

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 6 January 2010

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Service Plans 2010-13

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise the Board that Members have now been circulated with details of the presentations on the 2010-13 Service Plans that were presented at the 25 November 2009 meeting and to seek advice on what it considers to be priority areas for service development or improvement over the next 3 years.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board indicates priority areas for service development or improvement over the next 3 years.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Board, at its meeting on 25 November 2009, received presentations from Operational Directors, which set out the key issues and challenges for their Department's services over the coming 3 years. The details of these presentations have subsequently been circulated to Members of the Board in December 2009 to enable more detailed consideration of the matters presented. These are shown in Appendices 1-4.

3.2 The Board is now requested to consider the details of the presentations and to indicate its priority areas for service development or improvement over the next 3 years.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific policy implications resulting from this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Resource Implications:** There are no direct resource implications resulting from this report, but issues associated with resources are described within the Appendices.

6.0 Implications for Council's Priorities

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** – There are no direct implications resulting from this report; however, subject to the priorities selected for further consideration, there may be impacts.
- 6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills** - There are no direct implications resulting from this report; however, subject to the priorities selected for further consideration, there may be impacts.
- 6.3 **A Healthy Halton:-** There are no direct implications resulting from this report; however, subject to the priorities selected for further consideration, there may be impacts.
- 6.4 **A Safer Halton:-** There are no direct implications resulting from this report; however, subject to the priorities selected for further consideration, there may be impacts.
- 6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal;-** There are no direct implications resulting from this report; however, subject to the priorities selected for further consideration, there may be impacts.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS;-

- 7.1 There are no direct risks associated with this report

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES;-

- 8.1 There are no direct equality or diversity issues associated with this report; however, subject to the priorities selected for further consideration, there may be issues.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
None.		

Appendix 1

Paper to: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board Members

DATE: December 2009

REPORTING

OFFICER: Operational Director- Highways, Transportation & Logistics

SUBJECT: Highways, Transportation & Logistics
Department – Service Plan Issues/development and review of functions

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to set out in more detail the contents of the verbal presentation given by the Operational Director, Highways, Transportation and Logistics to the Board at its meeting on 25 November 2009. It will explain to Members the functions to be undertaken within the restructured Highways, Transportation & Logistics Department (to be operational from April, 2010) and highlight a number of key issues and challenges, which the Service will face in the coming years.

1.2 Member's comments on these matters are sought.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT

2.1 The Highways, Transportation & Logistics (HTL) Department exists to provide a safe, efficient highway network and an inclusive integrated transport system that ensures people and goods can move around freely and sustainably within and through Halton. The Service is cross cutting and supports the delivery of all corporate objectives by providing access to key services of the Council.

2.2 Within the Department there were originally five Divisions providing the service:

- Transportation;
- Highways;
- Bridge & Highway Maintenance;
- Network Management & Street Lighting; and
- Operational Support & Logistics

- 2.4 The new “to be” Department has been rationalised, with a number of services now to be delivered by Centres of Excellence for Policy and Strategy, Marketing & Communications, Performance Management and Administration. The restructuring of the Department has therefore had a significant impact on the way in which it conducts its business.
- 2.5 From April 2010, the Department will comprise 4 Divisions, instead of the 5 that currently exist. These being:
- Traffic;
 - Highways Development;
 - Bridges & Highways Maintenance; and
 - Logistics;

In addition, the officers of the Mersey Gateway Team will continue to form part of the Department and because of its overall significance, this team has direct links and dependencies with each of the 4 Divisions as seen on the following diagram.

Overall, the number of posts is anticipated to reduce by approximately 19%, which includes a reduction of 5 management posts, but the structure may reduce further over the coming months. These reductions will be achieved through staff transferring to the Centres of Excellence and possible Voluntary early retirements. The broad areas of responsibility for each Division are now shown.

Operational Director

Traffic

- Street lighting;
- Road signs;
- Intelligent traffic systems (traffic signals, VMS etc);
- Co-ordination of roadworks;
- Temporary road closures;
- SJB flood lighting;
- Network management;
- Traffic count database;
- Traffic management and road casualty reduction;
- Management and analysis of road casualty data;
- Highway and child safety audits;
- Traffic Regulation Orders;
- Road Safety, Education, Training & Publicity;
- School Crossing Patrols;

Highways Development

- LTP Integrated Transport Programme;
- HBC Capital Development & Regeneration Projects;
- Highway Infrastructure Improvement Schemes;
- Making-up Private Streets & Adoptions;
- Local Safety Schemes;
- Traffic Mgt. & Traffic Calming Schemes;
- Area Forum Schemes;
- Highway Planning;
- Section 38 & 278 Procedures;
- Land Charges;
- Street Naming & Numbering;
- Highway Adoption Register & Street Gazetteer;
- Stopping-up & Highway Orders; and
- Public Rights of Way Management

Bridge & Highway Maintenance

- Planned footway and carriageway maintenance;
- Routine, reactive and emergency maintenance;
- Winter maintenance;
- Section 58 Safety inspections and technical administration of compensation claims;
- Highways Act enforcement;
- Asset management planning;
- Bridge inspections & maintenance (including within the SJB Complex)
- Bridge assessment and strengthening
- Management of HBC bridgestock; and
- Technical approval of

Logistics

- Fleet Management including Employee Car Leasing Scheme;
- Fleet Acquisition & Disposal;
- Vehicle Maintenance;
- Plant Maintenance;
- Operators Licence Compliance;
- MOT Testing;
- Taxi Testing;
- Depot Management;
- Fuel Management;
- Client Transport;
- Community Meals Transport;
- Contract Repairs;
- Management & procurement of transport services;
- Development of SLAs with C&YP and H&C;
- Contract compliance checks;
- Passenger assistance training;
- Management of transport budgets;
- Public transport information to public;
- Workplace travel plans;
- Halton's Access Plan;
- Public transport infrastructure;

Mersey Gateway Team

2.6 The following provides an insight into the challenges faced by the Department between 2010 and 2013:

- **Efficiency Programme:-** Its implementation and the resultant the restructuring of the Department will lead to the loss of significant experience and a period of upheaval. Therefore, a key challenge will be improving or maintaining current levels of service, whilst those staff in new positions 'bed in' and the remainder adapt to the revised structures. Responsibility for transport strategy and policy, including the preparation of the next Local Transport Plan now primarily rests with the new Policy & Strategy Centre of Excellence, supported by the staff of HTL.
- **Supporting The Development of the Mersey Gateway Project:-**
The development of the Mersey Gateway project is continuing and it will place increasing demands on the resources within the Department. In particular, the work associated with supporting the procurement, programming/phasing of works and Technical Approval Processes will be significant and it maybe necessary to reprioritise planned works to ensure the requirements of the Mersey Gateway are met.
- **Developing the Mersey Gateway De-linking proposals:-**
The de-linking of the SJB was a topic issue for the Urban Renewal PPB in 2008/09. The development of highway designs for de-linking on both sides of the river are tied closely into both the Sustainable Transport Strategy and the Regeneration Strategy. Proposals need to be consistent and taken forward in parallel with the development of policies under these strategies. It is anticipated that the SJB De-Linking Topic Group will reform to consider the options in more detail, once the decision on the Mersey Gateway, by the Secretaries of State, is known.
- **Delivering the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Study (MGSTS):** Following a positive decision on the Mersey Gateway, a significant proportion of Halton's capital and revenue resources for highways and transport in conjunction with toll revenue from the Mersey Gateway project will be focused on delivering the first 6 themes contained within the MGSTS delivery plan. These schemes are targeted at encouraging greater levels of sustainable transport within the Borough and include:
 - Development of a Halton Rapid Transit System;
 - Extension of the Halton Rapid Transit system and introduction of complementary services;
 - Introduction of a new mobility Smartcard;
 - Development of Mobility Management initiatives;
 - Walking & cycling improvements; and
 - Improvements to bus/rail interchanges and railway stations;

- **Funding:** The funding of transport infrastructure and initiatives will constitute a key challenge during the life of this Service Plan. The economic downturn is likely to result in significant reductions in both the availability of revenue and capital allocations to local authorities. Furthermore, the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA), which provides funding for major schemes, integrated transport initiatives and maintenance of the highway is currently being reviewed by 4NW, to assess the need to reallocate funding between the Majors, Integrated Transport and Maintenance existing budget heads and to create a new budget for 'minor' Major schemes (costing less than £5m). This exercise could have significant impact on any funding received by Halton and as such the scale and type of schemes it is able to progress.
- **Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP 3):-** Work is currently progressing on the development of our third LTP3, which will become effective from 2011/12. This plan will be a joint plan with the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) and as such will provide a transport strategy for the Liverpool City Region. However, the plan will reflect the specific transport needs of Halton, as identified in its Community Strategy, (as well as those of the districts in Merseyside), and will contain a separate implementation plan for Halton to enable bespoke initiatives and measures to be implemented. A key issue for LTP3 will be ensuring that transport's contribution to green house gases is reduced in line with national and Local Area Agreement targets.
- **ITA Governance & Delivery Review:-** The Liverpool City Region Transport Working Group has commissioned consultants to review governance options and delivery arrangements within the Liverpool City Region. The study is due to report in around 12 months and any findings adopted could have a significant impact on the highway and transportation powers available to the Authority and the way in which it delivers its transport services.
- **Road Safety:-** The Government has published a new road safety strategy, following a period of consultation in 2009. The strategy entitled 'A Safer Way: Making Britain's roads the Safest in the World' sets some very challenging road safety national targets that it will be extremely difficult for Halton to meet primarily because it has already been very successful in reducing casualties. The strategy will be carefully considered in the development of Halton's road safety strategy to ensure consistency and support and will be incorporated into our Joint LTP3.
- **Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB) Maintenance:-** Work will continue to be delivered through the HBC Bridge Maintenance Partnership Contract to deliver the increased programme of major bridge maintenance on the SJB, which is being funded through S31 Primary Route Network (PRN) Grant. As always, the major maintenance activity on the SJB Complex will be delivered through a programme of overnight and weekend working, wherever possible, to avoid the most severe of any traffic

disruption. However, it maybe necessary to carryout works during the daytime hours in the week if safety reasons or statutory undertakers dictate such practice. The nature of the work on the SJB planned for the next year and beyond dictates that the demand for weekend traffic management on the SJB and its approaches will be significant.

- **Silver Jubilee Bridge Maintenance Major Scheme Bid:-** . The Bid currently under DfT consideration is based upon the premise that the Mersey Gateway project does not exist. All effort is now focused on trying to achieve Programme Entry status by March 2010. This provides increased assurance of receiving Regional Funding Allocation (RFA). Should the MG be granted full approval it may be necessary to review the Bid. This will be to both reconsider the value for money appraisal in a post MG environment and to reappraise the programme of bridge maintenance work in the context of those structures put at risk by SJB de-linking. These discussions are ongoing with the DfT.

During construction of the MG and establishment of the highway links to it, there is the prospect of significant disruption to traffic crossing the Mersey in Halton. Programming the essential SJB complex major bridge maintenance work required during the same period without adding significantly to this disruption will be a major issue.

- **Drainage & Flood Protection:-** Following consultation during the Summer, the Flood and Water Management Bill was included in the Queens Speech Debate in November and forms part of the current parliamentary session's business. After a second reading on 15th December, the Bill has now entered the Committee stage, which will be brought to a conclusion not later than 21 January 2010. The provisions in the Bill have significant implications for HTL:
 - A new responsibility for leading the co-ordination of flood risk management for Halton;
 - A requirement to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy to manage flood risk from whatever source, in partnership with the EA and United Utilities (Water Company);
 - Management of the process for the design, approval and maintenance of sustainable urban drainage systems for new developments.

Resource issues both in terms of the funding and staffing required to fulfill this 'lead role' are likely to be significant for us during the period of the plan and beyond.

- **Development and implementation of the TAMP:-** The introduction of Whole of Government Accounts based on IFRS (International Financing Reporting Standards) will require the adoption of a full asset management approach to Highway maintenance and management. This will require:

- Further development of the highways and transport assets inventory in terms of extent, location and condition;
 - Calculation of the 'Gross Replacement Cost' value of our H&T assets. This is required to be undertaken this year, for inclusion in 2009/10 account. Our first Transport Asset Management Plan put a preliminary estimate of £1.25 billion on the value of our assets. This is the Council's biggest physical asset and indicates the scale of what needs to be maintained and why maintenance funding is so important. Our highways and transport networks are used by virtually every member of our community on a daily basis throughout the year;
 - The development and approval of 'levels of service' required for each group of highway assets (e.g. footways) and adoption of policy and strategies for maintenance and improvement to enable financial management in accordance with the Transport Infrastructure Assets Code and to target expenditure using a 'whole life cost' approach;
 - Calculation of the 'Depreciated Replacement Cost' value of our Highways & Transport assets taking into account deterioration, particularly of our carriageways and footways. This is required for 2010/11 accounts.
- **Implications of the 'Gullicksen' ruling on the adoption of highways built within local authority housing areas:-** Although Halton Housing Trust (HHT) has identified programmes for environmental improvements within its estates, these do not currently address the issues relating to the condition of footways and access roads and repairing / improving them to highway adoptable standards as was anticipated upon the transfer of housing. Despite assurances from HHT that it would improve paths within its estates and would deal with any insurance claims arising there from, its insurers are applying what is known as the Gullicksen ruling to public liability claims in respect of trips and falls on footpaths in its areas of responsibility. The consequence of this is that Halton Council is now having to settle these claims. Section 58 of the Highways Act provides highway authorities with a statutory defence against claims, where it can be established that reasonable steps have been taken to make sure that the highway is not dangerous for traffic. A systematic inspection and repair regime is necessary for the statutory defence but unfortunately this has not been applied to the HHT roads and footpaths and no records exist for these areas.

A desktop mapping exercise has been undertaken to identify highways maintainable at public expense. These are extensive in areas such as Hough Green, Ditton, Crow Wood and Grange etc. A more accurate condition survey was undertaken in Hough Green which estimated the cost of repairs required to bring roads and footpaths up to adoptable standard in this area alone are approximately £400,000 at current day prices. There are now therefore likely to be significant implications for revenue budgets in terms of:

- Insurance settlements – increasing number and value of claims
- Highway inspections of these HHT highway areas
- Emergency (category 1) repairs to make-safe defective areas
- Repair and reconstruction of footways, access roads and paved areas.

It is not possible to predict at this stage what this increased demand on Council's budgets will be. The first thing we need to do is to discuss and agree with Halton Housing Trust which areas of its estates constitute 'public highway' and are therefore adopted and maintainable at public expense by HBC. Until we carry out a subjective analysis of each road and footpath within each estate, and agree with HHT which of those are highways in use by the general public, it is not possible to accurately estimate the extent of our liability. However, it is possible that the figure could be up to several million pounds, depending upon whether we carry out 'short term' repairs or undertake full reconstruction. The more recent court ruling of *Ley v Devon County Council* (2007) provides us with precedent in terms of rejecting the case for 'private' footpaths serving residents only, or accessing 'backyard' / drying areas to be adopted. Garage & parking areas and their access roads are also unlikely to be deemed highway.

- 2.7 All the above are likely to more than absorb both the human and financial resources that are available. It follows that there may be impacts on service delivery in some areas. The Board will receive regular reports on these and other matters, as appropriate so that they are aware of performance and any developing concerns.

Appendix 2

Paper to: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board Members

DATE: November 2009

REPORTING

OFFICER: Operational Director- Economic Regeneration

SUBJECT: Economic Regeneration Department – Service Plan Issues/development and review of functions

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to explain to Members the functions undertaken within the newly formed Department (to be April, 2010) and to highlight a number of key issues, which the Service will face in the coming years.

1.2 Member's comment on these matters is sought.

EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT

2.1 The new department will have three divisions and deliver a range of services. It will align most closely with the work of Urban Renewal and Employment, Learning and Skills. The services include:

- Major Projects
- External Funding, European and Regional Affairs
- Strategic Asset Management
- Business Development. Inward Investment and Economic Promotion
- Enterprise Development
- Employment including HPiJ and Supported Employment
- Skills for Life and Employability
- Adult Vocational Learning
- Family Learning and Children's Centres
- Sector Skills and Workforce Development.

2.2 With regard to 2010/11, there are a number of issues that will be of interest to this Board that are presently delivered by the existing Economic Regeneration Department.

1. Business and Investment

Whilst the conversion rate is holding up surprisingly well during the recession, the number of enquiries is considerably reduced. With many forecasts for next year saying the economy will

return to growth at some point, it is unclear how long it will take for enquiries to return to anything like the pre-recession level.

2. Mersey Gateway

There will be a continued focus on relocations to facilitate the construction of the new crossing. This will continue to use considerable departmental resources and further prioritisation of workloads is likely to be required.

Also, there is considerable scope to promote tourism during the bridge construction and afterwards. Initial investigations show there is a small but significant market for major engineering projects. Work on the tourism opportunities associated with the new bridge will need to start in earnest during 2010/11

3. Sectoral Developments

Much work has already been put into developing the logistics sector both in terms of physical developments led by Major Projects such as 3MG and also by Economic Regeneration in terms of skills development and job matching for local people. Major recruitments in the pipeline could yield over 600 jobs in the first phase alone and it has been agreed that the recruitment processes will be led by the local partners with a view to maximising the number of Halton residents that gain employment. This work has been the subject of a joint scrutiny review by Urban Renewal and Employment Learning and Skills PPBs and progress reports will be presented to both boards during the course of 2010/11.

The next sector undergoing development work is STAM (Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing). There is considerable opportunity for investment and job creation in this sector and a joint scrutiny review by Urban Renewal and Employment Learning and Skills PPBs is in place to consider how these can be maximised. Both Boards will receive reports and recommendations from the scrutiny topic groups which no doubt will lead to significant new projects in 2010/11.

Appendix 3

Paper to: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board Members

DATE: November 2009

REPORTING

OFFICER: Operational Director- Environmental and
Regulatory Services

SUBJECT: Environmental and Regulatory Services
Department – Service Plan Issues/development and
review of functions

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER

1.3 The purpose of this paper is to explain to Members the functions undertaken within the newly formed Environmental and Regulatory Services Department (to be April, 2010) and to highlight a number of key issues, which the Service will face in the coming years.

1.4 Member's comment on these matters is sought.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT

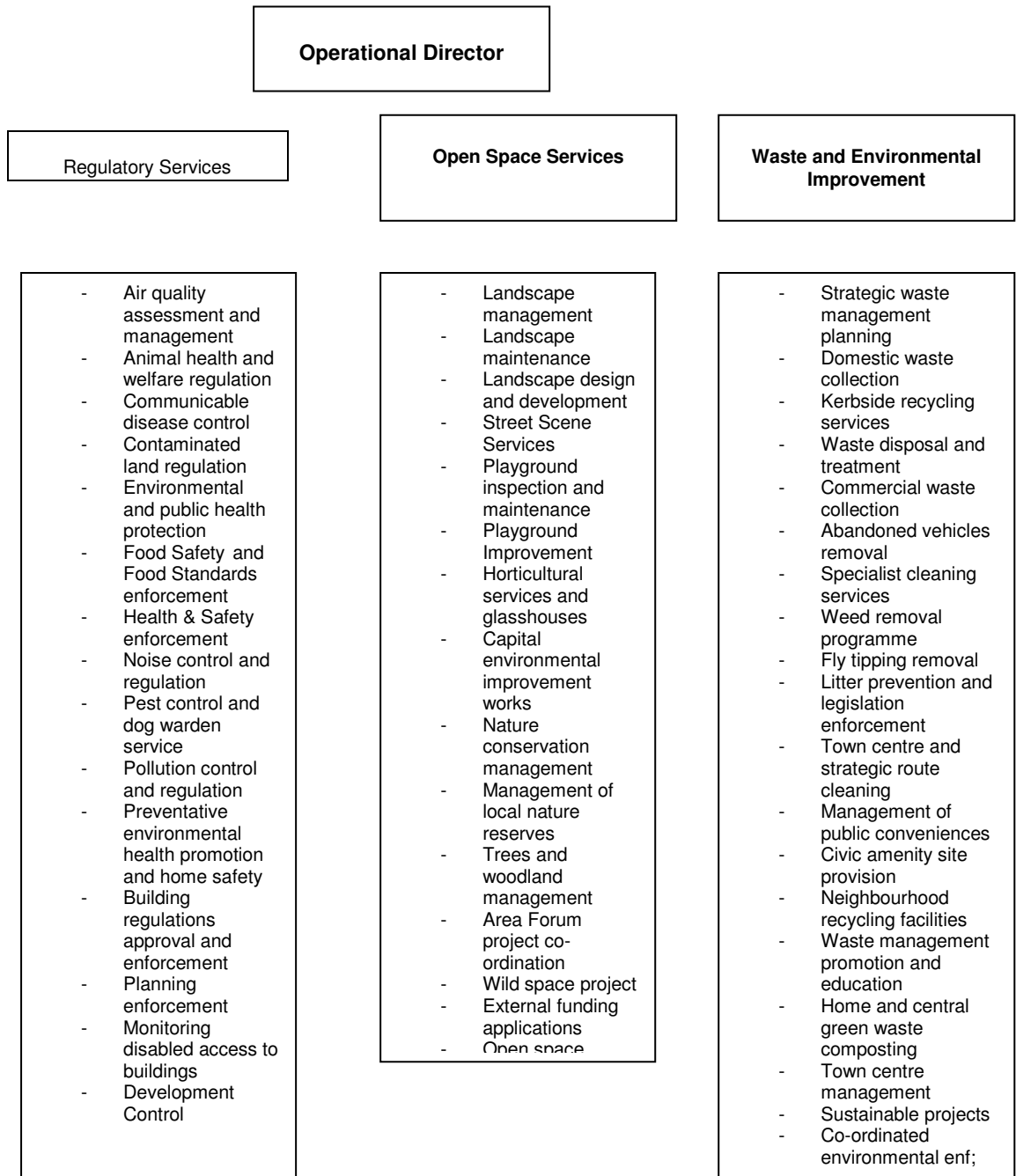
2.1 The Environmental and Regulatory Services Department was created on the 1 April 2006, with the purpose of co-ordinating a number of key services, which share as part of their wider objectives improving the environmental quality of the borough. In particular, the Service aims to support and deliver on the corporate objective/vision of providing a modern and high quality urban environment, which is safer and more attractive and which provides for a better quality of life for the borough's residents.

2.2 Within the Department there were originally four Divisions, which collectively deliver this commitment: -

- Environmental Health, Enforcement and Building Control
- Landscape Services
- Planning and Policy
- Waste Services

2.3 The new "to be" department largely stays the same, although the Policy and Strategy, Centre of Excellence will, in the future deliver the policy development area of work. Town Centre management, sustainable services and certain landlord responsibilities for open spaces within the borough will be added to the department's functions.

2.4 As a consequence of the above the new E and RS Department will now consist of three divisions and take the following shape and deliver the following services:-



1.5 The Department as a whole will employ, circa 275 personnel.

1.6 As can be seen much of the work undertaken contributes directly or indirectly to the objectives of a renewed and regenerated Halton.

Of particular interest to this Board will be the Department's contributions towards wider corporate policies and responsibilities in respect of

- Crime and Disorder and its impact upon the urban fabric
- Planning, building control performance
- Waste and recycling management and how the delivery of function impacts upon the character and fabric of the borough.
- Environmental crime- its management and control and how this can impact upon the boroughs landscape and appearance
- How the open spaces within the borough are managed
- The enforcement of environmental health controls in respect of safe and healthy premises
- The de-contamination of the Borough

These matters all have potential to absorb capacity, which may or may not be available and impact upon service delivery. The Board will receive regular reports on these and other matters, so that they are aware of performance and developing concerns, should they arise, with service delivery and to be given assurance that a quality service is being provided in an efficient and effective manner.

Appendix 4

Major Projects Department Service Plan 2010 – 11 – 12 - 13

As a result of the Business Efficiency Review, at the same time as losing its two most senior officer posts (Operational Director and Divisional Manager posts) the current Major Projects Department will become a Section within the Business Development division of the Economic Development Department in 2010-11. This will obviously impact sharply on the ability to deliver regeneration programmes and will demand an extremely focussed approach.

Subject to restructuring and budget considerations, the Service Plan 2010 – 2011 for this Section will include the following priorities:

- ❖ 3MG – to progress the implementation of the programme including, subject to market testing, the disposal of Halton Borough Council Field and the provision of associated infrastructure, such as rail sidings.
- ❖ Widnes Waterfront – to progress development at Venture Fields and the former Bayer site.
- ❖ Castlefields Regeneration – to manage the continuation of the Regeneration Programme including the completion of the Village Square development and remaining housing renewal projects; the disposal, subject to market conditions, of the Lakeside housing development site; and appropriate infrastructure improvements.
- ❖ Town Centres – to progress, subject to the availability of funding, the implementation of Town Centres' Improvement Programmes and to continue to try to progress development of the Canal Quarter.
- ❖ Remediation of St. Michael's Golf Course – to implement the second year of the £2.477 million Defra-funded remediation programme and to try to secure funding for the completion of the scheme.
- ❖ Management and co-ordination of the Urban Renewal Priority of the LSP, including the Urban Renewal WNF allocation.