

# **Minutes**

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

**Wednesday, 9 July 2025**

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**COUNCIL**

*At a meeting of the Council on Friday, 16 May 2025 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Abbott, Ball, Baker, Begg, Bevan, Bramwell, Carlin, Connolly, Dennett, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hughes, Hutchinson, Jones, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, McDermott, McDonough, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Polhill, Ratcliffe, Ryan, Stretch, Skinner, Teeling, Thompson, Wainwright, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Davidson, Dourley, Leck, A. Lowe, Nelson, L. Nolan, P. Nolan, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh, Rowe, Stockton and Thornton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, S. Young, G. Ferguson and W. Rourke

Also in attendance: 39 Members of the public

*Action***COU1 ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

Moved by Councillor Thompson and seconded by Councillor Wright:-

RESOLVED: That Councillor Martha Lloyd Jones be elected Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

Moved by Councillor Hutchinson and seconded by Councillor S. Hill:-

RESOLVED: That Councillor Wallace be elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

**THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR MARTHA LLOYD JONES IN THE CHAIR**

**COU2 COUNCIL MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 5 March 2025, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU3 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that her Charities for the year would be Nightstop Communities North West and Halton Speak Out with Ella Performance Group.

COU4 LEADER'S REPORT

There were no Leader's announcements.

COU5 EXECUTIVE BOARD (SELECTION COMMITTEE) 13 MAY 2025

The following results of the Executive Board (Selection Committee) were moved by the Mayor and seconded by the Deputy Mayor.

COU6 LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mike Wharton be appointed Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2025/26 and Councillor Dave Thompson be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

COU7 BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS

RESOLVED: That the Boards and Committees be constituted with the membership as shown for the Municipal Year 2025/26:-

**Executive Board (10)**

Councillors Wharton, (Chair), Ball, Bevan, Dennett, Harris, T. McInerney, P. Nolan, Thompson, Wall and Wright.

**Health & Wellbeing Board**

Councillors Wright (Chair) Ball, T. McInerney and Woolfall.

**Corporate and Inclusion Policy and Performance Board (11)**

Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice Chair), Carlin, C. Loftus, Davidson, Leck, Logan, N. Plumpton Walsh, McDermott, McDonough and A. McInerney.

**Health and Social Care Policy and Performance Board (11)**

Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice Chair), Davidson, Lowe, Goodall, S. Hill, Hughes, McDonough, N. Plumpton Walsh, Skinner, and Stretch.

**Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board (11)**

Councillors Woolfall (Chair), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice Chair), V. Hill, Hutchinson, K. Loftus, McDermott, Nelson, L. Nolan, C. Plumpton Walsh, Stockton and Wainwright.

**Local Economy Policy and Performance Board (11)**

Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice Chair), Connolly, Begg, Garner, Gilligan, Hutchinson, K. Loftus, Rowe, Skinner and M. Ryan.

**Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board (11)**

Councillors Logan (Chair), Goodall (Vice Chair), Baker, Dourley, Fry, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Ryan and Skinner.

**Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board (11)**

Councillors Fry (Chair), Carlin (Vice Chair) Bramwell, Connolly, Garner, C. Loftus, A. McInerney, L. Nolan, Ratcliffe, Stretch and Teeling.

**Development Management Committee (11)**

Councillors Leck (Chair), Thornton (Vice Chair), S. Hill, Hughes, P. Nolan, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, Polhill, Rowe, Thompson and Woolfall.

**Audit and Governance Board (7)**

Councillors Polhill (Chair), Connolly (Vice Chair), Abbott, V. Hill, Ratcliffe, Thornton and Wallace.

**Regulatory Committee (11)**

Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott (Vice-Chair), Begg, Bramwell, Fry, Hughes, K. Loftus, Lowe, Nelson, Stockton, and Wainwright.

**Mayoral Committee (5)**

Councillors M. Lloyd Jones, Wainwright, Gilligan, Philbin and Wright.

**Appointments Committee (6)**

Councillors Wharton (Leader), Thompson (Deputy Leader), Dennett (or another portfolio holder as selected by Leader), Wainwright (or a Chair of a PPB, selected by Leader) Ratcliffe and Davidson.

COU8 APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

RESOLVED: That Councillor Wainwright be

appointed Scrutiny Co-ordinator for the Municipal Year 2025/26

COU9 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTEE AND INDEPENDENT PERSONS

RESOLVED: That

Chief Executive

- 1) Mr David Wilson be re-appointed as the Healthwatch Halton representative and non-voting Co-optee to the Health and Social Care Policy and Performance Board for the Municipal Year 2025/26; and
- 2) Professor David Norman and Mrs Diane Howard be re-appointed as Independent Persons for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011, for a further period of 4 years.

COU10 APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive, regarding the appointment of Members to serve on various Outside Bodies. A document was tabled showing the recommendations put forward.

RESOLVED: That representatives be appointed to Outside Bodies in accordance with the tabled document.

COU11 EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIOS

The Leader confirmed that the Executive Board would consist of the following Portfolio holders for the Municipal Year 2025/26:-

Leader - Councillor Wharton - Overall Leadership and Corporate Strategy, Communications and Liverpool City Region matters  
 Deputy Leader - Councillor Thompson - Leadership on Cheshire Sub-Regional matters and Major Projects  
 Councillor T. McInerney - Children and Young People  
 Councillor Ball - Adult Social Care  
 Councillor Dennett - Corporate Services  
 Councillor Wright - Health and Wellbeing  
 Councillor Wall - Community Safety  
 Councillor P. Nolan - Environmental & Urban Renewal  
 Councillor Bevan - Employment, Learning & Skills and Community  
 Councillor Harris - Housing and Environmental Sustainability

RESOLVED: That the Portfolios be noted.

COU12 UPDATES TO COUNCIL CONSTITUTION (MINUTE EXB121 REFERS)

Executive Board had considered a report of the Director, Legal and Democratic Services, which sought approval of a number of changes to the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED: That Council approve the revised Constitution, including the matters set out in the appendices, attached to the report

Chief Executive

COU13 URGENT DECISIONS

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive, on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Council note the report.

COU14 ABSENCE OF A MEMBER

This item was withdrawn.

COU15 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025-26

The Council considered a report of the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, on the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26.

The Localism Act 2011 required every local authority to prepare a Pay Policy Statement each year, which detailed the Council's approach to a range of issues relating to the pay of its employees, principally its senior staff (Chief Officers) and the Authority's lowest paid employees.

The purpose of the Statement was to provide transparency with regards to the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees by identifying the following:-

- The methods by which salaries of all employees were determined;
- The details and level of remuneration of its most senior staff (i.e. its Chief Officers) as defined by relevant legislation; and
- The Committee responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in the Statement were applied consistently throughout the Council and

recommending any amendments to the Full Council.

The following information was included in the report:-

- Background to the Pay Structure;
- Senior Management Remuneration;
- Recruitment of Chief Officers;
- Additions to Salaries of Chief Officers;
- Pensions Contributions;
- Payments on Termination;
- Publication of the Statement;
- Lowest Paid Employees; and
- Accountability and Decision Making.

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2025/26 be adopted.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

#### COU16 CIVIC SUNDAY

The Mayor announced her intention to attend a Civic Service at St Michaels and All Angels CofE Church, Greenway Road, Runcorn, on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2025, at 10.30am.

*Meeting ended at 7.08 p.m.*



**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Tuesday, 25 February 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor T. McInerney

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, Z. Fearon, G. Ferguson, H. Roberts and D. Cooke

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
EXB82	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
	<b>LEADER'S PORTFOLIO</b>	
EXB83	CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025/26	
	The Board received a report of the Chief Executive, which set out the proposed Calendar of Meetings for the 2025/26 Municipal Year, which was appended to the report for information.	
	RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2025/26 Municipal Year, as appended to the report.	Chief Executive
EXB84	URGENT DECISIONS	
	The Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on 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 Director Finance and/or the Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.

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

RESOLVED: That the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB85 BUDGET 2025/26 - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report from the Director, Finance, which outlined a recommendation to Council in respect of the Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2025/26.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approved at the Executive Board meeting on 14 November 2024, had identified a funding gap of around £38.1m in 2025/26, £14.5m in 2026/27, £7.3m in 2027/28 and £9.3m in 2028/29. 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 detailing 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 £20.757m against a net budget of £149.496m.

The proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 totalled £183.052m; the departmental analysis of this was shown in Appendix B along with a breakdown of these changes in Appendix C. A total of £1.349m of savings were approved by Council on 1 February 2023. Further savings of £6.876m had been proposed for 2025/26 financial year and were detailed in Appendix G.

Table B in the report demonstrated the Council position where it is unable to present a balanced 2025/26 budget without seeking Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from Government. Receipts from Council Tax and Business Rates were insufficient to fund the forecast net spend for 2025/26. At its meeting on 4 December, Council approved that an application for EFS be made to Government. The submission included an ask for EFS for 2024/25 £20.8m and for 2025/26 £32m. Provisional approval for the EFS application was still awaited but it was expected to be received in late February 2025.

The Board was advised that the proposed budget incorporated the grant figures announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement. It included £0.181m for the New Homes Bonus grant, an increase of £0.057m from 2024/25. The budget also included Better Care Funding of £8.614m which was unchanged from 2024/25. Additional funding for Adult's and Children's Social Care was announced as part of the provisional grant settlement. The 2025/26 grant allocation of £17.744m was inclusive of an additional allocation of £2.718m awarded for the forthcoming year. This funding would be included in the Council budget to help fund existing pressures within Social Care services. Table C in the report provided an updated position of grants announced at the settlement and how the allocation compared to 2024/25.

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.

### Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the Council's revenue budget, capital programme and council tax for 2025/26.

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A number of alternative budget proposals have been considered by the Budget Working Group.

Implementation Date

5 March 2025.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended

Director  
Finance

of

- 1) to adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A, which includes setting the budget at £183.052m, the Council Tax requirement of £68.208m (before Parish, Police, Fire and LCR Combined Authority precepts) and the Band D Council Tax for Halton of £1,846.66;
- 2) to approve the capital programme set out in Appendix E;
- 3) to approve the use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out in Appendix H;
- 4) to approve the budget savings set out in Appendix G; and
- 5) to approve 100% Council Tax premium being applied to properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for a minimum period of 12 months.

EXB86 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT  
2025/26

The Board received the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, (TMSS) which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy for 2025/26.

The TMSS was appended to the report and detailed the expected activities of the treasury function in the forthcoming financial year (2025/26). 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.

Director of Finance

#### EXB87 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2025/26

The Board considered a report of the Director – Finance, on the Council's Capital Strategy for 2025/26.

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 2025/26. 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 2025/26 Capital Strategy, as presented in the Appendix.

Director of Finance

*N.B. Councillor Wharton declared an Other Registrable Interest in the following item of business as he is a Treasurer of Hale Youth Club. Councillor Dennett declared an Other Registrable Interest in the following item of business as he is a Treasurer of Halton Play Council.*

#### EXB88 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF RENEWALS

The Board received a report from the Director –

Finance, which advised 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. The report requested consideration be given for the renewal of discretionary business rate relief for existing registered charities, not for profit organisations, and community amateur sports clubs, who continued to satisfy the appropriate criteria.

The report outlined details of proposed changes to discretionary rate relief for these organisations. The Council currently granted discretionary business rate relief to organisations for a three-year period, and it was recommended that this practice would continue in order to provide the organisations with certainty to assist with their financial planning.

The Council was required to provide the organisations with twelve months' notice of any changes to their discretionary rate relief. Therefore, if approved the renewals will apply from 1 April 2026.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) discretionary business rate relief of 10% be granted for those registered charities and CASC organisations currently in receipt of such relief, for the period of three years commencing 1 April 2026, as listed in the Appendix; and
- 2) discretionary business rate relief of 75% be granted for those not-for-profit organisations currently in receipt of such relief (with 60% relief for one organisation as indicated), for the period of three years commencing 1 April 2026, as listed in the Appendix.

Director of Finance

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB89 PERMISSION TO CONSULT HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report which sought approval to commence a consultation with stakeholders and partners with a view to determining a new policy on sustainable travel and transport for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In accordance with the DfE Statutory Guidance, provision of assisted home to school transport is for eligible SEND pupils of statutory

school age, 5-16 years of age. The Council currently provides a transport service to early years children and post 16 SEND students, which falls outside of their statutory duties.

The Board was advised that the number of SEND pupils requiring specialist transport had significantly increased over the past number of years. This was a trend that appeared to be replicated in every other local authority across the country. A comparison in Halton was provided in the report for between 2012 and 2024 for in Borough and out of Borough transport.

It was proposed that the Local Authority consults with parents/carers, educational establishments and other interested parties on revised travel solutions. The consultation would take the form of two parts:

Part A: Flexible travel arrangements and increasing independence

This would include, personal travel budgets, escalation of independent travel training, centralised picks ups and mobility vehicles.

Part B: Reviewing discretionary transport

This would include distance criteria, provision of transport for pupils under the age of 5 years, post 16 transport and governance changes.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

The report sought the Board's approval to commence a consultation with stakeholders and partners with a view to determining a new policy on sustainable travel and transport for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The alternative option would be to not consult on Home to School Transport provision and continue with the current policy.

#### Implementation Date

June 2025 to report back to Executive Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report;

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

- 2) approve the commencement of a consultation with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities from September 2025; and
- 3) confirm they support the overall process.

## **ADULT AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB90 SUPPORT AT HOME SERVICE IN HALTON – BRITISH RED CROSS**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Adults, which sought approval for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of Part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, for a direct award to support the continuation of the provision of the Support at Home services in Halton, delivered through contract with British Red Cross for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028. A breakdown of the key performance indicators of the Service provided by British Red Cross between January to December 2024, were set out in the Appendix to the report.

The total cost of the contract over a three-year term would be £260,013 (based on an annual contract value of £86,671).

**RESOLVED:** That the Board

- 1) note the contents of the report; and
- 2) approve a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of Part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, for a direct award to support the continuation of the provision of the Support at Home services in Halton delivered through contract with British Red Cross for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB91 HALTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS)**

In December 2024, the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to all Local Planning Authorities requesting an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) be sent to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by

Executive Director  
of Adult Services



6 March 2025. The LDS informs work which was required to maintain a Local Plan, in line with National Policy.

The Board considered a request to delegate powers to the Director for Planning and Transport, in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Environment and Urban Renewal and Climate Change, to make editorial changes to the Local Development Scheme work plan prior to submission to the MHCLG.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report;
- 2) approve the schedule of work within the LDS; and
- 3) give delegated powers to the Director of Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, for the final approval before submission on the 6 March 2025.

Director -  
Planning and  
Transportation

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.

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

#### **EXB93 RUNCORN CREATIVE AND DIGITAL SKILLS CENTRE**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided information about the refurbishment of the current vacant historic properties 63-65 High Street, Runcorn, into a Creative and Digital Skills Centre, and subsequent leases of the building to both Mako Create and A Place for Us.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### **EXB94 HALTON STADIUM MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to include maintenance works at the Halton Stadium in the 2024-26 Capital Programme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

### **ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB95 COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER FOR LAND AT SCI-TECH DARESBUY - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to exercise the Council's powers of compulsory purchase to enable the delivery of the extension to the Sci-Tech Daresbury campus and to enable the development of delivery land and interests to provide the subject site with vacant possession.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

A decision is required to enable the Council to agree to make use of its powers of compulsory purchase to acquire the land necessary to enable the delivery of the Sci-Tech Daresbury masterplan.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The compulsory purchase of land is considered the best course of action to ensure that the land is available for the delivery of the scheme.

Implementation Date

Quarter 2 of 25/26

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) Council updates the Capital Programme to reflect the costs of the Scheme;
- 3) the Director – Legal and Democratic Services is authorised to make the Halton Borough Council (Sci-Tech Daresbury) Compulsory Purchase Order 2025 (“Order) pursuant to section 226 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and all other enabling powers, for the purposes of site assembly necessary to deliver the Scheme, and that the recommendations set out in paragraphs 2.3.2 – 2.3.10 of the report be approved;
- 4) the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to: continue, in partnership with the Sci-Tech Daresbury Joint Venture, to negotiate with third parties alongside the progression of the CPO and, agree the terms of any acquisition, relocation or accommodation works required or the amount of any compensation payable with the JV as a result of the Order, including compensation for disturbance and upon possession of any land within the Order, to take the necessary steps to clear, secure or ensure such land as is necessary; and
- 5) the Director – Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property, is authorised to:
  - enter into other agreements with interested parties including agreements for the withdrawal of blight notices and/or the withdrawal of objections to the CPO including where appropriate seeking the exclusion of land or rights from the CPO, making provision for the payment of compensation and/or for relocation.

Director, Legal  
and Democratic  
Services

- Agree minor modifications to the Order or the Order Map to secure confirmation of the Order.

## EXB96 FOUNDRY LANE RESIDENTIAL

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the Foundry Lane Residential scheme and sought approval:

- For the acquisition of the land required for Phase 2; and
- To accept the additional funding from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) and enter into a new/addendum Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) to support the acquisition and development.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) authority be given to the Director Economy Enterprise and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to conclude the legal and funding arrangements for the acquisition of the Phase 2 required land;
- 2) authority be given to the Director Economy Enterprise and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to enter a new Grant Funding Agreement with LCRCA; and
- 3) the inclusion of the aforementioned items in the Capital Programme be approved.

Director Economy, Enterprise & Property -

**MINUTES ISSUED: 27 February 2025**

**CALL-IN: 6 March 2025 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 6 March 2025.**

*Meeting ended at 3.07 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 13 March 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Ball, Dennett, Harris, T. McInerney, Nelson, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Lloyd Jones and P. Nolan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, G. Ferguson, D. Cooke, J Stevens and S. McDonald

Also in attendance: None

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

*Action*

**EXB97 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

**EXB98 URGENT DECISIONS**

The Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on 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 Director Finance and/or the 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 the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

**CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

**EXB99 REVIEW OF COUNCIL WIDE FEES AND CHARGES**

The Board considered a report of the Director - Finance, on the review of the Council wide fees and charges for 2025/26 for services provided by the Council's Directorates.

The Board was advised that, as part of the budget preparations for 2025/26, a review of fees and charges had been carried out. The aim in setting fees and charges was to ensure that the Council fully recovered the cost incurred in providing the service, although this was dependent on a number of factors outside of the agreed charge. These were detailed in the report and noted as including demand, which could change year on year and be affected by weather, economy, regional and national events and demographics; competition, where there may be a strong competitive market; and a statutory element, where some charges were outside the control of the Council and there was no discretion to what could be charged.

Attached at Appendix A was the proposed schedule of statutory fees for 2025/26 and the chargeable rates for The Brindley Theatre and the Registrar's Service were attached at Appendix B and C respectively, for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The Board noted that the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board (PPB) had considered a proposal for the pest control fee for rat treatments on domestic properties. The PPB had endorsed the proposal to introduce a new fee that recovered the full cost of rat treatments on domestic properties, with the exception for those in receipt of benefits (subject to proof). It was agreed that this would be explored.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A and for 2026/27, as set out in Appendices B and C, be approved.

Director of Finance

**EXB100 2024/25 SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025**

The Board received a report from the Director - Finance, which advised on the Council's overall revenue and capital net spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with a forecast outturn position.

Appendix 1 presented a summary of spending

against the operational revenue budget up to 31 January 2025 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 £15.487m. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 January 2025, highlighting the schemes, which had been revised.

RESOLVED: That

Director of  
Finance

- 1) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the councilwide forecast outturn overspend position;
- 2) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved savings proposals for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 4;
- 3) Council be asked to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.22 and incorporated within Appendix 3; and
- 4) This report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

#### EXB101 PENSIONS DISCRETIONS STATEMENT 2025/26

The Board received the annual Pensions Discretions Statement for 2025-26 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 2025-26 was based upon the statement for 2024-25, which was approved by Executive Board in February 2024. It was noted that no new discretions had been added.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the Pensions Discretions Statement for 2025-26

## ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

### EXB102 CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF DAY, RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING HOME CARE CONTRACT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Adult Services, which sought an extension of the current contract for the provision of day, residential and nursing home care. The current contract was due to expire on 31 March 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

- 1) note the contents of the report; and
- 2) confirms their approval for an extension to the current contract for the provision of day, residential and nursing home care for a period of two years from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027 for care homes in the Borough to continue placements on a spot purchase basis.

### EXB103 HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL & NHS CHESHIRE & MERSEYSIDE: JOINT WORKING AGREEMENT (BETTER CARE (POOLED) FUND) - KEY DECISION

The Board considered report of the Executive Director, Adult Services, which sought approval for the new Joint Working Agreement (JWA) between Halton Borough Council and the NHS Cheshire & Merseyside taking effect from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, which replaced the previous JWA. A copy of the new JWA was attached to the report as Appendix 1.

It was noted that when information on possible future implications to the Council on the Government decision to abolish NHS England was known, a report would be brought to Board members.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

Approval of the Agreement will continue to support both the Council and NHS CM in developing our integrated approach to service delivery and transformation to improve the health and wellbeing of Halton residents.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Allow the JWA to cease



Implementation Date

The two-year JWA takes effect from 1 April 2025

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the contents of the report and associated Appendix; and
- 2) approve the Agreement, with delegated authority be given to the Executive Director, Adults Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, to finalise the new JWA.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

**EXB104 DEMENTIA ADVISOR SERVICE - ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Adult Services, which sought approval for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, for a further 12-month contract renewal, through a direct award, to the Alzheimer's Society for the provision of a Dementia Advisor Service in Halton. Adult Social Care had previously commissioned Alzheimer's Society to provide a community support service across Halton to those pre and post dementia diagnosis and their carers'.

The current contract was issued on 1 April 2024 and ran for 12 months. The Board was advised that a further 12-month contract was recommended to run from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. The current contract value was £77,173 per annum, remaining unchanged since 2023.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, for a direct award to support the continuation of the provision of the Dementia Advisor Service in Halton delivered through contract with Alzheimer's Society for the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

**EMPLOYMENT LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND  
COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO**

**EXB105 HALTON LIBRARY SERVICE REVIEW**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the library service consultation exercise, which took place from 27 August to 8 October 2024. Questions

were posed around changes to opening hours and the reasons why people use or do not use the library service with consultations submitted both online and via hard copies at a variety of sites to ensure the engagement approach was inclusive. A copy of the public consultation survey, current and proposed opening hours and a complete summary of findings was attached to the report as Appendix A.

It was noted that the proposals provided a budget saving in year one of £49,599.97. With reduced costs in subsequent years of £91,599 less than £2,666 increased outreach costs, a net position of £88.933.87 per annum.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves

- 1) the amended library opening hours; including closure of Runcorn Old Town & Ditton library on Saturdays; and
- 2) amending the 'Home Library' delivery service model, with the acquisition of an electric vehicle to increase service reach.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

*N.B. Councillors Thompson and Wharton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following item of business as they are a Non-Executive Director of Mersey Gateway Crossings Board and left the meeting for the duration of the item. Councillor Nelson declared a Disclosable Other Interest as a member of the Environmental Trust Board.*

### COUNCILLOR HARRIS IN THE CHAIR

#### EXB106 MERSEY GATEWAY

The Board considered a report of the Director, Legal and Democratic Services, which recommended that the Council enter into a new provision of services contract with Mersey Gateway Environmental Trust. The Trust was set up as the long-term vehicle for the Environment Mitigation Plan to deliver lasting benefits associated with the Project and related environmental initiatives. On 19 November 2015, Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd appointed the Trust to carry out the responsibility for the environmental services.

The Trust, the Board and the Council were now proposed to enter the second phase of the Environmental Services Contract to maintain the environmental monitoring and environmental improvement of the Mersey estuary

through the implementation of the Trust's charitable objectives that were agreed in the Project Agreement. The report highlighted the reflected changes in the proposed agreement for the following Scheme Titles:

- Business Operation;
- Environmental Monitoring;
- Wigg Island; and
- Saltmarsh

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) give authority for the Council to enter into a new contract for the provision of services by Mersey Gateway Environment Trust; and
- 2) authorises the Director, Legal and Democratic Services to take all necessary steps to bring the contract into effect by 1 April 2025.

Director, Legal  
and Democratic  
Services

#### EXB107 HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION SPD AND CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTATION SPD

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to adopt the following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):

- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) SPD; and
- Climate Change and Adaptation SPD

Once agreed, the SPDs would be sent to the Secretary of State as part of the adoption process, made publicly available and used as a material consideration in planning decisions in addition to the Local Plan.

RESOLVED: That the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Documents is approved.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

#### EXB108 ADDITIONAL HIGHWAY GRANT ALLOCATIONS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to accept capital funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) in compliance with Council Standing Orders. The Council had received from the LCRCA a grant of £1,233,766 for the Runcorn Busway and expected funding of £995,895.90 for Local Highways Maintenance Funding Allocations. The LCRCA had requested formal grant acceptance for the highway funding

in advance of receipt to ensure funding expenditure could start as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the grants for Runcorn Busway and the Local Highway Maintenance Funding 2025/26 are formally accepted;
- 2) delegated powers are provided to the Director Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to deal with the Grant Funding Agreement(s) described in the report; and
- 3) delegated powers are provided to the Director Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to deal with any matters relating to procurement and the operation and delivery of these agreements.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

#### EXB109 ROADSIDE MEMORIALS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to formally adopt a new Roadside Memorial Policy. It was noted that several local authorities had established policies and protocol relating to the placement and removal of roadside floral tributes and other memorials placed at the scene of fatal road crashes, and other fatalities adjacent to the highway.

The purpose of the policy would be to provide a formal framework which would enable the management of roadside memorials in a way which best served the community. A copy of the policy was attached at Appendix A to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board adopt the policy contained in Appendix A.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

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

#### EXB110 SERVICES FOR MISSING FROM HOME AND CARE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS CHESHIRE FOR HALTON, CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER AND WARRINGTON: REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS

The Board considered a request for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of

part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders to allow the continuation of a contract with We are With You to deliver on behalf of the Council, the Tri-Party Missing from Home and Care Service, for a period of one year from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. We are With You was commissioned to deliver the Pan Cheshire Missing from Home and Care Service across Warrington, Cheshire West and Halton.

RESOLVED: The Board approve that the contract with We are With You should be extended for a further twelve months without going through the Procurement process, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

EXB111 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.

## DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

### EXB112 HIGH STREET RUNCORN

The Board considered a report which sought authority to acquire with Town Deal funding 77 High Street, also known as Chambers.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects) to take such action as necessary to acquire 77 High Street, also known as Chambers; and
- 2) the Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property be authorised to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

### EXB113 ASTMOOR MASTERPLAN UPDATE

The Board considered a report which provided an update on progress in delivering the Astmoor Masterplan.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) authority is delegated to the Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to continue the negotiations to enable the disposal of the land identified in the report; and
- 2) Council amends the Capital Programme to include the Astmoor Masterplan capital receipt as set out in paragraph 3.13.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

*N.B Councillor Wright declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item as a member of the Halton Housing Trust Board.*

### EXB114 RUNCORN WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to progress delivery of the Runcorn Waterfront

development. Delivery being enabled through entering into a Development Agreement with Halton Housing for the disposal of Council Land to unlock this regeneration and housing renewal project within Runcorn Town Centre.

The Board discussed the recent developments which were ongoing in Runcorn Town Centre and it was agreed that a report would be brought to the next meeting together with all the current and future developments in the area.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the progress being made to realise the Runcorn Waterfront development;
- 2) approves delegated authority to Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to agree final details of the terms of the Development Agreement with Halton Housing for disposal of Council Land to enable delivery of the Runcorn Waterfront development; and
- 3) authorises the Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

### EXB115 CARE PROVIDER CONTRACT UPLIFT 2025/26 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Adult Services, which advised on the outcome of the consultation with domiciliary care, direct payments, supported living and care home providers within Halton, in respect of the Care Provider Contract Uplift for 2025/26.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

Section 5 of the Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to ensure that the care market as a whole remains viable and sustainable, any uplift is essential to support this market.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not offering an uplift for the care market would jeopardise

market sustainability and potentially see providers leaving the Borough.

Ceasing delivery of the services would impact negatively on a vulnerable cohort of the borough's population and likely result in more costly, crisis intervention being.

Implementation Date

1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the contents of the report;
- 2) considers the recommendations and risks; and
- 3) approval to be given to offer the recommended uplift to care providers for 2025/26

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

EXB116 DOMICILIARY CARE SERVICE TENDER: WAIVER TO  
EXTEND CURRENT CONTRACT TERM - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report which sought approval for a Non-Emergency Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of Part 2 to allow the continuation of a contract with the current provider under the new Domiciliary Care Service contract to commence on 28 April 2025. This would ensure business continuity.

Reason(s) for Decision

- The decision relates to a service which is statutorily required.
- The contract value is above £5m.
- The decision impacts on all wards and communities within the borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There are no alternative options. The Council must award contracts to providers for the supply of a Domiciliary Care Service in compliance with its regulatory duties to ensure continuity of service once the current contract ceases on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

Implementation Date

The proposed contract will be for an initial five years commencing 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025 until 27<sup>th</sup> April 2030 with the



option to extend by 2 x 12-month periods, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2030 until 27<sup>th</sup> April 2031 and 28<sup>th</sup> April 2031 until 27<sup>th</sup> April 2032.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves a Non-Emergency Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of Part 2, to grant an extension to the current Domiciliary Care Service contract as per sections 3.7 and 3.8 of the report.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

**MINUTES ISSUED: 18 March 2025**

**CALL-IN: 25 March 2025 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 25 March 2025.**

*Meeting ended at 3.10 p.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 17 April 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, Z. Fearon, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke, D. Cooke, L. Crampton and P. Preston

Also in attendance: None

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

*Action*

**EXB117 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

**EXB118 URGENT DECISIONS**

The Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on two 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 Director Finance and/or the Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the two urgent decision taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

**DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO****EXB119 WIDNES TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION  
FRAMEWORK - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, that presented the Regeneration Framework for Widnes Town Centre for approval. The Framework set out nine spatial strategies and deliverables to drive the future of Widnes Town Centre. It summarised the evolution of the Town Centre over the years and some of the challenges that would need to be overcome, before setting out where the development opportunities would lie.

Consultation on developing the Framework had taken place with the Widnes Town Centre Panel, Council staff, Council website, pop up events held in the Town Centre, major landowners and a workshop with students from Cronton College.

The Framework was supported by the following two evidence-based documents which had been composed by industry specialists to inform the special strategies and projects:

- Widnes Town Centre, Active Travel and Movement Study; and
- Widnes Town Centre Engagement Feedback Report.

Reason(s) for Decision

The Framework has the potential to impact the wider Halton Community.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

N/A

Implementation Date

Subject to obtaining the necessary permissions and securing funding, the period from 2025 to 2035.

**RESOLVED:** That the Board approve

- 1) the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework, the spatial strategies and projects outlined within it be supported and approved;

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

- 2) the next steps to delivery as outlined in section 7 of the Framework;
- 3) delegated authority being given to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Major Projects and Climate Change, to pursue further investigations into identified project areas as opportunities come forward;
- 4) the move towards establishing a Widnes Town Centre Strategic Board comprising relevant public and private sector partners, to have direct oversight of the delivery of projects; and
- 5) the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework and its two supporting documents be published on the Council website.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB120 TAXI LICENSING MATTER**

The Board considered a report of the Director Legal and Democratic Services, which outlined recommendations from the Regulatory Committee in relation to amendments to the Councils existing Hackney Carriage Stands Order. Details of the current taxi rank provisions, and the proposed amendments along with the consultation exercise undertaken with Halton Taxi Trade, Cheshire Police and members of the public were detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board approve proposals detailed in Appendix A of the Regulatory report (see Appendix 1) dated 12 March 2025 in respect of stands 11, 13, 17 and 19; and
- 2) the Director Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to fulfil all procedural requirements in accordance with Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and to make the taxi stands order accordingly.

Director, Legal and Democratic Services

### **EXB121 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION 2025**

The Board received a report of the Director Legal and Democratic Services, which sought the approval of Council to a number of changes to the Constitution.

The revised version of the Constitution picked up the changes to the Council's working arrangements that had taken place during the year, as well as other changes which were intended to assist the Council to operate more effectively.

Members were referred to Appendix one where the proposed amendments were listed; these had been considered by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, in accordance with Article 16.02.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board recommends Council to approve the changes to the Constitution including the matters set out in Appendix one.

Director, Legal and Democratic Services

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

### EXB122 RECRUITMENT OF TWO SPECIALIST FOSTER CARERS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children's Services, which sought approval to the invest to save proposal of recruiting 2 Specialist Foster Carer's as an additional care option for our Children and Young People with complex needs in Care. The report set out the benefits to the child and to the Council of a Specialist Foster Carers Scheme.

RESOLVED: The Board approve the recruitment of 2 Specialist Foster Carers as part of a scheme that aims to move children and/or young people from high cost residential placements into a foster care, family environment.

Executive Director of Children's Services

### EXB123 HALTON PROVISION OF INTERNAL SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children's Services, that outlined the background and current position of the supported accommodation contract and proposed options around re-procurement of the Service.

RESOLVED: That

Executive Director of Adult Services

- 1) the report be noted and options appraised;
- 2) approval is granted to the recommendation that the contract with People, Potential, Possibilities (P3) should be extended for a further twelve months without going through the Procurement Standing

Order 1.14.4 (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;

- 3) a 12 month extension of the internal Supported Accommodation Contract, inclusive of the inflationary uplift be approved;
- 4) permission is granted for the Head of Commissioning and Placement, and the Head of Children in Care and Care Leavers, to implement the building transfer; and
- 5) the re-commissioning of the service, via open competitive tender by March 2026, and delegation of responsibility to the Head of Commissioning to undertake any further necessary steps be approved.

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

### EXB124 HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Adults Services, which described the Council's annual Homelessness Funding Grant Award from Government and allocated spend for 2025/26 to tackle and prevent homelessness.

Government confirmed the allocation of a key element of the overall investment in funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which was available to local authorities in 2025/26 to support and deliver services to prevent and tackle homelessness. Members were advised that from this funding Halton had been allocated £547,706 for 2025/26. It was noted that the funding grant allocation would be ring fenced to ensure the Local Authority had the resources to take action to prevent homelessness and utilise the funding to continue to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The proposals for the allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant were presented in Appendix 1, Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding Grant in Appendix 1a, Winter Pressures Grant Funding in Appendix 1b, CAB Cost Savings in Appendix 2, Repossession Referrals in Appendix 2a, Repossession Notice Activity in Appendix 2b and case studies were presented in Appendix 3.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the recommendations for expenditure against the grants, as

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

described in Appendices 1 and 3.

EXB125 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.

**COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIOS**

*N.B. Councillor Wharton declared a Other Registrable Interest in the following item of business as he has a family member with connections to Park House.*

EXB126 ANN STREET WEST / GRANGEWAY COURT BUSINESS CASE

The Board considered a report which highlighted the need for greater sufficiency in respect of:



- Emergency accommodation for those vulnerable individuals and families who are fleeing domestic abuse;
- Independent self-contained supported accommodation for young people and care leavers, who are prepared for, and able to live more independently; and
- Provision to relieve homelessness pressures.

The proposed accommodation model across both areas would meet the needs of vulnerable families and the needs of young people, providing financial benefit in relation to reducing the amount of external resources and external supported accommodation currently commissioned.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves:

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

- 1) the use of the remaining three accommodation blocks / 12 units at Grangeway Court be granted to, and developed by, Community Safety & Protection, within the proposed plan, for the sole use as emergency accommodation under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, fulfilling our statutory duty;
- 2) Council be asked to approve inclusion in the 2025/26 capital programme, of the capital works at Grangeway Court as outlined in paragraph 3.7;
- 3) the use of 1 Ann Street West (known as Maya Court) be granted to Children Services to pursue a new lease arrangement with Riverside, for the sole use as Supported Accommodation, under the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023, fulfilling our statutory duty; and
- 4) the commissioning of the Supported Accommodation contracts across the sites will be set out in a future report to enable options to be explored.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 23 April 2025**

**CALL-IN: 30 April 2025 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 30 April 2025.**

*Meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.*

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Tuesday, 13 May 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Lloyd Jones and Nelson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Osborne, M. Reaney and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>EXB127 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>EXB128 APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to appoint Councillor Wharton as the Leader and Councillor Thompson as the Deputy Leader of the Council for the 2025/26 Municipal Year</p>	Chief Executive
<p>EXB129 APPOINTMENT OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR AND APPOINTMENT OF HEALTH PPB CO-OPTEE</p> <p>The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive, regarding appointments to the Council's Boards, Committees and Scrutiny Co-ordinator post, and the re-appointment of a non-voting co-optee to the Health Policy and Performance Board, for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.</p> <p>A list of Committee and Board memberships was tabled at the meeting.</p>	

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to make the following appointments:

Chief Executive

- 1) to the Council's Boards, Committees and Scrutiny Co-ordinator post, for the 2025/26 Municipal Year; and
- 2) Mr David Wilson - Healthwatch Halton, be re-appointed as non voting Co-optee to the Health Policy and Performance Board, for the 2025/26 Municipal Year

*Meeting ended at 2.05 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 12 June 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Bevan, Ball, Dennett, Harris, T. McInerney, P. Nolan, Thompson, Wall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, Z. Fearon, G. Ferguson and K. Appleton

Also in attendance: None

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

**EXB1 MINUTES**

*Action*

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO**

**EXB2 WIDNES TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION  
FRAMEWORK – CREATION OF WIDNES TOWN CENTRE  
STRATEGIC BOARD**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, which set out the structure of the Widnes Strategic Board. The purpose of the Board was to:

- provide advice, insight and challenge to Halton Borough Council on the regeneration and development of Widnes town centre;
- represent the interest of local residents, businesses and community organisations;
- support the delivery of the Widnes Regeneration Framework and related projects; and
- champion Widnes town centre and promote civic

pride.

The Widnes Strategic Board would consist of up to 15 members drawn from the local community. A copy of the Terms of Reference was attached as an appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) approves the structure of the Widnes Strategic Board and delegated authority be given to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects to finalise its members; and
- 2) approves the draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) and delegated authority be given to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects to update and adapt the Terms of Reference as the projects contained within the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework evolve.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

### EXB3 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented three 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 three applications, in relation to their respective addresses. Appended to the report was the potential annual cost to the Council of granting the discretionary rate relief.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) discretionary rate relief for any new applications received during 2025/26 be awarded at the rates approved on 25 February 2025 for the renewal of existing awards, as outlined in paragraph 3.5;

Director of  
Finance

- 2) the application for discretionary rate relief from the Cathie Stankevitch Foundation in respect of Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes with effect from 1 July 2024 be approved at 10%;
- 3) the application for discretionary rate relief from The Autism Wellbeing Project in respect of Suite A8, The Business Hub, Simms Cross, Widnes Road, Widnes with effect from 14 March 2025, be approved at 75%; and
- 4) the application for discretionary relief from The Autism Wellbeing Project in respect of Suite B2, The Business Hub, Simms Cross, Widnes Road, Widnes with effect from 14 March 2025, be approved at 75%.

EXB4     DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS  
FOR QUARTER 4   2024 - 2025

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the fourth quarter period to 31 March 2025, for the Children and Young People Directorate; and the Enterprise, Community and Resources Directorate.

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

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

EXB5     2024/25 SPENDING AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position for the 2024/25 financial year.

A summary of spending against the Council's revenue and capital net spending position for 2024/25 was

presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net spending as at 31 March 2024 was £16.073m over budget. This was an improvement from the forecast outturn position of £18.906m reported at the end of January 2025. Whilst an improved position, given the scale of the budgetary overspend the Council would need to access the exceptional financial support provisionally approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 24 February 2025.

The report also detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 March 2025. Other than the General Fund reserve of £5.149, there were no further reserves available to help fund future budgets.

In addition, it was noted that Capital Spending at 31 March 2025 totalled £46.517m, which was 91.7% of the planned spending £50.748m (which assumed a 20% slippage between years). Appendix 2 presented details of spending against all capital schemes. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 March 2025.

It was noted that the 2025/26 budget had been slightly increased to reflect the increased spending against all the high-pressure areas.

A report on the 2025/26 budget monitoring position as at 31 May 2025 along with an initial outturn forecast, would be presented at the earliest opportunity to allow for any urgent corrective action to be taken.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council's 2024/25 outturn position as presented in the report be noted;
- 2) Directorates take all possible steps to manage spending in line with budget during 2025/26;
- 3) priority is given to the acceleration of the Council's Transformation Programme, to ensure it is sufficiently developed to deliver the savings required to meet the medium-term financial gap and help the Council replenish its reserves; and
- 4) this report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

Director of Finance



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

### EXB6 HOMELESSNESS CONTRACTS: WAIVER TO EXTEND CURRENT CONTRACT TERMS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Adult Social Care, which sought approval for two Non-Emergency Waivers in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 to allow the continuation of contracts with the incumbent providers until new procurement processes have been undertaken and completed. This would ensure business continuity. The two contracts were in relation to the following Homelessness services that were due to end in 2025:

- Single Homelessness Supported Accommodation Service; and
- Homeless Families Supported Accommodation Service.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approve a Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, to grant extensions to the current Homeless contracts as per sections 3.8 and 3.9 of this report.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

## ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

### EXB7 CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, which provided details of essential work required to be undertaken to refurbish aging infrastructure and update the grounds with a range of environmental enhancements at three of the Council's cemeteries located at Widnes, Runcorn and Halton cemeteries.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the proposals set out within the report be approved;
- 2) Council be asked to include £1.971m within the Council's Capital Programme over 4 years to fund the proposed works as set out within the report; and

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

- 3) authority be delegated to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to prepare and approve all necessary documents, contracts and funding arrangements required to complete the proposed works.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB8 NEW CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES POLICY & PERFORMANCE BOARD**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services, to Co-Opt a new independent member of the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board to provide assurance and challenge.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended that Stuart Smith OBE, be Co-Opted to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board for a period of 12 months, to be reviewed at the end of that period.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

### **EXB9 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.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB10 FUNDING FOR EXTENSION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services, that outlined details of a loan to carers to build an extension on their property to accommodate four children in their care.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the loan be agreed, subject to the legal and financial arrangements being finalised in detail and due diligence being undertaken; and
- 2) the Executive Director - Children's Services be asked to finalise the details of the arrangement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB11 EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION: STAFF UNPAID LEAVE**

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director Chief Executives Delivery Unit, that provided details on a proposed scheme for a Christmas closure utilising a variation of the previously proposed four days unpaid leave arrangement.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the scheme and the commencement of formal negotiations with Trade Unions to finalise and implement the scheme for a Christmas closure.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

*N.B. Councillor Wright declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the following item of business as she is a member of Halton Housing Trust Board.*

EXB12 DISPOSAL OF LAND AT CROW WOOD LANE, WIDNES

The Board considered a report which sought approval for the disposal of land owned by the Council at Crow Wood Lane, Widnes to Halton Housing to enable the construction of 13 homes for adults with disabilities and complex needs.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) approves the disposal of the freehold interest in land at Crow Wood Lane for the terms outlined in paragraph 5.2; and
- 2) authorises the Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.

Director  
Economy,  
Enterprise &  
Property

**MINUTES ISSUED: 17 June 2025**

**CALL-IN: 24 June 2025 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 24 June 2025.**

*Meeting ended at 2.20 p.m.*

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on Wednesday, 12 March 2025 at Karalius Suite, Halton Stadium, Widnes*

*Present:* Councillor Wright (Chair)  
 Councillor Ball  
 Councillor T. McInerney  
 Councillor Woolfall  
 K. Butler, Democratic Services  
 D. Nolan, Adult Social Care  
 I. Onyia, Public Health  
 L. Gardner, Warrington & Halton Teaching Hospitals  
 S. Griffiths, Adult Social Care  
 D. Haddock, Cheshire Constabulary  
 L. Hughes, Healthwatch Halton  
 A. Leo, Integrated Commissioning Board  
 W. Longshaw, St. Helens & Knowsley Hospitals  
 T. McPhee, Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust  
 L. Mogg, Public Health  
 A. Moore, Cheshire Constabulary  
 D. O'Connor, Adult Social Care  
 H. Patel, Citizens Advice Bureau  
 S. Patel, Local Pharmaceutical Committee  
 K. Stratford, Public Health  
 F. Watson, Public Health  
 L. Windle, Halton Housing  
 S. Yeoman, Halton & St Helens VCA

*Action***HWB22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from H. Crampton – Cheshire Fire & Rescue Services, M. Charman – Bridgewater Community Health Care NHS Foundation Trust, W. Rourke – Halton Borough Council and J. Wallis - Bridgewater Community Health Care NHS Foundation Trust.

**HWB23 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

**HWB24 TOBACCO**

Members of the Board received a report and accompanying presentation from the Director of Public Health which provided an update on the Tobacco Programme.

Smoking was still the main preventable cause of death, disability and ill health in England, despite a decline in prevalence over recent years. Smoking was the cause of around 75,000 deaths, 1 in 4 of cancer deaths and killed up to two thirds of long-term users.

The smoking prevalence of Halton was estimated to be around 13.7% of adults which was slightly above the national average of 12.4%. It was estimated that it costs Halton around £89M in productivity, £5M in healthcare and £45M in social care. In addition, there was an estimated loss of £102M due to premature deaths from smoking in Halton.

In 2014, Halton Council signed the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control, which was a statement of a commitment to ensure tobacco control was part of mainstream public health work and committed councils to take comprehensive action to address the harm from smoking. Halton's local tobacco alliance was paused due to the pandemic, however, it was reformed in 2024 as part of the "Live Well" Programme within One Halton and local partners rejoined. Their aim was to reduce prevalence of smoking in Halton to 5% or less by 2030.

The Board noted and discussed the information presented and in response to questions raised, the following additional information was noted:

- a piece of work was being done nationally about young people vaping; the major concern was what was in the vapes and the effects on those using them; and
- Trading Standards conduct test purchases with appropriate young people at premises to ensure they comply with the law in respect of age restricted products, and this work was supported by the Police. However, Board Members were advised that anyone who had any concerns about tobacco/vapes being sold illegally or to those underage, could contact Crimestoppers.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) support ongoing activity in local and regional plans.

## HWB25 HEALTH INEQUALITIES DASHBOARD

Members of the Board received a report and accompanying presentation from the Director of Integration, Mersey and West Lancashire Hospitals, which set out the Trust's Health Inequalities Dashboard.

Mersey and West Lancashire Hospital Trust provided care for around 50% of Halton's population, with a particular focus around Widnes. Board Members were informed that a recent Kings Fund Health Inequalities paper cited a number of statistics which included:

- People in the most deprived areas were twice as likely to die prematurely from cardiovascular disease than people in the least deprived areas;
- People in the most deprived parts of England were more than twice as likely to wait over a year for elective care than people in the most affluent areas in 2022; and
- The difference in life expectancy for people living in the most deprived areas of England compared with the least deprived areas is 9.7 years for males and 7.9 years for women.

The Trust was committed to reducing health inequalities and therefore had developed a dashboard that used near live data to support the journey. The next steps in the development of the dashboard would be to complete the activity undertaken within the wide Trust's footprint to include Sefton and West Lancashire. The Trust was in dialogue with Warrington and Halton Hospitals Trust to explore the possibility of providing this system to their Trust as this would give a complete picture of Acute Care in Halton.

The dashboard held demographic data of local boroughs as well as elective and non-elective activity across the Trust. The data from the dashboard, along with insights from Public Health, should lead to changes in service provision and lead to a reduction in health inequalities.

The Board noted and discussed the information presented and suggested that there needed to be more of an understanding about why some people do not attend appointments. A question was raised about "did not attend" rates for children and young people and whether it would make a difference if this was changed to "was not brought" (by parents). It was noted that this approach was being considered by Alder Hey.

Further work was needed from a) a quantitative perspective and whether patients were showing up in the hospital system somewhere else and b) from a qualitative perspective, patients should be asked why they are not turning up. This should provide a clearer picture to change the system and help prevent those on the waiting list ending up in A&E.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the establishment of the Health Inequalities Dashboard; and
- 2) endorse the collaboration with Warrington and Halton Hospitals Foundation Trust so that a complete picture of Acute Care across Halton is available.

#### HWB26 SOCIAL NEED SUPPORT FOR SECONDARY CARE MENTAL HEALTH PATIENTS

The Board received a report and accompanying presentation which provided an update on the integrated offer between Mersey Care and Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector. The report addressed the social needs of secondary care mental health patients to support delivery of the One Halton Living Well Strategic priorities.

The service was funded from NHS England via Community Mental Health Transformation monies and a three year contract was in place, with the option to extend for a further two. The funding was intended to support the interface between primary and secondary mental health care, to transform delivery of care for adults with severe mental illness and those with complex needs.

The service in Halton was run by a team which included two Mental Health Navigators; this was managed by Halton & St. Helens CVA but was embedded in the secondary care community teams and mental health in-patients units. The service:

- Acts as a connector/sign-poster between health care professionals, VCFSE groups and local people; and
- Facilitates a voluntary sector mental health forum and builds an alliance of local VCFSE sector providers that support engagement between mental health professionals and the sector.



The core outcomes and benefits of the service were outlined in the report which also highlighted the Mental Health Care Navigator Team achievements, performance and activity reports and identified some challenges. In addition, some examples of service user stories and feedback were provided for noting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

HWB27 ADULTS PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER - ANNUAL REPORT (OCTOBER 2024)

The Board received an annual report from the Adults Principal Social Worker (APSW) which outlined how the role of social work supported the One Halton Based Partnership in order to meet its priorities and objectives.

It was reported that the APSW was a statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014. The national guidance on the role and responsibilities had evolved and been updated and clarified over recent years. It was noted that the Principal Social Worker played a key role in representing and promoting the social work profession; the report listed some of the responsibilities that came with the role.

The report also outlined details of the strengths based approaches and practice training, which had been carried out over the past 12 months. Included were details of specialist training such as e-learning for all staff and webinars, in conjunction with the Learning Disability and Autism Programme.

Information on: present and future workforce development; the mental health 'Think Ahead' Programme; the LGA's Standards for Employers of Social Workers; the organisational health check and quality assurance, was also presented in the report.

It was acknowledged that there were some challenges in hospitals due to vacancies in social care. However, it was anticipated that apprenticeship appointments in the discharge teams and intermediate care teams would help address some of the issues.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

HWB28 PRINCIPAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST - ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adult Social Care, which presented the Principal Occupational Therapist's (POT) Annual Report.

The Adults Principal Social Worker (APSW) role was a statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014. Although there was no current requirement in place for local authorities to have a POT, Halton had had one in post since January 2024. It was acknowledged by the ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) that having a POT to work alongside the APSW added diverse leadership within adult social care and had a positive impact on local populations.

The report outlined the role of occupational therapy, referral numbers, challenges faced, and culture and practice of the service and the current workforce. Members were referred to the appendix, which presented an anonymised case study for information.

It was agreed that the Public Health Improvement Team would liaise with the POT regarding health and wellbeing.

RESOLVED: That the report and appendix be noted.

Director of Public Health

HWB29 BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2024/25 - QUARTER 2 UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adult Services, which provided an update on the Quarter 2 Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan 2024/25, following its submission to the National Better Care Fund Team in June 2024.

In line with the national requirements, the quarter 2 report focussed on reporting on the spend and activity funded via the discharge funding allocated to the local authority and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Halton Place).

As at the end of quarter 2, there were no areas of concern to advise the Board of. Spend and activity would continue to be monitored via the Better Care Commissioning Advisory Group, as part of the joint working arrangements.

RESOLVED: The Board note the report.

HWB30 BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2024/25 - QUARTER 3  
UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adult Services, which provided an update on the quarter 3 Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan 2024/25, following its submission to the National Better Care Fund Team in June 2024.

In line with the national requirements, the quarter 3 report focussed on reporting on the spend and activity funded via the discharge funding allocated to the local authority and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Halton Place).

Spend and activity would continue to be monitored via the Better Care Commissioning Advisory Group, as part of the joint working arrangements.

RESOLVED: The Board note the report.

HWB31 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAN CHESHIRE  
CHILD DEATH OVERVIEW PANEL

The Annual Report of the Pan Cheshire Child Death Overview Panel 2023/24 had been added to the agenda for the Board to note.

A copy of the report had previously been circulated to members of the Board for their information.

*Meeting ended at 3.45 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, 24 February 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice-Chair), Connolly, Garner, S. Hill, Hutchinson, Rowe and Ryan

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Abbott, McDonough and Stretch

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, D. Cooke, K. Arrowsmith and H. Roberts

Also in attendance: T. Done & G. Heesom – Beacon Savings & Loans and J. Leake – Sci-Tech Daresbury

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

	<i>Action</i>
ELS20 MINUTES	
The Minutes from the meeting held on 18 November 2024, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
It was noted that the outstanding queries referred to in ELS19 would be sent to Members following the meeting.	
ELS21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
ELS22 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Executive Board minutes relating to the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community portfolio published since the last meeting of this Board were attached for information.	

ELS23 PRESENTATION - HALTON CREDIT UNION - NOW CALLED WEAREBEACON

The Board received a presentation from Tracey Done and Gareth Heesom, from Beacon Savings and Loans (previously Halton Credit Union).

Beacon is a not for profit organisation that provides ethical products and services to those who struggled to get credit. It was governed by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) as banks and building societies were.

The change of name from Halton Credit Union was explained as being part of the re-branding of the service so that it was non-geographical, as it was expanding across the whole of Cheshire. Beacon's services were now available to anyone who lived or worked in Cheshire and some neighbouring areas such as Liverpool and Stoke on Trent.

The website and app were introduced to the Board and the services available included family loans, Save to Borrow, secured borrowing for high savers, a salary saving scheme with payroll partners, life insurance at no cost to Members, and a Christmas savings club.

The guests advised that Beacon also supported employees and employers, as one in four people worried about debt or money issues, which in turn could affect performance at work. The salary schemes offered helped employees to be able to afford loans and better manage their money.

Beacon did currently work with partners such as the NHS, the Council, nurseries and Chamber of Commerce, but wanted to partner with more businesses to offer the same services. Members noted this for use in their constituencies.

Copies of the Annual Report, Information Packs and business cards were distributed to the Board. The guests were invited to send a briefing note for inclusion in the Environment and Regeneration Department's newsletter. The guests were thanked for their informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## ELS24 SCI-TECH DARESBUY

The Board considered a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the delivery of Sci-Tech Daresbury's Talent and Skills Action Plan.

The Board welcomed Mr John Leake, the Business Growth Director for Sci-Tech Daresbury. He advised that the Sci-Tech Daresbury site was one of only 6 science and technology campuses in the UK and this was the only one in the North of England.

Sci-Tech Daresbury Talent and Skills Strategy was developed in 2021. It was a key component of the Sci-Tech Daresbury Strategy for Science, Innovation and Growth. The Strategy focussed on attracting, developing and retaining the wide range of skills and expertise essential to establishing Sci-Tech Daresbury as a global beacon of science and technology, focussed innovation and entrepreneurship.

The presentation outlined some of the key activities and recent successes, as well provided a summary of the priorities of the 2025 Action Plan.

Following the presentation, the Members received the following additional information in response to their questions:

- Public transport services were available to the site, with 3 bus services in operation;
- Although work experience take up for students was low to start with, in 2024, 12 places were awarded to students from Halton;
- There was collaboration with local companies and with schools but it was difficult to get into secondary schools due to their tight curriculums;
- John's team did have contact with the Lead Officer in the Council's 14-19 team, who assisted them with contacting secondary schools;
- It was challenging to get companies to adopt apprentices as a route to securing talent;
- Employees at the site came from a broad area, including Cheshire, Liverpool, Manchester and Wales, with some from Halton;
- A skills shortage existed in the whole of the UK not just in Halton; and
- Regarding future development of the site, it was felt that another access road would be needed.

Members were advised that a mapping assessment had been undertaken and professional advice stated that this was not needed.

Members comments on the future expansion of Sci-Tech Daresbury and the amount of additional infrastructure that would be needed to accommodate more companies and employees were noted.

Mr Leake was thanked for his informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments made be noted.

## ELS25 HALTON ADULT LEARNING SUMMARY – ACADEMIC YEAR 23/24

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an overview of the current services provided by Halton Adult Learning and provided a summary of the key performance indicators for the academic year 2023/24.

Halton's Adult Learning service delivered a range of accredited and non-accredited, community learning courses in Runcorn and Widnes, which aimed not only to improve residents lives, but also address the skills gaps in the Borough and across the Liverpool City Region (LCR). The service also delivered Family Learning in schools across Halton and co-ordinated the Pathways to Teaching Programme, on behalf of the LCR Combined Authority (LCRCA). Further, the Adult Learning team also co-delivered the Supported Internship Programme with Halton People into Jobs (HPIJ). This service aimed to improve the breadth of the curriculum offer in order to give adults within the Borough wider opportunities for development.

The overview included information on the following programmes:

- Maths, English and Digital Functional Skills;
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL);
- Education pathways;
- Test and Learn Programmes;
- Family Learning; and
- The Multiply initiative.

The report outlined the Adult Learning's performance and achievements. In relation to adult enrolments, these



had almost grown by 50% since 2021-22. Additionally, the retention rate overall across the service was good, at 91.1%. It was noted however, that there were concerns with the retention and achievement rates for Maths and English.

Members enquired about the promotion of the Adult Learning Service. This was done in the traditional way using brochures and flyers but it was also promoted by the staff running the service and on its Facebook page. The Family Learning Service was currently delivered by two qualified ex-primary school teachers.

In response to other questions, it was noted that funding for *Multiply*, a national initiative, would come to an end in March 2025. Also, clients were provided with feedback forms after using any of the services that came under Adult Learning.

Following a request, the e-version of the prospectus and the employer support information would be sent to the Board following the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and the curriculum intent and its alignment with the local skills context be noted.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

## ELS26 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2024/25

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 3 of 2024-25 (1 October 2024 to 31 December 2024) and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2024-25 were agreed by Members and for the various function areas reported to the Board as follows:

- Enterprise, Employment and Skills; and
- Community and Environment.

The report detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period. Members were invited to highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be provided to a future meeting of the Board.

Members requested that an item on the Council's

'Connect to Halton' service for the use of agency staff be brought to the next meeting of the Board.

The Chair announced that a site visit to The Brindley Theatre had been arranged on 4 March 2025 at 11am; a calendar appointment would be sent.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 3 performance management reports be received.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

#### ELS27 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2024

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which gave the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30 November 2024, together with the latest 2024-25 outturn forecast.

On 16 January 2025, Executive Board received the attached report and appendices, which presented details of Councilwide revenue and capital spending by each department and outlined the reasons for key variances from budget.

Executive Board has requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information. This is to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as outlined in the report be 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, 11 February 2025 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Begg, Fry, Garner, Goodall, C. Loftus, L. Nolan and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Davidson and Stretch

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, D. Nolan, H. Moir, D. O'Connor and S. Griffiths

Also in attendance: T. Leo – Halton Place, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside and two members of the public

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

*Action*

#### HEA27 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 were signed as a correct record.

#### HEA28 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following question was received:

Question:

Appendix 1 - the Quality Assurance Framework was approved and published in October 2024 to meet the Council's obligations under the Care Act 2014. Although the obligations under the care Act has been in place since April 2015.

What Quality Assurance Framework did the Council's quality assurance team use to mitigate risks that led to the Council's (the providers) failure to protect its residents across its own internal care homes prior to October 2024 (specifically from 2022-2024)? No Audits performed from 2022.

The Quality Assurance Team employs 2 part time quality

assurance officers - one of which has been off long term sick since 2021. The nominated person over all of the Council care homes had overall responsibility to protect services users from avoidable harm, and overall governance of the services owned by the Council.

I'd really appreciate if my response to my question, was in the public domain in the next minutes of the PBB. I feel it's in the public interest to know the failings that are occurring in our care Homes in Halton.

Response:

The question was received the day before the meeting at 1141 hours, so a response would be prepared following the meeting and sent to the member of the public.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

HEA29 HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES

The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting held on 9 October 2024, were submitted to the Board for information.

HEA30 EMPLOYER STANDARDS HEALTH CHECK SURVEY 2024

The Board received a report which presented the results from the Employer Standards Health Check Survey 2024. The survey was conducted at a national level between 16 February and 22 March 2024. The summary report was attached at appendix 1.

It was noted that the health check was conducted on an annual basis and this was the fourth year that it had been run nationally by the LGA, where Halton had taken part each time. Some key points were outlined for Members in the officers report, taken from the summary.

Members welcomed the results of the survey and that required standards were being met. It was noted that staff employed by the Council were preferred over agency staff, as this offered clients consistency and reassurance.

RESOLVED: That the report and appendix be noted.

HEA31 ADULTS PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a report from the Executive Director – Adult Social Care, which provided an annual

progress report from the Adults Principal Social Worker (APSW) showing how the role of social work supported the Council to meeting its priorities and objectives.

It was reported that the APSW was a statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014. The national guidance on the role and responsibilities had evolved and been updated and clarified over recent years. It was noted that the Principal Social Worker played a key role in representing and promoting the social work profession; the report listed some of the responsibilities that came with the role.

The report also outlined details of the strengths based approaches and practice training, which had been carried out over the past 12 months. Included were details of specialist training such as e-learning for all staff and webinars, in conjunction with the Learning Disability and Autism Programme.

Information on: present and future workforce development; the mental health 'Think Ahead' Programme; the LGA's Standards for Employers of Social Workers; the organisational health check and quality assurance, was also presented in the report.

In response to Councillor Fry's question on apprenticeships, it was announced that updated guidance had been issued in relation to apprenticeships eligibility criteria, which is encouraging for the Social Worker profession.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

HEA32 ADULTS PRINCIPAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adult Social Care, which presented the Principal Occupational Therapist's (POT) Annual Report.

Although the Adults Principal Social Worker (APSW) role was a statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014, at present there was no requirement in place for local authorities to have a POT, however Halton had one in post since January 2024. It was acknowledged by the ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) that having a POT to work alongside the APSW added diverse leadership within adult social care and had a positive impact on local populations.

The report outlined the role of occupational therapy, referral numbers, challenges faced, and culture and practice of the service and the current workforce. Members were referred to the appendix, which presented an anonymised case study for information.

Members agreed that the addition of the POT's post was a benefit to the service and welcomed the appointment.

The consensus of the Board was that the adaptation of homes, where possible, was preferable to people being admitted to hospital. It was commented that the Occupational Therapy Team was a stable workforce, and staff members had been employed at Halton for a long time. Although a challenging area to work in, they were creative and motivated and had the support of a good leadership team.

RESOLVED: That the report and appendix be noted.

HEA33 QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK FOR USE BY THE QUALITY ASSURANCE TEAM

The Board was presented with the Quality Assurance Framework that is used by the Quality Assurance Team; this was appended to the report.

This document brought together the process, methods and tools that the Quality Assurance Team (QAT) used to gather evidence and intelligence about Adult Social Care services that were commissioned for Halton. It was noted that these quality assurance activities supported the delivery of social care commissioned services, in meeting and exceeding contractual, regulatory and quality standards.

A summary of the purpose of the Framework and the services supported were provided. This included the role of Elected Members in the quality assurance process, through Councillor visits to care homes (Section 4.27).

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

HEA34 HOUSING ADAPTATIONS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE POLICY AND HOME ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Board received a report from the Executive Director of Adult Services, which presented the *Home Adaptations for Disable People Policy* and the *Home Assistance Policy*.

The Board was advised that the Home Adaptations for Disabled People Policy was the internal policy for staff for determining eligibility, approval and management of both minor and major housing adaptations requests. The Home Assistance Policy was the corresponding public facing document, required to be in place as per the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order (RRO) 2002.

The report provided Members with details of a recent review of the policies, using Government guidance published in March 2022 – *Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Delivery: Guidance for Local Authorities in England*.

Following Members discussion and scrutiny of the policies, the following additional information was provided:

- It was disappointing that the review had not included proposals for an increase on the £30k maximum DFG (Disabilities Facilities Grant) award for housing adaptations – a review was supposed to have taken place last year, but this was cancelled by Government;
- Concerns were raised that £30k does not go as far as it did when it was set years ago, so for some people this may not be enough to cover required adaptations and therefore push them into care homes;
- The fast track process for a DFG application took approximately 6 months from when the grant application is made;
- It was noted that only the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association had responded to the consultation, despite two reminders being sent. Members were curious as to why other charities had not responded;
- Top up loans were available to clients in certain circumstances;
- Discretionary support loans may be available for owner occupiers to cover contributions to adaptations or to cover a shortfall in funding. These charges were then placed against the property and recouped if the property was sold or transferred within 10 years;
- Housing associations do fund housing adaptations and were signed up to fund 50% of costs; and
- In the case of a private landlord not agreeing to adaptations to their property, the client would be supported to consider a house move.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

HEA35 PROPOSED CHANGES TO NHS FUNDED GLUTEN FREE PRESCRIBING

The Board considered a report from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Place Director for Halton, which informed of the proposals to commence consultation on the cessation of NHS Funded Gluten Free Prescribing across Cheshire and Merseyside.

It was noted that the ICB had a duty to engage with Local Authority Health and Overview Scrutiny Boards, so that confirmation could be sought as to whether the Scrutiny Boards believed that the proposal was a substantial development or variation (SDV) to NHS services. If this was confirmed by the Board, then the requirement for the ICB to formally consult with the Board would be triggered.

Members were referred to Appendices one and two – *Gluten Free prescribing paper to the Board of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICS* (28 November 2024); and *Cheshire and Merseyside Protocol for the establishment of Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements in Cheshire and Merseyside*.

Members discussed the proposals and after taking into consideration the fact that Halton was a deprived Borough; 141 patients were accessing the prescriptions; the demographics of this group of patients was unknown; and coeliac disease was a medical condition; it was agreed that the proposal to cease NHS funded gluten free prescribing represented a substantial variation.

The Healthwatch Co-optee requested the consultation to be available in other formats other than online, this would be addressed. It was also noted that all stakeholders that wished to be included in the consultation would be.

RESOLVED: That the Board confirms that the proposal to cease NHS funded gluten free prescribing represents a substantial development or variation.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

HEA36 SCRUTINY TOPIC 24/25 OUTCOME AND PLANNED TOPIC 25/26

The Board received the summary of evidence, Member conclusions and recommendations, relating to the Scrutiny Committee Review of NHS (Non GP) Community Services.

This topic was agreed by the Board in June 2024 and



between July and December, a scrutiny group met monthly to receive evidence from several contributors. Details of the membership, contributions and summary evidence was presented in appendix 1 – Scrutiny Recommendations Report. The recommendations proposed were also outlined in the report in paragraph 3.5.

The Board agreed that the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of NHS (Non GP) Community Services be approved.

Members had proposed two options for potential areas for security in 2025, as follows:

Mental Health Support – looking at how existing provision was meeting current demand and responding to predicted demand, and equality of access to services for marginalised or minority groups, covering both Adults and Children and Young People’s services; and

Access to Health Care – looking at equality of access, experience and outcomes across specific health care provisions for marginalised or minority groups (specific provisions to be identified, but including mental health and dentistry).

After discussion and consideration of a further suggested topic, oral health and dentistry, Members voted for the Mental Health Support topic group. A full topic brief would be developed and shared with Members at the next meeting. It was noted that an update on dentistry in the Borough would be requested for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of NHS (Non GP) Community Services be approved; and
- 2) the Board agrees that Mental Health Support is the scrutiny topic for 2025.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

#### HEA37 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2024

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which gave the Council’s overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30 November 2024, together with the latest 2024-25 outturn forecast.

On 16 January 2025, Executive Board received the

attached report and appendices, which presented details of Councilwide revenue and capital spending by each department and outlined the reasons for key variances from budget.

Executive Board has requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information. This was to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as outlined in the report be noted.

*Meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.*

**HOUSING AND SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 10 June 2025 at the Board Room, Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Fry (Chair), Carlin (Vice-Chair), Bramwell, Connolly, Garner, C. Loftus, A. McInerney, Ratcliffe and Teeling

Apologies for Absence: Councillor L. Nolan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, N. Goodwin, A. Plant and N. Renison

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
SAF1	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged that the Board had a busy agenda for the next 12 months.	
SAF2	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
SAF3	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
SAF4	ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2024 – MARCH 2025	
	Members considered the 2024-25 Annual Report from the Chair of the Board, which outlined the contributions made to the ongoing work of the Board. The Board had met four times during the year and the report set out the work carried out during the Municipal Year April 2024 to March 2025.	

The Chair and Deputy Chair thanked Councillor Norman Plumpton-Walsh, the outgoing Chair, for all his work and dedication to the Board.

Following discussions, some additional information was noted:

- Concerns were raised about the number of registered dangerous dogs in the Borough, many which have been seen off lead and without muzzles. The Chair confirmed that he was due to meet with the Police Crime Commissioner and would raise these concerns and feedback to the Board in due course. It was suggested that Royal Mail workers were able to help and identify addresses where the dogs live; further information about this would be provided to the Chair. Members were also advised that Neighbourhood Patrol Officers would also be able to provide some support;
- Another concern was the rising numbers of ketamine use. It was noted that this issue was discussed at length at the Children & Young People Policy and Performance Board and an event had been arranged to discuss. Members were also reassured that drugs and alcohol was a key priority for Public Health and information was being sent to schools and parents. In addition, the Safer Halton Partnership had funded a series of events to raise the awareness and dangers for schools. It was agreed that a briefing note about this would be sent to all Members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*Councillor Garner declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the following item; her partner was employed by Evolve, a subsidiary of Riverside Housing.*

#### SAF5 PRODUCTION OF A BOROUGH WIDE HOUSING STRATEGY – PROGRESS UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided a progress update on the new Housing Strategy for the Borough.

Following the approval for production of a new Housing Strategy at the Council's Executive Board in April 2024, Board members were advised that Arc4, a housing research policy specialist, had been commissioned to

Director of  
Community &  
Greenspaces

support the production process of the Strategy. This had commenced in September 2024 and consisted of two stages, the first being a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) which included a household survey of residents in Halton being undertaken.

The survey took place between November and December 2024 and was sent to 16,530 households. 1,620 useable responses were received (9.8% response rate). It covered 4 broad themes:

- Your home, neighbourhood and household;
- Housing history;
- Future housing requirements: whole household; and
- Future housing requirements: newly forming households.

The main purpose of the survey was to provide evidence to help assess housing need by type, size and tenure within different parts of the Borough.

The Housing Strategy was currently in the draft process (Stage 2) and once completed, an informal stakeholder engagement would be undertaken in June/July 2025, followed by a formal 6 week public consultation in July/August 2025; the final revisions and adoption was planned for September/October 2025.

Some concerns were raised by Members regarding housing standards and difficulties Ward Councillors had contacting the housing providers. Following discussions, the Chair agreed to contact the Chief Executive of Halton Housing regarding the matters raised and the Board agreed a focus on housing standards, as part of its responsibilities, moving forward.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) Note the progress of the new Boroughwide Housing Strategy; and
- 2) Promote participation the Stakeholder and Formal Public Consultation process.

#### SAF6 DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the following ongoing service developments in the Domestic Abuse Service:

- Domestic Abuse Strategy - this had been renewed until the end of 2026 and was appended to the report. The 4 strategic priorities remained the same and Strategy was approved by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board in April 2025;
- Domestic Abuse Partnership Board – Halton’s needs assessment required an update and this would be completed by the end of the year. This would inform the emerging from 2026 onwards;
- White Ribbon - the steering group signed off the action plan on 7 May 2025 and submitted to White Ribbon to complete the last stage of accreditation. A copy of the action plan was appended to the report for information; and
- Harm Reduction – the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office had secured additional resources for Halton to deliver a harm reduction initiative. This would include joint working with a number of agencies including health, housing, criminal justice agencies, drug and alcohol services and local authority departments. An evaluation report would be presented to the Board in due course.

Members acknowledged that it was pleasing to note the work being done and that action is being taken against domestic violence for all victims. Members also suggested that they would like to see a workforce policy for domestic abuse.

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

Director of  
Community &  
Greenspaces

## SAF7 COMMUNITY SAFETY & PROTECTION DIVISION

The Board received a report from the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the progress in the Community Safety and Protection Division. The report highlighted some key matters for the Board to note, that would progress over the next 12 months, in the following areas:

- Enforcement and CCTV – a report would be presented to the Executive Board in July and a piece of work was planned to invest in this area of work; the Board would receive further updates throughout the year;

- Emergency Planning - the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (also known as Martyn's Law) received Royal Assent on 3 April 2025. The regulator had been confirmed as the Security Industry Authority (SIA). A Halton working group had been set up to scrutinise the guidance to ensure the Council was compliant; and
- Devolution Arrangements – arrangements were progressing in Cheshire and Warrington and the anticipated implementation of a Mayor and Combined Authority was May 2026. A piece of work was being undertaken to consider a pan-Cheshire Community Safety Partnership in a devolved administration. The Board would be updated throughout the year on arrangements and how progress would impact on Halton.

Following discussions, some additional information was noted:

- Requests for CCTV in hotspot areas would be addressed outside of the meeting;
- Issues with electric bikes should be reported to the Police; and
- Concerns were raised about inappropriate comments on social media relating to various issues such as asylum seekers and refugees and the High Court's ruling on the definition of a "woman", under the Equality Act 2010. These were acknowledged, however, Members were reminded that it was not the Council's role to respond to comments on social media.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*Councillor Teeling declared a pecuniary interest in the following item; her sister worked as an agency nurse across various care homes.*

*Councillor Bramwell declared a pecuniary interest in the following item; her daughter was employed as a Social Worker by Halton Borough Council.*

SAF8 COUNCIL WIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 13 March 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and

capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast. The report also described the reasons for key variances from budget.

The Executive Board had requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information, to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as at 31 January 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

*Meeting ended at 8.01 p.m.*



**CORPORATE AND INCLUSION POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Corporate and Inclusion Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 3 June 2025 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Philbin (Vice-Chair) - in the Chair, Carlin, Davidson, Leck, Logan, McDermott, A. McInerney, C. Loftus and N. Plumpton Walsh

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Gilligan and McDonough

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, E. Dawson, P. Garnett, H. Hamlett, C. Hill, M. Reaney, G. Tootle and C. Westwood.

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
CS1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 21 January 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CS2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
CS3	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
	The Board was presented with the minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio, which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of the Board.	
	Members requested an update on the cessation of school meals and queried if there were still any schools who had not made alternative arrangements for the provision of school meals.	
	Members also questioned if assets such as cash registers and kitchen equipment were transferred to the new	

catering providers.

Officers agreed to provide Board Members with updates to these queries in due course.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

#### CS4 ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

The Board considered a copy of the Annual Report from the Chair of the Corporate & Inclusion Policy and Performance Board for 2024/25. The Board had met four times during the year and the report set out the work carried out during the Municipal Year April 2024 to March 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be noted.

*NB: Councillor Sian Davidson declared a disclosable pecuniary interest for the following item due to a family member being in receipt of pension benefits.*

#### CS5 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND – PROGRESS UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which outlined the final spend position regarding the delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025.

A spending plan (tranche 6) had been prepared and was attached as Appendix A. It was noted that £100,000 had been allocated to the Discretionary Support Scheme within the Benefits Division to process applications. As per Government guidance, it was intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners and people with disabilities.

Appendix B of the report contained detailed information relating to spending for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 (tranche 7). This included expenditure from partner organisations including Halton Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB); Widnes Foodbank; Runcorn Foodbank; Holiday Activity Food Programme; Affordable Warmth – Energy Projects Plus; and Halton Voluntary Action.

A Board Member raised a concern regarding the withdrawal of funding for the CAB and queried if they still had capacity. Officers confirmed that their funding was topped up in tranche 6 and no objections had been received to date.

RESOLVED: That the Board note:

- 1) the final position regarding the Household Support Fund for the period 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2025; and
- 2) the spending plan for the Household Support Fund for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

CS6 CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT 1ST APRIL 2024 TO 31ST MARCH 2025

The Board was provided with a report from the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which presented details of health and safety management within the Authority from 1 April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

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

The following information was also highlighted from the report:

- Reportable and significant accidents for employees were at a total of 10; a rise of 1 across all directorates;
- Near miss reports had fallen from 3 to 0;
- Two additional categories had been added to the report i.e. threats of violence and sexual harassment;
- 28 violent incidents had been reported; a rise of 7;
- Schools had reported 6 verbal threats, 33 physical incidents and 1 threat of violence. Members were reminded that these figures did not include academies or free schools; and
- The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (also known as Martyn's Law) received Royal Ascent on 3 April 2025. The regulator had been confirmed as the Security Industry Authority (SIA). A Halton working group had been set up to scrutinise the guidance to ensure the Council was compliant and updates would be included in future reports.

Members raised concerns that health and safety information and data regarding violent incidents, involving staff and pupils, was not readily available from Academy Trusts. Members were advised that despite various requests to the Academy Trusts, the Local Authority (LA) did not have access or receive reports regarding health and

safety or information relating to accidents or incidents. It was agreed that attempts would continue to be made to find a solution to this issue.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted including the recommendations and actions for 2025/26.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

CS7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2024/25

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 4 of 2024/25. The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets, and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period:

- Finance;
- Operational HR Division, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services; and
- Property Services.

Members were reminded that in September 2024, the Council entered into a joint venture with Commercial Services Group, a company wholly owned by Kent County Council. Connect2Halton, a council-owned company, was dedicated to recruiting employees. Members were reassured that this arrangement would be reviewed and monitored to determine its impact and any changes would be reported to the Board in due course.

In relation to one of the Council's milestones to vacate the Municipal Building, it was noted that a Member Working Group (led by Councillor Thompson) had been set up to look at this piece of work, however, this was currently on hold. Councillor Leck questioned who the Members of this group were and how could others feed into the debate. It was agreed that concerns would be fed back to the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, and an update would be provided in due course.

RESOLVED: That the 2024/25 quarter 4 performance management report be noted.

Executive Director  
Environment &  
Regeneration

CS8 COUNCIL WIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 13 March 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast. The report also described the reasons for key variances from budget.

The Executive Board had requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information, to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

Councillor Logan requested that the consideration be given to keep the Children's Centre at Windmill Hill open. It was agreed that the request would be taken forward with the Director of Education, Inclusion and Provision and the Board would be updated in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as at 31 January 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

Director -  
Education,  
Inclusion and  
Provision

CS9 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.

CS10 EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION: STAFF UNPAID LEAVE

The Board received a report from the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which outlined a proposed scheme for a Christmas closure, which utilised a variation of the previously proposed 4 days unpaid leave arrangements.

The report outlined the process which was undertaken, including the staff consultation and discussions with Members and Trade Unions. The outcome determined that a Christmas closure was preferred.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the report and consider the proposed scheme for a Christmas closure; and
- 2) endorse the recommendations to Executive Board for approval.

Corporate  
Director - Chief  
Executive's  
Delivery Unit

*Meeting ended at 8.03 p.m.*

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Audit and Governance Board held on Wednesday, 19 March 2025  
at the The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chair), Wall (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Begg, Connolly, Dourley, Gilligan, McDermott, N. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, G. Ferguson and M. Reaney

Also in attendance: L. Luddington - Grant Thornton UK LLP

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>AGB26 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>AGB27 STANDARDS UPDATE</p> <p>The Board considered a report of the Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer, which provided an update on Standards issues for the Municipal Year 2024/25. The Board had assumed responsibility for the work of the former Standards Committee in 2021 and it was agreed that a report on Standards issues would be brought each year.</p> <p>A verbal update was given on local matters that had been considered since the last meeting involving Councillors and those involving Parish Councils.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the report should be forwarded to Council for information, along with the minutes. In addition, a briefing note would be sent to all Councillors providing a Standards update, with a seminar to be arranged later in the year.</p>	

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

AGB28 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

The Board considered a report from Liz Luddington on behalf of the Council's external auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, which provided a progress update regarding preparations for their audit of the Council's 2024/25 year-end accounts, along with an outline of sector-wide developments. The Appendix outlined progress with preparations for the year-end audit, the value for money assessment, and also outlined some sector-wide developments of interest.

On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked Michael Green from Grant Thornton for all his previous audit work in Halton.

AGB29 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2025/26

The Board considered a report of the Head of Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, which sought approval for the planned programme of internal audit work for 2025/26.

A risk based Audit Plan had been prepared, designed to enable Internal Audit to deliver an overall opinion on the Council's risk management and control and governance arrangements. A copy of the draft Audit Plan for 2025/26 was attached as an appendix to the report. It outlined the role and scope of internal audit, how internal audit was resourced and delivered, reporting arrangements, and the planning methodology.

The Board was advised that the Plan served as a statement of intent but remained flexible to accommodate changes in the organisational risk environment and internal audit resources throughout the year.

Performance against the Audit Plan would be kept under review throughout the year and regular progress reports would be provided to the Board. Internal Audit would liaise as necessary with the Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, to minimise duplication and to ensure efficient and effective deployment of the overall audit resource.

Arising from the discussion, the Board requested further information on the Grant Finder app.



RESOLVED: That the Board approves the Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26.

AGB30 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 items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

AGB31 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received a report from the Head of Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, updating Members on the internal audit activity since the last progress report to the Board on 20 November 2024. It also highlighted any matters that were relevant to the Board's responsibilities as the Council's Audit Committee.

Members were referred to appendix one, which listed all the planned work for the year and its current status. The

schedule of audits had been updated to reflect the progress made in completing audits since the last update to the Board. Since the last report 20 audits had been finalised and one follow up audit had been completed.

Appended to the report were the executive summaries of the reports issued numbering 2 to 21, as listed in the report.

The Board discussed the recent audits and agreed that:

- Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board be requested to look at the policy regarding the removal of items from graves at the cemeteries, and the responsibility for improvements to the road within Widnes cemetery, which was currently unadopted; and
- their concern regarding the timescales to process applications for Education and Health Care Plans be passed to the relevant department.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Progress Report and comments made be noted.

*Meeting ended at 7.20 p.m.*

## AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Audit and Governance Board held on Wednesday, 4 June 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chair), Connolly (Vice-Chair), Abbott, V. Hill, Ratcliffe, Thornton and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, M. Murphy, S. Baker, G. Ferguson, S. Middlehurst and R. Rout

Also in attendance: L. Luddington and M. Derrick – Grant Thornton UK LLP

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

		<i>Action</i>
AGB1	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p>It was noted that Councillor Thornton would be appointed as a representative on the Transformation Board.</p>	
AGB2	CORPORATE RISK REGISTER REVIEW - MAY 2025	
	<p>The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, on the annual update of the Corporate Risk Register for 2025/26.</p> <p>The Board was advised that the Council recognised its responsibility to manage both internal and external risks as a key component of good corporate governance. The Risk Control Measures had been reviewed and updated in line with current charges within the Authority and as proposed by managers and internal stakeholders.</p> <p>It was noted that a new Risk Management Policy was in development which would be accompanied by a new risk register design. This was being completed over the summer</p>	

of 2025 and it was anticipated that it would be submitted to the Board in September 2025 for consideration and approval.

A Board Member raised an issue around vulnerable adults in social care and it was agreed that this would be reported back to the relevant department.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the review of risks mitigating actions be noted; and
- 2) the robustness of the Corporate Risk Register and the adequacy of the associated risk management arrangements be noted.

**AGB3 ANNUAL REPORT ON WAIVERS OF PROCUREMENT  
STANDING ORDERS**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, which set out the Council's arrangements for the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders and provided details of all the waivers approved in 2024/25.

The Board was advised that there were three procedures for the approval of requests to waive Procurement Standing Orders:

- Emergency Procedures;
- Non-Emergency Procedures (exceeding £100k)
- Non-Emergency Procedures (up to £100k)

The report detailed the advantages waivers can offer when used appropriately, the process for waiver requests including checks and confirmations and a summary of those waivers approved in 2024/25.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board confirms its assurance in the appropriateness of the processes followed for the approval of waivers to Procurement Standing Orders; and
- 2) the waivers of Procurement Standing Orders approved in 2024/25 be noted.

**AGB4 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND OPINION –  
2024/25**

The Board considered a report of the Head of Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, which summarised the work completed by Internal Audit during 2024/25, provided his annual opinion on the Council's risk management, control and governance processes and outlined how Internal Audit complied with the PSIAS throughout the year.

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) required the Head of Internal Audit to produce an annual report that included an overall opinion to support the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED: That the Board receives and notes this report as a source of independent assurance on the effectiveness of the Council's risk management control and governance arrangements during 2024/25.

AGB5 EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 – ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, which provided an update on the actions being taken to address the recommendations arising from the External Auditor's 2023/24 Annual Report (AAR) which was presented to the Board at its meeting on 25 November 2024. The AAR included two statutory recommendations, which given their importance were required to be approved by Council on 5 December 2024. In addition, the External Auditor highlighted a number of recommendations made for the previous year which were still being addressed.

An action plan had been prepared to manage the work being undertaken in response to the External Auditor's recommendations. The Board noted that good progress had been made in addressing all of the recommendations and the Appendix presented details of progress in relation to the Action Plan.

RESOLVED: That the progress update regarding the 2023/24 AAR Action Plan as presented in the Appendix be noted.

AGB6 EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN – 2024/25 YEAR-END

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, which set out the 2024/25 year-end Audit Plan, presented by the External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP.

The Board was advised that the External Audit Plan

was attached to the report and set out details of risks identified, their approach to the value for money conclusion and audit fees.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the External Audit Plan for 2024/25 year-end be noted.

AGB7 INFORMING THE EXTERNAL AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT

The Board considered a report by the Director of Finance, which presented for information the draft response provided to the annual letter to the Board from Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditors, regarding their year-end audit of accounts work.

The Appendix to the report outlined the draft responses provided to a number of questions contained in a letter from Grant Thornton, which it was proposed to provide to them in order to assist with their year-end audit of accounts.

RESOLVED: That the draft responses shown in the Appendix be provided to the Council's external auditors.

AGB8 DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, which sought approval of the draft 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The final version would be reported to the Board in September.

It was noted that the AGS, attached to the report at Appendix 1, provided an overview of the governance framework in place for 2024/25 and a Governance Review Action Plan Update. In addition, the AGS offered a transparent assessment of the Council's governance arrangements and the challenges it currently faced.

Once approved the AGS would be signed by the Council Leader and Chief Executive and published on the Council's website.

It was noted that there were eight areas previously identified for improvement last year and details of the actions taken were set out in the report, together with eight areas identified for the forthcoming year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 be approved.

AGB9 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 items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

AGB10 SIRO REPORT Q1

The Board considered a report of the Director of ICT and Support Services, that provided a quarter one update on the Council's overall Information Governance, Cyber Security and Data Protection risk. The report provided information on:

- Subject Access Requests
- Freedom of Information Requests
- Data Breaches
- Update on Cyber Security and the Cyber Assessment Framework

It was requested that a copy of the cyber assessment framework could be circulated to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and approved.

#### AGB11 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Head of Audit and Operational Finance, which provided an update on internal audit activity since the last progress to the Board on 19 March 2025. Members were referred to Appendix One, which listed all the planned work for the year and its current status. The schedule of audits had been updated to reflect the progress made in completing audits since the last update to the Board. By the end of April 2025, 87 days of audit work had been completed, which represented just over 8.3% of the total planned days for the year.

Appended to the report were the executive summaries of the reports issued numbering 2 to 12, as listed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Progress Report and comments made be noted.

*Meeting ended at 7.33 p.m.*



**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Tuesday, 4 March 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Bevan, C. Loftus and Philbin

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, A. Evans, A. Strickland, G. Henry and A. Blackburn

Also in attendance: 7 Members of the public

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

*Action*

**DEV74 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2025, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**DEV75 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.

**DEV76 24/00086/FUL & 24/00087/LBC - PROPOSED RESTORATION OF DARESBURY HALL AND COACH HOUSE TO ENABLE CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE, THE DEMOLITION OF VARIOUS BUILDINGS AND EXTENSIONS, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILD DWELLINGS IN THE HALL'S GROUNDS TO SUPPORT THE CONSERVATION OF THE DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS AT DARESBURY HALL, DARESBURY LANE, DARESBURY, WA4 4AG**

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

Prior to the presentation of the item, Officers provided the Committee with the following updates:

- In the summary table on page 8 of the printed agenda next to recommendation, the words grant 'outline' planning permission should read, grant 'full' planning permission;
- Page 18 – 33 no. additional market dwellings should read 31 no. additional market dwellings;
- The NPPF paragraph numbers set out in the report were superseded by the December republication of the NPPF. The report referenced paragraph numbers of the previous version of the NPPF consistent with the objection from the Georgian Group. Assessments of the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF were set out in the policy assessment section of the report at pages 30-33 of the printed agenda, and in the assessment Georgian Group objection set out at pages 37-48 of the printed agenda, and in full at appendix 2 of the report. The renumbered paragraphs were not considered to affect the overall assessment of Green Belt policy; and
- Both applications are required to be referred to the Secretary of State. In the case of the FUL application, this was to be referred for Green Belt protection reasons. In the case of the LBC this was to be referred for heritage protection reasons. As a result the recommendations will need to be amended to account for the delegated authority necessary to undertake this exercise.

Two applications were presented, a full planning application concerning new operational development at the Daresbury Estate and a Listed Building Consent application that sought changes to the appearance of the listed buildings on site.

The applications concerned an enabling development, a term used that sets out a justification for non-policy compliant development to achieve an aspirational aim, which in this case involved the restoration and preservation of a grade II\* listed heritage asset that was featured on the Historic England heritage at risk register since 2010.

It was noted that the Council had previously approved a similar scheme in 2009 but unfortunately, that scheme did not come forward. Since that time the Daresbury Hall estate had fallen into a significant form of disrepair and had been victim to a number of fires. The property today was in a

serious state of decay and was being propped by specialist scaffolding. Members were referred to the drone imagery set out on pages 19-22 of the printed agenda, which showed its current state of disrepair.

Officers advised that notwithstanding the objection of the Georgian Society, the scheme had been assessed by the Council's retained Heritage Advisor, Historic England and Daresbury Parish Council, who raise no objection to the development proposal.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Muir, a representative of the Applicant, who summarised the benefits of the proposal:

- The restoration of Daresbury Hall and coach house would enable the Grade II\* listed heritage asset to be converted to residential, ensuring its longevity for future generations;
- A robust and comprehensive assessment of the site was undertaken;
- A sensitive approach to redevelopment would apply, as per the Green Belt policies;
- A comprehensive ecological survey had been undertaken;
- The site would include naturalistic planting and new habitats;
- Sustainable construction practices would be adhered to;
- The local community would benefit from the enhancement of the site; and
- A landscaping and ecological management plan would be followed.

The Committee agreed that the proposals presented an opportunity for the redevelopment of this Grade II\* listed building that had laid derelict for a number of years. Each application was moved and seconded and the Committee voted unanimously to approve them.

24/00086/FUL

RESOLVED: That delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Transportation, to refer the matter to the Secretary of State and upon satisfactory resolution of the referral (for Green Belt protection reasons), that the application be approved subject to the following:

- a) S106 Agreement that secures the terms set out in the Legal Agreement section of this report;

b) Schedule of conditions set out below; and

1. Time limit;
2. Clarification of proposed development;
3. Approved plans;
4. Materials to be agree (RD3 and GR1);
5. Submission of existing and proposed site levels (GR1);
6. Tree protection measures (HE5);
7. Natural England bat licence (CS(R)20 and HE1);
8. Development to be undertaken in accordance with Bat mitigation plan Arbtech, 18 January2025, Issue 0.3 (CR(R)20 and HE1);
9. Submission of Bird Box Scheme – (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 10.Nocturnal species sensitive external lighting scheme (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 11.Reasonable avoidance strategy, construction phase ecological impacts (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 12.Statutory biodiversity metric assessment to secure: a conditions assessments and a habitat management plan (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 13.Development to be undertaken with landscape and ecological management plan (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 14.No tree felling or hedge removal in period 1 March to 31 August (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 15.Hedgehog highway scheme (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 16.Invasive species method statement (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 17.Site investigation study and site remediation plan (CS23 and HE8);
- 18.Site investigation unforeseen contamination condition (CS23 and HE8);
- 19.Site investigation verification submission (CS23 and HE8);
- 20.Daresbury Lane pedestrian link scheme details (C1 and C2);
- 21.Electric vehicle charging points scheme (C2);
- 22.Visibility splays (C1 and C2);
- 23.Submission of a cycle parking scheme (C2);
- 24.Verification of the sustainable urban drainage scheme (CS23 and HE9);
- 25.Surface water drainage verification submission (CS23 and HE9);
- 26.Dust management plan (construction phase) (HE7);
- 27.Working hours condition (HE7);
- 28.Waste management plan (WM8);
- 29.Post development future resident recycling plan

(WM8);

- 30. Post development and climate change strategy;
- 31. Sewage disposal (HE9);
- 32. Construction Management Plan (C1);
- 33. Limited construction hours (GR2);
- 34. Detail hard standing agreed (C2 and HE9);
- 35. Access constructed prior to occupation (C1);
- 36. Landscaping (GR1, GR3 and HE5);
- 37. Hedgerows retained or mitigation (CS(R)20 and HE1);
- 38. Acoustic mitigation (GR2);
- 39. Update structural report (HE1);
- 40. Soft tree felling technique for all trees to be removed (CS(R)20 and HE1); and
- 41. Tree retention root protection strategy (HE5).

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

24/00087/LBC

RESOLVED: That delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Transportation, to refer the matter to the Secretary of State and upon satisfactory resolution of the referral (for reasons of heritage protection), that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out below:

- 1. Time limit;
- 2. Approved plans (GR1);
- 3. Stone repair details (HE1);
- 4. Repair methodology (HE1);
- 5. Joinery and plasterwork details (HE1);
- 6. Fire protection details and strategy (HE1);
- 7. Schedule of materials (HE1);
- 8. Schedule of works (HE100);
- 9. Brick sample panel (HE1);
- 10. Acoustic separation details (HE1);
- 11. Aperture details (HE1);
- 12. Rainwater goods details; and
- 13. Damp proof course treatment prevention.

DEV77 24/00438/REM - APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS (SCALE, APPEARANCE, LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPING) FOR THE ERECTION OF 199 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS PURSUANT TO OUTLINE APPLICATION 22/00543/OUTEIA AT SANDYMOOR SOUTH PHASE 2, WINDMILL HILL AVENUE EAST, RUNCORN

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

The Committee was advised of the following updates since the publication of the agenda:

- The red line plans in the report pack had been updated, resulting in a slightly smaller site boundary to reflect to original outline boundary and remove the isolated area of land to the east of the rail line. This was a correction and was not considered to affect the determination;
- An updated Affordable Housing Strategy had been received which indicates provision of 50% affordable rent and 50% intermediate home ownership. The applicant had stated however, that they were still in discussion with the providers and the final split was yet to be agreed. An additional condition was therefore recommended to allow this to be resolved;
- The updated noise report had been received. The proposal for upgraded glazing and ventilation to be installed in bedrooms facing the railway line at certain properties was confirmed as acceptable;
- With respect to open space, the only deficiency identified within the neighbourhood was for children and young people and not the other deficiencies listed at page 125 of the printed agenda. The scheme was considered to offer sufficient provision in this regard; and
- Condition number two in in the recommendation should read *Detailing external finishing materials*.

It was noted that discussions were still ongoing with Highways officers and the LLFA to finalise the detailed layout and to confirm the final drainage strategy, hence the request for delegation.

One Member requested that the Committee be advised of the final split in relation to affordable housing, once this was agreed.

Following a vote, the Committee agreed that the application be approved, subject to the conditions below.

**RESOLVED:** That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning 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 drainage and highways.

Upon satisfactory resolution, that the application be approved subject to the conditions below and any additional conditions recommended through the resolution of the issues relating to drainage and highways:

1. Approved plans;
2. Detailing external finishing materials (GR1);
3. Site levels (GR1);
4. Submission and agreement of an updated LHMP (HE1);
5. Tree protection / arboricultural method statement (CS(R)21 and HE1);
6. Securing landscaping / detailed planting plan (GR1, GR2 and HE5);
7. Parking and servicing (C1 and C2);
8. Detailing play equipment/street furniture (RD4/GR1);
9. Detailing boundary treatment (GR3);
10. Permitted development removal – garages (GR1 and GR2);
11. Permitted development removal – Fences (GR1 and GR2); and
12. Securing an updated affordable housing strategy (CS(R)13).

#### DEV78 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following appeals had been received/were in progress:

**23/00194/FUL**

Proposed internal reconfiguration of existing dwelling and part double, part single storey extension at 62 Church Road, Hale.

**24/00125/FUL**

Proposed two storey pitched roof extensions to front and side, single storey flat roof rear extension and new roof over existing side extension and detached garage at Tileacres, 29 Hale Road, L24 5RB.

**24/00097/FUL**

Erection of two drive-thru units with 'drive-thru' facilities together with associated car parking, servicing and landscaped areas at Green Oaks Centre, Widnes.

**22/00569/OUT**

The Secretary of State has called in the planning application for the Heath Business and Technical Park, Runcorn. This would be considered at a Public Inquiry.

The following appeals had been determined:

**23/00200/FUL**

Proposed removal of existing conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension at Sexton Cottage, Daresbury **(DISMISSED)**.

**21/00711/FUL**

Proposed division of one flat into two flats on ground floor at Unit 5 Salisbury Street, Widnes **(DISMISSED)**.

*Meeting ended at 6.50 p.m.*



**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 7 April 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors S. Hill (Chair), Leck (Vice-Chair), Bevan, Carlin, C. Loftus, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, Rowe and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Polhill and Thompson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, A. Strickland, G. Henry, I. Dignall, A. Blackburn, C. Sturdy and C. Nixon

Also in attendance: Councillor Jones and 7 members of the public

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

*Action*

**DEV79 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**DEV80 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.

**DEV81 24/00458/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF 10 NO. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENTS AND 3 NO. TWO BEDROOM BUNGALOWS TO BE USED SOLELY AS SUPPORTED LIVING/EXTRA CARE UNITS INCLUDING ANCILLARY FACILITIES, PROVISION OF ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING ON LAND ON THE EAST SIDE OF CROW WOOD LANE, WIDNES, WA8 3PN**

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

Officers advised that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) had requested minor changes to the drainage information submitted. A drainage scheme with a satisfactory discharge rate had now been agreed between the Applicant and the LLFA to ensure the proposal was acceptable in terms of flood risk and compliant with Policy HE9 of the DALP.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Ellis, a neighbouring resident of 60 years, who objected to the proposal. He argued that:

- The entrance to the site was directly opposite to his property;
- The entrance to the site was on a bend in the road raising visibility and safety concerns;
- The road was not on a gritting route;
- St Patrick's Care Home would be building an extension soon which would increase the traffic volume; and
- Service vehicles would be entering and exiting the site so a different access road was needed.

In response to the highway concerns raised, Officers advised:

- That a visibility condition was applied;
- Crow Wood Lane was subject to a 20mph speed limit;
- The road was not heavily trafficked; and
- There had been no reported collisions on the road to date.

Approval of the application was moved and seconded and was unanimously approved by the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That the application is approved subject to the following conditions (all pre-commencement condition(s) have been agreed with the applicant:

1. Reason for decision;
2. Prior to commencement condition justification (GR1);
3. Standard Full Permission 1 (GR1);
4. Approved Plans (GR1);
5. External Facing Materials (GR1);
6. Standard Hours condition (GE2);
7. Site levels (GR1);
8. Visibility splays (C1);
9. Access road development (C1);
10. Details of cycle parking (C2);
11. Ground Contamination (CS23 and HE8);

12. Unidentified contaminated land (CS23 and HE8);
13. Tree protection measures (HE5);
14. Construction Environment Management Plan (CS(R)20 and HE1);
15. Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SUDS) (HE9);
16. SUDS verification (HE9);
17. Bird and bat boxes (HE1);
18. Breeding birds (HE1);
19. Soft felling techniques (CS(R)20 and HE1);
20. Site waste management plan (WM8);
21. Energy and sustainability (CS(R)19);
22. Landscaping (GR1, GR3 and HE5); and
23. Permitted Development removal (GR1 and GR2).

DEV82 25/00088/PRIOR - APPLICATION TO DETERMINE IF PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED FOR A CHANGE OF USE OF A BUILDING FALLING UNDER USE CLASS E INTO A MIXED USE, CLASS E AT GROUND FLOOR, AND TWO FLATS (CLASS C3) AT FIRST FLOORS AT 1-4 SALISBURY STREET, WIDNES

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

Members were advised that this was not a full application – it was a change of use under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class G of the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO). Therefore, there were only certain factors that could be considered when determining whether prior approval was required for the application. These factors were listed on page 39 of the report, (a) to (e). Additionally, to ensure that the first floor of the development fell into Class C3 dwellinghouse and to be compliant with Part G of the GPDO, the occupiers of each flat must be members of the same household.

The Committee was advised that the Applicant has submitted a Noise Impact Assessment report, which recommended that remedial works and acoustic enhancements would be required to alleviate the passage of noise between the ground and first floor, which the Council's Environmental Health Officer has agreed. The GPDO provides that the development would need to be implemented in accordance with the submitted information if the application was approved.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Ayres, who lived in a neighbouring property and spoke in objection to the proposal, on behalf of local residents and businesses.

He stated *inter alia* that:

- The residents opposed this proposal, as they did with the previous two applications for this site;
- The Applicant already owned 3 neighbouring properties in Salisbury Street that were rented out;
- The rear entrance to the property lead to the main Town Centre car park;
- There were no outside communal areas for the tenants;
- There was no refuse collection in Salisbury Street as it was too narrow for the bin wagons to enter;
- The development would have an impact on local residents in the community over parking provision as there was none – illegal parking was already taking place; and
- Derek Twigg MP had written to the Secretary of State with concerns over the proposal and objections from local residents.

Councillor Jones (local Ward Councillor) then addressed the Committee in objection to the proposals. He reiterated the neighbouring residents concerns and added *inter alia*:

- The roads around the site were restricted by double yellow lines, so the parking situation for residents would be exacerbated;
- There was no communal or outside space for residents to enjoy;
- Fly tipping already occurred in the area;
- The dignity of the Funeral Parlour business opposite should be considered; and
- The location of the proposal was inappropriate for the area, when considering neighbouring residents and being so close to the Town Centre.

*A member of the public, Mr Edwards, was registered to speak, but did not attend the meeting.*

In response to concerns over the absence of refuse collection services for the site, Officers advised that Waste Services had been consulted and had agreed to liaise with the Applicant to ensure the service would be provided.

Members discussed the concerns raised by the speakers on behalf of local residents and raised their own concerns with regards to fly tipping, parking provision and noise. Although they supported residents, it was noted that as this was a prior approval application, they was restricted

to the 5 conditions that could be considered, referred to above.

The application was moved and seconded and the Committee voted to approve the Application by majority vote.

RESOLVED: That prior approval is required and is given, subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the details submitted, and the addition of a condition resulting from the Noise Impact Assessment Report.

#### DEV83 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following applications had been received / were in progress:

**24/00125/FUL**

Proposed two storey pitched roof extensions to front and side, single storey flat roof rear extension and new roof over existing side extension and detached garage at Tileacres, 29 Hale Road, Hale, L24 5RB.

**24/00097/FUL**

Erection of two drive-through units with 'drive-thru' facilities together with associated car parking, servicing and landscaped areas, at Green Oaks Centre, Widnes.

**22/00569/OUT**

The Secretary of State has called in the planning application for the Heath Business and Technical Park, Runcorn. This will be considered at a Public Inquiry.

The following appeal had been determined:

**23/00194/FUL**

Proposed internal reconfiguration of existing dwelling and part double, part single storey extension at 62 Church Road, Hale. **DISMISSED**

*Meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.*

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**REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Wednesday, 12 March 2025 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott (Vice-Chair), Bramwell, Dourley, Fry, V. Hill, K. Loftus, A. McInerney, Stockton and Teeling

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Hughes

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Hesketh, W. Pringle, A. Strickland and C. Ward

Also in attendance: None

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

*Action*

**REG11 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2024, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

**REG12 INSTITUTE OF LICENSING - SUITABILITY GUIDANCE**

The Committee considered the contents of the report and that the information contained to be noted.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee note the report.

**REG13 TAXI LICENSING MATTER**

The Committee considered the proposed amendments to the current Taxi Ranks Order following a consultation exercise that had been undertaken with the Halton Taxi Trade, Cheshire Police and members of the public.

The Committee approved the proposed amendments to the current order.

RESOLVED: That:-

- 1) the information set out in the report and attached appendices were noted by the Committee;
- 2) the proposals set out in Appendix A to be referred to the Executive Board, with a recommendation for approval, subject to the Executive Board considering any representations which may be made in respect thereof; and
- 3) the Executive Board be recommended to authorise the Director, Legal and Democratic Service to fulfil all procedural requirements relating to the proposals contained within the report in accordance with Section 63 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

*Meeting ended at 6.52 p.m.*



**REGULATORY SUB COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Regulatory Sub Committee on Wednesday, 26 March 2025 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott and Dourley

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Hesketh, A. Strickland and C. Ward

Also in attendance: None

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

**REGS17 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9 December 2024, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

**REGS18 APPLICATION TO TRANSFER PREMISES LICENCE  
HOLLYWOOD PIZZA, 117 ALBERT ROAD, WIDNES, WA8  
6LB**

A meeting of the Regulatory Sub Committee (acting as Licensing Committee under the Licensing Act 2003) of Halton Borough Council was held at Municipal Building, Widnes on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 commencing at 3.30pm.

The meeting was held to hear a transfer application made under section 42 of the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of a Premises Licence at Hollywood Pizza, 117 Albert Road, Widnes.

In attendance were: -

1. Members of the Regulatory Sub Committee comprising Cllr Pamela Wallace (Chair), Cllr John Abbott and Cllr Eddie Dourley ('the Sub Committee')
2. Miss Riannon Perry – Director of Hollywood Pizza

- and Burgers Ltd ('the Applicant')
3. Kim Hesketh (Licensing Manager)
  4. Alex Strickland (Legal Adviser)
  5. Craig Ward (Licensing Enforcement Officer – to observe proceedings)

The hearing was triggered as a result of the representation from Cheshire Police on the crime and disorder/immigration issue, which was supported by statements from Home Office immigration officers.

After the Chair of the Sub Committee introduced the parties, the Legal Adviser outlined the procedure to be followed. The Licensing Manager presented the Licensing Report with appendices including the Application (Appendix A), Representation from Cheshire Police (Appendix B), together with supporting statements from immigration officers.

#### **1. Details of the application**

The application was to transfer the Premises Licence (which allows late night refreshment) from Ismael Aliyari to Hollywood Pizza and Burgers Ltd (see Appendix A of the Licensing Report).

#### **2. The Hearing**

The Applicant made clear that she had recently taken over the business from the current premises licence holder, Mr Aliyari and had paid cash for his interest in the business. The Applicant noted that a licence was necessary because it was serving late night refreshments after 11pm. The Sub Committee was informed that all fees had been paid in respect of the transfer application. The Applicant assured the Sub Committee that she carried out due diligence when purchasing the business and that she also did so in respect of the immigration status of workers at the premises and had previously removed some who did not have the right to work.

In response to questions from the Sub Committee, the Applicant confirmed that she had acted in good faith when purchasing the business and assured Members she would be mindful of immigration/work status issues of staff in the future.

The Police provided details of the joint operation at the premises that was carried out on 21 February 2025 and referred to the statements provided by Immigration Officers

at the Home Office.

Both parties summed up accordingly.

Before deliberations the Sub Committee went into closed session to hear from Cheshire Police about any intelligence that may be relevant. In the event, the Sub Committee concluded that there was nothing of relevance raised here that would impact on the deliberations.

### **3. The Determination**

The Sub Committee resolved to grant the transfer application.

### **4. Specific reasons for the Determination**

In making its determination, the Sub Committee had regard to the statutory licensing objectives, the statutory guidance and Halton Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy, as well as all representations made to the Sub Committee in addition to the Licensing Report.

The Sub Committee considered as follows:-

- i. Although the Sub Committee noted that there had been a significant joint operation between the Police and Home Office at the premises on 21 February 2025, which had identified a potential immigration offence, it gave substantial weight to the fact that there had to date been no prosecution for the offence, let alone any criminal conviction. Furthermore, although there was the potential for a civil penalty surcharge to be issued (which could be as substantial as £60,000), this would carry a number of rights of appeal, and to date, no such fine had been issued. The Sub Committee gave substantial weight to these points also.
- ii. The Sub Committee noted that the Home Office had chosen not to make a formal representation themselves in respect of this matter and had instead opted to rely on that made by Cheshire Police, by providing supporting statements. The Sub Committee concluded this had not assisted the case advanced to refuse the transfer application.
- iii. The Sub Committee gave some weight to the representation from Cheshire Police that the applicant 'may continue to employ' persons who have no right

to work in the UK, although it noted that a Premises Licence Review could deal with any such matter in the future if required, on the basis of relevant evidence presented.

- iv. The Sub Committee concluded that the case for refusing the transfer application on grounds of crime and disorder and/or immigration grounds had not been made out in this instance, and accordingly resolved to grant the transfer application.

5. **Time that the determination shall take effect**

Forthwith.

*Meeting ended at 4.36 p.m.*

**TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee on Friday, 14 February 2025 in the  
The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Fry and K. Loftus

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business:

Officers present: W. Pringle, A. Strickland and C. Ward

Also in attendance: None

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

*Action*

**TLSC31 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2024, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

**TLSC32 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

The Committee considered:

- 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Committee during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

#### TLSC33 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

Case: 786

RESOLVED: That the restricted Single Status Drivers Licence be revoked.

*Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.*

**TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee on Wednesday, 26 February 2025 in the Bridgewater Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott and Hughes

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Hesketh, W. Pringle, A. Strickland and C. Ward

Also in attendance: None

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

*Action*

TLSC34 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Committee considered:

- 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Committee during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

TLSC35 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

Case: 787

RESOLVED: That the restricted Single Status Drivers Licence be issued with a written warning, to remain on file for 12 months.

*Meeting ended at 10.51 a.m.*



**APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Appointments Committee held on Thursday, 29 May 2025 at the Halton Stadium, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Dennett, Thompson and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Wharton, Davidson and Ratcliffe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Young and H. Hamlett

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

*Action*

**APC1 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2024, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and agreed as a correct record.

**APC2 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

The Committee considered:

- 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Committee during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 4 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

APC3 STAFFING MATTER

The Committee considered a report that set out a proposed approach to the selection and appointment of an Interim Chief Executive (incorporating the role of Head of Paid Service and Acting Returning Officer) for a fixed period, pending a permanent recruitment process.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approves the recommended approach set out as Option 1 in the report.

Chief Executive

*Meeting ended at 1.26 p.m.*