

# **Minutes**

**For Presentation to the Council  
At the meeting to be held on**

**Wednesday, 6 March 2024**

# Minutes

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**COUNCIL**

*At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 6 December 2023 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Abbott, Ball, Baker, Begg, Bramwell, Cargill, Carlin, Dennett, Davidson, Dourley, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hutchinson, Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, L. Nolan, P. Nolan, Philbin, Polhill, Ratcliffe, Ryan, Stockton, Skinner, Teeling, Thompson, Thornton, Wainwright, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Bevan, Bradshaw, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh and Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, S. Young, G. Ferguson and D. Nolan

Also in attendance: One member of the press

*Action*

COU41 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 October 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU42 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she was pleased to announce that Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh had given birth to a baby boy George James, and both mother and baby were doing well. On behalf of the Council the Mayor sent her congratulations to Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh and Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh.

The Mayor also thanked everyone who had helped and attended the Town Hall Open Day. The event had raised £1075 towards the Mayor's Fund.

COU43 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader in his report to Council:

- expressed his disappointment at the lack of acknowledgement from central government in its recent autumn statement, to provide much needed additional funding towards Social Care Services;
- he reported that the Ofsted Inspection of the

Council's SEND service was completed and a report was expected soon; and

- he wished everyone very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

#### COU44 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board meetings on 19 October 2023 and 16 November 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

#### COU45 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 11 October 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

#### COU46 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

*N.B. Councillors A. Lowe and J. Lowe declared a Registrable Other Interest in the following item of business as they have a family member employed at St Lukes Care Home.*

#### COU47 REVISIONS TO THE 2023/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - EXB51

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which set out a number of revisions to the Council's 2023/24 Capital Programme.

RESOLVED: That the revisions to the Council's 2023/24 Capital Programme outlined in paragraph 3.2, be approved.

Operational  
Director - Finance

#### COU48 DETERMINATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2024/25 - EXB53

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the determination of the Council Tax Base for 2024/25.

The Mayor asked if there were any observations or amendments to the proposals set out in the report and none were received. The recommendation was unanimously

approved by Council as detailed below.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 be set at 36,409 for the Borough, and that the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Environment Agency be so notified; and
- 2) Council set the Council Tax Base for each of the Parishes as follows:

Parish	Tax Base
Hale	667
Halebank	534
Daresbury	212
Moore	341
Preston Brook	370
Sandymoor	1,606

Operational  
Director - Finance

COU49 EAST RUNCORN CONNECTIVITY SCHEME - EXB58

Executive Board had previously considered a report which sought approval to accept funding to complete the full business case in support of the East Runcorn Connectivity Scheme project elements, that were deliverable within the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). The report sought Council approval to accept funding from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and to amend the Capital Programme accordingly.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the funding from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement be accepted and the Council be recommended to amend the Capital Programme accordingly;
- 2) Mott MacDonald Ltd are retained as external consultant for the project up to a value of £1.61m, via the Warrington Consultancy Framework; and
- 3) the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Environment and Urban Renewal, be delegated to procure and implement the necessary works to deliver the A56 East Runcorn Connectivity (ERC) Scheme and active travel routes within funding deadlines.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

COU50 STATUTORY POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW

Council considered a report of the Chief Executive, that sought authority to approve a revised Polling Places Scheme. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 required the Council to carry out a review of all its polling stations every five years. As part of the review process, a consultation exercise had been carried out and comments were required by 13 November 2023. It was noted that those comments received had been taken into account and the recommendations were detailed in the appendix to the report.

It was noted that on page 9 of the report there was a typing error in the electorate figures for the Polling Districts in Daresbury Moore and Sandymoor Wards, DM1 and DM3. The figures should read DM1 - 3110 and DM3 - 296.

RESOLVED: That the Polling Places Scheme as detailed in the appendix to the report for the period 2024-2029 be adopted.

Chief Executive

COU51 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

The Council considered the reports of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 18 October 2023:-

- Children, Young People and Families;
- Employment, Learning and Skills and Community;
- Safer;
- Environment and Urban Renewal;
- Corporate Services; and
- Audit and Governance.

COU52 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of Council on 18 October 2023:-

- Development Management; and
- Appointments.

*Meeting ended at 6.57 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 7 December 2023 in the Halton Stadium, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Dennett, Harris, J. Lowe, T. McInerney, Nelson, P. Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor M. Lloyd Jones

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, G. Ferguson, Z. Fearon and D. Nolan

Also in attendance: One member of the press

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

EXB60 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

EXB61 WIDNES TOWN CENTRE VISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the development of a vision and delivery strategy for Widnes Town Centre and outlined the next steps in progressing this work. The Council had commissioned consultants Aecom and the BE Group, to develop a high-level Vision and Delivery Strategy for Widnes Town Centre. The aim of the Widnes Town Centre Vision was to guide the regeneration of the town centre and to identify opportunities and priorities for development.

The report highlighted the market analysis which had been undertaken, consultation which had taken place and the consultants conclusions. In order to address the issues detailed by the consultants and to proactively progress

*Action*

opportunities in the town, a vision and a set of accompanying objectives had been identified and these were set out in the report.

The Board was advised that the next step to progress the work was as follows:

- the consultants had identified potential mechanisms for delivery ranging from purely private sector schemes to public sector involvement and each would be assessed;
- a brief would be prepared to commission consultants to undertake master planning work;
- an assessment and cost benefit analysis would be undertaken; and
- a Town Centre Panel would be established comprising: Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder Environment and Renewal, Portfolio Holder Climate Change and one representative from each Widnes Ward.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the vision and objectives outlined in the report be supported;
- 2) the next steps outlined in section 4.1 of the report be agreed; and
- 3) the establishment of a Town Centre Panel be agreed.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB62 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF**

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented two applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, for consideration.

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

The report outlined details of the applications from Hazlehurst Craft Studios CIC, in relation to their respective addresses. Appended to the report was the potential annual

cost to the Council of granting the discretionary rate relief. Currently, where discretionary rate relief was granted to registered charities and non-profit organisations, it was provided until March 2025 in order to provide the organisations with some degree of certainty.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the application for 90% discretionary rate relief from Hazlehurst Craft Studios CIC in respect of premises at 71 High Street, Runcorn, with effect from 1 April 2023, be approved; and
- 2) the application for 90% discretionary rate relief from Hazlehurst Craft Studios CIC in respect of premises at 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 73 High Street, Runcorn, with effect from 16 February 2024, be approved.

Operational  
Director - Finance

#### EXB63 GAS & ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CONTRACTS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which advised that the Council purchased energy supplies via the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) framework. CCS were an executive agency sponsored by the Cabinet Office and are the biggest provider of public sector frameworks in the UK thus can provide excellent value due to their bulk buying power. CCS went through a tender process earlier this year and the result being that Total Energies, previously Total Gas and Power, were appointed as their gas provider and EDF were appointed as their electricity provider.

The Board was advised that the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration had approved the award of the corporate gas supply contract to Total Energies. The report also sought approval for the award of the corporate electricity supply contract to EDF. The new arrangements commenced on 2 October 2023 and both frameworks were until 20 February 2027. Full details of the cost of the contract and the arrangements were outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the award of the corporate electricity supply contract to EDF be approved.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

EXB64 DEMOLITION OF THE FORMER WATERLOO CENTRE, RUNCORN

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided information on the decision of the Chief Executive to approve a waiver of Standing Orders under section 1.14.2 Emergency Powers, to appoint a contractor to undertake the demolition of the former Waterloo Centre, Runcorn. The former Waterloo Centre had been closed since 2004 and had been surplus to Council requirements. No viable alternative use had been found for the building and without investment the building had started to fall into disrepair.

The Board noted that the intention was to demolish the building in 2019, however concerns were raised by Planning that the building adjoined Edgerton Street Library, which was a listed building. Over the last couple of years, the building had deteriorated and the latest report from a structural engineer stated that it was not feasible to shore the building up and that it needed to be demolished in a controlled manner. As a result, and following legal advice, the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, had made the decision that the building should be demolished as soon as possible.

A tender exercise was previously carried out in 2019 and although the work had been put on hold due to the concerns raised, to expediate matters and avoid a lengthy tender exercise, negotiations had taken place with the original proposed contractor Excavation and Contracting to carry out the work. They had submitted a revised price of £110,000. In order to avoid any unnecessary delay, a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders via the Chief Executive under Emergency Powers was obtained.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EXB65 AGENCY WORKER CONTRACT EXTENSION

The Board considered a report of the Head of HR Operations, which sought approval to extend the current contract for the supply of agency workers. In compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.15.3, acceptance of pre-determined contract extension, approval by the Board was required as the estimated value was likely to exceed £5,000,000 per annum.

The current contract was awarded to Matrix SCM in May 2022 and had a pre-determined option to extend for 2 x

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

12 month periods, the first extension period was from 1 May 2024 to 30 April 2025.

The report proposed that the current contract be extended to ensure opportunity remained to resource agency staff through a neutral vendor and to avoid costs and resource commitment of a tendering procedure, whilst other options were being explored.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approve that the contract arrangement with Matrix SCM be extended for a further 12 month period from 1 May 2024 to 30 April 2025.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

#### EXB66 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

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. Appendix A to the report set out the Transformation projects for each of the Directorates, as well as the associated delivery plans, which would provide a framework to assess project feasibility.

The Board noted that the development of delivery plans and associated trajectories against priority delivery actions was underway. The development of trajectory data would be used to monitor progress against both financial and non-financial outcomes. This work would continue throughout December.

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

#### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

#### EXB67 ADULT SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which provided a copy of the Adult Social Care Annual Report for 2022/23.

The theme of this year's report was 'making a difference' and as well as providing context as to what the local provision of ASC looked like and the direction of ASC during the report period. The report also looked at how ASC had made a difference to people through the services

delivered. The report provided examples of where services, staff and innovation had positively impacted on people who used the services and contained feedback from people and staff as to how this had made a difference.

The Board thanked Officers within the Adult Services Directorate for all their work.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted.

Executive Director  
Adult Services

## **ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB68 HALTON FREEPORT RETAINED RATES FUND**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval for the Council to implement the Halton Freeport Retained Business Rates Fund. In 2021, the Council supported the development of a Freeport application in support of the Liverpool City Region's economic aspirations. The Freeport had two major elements: to provide connectivity to Port of Weston and to raise project funding to deliver the Council's economic aspirations in the form of Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). TIF is a method of raising revenue to pay for regeneration.

The report provided an update on how the Council intended to establish the Retained Business Fund on a similar basis to the TIF Fund established for the local Enterprise Zone using a prescribed number of projects as outlined in the Full Business Case and Retained Rates Strategy. A list of the initial nominated projects were detailed in the report.

It was noted that projects confirmed as 'in scope' would be managed by the billing authority. Projects would be invited to prepare a business case, proportional to the scale of the project, in line with the requirements of the billing authority. Each billing authority would set out its own governance process for the approval of funds allocated from retained rates.

The Board was advised that initial estimates suggested that the 25 years (2046 to the lifetime end point) Halton Retained Business Rates Fund rates retention period could support the delivery of the masterplan through approximately £40m of Tax Increment Financing.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) the Board supports the progress made on the Freeport and specifically the retained business rates fund to deliver local regeneration priorities;
- 3) delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration, Operational Director - Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to take the necessary steps to develop a Halton Freeport Retained Business Rates Fund; and
- 4) the Operational Director Finance, be authorised to enter into and manage the processes required to facilitate the Business Rates Retention and Tax Increment Financing processes.

EXB69 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

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

Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

*N.B. Councillor J. Lowe declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed at St Lukes Care Home.*

**ADULT AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

EXB70 CARE PROVIDER CONTRACT UPLIFT 2024/25

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which provided information on the proposed annual uplift for domiciliary care, direct payments, supported living and care home providers within Halton for 2024/25.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- 2) approval be given to actively enter into consultation with Care Providers in relation to the annual uplift for 2024/25

**MINUTES ISSUED: 12 December 2023**

**CALL-IN: 19 December 2023 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 19 December 2023.**

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

*Meeting ended at 1.25 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 18 January 2024 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Dennett, Harris, M. Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, Nelson, P. Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor T. McInerney

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, G. Ferguson, J. Farrell and P. Wright

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

EXB71 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

EXB72 URGENT DECISIONS

The Executive Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Board.

It was noted that the Council's Constitution gave authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Operational Director Finance and/or the Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.

One urgent decision had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.

RESOLVED: That the urgent decision taken since

*Action*

the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

### **DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB73 TERM MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to proceed with a procurement process with regards to the provision of term maintenance and minor works contracts for mechanical, electrical and building elements for use across the Borough. The current maintenance and minor works term contracts would come to an end on 31 December 2024 and it was proposed that the new arrangements would be set up for a 3 year period with the potential for up to a 1 year extension, subject to satisfactory performance.

It was noted that based on previous expenditure, it was anticipated that the total annual value of the contract could be up to £2m a year.

**RESOLVED:** That the Board approve that the procurement process be entered into via the Chest with the purpose of securing term maintenance and minor works contracts for mechanical, electrical and building elements for use across corporate and school buildings Borough-wide.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

#### **EXB74 TERMS OF REFERENCE WIDNES TOWN CENTRE PANEL**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that set out the proposed Terms of Reference for the Widnes Town Centre Panel. The Terms of Reference included the role of the Panel, Panel Membership, possible future arrangements for key stakeholders to be invited to attend meetings and details for quarterly meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed Terms of Reference outlined in Section 3 of the report be approved.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB75 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2025/26 - KEY DECISION**

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Children's Services, which requested the approval of the School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and

Co-ordinated Schemes, for admission to primary and secondary schools, including Academy, Free School and Voluntary Controlled schools for the September 2025 intake.

The Board was advised that on 2 October 2023, the Local Authority issued a statutorily required consultation on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2025 intake for primary and secondary schools (attached as appendices 1 and 2 respectively). The primary scheme also included the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools for whom the Local Authority was the admission authority.

The report provided details of the consultation, which ran until 10 November 2023. One response was received which was outside the remit of the consultation and had been responded to separately. Additionally, no amendments to the oversubscription criteria were suggested, as these reflected the criteria which are considered good practice and acceptable by the Department for Education.

It was noted that all Halton's secondary schools were either academies, free schools or voluntary aided and were therefore their own admission authorities, with responsibility for consulting and determining their own admissions criteria and their own Published Admission Number (PAN).

Reason(s) for Decision

Local Authorities as the admission authority for community and voluntary schools are required to consult and then determine their admission arrangements annually, and are also required to determine coordinated schemes for primary and secondary admission rounds that apply to all schools.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

Implementation Date

The implementation date is September 2024 which is when the timetabled process for the September 2025 intake commences.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the Coordinated Scheme for Admission to Primary Schools – which also contains the Local Authority's admission criteria

Executive Director  
Children's  
Services

to community and voluntary controlled schools, and approves the Co-ordinated Scheme for admission to secondary schools, both of which will apply to the September 2025 intake.

EXB76 SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2024/25 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children’s Services, which provided a summary of the capital funding received by the Council from central Government to support capital works and programmes within schools for 2024/25.

The Board was advised that the Department for Education (DfE) had not announced the School Condition Allocation Capital Grant for 2024/25 however, given the timescales for some of the proposed capital projects, there was a requirement to present this report, so it was compiled using the 2023/24 allocation, which was £748,583.

The report set out details of the indicative funding available to support capital projects across the schools estate and also explained how the School Condition Allocation would be utilised.

Reason(s) for Decision

To agree funding for capital works across Halton’s educational establishments.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Implementation Date

Any works to be undertaken from the funding detailed in the report would be implemented with effect from 1 April 2024.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the position regarding capital funding from the Department for Education for 2024/25 be noted;
- 2) the proposals to be funded from the School Condition Capital Allocation be approved; and
- 3) the capital allocations are put forward for inclusion in the budget report to full Council.

Executive Director  
Children's  
Services

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

**EXB77 ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR CARE AND SUPPORT 2023-2026 - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which presented the draft Adult Social Care Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support 2023 – 2026 for approval. The Strategy document outlined the Council's Commissioning intentions over the next three years which would aim to support residents, unpaid carers and their families to have access to the right services, information, advice and guidance in order to make good decisions about the care and support they need.

Reason(s) for Decision

The priorities and commissioning intentions identified within the Strategy will not only aim to support addressing key local challenges identified but will prioritise approaches that reduced or delayed the need for care and support, building on the strengths of people's existing support networks and also ensured we adhere to our duties under the Care Act 2014.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The commissioning intentions and associated actions listed within the Strategy have been carefully considered and it is felt that they present the best options available to promote health and wellbeing and deliver services which lead to positive outcomes for people.

Implementation Date

This is a three-year strategy which takes effect from 1 April 2023 and runs to 31 March 2026.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) contents of the report and associated Appendix be noted; and
- 2) the draft Strategy be approved.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

**EXB78 PRELIMINARY PROCUREMENT NOTIFICATION - PROPOSED TENDER OF A FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE**

The Board considered a report of the Executive

Director – Adult Services, which provided an update on the procurement process for the supply of a Floating Support Service. It was noted that due to unforeseen circumstances, a three-month delay to the proposed contract commencement date was required in order to undertake the tender process and allow for the required three-month mobilisation period. The revised mobilisation period was now scheduled to take place from 1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024.

The proposed new contract commencement date was 1 July 2024 and would be for an initial three years until 30 June 2027. Officers would seek to extend the current contract with the current provider for the three-month duration of the mobilisation period, allowing for continuity of the current service delivery before the new contract commenced on 1 July 2024.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

EXB79 PRELIMINARY PROCUREMENT NOTIFICATION -  
PROPOSED TENDER OF A DOMICILIARY CARE  
SERVICE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which sought approval to commence a new tender procedure for the supply of a Domiciliary Care Service in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.3.5, as the contract value will exceed £1m in value. The report also sought approval for a second pre-determined contract extension period commencing 2 April 2024 up to a period of 12 months as the contract value would exceed £5m.

Reason(s) for Decision

- the decision is statutorily required;
- the contract value is £5m; and
- the decision impacts on all wards and communities within the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There are no alternative options. The Council must commence a new tender procedure for the supply of a Domiciliary Care Service in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.3.5 to ensure continuity of Service once the current contract ceases.

Implementation Date

The proposed contract will be for an initial five years commencing 2 October 2024 until 1 October 2029 with an option to extend by 2 x 12-month periods, 2 October 2029 until 1 October 2030 and 2 October 2030 until 1 October 2031.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted;
- 2) the Preliminary Estimates Report to commence a new tendering procedure for a Domiciliary Care Service in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.3.5 be approved;
- 3) in order to undertake the new tendering procedure in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.15.3, the second available pre-determined contract extension period of the current Domiciliary Care Service be approved; and
- 4) in relation to recommendation 3 above, approval be given to the Executive Director – Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Adult Social Care, to agree the contract extension period with the incumbent Provider up to a maximum of 12 months from 2 April 2024.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB80 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER - DOG CONTROL**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which requested approval of a Public Spaces Protection Order for Dog Control to help tackle dog fouling and other forms of irresponsible dog ownership. A copy of the proposed Order was attached as Appendix 1.

The Board was advised that the Council had previously introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order in 2019. The Order enabled Officers to use enforcement powers to hold those responsible for irresponsible dog ownership covered by the Order, accountable. Consultation on the proposed 2024 Order had taken place between August and September 2023 and it was noted that those who had responded to the consultation agreed with the Council's proposal. Following the consultation process, there

were no material changes to the 2019 Order in the proposed 2024 Order.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) approval be given for the Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order attached as Appendix 1 to be made;
- 2) the Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order comes into effect as of 1 February 2024; and
- 3) delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director – Environment & Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, to make variations to the Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order, but only to the extent of varying where the Dogs on Leads and Dog Exclusion Provisions of the Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order shall apply, and only in such circumstances where appropriate consultation has been carried out which provides support for any proposed variation.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

**EXB81 REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT CONTRACT - REQUEST FOR A ONE-YEAR WAIVER**

The Board considered a request for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 v of Part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders in relation to the Resettlement Contract with Plus Dane which was due to expire 31 March 2024. A one-year waiver would extend the contract with the existing provider to 31 March 2025. This approach would enable Officers to appraise a range of commissioning/delivery options for the future delivery of the service.

RESOLVED: That the

- 1) contents of the report be noted; and
- 2) request for a one-year waiver to the Resettlement Contract in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4v be approved

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

**CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO**

*N.B. Councillor J. Lowe declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed at St Lukes Care Home.*

EXB82 ST LUKE'S & ST PATRICK'S DECARBONISATION PROJECTS

The Board considered a report which sought approval in respect of the provision of capital funding to support the decarbonisation schemes at St Luke's and St Patrick's Care Homes, following the submission of a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS).

In line with the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2040, and in accordance with the Climate Change Action Plan 2022-27, funding had been sought for undertaking decarbonisation works at both St Luke's and St Patrick's Care Homes by submitting a bid to the PSDS. The outcome of the bid should be announced by the end of January 2024. A second bid had been submitted covering 3 Corporate sites and this would be subject to a further report in due course should the bid be successful.

It was proposed that should the bid be successful, the works to both Care Homes would be undertaken by Sure Group, Sure Maintenance, who are the Council's main mechanical term contractor working in conjunction with Eric Wright Construction.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the provision of £1.609m of capital funding over a 2 year period, subject to the PSDS bid being successful, or £2.98m if the bid is unsuccessful, be agreed, to enable the decarbonisation works to proceed at both St Luke's & St Patrick's Care Homes; and
- 2) Council be asked to approve this scheme for inclusion within the 2024/25 capital programme.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

**MINUTES ISSUED: 23 January 2024**

**CALL-IN: 30 January 2024 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 30 January 2024.**

*Meeting ended at 2.38 p.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 22 February 2024 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Dennett, Harris, M. Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, T. McInerney, Nelson, P. Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, E. Dawson, G. Ferguson, Z. Fearon and J. Gallagher

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
<p>EXB83 MINUTES</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p><b>LEADER'S PORTFOLIO</b></p> <p>EXB84 THE CORPORATE PLAN</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Board considered a report from the Corporate Director Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an overview of the new Council Corporate Plan and outlined the next steps for the Plan to come into effect from April 2024. The Corporate Plan would be the Council's key strategic document and it would set out the main vision, themes and values of the Council for the next 5 years. A copy of the Plan document was attached to the report.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">RESOLVED: That</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">1) the report be noted and the Board recommends to Council that the new Corporate Plan be approved; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">2) the Scrutiny Chairs' Group be requested to consider</p>	<p>Corporate Director - Chief Executive's Delivery Unit</p>

changing the titles of the Policy and Performance Boards to bring them in line with the new Corporate Plan 6 key priorities.

EXB85 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024-2025

The Board received a report of the Chief Executive, which set out the proposed Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/25 Municipal Year, which was appended to the report for information.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/25 Municipal Year, as appended to the report.

Chief Executive

**CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

EXB86 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2024/25

The Board received the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, (TMSS) which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy for 2024/25.

The TMSS was appended to the report and detailed the expected activities of the treasury function in the forthcoming financial year (2024/25). Its production and submission to Council was a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code.

The Local Government Act 2003 required the Council to have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years, to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Act therefore required the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy (AIS), which set out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. Government guidance notes stated that authorities could combine the TMSS and the AIS into one report, which the Council had done and was included in Section 4.

Members noted that the production of a Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement was required and a formal statement for approval was contained within the

report at paragraph 2.3, with the full policy shown in Appendix A.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to adopt the policies, strategies, statements, prudential and treasury indicators outlined in the report.

Operational  
Director - Finance

EXB87 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024/25

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, on the Council’s Capital Strategy for 2024/25.

It was reported that all councils were required to produce a Capital Strategy annually, the aim of which was to ensure that the Council understood the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

Members were advised that the Capital Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, included on the same agenda; this detailed the expected activities of the treasury management function and incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy for 2024/25. It was noted that the successful delivery of the Capital Strategy would assist the Council in planning and funding its capital expenditure over the next three years.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the 2024/25 Capital Strategy, as presented in the Appendix attached to the report.

Operational  
Director - Finance

*N.B. Councillors Thompson and Wharton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following item of business as they are both members of the Mersey Gateway Crossing Board.*

EXB88 2023/24 SPENDING AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, advising of the Council’s overall revenue and capital net spending position as at 31 December 2023, together with a forecast outturn position.

Appendix 1 presented a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 December 2023 and Appendix 2 provided detailed figures for each individual Department. It was reported that in overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend

would be over the approved budget by £7.144m. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 December 2023, highlighting the schemes which had been revised.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continue to be limited to only absolutely essential items;
- 2) Executive Directors continue to take urgent action to reduce or defer spending for the remainder of the current financial year, or secure additional funding;
- 3) Council be requested to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.24; and
- 4) a review of outstanding sundry debts is undertaken as outlined in paragraph 3.31, particularly within Adults and Community and Greenspaces, to facilitate debt collection, reduce the level of outstanding debt, and avoid increasing bad debt provision.

Operational  
Director - Finance

#### EXB89 BUDGET 2024/25

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director, Finance, which outlined a recommendation to Council in respect of the Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2024/25.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approved at the Executive Board meeting on 16 November 2023, had identified a funding gap of around £3.743m in 2024/25, £0.495m in 2025/26 and £1.347m in 2026/27. The Strategy had the following objectives:

- Deliver a balanced and sustainable budget;
- Prioritise spending towards the Council's priority areas;
- Avoid excessive Council Tax rises;
- Achieve significant cashable efficiency gains;
- Protect essential front line services and vulnerable members of the community; and
- Deliver improved procurement.

In terms of consultation, it was noted that the Council used various methods to listen to the views of the public, and Members own experiences through their Ward work was an important part of that process. Individual consultations were taking place in respect of specific budget proposals and equality impact assessments would be

completed where necessary.

The Board received regular reports summarising spending in the current year against the budget. The latest report indicated that spending was forecast to be over budget in the current year by approximately £7.144m against a net budget of £140.880m.

The proposed revenue budget for 2024/25 totalled £149.496m; the departmental analysis of this was shown in Appendix B and the major reasons for change from the current budget were shown in Appendix C. A total of £2.702m of savings were approved by Council on 1 February 2023.

The Board was advised that the proposed budget incorporated the grant figures announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement. It included £0.124m for the New Homes Bonus grant, an increase of £0.115m from 2023/24. The budget also included Better Care Funding of £6.982m which was unchanged from 2023/24.

Further information was also provided on the budget outlook, Halton's Council Tax, Parish precepts, Police, Fire and Liverpool City Region (LCR) Mayor precepts, the Capital Programme, Prudential Code and School Budgets.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended

- 1) to adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A, which includes setting the budget at £149.496m, the Council Tax requirement of £64.039m (before Parish, Police, Fire and LCR Combined Authority precepts) and the Band D Council Tax for Halton of £1,758.89;
- 2) to approve the capital programme set out in Appendix F;
- 3) to approve the introduction of a Council Tax Premium of 100% to properties where there is no resident and which are substantially furnished (typically referred to as second homes) from 1 April 2025, subject to legislation being enacted; and
- 4) to approve the use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out in Appendix H.

Operational  
Director - Finance

EXB90 PENSIONS DISCRETIONS STATEMENT 2024/25

The Board received the annual Pensions Discretions

Statement for 2024-25 for Halton Borough Council.

The Council was required to publish a Pension Discretion Statement annually, to advise the discretions it intended to exercise under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – this was appended to the report.

It was reported that the Pensions Discretion Statement for 2024-25 was based upon the statement for 2023-24, which was approved by Executive Board in March 2023. It was noted that no new discretions had been added.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the Pensions Discretions Statement for 2024-25.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB91 FAMILY HUBS DIGITAL SOLUTION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children, which provided an update on the progress of the Halton Family Hubs Programme in meeting the Department of Education's ambition to implement a Digital / Virtual Family Hub by March 2025. Family Hubs were a system wide model of providing high quality, joined up, whole family support services. Hubs delivered these services from conception, through a child's early years until they reached the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).

It was noted that Beebot Family Hubs Support had conducted a successful proof of concept exercise with families, residents and professionals, with the aim to gain feedback and opinion from a range of demographics and job roles across Halton. Following on from the exercise, that included positive stakeholder workshop feedback and support, Beebot had been asked to provide a fully costed proposal. The estimated cost of a 3-year licence was £194,000, funded through the Department for Education Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme, and a waiver of Procurement Standing Order 1.14. (iv) and 1.14 (v) was requested for the purchase of the Family Hub Digital Solution.

RESOLVED: That approval be given for a Waiver request in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14. (iv) and 1.14 (v) for the purchase of the Family Hub Digital Solution.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

EXB92 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

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

**CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

EXB93 FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE ARRANGEMENTS - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, that outlined new arrangements for the management of flexible workforce from 1 September 2024 onwards.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

**MINUTES ISSUED: 27 February 2024**

**CALL-IN: 5 March 2024 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 5 March 2024.**

*Meeting ended at 2.35 p.m.*

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on Wednesday, 17 January 2024 at the Karalius Suite - Halton Stadium, Widnes*

Present:

- Councillor Wright (Chair)
- Councillor J. Lowe
- Councillor Woolfall
- A. Allt, National Institute of Health Research
- K. Appleton, Halton Borough Council
- V. Amour, Halton Borough Council
- C. Bradbury, People in Partnership
- H. Crampton, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service
- R. Foster, Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- L. Gardner, Warrington & Halton Teaching Hospitals
- D. Gregg, Halton Borough Council
- N. Hidderley, Halton Borough Council
- A. Hindhaugh, Halton Borough Council
- L. Hughes, Healthwatch Halton
- J. Jones, Citizens Advice Bureau
- A. Leo, Integrated Commissioning Board
- W. Longshaw, St. Helens & Knowsley Hospitals
- T. McPhee, Mersey Care NHS Trust
- D. O'Connor, Halton Borough Council
- I. Onyia, Public Health
- S. Wallace-Bonner, Halton Borough Council
- D. Wilson, Healthwatch Halton

Apologies:

- Councillor T. McInerney
- S. Patel, Local Pharmacy Committee

Also in attendance: Councillor Carlin and 9 members of the public

*Action*

#### HWB20 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

#### HWB21 RESEARCH READY COMMUNITY PROJECT

The Board received a report regarding the Research Ready Community Champion Power in Partnership Project (PIP) which was based in Runcorn.

The Research Ready Community (RRC) Project commenced in Halton in June 2023 and employed six RRC Champions and one NIHR Research Engagement Officer. The Champions were young adults and care leavers who were part of a National programme to help build better

relationships with communities and increase equitable access to health research amongst under-represented groups.

The Board also received a short film which provided a snapshot of what the Champions had achieved so far.

The Champions had identified six areas of health that had affected them the most:

- Isolation and loneliness;
- Diabetes and its complications;
- Managing heart conditions;
- Addiction (alcohol, drugs and gambling);
- Depression, mental health and wellbeing; and
- Sexual health support.

The young people had also made further developments by attending meetings with senior health professionals for the local NHS and shared their own experiences to help organisations to make the changes needed to improve their lives.

The report also outlined the background to the programme and the findings to the community research that had been carried out.

The Board discussed the information presented to them and the following comments were noted:

- Local organisations needed to promote the services that were available;
- How should this initiative be used to shape services and how will be make a difference? A wider discussion was needed; and
- Service providers were keen to speak to the Champions and have some further conversations.

RESOLVED: that the Board note the presentation.

## HWB22 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD FORWARD PLAN

The Board received a report regarding the Health and Wellbeing Board Forward Plan.

Members were reminded that a review of the Board and its role that took place in 2022, where it was suggested that part 1 of the agenda included the statutory functions and accountabilities and part 2 of the agenda was thematic; led by the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

There were four themes and these would be aligned with the quarterly Board meetings. The report contained an outline plan which would be updated accordingly when more details were available. Lead officers would work with members of the Board to identify content for the agenda.

Members of the Board noted the contents of the report

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the content of the report; and
- 2) endorse the use of a thematic Forward Plan.

#### HWB23 HALTON FAMILY HUBS

The Board received a presentation and report which provided an update of the progress of Halton Family Hubs.

In 2019, the Government's Manifesto pledged to champion Family Hubs across England. In December 2020, the Minister for Children outlined plans to create a National Centre for Excellence for Hubs, funded by the Department for Education (DfE). This included a Best Start for Life Review which was a programme to ensure the best support during the first 1001 days of a baby's life and maximise lifelong emotional and physical wellbeing.

In April 2022, the DfE and DHSC announced that Halton would be one of the 75 Local Authorities who would become a pilot area for the Family Hubs and Best Start to Life Scheme. Since December 2022, Halton had been working hard to develop this model.

The Board was advised that Family Hubs were designed to support children and families by bringing together all the support families may need from pregnancy through to young people turning 19, or 25 if they had a disability. They brought together early help and intervention delivered by a range of partners and organisations and services that could be delivered in various ways from different venues i.e. children's centres, libraries, health centres, GP practices and many more.

The presentation outlined the journey so far in the development of the model, its achievements and challenges over the past 12 months and the next steps for the future.

The Chair provided some positive feedback she had received about an event organised by the service.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the presentation.

#### HWB24 CORPORATE PARENTING

A report was presented to update the Board on the role it plays in supporting and delivering corporate parenting responsibilities.

The Board also received a presentation which set out the corporate parenting principles, the role and responsibilities of a corporate parent and who the members were on the Corporate Parenting Board.

Members were advised that the Corporate Parenting Strategy was shortly to be re-launched and invites would be sent out in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) adopts the principles of the corporate parenting strategy and the defining of the seven key priorities, to support the improvement journey of Halton care experienced young people and care leavers;
- 2) notes the senior management representation across Halton and affirm the corporate commitment to develop stronger partnership working to ensure the needs of care experienced young people and care leavers are galvanised and prioritised by all stakeholders, ensuring 'our children are our future'; and
- 3) notes that the cross-party members, senior managers and key stakeholders would meet bi-monthly, receive reports, including performance reports, undertaking strategic and thematic enquiry into specific elements of the strategy, and seek ways of resolving barriers to support the success of our people place and practice.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

#### HWB25 INSPECTION OF SEND LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP

The Board received a presentation from the Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision, which provided an update on the recent Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Area Partnership Ofsted Inspection.

The presentation described the membership of the Local Area Partnership and who they were. Under the umbrella of One Halton, the Council, community and NHS

organisations work together for the benefit of children and young people living in Halton. It outlined the responsibilities and priorities of the partnership.

The presentation also outlined the partnership's learning from the process; the outcome of the inspection was embargoed until the publication of the final Ofsted report. The report would share the responsibilities of the Local Area Partnership and help to inform the Board of priorities which would inform strategic planning and support the partnership to deliver the right support at the right time, in the right way, for children and young people with SEND.

Once the inspection report was published, the findings would be shared with all stakeholders. The Strategy and priority plans for the SEND Local Area Partnership would be shared and steps would be taken to progress as a partnership on the collective vision for children and young people with SEND in Halton.

RESOLVED: That the report and presentation be noted.

#### HWB26 UPDATE ON THE TRANSITION TEAM

The Board received a report which provided an overview on the Transition Team. The Transition Team was established in 2017 with a remit to work with young people with severe learning disabilities (SLD) and physical and sensory disabilities (PSD) to ensure they had a smooth transition from children's services to adult services.

The Board also received a presentation from the lead Occupational Therapist, which described a piece of research that had been undertaken to identify some of the issues surrounding the delays in provision of disabled paediatric equipment in Halton and the impact this had on families.

The research made a number of recommendations which were noted as follows:

- Review how the process of service provision could be streamlined;
- Compile a policy for the supply of all equipment for disabled children encompassing acceptable timescales in all areas of provision; and
- Purchase a core stock to reduce early intervention time after initial assessment.

It was also noted that the budget for this service area

was currently £25,000, however, in order to purchase the required specialised bespoke equipment, this budget would require a substantial increase.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the report.

#### HWB27 CITIZENS ADVICE HALTON - CHILD POVERTY UPDATE

The Board considered a report on how the rising rate of the National Living Wage (NLW) in April 2024 and the rising cost of school uniforms could impact on child poverty levels in Halton.

The report highlighted some of the issues faced by local families and set out some steps which local partners could take to help reduce the financial burden faced by families with young children in schools.

The report also described the negative impact of the rising NLW and the potential implications which included:

- Low income working households will not see the full value of a higher NLW;
- Few parents will be exempt from the benefits cap;
- Families would not be eligible for free school meals;
- There would be implications for Universal Credit conditions; and
- Self-employed parents may lose benefit income.

The report outlined a number of recommendations relating to the rising NLW and cost of school uniforms.

The Board noted and discussed the report and suggested that further work needed to be done to revisit interventions and maximise income.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and the Board determines a way forward.

Director of Public Health

*The Chair expressed thanks to Kath Parker, Chair of Healthwatch Halton who had now retired from the role. Kath had been a member of the Board for many years and her support had been invaluable. The Chair also welcomed Lydia Hughes who had taken over the role on an interim basis.*

*Meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.*

**CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE  
BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 22 January 2024 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), Begg, Goodall, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, McDermott, Rowe and Ryan

Apologies for Absence: Councillors C. Plumpton Walsh and Baker

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Farrell, A. Jones, K. Bazley, J. Gallagher, V. Armor and A. Hindhaugh

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CYP21 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CYP22 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CYP23 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND THE WAY FORWARD	
<p>The Board received a report of the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which gave an update on 'The Big Conversation', since it was presented at the last meeting in November 2023.</p> <p>The consultation closed on 30 November 2023. The report outlined the engagement results of the consultation, broken down into age groups and presented the methods used and areas the consultation had reached, which included many stakeholders and partners.</p>	

It was reported that there was a high level of agreement to the suggested themes within the consultation. It was evident however that the addition of a 6<sup>th</sup> theme was required to encompass areas such as: environment, open and green spaces and the protection of these, litter, overgrowth and weeds, regeneration, business, economy, growth support and town centres, housing and supported living. It was proposed that these would come under '*Place and Community*'.

The timeline for the new Corporate Plan was provided and its launch was scheduled for April 2024. All Elected Members of the Council had been emailed to advise of the qualifying statements devised for each priority/theme. These would also be made available to the public, employees and residents, who would now be given the opportunity to provide feedback on these statements, which set out what each priority would aim to achieve over the next 5 years.

The public consultation was open from 19 January to 26 January and was being shared via social media and drop-in sessions in the libraries and Direct Links in Runcorn and Widnes.

Members made the following comments:

- It was felt that the priorities were similar to the original priorities the Council has now;
- One week for a public consultation on the qualifying statements was not very long and there was the potential for criticism;
- A 1% response from 16–19-year-olds was skewing the figures – the efforts made with this age group were reiterated; and
- Funding for the new Corporate Plan was queried – this would be confirmed at a later date.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board continues to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan.

#### CYP24 SUMMARY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director Children, which provided a summary of the key

work taking place locally and at a regional level, to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

An accompanying presentation was provided which gave an overview of work taking place in Halton by a variety of organisations and teams. It also included an overview of preventative work that aimed to keep children and young people mentally well, and services that provided direct interventions and support when children and young people were struggling.

Members were also provided with details of the *The Resilience Framework* and details of the core/statutory services available in Halton. It was noted that this was not a definitive list of support that was available, as there were many other services that had a positive impact on children and young people's mental health – these examples were listed.

The following additional information was provided in response to Members questions:

- The nurturing agenda was connected to this as all services were encouraged to be part of the network of support, as they all complimented each other;
- Training was a rolling programme as staff members changed all the time;
- Not all schools were using the service, as they chose not to. Some felt they did not need the support; some were doing their own work in the mental health area; and some were dependent upon the availability of funding;
- It was thought that 1 in 6 children had a probable mental health disorder;
- Outcomes of services were measured but varied across organisations/teams and were dependent on the intervention utilised;
- The remedial role of the service was understood and it was commented that schools and mental health services approach was also prevention, as outlined in the presentation;
- It was recognised that teachers leaving and joining different schools could be unsettling for children; and the same could be said for the staff members losing colleagues;
- It was commented by one Member that a simple way of encouraging good mental health in students was to encourage sports – it was felt that extra-curricular activities were becoming exclusive due to the costs involved. It was noted that all schools' curriculums

did include sports and HBC employed a Schools Games Officer, who worked with schools to encourage sporting activities, events, competitions and support for children and young people with disabilities;

- Access to the Baby Infant Bonding Service was explained;
- The main transition period for pupils dealt with by the Team was children transferring from primary to secondary school; any other significant periods would be checked and reported after the meeting; and
- The number of Educational Psychologists in Halton would also be reported back.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) receive the presentation; and
- 2) note the key work and services contributing to the positive mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

#### CYP25 HALTON FAMILY HUBS

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Children, which gave an update on the progress of Halton's Family Hubs and the next steps.

The Government's 2019 Manifesto pledged to champion Family Hubs across England. In December 2020, the Minister for Children outlined plans to create a national Centre of Excellence for Family Hubs, funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The *Best Start for Life Review: A Vision for the 1001 Critical days*, outlined a programme of work to ensure the best support during those crucial first 1001 days, setting babies up to maximise their potential for lifelong emotional and physical wellbeing.

It was announced in April 2022 that 75 local authorities would become pilot areas for the Family Hubs and Best Start for Life schemes and Halton had been selected for this.

The Board was advised that since December 2022 the Council had been working hard to develop the Family Hub Model and the presentation outlined the journey so far in the development of these, as well as the challenges faced over the past year; achievements reached; and how they were making a difference.

In response to questions the following additional information was provided:

- The Family Hubs were a universal offer for children and young people in the Borough aged 0-19 or 25 with SEND;
- It was commented that the benefits of the Programme could be long term as it would help with the prevention of children entering the care system for example – officers had already seen results as referrals to specialist targeted parenting programmes had reduced, as a result of more people accessing at a lower level;
- The costs of capital projects had increased recently and these would be raised with the North West delivery lead this week;
- 25,000 young people had used the Hubs so far, and 130 new referrals were being seen each month across the Borough;
- Outcomes of the Family Hubs were reported back to a control group in Government, to demonstrate the programmes were working;
- The demographics of the Family Hubs was not a barrier to residents as they could visit any, and all residents had the same opportunity to access the services offered – if the demand for a service existed in a particular Hub it would be provided there;
- The digital offer would be improved as a new system was being procured; and
- The Family Hubs were also focussing on increasing access for fathers so that all family members could benefit from the services.

The Family Hubs were located in Runcorn at Halton Lodge Children's Centre, Windmill Hill Children's Centre and Brookvale Community Centre, with a satellite site at Halton Brook Learning Centre. Widnes Family Hubs were located at Kingsway Community Centre, Ditton Community Centre and Warrington Road Children's Centre, with a satellite site at Upton Community Centre.

Overall Members were pleased to hear the success of the Family Hubs to date and would welcome a further update as the Programme develops.

**RESOLVED:** That the Board receives the presentation.

CYP26 SUMMARY OF VALIDATED HALTON EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE, SUMMER 2023

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children, which presented a summary on the validated outcomes for Halton's Children and Young Peoples' educational performance from summer 2023, in comparison to validated national, regional and statistical neighbour data.

Members were referred to Paper One, appended to the report, which included attainment and progress outcomes from the summer 2023 statutory assessment and exam period for all pupils – cohorts of children and young people with SEND; cohorts of children and young people who were eligible for Free School Meals; Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development (GLD); phonics outcomes; end of Key Stage One outcomes; end of Key Stage Two outcomes; and End of Key Stage Four outcomes (GCSE English and Maths). Explanations on the outcomes for each of the above cohorts were provided in the report.

Members discussed the implications of Local Authority funding cuts (Schools Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grants, SIMB Grant) and how this had led to the offer of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that schools could purchase going forwards, due to the removal of funding for the SIMB Grant. The extent of what schools had bought into this year would become clear at the end of January 2024.

One member suggested writing to schools' governors to ensure they were informed of the situation. It was noted that this information was shared with headteachers at headteacher meetings and would be shared with other stakeholders, including Governors at the Governor termly briefing on 30 January 2024.

Following a question regarding the Council's position on academisation, it was noted that advice was given to schools thinking of converting but a neutral view was maintained. Schools were advised of the risks/disadvantages, eg, Local Authority services that could be lost by converting.

**RESOLVED:** That the report and comments/feedback received be noted.

CYP27 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT - QUARTER 2  
OF 2023-24

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 2 of 2023-24 (1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023).

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2023-24 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan for the following Departments:

- Education, Inclusion and Provision Services; and
- Children and Families Services.

The reports detailed progress made against objectives, milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period. Members were requested to consider the progress and performance information and highlight any areas of interest and/or concern, where further information could be reported at a future meeting of the Board.

The Chair commented that these were now out of date but invited questions from Members. The Board queried the overspend that existed in Children's Services, around residential and educational placements and out of Borough placements provision for some children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), requiring specialist provision. They discussed the possibilities of this being reduced both in the short term and long term.

RESOLVED: That the quarter two 2023-24 performance management reports be received.

*Meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.*

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**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY POLICY AND  
PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 29 January 2024 in the Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice-Chair), Ball, Garner, Hutchinson, Rowe, Ryan and Stretch

Apologies for Absence: Councillors C. Plumpton Walsh and Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, P. Wright and J. Gallagher

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>ELS26 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 20 November 2023, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>ELS27 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
<p>ELS28 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND THE WAY FORWARD</p> <p>The Board received a report of the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which gave an update on 'The Big Conversation', since it was presented at the last meeting in November 2023.</p> <p>The consultation closed on 30 November 2023. The report outlined the engagement results of the consultation, broken down into age groups and presented the methods used and areas the consultation had reached, which included many stakeholders and partners.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a high level of agreement</p>	

on the suggested themes within the consultation. It was evident however that the addition of a 6<sup>th</sup> theme was required to encompass areas such as: environment, open and green spaces and the protection of these, litter, overgrowth and weeds, regeneration, business, economy, growth support and town centres, housing and supported living. It was proposed that these would come under '*Place and Community*'.

The timeline for the new Corporate Plan was provided and its launch was scheduled for April 2024. All Elected Members of the Council had been emailed to advise of the qualifying statements devised for each priority/theme. These would also be made available to the public, employees and residents, who would now be given the opportunity to provide feedback on these statements, which set out what each priority would aim to achieve over the next 5 years.

The public consultation on the qualifying statements was open from 19 January to 26 January and was being shared via social media and drop-in sessions in the libraries and Direct Links in Runcorn and Widnes.

The following additional information was given in response to Members questions:

- The feedback for the qualifying statements was now received and a 10- page document explaining the detail of each of the priorities would be added;
- This 10-page document will be shared and promoted amongst stakeholders – Elected Members, residents, Halton's workforce and businesses once it was approved;
- A detailed Workforce Plan would then be written for staff to work to, containing business plans and KPI's for example; and
- The Corporate Plan is linked to the reimagine Halton agenda and the Transformation agenda.

Members discussed the timeline for the launch of the new Corporate Plan and raised concerns that the full Plan would not have been scrutinised by Members before it was launched. Specifically, they were concerned that the detail of the full plan would not be known until after the Council meeting in March, where the Plan was being approved. The Board also requested an opportunity to scrutinise the full document at Policy and Performance Board's in the future.

Officers would explore the possibility of sharing the

10-page document with all Members prior to approval of the Plan at the Executive Board meeting in February.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) concern was expressed with regards to the lack of time for scrutiny of the full Corporate Plan. Therefore, the Board declined to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan. Members felt that it was essential that Policy and Performance Boards were able to scrutinise the full Corporate Plan before its presentation to full Council.

#### ELS29 PRESENTATION - COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE DEPARTMENT

The Board received a presentation from the Operational Director of Community and Greenspace, on developments that had taken place within that Department over the past two years and how they were contributing to the Council's strategic aims.

The Community and Greenspace Department comprised 4 areas:

- Environmental Services;
- Leisure Services;
- Community Safety and Protection; and
- Stadium and Catering Services.

The presentation covered several areas of interest within each of the above services, including how the structural changes that had been made had aligned services to the various Member Portfolios and streamlined management arrangements to create a more focused service delivery.

The following highlights were discussed:

- An additional stage had been built for the Stadium, to accommodate smaller events such as tribute and comedy nights; this was also portable so could be used indoors and outdoors;
- The cessation of the schools meals service by 31 March 2025 was discussed;
- A restructure of the Stadium and Catering services to form a new division was currently underway. Although staff would be put at risk, there were

enough job vacancies for those staff who wanted them;

- Widnes Cemetery was now full – an opening ceremony for the one in Peel House Lane would take place in Spring 2024;
- Further work around increasing the amount of recycling in the Borough was being undertaken, as well as looking at reducing contamination;
- The importance of the Borough's libraries to Halton's communities; and
- An Enforcement Team of 4 staff is being put into place who would patrol open spaces and parks and would issue fines for littering and dog mess/control offences.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received and information noted.

*Meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.*

## HEALTH POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Health Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 28 November 2023 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Begg, Davidson, Fry, Garner, C. Loftus, L. Nolan and Thornton and D. Wilson – Healthwatch Co-optee

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Stretch

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, D. Nolan, L Wilson, H. Moir and J. Gallagher

Also in attendance: L. Gardner – Warrington & Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and A. Leo – Halton Place: NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

#### HEA22 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

#### HEA23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

#### HEA24 HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES

The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board's meeting held on 5 July 2023 were submitted to the Board for information.

#### HEA25 HALTON HEALTH HUB

The Board received an update from the Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, on the completion of the project to develop an out-of-hospital Hub to deliver clinical outpatient services from Runcorn Shopping City.

*Action*

It was announced that Phase 1 of the project had been in operation for almost 12 months and delivered Audiology, MSKCATS, Optometry and Orthoptics services, as well as community health services such as vaccination clinics. It was noted that in the first 10 months of opening, the Hub had provided services to more than 3000 patients across 3 providers.

Phase 2, the Community Diagnostic Centre, was planned to open in December 2023 and would include audiology, sleep studies, ultrasound, respiratory and phlebotomy services. Phase 3 would include future opportunities as the Centre had the potential to accommodate additional services, these were outlined.

Members' welcomed the opening of the Hub and that it had been well received by residents. The following responses were given to questions:

- The Active Travel Service pilot was now operating (by Wellbeing Enterprises) and was advertised using social media and distribution of leaflets in the Shopping City;
- The Wellbeing Service provider was appointed by the Liverpool City Region (LCR) – further information on the process for selecting the provider would follow after the meeting as it was not to hand;
- The location and accessibility of the Hub for residents was welcomed as it could be used by most patients using public transport;
- The potential of including more services in the Hub was positive;
- The Hub did not offer drop-in phlebotomy services (which had ceased in the Borough since Covid-19). There was, however, a new online booking service currently being trialled at two GP's surgeries. Despite this it was felt that a drop-in service would be preferred by many residents – these comments would be fed back to the Trust; and
- The Musculo-skeletal service at the Captain Sir Tom Moore Building was still available.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

HEA26 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on 'The Big Conversation'.

The Big Conversation was about engaging with the public so that they understood the challenges that the Council was facing. It was an approach between the Council and those who lived or worked in Halton to work together to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life. A stakeholder analysis and a Communications Plan was developed to generate and establish as many opportunities as possible to involve all stakeholders in many different ways.

Members were advised that to date, a total of 1012 responses had been received; a breakdown of these by source was provided. The report outlined the promotion, consultation and engagement carried out in the community so far. The themes emerging from the consultation were also presented and any gaps in responses were highlighted, as well as the actions required to fill these.

It was noted that the consultation ends on 30 November 2023, after which an analysis would be undertaken to identify the key priorities. January and February 2024 would see final consultation with stakeholders via drop-in sessions and community engagement, prior to the Corporate Plan being finalised in March, ready for its launch in April 2024.

Further to Members questions, it was commented that the exact amount of engagement from the public would not be known until the analysis was carried out in December, after the closing date. Members were reassured that public access to the survey was via many methods, so that all sections of the population were able to complete this in the format that suited them.

In order to address the low number of respondents from the 16-24 age group, staff had attended: Riverside, Carmel, Priestley and Sir John Deane Colleges; the Linnets and Vikings Clubs; and the Family Hubs in Windmill Hill and Kingsway to encourage people to complete the survey. Also, social media advertising had targeted this age group and the team had liaised with social workers who encouraged residents they dealt with to complete the survey. One Member commented that the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme staff could have been contacted, to encourage responses from residents they dealt with and this was a missed opportunity.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the report; and

- 2) continues to endorse the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'.

#### HEA27 PRIMARY CARE ACCESS - UPDATE

The Board received a report and presentation from the NHS Director for Halton Place, which provided an update on Primary Care Access in Halton.

The presentation set out the current position within Halton and also highlighted the Primary Care Access Recovery Programme (PCARP) across Cheshire and Merseyside, including Halton. Nationally, general practice was delivering more than 1m appointments every day and half a million more every week than pre-pandemic. GP's in Halton had delivered almost 705,000 appointments between April 2022 and March 2023 and the service had seen a range of developments which had grown the workforce to meet rising demand and the needs of an ageing population.

Members were advised however, that the pandemic had changed the landscape and the increase in practice capacity needed to keep pace with growing demand. They were advised of *The Fuller Stocktake Report*, which built a broad consensus on the vision for integrating primary care with three essential elements: streamlining access to care and advice; providing more proactive, personalised care from a multidisciplinary team of professionals; and helping people stay well for longer. This remained the intent and was part of the strategic objectives set out for integrated neighbourhood delivery and multi-disciplinary team working within Halton.

The report described the two central ambitions of the PCARP and four areas of focus identified that would support the recovery, in relation to the first element. Progress would be monitored and reported over the next 12 months and beyond, to ensure that the improvements outlined were as effective as possible.

Following Members' comments, the following was noted:

- The percentage of appointments that were provided by GP's from April 22 to March 23 was 51%. It was explained that the other 49% of appointments were provided by other practitioners, such as Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) and other specialist staff, depending on the condition being experienced by the patient;

- It was planned to have more multi-disciplinary teams at GP's surgeries going forward;
- Certain administration tasks relating to patient appointments were part of a GP's role due to patient confidentiality;
- Healthwatch surveys indicated that patient satisfaction rates varied in Halton from poor performing to above average performance – information sharing between surgeries took place so that lessons could be learnt and practices were being encouraged to work together more; and
- Healthwatch patient feedback received referred to some online systems being patchy – more specific details would be provided following the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the presentation is received and noted.

#### HEA28 SERVICES UPDATES - PHLEBOTOMY & MUSCULO-SKELETAL

The Board received updates and presentations from the Place Director – One Halton, on phlebotomy and musculo-skeletal Services in Halton.

The presentations outlined the latest position for both services for Halton's patients and gave details of planned increases in service capacity in the future.

It was commented that the wait time for musculo-skeletal service appointments had increased for patients in Halton, this was due to increased demand for the service.

RESOLVED: That the presentations are received and noted.

#### HEA29 ONE HALTON PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Director – Halton Place, which presented an update on the One Halton Partnership.

The One Halton Partnership Board comprised a wide range of members including NHS bodies, local authority bodies (including children's, adults, public health services) and non NHS/non statutory bodies. The Partnership Board was the vehicle for delivery of national priorities and Halton's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Achieving One Halton's ambitions was the responsibility of all partners working together to achieve a set of shared strategic

objectives for Halton Place.

The presentation included a recap of the Integrated Care System (ICS) structure; the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M) Integrated Care Board (ICB); and the Place Based Partnerships. The C&M ICB key priorities were outlined which included how these aligned to Halton Place priorities. Officers' also described the challenges being faced in Halton and gave examples of projects currently being worked on.

RESOLVED: That the presentation is received and noted.

HEA30 HALTON SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Board was presented with the Halton Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) Annual Report 2022-23.

It was noted that under the Care Act 2014, Safeguarding Adults Boards (SAB) were responsible for producing an Annual Report, setting out achievements of the SAB and highlighting priorities for the following year.

The HSAB Annual Report had been developed in conjunction with partners, to ensure the report encompassed a multi-agency approach. The Annual Report included performance data and comparisons between years; achievements in the year and highlighted areas of good practice regarding safeguarding in the Borough.

The Annual Report would be published after approval and shared with HSAB's member organisations through the SAB Board meetings.

In response to a question, it was commented that there was a 6% increase in the numbers of DoLS applications received last year. Out of 894 received, 518 of these there were from women. The fact that there were more older women in the Borough than men could be the reason for this, as well as the fact that some people were just not aware of the Policy, so did not apply.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) approve the Annual Report for publication.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

HEA31 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS, QUARTER 2  
2023-24

The Board received the Performance Management Reports for quarter two of 2023/24.

Members were advised that the report introduced, through the submission of a structured thematic performance report, the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health in quarter two of 2023-24. This included a description of factors, which were affecting the service.

The Board was requested to consider the progress and performance information; raise any questions or points for clarification; and highlight any areas of interest or concern for reporting at future meetings of the Board.

It was noted that overall the performance data was heading in the right direction with no particular areas that required highlighting. One Member requested sight of the Suicide Strategy at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management report for quarter two of 2023/24 be received.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

*Meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.*

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**SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 6 February 2024 at the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors N. Plumpton Walsh (Chair), Carlin (Vice-Chair), Baker, Bevan, Bramwell, Cargill, Goodall, A. Lowe, Ratcliffe and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, J. Gallagher, N. Goodwin and P. Wright.

Also in attendance: Councillor C. Plumpton-Walsh

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

SAF24 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Action*

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some feedback from the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel meeting, which he attended along with Councillor Martha Lloyd-Jones on 2 February 2024.

The Panel received a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner which proposed a 4.99% increase to the policing element of the council tax bill 2024/25. This would amount to an extra £12.50 a year for a band D household and this was agreed by all four of Cheshire's borough councils.

SAF25 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

SAF26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

SAF27 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Board received a report from the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which gave an update on 'The Big Conversation', since it was presented at the last meeting in November 2023. The report shared the analysis of the consultation and outlined the next steps.

The report set out the five themes which had all been scored highly by stakeholders in terms of what they deemed to be a priority:

- Improving health, promoting wellbeing and supporting greater independence – 93%;
- Building a strong, sustainable local economy – 91%;
- Supporting children, young people and families – 89%;
- Tackling inequality, helping those who are most in need – 84%; and
- Working towards a greener future – 78%.

In addition to these, stakeholders were asked to identify any additional themes which they felt were significant and those were the environment, local economy and housing. This feedback resulted in a sixth priority being created called "Place and Community".

Members were advised that the consultation closed on 30 November 2023 and the total number of responses received was 1,076; an analysis of the feedback was outlined in the report.

A copy of the draft Corporate Plan was emailed to Members on 6 February 2024 for information and this would be presented to the Executive Board for approval on 22 February 2024. Thereafter, it would be launched in April 2024.

Members noted the information presented to them and the following comments were noted from discussions:

- it was felt that the priorities were similar to the current Council priorities and that not enough was being done to tackle issues such as environmental concerns, regeneration in the Borough and lack of social housing;
- a Member of the Board referred to "Halton 2000", a consultation exercise which was carried out in the year 2000 and they felt that little improvements had

been made as a result of this. It was suggested that the Council should learn from past experiences; and

- another Member suggested that there was a general complacency in the public, not just in Halton, because people did not have any faith that changes would be made and therefore this might have been a reason why more people did not complete the survey.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board continues to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan.

#### SAF28 SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration which provided an update on the development of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the Safer Halton Governance and Strategy.

CSP's were created when the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed responsibility on Local Authorities and Police Chiefs to meet regularly to discuss crime and disorder issues within their respective areas. The aim of the CSP in Halton was to make it a safe place to live and work; its functions were outlined in the draft strategy.

Members were advised that the Safer Halton Partnership Strategy had recently been revised along with its governance arrangements and priorities to ensure that it was fit for purpose. This work was supported by an additional resource, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and it had been agreed that focus would be given to:

- Safer Halton Governance structure;
- Strategic Needs Assessment;
- Community Safety Partnership Strategy/Partnership Plan; and
- Safer Halton Partnership Delivery Plan.

The draft Strategy set out the priorities which were data driven and governance led. To date, the priorities that had been agreed were:

- 1) Anti-Social Behaviour;

- 2) Domestic Abuse;
- 3) Serious and Organised Crime;
- 4) Integrated Offender Management;
- 5) Counter Terrorism;
- 6) Hate Crime;
- 7) Substance Misuse;
- 8) Serious Violence; and
- 9) Road Safety.

The three year over-arching Strategy would be implemented on 1 April 2024. Thereafter, annual delivery plans would be developed which would set out clear actions.

A number of workshops had been held with partners who sat on the SHP and these had been well received. Members were advised of the advantages of having such a partnership in place, including access to funding opportunities. Through work carried out in recent months, over £160,000 of funding had been secured.

The following additional information was provided in response to Members questions:

- There were data arrangements in place between Council systems and Cheshire Police;
- Dangerous dogs – if these were at a rented property and causing a nuisance then the matter needed to be reported to the landlord. If there was a safety concern then the matter should be reported to the Police;
- Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review – a tool available for residents to report unsatisfactory outcomes of anti-social behaviour. This would be reported to the Local Authority and the Enforcement Team would then work with agencies involved, for example housing providers, Police etc to review actions and assess if these had fallen short of procedures; and
- A presentation on Serious Violence Duty would be delivered to the next Board meeting and this would include details on the impact of knife crime. Cheshire Police had focussed on “stop and search” which had resulted in a significant number of weapons being confiscated. Work was also being carried out in schools to deliver educational programmes.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft Safer Halton Partnership Governance and Strategy be received and comments made be noted.

SAF29 DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on strategic and service developments in delivering the Council's duties on domestic abuse.

Members were reminded that the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service transferred to the Council in January 2023 and a report was presented to the Board in February 2023. The service underwent a restructure and recruitment was underway to increase capacity in the team, including a Case Worker who would work with perpetrators and a Domestic Abuse Advocate Educator, who would work with the 14 GP surgeries in Halton to raise educational awareness about domestic violence. The additional staff would help support the team and respond to service demands which were exceptionally high; Halton was the second highest in the country with 174 live cases and 90 cases pending.

The report also provided an update on the following areas:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - a workshop was held in November which focused on a significant piece of Halton research led by Safelives. This resulted in a high quality report which would help shape a work programme for the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and improve local services in Halton;
- White Ribbon – in October 2023, Council supported a motion to obtain accredited status from White Ribbon. The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board would govern the White Ribbon Steering Group and work was in progress; and
- Halton Resolve – this work had been commissioned to support an emotional health and wellbeing service for children, young people and families to reduce the impact of domestic abuse; this was being developed by the Children's Society. During July and September 2023, 30 children and young people received a referral.

The following additional information and comments were noted:

- Domestic abuse also affected older people;

- Members to be given the opportunity to be involved in the White Ribbon Steering Group;
- Members to be offered the opportunity to attend any future Workforce Development Sessions which were held to raise awareness on domestic abuse; and
- Men were also victims of domestic violence. Members were reassured that Halton operated a universal service and the Police also supported targeted approaches for individuals who presented as victims, for example, those in custody.

RESOLVED: That the Board note and comment on the report.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

*Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.*

**CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 23 January 2024 in the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), J. Bradshaw, Hutchinson, Logan, A. Lowe, A. McInerney, Thornton and Wainwright

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

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: None

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CS25 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 7 November 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CS26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CS27 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board was presented with the minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of the Board.</p>	
CS28 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES	
<p>The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 26 July 2023.</p>	
<p>Members commented that the group was progressing well.</p>	
<p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.</p>	
CS29 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION	

## ANALYSIS AND THE WAY FORWARD

Following a report which the Board received at their November meeting, a presentation was delivered to share the analysis of “The Big Conversation” and outlined the next steps.

The Board were reminded that the “The Big Conversation” was about engaging with the public so that they understood the challenges that the Council was facing. It was an approach between the Council and those who lived or worked in Halton to work together to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life. A stakeholder analysis and a Communication Plan had been developed in order to generate and establish as many opportunities as possible to involve all stakeholders in many different ways.

The presentation set out the five themes i.e.

- Improving health, promoting wellbeing and supporting greater independence;
- Building a strong, sustainable local economy;
- Supporting children, young people and families;
- Tackling inequality, helping those who are most in need; and
- Working towards a greener future.

In addition to these, stakeholders were asked to identify additional themes which they felt were significant and those were the environment, local economy and housing.

Members were advised that the consultation closed on 30 November 2023 and the total number of responses received was 1,076. A breakdown of these by source was outlined in the report.

The presentation also outlined the Corporate Plan timeline; During January 2024, key priorities would be identified and agreed with a summary to be shared with stakeholders via drop-in sessions. The Plan would then be finalized and approved at key forums before being launched in April 2024.

Members noted the information presented to them and the following comments were noted from discussions:

- The priorities identified were the same as the current ones;

- There was a concern that the outcome of this consultation would create further work for staff and add to existing workloads; and
- It was suggested that the Council should promote the success of the consultation and the number of people/stakeholders that was reached via social media. 1,076 people responded to the consultation, however, over 12,000 people were indirectly contacted e.g. via social media, partner's newsletters and flyers.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board continues to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan.

### CS30 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

The Board considered a report which provided a statistical analysis of the Corporate Complaints received during the 2022-23 financial year.

The report outlined the two stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints; a corporate complaints trend analysis from 2022-23; the nature of those complaints received; and outcomes. The data showed that the Council had received 112 corporate complaints which had been consistent with previous years. Given the challenges the Council had faced it was considered a fair outcome.

At present, the Council aimed to respond to complaints at stage 1 of the procedures within 10 working days and those at stage 2 within 28 working days. There had been a delay in some areas but work was ongoing to improve those response times.

In addition, the report also provided a summary on complaints and queries that had been received by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) during 2022-23. It was noted that the Ombudsman had made 22 decisions during the year and upheld 4 complaints.

It was noted that the LGO were due to introduce a new Joint Complaint Handling Code which would apply to all Local Authorities in England, however, it would not replace the Children's and Adults statutory complaint processes. The Council would be undertaking an assessment of its current procedures against the Code in early 2024.

Operational  
Director, Legal  
and Democratic  
Services

Members queried the data presented in terms of the number of complaints due to the amount of emails they receive from constituents each month. They were reminded that the data demonstrated the number of complaints taken through the formal corporate procedures. Whilst Members may receive emails, these may be determined as queries or general service requests which could be dealt with quickly within service areas.

Some Members of the Board also queried what had happened to the Corporate Complaints Committee which used to review complaints before they were escalated to the LGO. Members were reminded that this Committee had been disbanded some time ago when the Council's procedures were reviewed and the two stage process was introduced, in line with LGO guidance. Officers agreed to confirm the timeline for these changes in due course.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

CS31 CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Assistant to the Chief Executive which provided an update on related activities aimed at reducing the Council's impact on the environment and CO2 emissions from Council activities.

Operational  
Director - Policy,  
Planning and  
Transportation

Since it started to measure its carbon emissions in 2006/2007, overall emissions had reduced in the Council's operations from 26,338 tonnes of CO2 to 8,740 tonnes.

In 2017, the Government reset the baseline in the expectation that public bodies would reduce their carbon emissions by 50% by 2031. In 2017, the Council's baseline was 14,811 carbon tonnes and in 2022/23, it had managed to reduce its emissions to 8,740 tonnes; a reduction of 40.9%. Emissions were 9,327 tonnes of CO2; a further annual reduction of 6.29%

The report outlined a number key projects which had been completed or commenced during 2023 which included:

- Improvements to Council buildings, including solar power schemes and solar farms at different sites;
- Electric vehicle charging points at Lowerhouse Lane and Picow Farm depots;
- Increased climate change awareness across the Council e.g. e-learning training courses for Officers and Members and establishment of a Climate

Change Advisory Group;

- Launch of the Big Halton Forest Project which will work with individuals, communities, organisations, and businesses with the aim of adding a new tree for every citizen by 2030 across the Borough;
- Work undertaken to influence the supply chain to improve sustainability in the supply of goods and services within all published tenders to include social, environmental and economic considerations;
- The Council has engaged in a number of projects to help address climate change relating to private and social housing;
- Work commenced with the Liverpool City Region on the Hydrogen Strategy; and
- Halton received funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and to date, grants of circa £15,000 had been provided to local groups to improve green space, create wildflower spaces and develop food growing initiatives.

Members noted the report and raised the following questions:

- Was possible to include a provision within planning applications that developments should include electric chargers. Officers acknowledged that this was a good point and provided reassurance that this would be considered as part of the consultation on a new Supplementary Planning Document, detailed in section 5.10 of the report;
- What provision will be considered for homes without off-road parking i.e. terrace houses and flats?;
- If new developments included solar panels on new homes, would these belong to the homes or be a leasing arrangement?
- What are the fee tariffs for solar panels in Halton?

Officers agreed to report back to Members in due course.

The Chair acknowledged the questions raised and suggested that some might be more applicable for the consideration of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the report and the ongoing work be noted.

PAYMENTS, UNIVERSAL CREDIT, AND THE LOCAL SCHEME FOR WAR PENSIONS

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which provided updates regarding the delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund, Discretionary Housing Payments, Universal Credit and the Housing Benefit Local Scheme for War Pensions.

Following the report presented to the Board in November 2023 which outlined spend up to 30 September 2023, this report provided an update on spend up the end of December 2023.

Since the last report there had been a significant increase in Household Support Fund expenditure on vulnerable pensioners, the Discretionary Support Scheme, Free School Meal Vouchers, Public Health and Halton's Citizen Advice Bureau. The full details of the spend was outlined in the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the latest position regarding the Household Support Fund, Discretionary Housing Payments and Universal Credit as outlined in the report, be noted;
- 2) the revision to the Household Support Fund spending plan be noted; and
- 3) the Executive Board be recommended to approve the continuation of the local scheme, that all of a war disablement pension or war widows' pension be disregarded for the purposes of calculating household benefit.

*Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.*

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Tuesday, 5 December 2023 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors S. Hill (Chair), Leck (Vice-Chair), Carlin, C. Loftus, Philbin, Polhill, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Bevan, Davidson and C. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, A. Plant, A. Evans, G. Henry, L. Wilson-Lagan, A. Blackburn and L. Crampton

Also in attendance: Councillor Ryan, 16 members of the public and one member of the press

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

	<i>Action</i>
DEV27 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2023, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
DEV28 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
<p>The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.</p>	
DEV29 20/00476/FUL - PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING TO PROVIDE A NEW COMMUNITY HUB, DEMOLITION OF WATERLOO CENTRE, ERECTION OF NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT OF 29 ONE BEDROOM SUPPORTED LIVING/EXTRA CARE APARTMENTS WITH ANCILLARY FACILITIES, PROVISION OF ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING AND 20/00477/LBC - APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING TO PROVIDE A NEW COMMUNITY HUB, DEMOLITION OF WATERLOO CENTRE AND REMEDIAL	

WORKS TO ADJACENT LISTED BUILDING. BOTH AT WATERLOO CENTRE & CARNEGIE LIBRARY, EDGERTON STREET, WATERLOO ROAD, RUNCORN, WA7 1JL

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Since the publication of the agenda a further 24 objections had been received for application 20/00476/FUL, citing issues that were addressed through the report.

Members were informed of a correction to the report which referred to the 2015 Direction on arrangements for dealing with heritage applications which should refer to the 2021 Direction, but was not considered to affect the assessment contained within the report. Members were also reminded of the provisions of paragraph 196 of the Framework which provides that:

*“Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision”.*

Members were advised that the loss of the non-designated heritage asset building results in a negative factor which must be considered in the overall balance of the decision, however, as stated within the report, that would be outweighed by the outlined benefits.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Goodwin, the Applicant, who introduced Signature Housing Group as a not-for-profit organisation, operating a number of sites in the Country. In respect of application 20/00476/FUL, he commented that:

- The proposal made use of a derelict brownfield site;
- It would provide much needed supported living accommodation, in particular for dementia patients, and includes a community garden;
- The proposal complied with the policies relating to the development;
- The site was sustainable, with good public transport links and near the town centre;
- In its present condition, the Waterloo Centre was not viable and considered to be beyond repair, so should be demolished for safety reasons;
- In its present state the Waterloo Centre was a risk to

- the adjoining building, Carnegie Library; and
- The Council had also determined that due to the dangerous condition of the building, demolition was the only viable option to remove the danger.

In respect of application 20/00477/LBC, he stated that:

- The refurbishment of the existing Carnegie Library would bring an unused listed building back into use;
- It would provide a new community hub, housing 3 meeting rooms;
- The Council's Conservation Officer has considered the proposal and agreed that was acceptable and *'would bring the long term vacancy of the building to an end and create a vibrant community hub'*; and
- The scheme will generate a range of benefits for the local community, community groups and individuals.

Members considered the Applications and shared the opinion that it was sad to see the dereliction of the site, considering its history. They agreed that it would be good for the community to have the Carnegie Library restored so that it could be brought back into public use.

Questions relating to unmet demand for this type of accommodation and lift provision were responded to. Members were referred to the plans where the location of the lift was clarified. It was noted that although there was no evidence of unmet demand, Policy CS(R)12 (2) of the DALP, states that *proposals for new specialist housing for the elderly, including extra-care and supported accommodation, will be encouraged in suitable locations, particularly those providing easy access to local services and community facilities.*

Officers confirmed that the application was for supported living / extra care accommodation and this being changed in future to HMO accommodation would not be allowed under current permitted development rights. Questions relating to the conservation adviser responses and parking concerns were also addressed by Officers.

Both Applications were moved and seconded and the Committee agreed to approve them, subject to the conditions listed.

RESOLVED: That the applications be approved subject to the following conditions:

20/00476/FUL

1. Time limit;
2. Approved plans;
3. Use restriction – Community Hub – Use Class F2(b) – Hall of meeting places for the principal use of the local community;
4. Existing and proposed elevation drawings to show areas of repair and change. Including elevation drawing of the infill section where link removed between the Carnegie Library and Waterloo House;
5. Elevation and section of no more than 1:20 of proposed new window to infilled section of the Carnegie Library;
6. Building recording – Waterloo House;
7. Archaeological watching brief;
8. External facing materials;
9. Implementation of tree protection measures;
10. Boundary treatments scheme;
11. Soft landscaping scheme;
12. Off site highway works;
13. Parking and servicing provision;
14. Electric vehicle charging point scheme;
15. Cycle parking scheme;
16. Construction management plan;
17. Construction hours;
18. Site waste management plan/audit;
19. Demolition between November – February or licensed bat ecologist present;
20. Bat box scheme;
21. Lighting scheme to protect ecology;
22. Breeding bird protection;
23. Bird nesting box scheme;
24. Biodiversity net gain plan;
25. Additional site investigation / Remediation Strategy / Verification reporting;
26. Drainage strategy;
27. Separate system for foul and surface water drainage;
28. Acoustic risk assessment; and
29. Sustainable development and climate change scheme.

20/00477/LBC

1. Time limit;
2. Approved plans;
3. Existing and proposed elevation drawings to show areas of repair and change. Including elevation drawing of the infill section where link removed between the Carnegie Library and Waterloo House;

4. Updated and detailed schedule of works for each area of work in the Carnegie Library including photographs and methodology;
5. Elevation and section of no more than 1:20 of proposed new window to infilled section of the Carnegie Library;
6. Details and drawing of new gate to top of spiral stair and fencing to Egerton Street elevation;
7. Details of secondary glazing to all windows;
8. Details of any new doors to be added (internal or external); and
9. Methodology for vegetation removal.

DEV30 22/00493/OUT - OUTLINE APPLICATION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS, FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (USE CLASS C3) OF 17 DWELLINGS ON LAND AT SUMNERS FARM, EAST OF BARKERS HOLLOW ROAD, PRESTON ON THE HILL, WA4 4AZ

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Officers advised that neighbouring and Parish Council objections related to a misunderstanding about the allocation of the land and highway safety. It was confirmed that the site is located within the Primarily Residential Area and was not Green Belt or Safeguarded Land. With regards to access, the Applicant had worked with the Highway's Officer and the means of access was now deemed acceptable, with suggested conditions being in the interests of highway safety.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Harris, the Agent acting on behalf of the Applicant. He stated that:

- The site was now designated within the Local Plan for development;
- The proposal is for 17 homes, which include 4 affordable;
- All outline matters had been agreed;
- Ecology and trees issues were to be secured by conditions; and
- The proposal was in accordance with the Council's policies and National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF).

The proposal was moved and seconded and the Committee agreed that it be approved.

RESOLVED: That the application is approved subject to the following:

a) entering a Legal Agreement, under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, with the Council land relating to:

- i. Affordable housing;
- ii. Off-site public open space contribution; and
- iii. TRO contribution to extend the 30mph zone.

b) conditions listed below:

- 1. Time limit – outline permission;
- 2. Submission of reserved matters;
- 3. Development parameters;
- 4. Breeding birds protection (HE1);
- 5. Bird boxes (HE1);
- 6. Hours of construction (GR2);
- 7. Implementation of site access (C11);
- 8. Parking and servicing (C1 and C2);
- 9. Visibility splays on Barkers Hollow Lane (C1);
- 10. Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) including reasonable avoidance measures – common amphibians;
- 11. Ecologically sensitive lighting scheme (GE21);
- 12. Drainage strategy/verification (HE9);
- 13. Ground contamination (site investigation, risk assessment, remediation strategy, validation report) (HE8);
- 14. Submission of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (including updated metric);
- 15. Securing off-site highway works;
- 16. Arboricultural survey and methodology report (HE5);
- 17. Waste management plan (WM8 and WM9); and
- 18. Submission and implementation of an operational energy scheme to demonstrate energy consumption/carbon reduction.

c) that if the S106 Agreement or alternative arrangement was not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee to refuse the application.

DEV31 22/00638/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 13 DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3) WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, ACCESS/EGRESS, PARKING AND

ASSOCIATED WORKS ON LAND BOUNDED BY CHURCH  
END AND TOWN LANE, HALE, L24 4AX

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

The published AB list referred to two corrections in the report; these were noted by Members. Also, the following additional conditions were to be added to the recommended schedule of conditions as follows:

- Hedgehog highway details;
- Carbon reduction scheme;
- Construction dust mitigation scheme;
- Unsuspected contamination condition; and
- Contaminated land remediation verification condition.

Officers clarified two points, one relating to the matter of two trees, which are proposed to be removed. The other relating to the values of Section 106 Agreements, which were omitted from the report. The values were confirmed as being £3,617.38 towards recreational pressure and £17,587.14 towards off site open space.

It was also reported that one further objection had been received since the publication of the agenda; the points raised in the objection are summarised as:

- Proposal is for 13 dwellings, guideline states 12 dwellings;
- How can Halton need more 4 bed roomed dwellings;
- There is a need for affordable homes;
- There is a need for properties to cater for older residents;
- Danger of a road next to a school; and
- The ancient duck pond is not preserved.

Responses were provided to each by the Case Officer in the following terms:

- The DALP allocation carried a notional indicative capacity of 12 units;
- The strategic housing needs of the local housing market were set out in the report. Page 159-162 of the agenda;
- The scheme is contributing three affordable housing units as part of the proposal;
- There is no requirement of the site allocation to cater

- for a specific demographic of the population;
- A grant of planning permission would see the development proposal implemented in accordance with building regulations that require non discriminatory provisions such as level access, downstairs toilets etc;
- A pond feature is present on site, a recent visit found it to contain water. There are no records of Great Crested Newts within 1km of the site boundary. The pond was recorded as dried up during a contaminated land survey. Recent observations recorded that a large portion of the pond had paddock grass growing at its centre, supporting earlier recordings of it being dried up. Given the lack of maintenance of the pond and its present condition, it is considered to be of low quality and low grade. Removal of the pond would not cause harm to biodiversity that would justify refusal pursuant to paragraph 180a of the NPPF or Policy HE1 of the Halton Delivery and Allocations Plan. The pond is located in the area where three affordable properties are proposed to be built. Page 163 of the agenda notes the precarious viability of the scheme. Further erosion of the viability with regard to the loss of developable land is a material consideration. The delivery of three affordable residential units is of materially greater worth than the retention of the pond; and
- Concerns of highways safety were addressed by the Council's Highways Officer, who commented that full consideration had been given to the impact of the development upon the adjacent school access point.

The Application was moved and seconded and the Committee approved it, subject to the conditions listed below with the addition of the 5 additional conditions mentioned above.

RESOLVED: That authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Planning, Policy and Transportation, to determine the application in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee, following the satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issues relating to HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment) compliance. Upon satisfactory resolution that the Application be approved subject to the following:

- a) Section 106 Agreement that secures the terms set out in the Legal Agreement section of the report;

b) schedule of conditions set out below and recommended conditions that follow with any additional conditions recommended through the resolution of the HRA compliance issue to be added:

1. Time limit;
2. Plans;
3. Materials to be agreed (RD3 and GR1);
4. Submission of existing and proposed site levels (GR1);
5. Tree protection measures (HE5);
6. Submission of bird box scheme (CS(R)20 and HE1);
7. Protection of mammals during construction (CS(R)20 and HE1);
8. Electric vehicle charging points scheme (C2);
9. Ground contamination (CS23 and HE8);
10. Visibility splays (C1 and C2);
11. Submission of a cycle parking scheme (C2);
12. Verification of the Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme – CS23 and HE9);
13. Waste management plan (WM8);
14. Sewage disposal (HE9);
15. Construction management plan (C1);
16. Limited construction hours (GR2);
17. Detail hard standing agreed (C2 and HE9);
18. Access constructed prior to occupation (C1);
19. Landscaping (GR1, GR3 and HE5);
20. Hedgerows retained or mitigation (CS(R)20 and HE1);
21. Acoustic mitigation (GR2);
22. Hedgehog highway details;
23. Carbon reduction scheme;
24. Construction dust mitigation scheme;
25. Unsuspected contamination condition; and
26. Contaminated land remediation verification condition.

c) that if the S106 Agreement or alternative arrangement is not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee to refuse the application.

#### DEV32 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following appeals had been received / were in progress:

**22/000304/FUL**

Proposed demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension and single storey front and rear extensions at 9 Windermere Avenue, Widnes.

The following appeals had been determined:

**22/00019/PLD**

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use of development for the installation of a solar farm (ground mounted solar photovoltaic panels) at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, land bounded by Dungeon Lane, Hare Road and Baileys Lane to the east of Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Speke, Liverpool, L24 1YD – Allowed

*Meeting ended at 7.30 p.m.*

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 15 January 2024 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Leck (Vice-Chair), Bevan, Carlin, Davidson, C. Loftus, Polhill, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors S. Hill, Philbin and C. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, M. Webster, G. Henry, L. Wilson-Lagan, A. Blackburn and L. Crampton, C. Sturdy and C. Nixon

Also in attendance: Councillors Wallace, Wall, Wharton and Hutchinson, one member of the press and 33 members of the public

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

*Action*

DEV33 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

DEV34 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.

DEV35 22/00423/OUTEIA - PROPOSED HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION COMPRISING: FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRIMARY ACCESS POINTS, PRIMARY INTERNAL LINK ROAD AND SITE ENABLING WORKS, INCLUDING SITE LEVELLING AND OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION, WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS, FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF UP TO 500 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3), LATER LIVING UNITS (C2), A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL, A LOCAL CENTRE (USE CLASS E) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE, ON LAND OFF HALE GATE ROAD, WIDNES

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

The following updates were provided by the Case Officer:

- Heritage update – as presented in detail in the published AB Update List;
- Cheshire Police had not responded in relation to the request for further information and justification for their request for financial contributions;
- NHS Property Services letter sent to Members of the Committee on Friday – Officers were of the same position as set out in the Committee report, in that the request for financial contributions did not meet the relevant tests of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations and was not therefore proposed to be secured in a S106 Legal Agreement;
- There were minor changes to the list of conditions set out in the report – conditions 4 and 5 had been combined, conditions 12 and 13 had been combined and a condition had been added in relation to energy and sustainability;
- The Council's Highway Authority had formally removed their objection; and
- The Council's Highway's Officer advised the Committee that following discussions with *Arriva* regarding bus provision into the site, a service diversion was currently cost prohibitive/operationally ineffective and an unreasonable ask of the developer given the amounts required. It was noted that the site accesses were designed to accommodate potential future bus services into the site, should a bus service become available in the future.

Mr Anderton, a resident of Halebank since birth and Parish Councillor for 6 years, addressed the Committee on behalf of local residents objecting to the proposals. He stated, *inter alia*, that:

- The Halebank community felt that the addition of 500 houses would impact greatly on the existing population;
- The infrastructure of the area was insufficient to cope with this number of additional houses;
- He referred to an Executive Board report from 2016 which raised concerns back then over the 'pinch point' on Ditton railway bridge;
- HBC should contact Network Rail to conduct a

structural survey of the bridge;

- The application was non compliant;
- All local Ward Councillors were opposed to the application;
- Halebank Parish Council had been successful with 3 judicial reviews on planning approvals previously; and
- The application was not in accordance with the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP).

He concluded by urging the Committee to refuse the application or at least defer its decision to a later date.

The Committee was then addressed by Ms Landor, a Planning Consultant representing Halebank Parish Council. She commented, *inter alia*, that:

- 50% of the site was in the Green Belt so this was a departure;
- The owner of the site did not own all of it;
- There was policy conflict regarding the school (this was described) which was underplayed;
- Roads were not tree lined as required;
- The proposed open space provision was disjointed;
- The Highways Authority were unhappy with the proposal; and
- The scheme was not in accordance with policy and we disagree with the officer recommendations to approve.

Ms Smith, the Planning Agent for the applicant, then addressed the Committee and stated the following:

- The strategic site would ensure comprehensive development of an allocated site;
- It was noted that the primary school was shown in a different location but the quantum of the school site was the same;
- A safe off road path leading to the school was included;
- Key design principles had been included despite being an outline application;
- A comprehensive suite of technical assessments had been carried out;
- There had been no objections from statutory consultees;
- Off-site improvements would be secured by conditions;
- Financial contributions requests from the Police and NHS had not met the relevant tests;

- 106 Agreements were in place for school land and open space improvements;
- The application would bring affordable open market housing; and
- The application was wholly in compliance with planning policies.

Members discussed the application, highlighting concerns over the safety of Ditton railway bridge; the increase in population that would occur and the pressures that would be put on health services because of this; and the provision of outdoor sports facilities.

The Highways Officer responded that the Public Right of Way has a condition which ensures its consideration is integral in the design process and which could provide enhancements to it. Also, that other, off-site conditions would similarly ensure improvements for sustainable travel routes and connections to the site, including up to the Ditton railway bridge.

It was confirmed that the bridge was adopted, so HBC was the Highways Authority for the bridge. Officers clarified the ownership of the bridge and it was reported that Network Rail did not have any concerns about the safety of the bridge and had no objection to the proposed development.

It was commented that this application was an outline application, so matters relating to some issues listed by Hale Parish Council, health services provision and outdoor sports provision would be dealt with in detail in the full application, when this came forward.

One Member moved an amendment to the recommendation and requested a deferral, but this was not supported.

The original recommendations were then moved and seconded and the Committee voted, which resulted in 4 voting For and 4 voting Against; the Chair voted For, so the vote to approve the application was carried.

RESOLVED: That the application is approved subject to the following:

- a) a Section 106 Agreement;
- b) schedule of conditions set out below:

1. Standard outline conditions for the submission of reserved matters application;
2. Condition setting our parameters of the permission;
3. Condition for phasing plan;
4. Plans condition listing relevant drawings;
5. Implementation of access arrangement;
6. Site levels;
7. Public open space management plan;
8. Lighting scheme to protect ecology;
9. Hours of construction;
10. Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP);
11. Homeowners information pack;
12. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) updated metric;
13. BNG Assessment;
14. Landscape and habitat management plan;
15. Breeding birds protection;
16. Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural method Statement;
17. Scheme for cycle routes and footpath provision for Active Design;
18. Bus infrastructure provision;
19. Travel plan;
20. Site investigation, remediation and verification;
21. Noise mitigation scheme;
22. Site Waste Management Plan;
23. Archaeological works;
24. Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP);
25. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
26. SuDS validation;
27. Waste water;
28. Hard and soft landscaping; and
29. Off-site highway works.

And

- c) if the S106 Agreement is not signed within a reasonable period of time, authority is given to refuse this planning application.

DEV36 23/00349/COU - PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF DWELLING AND HOTEL INTO 6 APARTMENTS AT 15(A) - 19 MAIN TOP HOTEL, MERSEY ROAD, WIDNES, WA8 0DG

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

The Case Officer advised that the requirement for a legal agreement, referred to in the report and recommendations (a) and (c), had been removed and the issue would now be secured by conditions.

She also advised that 22 neighbour objections had been received believing that the application was for homes of multiple occupation (HMO's); she confirmed that the application was for 6 self-contained apartments and should be determined as such. She also provided updates in relation to car parking and it was noted that the Highways Officer raised no objection. He did suggest additional condition/s to make good the redundant dray delivery hatch to the former beer cellar; these would be added.

The Committee was addressed by West Bank Ward Councillor Wallace, who, supported by her Ward colleague Councillor Hutchinson, spoke in objection to the application on behalf of residents.

Councillor Wallace began by distributing a page of photographs taken of parking in the area, which it was noted were taken on a Saturday at 1pm. She gave the Committee some historical and background information on West Bank. As a born and bred resident of West Bank herself, she had witnessed the area thrive under the chemical industry in the 1960's and had seen its decline over the years. She mentioned anti-social behaviour, gangs, drugs and drug use, the increase of HMO's, fly tipping and parking issues. She also commented on the influx of landlords buying properties who were not from the area and had no interest in the community of West Bank. She had also spoken to all residents regarding this and advised it was having a negative impact of the community, as it was felt local people were being pushed out of the area.

She also highlighted problems already being experienced with highways and cleansing. Emergency vehicles and bin trucks were being blocked by cars parking on streets so were prevented from reaching properties. She cited that a development such as this would exacerbate the situation.

She concluded by advising that Derek Twigg MP had previously raised concerns about the numbers of HMO's in West Bank. She urged the Committee to help the community of West Bank to stop the saturation of the area with properties of this nature, and the one being applied for today.

Councillor Wallace's objections could also be found in detail on pages 75 and 76 of the agenda.

Members discussed the application, raising concerns over the lack of parking spaces for 6 flats (they stated potentially 12 cars) and the problems that emergency vehicles, cleansing trucks and buses already had with access to the area. It was commented that to make an analysis and comparisons with hotel parking requirements and residential parking requirements was not a fair one, especially as the building was used as a hotel many years ago. The consensus was that it was wrong to assume that residents of apartments did not own vehicles because some did. It was agreed that in this case the development would have a cumulative impact on parking in the area, as no parking spaces were provided for the residents.

The Committee proceeded to a vote on the application and it was unanimously refused.

RESOLVED: That the application be refused for the following reasons:

- 1) the application is contrary to Policies C1 and C2 of the DALP, as it does not include on-site parking provision; and
- 2) this lack of provision would exacerbate current problems with congestion and the availability of on-street parking. The cumulative impact of this would be harmful to the street scene, parking standards and highway safety in the surrounding area.

*Meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.*

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## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

*At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 5 February 2024 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors S. Hill (Chair), Bevan, Carlin, Davidson, C. Loftus, Philbin, Polhill, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Leck and C. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, A. Evans, J. Eaton, L. Wilson-Lagan, A. Blackburn, L. Crampton, C. Nixon and C. Sturdy

Also in attendance: Councillors Ratcliffe and Rowe, and 15 members of the public

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

*Action*

#### DEV37 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2024, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### DEV38 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.

#### DEV39 22/00638/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 13 DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3) WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, ACCESS/EGRESS, PARKING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS ON LAND BOUNDED BY CHURCH END AND TOWN LANE, HALE, L24 4AX

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

This application was reported to the Development Management Committee in December 2023. Just prior to the start of the meeting the Chair received an email from

Hale Parish Council objecting to the proposal and providing additional details to those already submitted. Due to timing of the email its content was not noted until after the Committee had resolved to approve the application. In view of the above the application has returned to the February Committee, so that consideration could be given to the objection and additional information provided. The full objection could be found on page 10 of the agenda.

Officers advised that the Council has since undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the points raised by the Parish Council, set out on pages 13-19 of the agenda report.

Since the publication of the agenda, further advice had been received from the Council's retained Advisor on heritage matters. It was commented that overall, it was considered that the application site had little to no impact on the current setting of the conservation area, due to its unkept nature and lack of public accessibility. The proposed scheme would create a more active site on this derelict plot, having a positive impact on the conservation area. The Heritage Advisor did not raise any objection to the proposal. The Advisor's detailed comments were available on the published AB update list.

Taking account of the above, the recommendation remained to approve the planning application subject to conditions and a legal agreement.

The application was moved and seconded and the Committee voted unanimously to approve the application.

**RESOLVED:** That authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Planning, Policy and Transportation, to determine the application in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee, following the satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issues relating to HRA compliance. Upon satisfactory resolution, that the application be approved subject to the following:

- a) a Section 106 Agreement that secures the terms set out in the Legal Agreement section of this report;
- b) schedule of conditions set out below; and
- c) that if the S106 Agreement or alternative arrangement is not executed within a reasonable period of time, authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and

Transportation, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee to refuse the application.

Recommended conditions as follows, with any additional conditions recommended through the resolution of the HRA compliance issue to be added to the list below:

1. Time limit;
2. Plans;
3. Materials to be agreed (RD3 and GR1);
4. Submission of existing and proposed site levels (GR1);
5. Tree protection measures (HE5);
6. Submission of bird box scheme (CS(R)20 and HE1);
7. Protection of mammals during construction (CS(R)20 and HE1);
8. Electric vehicle charging points scheme (C2);
9. Ground contamination (CS23 and HE8);
10. Visibility splays (C1 and C2);
11. Submission of a cycle parking scheme (C2);
12. Verification of the sustainable Urban Drainage scheme (CS23 and HE9);
13. Waste Management Plan (WM8);
14. Sewage disposal (HE9);
15. Construction management plan (C1);
16. Limited construction hours (GR2);
17. Detail hard standing agreed (C2 and HE9);
18. Access constructed prior to occupation (C1);
19. Landscaping (GR1, GR3 and HE5); and
20. Acoustic mitigation (GR2).

DEV40 23/00018/FUL - PROPOSED FILLING STATION WITH ANCILLARY CONVENIENCE STORE (325 SQM GIA), FORECOURT WITH 4, TWO SIDED PUMP ISLANDS, CANOPY, ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS AND ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, A DRIVE THROUGH FAST FOOD RESTAURANT (349 SQM GIA) (USE CLASS E (B)/SUI GENERIS HOT FOOD TAKEAWAY USE) WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, NEW SITE ACCESS ROAD, NEW ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION, FIREWALL TO VALVE COMPOUND AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT THE WOODYARD, WEAVER VIEW, CLIFTON, RUNCORN, WA7 4XU

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Officers advised that there was a Major Hazard Pipeline (*the Trans Pennine Ethylene Pipeline*) running through the site and the pipeline operator SABIC, had objected to the application based on it being within the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE's) consultation zones for a Major Hazard Pipeline. HSE has also advised against the granting of planning permission on safety grounds. It was not considered that the safety advice of the HSE outweighed the proposal's policy compliance and the benefits that would result from the delivery of the development.

An update in respect of ground contamination was provided. The Contaminated Land Officer had since confirmed that they raised no objection to the proposals, subject to a condition being attached requiring the submission of a detailed scheme of ground gas protection measures, or a revised risk assessment, along with a verification plan and submission of the verification / installation report upon completion of the works.

In summary, the proposal was considered to accord with the DALP and would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in Halton.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Nick O'Keefe, a local resident who objected to the proposal. He made the following comments, *inter alia*:

- Why did we need the development when there was a similar one further down the expressway;
- 4 Electric Vehicle charging points did not constitute a green development;
- The traffic on the junction was already congested and an increase in traffic would mean residents on Cholmondeley Road would be stuck;
- The junction was badly designed to begin with;
- Emergency response vehicles timescales would be affected by more traffic;
- There were no bus routes on Cholmondeley Road so staff working at the site will have to use their own cars which will take spaces designed for customers use;
- Weaver View flooded on a regular basis and covering the site with Asphalt will make it worse;
- There would be rubbish created from the fast food outlet and this would blow downhill polluting the River Weaver; and
- The proximity of an Ethylene pipeline was dangerous as it was under high pressure and highly explosive – release of this gas would be catastrophic.

Mr Williams, the Applicant, then addressed the Committee. He commented *inter alia*:

- That the proposal was reviewed by both Council Highway Officers and National Highways and no objection was raised. An independent highways consultant, taking into consideration the modelling of the existing roundabout, concluded that the proposal would only result in a 1.75% uplift in traffic volume;
- The proposal includes improved pedestrian and cycleway links on the development frontage;
- The site provides parking bays for 54 vehicles and 8 petrol refuelling bays. This would be in excess of the Council's parking standard and would ensure that parking and servicing would not be an issue;
- An independent road safety audit had been provided;
- The HSE had advised against the granting of planning permission and has an opportunity to request that the application be called in should they wish to do so;
- The Pipeline Manager has been working with him and pipeline safety had been assessed;
- Surrounding residents do not have sight of the filling station, which is obscured by greenery;
- The residents of Cholmondeley Road were 170m away from the station and there are fields and trees between them; and
- The site would create 145 jobs.

The Committee was then addressed by Councillor Ratcliffe, local Ward Councillor for Beechwood and Heath, who spoke in support of residents regarding their concerns. She made the following comments, *inter alia*:

- The HSE and SABIC's reasons for objecting to the proposal were founded as the Ethylene pipeline ran beneath the site and was a flammable, reactive and dangerous gas if released into the atmosphere, so was a significant risk to life;
- It was accepted that employment for the area would be positive;
- Councillor Ratcliffe had spoken to members of staff at the HSE and SABIC about the risks;
- The nearest bus stop was one mile away and it was a one bus per hour service, so staff at the site would most probably drive to work;
- It was already a busy roundabout leading to major roads like M56 and A557 and this would increase the volume of traffic – the Officers' advice was noted but

this did not suppress her concerns for residents.

Members discussed: the concerns relating to the pipeline and the objections raised from the HSE; the call-in procedure; the increase in the volume of traffic to an already congested area; COMAH sites in general; the egress and exit to the site; parking spaces on site being used by staff forcing customers to park on the road; the potential for queues at the drive through to overspill onto the road.

In response it was commented that the objection made by the HSE was a material planning consideration but the risks to public safety were of a level which was compliant with the Council's risk policy, as outlined on pages 87-88 of the report. It was explained that this site is allocated for development and that Government Inspectors did not recommend the removal of this allocation. Members were asked to give careful consideration to the HSE advice in making the decision. Officers explained the opportunity that the HSE has to consider requesting that the application be called in for determination by the Secretary of State.

From a highway's perspective, it was reported that there were now no objections from the National Highways and the Council's Highways Officers. In relation to parking provision, this was in excess of the required standards and the volume of traffic on the roundabout was predicted to increase by only 1.75%. It was noted that the installation of double yellow lines on the highway outside of the site would require Police support, but Section 278 offsite highway improvement works were included in the scheme, as described in Condition number 9 of the recommended conditions on page 90 of the report.

Taking into consideration the Officer's report and responses, and speakers' comments and concerns, the recommendation to approve was moved and seconded. The Committee voted by majority to agree the recommendation set out.

**RESOLVED:** That the application be approved subject to conditions listed below, should the proposal not be called in by the Secretary of State, following referral to the Health and Safety Executive:

1. Time limit;
2. Approved plans (GR1);
3. Submission of precise external facing materials (GR1);
4. Restriction on hours of construction (GR2);

5. Submission of an electric vehicle charging point scheme (C2);
6. Submission of a signage detail scheme (C1);
7. Implementation and maintenance of parking and servicing provision (C1 and C2);
8. Implementation and maintenance of cycle parking scheme (C2);
9. Submission of off-site highway improvements scheme (C1);
10. Submission of a sustainable development and climate change scheme (CS(R)19);
11. Submission of a sustainable urban drainage scheme, including future implementation, maintenance and management and verification reporting (CS23 and HE9);
12. implementation and maintenance of a landscaping scheme (HE5);
13. implementation and maintenance of a lighting scheme (HE1 and HE7);
14. implementation of tree works to British Standard (HE5);
15. Submission of a tree protection scheme (HE5);
16. Ensuring breeding bird protection (HE1);
17. Submission of a bird nesting boxes scheme (HE1);
18. Submission of a scheme demonstrating protection of Clough Lagoon LWS (HE1);
19. Submission of a waste audit (WM8); and
20. Submission of a remediation strategy and validation reporting (CS23 and HE8).

#### DEV41 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following Appeals had been received / were in progress:

23/00166/FUL

Proposed new dwelling on land adjacent to 19 Lilac Crescent, Runcorn.

The following Appeals had been determined:

22/000304/FUL

Proposed demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension and single storey front and rear extensions at 9 Windermere Avenue, Widnes – Dismissed.

*Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.*

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