

Bids in draft - £4.9 million

The Team is currently monitoring projects worth £47.9 million. Our pipeline list gives a current profile of the projects the Team will be supporting over the coming year; this pipeline is subject to new priorities being identified – should this be the case; the new projects will be discussed with the Operational Director and relevant Portfolio Holder.

4.2 Key Schemes

Details of some of the key schemes the Team is currently supporting are outlined below:

4.2.1 Town Deal

The £23.6 million Town Deal Programme for Runcorn is one of the key priorities for the team. We are responsible for servicing the Town Deal Board meetings and also for collating and submitting the twice yearly monitoring reports which triggers an annual payment from Government.

One officer in the monitoring arm of the team is attached to each of the 8 schemes and works closely with the project leads to ensure monitoring information is collected and any risks mitigated.

We work closely with our finance officer to manage and profile the budgets, to ensure compliance and prevent the clawback of any funding.

4.2.2 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**

The Programmes Office is leading on the monitoring of Halton's allocation of the Government's UKSPF funding stream; Halton is due to receive 7.9% of the total allocation and this t present amounts to around £3.5 million over the three year period 2022-2025.

Funding is released in phases and the strands that are currently live are:

- Green, Resilient, Safe Communities
- Local Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Town Centres

An Investment Plan was submitted to cover these three strands which total £608k to end March 2025. Quarterly claims in arrears are made to the CA.

Forthcoming strands include a business support programme and an employment support programmes.

4.2.3 **Destination Marketing**

The Programmes Office is delivering Halton's allocation of an LCR Destination Marketing programme; this is funded through the Strategic Investment Fund and runs from 2022-2025. Halton's allocation is £102,000 and the purpose of the programme is to encourage visitors to Liverpool to disperse around the Boroughs as part of their visit with a view to increasing visitor spend in those areas.

In Halton we have commissioned a specialist company called Vivid to deliver a series of campaigns to promote Halton, to relaunch the Visit Halton website and to re-establish Halton's Visitor Economy Network. Vivid are currently delivering a Halton Heritage Open Days campaign for the national Heritage Open Days scheme in September.

4.2.4 **Community and Voluntary Sector**

The Programmes Office maintains a remit to support voluntary and community sector organisations to secure funding to support their services as well as help deliver Halton's strategic priorities.

Projects currently being supported include:

- Catalyst Science Discovery Centre and Museum to develop a

£1 million bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund to redevelop its heritage gallery and activity.

- St Bede's Church – capital work and community programme
- Open 360 – monitoring of National Lottery Community Fund grant
- Libraries Improvement Fund Arts Council bid

4.2.5 **Liverpool City Region and Cultural/Visitor Economy work**

The Team continues to undertake some key work with Liverpool City Region and Halton partners in relation to Visitor Economy and Culture:

- The Lead Funding Officer sits on the LEP's Visitor Economy Officers Group and is currently delivering the Halton element of a SIF funded Destination Management programme and on the Liverpool City Region Heritage Officers Group;
- The Team supports Cultivate: Halton Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) with funding bids to deliver a quality arts and cultural programme for people in Halton;
- The Lead Funding Officer sits on the LCR Culture Officers Group which is currently delivering an LCR-wide Bridge to Bamboo project;
- The Programmes Office Manager played a key role in the development of Halton's Cultural Strategy which will be published imminently and which is critical in securing funding via the Arts Council of England and National Lottery Heritage Fund. They also sit on Halton's Events Board looking to deliver a programme of cultural activity in the Borough;
- The Programmes Office also sits on and supports HBC's Climate Action Group, in particular identifying funding sources to enable the delivery of HBC's Climate Action Plan. The Team produces a monthly Climate Change Funding Bulletin.

4.3 **Impact Assessment work**

The Economy, Enterprise and Property Department agreed to undertake value system mapping exercises to look at where working practices could be made leaner; the Programmes Office chose to scrutinise the funding enquiry process and where this could be made more efficient and effective.

The exercise tracked how many funding enquiries were received, where from, which ones were retained by the team, which referred, which enquiries led onto successful funding bids etc;

Key findings included: two thirds of enquiries came from outside HBC and one third from colleagues; approximately half of all enquiries were referred on to more suitable support; approximately 2% of enquiries

were progressed and led on to funding bids; the longer the time spent working on a case led to a higher level of funding being secured.

The exercise concluded that the vast majority of enquirers were satisfied with the quality of service received and that the team works well with a wide range of groups and projects; it also led to a number of areas of improvement, for example, following up enquiries that don't return enquiry forms and the reasons for this; projects that are supported for a period then go quiet after time and effort have been expended by the team to develop bids; further engage with HBC colleagues who may not be aware of the services offered by the Programmes Office.

This will now be monitored on an annual basis and also other areas of the team's field of work scrutinised with the aim of continuing to improve the service offered.

4.4 Training

The Team has traditionally delivered a free Training Programme which is available to HBC colleagues and externally to the voluntary and other public sector partners which consisted of the following sessions:

- 2 x half-day Bid-Writing sessions.
- 2 x half day Monitoring and Evaluation sessions.
- 2 x half day Now You've Got Your Grant sessions.
- 2 x Developing a Fundraising Strategy.

The training sessions are continually updated to improve bid-writing skill levels among both internal and external colleagues and also give a greater understanding of the context in which funding bids are submitted helping to ensure that bids are prioritised and of the highest possible quality.

The Team has reviewed its training delivery and now offers instead bespoke courses to individual teams or organisations; we have already delivered a bid-writing course to colleagues in the Development and Investment Department and will be rolling out these courses to other HBC Departments over the coming year.

4.5 Funding Data

4.5.1 Funding Secured

In 2022-23 the Team helped to secure funding of £1.499m. The tables below summarise the funding secured in 2022-23 using different data sets:

Quarter	Funding Secured
---------	-----------------

1	£144,994
2	£294,500
3	£229,000
4	£830,997

Type	Funding Secured
Ext	£735,491
Int	£764,000

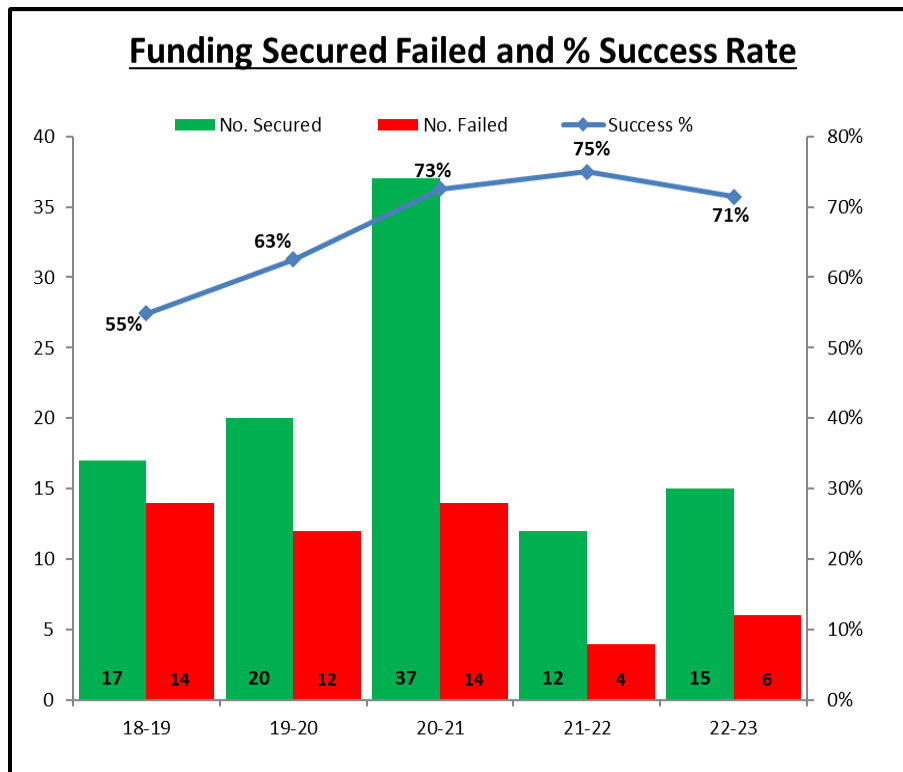
Funder	Funding Secured
Gov. Funding	£772,096
Landfill Trust	£295,997
National Lottery	£244,500
Trust Funding	£186,898

Organisation	Funding Secured
Catalyst SDC	£94,500
CHI	£150,000
HBC	£662,000
LCR/HBC	£102,000
Open 360	£23,035
Recharge & Restore CIC	£8,096
St Bertelines PCC (Windmill Hill)	£281,000
Trinity Methodist Church	£113,863
Wat Phra Singh Temple	£64,997

The table below shows details of the funding secured by the Programmes Office between April 2018 and March 2023.

Year	Funding Secured
2018-19	£3.12m
2019-20	£6.07m
2020-21	£12.7m
2021-22	£13.4m
2022-23	£1.49m

The total funding secured by the Programmes Office in the 5-year period was **£36.78m**. The table below show a graph of our percentage success rate with the number of bids failed and secured.



In the first few months of financial year 2023/24 we have secured funding of £295,941.

5.0 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

5.1 The Team's workload remains extremely busy; we continue to prioritise funding that is emerging through the Governments levelling up agenda, as well as funding opportunities via the Combined Authority in order to support HBC's priorities and to ensure Halton bids for these funds where appropriate. At the same time, we will continue with our remit to support our voluntary sector colleagues to secure funding to deliver their vital services across the Borough.

5.2 The external funding environment remains vibrant, if not competitive, and we look forward to securing further investment into the Borough in the year ahead to support the corporate vision and key strategic schemes going forward.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

All projects that request support from the Programmes Office must be supporting at least one of the Council's priorities.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

9.1 None identified.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

10.1 None identified.

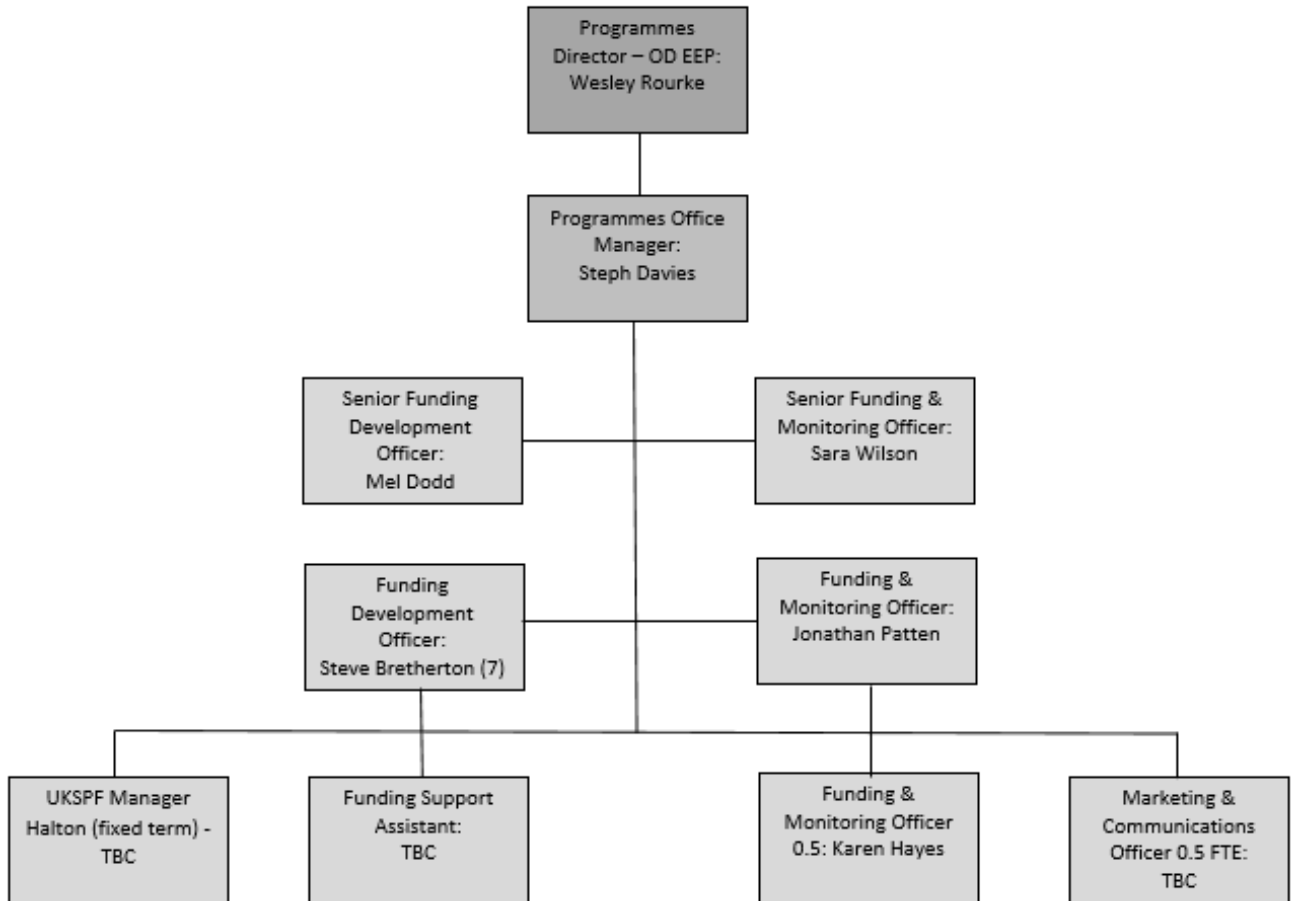
11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None identified.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Programmes Office Structure



Cost of Living Funding Opportunities

Over recent months an increasing number of households have been struggling with rising prices for food, fuel & other essential goods leading to a cost-of-living crisis. To alleviate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, support organisations i.e., charities & community groups, as well as individuals can apply for a range of grants. Funding may be available from a range of sources including Central Government; Local Authorities; Community Foundations & Grant Making Bodies.

1. Government Support

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, the Government has launched a support package targeted at those most vulnerable households. The support available includes:

- £15 billion energy bill rebate package.
- £650 Cost of Living payment for those on benefits.
- £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment.
- £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment.
- The Warm Homes Discount.
- Winter Fuel Payments.
- Cold Weather Payments.

Information on Government help available can be [found here](#).

2. Community Foundations

Within the UK there is a network of 47 Community Foundations. These cover specific geographic areas ranging from countries like Scotland, Northern Ireland & Wales to smaller areas i.e., specific counties or cities. Community Foundations are grant making bodies that exist to benefit disadvantaged communities. Grants are awarded to charitable, community or voluntary organisations. *In many cases these grants can be used to alleviate the impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis.* Each Community Foundation has its own grant making priorities and programmes to reflect the needs of its area. The list of Community Foundations can be found [here](#)

3. Local Authority Help

Local councils may be able to help individuals to pay for things like:

- energy and water bills.
- food.
- essential items such as for example clothes or household items such as cookers, etc.

This help is known as 'welfare assistance' or the 'Household Support Fund'. Each council runs their own scheme. The help they offer and who can get it varies. Individuals should ask their local council if they run a welfare assistance or Household Support Fund scheme. [Find out how to contact your local council on GOV.UK](#).

4. Funders Currently Accepting Applications

UK YOUTH FUND COVID FUNDING
Deadline:
Applications can be made at any time until all funding has been allocated.
Details:
A new £5m fund has been launched to support youth groups through the cost-of-living crisis. Organisations with an annual income of up to £500,000 who are facing unprecedented demand or whose work is being hindered due to rising core costs can apply for 3-year, unrestricted grants of approximately 10% of their current turnover. The funding is being offered to ensure that as many youth services as possible can continue to support young people in their local community. To be eligible, the applicant organisation must have a primary goal of providing services for young people. At least 70% of the organisation's beneficiaries must be between the ages of 8-25. Organisations will hear the outcome of their application within 4-6 weeks.
How to apply:
https://www.ukyouth.org/costofliving/

CASH FOR KIDS COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS
Deadline:
Applications will close when all funding is allocated.
Details:
The Cost-of-Living Fund will target families who have a genuine need for support & are suffering from disadvantage, allowing them to apply for grants of £50 per child which can be used for essentials i.e., food, heating, clothing, & school uniform. Service providers who support vulnerable children, including schools, social services, health professionals etc., can apply on behalf of the families they work with.
How to apply:
https://cashforkids.org.uk/grants

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME
Deadline:
Deadline extended to March 2024.
Details:
The Holiday Activities and Food Programme provides free meals & activities to children in disadvantaged areas during school holidays. Funding for 2023 will allow every local authority to continue supporting families in need. The programme is targeted at school-aged children from reception to year 11 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals & is available during the summer, Easter, & Christmas breaks. The government is also extending Household Support Fund which provides payments for food, clothing, utilities to vulnerable households.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/government/news/holiday-help-holiday-activity-clubs-continue-in-2023

BBC CHILDREN IN NEED EMERGENCY ESSENTIALS PROGRAMME
Deadline:
Applications can be made at any time.
Details:
BBC Children in Need Emergency Essentials Programme supports children and young people who are facing exceptionally difficult circumstances and is delivered by Family Fund Business Services. The programme provides items that meet a child's most basic needs such as a bed to sleep in, a cooker to provide a hot meal and other items or services critical to a child's wellbeing.
How to apply:
https://www.familyfundsolutions.co.uk/emergency-essentials/

BEATRICE LAING TRUST
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Trust funds projects concerned with the <i>relief of poverty or distress</i> , particularly those relating to children, & advancement of evangelical Christian faith, both at home & abroad. The Trust offers grants to UK registered charities working in UK, in developing countries & overseas. Grants are generally on a one-off basis for capital purposes i.e., purchase or construction of new premises, building extension, redevelopment/refurbishment, or purchase of equipment & vehicles.
How to apply:
https://www.laingfamilytrusts.org.uk/about-us/beatrice-laing-trust/

ASDA FOUNDATION'S COST OF LIVING GRANT
Deadline:
The application window will remain open until the budget cap has been reached.
Details:
Grants of up to £2,000 are available to support local charities, community groups & other not-for-profits following increases in their rent, utility bills & food costs because of cost-of-living crisis. Funding is available to help organisations keep buildings open, and/or to continue to support those most impacted through provision of meals, community cafes, food parcels, delivered meals.
How to apply:
https://www.asdafoundation.org/how-to-apply

BENEFACT TRUST GENERAL GRANTS PROGRAMME
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Benefact Trust (formerly known as the All Churches Trust) offers grants to Christian charities and organisations across the United Kingdom and Ireland that aim to help communities thrive and tackle social issues such as <i>helping vulnerable families</i> , homelessness and poverty to climate change and cultural cohesion. Through the General Grants Programme, the Trust supports the repair, restoration, protection and improvement of churches, cathedrals, and other places of Christian worship where changes support wider community use and enable greater impact.
How to apply:
https://benefacttrust.co.uk/which-grant-is-for-me/general-grants

ARTEMIS CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Artemis Charitable Foundation makes donations to charities operating in the UK and internationally primarily in 4 key areas; health; education; <i>poverty</i> ; & the environment.
How to apply:
https://www.artemisfunds.com/en/about-artemis/artemis-foundation-application-guidelines

BUTTLE UK - CHANCES FOR CHILDREN GRANTS
Deadline:
Applications can be made at any time.
Details:
Grants of up to £2,000 are available to support the needs of vulnerable children and young people who have experienced a <i>recent crisis</i> or change in life that has had a significant impact on their social and emotional wellbeing and their education. Support might include items and activities to support learning and development such as laptops, books, wi-fi, educational toys, tuition, etc; clothing and school uniforms; and social, sporting and leisure activities; and items for children/ young people's bedrooms. Buttle UK will only accept applications from frontline professionals (from a registered charity, housing association or public sector organisation).
How to apply:
https://buttleuk.org/apply-for-a-grant/chances-for-children-grants/

BRITISH GAS TRUST ENERGY SUPPORT FUND
Deadline:
The fund will remain open until all the money invested has been awarded.
Details:
Through the fund, thousands of eligible British Gas customers with fuel debt of £250-£1,500, can apply for grants to help pay their energy bills over the coming months. To be considered for the individuals & families fund you must meet all the following criteria:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants live in England, Scotland, or Wales. • Applicants have not received a grant from the British Gas Energy Trust within the last 2 years. • Applicants must be seeking a grant to clear an outstanding debt on a current or open gas, electricity or dual fuel energy account in your name or be a member of that household. The energy account must relate to your main residence. • Applicants have electric and/or gas debt. • Applicants do not have savings above £1,000. • Applicants have received help from a money advice agency.
In addition, the Trust also runs the Individual and Families Debt Write Off Fund which is open to British Gas and non-British Gas customers with an energy debt between £250-£1500.
How to apply:
https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/

COSARAF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION'S HARDSHIP GRANTS
Deadline:
Applications can be made at any time and are assessed every 6 weeks.
Details:
Grants of up to £2,000 are available to charities, housing associations, schools & social services providing support for individuals/families who are in financial need. Grants will support individuals & families who have exhausted all other sources of funding & are struggling with everyday costs, i.e., basic living expenses, household items & utilities, work or education-related expenses or rent arrears. Priority will be given to most financially excluded people; families over individuals; those with caring responsibilities & items that will make the most difference to the individual/family's long-term future. Other than in exceptional cases, grants will only be made available for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household items (white goods and occasionally other items i.e., sofas, wardrobes etc.). • Basic Living Expenses (Utilities or food). • Work- or education-related expenses (interview clothes, school uniforms, laptops). • Rent arrears & Council tax arrears, only where there is a clear/obvious risk of homelessness. • Contribution to immigration-related costs, where the current immigration status directly causes financial hardship to the applicant.
How to apply:
https://www.cosaraf.org/apply-for-funding/hardship-grants/

EDF CUSTOMER SUPPORT FUND
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The EDF Customer Support Fund awards grants to vulnerable customer households. It aims to provide customers with a fresh start and financial stability. It can help households stay out of fuel debt and better able to afford ongoing energy costs. The Fund also offers grants to buy essential energy efficient white goods such as cookers, refrigerators, or washing machines.
How to apply:
https://www.edfenergy.com/for-home/help-centre/faq/extra-support-when-you-need-it?steps=23147#chapter-23146-3

EDITH MURPHY FOUNDATION
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Edith Murphy Foundations purpose is to support other organisations (predominantly, but not exclusively, other registered charities) that: carry out research; support individuals who by reason of their age, youth, infirmity, disablement, poverty , or social/economic circumstances are suffering hardship, distress or are otherwise in need; relieve suffering & care for unwanted animals. Value of grants is normally £500-£5,000 although larger grants are made in sometimes.
How to apply:
https://edithmurphy.co.uk/

E-ON NEXT ENERGY FUND
Deadline:
Applications are open to individual customers of e-on & application can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The aim of the E-ON Next Energy Fund is to help E-ON Next customers who are experiencing financial hardship and struggling. There are two ways this fund can help: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first option is to help with paying gas and electricity bills through grants, helping individual to become financially stable and to get back control of their finances. • The other option is to provide a replacement appliance such as a cooker, fridge, fridge-freezer or washing machine if yours has broken or poor condition.
How to apply:
https://www.eonnextenergyfund.com/

FRIENDS OF THE ELDERLY GRANTS FOR OLDER PEOPLE
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Friends of the elderly provide support for older people affected by loneliness & grants for those living on a <i>low income</i> . Grants of up to £400 to older people who are of/over state pension age & have savings of less than £4,000. Funding is currently being provided thru 4 schemes: Home Essentials to help with cost of replacing everyday items, small home repairs/mobility adaptations; digital connection to help older people get online; financial support to help with unexpected bills; <i>Essential Living Costs including clothing, food, medicines & books</i> . Applications must be made 3 rd party Referral Agent such as charities, local authority and social services representatives.
How to apply:
https://www.fote.org.uk/our-charity-work/grants-2/

HENRY SMITH CHARITY IMPROVING LIVES
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Improving Lives programme provides grants to charitable organisations that help people in need when other sources of support have failed, are inappropriate, or are simply not available. Funding of £20,000-£60,000 per year for a maximum of 3 years is available to established organisations delivering services directly to beneficiaries. One of the key areas is to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have the support, information, and advice to address their financial issues. • People can navigate benefits, migration/asylum systems, claim their rights/entitlements. • People have improved financial literacy, are more able to understand their finances and have greater confidence when budgeting and managing their money.
How to apply:
https://www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/explore-our-grants-and-apply/improving-lives-grants-programme/improving-lives-grants-programme-overview/

HENRY SMITH CHARITY STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time and decisions are usually made within 6 months.
Details:
Grants of £20,000-£60,000 per year for up to 3 years are available to community-led charities & not-for-profits working to support communities in the most deprived areas of the UK. The programme focuses on supporting the running costs of organisations working at grass-roots level, to ensure that funding reaches the most disadvantaged areas, targeting places that are economically marginalised & affected by poverty. Funding could be used to increase existing service provision, take on a new staff member, improve sustainability or cover small capital costs.
How to apply:
https://www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/explore-our-grants-and-apply/strengthening-communities-grants/strengthening-communities-overview/

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND
Deadline:
Individuals are encouraged to contact their upper tier local authority & ask what help is available.
Details:
In recognition of ongoing cost-of-living crisis, Dept. for Work & Pensions is investing an additional £842m to help more low-income households to afford essentials. The scheme has been extended until the end of March 2023 to help those most in need with the rising costs of energy, food, water and other related essentials. The funding will be distributed by Local Authorities who will define eligibility criteria, the application process, as well as what the money can be spent on.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nearly-nine-million-grants-from-first-round-of-household-support-fund

INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS BENEVOLENT FUND
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Institute of Physics (IOP) aim is to advance physics education, research & application by providing positive & compelling experiences of physics to public audiences through engaging & entertaining activities & events. The Benevolent Fund provides financial help to IOP members, or their dependants, facing critical <i>needs</i> that cannot otherwise be met.
How to apply:
https://www.iop.org/physics-community/member-latest/covid-19/benevolent-fund

JORDISON & HOSSELL ANIMAL WELFARE CHARITY
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Charity provide one off-grants of no more than £250 for pet owners who are on no income and are on some form of pension or benefits only & cannot pay for vets' bills. Only grants for small Pets, no grants are available for chronic illness, cosmetic surgery (such as teeth claw clipping), spaying, neutering, castrating or euthanasia etc. Pet owners cannot apply directly.
How to apply:
https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/grant/jordison-and-hossell-animal-welfare-charity-12924

LONGLEIGH FOUNDATION INDIVIDUAL HARDSHIP GRANTS
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Individual Hardship grants are available to Stonewater Residents who are experiencing <i>short-term hardship or crisis situations</i> , i.e., Sickness resulting in sudden unemployment & short-term lack of funds, support may be needed for food vouchers; Oven or fridge requiring emergency replacement. Maximum grant value is £1000 per household in any 12-month period.
How to apply:
https://longleigh.org/our-grants/individual-grants/

MAGIC LITTLE GRANTS
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Localgiving has teamed up with the Postcode Community Trust to provide the Magic Little Grants programme. The fund provides small charities and community groups with grants of £500 for projects that address a range of community, social, environmental and health issues including preventing or reducing the impact of poverty.
How to apply:
https://localgiving.org/magic-little-grants/

MORTGAGE ADVICE BUREAU FOUNDATION
Deadline:
No application deadline is given.
Details:
Charities can apply for up to 50% of their crowdfunding target, up to maximum of £5,000, to support projects that match 1 or more of following themes: environment/conservation; health /wellbeing; prevention or relief of poverty. Projects could include rewilding projects, community gardens, social inclusion/mental health projects, sports projects, community food banks, money management/budgeting skills & educational projects for communities to reduce carbon footprint.
How to apply:
https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/mortgage-advice-bureau-foundation

OVO ENERGY FUND
Deadline:
No deadline specified.
Details:
The OVO Energy Fund is a fund that helps people who've fallen behind with their energy payments to OVO. To qualify, individuals need to be in receipt of one of the following: Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, or Universal Credit (but only if not working). In addition to qualify the energy debt on the energy account needs to be at least £150 and the annual household income is £16,190 or less.
How to apply:
https://www.ovoenergy.com/help/debt-and-energy-assistance

NATIONAL GRID ENERGY SUPPORT FUND
Deadline:
No deadlines specified.
Details:
The National Grid energy support fund to provide support for consumers struggling with rising energy costs over next 2 winters. Funding will be awarded to a group of charities providing support for vulnerable households & advice on energy efficiency measures to lower bills long term. It will enable organisations to increase the number of staff giving advice on phone lines, provide fuel vouchers & improve energy efficiency of households. Among the beneficiaries, Citizens Advice & Fuel Bank Foundation will receive £10m each, with National Energy Action receiving £1.5m.
How to apply:
https://www.nationalgrid.com/national-grid-announces-ps50-million-energy-support-fund-winter-and-next

PERSIMMON COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Persimmon Homes Charity Foundation is providing grant funding of up to £1000 to registered charities, clubs, schools, and other organisations which have already raised vital funds themselves towards projects to enhance their local community. The total available each month to support local good causes is £60,000. The type of projects supported to date have included support for <i>foodbanks</i> ; projects within schools; and sports projects; etc.
How to apply:
https://www.persimmonhomes.com/community-champions

TESCO COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME
Deadline:
This grant is open to applications. Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Tesco Community Grants Programme will use the money raised from the 5p bag charge in Tesco stores across England, Wales, and Scotland to pay for a large number of local projects. Tesco Community Grants fund thousands of local community projects across the UK, helping to fight <i>holiday hunger</i> , tackle mental health, support young people, host community events and much more. Since 2016 the scheme has supported over 40,000 community groups with more than £90 million in grants. Tesco Community Grants is open to charities and community organisations to apply for a grant of up to £1,500. Every three months, three local good causes are selected to be in the blue token customer vote in Tesco stores throughout the UK.
How to apply:
https://tescocommunitygrants.org.uk/

SWIRE CHARITABLE TRUST
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Swire Charitable Trust makes grants to charities supporting some of the UK's most vulnerable people to overcome barriers and realise their potential, and to charities who are protecting the environment and heritage. There is no maximum or minimum grant size. The Trust runs a rolling programme with regular grant making meetings. Once applications have been submitted applicants can expect to receive an outcome within 2-3 months of submission.
How to apply:
https://www.swirecharitabletrust.org.uk/

SCOTTISH POWER HARDSHIP FUND
Deadline:
No deadline specified.
Details:
Because some customers have difficulties paying their bills due to low income or other circumstances, Scottish Power has a Hardship Fund to help them get their energy payments under control. The Fund can help by clearing or reducing arrears by crediting a customer's Scottish Power energy account. To qualify, individuals need to be in receipt of one of the following: Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Pension Credit, or Employment and Support Allowance.
How to apply:
https://community.scottishpower.co.uk/t5/Extra-Help/Hardship-Fund/ta-p/53

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION COST OF LIVING GRANT
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Royal British Legion Cost of Living Grants are available to all serving and ex serving armed forces personnel, their dependents, and carers. The programme is designed to allow the RBL to assist people who need help in a quick and easy way with everyday essentials such as kitchen appliances, clothes, and energy costs. No minimum or maximum grant amounts are specified.
How to apply:
https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/financial-and-employment-support/finance/grants/cost-of-living-grants

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION EVERYDAY NEEDS GRANTS PROGRAMME
Deadline:
Applications can be made at any time and should be assessed within 5 days of submission.
Details:
Grants of up to £2,400 are available to help UK Armed Forces veterans & their families who are struggling to pay their bills due to the cost-of-living crisis. Funding is available to support people who need help with everyday essentials i.e., kitchen appliances, clothes & energy costs. The initiative will provide non-repayable emergency grants of up to £200 a month for up to 12 months.
How to apply:
britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/financial-&-employment-support/grants/cost-of-living-grants

THE ANTON JURGENS CHARITABLE TRUST
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Anton Jurgens Charitable Trust awards grants to charities that work to improve the lives of socially disadvantaged and disabled individuals of all ages. Funding amounts are determined by the Trustees and have typically been between £1,000 and £6,000 in the past. To be eligible for funding, charities must be registered in the UK & have an annual income of less than £1m.
How to apply:
https://www.antonjurgensfonds.nl/en/applications/ajct/

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - CRISIS GRANT
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Royal British Legions Crisis Grant aims to support serving and ex-serving armed forces personnel and their families with unexpected expenses. The grant does not provide cash but can provide essentials for applicants and their family in times of need. A grant might help you cover the costs of something like: Vouchers to buy food; Funds for accommodation when someone is street homeless; Help to buy essentials; like clothing; Support with short notice travel costs (bus fare, petrol costs, etc). The RBL carefully consider the individual circumstances and needs, so don't hesitate to get in touch. However, help is not available for repayment of business debts, loans, legal expenses, medical care or where state assistance or statutory services are available.
How to apply:
https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/financial-and-employment-support/finance/grants/crisis-grants

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT FUND
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
In response to the cost-of-living crisis in the UK, Sense, the national disability charity provides grants of up to £500 to support to people with complex disabilities who live in the family home and are on low incomes. There is no restriction on how the money can be spent. People with complex disabilities who live in the family home and are on low incomes. All applications must be completed on the individual's behalf by a social care professional nominated by Sense. This can be a support worker, a service manager, or a social care worker.
How to apply:
https://www.sense.org.uk/our-services/sense-cost-of-living-support-fund/

CARD FACTORY FOUNDATION – COMMUNITY GRANT FUND
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Card Factory Foundation funds projects and charitable causes that make a positive difference for past and present Card Factory colleagues and communities where Card Factory stores operate across the UK. Through the Community Grant Fund, the Foundation provides grants of up to £2,500 to not-for-profit organisations and community groups for projects and activities that improve lives and provide support for those who are experiencing hardship caused by life-changing events. Applications can be made at any time with awards made monthly by the trustees. Grants over £2,500 will be made in exceptional circumstances on a quarterly basis.
How to apply:
https://www.cardfactoryinvestors.com/foundation/community-grant-fund

TRUSTHOUSE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION - MAJOR GRANTS
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation gives grants to small and medium sized local organisations in the UK with a demonstrable track record of success working to address local issues in communities of extreme urban deprivation and deprived rural districts. Through the Major grants programme, the foundation provides funding for core costs, salaries, running and project costs to organisations that have a focus on Family Support, this may further include Early intervention; Families coping with addiction; Prisoners' families. Single year grants are available of £10,000-£100,000 for core costs, salaries, running and project costs or multi-year grants for a maximum of 3 years, not to exceed £100,000 in total over this period, for core costs, salaries, running or project costs. The amount requested must not be for more than 50% of the total cost.
How to apply:
https://www.trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk/our-grants/major-grants

TRUSTHOUSE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION - SMALL GRANT
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation gives grants to small/medium sized local organisations with a demonstrable track record of success working to address local issues in communities of extreme urban deprivation & deprived rural districts. Through the small grants programme, the foundation provides funding of £2,000-£10,000 to charitable organisations with an income of less than £250,000 for projects that focus on Community Support. Examples of projects that can be funded include Community Services; Community Centres; Alternative Education; Training, mentoring, employment/volunteering, opportunities; Youth; Counselling; Family Support Services; Substance Misuse. Single year grants are available for core costs, salaries, running & project costs. Applicants cannot apply for more than 50% of total cost of work for which a grant is requested.
How to apply:
https://www.trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk/our-grants/small-grants

THE PETS AT HOME FOUNDATION HELPING PEOPLE THRU PETS
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Pets at Home Foundation Helping People Through Pets grant programme makes grants available to support charities who provide temporary or ongoing assistance to ensure pets (including equines) can remain with their owners, and/or change the lives of adults and children through the provision of animal-based activities. Funding can be used to cover costs such as building work, vehicles, equipment, vet bills, salaries, & new initiatives directly involving pets and people. Larger funding amounts, and multi-year funding applications of up to three years will be considered. Applications are considered three times a year. Grants of £250-£50,000 are available. The organisation has been operating for at least 2 years and can provide financial information for a 12-month period. Applications for multi-year funding of up to 3 years will be considered.
How to apply:
https://www.petsathomefoundation.co.uk/helping-people-through-pets/

STUART HALBERT FOUNDATION
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Stuart Halbert Foundation makes grants that meet the priority of the charity. These are People; Animal Welfare; Armed Forces; and Local community. The priorities in this policy will be reviewed every year (or more often if deemed appropriate by the Trustees) & may be changed in accordance with the Trustees' view of the most effective application of available funds at any point in time. Organisations and individuals within the UK can apply.
How to apply:
https://www.stuarthalbertfoundation.org.uk/

HARGREAVES FOUNDATION
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Applications are open for charities and educational institutions seeking funding to support those under the age of 18, & living with a mental health problem, physical disability or growing up in poverty through mediums of sport & education. The Foundation, likely to be in the region of £2m per annum. Grants will only be allocated to fund defined projects, initiatives or the purchase of specific items and wherever possible payments will be made directly to suppliers. No minimum or maximum grant level is indicated. Applications are accepted from: Registered Charities or CIOs; Schools & Further Education Colleges (usually exempt charities) or NHS Trusts.
How to apply:
https://www.thehargreavesfoundation.org/

JOHNSON FOUNDATION
Deadline: Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details: The Foundation supports UK registered charities working specifically within the Liverpool City Region in the areas of Welfare, Youth, Community, Arts, Education and Health. The Foundation awards grants for both capital and activity expenditure. No minimum or maximum grant level is indicated. Organisations eligible to apply include UK registered charities working in the Liverpool City Region; Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO's); Educational establishments (including schools and universities); Churches; Housing Associations; Museums and Galleries.
How to apply: http://thejohnsonfoundation.co.uk/funding/

KNIGHTS HOUSE FUND
Deadline: Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details: The Knights House Fund provides grants to support people in the borough of Widnes who are in conditions of need, hardship, or distress. The fund will fund both voluntary and community groups that are working in the Widnes area on a wide range of charitable projects and also individuals in need of additional help and support. The maximum grant available is £1000 for groups and £250 for individuals. Voluntary or community groups with a constitution or set of rules in the group's name, which includes CICs and Social Enterprises and individuals.
How to apply: https://cfmerseyside.org.uk/funds/knights-house-fund

THE ALBERT HUNT TRUST
Deadline: Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details: The Albert Hunt Trust will consider applications from registered charities, organisations and projects that provide Hospice Care; provide support for the Homeless and promote health and wellbeing; including physical and learning disabilities, physical and mental health, plus social challenges, and deprivation. Grants may be considered for a range of purposes & could include Single awards for capital projects (building/equipment/renovation), Grants for core funding to include staff costs or Ongoing running costs for specific projects. No maximum or minimum grant is indicated. Most grant recipients are registered charities, although from time to time the Trust may consider applications from other types of organisations which are pursuing charitable causes and where aims, & objectives are not for profit.
How to apply: https://www.alberthunttrust.org.uk/philosophy/

THE GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION - YOUTH
Deadline: Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details: Through the Welfare grants programme, the Foundation's support ranges from small local groups, such as girl guides and youth clubs to larger national youth development charities. The Foundation has two grant programmes which depend on the size of the grant being requested: Regular Grants - for applications below £100,000 or Major Grants - for application of £100,000 or more. The Foundation supports UK registered charities and CIOs working within the UK. The Foundations also accept applications from organisations that have 'exempt' status under the Charity Commission Guidelines. This is restricted to some of the following: faith-based organisations, schools and universities, hospitals, museums, and galleries & housing associations.
How to apply: https://garfieldweston.org/what-we-support/youth/

THE GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION - WELFARE
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Welfare grants programme supports charities that work with a variety of causes & groups including elderly, homeless, disability and special needs and those in the criminal justice system. The Foundation has 2 grant programmes which depend on the size of the grant being requested: Regular Grants - for applications below £100,000 or Major Grants - for application of £100,000 or more. The Foundation supports UK registered charities and CIOs working within the UK. The Foundations also accept applications from organisations that have 'exempt' status under the Charity Commission Guidelines. This is restricted to some of the following: faith-based organisations, schools and universities, hospitals, museums/galleries & housing associations.
How to apply:
https://garfieldweston.org/what-we-support/welfare/

THE GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION - HEALTH
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Health grants range from specialist care homes & hospices, charities specialising in treatment & support for specific illnesses, to translational research focusing on medical breakthroughs that will benefit generations now & in future. The Foundation has 2 grant programmes which depend on the size of grant being requested: Regular Grants for applications below £100,000 or Major Grants for application of £100,000 or more. The Foundation supports UK registered charities & CIOs working in UK. The Foundations also accept applications from organisations that have 'exempt' status under Charity Commission Guidelines. This is restricted to some of the following: faith-based organisations, schools/universities, hospitals, museums/galleries & housing associations.
How to apply:
https://garfieldweston.org/what-we-support/health/

THE GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION - COMMUNITY
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The community programme typically supports revenue grants for volunteering schemes and capital grants for the restoration of village halls and community centres and for facilities to support community life. The Foundation has 2 grant programmes which depend on the size of the grant being requested: Regular Grants for applications below £100,000 or Major Grants for application of £100,000 or more. The Foundation supports UK registered charities & CIOs working in the UK. The Foundations also accept applications from organisations that have 'exempt' status under the Charity Commission Guidelines. This is restricted to some of following: faith-based organisations, schools and universities, hospitals, museums/galleries & housing associations.
How to apply:
https://garfieldweston.org/what-we-support/community/

THE NEWBY TRUST - SOCIAL WELFARE
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Newby Trust funds local, regional or national charities registered & operating in the UK in the broad categories of education, health and social welfare. Through the Social Welfare programme, the Trust provides grants to improve people's quality of life in disadvantaged communities. Grants of £2,000-£10,000 are available. Within the over-arching aim of its Social Welfare programme, the Trust wishes to: provide small grants for short-term emergency relief. improve social support for disadvantaged groups. support cultural and physical activities to improve wellbeing. Trust is more likely to fund smaller/medium-sized charities with an annual income of under £1m.
How to apply:
https://www.newby-trust.org.uk/charities/

TOY TRUST
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Founded by the BTHA, the Toy Trust- the industry's charity- exists to raise money predominantly from the toy industry, its suppliers, and friends; and distribute the money raised to charities helping disadvantaged and disabled children within the UK and abroad. Toy Trust funds help disadvantaged children and their families to alleviate suffering; support children through awful experiences; encourage achievement through adversity; purchase vital equipment; provide care; bolster existing initiatives; initiate brand new projects; and satisfy basic needs. Generally, the grant will be for up to £5,000. Money raised through fundraising events and other initiatives is distributed by the Toy Trust committee that meets five or six times each year.
How to apply:
https://toytrust.co.uk/

SODEXHO FOUNDATION STOP HUNGER CAMPAIGN
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Through the initiative, the Sodexo Foundation donate time, skills and money to tackle hunger, support good nutrition & promote life skills in local communities. The Stop Hunger Foundations vision is to work with very best charities that exist to tackle hunger and malnutrition; promote healthy lifestyles; and develop life skills such as cooking. Previous grant awards have ranged between £1,500-£120,000, however 1 st time applicants can only apply for a maximum of £10,000. Organisations who have previously received funding include Fare Share who redistributes surplus food destined for landfill to local charities and community groups across the UK and Focus Ireland who support homeless people in Dublin by providing hot nutritious meals.
How to apply:
http://uk.stop-hunger.org/home.html

MORGAN FOUNDATION - REGIONAL GRANTS PROGRAMME
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Foundation supports charities across North Wales, Merseyside, West Cheshire, & North Shropshire. They specialise in supporting organisations helping children & families as well as the elderly, disabled & socially isolated. The Foundation makes multiyear revenue grants for core funding, salaries & ongoing running costs for projects. No minimum or maximum grant amounts are specified. The Foundation will consider any work which has a positive effect on their welfare & quality of life, or which expands the opportunities and life choices for young people in this region. Local branches of national charities which are based within the remit area, or programmes delivered locally by organisations working on a national basis, aren't generally supported.
How to apply:
https://stevemorganfoundation.org.uk/how-to-apply/

CLOTHWORKERS FOUNDATION GRANT SCHEME SMALL GRANTS
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Clothworkers' Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for people & communities that face disadvantage. The Small Grants Programme offers capital grants of £500-£10,000 and is open to charities with a turnover of under £250,000 and a total project cost of less than £100,000. The type of projects supported include alcohol and substance misuse; disability; disadvantaged young people; domestic & sexual violence, support for the elderly; homelessness; disadvantaged minority communities; helping prisoners and ex-offenders; visual impairment and textiles.
How to apply:
http://foundation.clothworkers.co.uk/Open-grant-programmes/Main-and-Small-Grant-Programmes.aspx

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SWIMMING POOL SUPPORT FUND
Deadline:
Further information will be made available shortly.
Details:
Announced new £63m fund to help keep public swimming pools afloat. The Swimming Pool Support Fund will allow local authorities to apply for funding for leisure centres with pools that face immediate pressures caused by rising energy and maintenance costs. Of the funding, £40m will go towards making pools more energy efficient in the long term, and £23m will be made available to help leisure centres deal with rising costs. Council-run pools, as well as those run on behalf of councils by private companies & charities are all eligible for support.
How to apply:
https://www.sportengland.org/news/new-funding-help-keep-leisure-centres-pools-afloat

MANAGEMENT FORESTRY INNOVATION FUND & TREE PRODUCTION INNOVATION FUND
Deadline:
The Forestry Commission which will accept applications to the Tree Production Innovation Fund until 9 th May 2023, & Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Fund until 15 th May 2023.
Details:
In an effort to meet net zero by 2050, the UK government is making £4m in funding available for innovative projects that enhance tree planting stocks and woodland resilience. Applications for both the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Fund and the Tree Production Innovation Fund are now being accepted to boost nature regeneration efforts, promote biodiversity, and support innovative approaches to tree production, tree health, and woodland resilience through increased and improved active management of woodlands.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/government/news/forestry-funds-open-to-boost-biodiversity-and-futureproof-forests-against-pests-diseases-and-climate-change

THE ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
Deadline:
The closing date is on the 17 th May 2023 4:00pm.
Details:
The Economic & Social Research Council has released details of a funding call for the creation of a centre to tackle the effects of climate change on population health. The centre will bring together experts & resources from different disciplines & institutions to conduct research & provide evidence of the link between climate change & human health for policymakers over a period of 5 years. Proposals must involve collaboration across multiple disciplines & sectors & should include an emphasis on addressing inequality as a key theme. UK Research & Innovation will fund up to 80% of the full economic cost of the project, which is valued at a maximum of £9.7m.
How to apply:
https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/centre-in-climate-change-and-health/

HEAT NETWORK EFFICIENCY SCHEME
Deadline:
The scheme will run until 2025 with the first round closing to applicants on the 19 th May 2023.
Details:
Public, private & third sector organisations can apply for funding to improve the performance of existing heat networks. The £32m Heat Network Efficiency Scheme, funded by the Dept for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, will provide funding to heat network operators to make improvements to existing heat networks or communal heating projects that are not performing to their maximum efficiency, resulting in better outcome for customers & operators. The scheme will provide up to 50% funding for capital works, and up to 100% funding for Optimisation studies.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heat-network-efficiency-scheme-hnes

LOCAL EV INFRASTRUCTURE FUND
Deadline:
The deadline for expressions of interest is the 26 th May 2023.
Details:
To support the transition to electric vehicles, the Government is making £381m of funding available to support local authorities to plan & deliver chargepoint infrastructure for residents without off-street parking. The Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund comprises of capital funding to support installation of EV chargepoints, & capability funding for local authorities to employ and train new staff specifically to plan and deliver ChargePoint infrastructure. Eligible county councils, unitary authorities & combined authorities can indicate if they would like their funding to be in financial year 2023/24 or 2024/25 based on their readiness to apply for & implement LEVI fund.
How to apply:
https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/grants-and-loans/local-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-scheme

TREE PRODUCTION CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAMME
Deadline:
The closing date for applications is the 31 st May 2023.
Details:
The Forestry Commission Tree Production Capital Grant Programme aims to increase the production of tree seed & saplings. The grant will support the development of machinery and automation, as well as the expansion of facilities to boost production rates. This initiative has been designed to complement the Tree Production Innovation Fund, which provides support for research projects aimed at enhancing UK tree production methods. Grants of up to £175,000 are available, which can cover up to 50% of the costs. The funding is part of the UK government's £750m Nature for Climate Fund. The type of organisations that can apply include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private sector nurseries and seed suppliers. • public sector organisations such as Local Authorities. • new entrants to forestry from adjacent horticultural/agricultural sectors. • environmental NGOs. • community tree nurseries.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-production-capital-grant

URBAN TREE CHALLENGE FUND
Deadline:
Those wishing to plant trees in '23/24 must submit applications by 11:59pm on 30 th June 2023.
Details:
Grants are available to community/volunteer groups as well as town councils & individuals for tree planting projects in socially deprived urban & peri-urban areas. Funding aims to support people's health & wellbeing by levelling-up access to nature. The fund provides 80% of standard costs for planting large trees & their establishment costs. The remaining 20% must be met through match funding either in the form of money or labour. There is a minimum application value of £10,000. Payments for trial pits have been introduced in this round to check for the presence of services.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund

LOCAL AUTHORITY TREESCAPES FUND
Deadline:
Applications received after the 30 th June 2023 will be considered for projects which plan to begin planting during the planting season in the 2024-2025 financial year.
Details:
Local Authority Treescapes fund aims to restore tree cover in non-woodland areas which may have been impacted by issues i.e., disease, habitat degradation or ageing tree stock. Funding is available to establish more trees in non-woodland areas i.e., parklands, riparian zones, urban areas, beside roads/footpaths, hedgerow trees & field boundaries. Grants of £50,000-£300,000 will be awarded to Borough, District/City Councils, County Councils, Unitary & Metropolitan Boroughs. Local authorities are encouraged to work with schools, other organisations, grass root organisations, community groups, & private individuals to deliver planting.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-treescapes-fund

FRIENDS PROVIDENT FOUNDATION'S 4D ECONOMY GRANTS
Deadline:
The next deadline for main grants is the 10 th July 2023. Applications for small grants can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Charities, social enterprises, and private companies can apply for funding for projects and activities that help to create fairness and sustainability in the economy. The funding is being made available to support the development of new economic ideas and approaches that push for and create a more just and sustainable economy based on the four D's: Diversified, Decarbonised, Democratised & Decentralised. Most grants will be in the region of £50,000-£75,000 and are available to support project and/or core funding. Small grants of up to £10,000 are also available to develop the ideas of under-resourced or newer entrants to economic systems change work.
How to apply:
https://www.friendsprovidentfoundation.org/grants/

NATURE FOR CLIMATE PEATLAND GRANT SCHEME
Deadline:
Details on how to apply will be added to the Natural England website before applications open.
Details:
Environmental groups, local authorities, charities, public bodies, individual landowners etc will be able to apply for funding to restore degraded peatlands. This competitive scheme aims to restore the whole hydrological unit of a peatland & reduce emissions from peat, with a goal of restoring 35,000 hectares of degraded peat by March '25. Applicants must have authority to carry out the activities in their proposal & demonstrate how their proposal will deliver the scheme's objectives, including wider benefits like improved ecosystems & biodiversity, better water quality, natural flood management, & protection of historic environment features. Restoration Grant applicants can normally apply for up to 75% of total project costs, & exceptional cases up to 85% of the cost.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nature-for-climate-peatland-grant-scheme

FCC COMMUNITIES' FOUNDATION
Deadline:
The closing date for applications are: 2023-2 Round opens 22 March 2023 and closes at 5.00pm on 7 June 2023. 2023-3 Round opens 21 June 2023 and closes at 5.00pm on 6 September 2023. 2023-4 Round opens 20 September 2023 and closes at 5.00pm on 6 December 2023.
Details:
FCC Communities Foundation helps benefit lives of people who live close to landfill sites by awarding grants for community, biodiversity & heritage projects. The Fund is designed to deliver amenity projects in 10 miles of an FCC Environment landfill site in FCC Communities operating area. Following types of amenities can be funded: Village Halls, community centres, public play areas, multi-sport games areas, sport/recreation grounds, churches, nature reserves, public gardens & woodlands, museums. Funding is available of £2,000-£100,000 for projects with a maximum total project cost of £500,000.
How to apply:
https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/funds/fcc-community-action-fund

WORKPLACE CHARGING SCHEME
Deadline:
Closing date 31 st March 2024, 11:59pm
Details:
Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS) is a voucher-based scheme that provides eligible businesses with support towards upfront costs of the purchase & installation of electric vehicle (EV) charge points. All businesses can use it to help provision charge points for their staff or fleets. Charities & small accommodation businesses can further use it to provision charge points for their guests or visitors. Public Sector, Non-profit, Private Sector can apply & can get from £350 to £14,000.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/workplace-charging-scheme

EV INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FOR STAFF AND FLEETS
Deadline:
Closing date 31 st March 2024, 11:59pm.
Details:
The grants provide small/medium sized businesses funding to install electric vehicle (EV) charge points and relating supporting infrastructure for their staff and fleet vehicles. Public Sector, Private Sector, Non-profits can apply. You can get from One grant of either £2,850 or 75% off the cost of installing infrastructure and a charge point, whichever amount is lower to 5 grants of up to £15,000, totalling £75,000.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/ev-infrastructure-grant-for-staff-and-fleets

EV INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FOR LANDLORDS
Deadline:
Closing date 31 st March 2024, 11:59pm.
Details:
The grants provide residential & commercial landlords, including social housing providers, funding to install electric vehicle (EV) charge points and relating supporting infrastructure in rental and leasehold properties. Non-profit, Public Sector, Private Sector organisations can apply, and you can get from one grant of either £350 or 75% off the cost to buy and install a socket, whichever amount is lower for a charge point installation to 300 grants each year, of up to £350 each for the EV charge point grant and 30 grants of up to £30,000 for the EV infrastructure grant, totalling £1,005,000 a year.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/ev-chargepoint-grant-for-landlords

WOODLAND PARTNERSHIP
Deadline:
Closing date 31 st March 2024, 11:59pm.
Details:
A lease scheme available to private and public landowners with options of 60 or 120 years. Forestry England (FE) are looking for land plots suitable for tree planting ideally of 50Ha+. Once the lease is agreed FE will design, plant & manage new woodland and the landowner will receive a negotiated rent. Public Sector, Private Sector & Non-profits can apply & you can get from £100-£300 per hectare per year.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/woodland-partnership-forestry-england

TREE HEALTH PILOT SCHEME
Deadline:
Closing date 31 st August 2024, 11:59pm
Details:
The tree health pilot scheme will test different ways of slowing the spread of pests and diseases affecting trees in England. It expands on support already available through the Countryside Stewardship woodland tree health grant. The results of the pilot, which runs from August 2021 to 2024, will help develop the future funding policy for tree health schemes. Around 100 grant agreements will be allocated through a competitive application process. Non-profit, Personal / Individual, Public Sector, Private Sector can apply and you can get from £500 to No maximum award as it is dependent on learning objectives. Total size of grant scheme is £3.3 million.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/tree-health-pilot

GREEN HEAT NETWORK FUND
Deadline:
Closing date 29 th November 2024, 10:59pm.
Details:
The Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) is a 3 year, £288m capital grant fund that will support the commercialisation & construction of new low and zero carbon (LZC) heat networks (including the supply of cooling) & the retrofitting & expansion of existing heat networks. It aims to develop & grow the heat network market and to address some of the challenges of decarbonising the UK's heat sector. Personal/Individuals, Non-profits, Private Sector, Public Sector organisations can apply. You can get from £1 to £1m (applications above £1m can be made, should an applicant have assessed that support in excess of this amount is required, and all other application gated metrics are met, however BEIS reserves the right to decline such an application).
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/green-heat-network-fund

NATURAL ENGLAND SPECIES RECOVERY PROGRAMME
Deadline:
Closing date 25 th November 2022, 5:00pm.
Details:
Expression of Interest: The Natural England Species Recovery Programme intends to open a competitive capital grant scheme next year. The scheme would be divided across two financial years (2023/2024 to 2024/2025). We intend to take the results of the market engagement exercise into account in developing the detailed design of the potential grant scheme. Private Sector, Non-profit, Public Sector can apply. Total size of grant scheme £18 million.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/species-recovery-programme

THE BOILER UPGRADE SCHEME
Deadline:
Closing date 31 st December 2024, 11:59pm.
Details:
Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) supports the decarbonisation of homes & small non-domestic buildings. The scheme provides upfront capital grants of £5000 or £6000 to encourage property owners to replace existing fossil fuel heating with more efficient, low carbon heating systems including heat pumps & biomass boilers. Who can apply Personal/Individual, Non-profit, Private Sector. You can get from £5,000 to £6,000 & total size of grant scheme £450m over 3 years.
How to apply:
https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/grants/boiler-upgrade-scheme

CLIMATE ACTION FUND
Deadline:
There is no deadline and applications are being accepted on an ongoing basis.
Details:
£8m is available to community projects that are focusing on link between nature & climate. Groups can apply for funding of up to £1.5m over 2-5 years to support place based & UK-wide partnerships that use nature to encourage more community-led climate action & help communities tackle climate change. The Fund expects most projects to be funded between £300,000-£500,000. Development grants of £50,000-£150,000 over 12-18 months are also available for those communities wanting to develop initial ideas. Fund is interested in projects that can do at least one of the following: show how creating a deeper connection with nature will lead to changing people's behaviours & greater care for environment or show how by bringing nature back into the places we live & work, we can help communities to reduce or adapt to the impacts of climate change. It is anticipated that 12-15 projects will be funded. Applications will be accepted from: local partnerships or UK-wide partnerships which are delivered across at least 2 UK countries.
How to apply:
https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/climate-action-fund

AVIVA COMMUNITY FUND
Deadline:
Applications can be made at any time.
Details:
Aviva has teamed up with Crowdfunder to offer funding of up to £50,000 to small charities, schools, & community interest groups with innovative ideas that benefit their community. Every 3 months, £250,000 will be split equally among Aviva's UK employees to donate to projects that matter to them most. Aviva wants to support projects that boost resilience of communities in face of uncertainty & will be supporting projects in 2 key areas: <i>Climate Action</i> : Promoting healthy, thriving communities by preventing, preparing for, and protecting against the impacts of climate change & <i>Financial Wellbeing</i> : Helping people to take control of their wellbeing by giving them the tools to be more financially resilient and independent. To take part the project must also be raising funds to develop a new approach, product, or technology, pilot a new scheme, implement a new initiative, or expand existing services to a new area or beneficiary group.
How to apply:
https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/

GOOGLE AI FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS
Deadline:
The application window will remain open until all selections are made.
Details:
Google has opened a call for applications to find organisations around the world that are using artificial intelligence (AI) to create new, innovative solutions to existing societal problems & to make progress against UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Successful applicants will receive support through a combination of funding, product donations & technical expertise. There is no fixed amount that can be requested, but previous awards have averaged \$1.3m. Previously supported projects have included AI-powered tools to track air quality/pollution, & use of bioacoustics monitoring to detect immediate deforestation threats. Applications will be accepted from not-for-profits, academic or research institutions, & for-profit social enterprise companies.
How to apply:
https://google.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_di0qQuYNuDnUiJE

REACHING COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Reaching Communities projects must address 1 or more of the following outcomes. People have better chances in life, with better access to training & development to improve their life skills; Stronger communities, with more active citizens, working together to tackle their problems; Improved rural & urban environments, which communities are better able to access & enjoy; & Healthier & more active people & communities. Revenue/small capital funding from £10,000-£500,000 for revenue projects and/or smaller capital projects up to £50,000. Buildings, £100,000-£500,000 for large capital projects.
How to apply:
https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england

ENGLAND COMMUNITY FORESTS: TREES FOR CLIMATE GRANTS
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
Trees for Climate is delivered by the 13 Community Forests across England, who have extensive experience in supporting landowners to establish and manage woodlands. Trees for Climate grant funding can cover the costs of woodland creation, fencing, paths and other infrastructure, and ongoing maintenance for up to 15 years. Design, planning and planting support from professional woodland advisors is also available.
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-woodland-creation-partnerships-grants-and-advice-table/england-woodland-creation-partnerships-grants-and-advice-table

FARESHARE'S SURPLUS WITH PURPOSE FUND
Deadline:
Funding applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Surplus with Purpose Fund provides funding of up to £50,000 to food businesses to offset costs of sending good quality surplus food to good causes, helping the people most in need. The fund is open to companies seeking to unlock new or hard to reach surplus (or 'waste') food, as well as those who haven't worked with FareShare. Stock types eligible are Packaging/labelling errors; Stock that's become surplus due to forecasting errors; Stock below MLOR (48 hours minimum life on receipt by FareShare); Fruit/veg past BBE; Stock past BBE (subject to manufacturer's extension letter); Quality rejections - 'out of spec'; Unfinished products; Bulk ingredients for manufacturing; Lines no longer being retailed; Samples and NPD's; Foreign label stock. Damages; Seasonal stock; Retailer branded food. Funding can be used to cover the additional staff costs needed for packing & sorting edible surplus food, or in building, implementing and managing new processes. It could also cover packaging & transportation costs, or lost income from the sale of surplus to animal feed or anaerobic digestion.
How to apply:
https://fareshare.org.uk/giving-food/

MCS CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The MCS Charitable Foundation funds a range of projects that accelerate the adoption of renewable energy & low carbon technologies. Grants of £5,000-£50,000 are available to public sector organisations, charities & not-for-profits for projects that have a UK-wide impact, either through having a national reach or through developing/demonstrating an innovative approach that could be replicated, adapted or scaled up. Projects should fall under the following themes: education, skills & CPD; public awareness/information & consumer confidence; zero carbon planning; or local zero carbon delivery initiatives. Grants of up to £100,000 will be considered in exceptional cases. Applicants should initially submit an expression of interest. Bids should fall into one of the following themes: Zero carbon planning; Education, skills & CPD; Public awareness/information & consumer confidence; Local zero carbon delivery initiatives. Bids should also meet at least one of the following criteria:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seed funding for innovative initiatives. • Support delivery of a proof of concept. • Research to support innovation or capacity building in one of the themed areas. • Sharing good practice.
The Foundation is also open to applications that fall outside of these standard criteria if applicant can make a strong case that proposal could have a step-change impact in society's action. Applications that have match funding will be looked upon favourably.
How to apply:
https://www.mcscharitablefoundation.org/funding

WOODLAND TRUST - FREE TREES
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
The Woodland Trust has free tree packs to give away to schools, community & youth groups. The free tree packs are available for planting on one publicly accessible site. Packs will be awarded on a first come first serve basis. All applicants need to do is find a suitable site & supply volunteer planters & tree protection. Tree packs for schools/communities offer perfect opportunity to bring people together to plant trees - encouraging local wildlife, protecting our landscape against tree disease & creating beautiful, wooded areas that people can enjoy. Packs available are: Small (30 saplings); Medium (105 saplings); or Large (420 saplings).
How to apply:
https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/

ENGLAND WOODLAND CREATION OFFER
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
<p>Landowners, land managers and public bodies can apply to the England Woodland Creation Offer for support to create new woodland, including through natural colonisation, on areas as small as 1 hectare. The grant will cover standard capital costs for tree planting (up to a per hectare cap), as well as rewarding farmers and landowners for providing public and/or wider environmental benefits. There are four types of payments available under EWCO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for capital items & activities to establish new woodland, at 100% of standard costs. • 10 years of annual Maintenance Payments to help establish the young trees once the capital works are complete. • contribution towards the actual cost of installing infrastructure to either enable the current and future management of the woodland, or to provide recreational access. • optional Additional Contributions where the location of the woodland and its design will deliver public benefits. You can apply for multiple Additional Contributions on the same land where it touches the right spatial layer, and the design is compatible. <p>EWCO is open to owner occupiers, tenants, landlords and licensors who have full management control of the land in the application (or consent from those who do). Land is eligible if it is: in England; within full management control of the applicant (& any counter-signatories, where applicable); not already classified as woodland; not subject to any existing legal requirement or obligation to create woodland; not subject to a dispute between landlords and tenants; not currently within an existing grant agreement that has more than five months left to run at the time the EWCO application is submitted (see How do I transition my woodland creation scheme into the England Woodland Creation Offer for more information).</p>
How to apply:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer#how-to-apply

ESMEE FAIRBAIRN FOUNDATION - FOOD STRAND
Deadline:
Applications can be submitted at any time.
Details:
<p>The Food Strand programme supports initiatives that raise awareness, promote & demonstrate reduced usage of harmful pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics & fossil fuels. The Foundation want to stimulate community involvement in food production & support the development of a more positive policy position. The Foundation also encourage organisations from across spectrum of food interests to work more closely together to address system-wide issues. Funding priorities include local projects that demonstrate alternative approaches to mainstream corporate food production & consumption; projects that improves people's understanding of role of food in their lives & impact it can have on personal & community wellbeing; & closer links between those who can influence changes in food production, distribution & consumption, i.e., 3rd sector community food groups/retailers.</p>
How to apply:
https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk/food

Programmes Office 22/23 Update Report

FACTS AND
FIGURES

Total
enquiries:

73

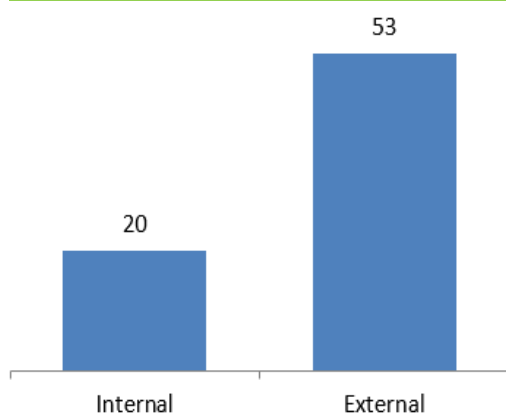
Funding Bulletins

The Programmes Office (Formerly know as External Funding) produces a monthly Funding Bulletin, which provides a snapshot of grant funding available at that point in time. There are 7 sections: Strategic Funds & Council Significance (Borough-wide Significance); Youth, Schools & Colleges; Faith & Places of Worship; Health & Sport; Arts, Culture & Heritage and Miscellaneous.

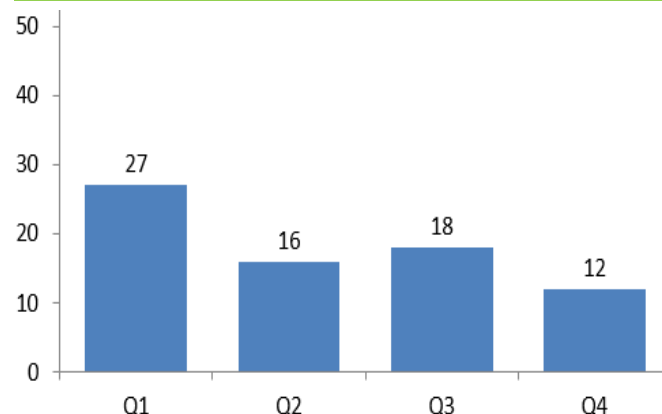
The Team also provides details of programmes with imminent deadlines.

To subscribe to any of the Bulletins contact the Team

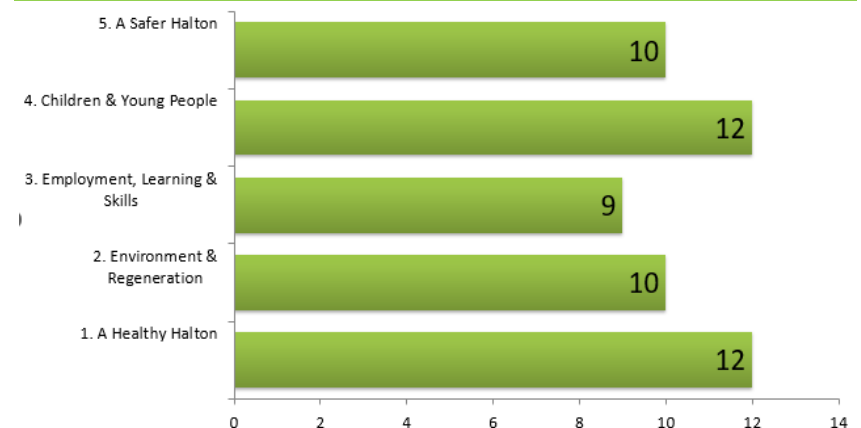
Enquiries Received



Enquiries per Quarter



Funding by Strategic Priorities:



Projects Funded in 2022/2023

St Berteline's (Windmill Hill)	£281,000	£1,499,491	£64,997	Wat Phra Singh
HBC/LCR Projects	£764,000		£113,863	Trinity Safe Space
Creative Health Initiatives	£150,000		£94,500	Catalyst SDC
Open 360	£23,035		£8,096	Recharge & Restore

For further information contact: funding@halton.gov.uk or <http://www.halton.gov.uk/funding>

Programmes Office 22/23 Update Report

Project Supported in 22/23

Community Environment Fund - a number of grants were awarded for both Halton Borough Council and community-led environmental projects, including Victoria Park Environment Team, Hazlehurst Studios and the Veterans. The aim of the funding is to encourage residents to engage in activity that has a positive effect on climate change and results in a better understanding of the issues faced relating to environmental matters.

HBC, UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) - Halton has benefited from an initial £608,000 from UKSPF - this is a fund which was set up by Government to replace European funding pots which comes to an end this year. The fund runs initially to March 2025 & includes strands on Culture/Art/Heritage, Green/Resilient/Safe communities and Town Centres. A programme of activity will be delivered on these themes, led by HBC and partners.

LCR/HBC, Destination Marketing Campaign - Halton is participating in a 3-year Destination Marketing campaign to encourage visitors from the Liverpool City Region and beyond to make the most of Halton's assets. HBC is working with a Destination Marketing company, Vivid, on specific campaigns which promote Halton's culture, heritage and natural assets. For further insight go to www.visithalton.gov.uk

Training

The new sessions aim to share & discuss Officer experiences of good practice in preparation of funding applications; & to enhance Officer awareness as part of a managed, strategic approach to prioritising future funding applications. Session Content:

- Programmes Office Remit & new Strategic Approach to Bids, HBC's Funding Support provision.
- What is a bid?
- Business Justification Case.
- Role of the PO Funding Officer.
- 10 Common Elements of an External Grant Application.
- 5 Discussion Topics & Case Studies.
- Funding Application Ownership.
- Strong & Weak Bids.

We also run our usual 4 core courses:
Basic Bid Writing Training.
Monitoring and Evaluation Training.
Now You Have Your Grant Course.
Developing a Fundraising Strategy.

Role of the Team



Website/Social Media

Our website <http://www.halton.gov.uk/funding> you can find details on the team and the latest funding bulletins and access to online forms.

We are also now on twitter <https://twitter.com/fundinghalton> (@fundinghalton) which is updated with the latest funding opportunities and information.

Projects Supported in 22/23

Wat Phra Singh Buddhist Temple & Meditation Centre secured a Veolia Environmental Grant for replacement of building's old, energy-deficient windows & outer doors and the installation of a community green space ('Peace Garden') adjacent to the main building - will each provide significant and lasting benefits to all user-groups and the wider public who regularly access the site. The new garden will also provide a free added-benefit to many user-groups who will feature and use the space within their varied activities.

Building on a long-established collaboration with Halton Women's Centre, **Recharge & Restore** secured a grant to deliver a 12-week programme for 20 vulnerable women who regularly attend the Centre, a proportion of whom have challenging parental and family circumstances requiring specific mental health support. **Recharge & Restore** also secured a grant to pilot an open-access café to support local people who recently been bereaved and/or were struggling to cope with the loss of a loved one.

St Bert's PCC (supported by the Windmill Hill Big Local Partnership) secured £311,000 capital grants from multiple funders to improve and increase the capacity of its existing church building to create a more welcoming, flexible & sustainable community space.

CHI Community Café secured a continuation grant to build on the success of its previous project, by helping to integrate local communities & individuals around the community cafe through a range of popular free activities & community events based around food & nutrition.

Trinity Safe Space secured a grant from Faith New Deal Pilot to deliver clinical supervision & counselling support for vulnerable people, including peer support. Additionally, the project delivered 100+ cultural awareness sessions, 120 ESOL sessions and 20 activities/events aimed at reducing social isolation/enhancing community cohesion for 150+ beneficiaries.

For the past 5 years **Open 360** has co-designed & delivered 11 community-based, 'digital inclusion' pilot projects aimed at bringing people together with a wide range of sensitive health issues & social needs. By carefully combining basic digital awareness, confidence & skills with important life-affirming activities including confidence-building/motivation, home-and-life skills, basic literacy/numeracy, money-management & practical employability support. the projects have become increasingly popular, resulting in a recently-funded 3-year scaled-up project (to expand delivery to over 500 people at risk of digital exclusion from 3 permanent venues in Halton).

Catalyst Science Discovery Centre & Museum, Synergy Project - the aim of the project is to completely refresh Catalyst's heritage offer; this will be done through a co-creation approach with local community groups. An award of £99,400 has been awarded by National Lottery Heritage Fund and the total project costs are in the region of £800,000.

For further information contact: funding@halton.gov.uk or call: 0151 511 7214 <http://www.halton.gov.uk/funding>



Programmes Office: Business Justification Case for External Funding

Please complete this form prior to any bid for external funding, ensure that the points below have been given consideration. Complete each section as fully as possible & send to Programmes Office

funding@halton.gov.uk

Officer Name		
Job Title		
Dept./Directorate		
Email/Contact Number		
Project Name or Service		
Has the project been presented to Senior Management and has it been approved, provide date? If not, provide date & meeting the project will be presented to Senior Management.		
If the project is current, how is it being funded?		
Over what period is the funding required?		
Estimated costs of project (if known)?		
Do you know there is a need for your project? (Say what evidence you have of this).		
Has funding been identified for this project? If so, please state the funding streams/Funder?		
If match funding is required has this been identified and applied for?		
Please state if match funding has been confirmed or not?		
If this project is being delivered in partnership, name the partners and who is lead applicant.		
If not, have you considered links to other Council/partner initiatives and whether this activity could be linked to existing activity, and any partnerships developed?		
What level of support is required from the Programmes Office? (Please mark yes or tick applicable boxes).	Identifying funding sources	
	Liaison with funding bodies	
	Identifying/facilitating a partnership	
	Writing or drafting a bid	
	Critical friend/Proof-reading a bid	
	Developing supporting documents	
	If none, please state the reason	
If you are writing the bid yourself, have you attended a bid-writing course in last year run by the Programmes Office, if yes what date?		

What resources are/will be in place to help assist with the bidding for financial support for this project?							
Is assistance required with monitoring the funding once secured? If so, specify what support is needed?							
What capacity has been allocated or earmarked for the Dept. or partner organisation to deliver the project?							
How does the project contribute to the objectives of the Corporate Plan, & any other Council Strategies?							
Which of the Halton's Strategic Priorities does the project meet and how? (Mark applicable boxes)	1.	A Healthy Halton	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	2.	Halton's Urban Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	3.	Employment Learning & Skills in Halton	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	4.	Children & Young People in Halton	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5.	A Safer Halton	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Which ward(s) will the project be delivered in? Mark applicable							
Appleton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Central & West Bank	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hale Village & Halebank	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hough Green	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bankfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Daresbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Halton Castle	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mersey & Weston	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beechwood & Heath	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ditton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Halton Lea	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moore & Sandymoor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Birchfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Farnworth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Halton View	<input type="checkbox"/>	Norton North	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bridgewater	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grange	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Norton South & Preston Brook	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boroughwide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Boroughs, State which.					
If you have any queries about this form or wish to discuss a project, please contact the Programmes Office on 0151 511 7214							

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	5 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Chief Executive
PORTFOLIO:	Chief Executive's
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 14 March 2023.

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 FINANCIAL 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 under the meaning of the Act.

Member Development Group

At a meeting of the Member Development Group held on 14th March 2023
in the Boardroom, Municipal Building Widnes

Present: Councillors A. Teeling (Chair), V. Begg J. Bradshaw, B. Gilligan, A. Lowe, T. McDermott, M. Ratcliffe, D. Thompson and P. Wallace.

Officers: K. Mackenzie, L. McKeagney, S. Riley, A. Scott, C. Spruce.

Apologies for absence: Councillors I. Bramwell and T. Stretch.

MDG 1	NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	<p>The notes of the last meeting held on 14 March 2023 were approved as a correct record.</p>	
MDG 2	HBC CONTACT CENTRE PRESENTATION	
	<p>The Group welcomed three officers from Halton Borough Council Contact Centre, who were attending to inform and update Members of their work and how this had developed over the last few years.</p> <p>Members received a detailed presentation explaining how calls were handled including issues such as potholes/bins/street lighting/ council tax/ social care.</p> <p>Members noted the Centre role of “Service Centre”. Advisors would listen to a callers query and take this as far as they could to resolve the caller’s issue. Calls were filtered in a way which prioritised certain types of caller – and some calls would be recorded to avoid duplication with no second call handling to improve efficiency through integration.</p> <p>The Centre could manage different elements of the same enquiry and pass through to different Council departments to be actioned.</p> <p>The Centre could pass on information on latest Government policy to callers on hold, through pre-recorded information, and promote what callers could do on-line – thus reducing the number of callers on hold.</p> <p>Contact Centre supervisors monitored the priority of calls arranged by the system.</p> <p>Members also noted plans for future integration with other systems to improve the current system, involving external partners.</p> <p>Members of the Group thanked the officers present for their valuable and informative presentation. Members also noted that the presentation would be offered to all Members in June 2023 following the local election in May.</p>	

MDG 3	ELECTED MEMBERS IT – WAY FORWARD	
	<p>The Group were updated following the distribution of iPads to all Members in December 2022. Office 365 had been installed, and Members noted that the Skype phone system would be phased out and would evolve to a newer version of TEAMS.</p> <p>Members noted that should they wish to use a larger screen at home, or their own device and log in to Office 365 via Edge web browser, this could be arranged through the IT Helpdesk.</p> <p>Members wished their sincere thanks to be recorded for the staff who worked so efficiently to manage to new IT distribution to all Members in December.</p>	
MDG 4	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 the election of May 2022 was 54.</p> <p>LOD3 – Percentage of Members attending at least one organised training event in the current financial year.</p> <p>Since May 2022, 63% of Members had attended at least one training and development event. The target was 100% for the year 2022-2023.</p>	
MDG 5	LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE	
	<p>Members noted that training sessions had been held for:</p> <p>Local Government Finance – 2 November 2022</p> <p>Race Equality - The training had been made available to all Members via Zoom.</p> <p>Members were reminded that there were a number of eLearning courses on offer for Members via the eLearning portal on the Intranet. If any Member needed assistance they should contact Alison Scott or contact training reception via the following link - Trainrec.Trainrec@halton.gov.uk</p> <p>Members were reminded of the North West Employers offer available with details on their website https://nwemployers.org.uk/ Members could find details of their seminars on offer and LGA workbooks.</p>	
MDG 6	ANY OTHER BUSINESS/MEMBER SUPPORT ISSUES	
	None to report.	

MDG 7	DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING	
	RESOLVED: The next meeting to be held in June/July 2023.	
	The meeting closed at 7.05pm	

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 5th September 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Performance Management Report for Quarter 4 of 2022/23

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 final quarter period to 31st March 2023.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022-23 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Finance
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development
 - ICT and Administrative Support
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property 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.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the final 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 are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. 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.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable.

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

None.

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring Report Q4

Reporting Period: 01st January to 31st March 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the final quarter of 2022/23 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in 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 emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 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

2.2 Benefits Division

Processing Times

At 31st March 2023 processing times for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction were as follows: new claims 23.71 days and changes in circumstances 9.55 days.

Household Support Fund No.3

The third allocation of the Government's Household Support Fund covered the period 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2023. Halton's funding allocation of £1.2m has once more been co-ordinated by the Benefits Division. The utilisation of the funding via a number of Council departments and Voluntary Sector Agencies is summarised in the table below, and illustrates the spread of support provided to vulnerable households and residents across the Borough.

Area of spend	Amount £
Free school meal vouchers for school holidays	536,592
Payment to vulnerable pensioner households	405,500
Discretionary Support Scheme awards	167,314
Citizens Advice Bureau	30,000
Fuel Bank	19,977
Holiday Activity Food Programme	5,000
Widnes Food Bank	10,000
Runcorn Food Bank	10,000
Affordable Warmth (Energy Projects Plus)	9,745
Halton Voluntary Action	10,000
Total	1,204,128

Alternative Support for Household Energy Bills

- Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding:

In September 2022 Government announced the introduction of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS). The Scheme was intended to provide a discount on energy bills of £400 for most households in Great Britain, to offset the rapidly rising costs of energy. This scheme is being delivered through domestic electricity suppliers in six instalments from October 2022 to March 2023.

However, there are a number of households who pay for their electricity in a different way, such as through a commercial intermediary, and so will not receive support through EBSS. Therefore in December 2022 Government announced the introduction of the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS Alternative Funding), which was established to provide support to households not eligible for the automatic Energy Bills Support Scheme. The EBSS Alternative Funding is a one-off £400 non-repayable payment to eligible households, to help with their energy bills between 27th February 2023 and 31st May 2023. Individuals must apply for the EBSS Alternative Funding via a Gov.UK portal. Local authorities will then be responsible for distributing support payments to eligible applicants.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) expects eligible households to include those with a commercial landlord or intermediary, such as park home residents and some housing association tenants. The EBSS Alternative Funding is expected to reach a significant number of vulnerable people, including self-funding residents in care homes. Halton has received funding of £412,400 which suggests that DESNZ expect there to be 1,031 households eligible for the EBSS Alternative Funding.

Households eligible for EBSS Alternative Funding may include the following:

- park home residents
- housing association, social and private tenants, and leaseholders, supplied via a landlord with a commercial meter
- partly and wholly self-funded care home residents
- households in house boats on residential moorings
- households on a private electricity network, for example those supplied by a heat network
- off-grid households
- traveller households on authorised sites
- households who live in a dwelling on business premises that is used wholly or partly for domestic purposes
- Households in temporary/supported accommodation
- Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (AFP AF):

The Government also announced the Alternative Fuel Payment (AFP), a £200 support payment for households that use fuels other than gas to heat their homes. Much of the delivery of this scheme will happen via energy suppliers, with eligible households being paid automatically from 06 February 2023 with no action for them to take. Although automated payments can be made to approximately 90% of eligible households, a small group remains which we are not able to pay automatically. This group must apply via a Gov.UK portal to receive the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (AFP AF).

The Government has asked councils that are responsible for council tax records and collection (“Billing Authorities”) to act as the delivery bodies for AFP AF funding. The Government will share applications with local authorities whose primary role will be to verify applicants’ addresses once they have passed through the application portal and to transfer the relevant support (£200 payment) to successful applicants. The requirement will be for applicants to prove their eligibility, with local authority efforts being desk-based.

The Discretionary Support Scheme Team within the Benefits Division, will carry out the Council’s role in verifying addresses and processing payments in respect of both the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding and the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund.

2.3 Revenues and Financial Management Division

2022/23 Quarter 3 Spending

For the financial year to 31 December 2022, overall Council operational net spending was £54.2m against a budget of £49.3m to date, resulting in an overspend position to date against budget of £4.9m. The forecast position for the year to 31 March 2023 was an estimated overspend of £7.1m.

Capital spending at 31 December 2022 totalled £18.5m, which is 102% of the planned spending of £18.2m at this stage. This represents 64% of the total Capital Programme of £28.9m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).

Work is underway to prepare the year-end accounts and the financial outturn position as at 31 March 2023 will be reported to Executive Board on 15 June 2023

Council Tax and Business Rate Collection

Council tax collection for the final quarter of the year is 93.9%, down by 0.23% on this point last year. Cash collection for the year to date is £70.6m, this includes £2.0m collected in relation to previous year debt.

Business rates collection for the final quarter of the year is 97.6%, up by 0.25% on this point last year. Cash collected for the year to date is £54.4m, this includes £1.7m collected in relation to previous year debt.

2.4 Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance Division

Purchase to Pay

Income generated from the Council’s early payment arrangements for supplier invoices totalled more than £160k in income in 2022/23. Additional income generated from SLA’s with external clients amounted to a further £101k. Over the financial year, 91% of all Council supplier invoices were paid within 30 days. Performance has dipped very marginally from 2021/22 due to the staffing vacancies experienced during the year.

Insurance

The Council has renewed its insurance policies for 2023/24 with its existing insurers. The final contract extension has been taken on the Council’s liability, personal accident, crime, and engineering policies. This means that all of these policies will need to be retendered ahead of the 2024/25 financial year.

The public sector insurance market remains volatile and the impacts of inflation, supply chain pressures, and the cost of living are impacting on premiums. Despite the Council’s high levels of self-insurance, and excellent claims record, renewals for 2023/24 have seen significant increases on the main insurance policies:

- Liability – 17.5% increase
- Motor – 10% increase
- Property – 10% increase

- The Council’s property, motor and computer policies are now entering the third year of a three-year contract, which has two further one-year extension options. A decision will be taken later in the year as to whether to take up the extension options or to retender the entire suite of insurance policies.

The Council’s insurance brokerage contract, currently awarded to Aon, is also due to expire on 31 March 2024 and will need to be retendered this year.

Direct Payments

The Direct Payments team delivers a support service to approximately 880 individuals who have opted to have their assessed care and support needs met by receiving a Direct Payment. As part of its role, the team undertakes an ongoing programme of audits of individual Direct Payment accounts, to provide assurance that funding has been used in accordance with assessed support plans and agreed outcomes. The audit process also involves recovering surplus funds where appropriate.

During 2022/23, the team completed a total of 793 audits of clients’ accounts and recovered over £1.95m. Approximately £1.75m of this sum was paid back into the Council’s community care budget and used to support in-year expenditure. The remaining sum related to health funded clients and was returned to the Integrated Care Board.

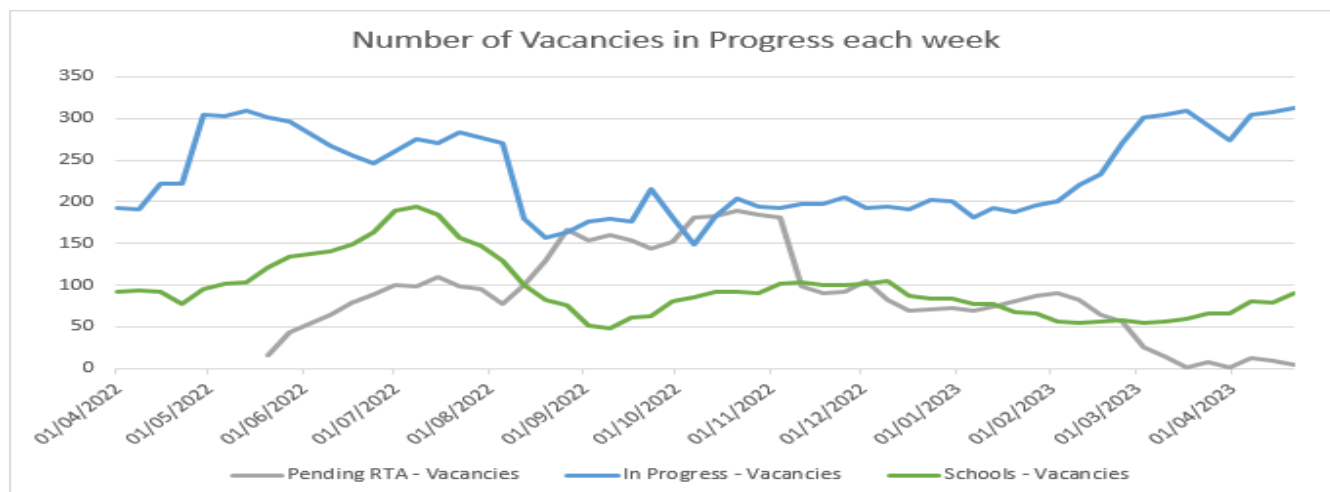
Sundry Debtors

During 2022/23 the Council raised 38,027sundry debtor invoices totalling £61,685,966. At year-end, the collection rate for debt raised in-year was 78.75%. It should be noted that the collection rate constantly changes in accordance with the value of invoices raised and the timing of payments received.

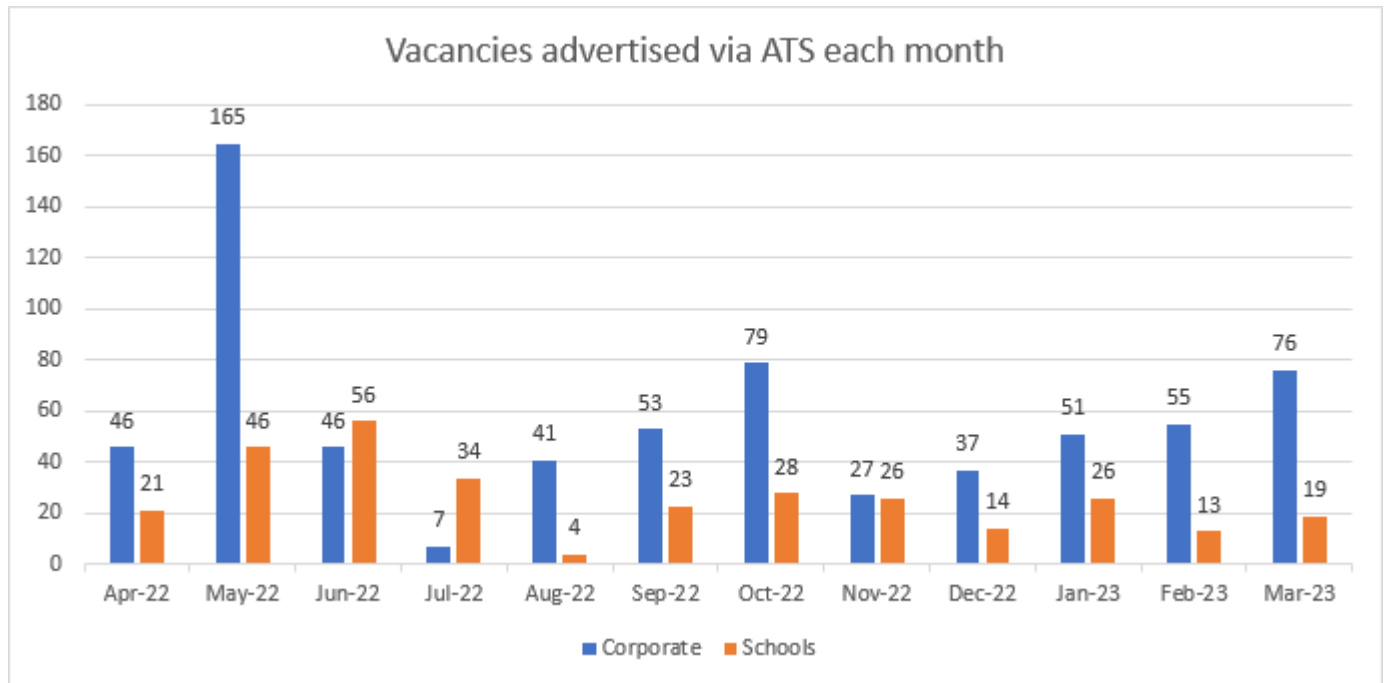
2.7 Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

On 28th February 2023, the Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency (PPPE) Department ceased to exist and was replaced by the Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit on 1st March, forming one of four departments sitting in the Chief Executive’s Directorate. In summary, the new department contains all of the services that were in the PPPE Dept, with the exception of the Partnerships function – elements of which have moved to service areas within the Environment & Regeneration Directorate. The operational HR functions now sit within a dedicated division to enable focused leadership and engagement across the Council, and are augmented with the addition of Health & Safety. The complement of services has been expanded by the addition of Communications & Marketing, and Research, Data & Intelligence, which have transferred in from other departments. In addition, the new Transformation Delivery Unit is situated within this structure. Future performance reports will reflect the structure and activity of the new department.

Despite significant ongoing challenges in terms of volume, the service has continued to incrementally reduce the amount of outstanding recruitment. Service volumes are represented below and it can be seen that demand for the filling of vacant posts remains high.



The line labelled 'Pending RTA – Vacancies' in the graphic above represents recruitment demand that could not be accommodated within the available resources, so was queued. This results from increased demand generally, but also from the annual upswing in school recruitment that occurs from May to September – further illustrated below. It's very positive that this had reduced to zero by the end of March, achieved through the application of additional resources, as well as some streamlining of process.



Work is now ongoing within the Transformation Programme to completely review the Council's approach to recruitment as it is clear that the existing operational platform, which was implemented in 2017/18, is not suitable for the labour market that now prevails. Further updates will feature in future reports and also in the reporting of Transformation Programme activity.

The Employment Relations function continues to support a broad range of work across the organisation, whilst continuing to balance a higher than average volume of HR casework. It was noted in Q3 that as the Transformation Programme commences and organisation begins to change, there is no capacity in this 'Business as Usual' area to support that change. A different resourcing model has been designed and will be refined and consulted upon during Q1 of 2023/24 to configure timely HR support to change objectives. A further report on this will feature in the Q1 2023/24 report.

The Pay & Pensions service is operating on a stable basis, however the unpredictability of timescales around the agreement of Local Government pay awards for 2023/24 creates issues for this service. The later these agreements are made, the more retrospective work there is to be processed by this service area, and resources do not exist to cover this so a pragmatic approach has to be taken, usually incurring cost to the Council in respect of overtime and additional hours worked. Further updates on those negotiations / agreements is in the Emerging Issues section below. It is already clear however that it may be some months before the pay awards that should have been agreed nationally for implementation on 1st April 2023 will be significantly delayed.

The service has set up and delivered the recruitment exercise leading to the appointment of two new Operational Directors in Adult Social Care – an exercise that forms part of a directorate restructure. In addition, the appointment of the new Executive Director Environment & Regeneration has concluded, following a search campaign and a comprehensive assessment and selection process delivered by the HR and Organisational Development Services, in conjunction with a commercial partner and North West Employers. A similar process is being put in place to recruit the Council's next Executive Director for Children's Services.

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Learning and Development collaboration project is continuing to deliver Race Equality Training for employees and managers across the region. To add value to the project, EqualTeach have been commissioned to deliver Elected Member Training regarding Race Equality with 12 Members attending in March 23. Positive feedback from the session has stated;

“Overall, it was one of the most successful seminars I have attended. The trainer’s ability to deal with Unconscious Bias was, in my opinion, exemplary”.

Further sessions to be explored for those unable to attend the initial training later in the year

To complement the Health and Wellbeing programme, delivered by the Health Improvement Team, further dates have been established for Mindfulness Courses’ with the Positive Behaviour team. The Mindfulness courses will be offered on a 1:1 basis, group sessions and a comprehensive 8-week course for those requiring a longer term intervention. The Organisational Development (OD) Team has been liaising with Employment Relations Service to promote to the right audience to ensure greater impact. This is designed to prevent absence and promote effectiveness within the services of those employees who attend.

A celebration and recognition event was held for those employees that recently completed the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Level 3 qualification. The Chief Executive presented certificates to those able to attend and celebrated the success stories with the cohort. Halton Borough Council has recently undergone the annual assessment with the Awarding Body, an extract from the final report can be seen below;

“This is a small, competent, ILM Centre which continues to successfully recruit to Level 3 Award in Leadership and Management and Level 5 Award in Leadership and Management. The learners on programme are employees of Halton Borough Council, who clearly benefit from their studies, and learner and employer satisfaction has been evidenced through learner progression from Level 3 to Level 5, and enhanced job performance”.

The e-learning platform has been redesigned and launched in this quarter, giving the platform a more contemporary appearance and ease of navigation for users’. The themes have been mapped against the Organisational Development Strategy and the key topics of the Transformation programme – this will ensure that investment in learning is clearly aligned to organisational priorities and forms part of a shift in focus for the Organisational Development service which will take place over the coming months.

E-learning take up in the quarter was 1373, representing an excellent return on investment across the 13 week period. In essence this translates into an average of 21 episodes upskilling per day through this platform alone.

The HBC Apprenticeship Policy has been updated for the new financial year, offering more flexibility to services through the initiative of ‘freezing’ vacant post budgets to match apprenticeship duration, with the new hire apprentice commencing at 75% of the appropriate salary level applicable to the position. It is anticipated that this will enable the Council to attract more apprentices, which aligns with an expanded portfolio of nationally available approved apprenticeships. The Council will also be offering new hire apprenticeship rates for higher level and degree apprenticeships.

1 further new hire apprentice was appointed in the quarter (Heavy Vehicle Service & Maintenance Technician L3), taking the Council to a complement of 8 new hire apprentices.

A new initiative has been implemented in partnership with Riverside College – targeted recruitment to in relation to our Administration Service function of A-Level business students who are coming to the end of their qualification, this seeks to address need in an area in which we’ve struggled to recruit in recent times. This is particularly appealing to those students who do not wish to go onto University and want to expand their knowledge and develop skills and behaviours in a working environment and to start their careers.

In addition to the work on apprenticeships, one Traineeships has commenced.

2.8 ICT and Administration

Through extensive research and workshops, the project team within Halton ICT Services has started to gain an understanding of the 'Art of the Possible' and the opportunity open to the wider user environment by starting to look at the use of the Microsoft M365 and Azure Cloud platforms. In conjunction with other cloud-based offerings opening up the world of interactive solutions such as AI, machine learning, improved and simplified user and customer experience, opportunities that express themselves through face to face, call centre, web, even telephony and just as importantly the internal customer experience through the technology platform we use as officers and councillors.

This and the next quarter for the teams associated with the changes ahead they will be looking to deploy this development of positive change for the wider authority.

As discussed within previous reports the development of the M365 Microsoft platform is a key development for all teams within the wider authority. Within Admin, ICT and Customer Services we are to implement considerable change under the transformation programme ahead, designing new ways of working allowing for integration with the new platform ahead of us currently completing the design phase.

As discussed, the design phase of this deployment must consider the objectives of the authority moving forward and the new ways in which it needs to work to survive within these constantly restrictive yet costly economic times.

The platforms ahead will be designed to allow for process innovation, linking services with self-help and self-service portals, this will target a more personalised customer experience for residents to register within these systems as well enabling faster turnaround of services together with accurate data links with our clients and partners as these projects evolve over the next 24 months.

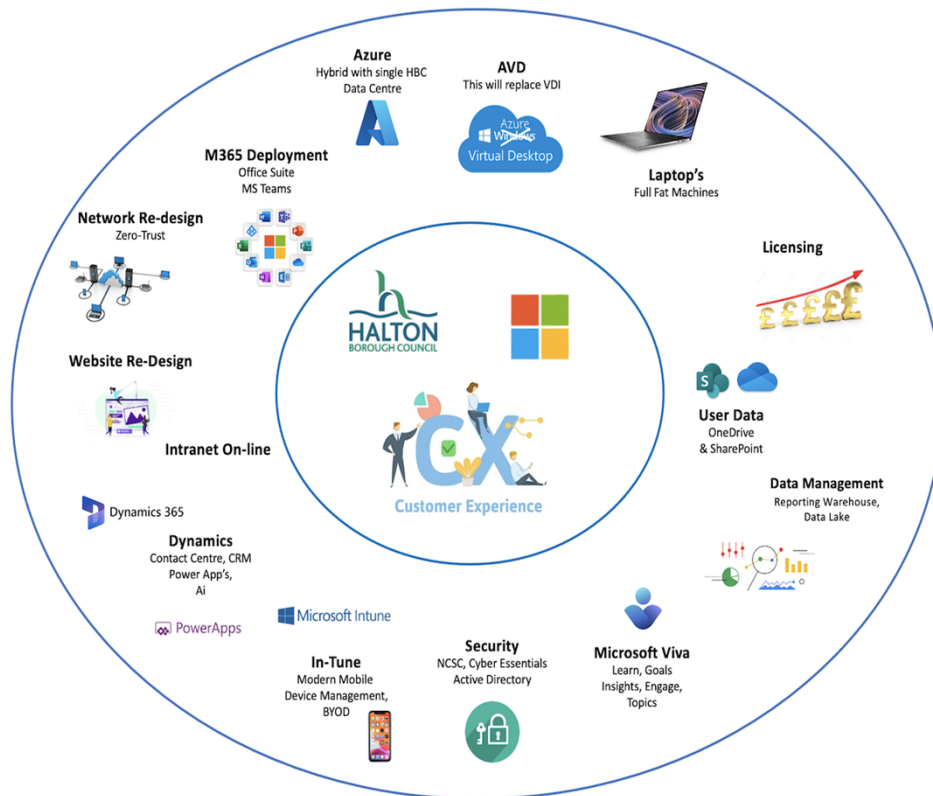
These projects are not overnight developments but ones that will be linked to the base platform currently in design.

The authority has partnered with an external provider, one with considerable experience across the NHS and Local and Central Government agencies in aiding with the development of the Microsoft platforms.

The objective is to have the finalised deployment plans in place by May of this year ready for final costings to be negotiated and approved by the authority.

This will encompass new and innovative ways of working from changes to the data centres reducing power consumption, through to new more secure desktop environments and simpler ways of accessing the systems and services used by all every day.

The changes ahead are considerable but planned to enhance and develop the internal and external customer experience over the coming years as this considerable range of projects evolves to deliver services within Halton. The officer desktop experience will be one of the first projects to be delivered in line with the recent deployment of M365 to councillors.



2.9 Legal and Democracy

Executive Board have approved minor amendments to the Constitution and recommended them to Council in Quarter 1.

Work has continued with Merseyside and Cheshire colleagues on the establishment of the Heath and Care Partnership.

The team continues to be deeply involved in the Transformation Programme.

The Education and Social Care team in Legal is still under great pressures due to case load and court timescales.

Attempts to recruit a Taxi Licencing Enforcement officer are continuing.

Legal Services have again been providing support in respect of major projects including Mersey Gateway and Freeport.

2.10 Stadium

Widnes FC recorded their record home attendance when they played Macclesfield Town FC with 630 spectators, they are currently in a relegation battle.

The Stadium hosted St Helens RLFC for training due the inclement weather and not being able to train as their usual venue prior to them travelling to Australia to become World Club Champions.

Widnes Vikings started their 2023 Betfred Championship Campaign in fine form winning 5 out of 8 games. Attendances are comparable to the 2022 seasons.

The stadium hosted North Wales v Dewsbury after an RFL recommendation due to a home ground fixture clash.

The annual Mayors Civic Ball was held at the stadium, hosting civic leaders from surrounding boroughs.

The upgrade of the executive box level started, seeing new tables, chairs and AV equipment for each box.

Self-service tea/coffee trial begins on the executive level, offering a wider selection and possible reduction cost.

Entertainment PA system purchased to reduce the potential cost of larger scale events at the Stadium. A stage and canopy will follow in the new financial year.

2.11 Catering - School Meals

The school meals service was given the news in February/March that Full Council and the Executive Board had made a decision that from the 31st March 2025 Halton Borough Council would no longer be providing a meal provision within schools. This raised alarm bells for the 200+ employees that will be affected by this decision. Meetings took place with the affected workforce, management, unions and HR to relay this news and to try and ease anxiety levels. Subsequently we are feeling the knock-on effect by this decision, as staff are looking for job security and moving to alternative positions in and out of the council.

External catering providers have been in touch with management over the possibility to speak to schools. Management are happy to engage with the providers and the schools leads to make the transition a smooth one.

Another decision by Full Council and the Executive Board to close two day care centres has also had a knock on affect to the school meals service. We currently provide the catering in these facilities and as a direct result of the closures planned for the end of August 2023 a business case has been presented to the HBC Steering group which sees the deletion of two catering supervisor positions.

Due to the uncertainty of the school meals service, we are struggling to retain staff and therefore foresee a recruitment issue moving forward.

2.12 Registration Services

- Certificate stock check for the General Register Office
- Completion of the Annual Performance Report for the General Register Office
- Updating of the Business Continuity Plan
- Celebration Event to Award Halton Registration Service the Award of the Outstanding Contribution Award by the
- Three Registrars completed Level 2 in Information, Advice and Guidance
- Review of Call Centre and HDL Scripts
- Setting of new fees for 2023/24 an 2024/25

2.13 Property Services (Operations)

St Patrick's Nursing Home Redevelopment

Design development works ongoing in respect of proposals to build a new 16 bed extension and refurbish the remaining accommodation. Works planned to be carried out in 2 phases with an estimated works cost of £2.6m. Planning application submitted. Now looking at options to decarbonise the building as part of the scheme and in respect of this we are intending to submit a bid for additional funding to the governments decarbonisation fund as part of the City region.

St Luke's Nursing Home Refurbishment

Design development works ongoing in respect of proposals to refurbish existing accommodation in 4 phases, estimated works cost of £1.1m. Now looking at options to decarbonise the building as part of the scheme and in respect of this we are intending to submit a bid for additional funding to the governments decarbonisation fund as part of the City region.

Proposed New Leisure Centre Moor Lane

The contract start date was 9th January 2023, works are progressing well the reduced dig is complete, foundations and drainage is currently being installed. Contractual completion date is 3rd February 2025.

Education maintenance programme 2022/23

The 2022/23 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council In March. The programme consists of 13 separate projects with an estimated cost of circa £780k. All projects have now been completed.

Corporate Maintenance programme 2022/23

The 2022/23 Corporate maintenance programme was approved by the Asset Management Working Group. Many projects have now been completed, a few are rolling over or being deferred to next years' programme, all the available budget has been spent, other than a small amount which is being accrued to next year.

Camden Buildings, High Street- refurb to create digital/creative hub

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October and works are now progressing through to RIBA stage 4 design on 59/57. 69 is now going to be delivered as a separate project. The purchase of 63 has now been completed so design works to 63/65 will recommence in the new financial year.

Brookvale Rec- Proposed Refurbishment works

An initial feasibility study has been submitted, this is currently being updated following further consultation with the Sports Development team. We are expecting the updated study will be provided in early April

Pickering Pastures- Proposed new pavilion building

The feasibility report has been updated to reflect the increasing costs, the budget estimate for the project is £520k. A report is going to Exec Board at the April meeting to seek approval to proceed with the project.

Cavendish School - 2 class extension

The project has been tendered and a preferred contractor is waiting to be appointed, Planning approval has now been obtained. Costs are likely to raise due to length of time between tender return and obtaining planning approval, will need to liaise with preferred contractor in due course. Start date has yet to be agreed as awaiting travel plan from school which needs approval.

The Brindley- Proposed extension

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October, following which design development is now progressing through RIBA stage 4. The preferred option has been agreed with a budget cost estimate of £5.6m. Planning approval is expected towards the end of April. Project to be tendered via the Chest in due course.

Runcorn Library redevelopment

Design development works ongoing to create an NHS Health & Education hub. The feasibility study has been completed and circulated for comment, budget cost £1.8m. Approval to proceed to RIBA stage 3 now obtained, these design works are now progressing.

Elite House- Redevelopment

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October, there is also a bid in to the Combined Authority however for additional funding as the Town Deal funding is insufficient to carry out the desired scheme, the outcome of this as yet unknown, it is anticipated however that a decision on that will be made prior to the end of May. The RIBA stage 2 report has been issued by the architects for comment and feedback, discussions are ongoing and it is anticipated that this will move to RIBA stage 3 once the outcome of the additional funding is known.

Changing Places Facilities

Funding has been secured for 3 Changing Places facilities which were originally planned to be in Victoria Park, Shopping City and the Stadium respectively. The works within the Stadium are now complete and the facility available for use. Planning approval has been obtained for the project in Victoria Park, this is currently out to tender with returns due back in mid-April, following which works will commence on site. The project in Shopping City has stalled however due to the owners not committing to contributing to the funding therefore approval has now been obtained to install the facility in Halton Lea Library as an alternative, design works are progressing with same.

Unit 10 Refurbishment

Works are progressing, the only outstanding works now are the roller shutter replacement and the upgrading of the fire doors, it is anticipated that these works will not be completed before the end of June due to the long lead times, once complete Tarmac will undertake their own fit out.

Decarbonisation Projects

Following completion of the decarbonisation works at the stadium further feasibility studies have been commissioned in respect of carrying out further work at our buildings subject to funding. We are currently working with the NW Net Zero Hub with a view to submitting a Combined Authority bid to the Decarbonisation fund in 2023. It is anticipated that this will cover 5/6 buildings, but yet to be confirmed.

Wigg Island- Demolition of former Pavilion

The demolition works are now complete.

Education maintenance programme 2023/24

The 2023/24 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council In March. The programme consists of 13 separate projects with an estimated cost of circa £780k. All projects have now been completed.

Corporate Maintenance programme 2023/24

The 2023/24 Corporate maintenance programme has been approved by the Asset Management Working Group. Design works are starting to commence on the various projects in the programme.

Education SEMH Resource base projects

There are 5 schools where we are looking at upgrading the facilities to create Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) resource bases for both KS1 & KS2 groups. All projects are currently in the early design stage

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:-

3.2 Finance - Benefits Division

Household Support Fund No. 4

In the Chancellor's autumn 2022 statement it was announced that the Household Support Fund is to be further extended from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, and on 20th February 2023 the Government informed Halton that it would receive a grant allocation of £2.6m for 2023/24. The Government have changed the requirements for this allocation, such that part of the funding must be distributed on the basis of an application process. However, the Council can still proactively target particular groups of households.

The following areas have been allocated funding to support vulnerable households and residents of the Borough with the ongoing cost of living crisis:

Discretionary Support Scheme

In order to meet the requirement to operate part of the scheme on an application basis, £356,000 of the funding has been allocated to the Discretionary Support Scheme, which has an existing telephone application process.

Free School Meal Vouchers

In order to provide assistance to vulnerable households with children, funding will be allocated to low income families with children, by issuing free school meal vouchers of £12 per week during all of the school holidays. It is estimated that the free school meals vouchers will cost approximately £1,170,000 in total. This will provide approximately 7,500 children with free school meals throughout all of the school holidays over the coming twelve months.

Pensioner Households on Council Tax Reduction

All pensioners currently receiving council tax reduction (CTR) will be provided with a one-off award of £120. It is estimated that 4,181 pensioner households on CTR will benefit from this award, at a total cost of £501,720.

Public Health and Care Leavers

£100,000 will be allocated to Public Health who will target support at vulnerable households who may fall outside those areas covered by the rest of the Spending Plan. Public Health will also be targeting support to families who have pre-school age children, and are flagged on the Income Deprivation Index affecting children.

In addition families who have disabled pre-school age children will be targeted for support. It is has been decided to allocate £82,126 to Public Health for this particular project. Children's Services currently have 135 recent care leavers and up to 50 young people in care who will become 18 years old in the next 12 months. It is proposed to assist these two vulnerable groups during the cost of living crisis with the following: energy bill support, household packs to assist with keeping warm, saving energy and cooking, and emergency food and hygiene packs. It is proposed to allocate £82,127 to Children's Services to provide the above mentioned support.

Voluntary Sector Partners

It has been agreed to ask Voluntary Sector Partners to once again assist the Council with the delivery of Household Support Fund assistance to residents. The allocations made previously for six month periods, to Citizens Advice, Food Banks, and Affordable Warmth etc. have been doubled for the coming year. Each organisation will provide a detailed proposal of how they intend to utilise the funding and throughout the year they will provide the Council with monitoring information for submission to the DWP.

Delivery and Co-ordination

The Benefits Division will co-ordinate use of the grant on behalf of the Council. A spending plan has been developed which will provide a basis for monitoring spending against the grant and help to ensure full utilisation by 31 March 2024. Quarterly returns have to be submitted to the DWP to demonstrate progress of the distribution of the Household Support Fund.

3.3 Revenues and Financial Management Division

VAT Treatment – Leisure Services

On 3 March 2023, HMRC changed the treatment of VAT in respect of leisure services which councils provide to the public. Leisure services are now treated as a non-business activity for VAT purposes and therefore outside the scope of VAT. The Council is working with its VAT advisor, PWC, to submit a claim to HMRC for recovery of output VAT against leisure services over the past four years.

2022/23 Statement of Accounts

Financial Management are currently in the process of drafting the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts for the Council. The deadline for publishing the draft accounts has been brought forward this year to 31 May 2023, two months earlier than for 2021/22. The earlier deadline was confirmed by Government on 31 March 2023, despite having issued a consultation seeking views from councils on the published date. The deadline date for the accounts to be signed off by the Council's External Auditor (Grant Thornton) is 30 September 2023.

3.4 Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance Division

Transforming Public Procurement Bill

The Procurement Bill completed its passage through the Committee Stage in the House of Commons in February and will now progress to Report and then Third Reading. The final stage in the Parliamentary process is 'consideration of amendments', when it returns to the House of Lords. Once the Bill achieves Royal Assent, work to finalise the secondary legislation will include a public consultation on the draft regulations. It is anticipated that the "go-live" will not take place until spring 2024 at the very earliest.

As previously reported, at this stage it remains uncertain as to what extent the changes will impact on the Council's procurement arrangements. It is however important to note that the new regulations will only apply to above threshold (i.e. higher value) procurement activity. The majority of the Council's procurement is below threshold and will therefore be unaffected and will continue to be governed by the Council's Procurement Standing Orders. The Government has stated that it will provide at least six months' notice ahead of the new requirements taking effect. This will give public authorities and service providers time to prepare for the changes to the revised public procurement processes.

3.5 Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

The 2023/24 Local Government sector pay claim for NJC staff (grades HBC1 to HBC11) remains under negotiation at a national level – the claim is 'inflation plus 2%'. This presents significant affordability challenges for the whole sector but reflects the economic backdrop within which the workforce is living, and mirrors the industrial relations climate prevalent in other sectors. Following a national offer of £1925 against every NJC pay point (representing an increase of between 3.88% and 9.24% depending on grade), consultation has taken place between trade unions and their membership, with no agreement being reached. The joint trade unions are now progressing to ballot their membership on industrial action across the country. On that basis, the Operational HR Division will support management across the Council in preparation for managing the impact of strike action.

The 2023/24 pay award for Chief Officers (Divisional Manager grade and above) has been agreed nationally at 3.5%.

A watching brief is being kept on wider employment relations issues across the sector. Teaching staff in some trade unions have taken industrial in response to the pay offer related to pay awards and are set to continue. In practical terms it places significant additional workload on the Pay & Pensions team as it results in the processing of a number of payroll and pension contribution adjustments after each episode of action. To date this has been contained, however any further increase in demand resulting from this will need to be resourced.

Harsh labour market conditions continue and the challenges in the resourcing of many service areas continues. As reported above, work around the re-engineering of the recruitment process, along with the setting up of specific recruitment campaigns for blocks of vacancies.

A campaign specific to Care Home recruitment went live in early January 2023 and has delivered favourable results. Sub-regional economic data continues to demonstrate that paid employment in the Liverpool City Region is at an all-time high. Recruitment and retention of social work staff in Children's Services remains a significant challenge in all Councils across the region. From a Halton perspective, an organisational response to this issue is now being supported by resource from the Transformation Delivery Unit.

Linked to the issue above, the use of agency workers continues to be high. Refer to PPPE LI 05 / 06 in Appendix 2 below for volumes and expenditure against the Council's corporate contract. Where the corporate contract cannot deliver workers, as the agency market is also affected by availability of suitable labour, off-contract arrangements are implemented. These have an associated cost of circa £5m in 2022/23, however year-end analysis of how far this is offset by budgets attributed to vacant posts and grant funding remains in progress at the time of writing. Included within this are some legacy off-contract arrangements in some of the Council's care homes, based on the business arrangements that transferred in. Work is underway to bring those functions into the corporate contract, but this must be done in a measured way so as not to effect a sudden loss of resource. This matter was subject to a specific report to the Corporate Policy & Performance Board in September 2022, which noted that a significant reduction can only occur as the recruitment issues outlined above are resolved. To provide organisational focus on this, reduction of agency worker usage is being supported by resource from the Transformation Delivery Unit.

As reported in Q3, the retained EU law (revocation and reform) Bill was published on 22 September 2022. EU derived law is set to expire on 31 December 2023 unless by then the Government has decided to retain it (it can extend deadline to 31 December 2026), and it remains unclear what this will mean for current UK HR legislation. This situation continues to be monitored and will be reported in future reports as appropriate.

3.6 ICT

Work has started within the department to assess and analyse the new Administration Work stream under the control of the corporate transformation programme. The impact of any change will be reported upon over the coming weeks in order to define a process and timeframe to progress with the project. Reports will be taken to the corporate management Team and reports will be made to the corporate HR Steering Group to define the opportunity ahead.

As previously noted, the ICT work stream is considerable and every effort will be made by the teams to maintain business as usual support to all users as well as deliver the projects ahead, plans will be reported against and as the new projects evolve the outcomes will also be detailed within this report.

In addition to the above technical programme of work the Front Door Transformation programme will also start, again plans are already being prepared with detailed strategies for the development of the customer services environment such as the contact centre systems and the CRM systems that control and operate the customer facing roles, integrated services such as the HBC web sites, and intranet will also be part of the first phase of the programme of work. Detailed definitions of the phases will evolve over the following quarter and will start to be reported against as themes emerge.

3.7 Legal and Democracy

Work is underway to prepare for the local elections on 4 May and the subsequent induction of any new Members. Council will consider the revised Constitution at the Annual Meeting, at which the Mayor and Deputy for the forthcoming year will be installed.

It is expected that pressures on Legal's Education and Social Care team will continue, and recruitment will take place to replace 2 Solicitors who will move on from the team in Quarter 1. Efforts to secure a Taxi Licencing Enforcement Officer will continue.

3.8 Community & Environment – Registration Services

Recruitment issues due to retirement and vacancies with casual staff

3.9 Property Services (Operations)

Protect Duty

The 'Protect Duty', more commonly known as Martyn's Law is due to come in to force later in the year. The legislation will place a requirement on those responsible for certain publicly accessible buildings, locations and venues to consider the threat from terrorism and to implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures. It will mainly focus on the requirement to undertake risk assessments of the various locations following which plans must be put in place in respect of implementing appropriate mitigation measures. The impact of this is that it may likely mean the introduction of measures such as public address voice alarm (PAVA) systems in certain venues where not already installed together with the enhancement of other factors such as street furniture, e.g. bollards, to prevent vehicular access to certain areas.

Accommodation review

With the new agile approach to working since the COVID pandemic, i.e. with office based staff only needing to be in the office for a minimum of 40% of the time, subject to service requirements, our main office accommodation is now significantly underutilised which gives us an opportunity to rationalise our office bases. Following on from a report produced in January 2023 in to our accommodation a Members working group has been set up and had a first meeting to start looking at how we can rationalise our main office accommodation to ensure the space is used more effectively in the future and to help generate revenue savings. Future updates will be given as this work progresses.

Rising Construction Costs

Construction costs have been rising significantly in the recent past which is having an impact across all projects. Whilst all sectors in industry have been affected by inflation, the construction industry appears to have been hit particularly hard with certain sectors, such as steelwork production, seeing increases in costs of up to 100%. The future outlook at present is that tender prices are unlikely to fall in the short to medium term, the hope being that these may settle down in the longer term.

Carbon emission targets

Halton's Climate Change Action Plan has set a target for the Council's own carbon emissions to reach net zero by 2040 in line with the Liverpool City region. We are currently working in conjunction with the NW Zero Carbon Hub with a view to submitting a Combined Authority bid in the autumn of 2023 when the next round of the government's decarbonisation fund opens up. This will likely cover 5 or 6 of our buildings where the boiler plant is nearing the end of its useful life and if successful will allow us to electrify the heat & hot water provision.

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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>


5.0 Performance Overview

- 5.1** 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.
- 5.2** 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.
- 5.3** 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	Objective
FS 01	Set the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Recommend Council Tax.


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Report 2022-25 Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2021.		Medium term Financial Strategy reported to Executive Board 17 November 2022
Report 2022/23 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council - March 2022.		Medium term Financial Strategy reported to Executive Board 17 November 2022

Ref	Objective
FS 02	To effect financial prudence by assisting managers to control their budgets by monitoring spending and providing timely and accurate financial reports.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Provide monthly financial reports to budget holders within 8 days of month end.		Reports all issued on schedule to date.

Provide quarterly financial monitoring reports to Operational Directors for inclusion in Performance Monitoring Reports.		Quarter 4 financial outturn reports are being finalised and will be shared with Operational Directors for inclusion in Performance Monitoring Reports.
Provide quarterly monitoring and forecasting reports on the overall budget to Executive Board.		Quarter 4 monitoring report on the overall budget will go to Executive Board on 15 June 2023.

Ref	Objective
FS 03	Provide for public accountability by reporting the Council's stewardship of public funds and its financial performance in the use of resources by preparing the statutory Statement of Accounts in accordance with the latest accounting standards.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Publish the Statement of Accounts following external audit and the Annual Governance Statement by 30th September 2021.		The draft accounts were published and shared with the External Auditor on 13 July 2022, ahead of the deadline of 31 July. The audit took longer than expected and the Audit Findings Report was eventually presented to Audit and Governance Board on 23 November 2022.









Ref	Objective
FS 04	Make best use of cash resources available to the Council and meet its statutory responsibility by setting, implementing and monitoring the Treasury Management Policy.





Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2021.		Treasury Management Policy reported to Council on 02 March 2022
Provide monitoring reports to Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.		Reported to Executive Board 17 November 2022.

Ref	Objective
FS 05	Ensure that the Capital Programme is affordable, prudent, and sustainable by setting and monitoring prudential borrowing indicators.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2021.		2023/24 Prudential indicators reported to Council on 08 March 2023
Provide monitoring reports to the Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.		Reported to Executive Board 17 November 2022.

Key Performance Indicators





Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
FS LI 01	Receive an unqualified external audit opinion on the accounts	Yes	Awaited	In Progress		N/A	Unqualified external audit opinion on the 2021/22 Statement of Accounts received 01 March 2023.
FS LI 02	Receive an unqualified VFM opinion from the Council's External Auditor	Yes	Awaited	In Progress		N/A	Final VFM opinion expected to be reported to Audit and Governance Board in July 2023.
FS LI 03	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected	94.14 %	94.25%	93.92 %			This is down by 0.23% compared with the same point last year. Impacted by resource being allocated to the energy rebate scheme at the expense of undertaking on-going recovery action during the first half of the year.
FS LI 04	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received	96.18 %	97.50%	97.93 %			Business rates collection for the final quarter of the year is 97.63%, up by 0.25% on this point last year.
FS LI 05	Average time for processing new claims (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction)	16.22	18	23.71			The Benefits Team has experienced long term staff sickness absence, and maternity leave during 2022/23, and this has had a significant impact on processing performance.



Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
FS LI 06	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	4.82	8	9.55			The Benefits Team has experienced long term staff sickness absence, and maternity leave during 2022/23, and this has had a significant impact on processing performance.
FSLI 07	Proportion of all supplier invoices paid within 30 days (including disputed invoices)	92.6%	93.0%	91.13 %			Delays in recruiting to vacant posts have seen invoice payment performance drop slightly when compared to 2021/22.

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Service



Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
PPPE 01	To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate training opportunities through the design and implementation of appropriate learning interventions, to include the development of bespoke Learning & Development offerings to individual service areas.


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy June 2022		All themes have been given attention. The lag in some activity due to restrictions in 2020 and 2021 means that the strategy has been amended in places, and augmented, and will be rolled forward to become the 2023 – 26 strategy.
Review and refresh annual training calendar September 2022.		Complete
Regular engagement with service managers to identify areas of challenge and develop appropriate bespoke solutions April, September, December 2022, and March 2023.		Ongoing and on target. Focus is shifting to Transformation Programme themes.
Embed knowledge and skills gained from Senior Leadership and Management Development Programmes (MBA / MSc) December 2022.		Engagement with acquired learning will contribute to the Council's Transformation Programme.



Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Complete delivery of in-house modular Leadership and Management development activity March 2023.		On target.
Monitor the embedding of knowledge and skills gained in-house modular Leadership and Management development activity. Ongoing and report in March 2023.		On target.

Ref	Objective
PPPE 02	Implement the Apprenticeship Policy to support the establishment of apprenticeships across the Council, and optimise return on the Apprenticeship Levy.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Establish 10 new apprentice placements within Council services, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2023.		8 recruited to and sustained, thus target missed – refer to Key Developments for further commentary on a revised approach.
Establish 20 new existing employee apprenticeships to enable up-skilling in a range of business areas, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2023.		Target met.

Ref	Objective
PPE 03	Optimise the use of the Agency Worker contract across Council services, to secure ongoing reductions in the incidence and cost of agency usage, and to ensure that correct and appropriate resourcing solutions are being deployed across Council services.


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Review and consider most appropriate resourcing mix in collaboration with service management in areas of highest agency usage December 2023.		Work ongoing in this area, specifically in Adults and Children's services. This is now a project in the Council's Transformation programme.



Implement resourcing plans with service management in appropriate areas December 2023.		As above.
Ongoing monitoring of agency usage and spend April, September, December 2022, and March 2023.		In place. Currently high spend. Actions to be taken to step down – issue a is a target project in Transformation Programme.

Ref	Objective
PPE 04	Work with high demand service areas to develop and implement effective recruitment programmes, optimising labour market engagement to attract high quality candidates.







Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Identify service areas with highest consistent recruitment demand, turnover, and low attraction rates September 2022.		A more programmed approach will be taken to this given the changing labour market conditions. Refer to Emerging Issues for more detail.
Implement project based recruitment plans with service management in appropriate areas December 2022.		A more programmed approach will be taken to this given the changing labour market conditions. Refer to Emerging Issues for more detail.
Corroborate out-turns of linked KPI's to assess effectiveness of approach to resourcing June, September, December 2022, and March 2023.		Market conditions making resourcing difficult across many areas, thus effectiveness of service may appear sub-optimal. However favourable results evident in Adult Care recruitment. Children's Social care remains an area under development.



















Ref	Objective
PPE 05	Develop and implement an organisation wide change programme – The Future Work Programme - to evaluate and introduce revised working practices following to meet the requirements of the changing labour market and employee expectation in the post-pandemic environment (to include use of accommodation, HR policy and practice, wellbeing support, application of technology)



Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Identify programme priorities and develop accommodation review work stream (in conjunction with EEP Dept) June 2022.		Accommodation review work stream in progress

Mobilise programme work stream groups and commence baselining and evaluation work. October 2022.		Work completed and informing accommodation and asset review considerations.
Conduct evaluation and feasibility work to inform design of new policy and practice in Council workplaces March 2023.		Target missed, however this results from a conscious decision to configure workplace accommodation in an optimum way, then establish an appropriate framework within which to align working practice, contractual amendments around working practice, deployment of appropriate technology, and associated policy.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
PPPE LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (Corporate)	12.94 (Days)	9.5 (Days)	12.98 (Days)			Target missed. Outturn consistent with previous year, but considered too high. Reconfiguration of HR services to take place to place more emphasis on wellbeing and proactively managing absence in services.
PPPE LI 02	Percentage of Employees without sickness	68.19	70.00	66.45			See commentary for PPPE LI 01 immediately above
PPPE LI 03	Total Full Time Equivalent Staffing Establishment (Indicator for information only)	3,250	For info purposes Only	3,204	For info purposes Only	For info purposes Only	Reported for information purposes only.
PPPE LI 04	Total Staff (head count) (Indicator for information only)	4,233		4,127			
PPPE LI 05	Total Agency Worker Usage (number of placements – year to date)	919	650	766			Outturn is driven by high usage in Children's and Adults Services, resulting from labour market conditions, however usage across other areas to cover vacancies is more prevalent than previous years - refer to Key Developments and Emerging Issues above for more detailed information.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
PPPE LI 06	Total Agency Worker Cost (cumulative gross cost – year to date)	£8.3m	£5.0m	£8.34 m			See commentary for PPPE LI 05 immediately above
PPPE LI 07	Number of apprenticeship placements established in the Council. (Cumulative – year to date)	2	10	8			Target missed. Mitigating measures in place from 1 April 2023 - refer to Key developments for further information.
PPPE LI 08	% of training delegates attending as proportion of places reserved:	100	95	96			Target met. Further narrative available in Key developments section above.
	Face to face	95	95	99			
	Virtual						
PPPE L109	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are:						Slight downward movement on component indicator (a), which stood at 62.42% at same point last year. Fluctuation exists in (b) and (c), due to turnover. Recruitment in top 5% of earners is not high volume, and as such scope for change is low.
	a) Women	64.2%	55%	61.4%			
	b) From BME communities	2.67%	2.0%	2.7%			
	c) With a disability	1.25%	8.0%	0%			
PPPE LI 10	No of staff declaring that they meet the definition of disability within the Equality Act 2010 as a % of the total workforce.	1.25%	10.00 %	1.29%			Fluctuation exists due to turnover and the indicator outturn reflects self-declaration. The 10% target reflects the wider Halton community. Despite the mismatch, it is important that this indicator continues to be monitored.
PPPE LI 11	Minority Ethnic community staff as % of total workforce.	0.99%	1.00%	1.31%			Shows improvement however fluctuation exists due to turnover and outturn tends to hover around target level. As indicated in figures provided.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
PPPE LI 12	Average time to recruit (Applicant Tracking System reported figure)	19 Days	15 Days	35.3 Days			Outturn demonstrates the number of days taken from vacancy closing date to completion of recruitment. Given the increase in demand for recruitment throughout the year, meeting the target was always set to be a significant challenge. For more information refer to narrative in graphics in Key Developments.





ICT and Administrative Support Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
ICT 01	Constantly evaluate and improve the usability, resilience, control and flexibility of the Council's Data Communications Network, Hardware and Software Infrastructure.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Continued Enhancement of the virtualization platform to enhanced or new technologies - March 2023.		Enhancements to the Halton Cloud platform continues at pace with the integration of Vendor Horizon 8 cloud-based systems and services within our own platform. New Microsoft solutions are also under test with options for deployment linked to the Hybrid Cloud approach the authority will be taking
Further development of Cloud Services Platform - March 2023.		Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release and licensing restrictions to enhance functionality and the user experience
SharePoint and Records Management enhancements through the E5 licensing model - March 2023.		Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release and licensing restrictions to enhance functionality and the user experience, again considerable change is in front of us with the deployment of SharePoint Cloud and the benefits this will bring.
Continued development of Interactive Web Services, Enhancement and further SharePoint Integration - March 2023.		Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release to enhance functionality and the user experience – As above the developments discussed within the body of the document will bring considerable opportunity for enhancement in the future.
Further development of commercial ICT opportunity within desktop, hosting and DR provision - March 2023.		This will always remain a focus together with the development of existing client opportunity. Mersey Travel, LCR and Sefton together with the Cemeteries system deployed to a 3rd party. Other opportunities for the deployment of Agresso together with other systems are currently under discussion.
Continued compliance with Central Government and NCSC Security guidelines and compliance requirements – March 2023.		Changes and enhancements are managed on a daily basis as the ever-changing security landscape evolves compliance with NCSC regulations and corporate and client needs remain a focus – £150'000 funding gained.





Ref	Objective
ICT 02	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including Web services, records & document management, business process workflow, corporate desktop portal and GDPR process.







Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Continuing improvements, enhancements and commercial use of Cloud system - March 2023.		All of the authorities' internal and external clients now successfully utilise this solution – delivering HBC services to partners, clients and internal users. With M365 becoming the focus as we deliver the E5 licencing suite within the Microsoft cloud.
Continuing workflow implementation together with a centralised and online postage systems - March 2023.		Continuing to support the technology developments as well as administrative process across the authority. This will evolve and enhance as part of the technology developments ahead.
Improvement and enhancement of all web-based customer interfaces - March 2023.		This continues to be a primary focus with content and facilities evolving monthly, in line with the ICT development programme and business requirement. A review of the design solution has taken place with development tools constantly being assessed. Linked the SharePoint development strategy and links to the M365 suite currently in development.
Continued development of document management and distribution services - March 2023.		The Records Management Unit is central to the development of the multitude of projects associated with data governance, digitisation of paper records and the development of many services such as centralised post and print – with the Hybrid Mail project under development - this focus will remain.

Ref	Objective
ICT 03	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including cloud and web service solutions, records & document management enhancement, business process workflow, corporate desktop portal.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Continual development of the I Want Admin/Finance/HR Portals - March 2023.		Through enhancements linked to the Records Management Unit and the proposed procedural evaluation of the service developments will evolve in line with business need, together with technical developments underway through our own in-house systems development team.
Develop and enhance operational Records management Unit Services - March 2023.		This is a constantly evolving process, and one that is now attracting and taking advantage of commercial opportunity.
The continued development of corporate administrative and customer service procedural services and support solutions March 2023.		This is a constantly evolving process for the teams supporting our client departments and teams through to the customer service deliverables within the contact centre and the increasing face to face requirements of our residents through the One Stop Shop's within Runcorn and Widnes.

Key Performance Indicators


Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ICT LI 01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.98	99.00	99.040			Remains in line with target and SLA, linked to Halton Cloud Data Centre configuration. A real achievement given the considerable levels of work undertaken over this period mainly out of hours/Weekends.
ICT LI 02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	99.97	99.00	99.67			Remains in line with target and SLA. Inclusive of planned down time out of hours. Especially during these times of new working arrangements when connectivity to the centre is key in its continual development.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ICT LI 03	School Support SLA: % of calls responded to within <u>agreed</u> target*:						Support remains at the same levels within this client environment, service agreements are due to be signed and a review of the service supply will be reviewed in line with the transformation process and corporate requirement.
	Priority 1	100	85.00	100			
	Priority 2	100	90.00	100			
	Priority 3	100	95.00	100			
	Priority 4	100	95.00	100			
ICT LI 04	Average working days from delivery to completion of a new PC.	5 (Days)	5 (Days)	2			New procedures are in place, with the advent of a full VDi based workforce all desktop's can be replaced the same day – a process is in place for home workers to drop off and collect a new device again a same day service.



Legal & Democracy

Key Objectives / milestones











Ref	Objective
LD 01	To ensure that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information and are kept informed of changing legislation and responsibilities.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Review constitution - May 2021.		The revised constitution was approved at Annual Council.

Ref	Objective
LD 02	To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that provides Elected Members, as key decision makers, with the necessary information, support and training opportunities to fulfil their individual potential and management and governance role effectively.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting where desired.		All members have been offered a MAP meeting.
To induct all new members by October 2021 .		All new Members have been inducted


Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 21 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (56 Total).	54 (100%)	54 (100%)	54 (100%)			All Members are offered a MAP. All newly elected Members completed an initial MAP in May 2022
LD LI 02	Percentage of Members attending at least one organized Training Event.	51 (94%)	54 (100%)	53 (98%)			All Members are offered a hybrid development programme via in-house officer training and e-Learning via the L&D Portal. It is a matter of personal choice for Members and take up has been very high.
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	10 (Days)			The target has been met.
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)			The target has been met.
LD LI 05	% of Executive Board minutes published within 5 working days after the meeting.	100%	100%	100%			The target has been met.









Community & Environment

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CE 01	Increase the number of Pupils having a school lunch, to raise awareness and increase levels of healthy eating.

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Deliver a promotion and educational campaign March 2023.		We are no longer exploring this option due to cessation of service.






Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CE LI 01	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.	71.42 %	75%	71.14 %			Off target
CE LI 02	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.	56.29 %	60%	64.33 %			On target as this includes school leavers in year 11. This should realign
CE LI 03	Take up of school lunches (%) – primary schools.	57.81 %	60%	58.19 %			Off target
CE LI 04	Take up of school lunches (%) – secondary schools.	50.10 %	50%	57.18 %			On target







Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP 03	Corporate

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Commence Construction of new Leisure Centre on site by 31st October 2022		Works commenced on site with the service diversion works on Moor Lane in October 2022, site mobilisation was carried out in December and the formal start on site was 9 th January 2023, completion being 3 rd February 2025.
Commence Construction of Extension to St Patrick's Nursing Home by 31st Dec 2022		The project has been delayed whilst the consultation takes place with families. Design works are continuing but we are now looking to decarbonise the buildings and are applying for additional funding.
Deliver agreed programmed maintenance programme to Corporate Buildings by 31st March 2023.		Budget fully committed, agreed works completed.
Deliver agreed programmed maintenance programme to schools by 31st March 2023.		All agreed projects now complete.
Complete refurbishment of 71 High Street, Runcorn by 30th September 2022		Completed.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 03	Commercial and investment portfolio – rent receivable against the budget to monitor receipt of income of rents and service charges.	Investment £44,300 Commercial £574,916	Investment £53,467 Commercial £663,613	Investment £44,300 Commercial £643,046			A shortfall of income was projected to exclude the income from the lease of no 29 –31 Moor Lane Widnes. The shortfall has been improved by the completion of rent review at lease at Venture Fields Widnes
EEP LI 04	Occupancy rates of commercial and investment portfolio.	100 % Investment 89% commercial	100 % Investment 90% commercial	100 % Investment 93% commercial			There are 6 vacant properties which will be on the market or vacant until negotiations are concluded
EEP LI 05	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	95%	96%	85%			In the past 12 months we have had a number of traders leave and others downsize, resulting in 18 more vacant units than 12 months ago. The reason being the very difficult trading conditions currently being faced. The introduction of parking charges to the main car park area has also impacted on the situation.

7.0 Financial Statements

FINANCE DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31st March 2023**

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employees	6,000	5,798	202
Premises	0	14	(14)
Insurances	894	982	(88)
Supplies & Services	315	353	(38)
Rent Allowances	31,198	31,198	0
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	65	5
Discretionary Social Fund	191	201	(10)
Discretionary Social Fund Household Support	2,373	2,373	0
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	288	12
Covid Isolation Expenditure	0	-9	9
Concessionary Travel	1,898	1,587	311
LCR Levy	2,241	2,241	0
Transfer to Reserves	262	245	17
Bad Debt Provision	77	86	(9)
Total Expenditure	45,819	45,422	397
Income			
Clerical Error Recovery	-400	-142	(258)
Rent Allowances	-30,598	-30,355	(243)
Other Fees & Charges	-264	-399	135
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-96	26
Burdens Grant	-60	-308	248
Dedicated schools Grant	-111	-111	0
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-279	(21)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-515	-515	0
Universal Credits	-5	-5	0
Council Tax Admin Grant	-204	-211	7
Household Support Fund Grant	-2,373	-2,363	(10)
Council Tax Liability Order	-501	-482	(19)
Business Rates Admin Grant	-155	-155	0
VEP Grant	-9	-9	0
Council Tax Rebate Scheme Admin Grant	0	-79	79
Covid Isolation Grant Income	0	36	(36)
Energy Bills Support Scheme	-330	-330	0
Family Annexe Council Tax Discount	0	-2	2
Alternative Fuel Payment Fund	0	-42	42
Schools SLAs	-278	-282	4
LCR Reimbursement	-2,241	-2,241	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-111	-135	24
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-82	-85	3
Transfer from Reserves	-133	-238	105
Total Income	-38,740	-38,828	88
Net Operational Expenditure	7,079	6,594	485
Recharges			
Premises Support	227	227	0
Central Support Services	2,518	2,518	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-5,753	-5,753	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,008	-3,008	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	4,071	3,586	485

Comments on the above figures

The net department spend for 2022/23 is £0.485m below the approved budget for the year. Expenditure levels have been less than budgeted which have mitigated the underachievement in the income targets for the year.

With the additional funding from the pay award, and a number of vacancies within the department, Finance have been able to achieve their staffing turnover savings targets as well as seeing an underspend of £0.202m against the employee budget for the year. This has been achieved through a number of vacancies and making use of external funding to fund employees traditionally funded from base.

Concessionary travel costs for the year are £0.311m below the approved budget. Covid has significantly affected concessionary travel usage, despite central government intervention to try to promote and fund elements of public transport. Passenger levels are still not at the levels they used to be and the trend seems set to continue – there are plans within 2023/24 to begin reducing the level of support provided to bus operators given they continue to be paid at pre Covid patronage. The budget has been reduced going forwards as the Council are expecting costs to remain lower than pre Covid levels.

Rent Allowance Income is showing a significant shortfall of £0.501m (including Clerical Error Recovery) due to an increase in the costs of supported accommodation. 60% of these costs are funded from housing benefits, with the balance falling to the Council.

There were a number of New Burdens grants received at the back end of the financial year with a value of approximately £0.210m. These were received from grant to compensate for additional work having to be undertaken by the department during the year covering council tax grant schemes and business rate relief schemes.

POLICY, PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31st March 2023**

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employees	2,147	2,116	31
Employee Training	123	188	(65)
Apprenticeship Levy	300	322	(22)
Supplies & Services	144	193	(49)
Agency	11	3	8
Other Expenditure	0	1	(1)
Contribution to Reserves	87	87	0
Total Expenditure	2,812	2,910	(98)
Income			
Fees & Charges	-132	-140	8
Reimbursements & Other Grants	0	-6	6
Schools SLA	-448	-452	4
Transfer from Reserves	-70	-70	0
Total Income	-650	-668	18
Net Operational Expenditure	2,162	2,242	(80)
Recharges			
Premises Support	72	72	0
Central Support	1,037	1,037	0
Recharge Income	-3,252	-3,252	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,143	-2,143	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	19	99	(80)

Comments on the above figures

At the close of the year, Policy, Performance, People and Efficiency net spend is over the approved budget by £0.080m.

Training costs are £0.065m higher than budgeted due to increased demand on the service over the course of the year

Supplies and services costs have been higher than forecast due to the reliance of consultants and legal professionals when dealing with complex tribunal cases. The main computer licence cost sitting within department is Trent, the software does not have the desired functionality so alternatives are being looked into, this might be an area of budget pressure going forwards as the department would need to operate the new system in tandem with Trent before fully switching.

Income targets were at achievable levels and overall actual levels were slightly above what was originally set.

ICT & ADMINISTRATION**Revenue Budget as at 31st March 2023**

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employee Expenditure	7,773	7,803	(30)
Supplies & Services Expenditure	1,012	769	243
Capital Finance	78	52	26
Computer Repairs & Software	1,149	1,122	27
Communication Costs	122	122	0
Premises Expenditure	99	141	(42)
Transport Expenditure	3	2	1
Transfer to Reserves	121	150	(29)
Other Expenditure	0	8	(8)
Total Expenditure	10,357	10,169	188
Income			
Fees & Charges	-624	-1,008	384
Schools SLA Income	-565	-526	(39)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-106	-106	0
Transfer From Reserves	-485	-485	0
Total Income	-1,780	-2,125	345
Net Operational Expenditure	8,577	8,044	533
Recharges			
Premises Support	389	389	0
Transport	19	23	(4)
Central Support Services	1,593	1,593	0
HBC Asset Rental Support Costs	748	748	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-13,112	-13,115	3
Net Total Recharges	-10,363	-10,362	(1)
Net Departmental Expenditure	-1,786	-2,318	532

Comments on the above figures

The department's financial position for the year shows net income as being £0.532m higher than budgeted.

The over achievement of income against Fees and Charges relates to external client income for traded services. This is for Agresso implementation and support at partner sites, the additional income is the main reason the department has performed well at outturn.

Against budgeted employee expenditure there are staff turnover saving targets in the region of £0.843m, this high target has largely been realised due to the number of vacancies and high turnover with Admin Services

Supplies and services budgets within the admin division are based on historical spend pre pandemic as this is best indication of projected spend now. Spend for the year is £0.243m below budgeted levels, due to reduced spending across the Council on printing, office equipment and general computer expenditure.

Premises costs are overspent at year end due to the well-publicised increases in gas and electricity prices.

Capital Projects as at 31st March 2023

Project Title	2022/23 (Outturn)		
	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
IT Rolling Programme	700	493	207
Totals	700	493	207

Comments on the above figures.

ICT is looking to move to more service based costs with the shift to 365, we're likely to see less capital spend going forwards so it might be able to be redirected to other areas provided the reduction carries on into next year.

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31st March 2023**

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employees	1,913	1,814	99
Premises Related Expenditure	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	322	264	58
Civic Catering & Functions	39	20	19
Legal Expenses	218	419	(201)
Legal Expenses Locums	0	473	(473)
Transport Related Expenditure	10	12	(2)
Capital Financing	0	19	(19)
Total Expenditure	2,502	3,021	(519)
Income			
Land Charges	-84	-66	(18)
School SLA's	-85	-82	(3)
Licence Income	-263	-293	30
Government Grant	0	-32	32
Reimbursement & Other Grants	0	-10	10
Fees & Charges Income	-65	-126	61
Transfer from Reserves	-17	-420	403
Total Income	-514	-1,029	515
Net Operational Expenditure	1,988	1,992	(4)
Recharges			
Premises Support	58	58	0
Central Support Recharges	351	351	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	-1,895	-1,895	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,486	-1,486	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	502	506	(4)

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms net spending is £0.004m above the approved budget for the year.

Employee expenditure is considerably underspent due to a number of vacancies within the department. However, due to high caseloads the department are required to rely heavily on agency costs to maintain service levels. This has been a significant cost of £0.473m to the council which has been funded from reserves. Graduate schemes are coming in place in 2023/24 and can hopefully provide support for less complex cases and reduce the workload, dropping reliance on agency staff for more straightforward tasks like attending court hearings.

Fees and charges income within the Legal Department is heavily reliant on the number of applications received so it is difficult to forecast. The financial structure will be shifting in 2023/24 to monitor each income stream more closely so the department can more readily identify areas which are requiring more support and help to record the cost correctly.

Legal expenses is currently £0.201m over the approved budget, costs are dependent on complexity and number of cases so difficult to forecast accurately. It has been advised that increased case numbers and case complexity will mean increased barrister costs and the need to use outside legal services.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2023**

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
Expenditure			
Employees	15,756	14,936	820
Premises	2,544	2,841	(297)
Supplies & Services	1,488	1,655	(167)
Hired & Contracted Services	453	475	(22)
Book Fund	147	142	5
Food Provisions	354	371	(17)
School Meals Food	1,872	2,069	(197)
Miscellaneous Transport Costs	115	133	(18)
Other Agency Costs	209	204	5
Other Expenditure	0	15	(15)
Waste Disposal Contracts	6,538	6,438	100
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	57	16	41
Grant to Norton Priory	172	173	(1)
Rolling Projects	0	20	(20)
Capital Financing	1,077	1,094	(17)
Total Expenditure	30,782	30,582	200
Income			
Sales Income	-1,196	-1,199	3
School Meals Sales	-2,730	-2,739	9
Fees & Charges Income	-5,351	-5,299	(52)
Rental Income	-209	-171	(38)
Government Grant Income	-359	-363	4
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-792	-818	26
SLA Income	-2,227	-1,785	(442)
Catering Fees	-88	-108	20
Internal Fees Income	-227	-289	62
Capital Salaries	-106	-75	(31)
Transfers From Reserves	-1,221	-1,314	93
Total Income	-14,506	-14,160	(346)
Net Operational Expenditure	16,276	16,422	(146)
Recharges			
Premises Support	1,496	1,496	0
Transport Support	2,325	2,433	(108)
Central Support	4,449	4,449	0
Asset Rental Support	3,519	3,519	0
Support Costs Income	-511	-511	0
Net Total Recharges	11,278	11,386	(108)
Net Departmental Expenditure	27,554	27,808	(254)

Comments on the above figures

The net department spend is £0.254m over the approved budget for the year.

This differs greatly from the forecast underspend position of £0.346m estimated at the end of Q3. The difference is predominantly to do with income estimates and further information is provided within the report.

Employee spend is £0.820m below the budget due to the number of vacancies within the department resulting from delays and difficulty in recruitment. This reflects vacancies within School Meals, Leisure and Stadium Services.

Premises costs are £0.297m over budget at the end of the year. Costs for utilities across all sites but in particular for Leisure services and Crematorium are overspent due to the increased cost of electricity and gas.

Spend on Supplies and Services is £0.167m over budget. This includes Crematorium spend for the decommissioning of the temporary cremator plus equipment costs.

Food Provisions, especially School Meals food is overspent by £0.197m due to the increasing inflationary food costs from suppliers.

Invoices relating to 2021/22 waste disposal contracts were received in Q3 2022/23 and were much lower than had been forecast in finalising the 2021/22 accounts. Charges for 2022/23 waste disposal contracts are calculated based on the average cost per tonne in the previous year. Therefore, the total outturn is £0.1m below the approved budget.

School Meals SLA income has underachieved by £0.442m, although mitigated by vacancies against budget for the service.

Transport recharges outturn overspend for 2022/23 is £0.108m due to fuel and other cost increases.

Capital Projects as at 31 March 2023

Project Title	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	37	16	21
Stadium decarbonisation scheme	0	145	(145)
Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment	70	42	28
Halton Leisure Centre	3,296	3,239	57
Children's Playground Equipment	80	40	40
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	0	340
Upton Improvements	13	0	13
Crow Wood Park Play Area	39	27	12
Crow Wood Park Pavillion	0	1	(1)
Open Spaces Schemes	450	170	280
Runcorn Town Park	256	282	(26)
Widnes Crem, Replacement Cremator	200	242	(42)
Spike Island / Wigg Island	60	1	59
Litter Bins	20	20	0
TOTAL	4,861	4,225	636

Comments on the above figures**Stadium Decarbonisation Scheme**

Grant-funded project to reduce the DCBL Stadium's carbon footprint. This involved replacing the gas boilers with air source heat pumps and installing LED lighting and additional installation. The scheme was completed in March 2022 with retentions paid in April 2023 over and above the approved budget.

Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment

The scheme is now complete but awaiting retentions invoice of approx £0.032m for the practical completion. There is a slight overspend due to additional fence panel/gate request works.

Halton (Moor Lane) Leisure Centre

The estimated cost of the new leisure centre has increased significantly due to the current levels of inflation, scarcity of materials etc. The Leisure Centre contract start date was 09/01/23 for a 108 week build. Spend to date includes all works associated with the PCSDA and CPO etc.

Children's Playground Equipment

This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds.

Landfill Tax Credits Schemes

Currently used to support improvements for a rolling programme of existing playgrounds and Open Space Schemes across the Borough. There were no projects identified in 2022/23.

Upton Improvements

Open space improvement works undertaken. Work has been delayed due to contractor workload and difficulty obtaining materials. No revised date set yet for when this may be spent.

Crow Wood Park & Pavilion

The main contract for the new park building has ended. A small amount of work to the building is required plus additional landscape contract to complete the paths - this is ongoing with some work from Property Services and Open Spaces team to complete.

Open Spaces

This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including Arley Drive/Halton Housing Trust and Fairfield History projects. Schemes on this code are progressing, although slightly behind the expenditure profile due to resource issues.

Runcorn Town Park

Project to renew park infrastructure. Project is ongoing with the next phase carried over to financial year 23/24. Some carry forward will be needed to complete work in season and for contingency payments plus some small sums for retention payments from previous phases. Anticipated further successful bids to the INEOS EfW fund for future phases.

Widnes Crematorium replacement Cremator

Contract works on the new cremator are complete. The over spend is as a result of the original budget of £0.200m being based on the quote from a company that later had to drop out of the process because they failed to meet the financial solvency requirements HBC needed. The company who could meet our financial requirements quote was an additional £0.031m. A further £0.010m overspend is as a result of repairs required to unforeseen damage to the original building slab under the old cremator when it was removed.

Spike Island / Wigg Island Recovery Works

The programme is slightly behind due to staff capacity issues. Waiting for a consultancy agreement to be put in place so the scheme can progress using external help.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**Revenue Operational Budget as at 31 March 2023**

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employee Related Expenditure	5,605	5,460	145
Repairs & Maintenance	2,211	2,285	(74)
Premises	92	102	(10)
Energy & Water Costs	1,059	1,059	0
NNDR	549	664	(115)
Rents	192	161	31
Economic Regeneration Activities	17	0	17
Security	486	548	(62)
Supplies & Services	822	621	201
Supplies & Services - Grant	740	740	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	162	162	0
Capital Finance	30	30	0
Transfer to Reserves	1,007	1,007	0
Total Expenditure	12,972	12,839	133
Income			
Fees & Charges Income	-906	-913	7
Rent - Commercial Properties	-801	-785	(16)
Rent - Investment Properties	-44	-44	0
Rent - Markets	-793	-766	(27)
Government Grant	-1,042	-1,042	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,612	-1,615	3
Schools SLA Income	-384	-362	(22)
Recharges to Capital	-153	-149	(4)
Transfer from Reserves	-2,248	-2,248	0
Total Income	-7,983	-7,924	(59)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,989	4,915	74
Recharges			
Premises Support	1,474	1,474	0
Transport Support	27	28	0
Central Support	2,082	2,082	0
Asset Rental Support	1,399	1,399	0
Recharge Income	-6,258	-6,258	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,276	-1,275	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	3,713	3,640	74

Comments on the above figures

As at 31 March 2023 net expenditure for the department was £0.074m below the approved budget for the year. An improvement on the forecast overspend position of £0.164m estimated at the end of December 2022.

The Department recognises the significant financial challenges they face and will continue to face into the near future, particularly given the elevated levels of inflation for commodities including fuel, energy, materials, and increased wage demands.

Financial Management continue to work closely with the Department and remain focused on achieving a balanced budget at year end. By carefully monitoring the accounts, the department has utilised grant, external funding and capital funding where possible to try and relieve the pressure on the core budget.

Across the Investment & Development Division several posts remained vacant in year due to a restructure that has taken place. Temporary measures have been taken where it has been possible to find the appropriate skill set required. The delay in recruitment of staff has improved the Employee budget position this quarter. The 2022/23 pay award was agreed in October and budgets updated accordingly.

The impact of increased energy and fuel costs continued to be monitored during the year. £0.156m was required from Council Reserves to fund the additional costs above budget. Latest forecasts show a further increase of 75% in gas costs and 52% electricity costs for 23/24 which have been allowed for in the approved budget.

Challenging income targets are particularly damaging to the Department, as unlike some other sectors the Council do not have the ability to passport additional costs pressure onto tenants as contracts are in place for a number of years and rent reviews can only take place when a review is due.

The Asset Management Service has incurred one off expenses this year, due to the vacant unit at The Hive that was previously occupied by Frankie & Benny's. Costs relating to NNDR, repairs and maintenance and service charges have had to be paid by HBC until the unit is leased. Negotiations are currently taking place with a new tenant.

Adult Learning Division has contributed £0.131m as match funding towards the Ways to Work Programme this financial year creating an employment programme to date of £6m.

Due to adverse trading conditions in the retail sector which have been worsened by inflation and increased utilities costs, the department under achieved on market rental income targets this budget year. During the last few months, the occupancy rate has dropped to 88%. This may be linked to the introduction of customers having to pay for parking outside the market.

The School Cleaning Service Level Agreement (SLA) did not cover its costs this budget year due to the need to employ agency staff to cover sickness and leave and the pay award. A review of SLA charges has been undertaken ahead of the next budget year.

The savings put forward to provide additional office space for external agencies at Rutland House was not achieved this budget year. This budget pressure will continue into financial year 2023/24. It is important that any future savings put forward can be delivered and will not create an added budget pressure.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Capital Projects as of 31 March 2023

Project Title	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
3MG	164	25	139
Murdishaw	31	1	30
Equality Act Improvement Works	200	247	(47)
Widnes Market Refurbishment	6	6	0
Broseley House	21	12	9
Solar Farm Extension	11	3	8
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2,117	3,569	(1,452)
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	36	0	36
Halton Lea TCF	388	353	35
Property Improvements	213	189	24
Astmoor Regeneration	14	14	0
Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Industrial Estate	500	518	(18)
Runcorn Station Building Development	110	60	50
St Paul Mews	500	515	(15)
Waterloo Building	0	7	(7)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	45	28	17
Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment	3,239	1,451	1,788
Totals	7,595	6,998	597

3MG – 3MG produced one major capital receipt in the form of the disposal of Linner Cottage in 2022 / 2023 however the anticipated disposal of HBC Field was delayed into 2023 / 2024 due to a boundary change with the land being disposed of. This means there will be a reduction in the size of plot disposed of, but the capital receipt will remain the same. The sale will complete in the first quarter of 2023 / 2024.

HBC was in negotiations to dispose of a plot of land in the north of the site but that petered out due to Central Government funding requirements and there are a small number of remaining plots that will form a portfolio of sites to be disposed of in 2023 / 2024.

Murdishaw – The Council have worked in partnership with Onward Homes to develop a community scheme which includes the establishment of a new CIC who will run a new venture from the former boxing club. A scheme of environmental improvements has been initiated across the estate with some signage improvements completed. Key priorities for the scheme include improvements to the external space at Murdishaw Community Centre and improvements to the Gorsewood area and external area adjacent to the former boxing club.

Equality Act - There are a number of access type schemes using the equality act budget this year. At quarter 3 it was anticipated that the budget would underspend and £0.100m was moved forward to 23/24.

Widnes Market Refurbishment – All Capital works are now complete, and all retentions paid.

Broseley House - All works are complete on site and invoices fully paid.

Solar Farm Extension - It has now been operational for 2 years. No key issues have been identified. The system is performing in line with expectations in terms of energy produced and income.

Foundry Lane – Project progressing on schedule with all ground remediation works now complete. Due to pre grant expenditure and additional costs for the land swap with Beesley & Fildes, it was agreed by Executive Board that the programme will be increased by £1.7m. This increase was placed in the Capital Programme for 23/24 and will need to be brought forward to 22/23.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improvement Works – Majority of the refurbishment works completed; redecoration works to the meeting rooms to be carried out.

Halton TCF – This LCR funded programme is now complete.

Property Improvements- There are a number of projects against this scheme including re-roofing the Fitness Suite at the Stadium, lift replacement at Kingsway Learning Centre, and re-roofing 73 High Street.

Astmoor Regeneration – Project is now complete.

Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Trade Park - Works nearing completion, anticipated completion by end of May, following which tenants can commence their fit-out.

St Paul Mews - Awaiting final tenant to be re-located, following which demolition of buildings will take place following a tender exercise.

Waterloo Building - Awaiting decision from Planning in respect of demolition, subject to approval being granted demolition will follow after a tender exercise.




Shared Prosperity Fund – Halton submitted an Investment Plan to the CA for three strands of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme – Town Centres; Local Culture, Arts and Heritage; Green, Resilient, Safe Communities. This amounts to £0.608m up to March 2025 and is a mix of capital and revenue.

Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment – The Town Deal programme covers a number of projects to strengthen the town centre economy, including Brindley Theatre Enhancement, Creative and Digital Skills Centre, Health and Education Hub, High Street Connectivity, Town Centre New Homes, Station Enterprise Facility, and Unlock Runcorn. Business cases for all projects have been submitted and approved. Work will continue on site for the next 3 years.




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	N / A
	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 5th September 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 1 of 2023/24

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 first quarter period to 30th June 2023.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2023-24 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Finance
 - Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
 - ICT and Administrative Support
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property 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.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the first 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 are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities.
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.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring Report Q1

Reporting Period: 01st April to 30th June 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the first quarter of 2023/24 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in 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
 - Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
 - 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

2.2 Benefits Division

Processing Times

At 30th June 2023 processing times for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction were as follows: new claims 25.14 days and changes in circumstances 18.70 days.

Energy Bill Payment Schemes

The Discretionary Support Scheme Team has administered the two energy support schemes on behalf of the Government that covered the period 27th February 2023 – 31st May 2023, and a summary of the amounts awarded for both schemes is shown below:

1. Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (£400 payment). Total paid £119,600 (299 awards). Example properties: park homes, narrow boats.
2. The Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (£200 payment). Total paid £5,000 (25 awards). Example properties: households who use fuel other than gas or electricity.

Universal Credit Implementation

The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) statistics indicate at 11th May 2023 there were 15,969 people within Halton claiming Universal Credit. The table below shows the Universal Credit caseload in Halton on a quarterly basis over the past 14 months.

Universal Credit caseload	
Date	Caseload
1 st April 2022	15,262
30 th June 2022	15,283
30 th September 2022	15,533
31 st December 2022	15,581
31 st March 2023	15,817
11 th May 2023	15,969

2.3 Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance Division

Supplier Invoice Processing Performance

During Q1, 92.59% of all Council supplier invoices were paid within 30 days. This represents an improvement in performance on 2022/23 despite the Purchase to Pay Team operating at reduced capacity since the start of the year.

HMRC VAT Inspection

HMRC will be carrying out an inspection of the Council during August. The inspection will be entirely focused on the Council's VAT accounting arrangements. The assessment has already required a significant amount of preparation work, which has included the submission of a detailed pre-visit questionnaire to HMRC.

Annual Governance Statement

As required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council's draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 has been published on the Council's website. The document is produced following a review of the Council's governance arrangements and it explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively. An action plan is included within the statement to address any significant governance issues identified through the review. The document was formally considered and approved by the Audit and Governance Board on 5 July 2023.

Cash Collection Contract

The Council has recently completed a successful joint procurement exercise with Knowsley Council for the renewal of the cash collection contract. The new contract has been awarded to the incumbent supplier, G4S, and takes effect on 1 August 2023.

2.4 Revenues and Financial Management Division

2022/23 Financial Outturn and Statement of Accounts

The 2022/23 financial outturn position was reported to Executive Board on 15 June 2023. It was reported that net operational spend for the year was £5.161m above the approved budget, the overspend being funded from earmarked reserves. The Council's General Fund balance as at 31 March 2023 remains at £5.149m, representing 3.7% of the Council's 2023/24 net budget of £140.880m.

Work has been finalised on completing the Council's draft 2022/23 Statement of Accounts. The draft version of the Statement was published on the Council's website on Wednesday 04 July 2023. The Council's external auditor Grant Thornton UK LLP will commence the audit of the accounts during September 2023, with the intention of reporting the Audit Findings Report to the Audit & Governance Board on 22 November 2023

Council Tax and Business Rate Collection

Council tax collection for the first quarter of the year is 27.41%, which is very similar to at the same point last year. Cash collection for the year to date is £21.2m, this includes £0.8m collected in relation to previous year debt.

Business rates collection for the first quarter of the year is 31.76%, up by 1.58%% on this point last year. Cash collected for the year to date is £18.5m, this includes £0.5m collected in relation to previous year debt.

Council Tax Support Fund

At the start of the financial year Government announced a £100m national scheme to support economically vulnerable households with their council tax payments. The funding is to support current working age and pension age Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) claimants by up to £25. To date, the Halton has supported 8,425 households with up to £25 reductions from their council tax bill.

Halton received an allocation of £306,269 to fund the scheme and to date has paid out £201,164 to support local residents. Payments will continue to be paid to new LCTS claimants during the year. The scheme will continue to be monitored and reviewed to ensure the funding allocation is fully utilised by year-end.

2.5 Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit

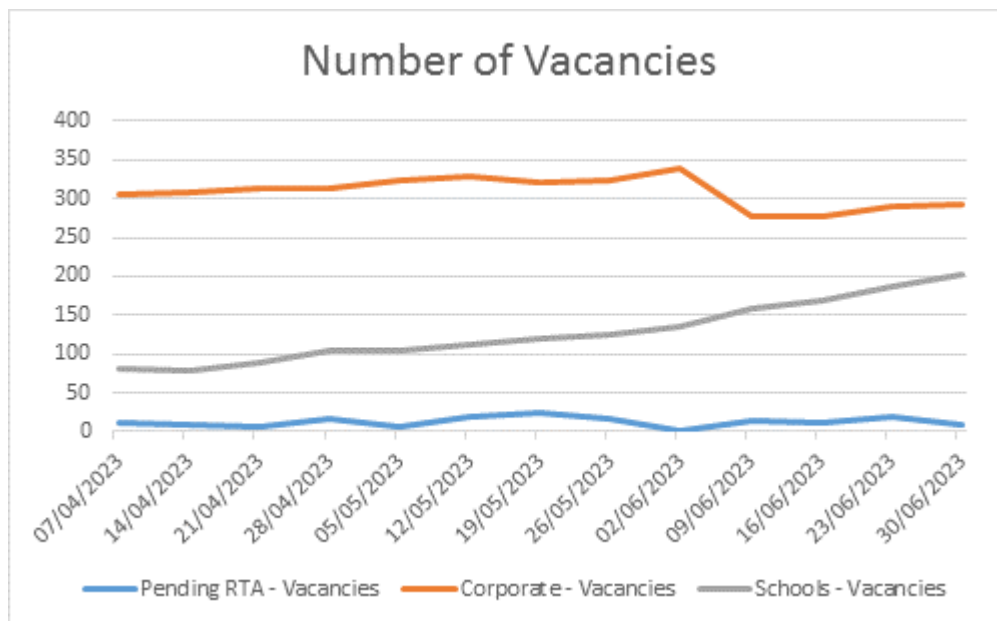
The Chief Executive's Delivery Unit came into being on 1st March 2023, forming one of four departments sitting in the Chief Executive's Directorate. The new department contains all of the services that were in the Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Dept, with the exception of the Partnerships function – elements of which have moved to service areas within the Environment & Regeneration Directorate.

The operational HR functions now sit within a dedicated division to enable focused leadership and engagement across the Council, and are augmented with the addition of Health & Safety. The complement of services has been expanded by the addition of Communications & Marketing, and Research, Data & Intelligence, which have transferred in from other departments. In addition, the new Transformation Delivery Unit is situated within this structure. Performance reports reflect the structure and activity of the new department.

In the Operational HR Division, the Employment Relations team is currently being reviewed to implement a HR Business partnering model. This will best equip the service to support the organisation on its transformation journey and beyond.

This model will allocate resources to specific directorates to build strong working relationships adding value throughout the directorates with a focus on the workforce and early intervention regarding casework.

Recruitment demand remains consistent, with a significant upswing in demand for the processing of schools vacancies, as can be seen in the graph below.



The Resourcing team have amended recruitment workflows ahead of the busy period in schools recruitment to avoid impact to corporate recruitment. Services will find a more streamlined process where recruitment is not paused during the peak times in school recruitment. Furthermore the successful 'Adults Always On' campaign is still in progress – this is a constant advertisement alongside attraction methods using web technology to attract candidates to hard-to-fill Adult Social Care roles and has been running since early 2023. This has enabled the filling of a number of roles across the service that would otherwise have likely remained vacant.

Management Team have supported the delivery of an Emerging Leaders Programme at level 5 for 12 existing managers. The qualification will be overseen by the Organisational Development Service and delivered by the Solace Group. It is scheduled to start in September 2023. The qualification will be funded through the Apprenticeship Levy and the content and projects will be aligned to the Transformation Programme and covers the following subject areas:

- Personal and professional development
- Communication
- Leading people
- Finance
- Managing people
- Operational management
- Project management

As with all apprenticeship programmes, participants are expected to work on both theoretical and practical work-based learning. The learning is split into seven units, each lasting approximately 9 – 12 weeks, over 24 months:

E-learning take up continues to be consistent, with 2638 learning interventions delivered via the e-learning system in the quarter. This approach continues to offer an excellent return on investment and accessible way of learning for employees.

For training and development delivered face-to-face, attendance stood at 95% during the quarter. This is within tolerance levels and again represents a good return on investment.

The Transformation Delivery Unit went live on 1st April 2023, work has been undertaken and continues to develop the scope of projects alongside service areas, with a view to supporting changes within services that are designed to optimise operations, align service provision with demand, and reduce the cost of service provision.

The initial programme structure has been augmented to increase capacity as projects come on stream. The programme methodology is now becoming embedded as engagement between the Transformation Delivery Unit and service areas increases. The methodology is reflective of the 'Delivery Unit' model used in Government, and subsequently in other local authorities. It balances service involvement and ownership, with project support and challenge.

The focus is now on applying the methodology through robust arrangements to identify and realise financial savings and service optimisation. Overall governance sits with the Executive Board, with all Member briefings to take place every two months.

The Communications and Marketing service are actively supporting a range of organisational initiatives, namely the Transformation Programme, and the Family Hubs initiative in Children's Services. As the organisation changes, the service will flex its approach to supporting the business, ensuring that messaging and effective communication is targeted to the organisational activity that most requires it.

Similarly, the Research, Data and Intelligence Service is actively supporting the analysis and interpretation of data required to underpin the Council's transformation activity, and will prioritise accordingly to align with the needs of the wider programme.

The development of the Corporate Plan, and the facilitation of the 'Big Conversation' continues to be driven in the Policy area, supported by colleagues in the Communications and Marketing, and Research, Data and Intelligence Services. All PPB's received a briefing on this during the last quarter.

2.6 ICT and Administration

The department is currently made up of three distinct delivery areas Administrative Services, IT and Customer Services. Admin has been subject to review under the transformation programme to disaggregate the service with the timeline for the changes starting in July and again will be subject to further update reports.

Customer Services is also subject to change under the Transformation Front Door programme and as such the technology & Data Governance strategy is closely linked to this programme creating a period of considerable departmental change across the board.

This update needs to allow members an understanding of the direction of travel and the considerable undertaking for those involved rather than a detailed technical overview of what is a technically complex change programme one that has been running for over 12 months in parallel with BAU to deliver a step change within the delivery model ahead.

Technical Innovation and evolution are essential to any business. Many authorities over the last few years are struggling to deal with the new world in front of them, as are we.

Years of austerity, the impact of COVID and internal change is starting to pivot our internal and external customer process to provide new ways to interact with our internal markets as well as our ever increasing and demanding client bases.

There is no escaping we are switching quickly to an ever more Virtual World.

The effects of COVID have simply pushed this along at a faster pace, elevating customer expectations of the front of house and technology service demand for a multitude of features we as clients of services or employees now expect as a matter of course.

Customer expectation has changed exponentially, however do we understand what these expectations are, fully and are they reasonable?

This will be the primary objective of the ICT and Front Door programmes ahead to understand and deliver against, improving the overall customer, Journey.

Forming a Halton customer strategy needs to start by setting a Halton-wide customer vision to match our business outcomes to the customer expectation. In many cases legislation will determine some outcomes however there is no excuse to avoid customer experience – there are many ways to say ‘no’ as well as yes!

With metrics we can benchmark, we can set measurable goals, and most importantly can prioritise the actions to be taken to get where we need to be.

The programme of work will be looking at how do we, as a service organisation, personalise this customer journey to upgrade from an interaction to an improved experience where customers feel they are understood and heard?

How do we continue to customise and refine this personal journey through the multitude of service options available to our clients?

How do we prioritise the improved employee experience?

Employee engagement is essential to our success as much as process change, finances and the delivery of the technologies that support the journey.

Love it or hate it, technology is with us on this journey and in many cases, it is something that will drive our opportunity to change as well as the way we work on a day-to-day basis. Be it with our colleagues, or with our customers, be they internal or external customers, they all require personalised outcomes alongside a personalised journey.

Business or enterprise technology is an ever-evolving entity, one that is now driven by a small number of major organisations, the main player being Microsoft.

Cost within this enterprise environment is a major factor, however the technology opportunity is now driving a more integrated, simplified environment within the “Cloud” with which to interact with our colleagues and customers.

The world is becoming ever more virtual with 24/7-365 access now an expectation. If a resident wants to interact with services at 3am this should be possible – how deep that interaction goes will depend on the nature of the request but will also depend on many factors from how our web services operate through to how refined our process becomes and ultimately the cost of delivering this ability.

2.7 Legal and Democracy

The local elections on 4th May 2023 and subsequent new Member inductions were carried out very successfully.

The revised Constitution was approved at Annual Council, and the installation of the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor took place smoothly.

The recruitment process for 2 replacement solicitors was commenced and it was hoped that a Taxi Licensing Enforcement Officer would soon be appointed.

2.8 Catering - School Meals

The school meals catering service and schools have been notified that from the 31 March 2025 Halton will no longer be providing a catering provision. As a result, two alternative providers have been in contact and have presented their offering directly to schools at two separate open days hosted at the Stadium.

Schools have been notified of prices increase from September 2023. This will see the charge for free school meals rise from £2.42 to £2.65 and for paid pupils an increase from £2.50 to £2.70. This is a direct result of increased food costs and also to reflect the 2022/23 pay award.

2.9 Stadium

Senior stadium managers met with the Transformation team and began the consultation process which identified areas for development, best practice and potential risks. Since the original meeting, the transformation team have requested various information and data which will be used to formulate the reimagining of the Stadium and its commercial viability and sustainability. Questionnaires have been produced digitally and hard copies to engage with all staff at all levels.

Key performances indicators are in the process of being developed along with the associated data collection systems. These will be focused on stadium usage/occupancy and customer satisfaction.

The Stadium has recently purchased a full event stage, canopy, sound & lighting system which will allow the stadium to promote and host a variety of new events both indoor and outdoor. This will save equipment hire fees allowing the stadium to stage cost effective, quality and affordable entertainment that appeals to a new audience.

High Profile community events to date include.

- Widnes Schools Town Sports Day
- Halton Chamber of Commerce – Business Awards
- Borough Elections
- Mayors Installation

2.10 Registration Services

The service continues to deliver an award-winning statutory service.

2.11 Property Services (Operations)

St Patrick's Nursing Home Redevelopment

Design development works ongoing in respect of proposals to build a new 16 bed extension and refurbish the remaining accommodation. Works planned to be carried out in 2 phases with an estimated works cost of £2.6m. Planning application submitted.

Now looking at options to decarbonise the building as part of the scheme and in respect of this we are intending to submit a bid for additional funding to the government's decarbonisation fund as part of the City region.

St Luke's Nursing Home Refurbishment

Design development works ongoing in respect of proposals to refurbish existing accommodation in 4 phases, estimated works cost of £1.1m. Now looking at options to decarbonise the building as part of the scheme and in respect of this we are intending to submit a bid for additional funding to the government's decarbonisation fund as part of the City region.

Proposed New Leisure Centre Moor Lane

The contract start date was 9th January 2023, works are progressing well the reduced dig is complete, foundations and drainage is currently being installed. Contractual completion date is 3rd February 2025.

Education maintenance programme 2022/23

The 2022/23 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council in March. The programme consists of 13 separate projects with an estimated cost of circa £780k. All projects have now been completed.

Corporate Maintenance programme 2022/23

The 2022/23 Corporate maintenance programme was approved by the Asset Management Working Group. Many projects have now been completed, a few are rolling over or being deferred to next years' programme, all the available budget has been spent, other than a small amount which is being accrued to next year.

Camden Buildings, High Street- refurb to create digital/creative hub

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October and works are now progressing through to RIBA stage 4 design on 59/57. 69 is now going to be delivered as a separate project. The purchase of 63 has now been completed so design works to 63/65 will recommence in the new financial year.

Brookvale Rec- Proposed Refurbishment works

An initial feasibility study has been submitted; this is currently being updated following further consultation with the Sports Development team.

Pickering Pastures- Proposed new pavilion building

The feasibility report has been updated to reflect the increasing costs, the budget estimate for the project is £520k. Executive board approval was received in April to proceed with the project.

Cavendish School - 2 class extension

The project has been tendered and a preferred contractor is waiting to be appointed, Planning approval has now been obtained. Costs are likely to raise due to length of time between tender return and obtaining planning approval, will need to liaise with preferred contractor in due course. The works are due to commence on site August 2023.

The Brindley- Proposed extension

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October, following which design development is now progressing through RIBA stage 4. The preferred option has been agreed with a budget cost estimate of £5.6m. Planning approval is anticipated July 2023. Project to be tendered via the Chest in due course.

Runcorn Library redevelopment

Design development works ongoing to create an NHS Health & Education hub. The feasibility study has been completed and circulated for comment, budget cost £1.8m. Approval to proceed to RIBA stage 3 now obtained, these design works are now progressing.

Elite House- Redevelopment

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October, there is also a bid in to the Combined Authority however for additional funding as the Town Deal funding is insufficient to carry out the desired scheme, the outcome of this as yet unknown, it is anticipated however that a decision on that will be made prior to the end of May. The RIBA stage 2 report has been issued by the architects for comment and feedback, discussions are ongoing and it is anticipated that this will move to RIBA stage 3 once the outcome of the additional funding is known.

Changing Places Facilities

Funding has been secured for 3 Changing Places facilities which were originally planned to be in Victoria Park, Shopping City and the Stadium respectively. The works within the Stadium are now complete and the facility available for use. Planning approval has been obtained for the project in Victoria Park, this is currently on site with an estimated further six weeks to handover.

The project in Shopping City has stalled however due to the owners not committing to contributing to the funding therefore approval has now been obtained to install the facility in Halton Lea Library as an alternative, this tender was won by Parklands and they are due on site in September 2023, with an eight week programme of works.

Unit 10 Refurbishment

Works are progressing, just waiting on connection of gas main by Cadent, though this has not affected handover of the internal work which is now complete. Tarmac will take occupation and undertake their own fit out.

71 High Street

Main refurbishment programme complete with contractor returning on 17th July to rectify some dry rot which was not apparent at survey stage.

Decarbonisation Projects

Following completion of the decarbonisation works at the stadium further feasibility studies have been commissioned in respect of carrying out further work at our buildings subject to funding. We are currently working with the NW Net Zero Hub with a view to submitting a Combined Authority bid to the Decarbonisation fund in 2023. It is anticipated that this will cover 5/6 buildings, but yet to be confirmed.

Wigg Island- Demolition of former Pavilion

The demolition works are now complete.

Education maintenance programme 2023/24

The 2023/24 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council in March. The programme consists of 13 separate projects with an estimated cost of circa £780k. All projects have now been completed.

Corporate Maintenance programme 2023/24

The 2023/24 Corporate maintenance programme has been approved by the Asset Management Working Group. Design works are starting to commence on the various projects in the programme.

Education SEMH Resource base projects

There are 5 schools where we are looking at upgrading the facilities to create Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) resource bases for both KS1 & KS2 groups. All projects are currently in the early design stages, cost and programme will become clearer as the projects progress.

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:-

3.2 Finance - Benefits Division

Household Support Fund 4

The Division has continued to administer the Government's Household Support Fund, which is now in its fourth tranche. Household Support Fund 4 covers the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 and Halton was awarded a grant allocation of £2.6m. As mentioned in the 2022/23 Q4 monitoring report, allocations of the grant have been made to a number of different Council departments and also to various voluntary sector organisations.

Spending on the Household Support Fund is underway, in line with a plan approved by Executive Board. For the period 1st April 2023 – 30th June 2023 two particular areas have reported amounts spent. Firstly, for vulnerable households with children 7,536 £12 vouchers have been issued for the summer half term holiday (1 week) to all children entitled to free school meals, and this represents expenditure of £90,432. Secondly the Discretionary Support Scheme Team have spent £51,000, and this was mainly for emergency support to include food parcels, PayPoint vouchers for gas and electricity, and other kitchen related equipment.

3.3 Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance Division

Transforming Public Procurement Bill

June 2023 saw some important progress on the Procurement Bill, which completed the House of Commons Report Stage and had its Third Reading on 13 June 2023. The Bill is now passing into its final stages, the first of which is the Consideration of Amendments back in the House of Lords. The House of Lords will consider whether it accepts the final changes of the Procurement Bill, following its passage through the House of Commons. If the House of Lords does not agree with all of the changes, there will be a period where the Bill passes back and forth between the two Houses as they settle on the Bill's final details.

It has been confirmed that following Royal Assent, the Procurement Act will commence on or around October 2024. This delayed commencement allows for consultation on, and the implementation of, the necessary secondary legislation that will sit under the new Procurement Act, as well as the six-month lead-in period.

The consultation on the secondary legislation, which is split into two parts, has now commenced. The first part consults on draft regulations to implement the Procurement Bill, and runs from 19 June 2023 to 28 July 2023. The consultation predominantly focuses on areas of the Procurement Bill that require lists, calculations or further definitions to be used in practice.

At the time of writing, the second part of the consultation is yet to be released. It will however cover the transparency provisions and notices that will be used by contracting authorities in order to fulfil their legal requirements under the Procurement Act. It will also include information on the proposed approach by the Cabinet Office on transitional arrangements for procurements already underway at the time the new regime comes into force.

As previously reported, at this stage it remains uncertain as to what extent the changes will impact on the Council's procurement arrangements. However, it is important to note that the new regulations will only apply to above threshold (i.e. higher value) procurement activity. The majority of the Council's procurement is below threshold and will therefore be unaffected.

3.4 Revenues and Financial Management Division

Office for Local Government (Oflog)

On 4 July 2023, DLUHC officially launched the Office for Local Government (Oflog). It will initially operate as an office of DLUHC (meaning it is part of the department rather than a separate agency), but the Government intends Oflog to eventually become independent.

The Government's stated intention behind the launching of Oflog is to empower citizens with information about their local authority, increase local leaders' and councils' understanding of their relative performance and increase central government's understanding of local government performance.

One of the objectives of Oflog is the publication of the Local Authority Data Explorer tool which is intended to bring together finance and performance information from existing data and allow local authority comparisons against particular outcome themes. The first iteration will look at finance, adult skills, adult social care and waste, with future iterations expanding the range of areas covered. The Government's aim is that, over time, Oflog provides contextual and explanatory information alongside the local authority comparisons.

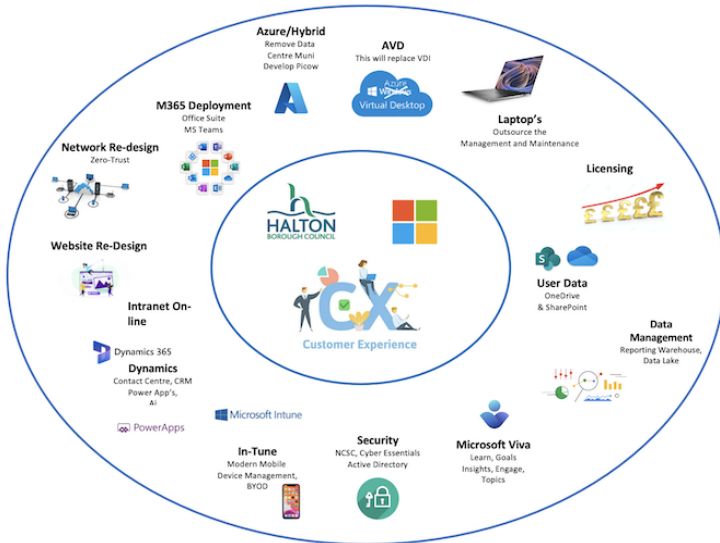
3.5 Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit

The 2023/24 pay award remains unresolved. The Unison industrial action ballot has recently closed, however other formal ballots are still taking place. Formal notification of the ballot outcomes at a national level have yet to be announced, therefore the pay award negotiations are still ongoing and the implementation of the pay award will be delayed.

Use of agency workers continues to remain high in the Council, particularly in Adults and Children’s Services where labour market conditions remain extremely tight. This also correlates to a consistently high number of vacancies in the staffing establishment (see recruitment update in Key Developments above). There are no signs of this abating, however inflationary increases in rates are pushing spend higher. A dedicated workstream within the Transformation Programme is now focused on this business issue, adding challenge and capacity to operational service areas to seek solutions to bring usage and associated spend down.

3.6 ICT

The Halton solution and current IT programme will deliver considerable change over the coming months through a brand-new user experience covering every aspect of the new Microsoft365 (M365) platform’s capability. A solution currently that is under review by external IT Auditors. Enjoying positive feedback over our approach to deployment of the platform as a whole, rather than piece meal.



The deployment will be built to the new government driven Cyber Essentials Plus standards in line with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidelines. As such the working environment for a government body as ourselves will be secured and managed to an audited compliance standard subject to regular audit by NCSC/DLUHC.

DLUHC funding was awarded to the project to enhance and develop these standards and again is subject to quarterly monitoring reviews of progress to ensure the funding delivers the key priority outcomes that were set out as part of the funding agreement.

As noted, the improved customer journey is essential to the delivery of a successful programme of works be that internal or external. Over the next few months there will be a considerable focus upon the internal customer experience for all officers linking into the corporate networks and applications.

The development and deployment of M365, bring with it a step change in how the IT departments and Teams manage and deploy services.

This ranges from extensive changes in Security compliance to adhere to the new National Cyber Security Centre NCSC, and DLUHC compliance regulations that are now part of statutory audit requirement, through to changes in network, systems and service management.

The deployment of the backend management systems for M365 will be completed mid Quarter 2, with the objective of deploying the front-end user experience to Officers toward the end of Q2. Many dependencies are in front of the teams with changes to the telephony provision and associated systems as Skype for Business will be removed and Teams will become the main telephony solution for both internal and external calls. This brings with it complexity in terms of porting over our phone number range and step changes in the way the call and digital traffic will be directed.

A new contract for Laptop was approved by the Executive Board mid-June, with the contract completed soon after, the delivery of devices is expected early August, these devices will be part of a new platform solution for all officers once linked with the new M365 user environment. Covered by a full five year replacement warranty and fully insured for the 5 years period of ownership.

As noted above the disaggregation of the central administration service is underway with formal staffing consultation now in place:

Report to Steering Group – 29th June
Open Consultation via email – 3rd July
Close consultation 28th July
Final report to Steering Group -17th August
At Risk – 21st August for 90 days
New structure implemented 13th November 2023

3.7 Legal and Democracy

Work will continue with Cheshire & Merseyside colleagues on the establishment and terms of reference for the Health & Care Partnership. It is hoped that it will be brought to Council in October.

The pressures in the Education & Social Care team in Legal Services are expected to continue and it is hoped that the recruitment issues are resolved shortly.

3.8 Catering - School Meals

In light of the fairly recent decision to cease the HBC School Meals service from 31 March 2025.

Recruitment and retention has become a real concern.

Staff turnover is at an all time high and motivating staff is becoming more difficult.

A reduced catering provision may be required in September if schools are not fully staffed.

3.9 Stadium

Contractual Negotiations

- Everton FC
- Halton Table Tennis
- DCBL Sponsorship

Atlas Security (Term Contractor)

The Stadium management team have raised a number of concerns over recent months. These have been highlighted directly with the Account Manager from Atlas as a risk and options are being considered regarding future arrangements.

Widnes Vikings

Overall attendances have reduced, this has the following impact.

- Reduced Income generation from secondary spend.

Staging costs remain same unless contractual arrangements are reviewed to reflect the current levels of attendance. (Transformation programme)

3.10 Registration Services

The service continues to strive to meet the KPIs set out by the General Register Office. However, it is reliant on external factors to work in a timely manner.

3.11 Property Services (Operations)**Protect Duty**

The 'Protect Duty', more commonly known as Martyn's Law is due to come in to force later in the year. The legislation will place a requirement on those responsible for certain publicly accessible buildings, locations and venues to consider the threat from terrorism and to implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures. It will mainly focus on the requirement to undertake risk assessments of the various locations following which plans must be put in place in respect of implementing appropriate mitigation measures. The impact of this is that it may likely mean the introduction of measures such as public address voice alarm (PAVA) systems in certain venues where not already installed together with the enhancement of other factors such as street furniture, e.g. bollards, to prevent vehicular access to certain areas.

Accommodation review

With the new agile approach to working since the COVID pandemic, i.e. with office based staff only needing to be in the office for a minimum of 40% of the time, subject to service requirements, our main office accommodation is now significantly underutilised which gives us an opportunity to rationalise our office bases. Following on from a report produced in January 2023 in to our accommodation a Members working group has been set up and had a first meeting to start looking at how we can rationalise our main office accommodation to ensure the space is used more effectively in the future and to help generate revenue savings. Future updates will be given as this work progresses.

Rising Construction Costs

Construction costs have been rising significantly in the recent past which is having an impact across all projects. Whilst all sectors in industry have been affected by inflation, the construction industry appears to have been hit particularly hard with certain sectors, such as steelwork production, seeing increases in costs of up to 100%. The future outlook at present is that tender prices are unlikely to fall in the short to medium term, the hope being that these may settle down in the longer term.

Carbon emission targets

Halton's Climate Change Action Plan has set a target for the Council's own carbon emissions to reach net zero by 2040 in line with the Liverpool City region. We are currently working in conjunction with the NW Zero Carbon Hub with a view to submitting a Combined Authority bid in the Autumn of 2023 when the next round of the government's decarbonisation fund opens up. This will likely cover 5 or 6 of our buildings where the boiler plant is nearing the end of its useful life and if successful will allow us to electrify the heat & hot water provision.

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 4.1** 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.
- 4.2** The Councils 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>


5.0 Performance Overview

- 5.1** 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.
- 5.2** 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.
- 5.3** 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	Objective
FS 01	Set the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Recommend Council Tax.


Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Report 2024-27 Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2023.		On target to report the Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board in November 2023. The financial forecast is being regularly updated.

Report 2024/25 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council - March 2024.		Work has commenced with Management Team and the Transformation Board to develop efficiency targets for 2024/25 onwards. This is in addition to 2024/25 and 2025/26 savings previously agreed by Council in February 2023.
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Ref	Objective
FS 02	To effect financial prudence by assisting managers to control their budgets by monitoring spending and providing timely and accurate financial reports.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Provide monthly financial reports to budget holders within 8 days of month end.		Reports all issued on schedule to date.
Provide quarterly financial monitoring reports to Operational Directors for inclusion in Performance Monitoring Reports.		Quarter 1 reports are in the process of being finalised and will be shared with Operational Directors for inclusion in Performance Monitoring Reports.
Provide quarterly monitoring and forecasting reports on the overall budget to Executive Board.		Quarter 1 monitoring report on the overall budget will go to Executive Board on 14 September 2023.



Ref	Objective
FS 03	Provide for public accountability by reporting the Council's stewardship of public funds and its financial performance in the use of resources by preparing the statutory Statement of Accounts in accordance with the latest accounting standards.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Publish the Statement of Accounts following external audit and the Annual Governance Statement by 30th September 2023.		The draft accounts were published and shared with the External Auditor on 04 July 2023. The External Auditor will not be in a position to commence the audit of accounts until the start of September, with the Audit Findings Report expected to be reported to Audit & Governance Board in November 2023





Ref	Objective
FS 04	Make best use of cash resources available to the Council and meet its statutory responsibility by setting, implementing and monitoring the Treasury Management Policy.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2023 .		Treasury Management Policy reported to Council on 08 March 2023
Provide monitoring reports to Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.		On track to report to Executive Board

Ref	Objective
FS 05	Ensure that the Capital Programme is affordable, prudent, and sustainable by setting and monitoring prudential borrowing indicators.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2023 .		Prudential indicators reported to Council on 08 March 2023.
Provide monitoring reports to the Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.		On track to report to Executive Board

Key Performance Indicators


Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
FS LI 01	Receive an unqualified external audit opinion on the accounts	Yes	Awaited			N/A	External audit expected to provide the audit opinion in November 2023.
FS LI 02	Receive an unqualified VFM opinion from the Council's External Auditor	Yes	Awaited			N/A	External audit not expected to provide VFM opinion until November 2023 at the earliest.
FS LI 03	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected	94.14%	94.25%	27.41%			This is the same position compared with the same point last year.





Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
FS LI 04	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received	96.18%	97.50%	31.76%			This is up by 1.58% compared with the same point last year.
FS LI 05	Average time for processing new claims (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction)	23.71	18	25.14			The Benefits Service is suffering unprecedented levels of staff sickness, in addition two members of staff have recently left, and another member of staff has been on maternity leave for 12 months.
FS LI 06	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	9.55	8	18.70			The Benefits Service is suffering unprecedented levels of staff sickness, in addition two members of staff have recently left, and another member of staff has been on maternity leave for 12 months.
FSLI 07	Proportion of all supplier invoices paid within 30 days (including disputed invoices)	91.13%	92.0%	92.59%			Just below target

Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit



Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CXDU 01	To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate training opportunities through the design and implementation of appropriate learning interventions, to include the development of bespoke Learning & Development offerings to individual service areas.


Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy September 2023		Strategy reviewed slightly. Organisational Development focus aligned to requirements of the Transformation Programme and will be tailored accordingly.

Regular engagement with Management Team to identify areas of challenge and develop appropriate strategic responses June, September, December 2023, and March 2024.		This is scheduled periodically. Refer to Key developments above for details of engagement during quarter.
Embed knowledge and skills gained from Senior Leadership and Management Development Programmes (MBA / MSc) December 2023.		This will be particularly targeted to supporting Transformation projects.
Reconfigure Leadership and Management development in the organisation to align with Transformation Programme principles December 2023.		Currently under consideration, collaborating with LCR Combined Authority colleagues and local university.
Monitor the embedding of knowledge and skills gained through previously delivered in-house modular Leadership and Management development activity. Ongoing and report in December 2023.		Important to ensure return on investment and to inform future programmed support.


Ref	Objective
CXDU 02	Implement the Apprenticeship Policy to support the establishment of apprenticeships across the Council, and optimise return on the Apprenticeship Levy.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Establish 20 new apprentice placements within Council services, utilising existing vacancies, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2024.		Policy position amended to use funding attached to specific vacancies on a 'grow our own' basis.
Establish 20 new existing employee apprenticeships to enable up-skilling in a range of business areas, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2024.		As immediately above. Also refer to Key Developments for details of use of Levy to fund management development.



Ref	Objective
CXDU 03	Optimise the use of the Agency Worker contract across Council services, to secure ongoing reductions in the incidence and cost of agency usage, and to ensure that correct and appropriate resourcing solutions are being deployed across Council services.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Review and consider most appropriate resourcing mix in collaboration with service management in areas of highest agency usage (Transformation Programme) December 2023.		Now a key strand of Transformation Programme. Refer to Emerging Issues above for more information









Ref	Objective
CXDU 04	Work with high demand service areas to develop and implement effective recruitment programmes, optimising labour market engagement to attract high quality candidates.


Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Identify service areas with highest consistent recruitment demand, turnover, and low attraction rates. Develop tailored solutions. (Transformation Programme) December 2023.		Now a key strand of Transformation Programme. Refer to Key Developments and Emerging Issues above for more information

Ref	Objective
CXDU 05	Develop and implement an organisation wide change programme – The Future Work Programme - to evaluate and introduce revised working practices following to meet the requirements of the changing labour market and employee expectation in the post-pandemic environment (to include use of accommodation, HR policy and practice, wellbeing support, application of technology)

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Use findings of Corporate Accommodation Review (2023) to determine available workspace capacity and develop optimum balance of 'staff to space'. December 2023.		Corporate Accommodation Review in progress, overseen by Asset Management Working Group. This will be supported by Transformation Programme Resources.
Develop contractual model to meet business requirements of 'staff to space' balance. March 2024		Work for Q4 2023/24.







Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CXDU LI 01	Average FTE days lost to sickness	12.98 (Days)	9.5 (Days)	2.67 (Days)			Better outturn than at Q1 of 2022/23. Refer to narrative in Key Developments above around the implementation of HR Business Partnering to increase effectiveness in this area.
CXDU LI 02	Percentage of Employees without sickness	66.45	70.00	87.65			Higher than same period last year and significantly better than outturn for whole of 2022/23.
CXDU LI 03	Total Full Time Equivalent Staffing Establishment (Indicator for information only)	3,204	For information Only		For information Only	For information Only	Reported for information purposes only.
CXDU LI 04	Total Staff (head count) (Indicator for information only)	4,127					
CXDU LI 05	Total Agency Worker Usage (number of placements – year to date)	766	650	344			Outturn continues to be driven by high usage in Children's and Adults Services, resulting from labour market conditions, however usage across other areas to cover is more prevalent than previous years
CXDU LI 06	Total Agency Worker Cost (cumulative gross cost – year to date)	£8.34m	£5.0m	£2.29m			See commentary for LI 05 immediately above





Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CXDU L109	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are:	61.45%	55%	61.45%			Fluctuation exists in (a), (b) and (c), due to turnover. It should be noted that recruitment in to the top 5% of earners is not generally high volume, and as such scope for significant change over time is low.
	a) Women	2.7%	2.0%	2.7%			
	b) From BME communities	0%	8.0%	0%			
	c) With a disability						
CXDU LI 10	No of staff declaring that they meet the definition of disability within the Equality Act 2010 as a % of the total workforce.	1.25%	10.00%	1.29%			Fluctuation exists due to turnover and the indicator outturn reflects self-declaration. The 10% target reflects the wider Halton community. Despite the mismatch, it is important that this indicator continues to be monitored.
CXDU LI 11	Minority Ethnic community staff as % of total workforce.	0.99%	1.00%	1.31%			Shows improvement however fluctuation exists due to turnover and outturn tends to hover around target level.
CXDU LI 12	Average time to recruit (Applicant Tracking System reported figure)	19 Days	12.2 Days	Days			Outturn demonstrates the number of days taken from vacancy closing date to completion of recruitment.

Key Objectives / milestones




Ref	Objective
ICT 01	Constantly evaluate and improve the usability, resilience, control and flexibility of the Council's Client interaction, Data Communications and Management, Hardware and Software provision.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Continued Enhancement and delivery of the E5, M365, Azure platforms to enhance and deliver new technologies into the authority - March 2024.		Significant progress has been made in the vital early planning staged for the effective deployment of Office 365 and Azure Cloud services. Many user data sets have been migrated and will continue through Q2 when it is envisaged will be completed.
Delivery of the Front Door transformation programme delivering changes in process, customer contact and customer journey - March 2024.		The first of the services to transfer over from legal is the transfer of land searches function now complete and transfer of post, income and budget in process with delivery through the RMU is now underway.
The continued development of the Records Management Unit enhancing all opportunities and creating a central fulfilment centre within - March 2024.		Ongoing development has included enhancing support for Information Management and prevention of data loss, which includes enhancements that have been implemented in respect of hybrid mail.
Development of Interactive Services, through integration with the Contact Centre and One Stop Shop's - March 2024.		An evolving programme of work moving now at pace - development of the project documentation and objective set is now underway and will be reported against as the department evolves and changes with the delivery of the objectives.
Management and development of commercial ICT opportunity within desktop, hosting and DR provision - March 2024.		The continued development and delivery of the Finance solution into partners within the city region continues with additional services and deliveries continually sought
Continued compliance with Central Government and NCSC Security guidelines and compliance requirements – March 2024.		Actively monitored by DLUHC consultancy – progress has been good through Q1, on target.



Ref	Objective
ICT 02	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including Web services, records & document management, business process workflow, corporate desktop portal, Information governance and Security Compliance process.





Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Delivery, deployment and Management of the E5, M365, Azure managed cloud platforms, enhancing user experience. - March 2024.		Ongoing preparatory work in the form of workshops with support staff provided by contracted support organisation. Most initial configuration of the Councils Microsoft Azure Tenant has been completed, currently working on the development of the end user experience, which is expected to be completed by the end of Q2.
Continued development and internal, commercial use of the Print Unit, Records management Unit - March 2024.		Ongoing development has included enhancing support for Information Management and prevention of data loss, which includes enhancements that have been implemented in respect of hybrid mail. The transfer of land search functions now complete and transfer of post, income and budget in process and delivery through the RMU is now underway.
Continued development of Contact Centre and One Stop Shop Services/Facilities/Integration with Authority wide process - March 2024. development and internal, commercial use of the Print Unit, Records management Unit - March 2024.		With the advent of the Front door/Customer Journey transformation programme, the department will evolve at pace and begin to report against developments over the coming months as the objectives are set.
The development of improved information governance and Security compliance in line with government guidelines - March 2024.		This has been built into the configuration of the Councils Microsoft Tenancy and will continue to be enhanced and reported via the SIRO reports to Management Team. These changes will continue to evolve as the deployment of the new transformed ICT platform matures. This is part of a gradual change programme supported by the Councils ICT Security Programme to minimise disruption to users, while enhancing capabilities and improving the Councils security and compliance position.

Ref	Objective
ICT 03	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including cloud and web service solutions, records & document management enhancement, business process development, customer service provision.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
The delivery of the Front Door transformation programmes across Admin and Support Services - March 2023 .		The disaggregation of the Administrative Support Division is now underway as part of the transformation programme greater detail within the body of this report.
The delivery of new and enhanced IT Security Management and Compliance systems/facilities across the authority's user base - March 2024 .		Most preparatory work has been completed. The onboarding of a Security Operations Centre will be the priority for Q2 and Q3
The delivery of new and enhanced technology provision across the authority's user base - March 2024 .		Users have already been migrated for their email and calendar facilities. These will now be further enhanced to ensure improved data loss prevention and security of the council's information assets.

Key Performance Indicators


Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ICT LI 01	Average availability of the Council's M365 Systems (%).	N/A	99.9%	TBA	TBA	TBA	This new KPI relates to the new M365 platform currently under development - availability stats are unavailable at this stage but as the deployment progresses this stat will become valid
ICT LI 02	Security Incidents across quarter	N/A	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	In line with the delivery of the new M365 platform this statistic will be monitored by new systems currently under development – Again to evolve with the programme of work.
ICT LI 03	Service Desk Call Resolution	86.56%	90%	87.3%			The Service Desk continues to be challenging however there are plans (integrated with the Customer Journey project and M365 delivery) to automate 'self-help' process. From Password reset to many other basic requirement freeing the service desk to deliver against the more complex requirement

Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ICT LI 04	Average working days from delivery to completion of a new Laptop.	1 (Days)	1 (Days)	TBA	TBA	TBA	Again, a new KPI that will evolve with the considerable programme of work underway. With the advent of the new Dell Laptop contract completed mid-June, this new stat will evolve with the M365 role out plan.
ICT LI 05	Number of resolved customer contacts – Contact Centre	27500	27000	28190			The level of calls into the contact centre continues to rise, with seasonal and service dependant increases as the financial strain upon residents increases. Along with the increase in services offered by the team.
ICT LI	Number of resolved contacts – One Stop Shop's	15500	15500	16140			The level of foot fall into the Shops continues to rise, with seasonal and service dependant increases as the financial strain upon residents increases. Along with the increase in services offered by the team.



Legal & Democracy

Key Objectives / milestones









Ref	Objective
LD 01	To ensure that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information and are kept informed of changing legislation and responsibilities.



Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Review constitution - May 2023.		The revised constitution was approved at Annual Council.

Ref	Objective
LD 02	To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that provides Elected Members, as key decision makers, with the necessary information, support and training opportunities to fulfil their individual potential and management and governance role effectively.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting where desired.		All members have been offered a MAP meeting.
To induct all new members by October 2023 .		The new Members have been inducted

Key Performance Indicators



Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (54 Total).	54	54	54			All Members are offered a MAP. All newly elected Members completed an initial MAP in May 2023.
LD LI 02	Percentage of Members attending at least one organised Training Event.	52 98%	54 100%	25 (46%)			All Members are offered a hybrid development programme via in-house officer training and e-Learning via the L&D Portal. Take up has been positive in Q1 but it is a matter of personal choice.
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	10 (Days)			This target has been met.
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)			This target has been met.

Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
LD LI 05	% of Executive Board minutes published within 5 working days after the meeting.	100%	100%	100%			This target has been met.


Community & Environment

Key Objectives / milestones

















CE 05	To routinely use customer feedback to drive forward service improvement in the Registration Service
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Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Ensure our services are available to those who wish to or who need to use them by providing accessible information in a range of ways (e.g. written information, online services).		Monitoring and reviewing our lessons learned based on customer feedback, comments and complaints
Seek the views of the local community and make adjustments to our service delivery when appropriate, based on customer feedback, to improve the service going forward. Where feedback cannot be acted upon, an explanation will be given.		You Said... We Did..... outcomes are published

Ref	Objective
CE 06	Develop a Stadium Business Plan and Marketing Strategy to make the Stadium more commercially viable.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Business Plan & Marketing Strategy		This will be heavily focused around the Transformation recommendations. Once Management have received these they will plan accordingly and produce/develop KPIs that are relevant.








Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Q1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CE LI 10	Registration Service - Births - 98% registered within 42 days	100%	100%	100%			Figures in line with expectation.
CE LI 11	Registration Service - Deaths with MCCDs (no coronial involvement) - 90% registered within 5 days	87%*	100%	97.16%			Where the service has not met the required 90% KPI, this is due to GPs signing death certificates on day 4 or later. <i>*Between April 22 and March 23 the service registered 362 deaths without coroner involvement. 315 of these were registered within the 5 days (87%).</i>
CE LI 12	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.		75%	71%			No commentary provided
CE LI 13	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.		60%	64%			No commentary provided
CE LI 14	Take up of school lunches (%) – primary schools.		60%	60 %			No commentary provided
CE LI 15	Take up of school lunches (%) – secondary schools.		50%	57%			No commentary provided
CE LI 16	Room Occupancy – Meetings (Box Level)	12.34%	40%	33.7%			New KPI
CE LI 17	Room Occupancy – Conferences (Bridge & Karalius)	50.19%	60%	63.9%			New KPI


Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones



Ref	Objective
EEP 07	Corporate Resources: To provide an effective corporate property service

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Ensure the leisure centre is on track on 31st March 2024 both in terms of time and cost by project managing it throughout the year.		Leisure Centre is on track in terms of time and budgets
Ensure the contractor commences on site with the major upgrade works at both St Patrick's and St Luke's by 1st Sept 2023.		Both St Patricks and St Lukes are on target to commence on site by 1 st September 2023.
Ensure all the projects are progressed in line with the school maintenance programme and are delivered by 31st March 2024.		All school projects on track, some sites already on site and rest are programmed to start in the next few weeks. All projects due to be completed on site and final accounts finalised by 31 st March 2024
Ensure all the projects are progressed in line with the corporate maintenance programme and are delivered by 31st March 2024.		All projects for corporate buildings are progressing, and are all due to completion of works on site and final accounts finalised by 31 st March 2024
Submit a decarbonisation funding bid in conjunction with the Combined Authority by October 2023 and be successful in having the funding approved by 31 st March 2024.		Funding bid on track for submission by October 2023
Ensure there is a wide and varied mix of commodities and services on offer in the Market and ensure occupancy levels are maintained or increased by 31st March 2024.		There is a good and varied mix of commodities available at Widnes Market, and various events over the summer have been scheduled to increase the footfall and highlight that Widnes Market is a central part of the town centre.
Ensure all necessary servicing, and repairs and maintenance is carried out within our properties by 31st March 2024 and ensure building managers are satisfied with the service provided.		All servicing, repairs and maintenance at corporate properties is ongoing. All servicing for 23/24 will be completed by 31 st March 2024. Building managers are periodically provided with questionnaires to ensure they are happy with service provided.


Ref	Objective
EEP 09	Corporate Priority: To design, manage and improve processes to generate increasing value for customers and other stakeholders. To undertake Employee Reviews for all staff



Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
All EDRs to be completed by September 23		DM EDRs are booked in for September Asset Management Team – only one permanent members of staff to undertake EDRs and uncertain if the target will be met due to staff changes Adult Learning Team – All EDRs to be booked in by September (tutors return early September) All Regeneration and Business Growth Team EDRs to be in place by September 2023.

Ref	Objective
EEP 10	Corporate Priority: To design, manage and deliver a place-based business support programme for Halton Commission support sessions to provide advice and guidance based on initial diagnostic.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Scheme in Place September 2023		Scheme in Place September 2023
Scheme finalised March 2025		Scheme finalised March 2025

Ref	Objective
EEP 11	Corporate Priority: Secure funding, support procurement and ground-breaking to take place for Ultraviolet at Sci Tech Daresbury Commissioning of Ultraviolet

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Funding Secured Q3 2023 / 2024		Discussions are ongoing with funding providers and the CA in regard to Investment Zones.

Procurement Q4 2023 / 2024		Initial discussions with Procure Partnerships to utilise framework for procurement
Groundbreaking Q1 2024 2025		The current programme is targeting a start on site for April 2024.

Key Performance Indicators

OPERATIONAL ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Climate change agenda and carbon emissions	CO2 emissions for 2021/22 amount to 9327 tonnes	Reduce emissions by 1%	Reduce emissions by 5%	<p>Submit a funding bid and obtain funding to carry out decarbonisation works to various buildings.</p> <p>Continue to deliver the LED lighting replacement programme.</p> <p>Carry out further rationalisation of our property portfolio to reduce emissions.</p> <p>Help carry out education programme for officers and Members alike</p>	
Level of satisfaction with repair & maintenance service delivered via the FM team	75% of surveys returned were rated as either good or excellent	80% Of surveys returned rated as either good or excellent	85% Of surveys returned rated as either good or excellent	<p>Issue questionnaires to building managers in order to rate the level of service provided.</p> <p>Continue to deliver a repairs and maintenance service in a timely manner, with quality contractors.</p> <p>Continue with the procurement of contractors, when necessary, based on best value principles.</p>	

7.0 Financial Statements

FINANCE DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	6,576	1,480	1,495	(15)	(25)
Insurances	930	545	495	50	(41)
Supplies & Services	357	180	274	(94)	(101)
Rent Allowances	35,500	7,232	7,232	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,748	360	286	74	112
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	18	9	9	8
Discretionary Social Fund	351	66	42	24	24
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	52	52	0	0
Household Support Fund Expenditure	2,000	59	59	0	0
LCR Levy	2,241	560	560	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	17	0	0	0	17
Bad Debt Provision	77	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	50,167	10,552	10,504	48	(6)
Income					
Other Fees & Charges	-329	-90	-89	(1)	(7)
Burdens Grant	-60	-60	-88	28	28
Dedicated schools Grant	-123	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-541	-230	-183	(47)	(49)
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	0
Schools SLAs	-295	-295	-282	(13)	(13)
LCR Reimbursement	-2,241	-560	-560	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-400	-30	-30	0	0
Rent Allowances	-34,800	-6,851	-6,851	0	0
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-18	-25	7	8
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-93	-93	0	0
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-515	-130	-151	21	21
Universal Credits	-5	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Admin Grant	-204	0	0	0	0
Household Support Fund Grant	-2,000	0	0	0	0
Energy Bills Support	-245	-245	-245	0	0
Alternative Fuel	-42	-42	-42	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-142	-35	-45	10	18
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-82	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-42,551	-8,679	-8,684	5	6
Net Operational Expenditure	7,616	1,873	1,820	53	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	268	67	67	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,069	517	517	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-5,330	-1,332	-1,332	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,993	-748	-748	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	4,623	1,125	1,072	53	0

Comments on the above figures

As at the end of June 2023 the department is reporting a small net underspend against budget. It is currently forecast that net spend for the department will be on track to the approved budget as at the end of the financial year.

Employee costs for the year are expected to marginally exceed the budget position, this is based on increased employee costs from the proposed 2023/24 pay deal.

The most notable area of underspend is concessionary travel, which is currently estimated to achieve an underspend against budget of £0.112m at the end of the financial year. Concessionary travel has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic; overall usage levels are still lower than pre covid levels. It is envisaged that support for operators to ensure sustainability of bus routes will drop towards the end of the year which may increase the overall outturn position, this will be reviewed at further points later in the year.








There are risks within the budget which will be reviewed at regular points throughout the year. This includes the yet to be agreed pay deal and rent allowances which continue to be an area of concern. Increased demand for supported accommodation results in increased costs for the Council over and above the housing benefit grant received.. This should ideally net to zero, however Government will only support up to a nominal figure after which, 60% will come from housing benefits and the remaining 40% is up to the Council to support.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT**Progress Against Agreed Savings**

Ref	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
F1	Client Finance	109	Increase by £3 per week the charge to clients for the Appointeeships Service to ensure full cost recovery.	45	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Implemented in April 2023 and income budget increased accordingly
F6	Income Control	118	Removal of payment kiosks which are now significantly under-utilised. The ceasing of annual rental and licence costs will provide a saving. Residents can instead make payments at Paypoint outlets.	20	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Implemented April 2023 and expenditure budgets reduced accordingly

F8	Insurance	1,043	Reduction in the insurance budgets, following a review of claims history over recent years with advice from the Council's insurance broker. The majority of claims are provided for via self-insurance, with external policies providing cover for exceptional or potentially high cost claims.	135	0	0		Implemented April 2023 and expenditure budgets reduced accordingly
F9	Internal Audit	300	Restructure in light of potential retirements over the next two years within the Internal Audit Team.	0	0	50		Planned restructure to take place during 2024/25 and to be implemented 1 April 2025
F11	Purchase to Pay	27	Increase in the target income budgets for the Early Payment Scheme (£15k) and the Corporate Card Programme rebate (£15k)	30	0	0		Implemented 2023/24 income budgets increased accordingly
F12	Benefits Processing & Administration	216	Deletion of a 1.0fte vacant Housing Benefit Officer Post and a 0.5fte vacant Visiting Officer Post.	55	0	0		These two vacant posts accepted for a saving in 2023/24 and can be deleted from the structure.
F13	Discretionary Support Scheme	221	Review the roles, procedures and structure of the team.	0	25	0		A review of the DSS structure will be undertaken in 2024/25.
F15	Business Rates	-26	Increase the charge to Halton Chamber of Commerce for providing billing and collection of Business Improvement District (BID) income.	2	0	0		2023/24 operating agreement between the Council and Halton Chamber of Commerce still to be agreed.
F16	Concessionary Travel	1,892	Due to a decrease in passenger numbers following Covid, it is considered that the budget for concessionary travel costs can be reduced. The budget was underspent by £421k	150	0	0		On Target

			(20%) in 2021/22. A reduction in this budget will not prevent any eligible concessionary passenger from still being able to travel.					
F17	Council Tax	84	Increase the charges applied when a court summons is issued by 30% (£23), to achieve full cost recovery over the three year period.	40	40	40	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On target, summons cost increased for 2023/24
F17 Cont	Council Tax	N/A	Establish a new post dedicated to reviewing council tax exemptions. It is considered at least a 3% reduction in Single Person Discount awards could be achieved, generating approximately £150k of additional council tax income, less the cost of the new post.	116	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Post appointed to and review of exemptions to commence over the next quarter.
F18	Financial Management - Treasury Management	1,152	Closer management of medium- to long-term cash balances will give greater opportunity to invest in higher interest bearing accounts due to increasing interest rates.	300	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Interest payable on target to achieve increased target.
Total Finance Department				893	65	90		

Chief Executive's Delivery Unit**Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	2,678	650	572	78	229
Employees Training	117	25	23	2	6
Apprenticeship Levy	300	20	43	(23)	(143)
Supplies & Services	296	50	39	11	26
Total Expenditure	3,391	745	677	68	118
Income					
Fees & Charges	-211	-45	-44	(1)	1
Schools SLA	-533	-440	-417	(23)	(77)
Transfer from Reserves	-87	-87	-87	0	0
Total Income	-831	-572	-548	(24)	(76)
Net Operational Expenditure	2,560	173	129	44	42
Recharges					
Premises Support	117	29	29	0	0
Transport	972	243	243	0	0
Central Support	53	0	0	0	0
Asset Rental Support	-5,491	-1,373	-1,373	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	52	13	13	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-4,297	-1,088	-1,088	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-1,737	-915	-959	44	42

Comments on the above figures

With the formal introduction of the Transformation Programme, the Chief Executive's Delivery Unit (previously Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency) is undergoing a period of change. The department already possessed a number of vacancies, but these have increased in Q1 of 2023/24 as a number of staff have been seconded onto the transformation programme which is operating from capital streams rather than revenue.

As a result of above employee costs for the year are expected to be below the approved budget by £0.229m. This is inclusive of increased employee costs from the proposed 2023/24 pay deal. School SLA charges for the

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

Capital Projects as at 30 June 2023



	Annual Capital Allocation	Allocation to Date	Actual Spend	Total Allocation Remaining
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
Transformation Programme	5,000	1,250	754	4,246
Total Capital	5,000	1,250	754	4,246

Comments on the above figures

The Transformation Programme has begun within the Council, a number of staff are now in post and consultancy work has begun. Moving further into 23/24 it is expected these costs will increase as more staff are introduced into the programme work on programme themes gathers pace.

Chief Executive's Delivery Unit

Progress Against Agreed Savings

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
PPPE1	Apprenticeships	198	Reduce the budget which provides for apprenticeship salaries by 50%. More apprenticeships will therefore be attached to vacant posts which are already budgeted for. This may particularly help to fill vacancies in areas where recruitment is difficult.	99	0	0		Reflected within the 2022/23 budget.
PPPE4	Organisational Development & Performance	383	Explore whether Organisational Development / Learning and Development activities could be rationalised and restructured to reduce cost, given there is currently a vacant post within the team.	65	0	0		Restructures to the team are currently being considered to help develop and change the way Organisational Development/Learning is carried out.
Total PPPE Department				164	0	0		

ICT & ADMINISTRATION**Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employee Expenditure	8,110	2,000	1,989	11	(361)
Supplies & Services Expenditure	1,012	254	220	34	65
Capital Finance	78	19	0	19	19
Computer Repairs & Software	1,318	1,122	1,148	(26)	(26)
Communication Costs	13	13	31	(18)	(18)
Premises Expenditure (HDL)	6	0	0	0	1
Transport Expenditure	3	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	15	0	0	0	0
Premises Expenditure	170	75	90	(15)	(15)
Total Expenditure	10,725	3,483	3,478	5	(335)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-906	-20	-20	0	181
Schools SLA Income	-610	-432	-442	10	(45)
Total Income	-1,516	-452	-462	10	136
Net Operational Expenditure	9,209	3,031	3,016	15	(199)
Recharges					
Premises Support	557	139	139	0	0
Transport	16	4	4	0	0
Central Support	1,787	449	449	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-10,951	-2,738	-2,738	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-7,097	-2,146	-2,146	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,112	885	870	15	(199)

Comments on the above figures

As at the end of June 2023 the department is reporting a small net underspend against budget. Although over the longer term through to the end of the financial year it is expected net spend for the department will exceed the approved budget by £0.199m.

Employee costs for the year are expected to exceed the budget position by approximately £0.360m. This is based on increased employee costs from the proposed 2023/24 pay deal plus staff turnover saving targets not currently being achieved. This position will be closely monitored throughout the year and updates provided in future quarterly reports.

The over achievement of income against Fees and Charges relates to external client income for traded services. This is for Agresso implementation and support at partner sites. With a number of agency staff across the Council, the department is recharging licence costs for non HBC staff to their respective departments, this should help budget holders more readily see the impact agency staff are having on Council's finances as there is not just the direct fees to be considered, there is strain on a number of other services and existing contracts which do come at additional costs.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

Capital Projects as at 30 June 2023

	Annual Capital Allocation	Allocation to Date	Actual Spend	Total Allocation Remaining
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
ICT Rolling Capital Project	700	175	49	651
Total Capital	700	175	49	651

Comments on the above figures

The ICT and Admin Department sees a rolling budget of £700k for its capital needs each year. Moving forward into 2023/24 there is a proposal to move to a contract which includes new laptops for all officers as well as insurance for all devices.

ICT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**APPENDIX A**

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
ICT3	External Clients	N/A	Recharge the Youth Offending Services for the full cost of ICT services which are hosted by Halton, but have not thus far been recharged. This approach has been agreed by the Cheshire and Warrington partner councils.	232	0	0	U	Final figure still to be agreed with partner councils.
Total ICT and Admin Department				232	0	0		

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2023**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	1,681	470	442	28	32
Agency Costs (Locums)	0	0	186	(186)	(450)
Supplies & Services	171	128	132	(4)	(4)
Civic Catering & Functions	26	2	1	1	4
Legal Expenses	260	20	76	(56)	(144)
Transport Related Expenditure	11	3	0	3	11
Total Expenditure	2,149	623	837	(214)	(551)
Income					
Land Charges	-90	-10	-10	0	0
School SLA's	-92	-65	-65	0	(1)
Licence Income	-284	-50	-54	4	10
Government Grant	-42	-42	-42	0	0
Fees & Charges Income	-70	-22	-24	2	6
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-177	177	437
Total Income	-578	-189	-372	183	452
Net Operational Expenditure	1,571	434	465	(31)	(99)
Recharges					
Premises Support	58	14	14	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	282	71	71	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	340	85	85	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,911	519	550	(31)	(99)

Comments on the above figures

As at the end of June 2023 the department is reporting a small net overspend against budget. It is currently forecast that net spend for the department will be over the approved budget by approximately £0.099m at the end of the financial year.

Employee costs for the year are expected to marginally be below the approved budget. This is a result of the number of vacancies that exist within the department but mitigated by agency costs and the proposed pay deal for 2023/24.

The main area of concern for the department is the volume of agency costs resulting from hard to fill vacant posts. It is expected these costs will be in the region of £0.450m at the end of the financial year. Whilst it has been agreed that these costs will be funded from reserves it is important that work is done now to reduce reliance on agency usage.

Within the forecast £0.144m overspend against budget of legal expenses, there is an estimated £0.218m costs relating to the contracting of barristers, most of which again, are due to the limited number of staff available to clear an increasing caseload. The impact of the transformation and recovery work in Children Services, along with increased support from the recruitment team and graduate rolls, should help alleviate the pressure seen in this area. However, the impact will likely not be seen immediately.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**APPENDIX A**

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
L4	Marketing, Design and Communications	45	Review the frequency of production of Inside Halton, as part of the wider consideration of the Council's communications strategy required for the Transformation Programme	0	15	0	U	The marketing and communications team has now moved within the Chief executives Delivery Unit so that they can review the frequency of production.
L5	Mayoral Services	102	Review the various budgets comprising the Mayoral function, with a target to achieve a 20% savings across these.	20	0	0	U	Looking at alternative ways to run the events and bring operations in line with other local authorities who have more independent/self-funded events. The savings should be on track to be met by the end of the year.
Total Legal Services Department				20	15	0		

Community and Greenspace**Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	17,061	3,700	3,667	33	(50)
Premises	3,685	1,017	1,033	(16)	(63)
Supplies & Services	1,598	553	526	27	108
Hired & Contracted Services	527	128	151	(23)	(93)
Book Fund	140	62	62	0	0
Food Provisions	371	54	87	(33)	(72)
School Meals Food	1,965	526	500	26	50
Miscellaneous Transport Costs	117	35	38	(3)	(8)
Other Agency Costs	601	159	140	19	16
Waste Disposal Contracts	6,865	1,810	1,804	6	34
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	67	38	38	0	8
Grant to Norton Priory	172	87	87	0	0
Capital Financing	201	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	33,370	8,169	8,133	36	(70)
Income					
Sales Income	-3,974	-922	-795	(127)	(308)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,741	-1,800	-1,800	0	0
Rental Income	-221	-72	-73	1	5
Government Grant Income	-595	-595	-595	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-685	-389	-389	(0)	0
SLA Income	-2,391	-627	-543	(85)	(286)
Internal Fees Income	-592	-83	-72	(11)	(52)
Capital Salaries	-173	-25	-26	0	(9)
Transfers From Reserves	0	71	71	0	0
Total Income	-14,373	-4,442	-4,221	(221)	(650)
Net Operational Expenditure	18,997	3,727	3,912	(185)	(720)
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,825	456	456	0	0
Transport	2,046	512	517	(5)	(20)
Central Support	3,856	966	966	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-540	-140	-140	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,386	1,794	1,799	(5)	(20)
Net Departmental Expenditure	26,383	5,521	5,711	(190)	(740)

Comments on the above figures**Financial Position**

The net department spend is £0.190m over budget at the end of Quarter 1 and the estimated outturn overspend against budget for 2023/24 is £0.740m.

Net employee spend is estimated to be slightly over the approved budget at the end of the financial year. The forecast outturn includes the pay increase proposal of £1,925 for all grades with the exception of a 3.5% increase for DM and above scales.

Whilst the proposed pay deal is over what had been included within the budget this is mitigated by a number of vacancies within leisure services and reduced casual usage in line with 2022/23 actual data.

Premises costs for cemeteries is overspent as contractors have been used for grass cutting services due to staff absences. Frank Myler Pavillion water meter charges is significantly higher than budget. Stadium premises electricity estimated outturn is based on previous years spend and will be reviewed during the course of the year.

Food Provisions is overspent due to the increasing inflationary food costs from suppliers. School Meals food underspend is reflected in the underachievement of sales income.

Whilst it is currently forecast that waste disposal spend will be within the approved budget for the year this comes with a certain amount of caution. Waste disposal forecast cost is based on estimated tonnage of waste and the department is still waiting on invoices to be presented for previous years.

Sales income for the year is expected to underachieve compared to the budgeted income target. Shortfalls in income in the Leisure Centres and the Stadium plus a reduction in room hire at Community Centres and Libraries are forecast to contribute towards lower income levels.

School Meals SLA income is forecast to underachieve by £0.286m over the course of the year but this will be mitigated by reduced staffing costs.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

Capital Projects as at 30 June 2023

Project Title	2023/24 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	34	2	0	34
Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment	28	1	13	15
Halton Leisure Centre	15,056	5,096	6,882	8,174
Open Spaces Schemes	851	82	45	806
Children's Playground Equipment	105	10	6	99
Upton Improvements	13	0	0	13
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12	0	1	11
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	26	0	340
Runcorn Town Park	284	79	91	193
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,023	241	4	1,019
Pickerings Pasture Café	520	125	0	520
Litter Bins	20	1	0	20
Totals	18,286	5,663	7,042	11,244

Comments on the above figures**Stadium Minor Works**

Previous year carry forward to buy stage and canopy.

Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment

There are some small works required in July. This project should then be completed.

Halton (Moor Lane) Leisure Centre

The project is making good progress and remains on track. The contract sum agreed with Wates is £28,997.616 and the estimated final account is currently the same value. There have been additional costs associated with the CPO. The total capital scheme is circa £31 million.

Open Spaces

This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including Runcorn Hill, Ski slope & miniature railway improvements, Runcorn Cemetery improvements, Space Tree, Arley Woodland Park, Upton Rocks access works, The Big Halton Forest.

Children's Playground Equipment

This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds.

Upton Improvements

Open space improvement works undertaken. Work has been delayed due to contractor workload and difficulty obtaining materials. No revised date set yet for when this may be spent.

Crow Wood Park

The main contract for the new park building has ended. A small amount of work to the building is required plus additional landscape contract to complete the paths - this is ongoing with some work from Property services and Open Spaces team to complete.

Landfill Tax Credits Schemes

Currently used to support improvements for a rolling programme of existing playgrounds/open space schemes across the Borough.

Runcorn Town Park

Project to renew park infrastructure. Project is ongoing with 2 contracts on site. Carry forward to complete work in season and for contingency payments. INEOS funding of £300k was deferred - £10k each to 2023/24 & 2024/25 plus £280k to 2025/26.

Wigg/Spike Island Recovery Works

The programme is slightly behind due to staff capacity issues. Waiting for a consultancy agreement to be put in place so the scheme can progress using external help.



Pickerings Pasture Café

Creation of Café Facility at Pickerings Pasture, a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which would be operated as a franchise. The Council has been asked to include £520k within the Council's Capital Programme to fund the construction of the café facility. Funded over seven years, the capital financing cost would be £87,500 per annum. This sum could be realised through a bid to the Environment Fund (paying £87,500 pa for seven years). Once completed and opened the café would generate income for the Council from the franchise rental, which could be used to offset the running costs of Pickerings Pasture.

COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX A

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
COMM 1	The Brindley Theatre	64	Reduce Box Office opening hours from 10am-5pm Monday-Friday to 10am-2pm. Currently 80% of tickets are purchased online or by telephone and this is increasing each year.	10	0	0		Box Office core opening hours were reduced to 5 hours (Mon – Fri) 10am – 3pm. They will be realigned to 4 hours daily 11am – 3.00pm (Mon – Fri) from 1 September onwards.
			Replace all non-LED lighting in the building. This is estimated to reduce on-stage energy costs by 75%.	10	0	0		
COMM 3	Sport & Recreation	471	Restructuring the roles and responsibilities of the Sports Development Team	0	36	0		On track to meet savings identified for 2024/25.
COMM 4	Stadium & Catering Services	751	Franchise the concourse only catering services to an external operator. An organisational restructure is currently being implemented for Stadium & Catering Services to reflect recent service changes.	50 40	0 0	0 0		

COMM 6	Area Forums	170	Reduce the base budget provision to £50k temporarily for one year, with all unspent monies in 2022/23 (currently £120k) being carried forward to be spent by the relevant Area Forums in 2023/24. The base budget position will then be reviewed for 2024/25.	120	-120	0		Implemented in 2023/24 budget setting.
COMM 5	Stadium & Catering Services – School Meals	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over £200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.	0	0	12		Work underway in school meals being delivered through alternative means
Total Community & Environment Department				230	-84	12		

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**Revenue Operational Budget at 30th June 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,155	1,319	1,309	10	39
Repairs & Maintenance	1,930	587	589	(2)	(2)
Premises	104	91	91	0	(3)
Energy & Water Costs	1,765	302	247	55	222
NNDR	793	683	676	7	7
Rents	165	77	77	0	0
Economic Regeneration Activities	37	3	3	0	0
Security	509	77	86	(9)	(30)
Supplies & Services	297	128	139	(11)	(45)
Supplies & Services - Grant	535	110	110	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	85	25	25	0	0
Total Expenditure	11,375	3,402	3,352	50	188
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-803	-72	-62	(10)	(41)
Rent - Commercial Properties	-974	-186	-146	(40)	(158)
Rent - Investment Properties	-44	-13	-11	(2)	(6)
Rent - Markets	-853	-211	-191	(20)	(78)
Government Grant	-1,058	-130	-130	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,084	0	-4	4	6
Schools SLA Income	-294	-205	-169	(36)	(36)
Recharges to Capital	-232	-15	-15	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-375	-217	-217	0	0
Total Income	-5,717	-1,049	-945	(104)	(313)
Net Operational Expenditure	5,658	2,353	2,407	(54)	(125)
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,006	502	502	0	0
Transport	23	6	6	0	0
Central Support	1,710	428	428	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-7,728	-1,932	-1,932	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,985	-996	-996	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,673	1,357	1,411	(54)	(125)

Comments on the above figures

Economy, Enterprise & Property is forecast to be £0.125m over budget at the end of the financial year with a current figure of net spend being £0.054m over budget for the first quarter of the year.

Due to the energy costs budget increasing significantly in 2023/24, the department is forecasting that it will be £0.264m under budget in year, but this is still predicted to be £0.484m higher than 2022/23, which is an increase of over 50%. The forecast will change over the following three quarters depending on the change in energy costs and usage over this time.

There has continued to be delays in recruiting across the department, and so the projection is currently that the department will be under budget by £0.039m on employee costs. It is important to note that the pay award has not yet been agreed for 2023/24 and this could drastically change employee costs if awards are agreed higher than those budgeted for.

As inflation is running much higher than originally predicted at the time of budget setting, supplies and services and security are predicted to overspend by £0.030m and £0.045m respectively. These budgets will be monitored closely throughout the financial year.

As in previous years, and the long recovery from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the financial challenges of commercial property rent continue to present a significant financial challenge. The department is currently predicting to under achieve it's income target by £0.158m. This position takes into account an approved saving of £0.120m letting out vacant space at Rutland House not being achieved.

The department is also projecting to under achieve on market rental income targets this financial year, as the occupancy rate continues to be low, this may be due to continued impact of introduction of customers having to pay for parking outside the market but hopefully footfall will increase before year end.

Early predictions also suggest budget shortfalls in fees and charges income and School SLA Income. Financial Management continue to work closely with the Department and remain focused on achieving a balanced budget at year end, increasing income and decreasing spend where possible. This will continue to be closely monitored as the year progresses and updates will be provided accordingly.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Capital Projects as of 30 June 23

	2023/24 Capital Allocation	Allocation to Date	Actual Spend to 30 June 2023	Total Allocation Remaining
Expenditure				
3MG	138	12	12	126
Murdishaw	29	0	0	29
Equality Act Improvement Works	352	56	56	296
Solar Farm Extension	8	0	0	8
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2634	77	77	2557
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	35	0	0	35
Roof Top Garden	35	0	0	35
Property Improvements	224	16	16	208
Runcorn Station Building Development	514	30	30	484
Waterloo Building	93	0	0	93
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	17	0	0	17
Town Deal				
- Unlock Runcorn	176	10	10	166
- Brindley Theatre Enhancement	359	42	42	317
- Creative & Digital Skills Facility	845	69	69	776
- Town Centre New Homes - Rutland Street	282	0	0	282
- Health & Education Hub	44	12	12	32
- High Street Connectivity	201	6	6	195
- Enterprise Hub	62	0	0	62
- Programme Management	200	0	0	200
Total Capital	6,248	330	330	5,918

3MG – HBC Field was sold in April 2023 for £11.9m. There are a small number of remaining plots that will form a portfolio of sites to be disposed of in 2023 / 2024.

Murdishaw – The department has worked in partnership with Onward Homes to develop a community scheme which includes the establishment of a new CIC who will run a new venture from the former boxing club. A scheme of environmental improvements has been initiated across the estate with some signage improvements completed. Discussions are ongoing with Community Development and Murdishaw Community Centre to make improvements to the external space and refurbish the allotment space to allow for the local community to develop its allotment project.

Equality Act Budget- There are a number of access type schemes using the equality act budget this year.

Solar Farm Extension - It has now been operational for 2 years. No key issues have been identified. The system is performing in line with expectations in terms of energy produced and income.

Foundry Lane – Project progressing on schedule with all ground remediation works now complete. Due to pre grant expenditure and additional costs for the land swap with Beesley & Fildes, it was agreed by Executive Board that the programme will be increased by £1.7m for 2023/24.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improvement Works – Majority of the refurbishment works completed; redecoration works to the meeting rooms to be carried out.

Property Improvements- There are a number of projects against this code including Reroofing the Fitness suite at the Stadium, lift replacement at Kingsway Learning Centre, and reroofing 73 High Street.

Runcorn Station Building Development –PACE ES3has now been completed, following an options selection process and have agreed on a preferred option. Within Network Rail the project has been moved to the Capital Delivery Team, where a client remit document has been produced and being reviewed and agreed by partners, to prepare for a procurement exercise for a Stage 4 supplier to develop the single option and obtain an Approval in Principal.



Waterloo Building - Awaiting decision from Planning in respect of demolition, subject to approval being granted demolition will follow after a tender exercise.






UKSF – Halton submitted an Investment Plan to the CA for three strands of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme – Town Centres; Local Culture, Arts and Heritage; Green, Resilient, Safe Communities. This amounts to £608k up to March 2025 and is a mix of capital and revenue.

The Town Deal programme –. The Town Deal programme covers a number of projects to strengthen the town centre economy, including Brindley Theatre Enhancement, Creative and Digital Skills Centre, Health and Education Hub, High Street Connectivity, Town Centre New Homes, Station Enterprise Facility, and Unlock Runcorn. Business cases for all projects have been submitted and approved. Work will continue on site for the next 3 years.

ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX A




Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
EEP1	Capital Works Team	N/A	Increase the level of fee income by increasing the percentage charged or charging by time, including those works not currently charged for.	10	0	0		On target.
EEP4	Cleaning Services – Council Buildings	580	Review cleaning arrangements, with a focus on only emptying bins and cleaning toilets daily.	0	100	0		Until the accommodation review is complete, only limited savings will be made in 2024/25

EEP2	Caretaking & Security Services	641	<p>A review and restructuring of caretaking arrangements.</p> <p>Reduce security cover at Halton Lea to provide opening/closing and then static guarding 7.00am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday, and 9.30am to 3.00pm on Saturdays to cover the opening hours of Halton Direct Link.</p>	0	52	0	 	<p>Restructure will take place in 24/25. It is anticipated the full saving will not be met in year.</p> <p>Cannot achieve savings for security due to anti-social behaviour in Halton Lea. Police have advised security is kept on site until this is resolved.</p>
EEP5	Corporate Buildings	927	Generate additional rental income by providing additional office space for external organisations at Rutland House, by letting out the remaining three floors.	120	0	0		Reflected in 2023/24 budget.
EEP6	Facilities Management	165	Restructure the team in light of an expression of interest for retirement.	44	0	0		Reflected in 2023/24 budget.
EEP8	Technical Support & Market Team	392	Restructuring of the team	98	0	0		Reflected in 2023/24 budget.
Total Economy, Enterprise & Property Department				307	152	0		




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	N / A
	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.