

Minutes

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

**Wednesday, 22 October
2025**

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COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 9 July 2025 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Abbott, Ball, Begg, Bevan, Bramwell, Carlin, Connolly, Dennett, Davidson, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hughes, Hutchinson, Jones, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, A. Lowe, McDermott, McDonough, A. McNerney, T. McNerney, Nelson, L. Nolan, P. Nolan, Philbin, Polhill, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Rowe, Ryan, Stockton, Skinner, Teeling, Thompson, Thornton, Wainwright, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Baker, Dourley and Stretch

Absence declared on Council business: None

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

Also in attendance: None

*Action***COU17 COUNCIL MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16 May 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU18 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- i. Civic Sunday had been held on 29 June at St Michaels & All Angels Church. The Mayor thanked all those who attended; and
- ii. delegates from the Kwangmyung Presbyterian Church in South Korea had been welcomed by the Mayor on a visit to Runcorn Town Hall. They had presented the Mayor with a gift as a thank you.

COU19 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader in his report to Council:

- Provided an update on the Adult Social Care Care Quality Commission Assessment outcome. The assessment had taken place between 17 – 19 March

2025. The Leader announced that the service had been rated as **Good**. He thanked everyone, staff and partners who had worked to make this judgement possible;

- Provided an update on the Children Services Ofsted Inspection;
- Congratulated Mary Murphy, Principal at Cronton College who had honoured in the recent King's Birthday Honours List and awarded an OBE;
- Reported that Staff Survey results had been collated and on the measure of satisfaction among staff, 78% said they were satisfied or very satisfied in their job; and
- Reminded Members that this was Stephen Young's last full Council meeting as Chief Executive. On behalf of the Council the Leader thanked Stephen for his work and support over the past three years and he wished Stephen well for the future.

COU20 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board meetings on 25 February, 13 March, 17 April, 13 May and 12 June 2024.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU21 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 12 March 2025.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU22 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

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

COU23 RECOMMENDATION OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT TO THE POST OF INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICES

Council was asked to consider the attached report.

RESOLVED: That Council considers the recommendation of the Appointments Committee and:

- 1) appoints Mr Richard Rout as Interim Chief Executive with effect from 1 September 2025 until the date the

Head of HR
Operations

new Chief Executive commences in post; and

- 2) the Interim Chief Executive has;
 - a. the full authority of the Chief Executive with effect from 1st September 2025 until the date the new permanent Chief Executive commences in post.
 - b. the full authority to exercise the delegations of the Chief Executive with effect from 1st September 2025 until the date the new permanent Chief Executive commences in post.

COU24 ELECTORAL MATTERS

Council was asked to consider the attached report.

RESOLVED: That Council appoint Richard Rout to carry out the Electoral Registration Officer functions for the registration of Parliamentary and Local Government Electors and the Returning Officer functions for Parliamentary, Local, Parish, Combined Authority Mayoral, Police and Crime Commissioner Elections and Referenda under all relevant legislation and to act as the Proper Officer for all related functions and relevant legislation with immediate effect until a further decision of the Council.

Chief Executive

COU25 AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION TO ENABLE ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (SINGLE USE VAPES) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2024

Council was asked to consider the attached report.

RESOLVED: That Council approve that the powers granted to the Council as a Regulator under the Environmental Protection (Single Use Vapes) (England) Regulations 2024 are delegated to the Director of Public Health and that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

Director, Legal and Democratic Services

COU26 CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS (EXB 7 REFERS)

The Council 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: That

- 1) the proposals set out within the report be approved;
- 2) Council is 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
- 3) delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to prepare and approve all necessary documents, contracts and funding arrangements required to complete proposed works.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

COU27 NEW CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES POLICY & PERFORMANCE BOARD (EXB8 REFERS)

The Council 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 appoint Stuart Smith OBE to 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

COU28 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

The Council considered the reports of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 16 May 2025:-

- Local Economy;
- Health and Social Care;
- Housing and Safer;
- Corporate and Inclusion; and
- Audit and Governance.

COU29 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of Council on 17 May 2024:-

- Development Management;

- Regulatory
- Taxi Licensing Sub Committee;
- Regulatory Sub Committee; and
- Appointments

Meeting ended at 7.06 p.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 10 July 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: S. Young, M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke and R. Rout

Also in attendance: None

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

Action

EXB13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB14 PLAN FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND, RUNCORN

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the Plan for Neighbourhoods (PfN) funding programme.

In the 2024 Spring Budget the then Government announced Phase 2 of their Long-Term Plan for Towns programme which identified Runcorn as one of the 20 additional towns across the country which would benefit from an allocation of £19.5m to invest over a 10-year period in local priorities.

It was reported that in March 2025, the Long-Term Plan for Towns was renamed Plan for Neighbourhoods by the new Government and the timeline for commencing delivery was pushed back to April 2026. The intention remained that the £19.5m funding over a 10-year period

would deliver a range of interventions. A full list of Sub-Interventions was provided at Appendix 1, Terms of Reference as Appendix 2 and a List of Organisations represented on the Board as Appendix 3.

The report outlined the development timeline of a Regeneration Plan which must be submitted to the Ministry - Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by 28 November 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) acknowledge the new name of the Board – Runcorn Town Neighbourhood Board as directed by MHCLG/central Government;
- 2) note the updated Terms of Reference to reflect the change of name and requirements of the new Plan for Neighbourhoods directive;
- 3) note the updated list of interventions (funding themes); and
- 4) note the timeline for submission of key documents to MHCLG and for delivery.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB15 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025

The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as at 31 May 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

A summary of spending against the Council's revenue budget as at 31 May 2025 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net revenue spending as at 31 May 2025 was £1.1m over budget.

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

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Executive Directors continue to implement the

Director of
Finance

approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 3;

- 2) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the council wide forecast outturn overspend position; and
- 3) 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.

**CORPORATE SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT
LEARNING AND SKILLS AND COMMUNITY
PORTFOLIOS**

EXB16 HEALTH AND LEISURE IN HALTON

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that requested the Board to consider the relationship between increasing the cost of the local authority leisure facilities to residents and the potential impact on health inequalities in the Borough. The Board was also asked to consider if it wished to subsidise leisure activities for certain groups in the Borough. Options for how this could be implemented were outlined in the report together with a request from Halton Walking Football Club.

As health is the number one priority for Halton it was proposed that a temporary subsidy be put in place as stated in the report to allow existing groups to continue to be active but with the following recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) as being active is a key factor to promoting health and wellbeing in the Borough the full subsidy amount should be allocated by contribution from Public Health;
- 2) to ensure fairness and consistency all groups who meet the criteria as set out in the report will receive a standardised 50 per cent discount; and
- 3) the Portfolio Holder for Employment Learning, Skills and Community Portfolio Holder be regularly updated on the status of discussions with the groups in receipt of the subsidy and the nature of support being

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

provided by Sports Development. This ensures transparency and accountability whilst tracking progress toward the goal of enabling groups to become self-sustaining.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB17 HIGHWAY STRUCTURES MAJOR MAINTENANCE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to proceed with the procurement of major maintenance works to key structures on the Runcorn Busway (Shopping City North Viaduct) under the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme using the SCAPE Framework.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the Director Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to be delegated to deal with any matters relating to the procurement and delivery of the scheme to refurbish the Shopping City Busway Viaduct (North) and associated structures.

Director -
Planning and
Transportation

EXB18 PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES FOR CAPITAL FUNDED HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to proceed with the procurement services for the delivery of capital funded highway improvements across the Borough. The current contract was due to expire on 5 August 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve a procurement process to secure a delivery contractor for capital funded highway improvement works.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB19 HOME-BASED RESPITE CARE SERVICE IN HALTON - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adults, that sought approval for a Non-Emergency Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (iv) of part 3 Procurement Standing Orders, to allow the granting of an extension to the current contract in place for the provision of the Home-Based Respite Care Service in

Halton, to be delivered by Care at Home Group Limited for a further 2-year period from 19 October 2025 to 18 October 2027.

Reason(s) for Decision

Approval of the extension to the current contract to Care at Home Group Limited for a 2-year period would support continuity of care for a vulnerable client cohort and allow for sufficient time to undertake a new procurement process for the service.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Allow the Home-Based Respite Service to cease.

Implementation Date

The 2-year extension to the contract would take effect from 19 October 2025.

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 the contract extension for the provision of the Home Based Respite Care Service in Halton delivered by Care at Home Group Limited for the period from 19 October 2025 to 18 October 2027.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

EXB20 REPORT BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive, which notified Members that the Local Government Ombudsman had issued a report against the Council following an investigation of a homelessness case. A copy of the report was attached.

RESOLVED: That the report and the actions taken to address the issues raised by the Ombudsman be noted.

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO

EXB21 PROPERTY POOL PLUS POLICY AMENDMENTS AND FUTURE DELIVERY OPTIONS - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Adults, that sought approval for the implementation of several changes to the Property Pool Plus Housing Allocations Scheme. The report set out details of

the three significant changes, and a number of minor policy changes to the Scheme.

The Scheme was currently jointly administered across the five Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral. Halton Housing had maintained the housing register and allocations contract for many years.

It was noted that the contract was due to cease in March 2026 and it was now necessary to consider the future validity of the administration of the Scheme.

Reason(s) for Decision

To ensure that the Allocations Policy is in line with current legislation case law, good practice, and meets local priorities it is necessary to periodically update and review the current iteration. The existing scheme has been in operation since January 2024.

The changes being proposed fall into three categories: three significant changes to assist the participating local authorities to respond more effectively to the demand on for social housing, minor policy changes that will impact a relatively small number of applicants; minor changes to improve clarity.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The option to continue to operate the current scheme policy without change has been considered but discounted due to the need for the Council to improve its ability to meet housing need in the area and to respond to the increased demand on homelessness services and associated temporary accommodation pressures.

Implementation Date

The Property Pool Plus Housing Allocations Scheme is a jointly administered scheme across the five Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral. Each Local Authority will seek approval from their respective Management Boards, with a view that the policy will be implemented July/August 2025.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) the Board approve the proposed changes to the

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Housing Allocations Scheme Policy (Property Pool Plus); and

- 3) the relevant Policy and Performance Boards be requested to review Property Pool Plus Housing Allocation Scheme during the current year.

EXB22 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.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB23 TRANSPORT OPERATOR'S LICENCE

The Board considered a report that provided information on the requirements pertaining to the Council's Transport Operators Licence and the preparation for the renewal of the Licence in December 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the recommendations contained within Appendix 1 of the report.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO

EXB24 KINGSWAY QUARTER REDEVELOPMENT, WIDNES - KEY DECISION

The Board received an update report on the proposed redevelopment of the Kingsway Quarter, Widnes and options to progress the project.

Reason(s) for Decision

The development will be significant in terms of its positive effects on communities in and around Widnes Town Centre.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Alternative Options are outlined in sections 3.11 -3.14 of the report.

Implementation Date

1 October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the current position and agree to option 4 as outlined in section 3.14 of the report. Officers are instructed to undertake further work to ascertain the respective merits and constraints associated with progressing this option;
- 2) agree that the appointment of a development partner for the site is delegated to the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Major Projects (Deputy Leader) and Housing and Environmental Sustainability;
- 3) authorise the Director for 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; and

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

- 4) receive further progress reports which will be provided to the Executive Board, as required.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB25 ACCOMMODATION REVIEW UPDATE REPORT - KEY DECISION

The Board received an update on the review of the Council's accommodation and requested that Members advise on their preferred option and approach.

Reason(s) for Decision

To promote and deliver an effective use of the Council's accommodation.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

An options assessment is contained in the report.

Implementation Date

1 October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the current position with the accommodation review;
- 2) agree the preferred option, (option 1b); and
- 3) progress discussions with relevant stakeholders as outlined in sections 3.24 of the report.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB26 COMMUNITY MEALS : REVIEW AND FUTURE OPTIONS - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Adults, that sought approval to cease the provision of the Halton Community Meals Service during the financial year 2025/26.

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision impacts on all wards and communities within the borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A range of alternative options for meals provision will be considered for current recipients of Community Meals on an individual basis during 2025/26.

Implementation Date

It is proposed that the Community Meals service will cease on or before 31 March 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves cessation of the provision of the Halton Community Meals service during the financial year 2025/2026, as per 3.11, 3.12 and 3.13 of this report.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB27 PUBLIC SURVEILLANCE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval for capital investment to upgrade the Council's CCTV and public surveillance infrastructure.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Council be asked to approve inclusion in the capital programme, a scheme of works and £500k investment to address CCTV infrastructure, software and hardware as outlined in the body of the report; and
- 2) authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services to prepare tender documents to procure this work.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

MINUTES ISSUED: 18 July 2025

CALL-IN: 25 July 2025 at 5.00 pm.

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

Meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 11 September 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: E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, Z. Fearon, G. Cook, G. Ferguson, R. Rout, D. Cooke and L. Wilson-Lagan

Also in attendance: None

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

Action

EXB28 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB29 URGENT DECISION

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

EXB30 NEW RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Board was presented with a revised Risk Management Policy which had been drafted in conjunction with Zurich Municipal, the Council's insurers. The aim of the Policy was to provide direction and alignment to current Risk Management processes across the Council Directorates.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the updated Risk Management Policy, with the changes outlined in Section 3.3 of the report.

Interim
Executive

Chief

EXB31 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

The Board considered a report that set out the development of the Council's new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, a copy of which was attached as an appendix. The Policy set out in detail how the Council met its duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

RESOLVED: That the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy be approved.

EXB32 2025/26 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JULY 2025

The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as of 31 July 2025, together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

A summary of spending against the operational revenue budget position as at 31 July 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 July 2025 was £1.629m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimated that net spend would be over the approved budget by £5.572m. It was noted that the forecast position remained a matter of great concern and action needed to be taken to reduce net spend immediately.

The report detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 July 2025 it remained unchanged from the previous period at £5.149m.

Members were advised that Council had previously approved the capital programme for 2025/26 at its meeting

on 5 March 2025. Since then, the capital programme had been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes had been developed. Appendix 4 brought all the separate elements together and outlined the Council's total planned capital programme expenditure.

RESOLVED: That

Director of
Finance

- 1) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 3;
- 2) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to ensure the Council wide forecast outturn overspend position for the year remains within budget;
- 3) the 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; and
- 4) Council be asked to approve the revisions to the capital programme set-out in paragraph 3.24 and incorporated within Appendix 4.

EXB33 MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2026/27 – 2030/31 - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, which included an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFS) for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy set out the five-year projection of the Council's resources and spending and was based on the most recent information that was currently available. The forecast showed that it was vital that a significant level of budget saving were achieved over the next five years, the scale of which would be extremely difficult to implement.

It was noted that the Government had confirmed that there would be significant and wide-ranging changes introduced to the local government finance system in 2026/27, known as the Fair Funding Review. The aim of the review was to target funding where it was most needed by using updated funding formulae to determine the different needs and costs faced by individual authorities, as well as their ability to raise revenue locally through Council Tax. A

consultation was issued in June with a closing date of 15 August 2025. The potential impact of the Fair Funding Review for Halton was set out in Medium Term Financial Strategy at Appendix 1.

Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2026/27 to 2030/31.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The alternative option of not maintaining a MTFS had been considered. However, this would not follow good financial management practice, as the MTFS was a key element in informing the Council's financial planning and budget setting processes.

Implementation Date

1 April 2026.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Medium-Term Financial Strategy presented in Appendix 1, be approved;
- 2) the 2026/27 base budget be prepared on the basis of the underlying assumptions set out in the Strategy;
- 3) the Reserves and Balances Strategy presented in Appendix 2 be approved; and
- 4) the award of Council Tax Support for 2025/26 remains at the 2025/26 level of 21.55%.

Director of Finance

EXB34 FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN

The Board considered a report of the Director - Finance, which outlined the Council's Financial Recovery position and provided options for the Council to achieve a sustainable budget position by the year 2030/31. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) showed that based upon current levels of spend, income and forecast growth in service costs and demand across the Council, by 2030/31 the cumulative deficit or funding gap on the Council's budget would have reached £118.613m. The position was unsustainable, and action must be taken over the MFTS period to ensure the Council had a balanced budget position by 2030/31 at the latest, removing the

dependency upon Exceptional Financial Support. The report set out proposals regarding action that must be taken to ensure this was achieved.

In addition to the financial forecast included with the MTFS, the report provided a summary of two scenarios with a potential budget deficit position for each. Executive Directors were asked to take immediate action to identify the savings, cost control and income generation proposals identified under scenario B.

Members were also provided with detailed information on a benchmarking exercise undertaken to review the Council cost base across a number of services and this was compared to its nearest neighbour group.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) benchmarking information be used to start the process of setting departmental budget reductions for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31;
- 3) Executive Directors supported by the Transformation Delivery Unit provide options for the Transformation Board, regarding how budget reductions on the scale outlined within this report might be achieved, along with details of the associated service delivery implications; and
- 4) Executive Directors identify specific budget savings proposals to be implemented from 1 April 2026 as a matter of urgency, utilising the template in Appendix B, in order to support setting the 2026/27 budget.

Director of Finance

EXB35 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

The Board considered a report from the Director – Finance, which presented the Treasury Management Annual Report 2024-25.

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

Information was provided on the economic outlook, interest rate forecast, borrowing and investments, budget monitoring, new long-term borrowing, policy guidelines and treasury management indicators. The Council's approved

Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2024-25 were set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and was attached as Appendix one.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB36 CARE EXPERIENCED AS A 'PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC'

The Board received a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services, that outlined the need to recognise children in care and care experienced young people as a locally protected characteristic under the Equalities Act to promote lifelong care and protection for this group of young people. It was aimed to end the discrimination that young people faced when presenting to other services and partnerships, as well as to ensure that all policies ensured consideration for this group of young people under a protected characteristic to prevent discrimination.

RESOLVED: That the Board agree that the Council recognises the 'Care Experienced' as a protected characteristic.

Executive Director
of Children's
Services

EXB37 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN (ANNUAL UPDATE)

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services, which presented an annual refresh of the Youth Justice Plan for the sub-regional Youth Justice Service. This was in compliance with the Youth Justice Board Guidance (Ministry of Justice) and Regulation 4 of the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.

Halton had a shared service arrangement for Youth Justice Services with the other three Local Authorities in the sub-region and as such the Governance arrangements for Youth Justice were overseen by a pan Cheshire Partnership Management Board. In line with legislative requirements the updated Youth Justice Plan had been refreshed and was attached as Appendix 1. The Plan included comprehensive performance data updated for the 2024/25 financial year and was produced in partnership with Cheshire Police and other statutory partners following consultation with service users.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board notes the update on performance and

Executive Director
of Children's
Services

progress made against priority areas during the financial year April 2024 to March 2025 set out in the refreshed and updated Youth Justice Strategic Plan for Cheshire (attached as Appendix 1); and

- 2) approves the content of the 2025-26 Youth Justice Strategic Plan for Cheshire and agrees to it being presented to Council for approval.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB38 HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ADULT SOCIAL CARE - CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Adult Services that provided details of the outcome of the Council's Adult Social Care CQC Assessment. The assessment process officially began back in October 2024 and culminated in an onsite CQC visit that took place 17 to 19 March 2025. The final report was published on 4 July 2025 and was attached as Appendix 1. Halton's Adult Social Care Services had been rated overall as Good. An Improvement Plan had been developed and was attached as Appendix 2.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the contents of the report and associated appendices.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB39 DOMESTIC ABUSE ACCOMMODATION

The Board considered a report that sought 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 SHAP (St Helens Accommodation Project) to deliver on behalf of the Council, the Domestic Abuse Supported Accommodation Service, for a period of one year from 11 January 2026 to 10 January 2027.

The request for authorisation of a waiver rather than implementing a tender process was due to the following:

- the current service was well known and performing well and met all required expectations. In the current situation it would be difficult for a new provider to become established as it was a specialist provision; and

- the contract delivered on a statutory duty to provide refuge accommodation, there could be no gap in service provision.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the contract with SHAP that expires on 10 January 2026 to be extended for 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
Environment &
Regeneration

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB40 DCBL STADIUM - NEW PAVA SYSTEM AND STRUCTURAL STEEL MAINTENANCE WORKS AND PITCH REPLACEMENT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, that sought Member approval to proceed with necessary works to the Public Address Voice Alarm (PAVA) System, the Structural Steelwork Repairs and replacement Pitch at the DCBL Stadium as identified in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Capital works identified in the report in sections 3.3 to 3.6 be approved;
- 2) consideration be given to the options outlined in paragraph 5.4 below regarding how the annual capital financing costs might be funded;
- 3) Council be asked to add works to the capital programme and include a financial contribution of £1.325m, subject to further work to establish detailed costs, and to proceed with an option to include the implementation of a PAVA system and undertake steel repairs to four stands only. This is to ensure the ongoing safety of the public when using the premises. A decision on options relating to the pitch to be deferred; and
- 4) approval of the detailed costs and the option to be undertaken, be delegated to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Employment Learning, Skills and Community and the Portfolio Holder for

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Community Safety.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB41 REVIEW OF THE MERSEYSIDE AND HALTON JOINT WASTE LOCAL PLAN

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the review of the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (JWLP). The JWLP set the framework for waste related planning.

It was noted that the 2025 JWLP document reviewed the original 2013 policies to understand whether they were fit for purpose and in line with Local and National Policy. The report concluded that most of the policies in the plan remained fit for purpose. A copy of the review of the JWLP was attached as an Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the review and accepts the outcome of the review of the Joint Waste Local Plan.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EXB42 WASTE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, that provided an update on a number of matters in relation to the Council's Waste Management Services, including options to help meet legislative requirements, proposed contractual arrangements for the processing of collected recyclable materials, proposed recycling collection methodologies and potential financial implications were known at this stage.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) endorse that the Council provides to the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority, as outlined commitment for Halton to be included in their procurement of new Waste Management and Recycling Contract arrangements that are to be introduced from 2029;
- 2) approve that, following the introduction of food waste collections in 2026, Halton's collected food waste is managed by the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority under the terms of the Waste Management and Recycling Contract;

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

- 3) approve that the Council collects 'Additional Materials' for recycling as part of household kerbside collections from 2026, at temporary additional cost, until the new Merseyside Recycling the Waste Authority Waste Management and Recycling contract is in place;
- 4) endorse that the Council retains a co-mingled recycling collection system from 2026 onwards (subject to a TEEP Assessment being carried out);
- 5) approve that the Council introduces the additional resources required to deliver a comprehensive, local waste communications and education campaign, and also approves the required expenditure to do so; and
- 6) delegated authority be given to the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Environment and Urban Renewal Portfolio Holder, to take any decisions as may be necessary as part of Halton's inclusion in the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authorities re-procurement exercise of the Waste Management and Recycling Contract.

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIOS

EXB43 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - REMOVAL OF PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE FROM USE CLASS C3 (DWELLING HOUSES) TO C4 (HMOS) - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to remove the permitted development rights for the change of use from Use Class C3 (dwelling houses) to C4 (HMOS). The report advised that Local Planning Authorities had the power, in exceptional circumstances, to withdraw permitted development rights through the making of an Article 4 direction. This meant that deemed planning permission would not be granted automatically and an application needed to be made to the Council. It did not prohibit development but enabled the Council to have some control over the proposed development and to apply its own policies.

The report set out the type of Article 4 directions, the proposed local areas where it was required, together with evidence and justification, the procedure and the timescales

involved to obtain Article 4 direction.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the making of an immediate Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the change of use from Use Class C3 (dwelling houses) to C4 (HMOs) as set out at Appendix 4 be approved;
- 2) the required notifications as set out in the report and the publication of a public notice as shown in Appendix C be authorised;
- 3) following notification and consultation, the matter is brought back to the Board to consider any consultation responses and make a decision on whether to confirm the immediate Article 4 Direction;
- 4) authority is delegated to the Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Sustainability to amend the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to include the making of the article 4 direction; and
- 5) it was noted that this proposal is a key decision which has not been included on the Council's Forward Plan and the procedure set down in Rule 16 of the Access to information Procedure Rules of the Constitution have been followed.

Director -
Planning and
Transportation

EXB44 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.

EMPLOYMENT LEARNING AND SKILLS AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB45 SUSTAINABILITY OPTIONS FOR HALTON PEOPLE INTO JOBS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval for a sustainable funding option for the Council's Halton People Into Jobs Service when existing funding streams came to an end in March 2026.

RESOLVED: That the proposed sustainable funding option outlined in the report be approved.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB46 VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Interim Chief Executive, that provided details of options for the introduction of a Voluntary Severance Scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the options contained in the report in relation to Voluntary Redundancy approvals and the introduction of a Voluntary Severance Scheme; and
- 2) acknowledge that further work to draw up an operational scheme would be required and a report would be brought back for consideration and approval.

Interim Chief
Executive

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB47 FUNDING FOR EXTENSION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services, that set out a proposal for a loan agreement to build an extension on a property to accommodate four children in 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 of Children's Services be asked to finalise the details of the arrangement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People.

Executive Director
of Children's
Services

MINUTES ISSUED: 18 September 2025

CALL-IN: 25 September 2025 at 5.00 pm.

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

Meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

At a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on Wednesday, 9 July 2025 at DCBL Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillor Wright (Chair)
 Councillor Ball
 Councillor T. McInerney
 Councillor Woolfall
 H. Back – Halton Housing
 K. Butler, Democratic Services
 S. Corcoran – Halton Housing
 M. Hancock - Public Health
 H. Herd – Warrington & Halton Hospitals
 A. Leo, Integrated Commissioning Board
 W. Longshaw, St. Helens & Knowsley Hospitals
 D. Nolan, Adult Social Care
 I. Onyia, Public Health
 H. Patel, Citizens Advice Bureau
 N. Renison - Halton Borough Council
 J. Wallis - Bridgewater Community Healthcare
 D. Wilson - Healthwatch Halton
 S. Yeoman, Halton & St Helens VCA

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

		<i>Action</i>
HWB1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies had been received from Lydia Hughes – Healthwatch Halton, Suketu Patel - Local Pharmaceutical Committee, Tim Phee - Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, Lucy Gardner - Warrington & Halton Teaching Hospitals and Lisa Windle – Halton Housing.	
HWB2	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2025, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.	
HWB3	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 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.

After some discussions, the following additional information was noted:

- The public consultation would be promoted to all partners and residents of the Borough and would be made widely available both online and in a number of public places e.g. libraries and One Stop Shops;
- Concerns were raised about increasing needs to health services, however, it was confirmed that although the consultation would give an opportunity to raise such concerns, these would be addressed by the Local Plan. The Housing Strategy concentrated more on the demographic needs of the Borough e.g. the type of accommodation that was required to accommodate the needs of the ageing population and people with learning

disabilities. The Strategy was about the quality of the Borough's accommodation as well as the quantity and it was considered that good quality homes lead to good quality health outcomes; and

- It was reported that there were some concerns about the number of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) in the Borough and it was confirmed that the private rental sector features heavily in the Strategy and how the sector would be monitored going forward.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the progress of the new Boroughwide Housing Strategy; and
- 2) promote participation in the stakeholder and formal public consultation process.

HWB4 PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Director of Public Health, presented a report which provided members of the Board with a briefing on the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) which included risks associated with it and proposed local governance arrangements.

Every Health and Wellbeing Board in England had a statutory responsibility to publish and keep an up-to-date statement of needs for pharmaceutical services of its local population. This was referred to as a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) and included dispensing services as well as public health and other services that pharmacies may be commissioned to provide.

The report set out the commissioning arrangements; proposed arrangements for producing Halton's next PNA; and the resources required.

The report also outlined the next steps which would be undertaken by a steering group. It was noted that once a final draft document had been completed, a 60 day statutory consultation would be undertaken and the results would be reported to the Board before its publication on 1 October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the contents of the report;

2) agreed that the Director of Public Health be the lead; and

Director of Public Health

3) agreed that the PNA be managed by a local steering group, led by Public Health.

HWB5 OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED REFORMS TO PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENTS AND UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The Board received a report from the Director of Public Health which provided an overview of the UK Government's proposals for reform to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Universal Credit (UC). The proposed reforms were outlined in the Green Paper "Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working Again" which was published in March 2025.

PIP was a benefit payment for people under State Pension age and need help with daily activities or getting around because of a long-term illness or disability. PIP was made up of two components; a daily living and a mobility element and an applicant could be eligible for one or both. The report outlined the details of the PIP criteria and payments.

The benefit was not means tested and therefore an eligible individual could receive support regardless of their employment status, income or the amount of savings they had. As of January 2025, 3.7 million people in the UK were claiming PIP.

The report stated that from November 2026, new and existing claimants would need to score at least 4 points on at least one specific daily living activity, in addition to meeting the overall 8-point threshold. This would mean that some individuals who previously qualified for PIP might no longer be eligible.

UC was a working age benefit to support those on low income with living costs. Applicants may be employed or unemployed and currently there were 7.5 million people in the UK claiming UC with 3 million having no requirement to find work. Payments are paid on a monthly basis and consist of a standard allowance with some additional payments being paid based on individual circumstances.

The report outlined the proposed changes that were due to come into effect from April 2026, particularly regarding the health element for those with limited capability for work. New claimants would receive a reduced health

element, and the existing health element for current claimants would be frozen until 2029/30. However, some individuals with severe, lifelong conditions would see their payments increase with inflation.

The Board was advised that approximately 10,000 people in Halton claim PIP and approximately half this amount would not qualify under the proposed criteria. It was suggested that some work could be done at a local level as to what might be a reformed PIP system in the next few years.

Members were advised that since the publication of the report, Parliament had made further amendments and therefore an accompanying presentation was delivered to the Board to outline these changes. It was noted that the two main changes to note were:

- all proposed amendments to PIP had been put on hold pending the Timms Review of the system, which was expected in the Autumn; and
- the UC health element cut would no longer apply to existing claimants.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the report and accompanying presentation which outlined the most up-to-date proposed Welfare Reform changes and the impacts on Halton residents.

HWB6 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES TACKLING THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN HALTON

A report was presented to members of the Board which provided an update on Public Health projects which targeted health inequalities. The report highlighted the various approaches undertaken to address the issues which included:

- Healthy Advertising Policy – the policy was introduced to combat the impact exposure to unhealthy advertising had on residents and to tackle the rates of overweight and obesity in Halton. This policy was part of the proactive approach to promoting health improvement in communities. Halton was one of only 23 Boroughs nationally to have made such a commitment and was working with partners in each area to bring together a joint evaluation on the impact of the policy;

- Winter Cold Homes Initiative – due to Halton’s successful application to the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Data and Access Governance Committee, Halton would be able to run a preventative scheme this Winter. Via a dashboard, patients health conditions would be assessed alongside areas of deprivation, to identify those most at risk of requiring hospital admission, due to the effects of fuel poverty. Halton was the first Public Health Department in the North West to be granted access to this dashboard. It would work closely with relevant partners to establish opportunities to change the ways of working with an aim to move towards a proactive prevention approach, opposed to intervention services; and
- Household Support Fund Schemes - in the recent Spending Review, the Government announced the replacement of the Household Support Fund with a new Crisis and Resilience Fund. Although details were not yet known, the Fund would cover multiple years opposed to short-term renewals of the current Fund. This would allow more opportunities for long-term collaboration in other areas.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

HWB7 HALTON’S VCFSE SECTOR AND IT’S ROLE IN WIDER DETERMINANTS

The Board received a presentation and accompanying report from the Chief Executive Officer of Halton and St. Helens Voluntary Community Action (VCA), which provided an overview on the work of the VCA and the local Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) to address health inequalities and the wider determinants that negatively impact health outcomes for people.

There was an estimated 724 groups and organisations in Halton that provided support, services and community action and Halton’s VCFSE sector provided a huge contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of the Borough. There were 1,861 paid staff in the sector and 17,671 volunteers who delivered 23.574 hours for local voluntary and social action. The workforce was worth £57.8 million to the Borough and the sector created £44.8 million gross value added.

The presentation outlined the top priorities of the

VCFSSE for the next 12 months which included funding, recruitment, organisational planning, maintaining reserves and working with others to deliver services.

Members were advised that the VCA ran a Community Lottery whereby charities, community organisations, social businesses and community groups could sign up, free of charge and get a slice of the ticket proceeds. 60% of the ticket proceeds from the Community Lottery go to charities, voluntary organisations and other not-for-profit groups with the remainder being put towards prizes and operating costs.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

HWB8 THE IMPACT OF ADVICE SERVICES ON TACKLING POVERTY AND THE WIDER DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The Board received a presentation and accompanying report which provided an overview of the volume and nature of enquiries local people were raising with the Citizens Advice Halton. The report outlined the emerging trends and what challenges they may pose for the wider health and wellbeing system.

The following key messages outlined in the presentation were noted:

- By May 2025, 50% of people getting debt advice from Citizens Advice were in a negative budget – this was up from 37% in January 2019;
- In January 2019 people had approximately £20 disposable income each month. By May 2025 this had dropped to minus £23 each month;
- The over 65s had on average £85 spare each month. All other age profiles had negative budgets;
- Owner occupiers had on average £56 spare each month. All other age profiles had negative budgets, ranging from minus £4 to minus £130 each month; and
- Personal Independent Payment enquiries had dropped from 130 each month to 75 each month. It was suggested that this reflected the Citizens Advice capacity as opposed to demand.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

HWB9 BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2025-26

The Board received a report from the Executive Director of Adult Social Services, which provided an update on the Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan 2025-26, following its submission on 31st March 2025.

In January 2025, the Government published a BCF Policy framework for 2025-26 which set out the vision, funding, oversight and support arrangements. The aim was to reform to support the shift from sickness to prevention and to support people living independently and the shift from hospital to home.

The Board noted that in order to support the BCF Plan 2024-25, the current Joint Working Agreement was reviewed and updated to reflect recent changes in governance and processes. The new Joint Working Agreement runs for two years up to the end of March 2027 and this was approved by partners.

RESOLVED: That the Better Care Fund Plan 2024-25 be noted for information.

HWB10 BETTER CARE FUND 2024-25: YEAR END REPORT

The Board received a report from the Executive Director of Adult Social Services, which provided an update on the Better Care Fund 2024-25 Year-End return, following its submission on 29 May 2025.

The update provided the Board with information on the four national conditions which had been met, progress on the four national metrics, income and expenditure actual, year-end feedback and adult social care fee rates.

RESOLVED: The Better Care Fund Year-End return for 2024-25 be noted for information.

Meeting ended at 3.40 p.m.

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

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 9 June 2025 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), Goodall (Vice-Chair), Baker, Dourley, Fry, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, Ratcliffe, Ryan and Skinner

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: Z. Fearon, B. Holmes, P. Woods, K. Morrow, C. Johnson, S. Campbell and K. Appleton

Also in attendance: S. Smith – Co-Optee

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

		<i>Action</i>
CYP1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CYP2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
CYP3	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
	The minutes relating to the Children, Young People and Families Portfolio, taken from the Executive Board meetings held since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix one for information.	
CYP4	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 & 4 2024/25	
	The Board received the performance management reports for quarters 3 and 4 of 2024-25.	

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2024-25 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan for the following Departments:

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

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

Following discussions, the Board raised the queries below:

- the number of permanent exclusions at each school in the Borough was requested. It was agreed that if the information was available it would be shared with Members;
- if Children In Need were being home educated and how this would be monitored?

RESOLVED: That the quarter 3 and 4 2024-25 performance management reports be received.

CYP5 AGENCY STAFFING AND COURT COSTS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services that provided an update on the progress made in the reduction of agency staff and court costs within the Service. It was noted that:

- improvements in the quality of assessments, plans and planning was supporting a reduction in the number of applications being made to the courts;
- progress was being made in concluding the number of children already in court with a reduction from 130 in February 2024 to 70 in March 2025;
- Public Law Online (PLO) had been improved and more families were considered through the PLO process prior to application being made to court;
- the number of children in care had reduced; and
- agency staff numbers had also continued to reduce from 63% to 36% and the number of applicants had increased. Agency rates continued on a downward trajectory.

The Board discussed the 'Thrive' approach, the numbers of agency staff currently employed and the area of Children Services they were based.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CYP6 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

The Chair presented the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2024-25. The Board 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 2024-25 Annual Report be received and noted.

CYP7 DFE COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDATIONS PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Children's Services, that provided an update on the progress against the Department for Education (DfE) Commissioner recommendations. The DfE Commissioner report was published in February 2025, and it was recommended that the Improvement Advisor would remain in place until the next full inspection of Children's Services was concluded and that regular progress reviews would be undertaken. The report included 24 recommendations in relation to the Council, the Halton Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the Improving Services for Children Board.

It was noted that in March 2025, the first quarterly progress review was undertaken, and the Board received a presentation that outlined the progress against each of the recommendations in the Commissioner report. The Board was advised that 21% of the recommendations had been completed and a further 71% of the recommendations were in progress and on track to be achieved in timescale. The two remaining actions were in progress but with some delays.

RESOLVED: That the information provided be noted.

CYP8 EARLY YEARS SUFFICIENCY DUTY REPORT 2025

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children's Services, which provided a summary of

the revised Sufficiency Duty Report (SDR) – this document was appended to the report *Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report 2025 Review*.

It was reported that the SDR detailed information on Halton’s childcare sector and outlined the current and projected supply and estimated demand for childcare places over the next 12 months. It also highlighted the gaps in provision and how these were being addressed.

The report also gave information on the expansion of the early years entitlements, launched in April 2024, together with estimates on how the demand for new places would impact upon the childcare market in Halton. Information was also shared on other factors affecting childcare both locally and nationally, the expansion of funded childcare for working parents of children aged 9 months to 2 years, the expansion of wraparound care, and the difficulties with the recruitment and retention of early years staff. The report detailed the sufficiency of childcare across sectors and strategies to address future challenges.

The Board discussed childminders operating from home and the possible impact on the wider community where they live. The Board was advised that Ofsted was the regulator for childminders, and there was a set number of children childminders were allowed to provide care for. If there were any concerns they could be shared with the Early Years team who would contact Ofsted.

The Chair agreed to write to the Chair of Development Management Committee to inform her on the planning concerns raised by Members regarding childminders operating from home.

RESOLVED: That the revised Sufficiency Duty Report be noted.

CYP9 HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children’s Services, that provided an update on the Home to School Transport consultation. Local Authorities were required to publish a Home to School Transport policy each year when parents were deciding which schools to apply for during the normal admissions round.

Following agreement by Executive Board at its

meeting on 25 February 2025, a Home to School Transport consultation was launched on proposed changes to the delivery of Home to School Transport services for children and young people. The consultation opened on 2 April 2025 and closed on 6 May 2025. Two separate consultations were launched, one for parent carer and young people, and one for stakeholders and residents of Halton. The consultation comprised two parts and details of each was set out in the report:

- Part A: Flexible travel arrangements and increasing independence; and
- Part B: Reviewing discretionary transport.

The next step was for responses to the consultation to be collated and analysed. Following this the key findings and any recommendations for future amendments to the Home to School Transport Policy would be shared with Children's Leadership Team, Council Management Team and Executive Board.

A Teams meeting would be arranged for the Board to be presented with the findings of the consultation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted;
- 2) the Board confirm they support the overall process; and
- 3) a Teams meeting would be arranged for the Board to be presented with the consultation findings.

N.B. Councillor Baker declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed at Inglefield.

CYP10 INGLEFIELD OFSTED REPORT

The Board received a report which provided an updated position around the Residential and Supported Accommodation Sufficiency programme of work which incorporated A7 within the Improvement Plan and a presentation from Mr Woods and Ms Morrow from the Disabled Children Short Breaks Team. The presentation provided information on the short breaks for children with complex disabilities at Inglefield, Runcorn. The presentation outlined the:

Executive Director
– Children's
Services

- number of referrals from Halton children;
- number of nights children had stayed at Inglefield;
- successful recruitment of the Inglefield team;
- recent Ofsted inspection of Inglefield which achieved an outcome of 'Good'; and
- steps being explored to provide improvements at the Centre such as communication passports and inclusive AAC devices to provide an individualist approach.

Members welcomed the presentation and were invited to contact Inglefield to book an appointment to view the service.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

CYP11 RESIDENTIAL AND SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION SUFFICIENCY UPDATE

The Board considered a report which provided an updated position around the Residential and Supported Accommodation Sufficiency programme of work which also incorporated information within the Improvement Plan. Within the wider Children's Sufficiency Improvement Journey the following key elements were noted:

- a full restructure of the Commissioning Team had been completed;
- a refreshed Contracts Register was in place and was supported by a dedicated commissioning workplan, which was shared with Procurement colleagues;
- the Placement Team had received additional officers within the establishment and roles had been clarified within new and updated job profiles;
- Commissioning receive a weekly overview of planning applications in the borough and consult on those involving children's settings;
- the Supported Accommodation Block contract had been renewed for 12 months;
- Service Level Agreement with Juno had been approved within the wider Sufficiency Strategy for four children's homes;
- the Children and Young Peoples Quality Performance and Monitoring Framework had been completed;
- the Council was now part of the North West regional QA group and were taking a regional stance on uplifts; and
- a high cost placement tracker had been implemented in April 2024 and as a result there had been an

annual cost avoidance of just over £1,000,000.

RESOLVED: That the report and presentation be noted.

CYP12 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which gave the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024-25 outturn forecast.

On 13 March 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.

The Board discussed the closure of Windmill Hill Children's Centre which was included in the report and expressed concern that it should be kept open. Officers advised that there were no current plans to close this Centre or Inglefield whilst there was a need for these services.

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

Meeting ended at 9.10 p.m.

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

*At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
on Monday, 8 September 2025 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), Baker, Fry, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones,
C. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe and Ryan.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Goodall and Dourley.

Absence declared on Council business: None.

Officers present: K. Appleton, M. Bridge, Z. Fearon, B. Holmes, K. Butler and I.
Moorhouse.

Also in attendance: S. Smith – Co-Optee and Councillor T. McInney in
accordance with Standing Order Number 33.

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

Action

CYP13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2025,
were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

It was confirmed that the Windmill Children's Centre
was no longer considered for closure, and this will be shown
in future reports.

CYP14 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been
received.

*N.B. Councillor Lloyd-Jones declared an Other Disclosable Interest in
the following item of business as he was helping a resident obtain a
loan.*

CYP15 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Children, Young People

and Families Portfolio, taken from the Executive Board meetings held since the last meeting of this Board, were attached as Appendix 1 for information.

It was noted that the part 2 Executive Board report EXB10 – Funding for Extension, would go back to the next meeting on 11 September 2025, following further work.

CYP16 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (CYP) Q1 2025-26 MONITORING REPORT

The Board received the performance management report for Quarter 1 for 2025-26.

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2023/24 were agreed by Members and included in the Business Plan, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:

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

The report detailed the progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

Highlights included permanent exclusions being reduced by 18%, more engagement at family centres, EHCP (education, health and care plan) annual reviews improving to above the national average, and over £1.2million in cost avoidance for high-cost residential placements. There were three residential placements in this quarter which was down from 17 in the previous quarter. An ICT commission was underway for the SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) Team to reduce the backlog, and 189 social workers were trained in house.

Following some questions from the Board the following points were made:

- The amount of progress done in a short amount of time was very good concerns were raised over secondary schools permanently excluding pupils for first time drug offences. They felt that these exclusions should only happen if there was a risk to pupil life, for example if a Class A or B drug was being supplied.
- The Council was limited in how they could influence school drug policies, but they were

holding targeted support meetings with schools to look at frequently absent pupils and those who were electively home educated. This was to stop the 'flow' out of the school following permanent exclusions for drug related reasons. Officers had 'reflective challenges' with schools to get them to reduce permanent exclusions and work with affected families on this alongside multi-agency partners.

- The new Family Support Days, especially the 'Dad Matters Days' were praised as they were a good way for dads to support each other.
- Officers planned to use AI to create guides, take minutes in strategy discussions and for supervision notes.
- Half of the secondary schools in Halton had banned mobile phones on their premises. A lot of parents initially objected to this but there were a lot more benefits than issues raised from the bans.
- The services that SEND must provide make it very difficult for them not to overspend. Work was being done to slow the growth of the number of children coming into care and recruit more foster carers.
- Agency staff costs had reduced from £6.5 million to £3.8 million through workforce strategies, recruitment and investment in the services.
- Some funding for care services came from Central Government, but this funding was limited and reduced significantly when a child turned 18 and the Council needed to provide the same service.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CYP17 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)

The Board considered a report on the Annual Report of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) which provided a summary and analysis of the work of the LADO service for 2024-2025. The report detailed progress made against objectives set previously and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that arose during the reporting period.

Members discussed the report and subsequently requested some anonymised case studies to help provide

an understanding of a LADO referral.

RESOLVED: That the Annual LADO Report for 2024-25 be noted.

CYP18 QUARTERLY QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

The Board received an update on the quality of practice in Children's Services through audit findings. AI was being used to help record discussions and this would save practitioners time with trying to record discussions. Families had given positive feedback to social workers, and the Council's audits showed that practices had improved. Training had been undertaken with partners to improve safeguarding referrals to the Council.

Following some questions from the Board the following points were made:

- There had been a reduction in care leaver reports being unfinished. Teams had been advised that this was unacceptable as the reports were needed to monitor progress.
- The Social Worker Academy had recently finished working with Children's Services regarding their audit reports and they will soon start work with the Care Leavers Team.
- The LGA (Local Government Association) will audit the Care Leaver Service in October 2025. This will include looking at audit reports and talking to care leavers and staff about their experience.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CYP19 HALTON LOCAL AREA SEND PARTNERSHIP IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

The Board received Halton's SEND Improvement Programme which was submitted to OFSTED following the Local Area Partnership SEND Inspection. In November 2023, there was an Ofsted and CQC visit where it was shown that there were systematic failings in the Council's SEND provision.

The Board received a presentation that outlined the planned improvements with the new SEND strategic and delivery boards. Officers were keen to improve communication for families, reduce repetition for officers, and ensure that families felt there were improvements and received information quicker. The new strategy was done

with families and other relevant partners in 21 engagement sessions. The new programme should go live in January 2026 after the board reviews it in November 2025. The new programme will also include a formal escalation process if the actions already carried out did not have the desired impact. Partnership work was done to save money on specialist furniture for SEND children and work was planned to provide support for neurodivergent pupils. There will be a new speech & language assessor provider from November 2025. Officers concluded that a new SEND White Paper was expected from the Department of Education (DfE) in the Autumn of 2025.

Following some questions from the Board the following points were made:

- Regarding the White Paper, it was predicted that it would state that only children with complex needs would be allowed EHCPs.
- The White Paper was expected to give SEND money provision directly to schools and not via the Council, which meant they would not be able to support mainstream schools with SEND issues.
- Private assessments for children possibly needing EHCPs would need to be scrutinised more against what an education provider could give. If a EHCP was declined and went to a Tribunal, risks would need to be managed.
- Regarding the speech and language provider, a new company was being brought in due to issues with the current one. The ICB (Integrated Care Board) would manage one aspect of this, and the Council would manage the other.
- If an EHCP said interventions were needed for a child, then the Council would need to ensure that this was delivered. The ICB would manage the health aspects.
- If the SEND Team was to be inspected soon, inspectors should see that there had been progress made against the five action plans.
- The Council received £1.6 million to increase SEND provision for schools in-borough. This included new classrooms at Ashley High School and other schools were asked if they wanted access to the funding to help their provision.

Officers agreed to provide a copy of the PowerPoint Slides to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve Halton's Local Area SEND Partnership Improvement Programme as the mechanism to monitor and scrutinise progress going forward.

Director of Education

CYP20 CARE EXPERIENCED AS A 'PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC'

The Board received a report supporting the motion of 'care experienced' becoming a protected characteristic for young people. The purpose of this was to try and end discrimination for care experienced young people. If accepted, the Council will be one of 32 Council's in the country considering this proposal.

The Board discussed how this would have an impact on new private care homes.

It was confirmed that the characteristic would be recognised permanently so adults with care experience could be signposted for support.

Following a vote by way of a show of hands, the Board agreed that 'Care Experienced' should be a protected characteristic.

RESOLVED: That the Board recommends that the Council recognise 'Care Experienced' as a protected characteristic.

CYP21 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025

The Council received a report on the Council's overall revenue spending position as of 31 May 2025, the latest 2025/26 year-end outturn forecast, and details of the 2024/25 year-end outturn position for their information. All Policy and Public Performance Boards had received this report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 8:29p.m.

LOCAL ECONOMY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Local Economy Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 16 June 2025 in the Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice-Chair), Begg, Connolly, Garner, Gilligan, Ryan and Skinner

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Hutchinson, K. Loftus and Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Cooke, G. Ferguson, M. Jones and S. Lowrie

Also in attendance: Councillor Bevan, J. Jones (Halton CAB) and N. Fedigan (Connect2Halton)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

ELS1 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 24 February 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

ELS2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

ELS3 CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The Board welcomed Jo Jones, from Halton Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), who gave an overview on the services offered in the Borough. CAB offered a free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information on a wide range of subjects. In addition to this, they also provided advocacy and mental health support, access to charitable grants, volunteer training, budgeting skills and financial literacy programme, employability support and research and campaigning. In 2024/25 CAB Halton had assisted 7,695 people/households, advised on 54,116 different issues and achieved £6.2m income gains. The presentation detailed the impact the service had achieved for people in the Borough in terms of economic value and as

a voice for local people. It also set out the future of the service for 2025/26 and beyond and gave case study examples.

Members requested further information on the impact on the Council Welfare Advice Service since the reduction in Council funding towards Halton CAB and the type of public enquiries received.

Jo Jones was thanked for her informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation and comments made be noted.

Director
Economy,
Enterprise &
Property

N.B. Councillor Teeling declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed as an agency nurse.

ELS4 CONNECT2HALTON UPDATE

The Board welcomed Nicola Fedigan, from Connect2Halton, who gave an overview on the services offered. Connect2Halton was a joint venture company launched in September 2024, (50% owned by Halton and 50% owned by Kent Council) dedicated to recruiting a flexible workforce such as temporary and casual workers. The key features and benefits were as follows:

- 100% of the profits were returned to the public purse (50/50 split);
- external agencies were managed to ensure compliance;
- it provided a one stop shop approach for managers;
- produced a significant reduction in off-contract spend; and
- it was based within Council offices and therefore focussed on local engagement, not national agencies.

The following additional information was given following Members questions:

- the numbers of people in the candidate 'pool' and the areas of work they provided cover for;
- a meeting had been arranged with officers from Adult Social Care to discuss the provision of staff for the care sector using Connect2Halton;
- the service was prioritising Halton residents for casual work; and
- managers were being encouraged where possible, not

to recruit staff from other agencies and to use Connect2Halton.

Nicola Fedigan was thanked for her informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation and comments made be noted.

N.B. Councillor Teeling declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed at Halton Leisure.

ELS5 HALTON LEISURE CENTRE

The Board received a report and accompanying presentation, which provided an overview of the activities and operations at Halton Leisure Centre since its opening on 10 February 2025.

It was reported that the new leisure centre had seen an increase in users and membership, achieving approximately 1,000 new members since opening which had increased monthly direct debit revenue by circa £30,000 per month. It was noted that:

- a new building, plant, equipment and technology had required staff training, new systems of work and policies and procedures had been developed;
- some elements of delivery had been staggered and still developing, such as the café and soft play area;
- there was ongoing dialogue with Wates the construction company, and a defect reporting system had been implemented now the site had moved beyond the snagging phase;
- the Active Halton App had been refreshed and was being used by the majority of customers; and
- the new leisure centre complied with school's requirements for swimming and 8 schools were now utilising the pool with a further 2 due to start in September.

In response to questions and comments, the following additional information was provided to Members:

- problems with the balustrade in the pool area had been identified and this had been discussed at meetings held with Wates and Property Services; and
- the use of social media and marketing for the Centre had been highlighted and was being explored.

Members welcomed the presentation and thanked Sue Lowrie and Marc Jones for the update.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

ELS6 ANNUAL REPORT FOR 24/25

The Chair presented the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community PPB's Annual Report 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. He thanked all Members of the Board and Officers for their participation and support over the past year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report for 2024-25 be received.

ELS7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2024/25

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 4 of 2024-25 (1 January to 31 March 2025) 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.

The Board discussed Sci-Tech Daresbury and the financial and social rewards for the Borough. They were advised that the site has no financial cost for the Council. A further report would be brought to the Board with information on the issues raised by Members. In addition further information would be circulated on the Sandymoor Open Spaces Improvements.

Director
Economy,

-

RESOLVED: That the quarter 4 performance management reports be received.

Enterprise &
Property

ELS8 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which gave the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024-25 outturn forecast.

On 13 March 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 9.15 p.m.

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HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Health and Social Care Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 24 June 2025 at Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Davidson, Goodall, S. Hill, A. Lowe and N. Plumptre Walsh

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Hughes and McDonough

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, H. Moir, S. Wallace-Bonner and L. Wilson

Also in attendance: T. Leo – Halton Place, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

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

		<i>Action</i>
HEA1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2025 were signed as a correct record.	
HEA2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
HEA3	HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES	
	The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting held on 12 March 2025, were submitted to the Board for information.	
HEA4	HPPB ANNUAL REPORT 2024 25	
	The Chair presented the Health Policy and Performance Board's (PPB) Annual Report for April 2024 to March 2025.	
	During this period the Health PPB examined in detail many of Halton's Health and Social Care priorities. Details of the work undertaken by the Board was outlined in the	

Annual Report.

The Chair thanked his Board Member colleagues and Officers for their input and support throughout the year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be received.

HEA5 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO FERTILITY TREATMENT POLICIES ACROSS CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

The Board received a report from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Place Director which outlined the proposals by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB to harmonise the existing 10 Fertility Policies in place across the 9 Local Authority Place areas in Cheshire and Merseyside into a single policy for Cheshire. This would result in some changes to existing access for patients registered with a GP practice in Halton. The proposals incorporated changes to:

- the number of NHS funded IVF cycles available to patients;
- changes to eligibility with regards Body Mass Index and Smoking;
- changes to definition of childlessness;
- changes to Intra Uterine Insemination commissioning; and
- wording on the lower and upper ages for fertility treatment.

A number of other options regarding IVF cycles were considered and the pros and cons of each were outlined in table 4 of the report.

A six week public consultation went live on 3 June 2025 and was due to finish on 15 July 2025. Following a period of consideration of the findings of the consultation, the recommendations for approval regarding the single Fertility Policy for Cheshire and Merseyside would be presented to the ICB Board at its meeting on 25 September 2025.

Members of the Board noted the report and shared some of their personal experiences. Following discussions, Members confirmed that they did not endorse the proposals outlined in the report and formally requested a Joint Scrutiny Board for further consideration on this topic.

The importance and sensitivity of the topic was acknowledged and Members were thanked for their

comments. They were also encouraged to participate in the consultation and make their views known. The comments regarding the impact on individual's physical and mental health were taken on board. Members were advised, that should the policy be adopted, it would only be until National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance was published (no expected date) and then the policy would be reviewed again.

The Chair agreed to email Board Members about participating in the consultation; two Members would be required to sit on a Joint Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) confirms that the proposal represents a substantial development or variation and Halton would participate in a Joint Scrutiny Board in line with the agreed protocol for establishment of joint health scrutiny arrangements for Cheshire & Merseyside; and
- 2) agree two Members of the Health Policy and Performance Board would be sought to participate in the Joint Scrutiny Board.

HEA6 HPPB SCRUTINY TOPIC 2025 26

The Board considered a report which presented the topic brief for the Health Policy and Performance Board's 2025-26 scrutiny review.

It was noted that at the February meeting it was agreed that '*Mental Health Support*' would be the focus of the 2025-26 scrutiny review. Appendix 1 set out the remit and areas of focus that would be considered as part of the Scrutiny Review.

It was confirmed that the first meeting of the topic group would take place in July and thereafter on a monthly basis. Members would be presented with information regarding the areas covered in the Topic Brief to scrutinise service delivery, emerging issues and opportunities in order to develop a set of recommendations for a report, which would be presented to the Board in February 2026. The Chair invited all Members of the Board to participate.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and

- 2) the Board approves the topic brief as outlined in Appendix 1.

HEA7 MINOR AND MAJOR ADAPTATIONS PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adults, which provided an update on performance relating to Minor and Major Adaptations funded through the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

A minor adaptations contract was in place for people in owner occupied or private rentals and work was undertaken by Upholland Property Services (UPS). Major adaptations, which required a DFG, were managed through Halton's Home Improvement Agency.

A home adaptation was delivered in 4 key stages and during April 2024 to March 2025 the following works were completed:

Minor adaptations (by UPS)	1515
DFG	35 (44 cancelled)
Registered Social Landlord/DFG	110
Stairlifts	9 (20 cancelled)

Members noted a number of challenges within the provision of minor and major adaptations and these were described in section 3.3 of the report.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

HEA8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS QUARTER 4 2024/25

The Board received the Performance Management Reports for quarter four of 2024/25.

Members were advised that the report introduced, through the submission of a structured thematic performance report, the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health in quarter three of 2024/25. This included a description of factors, which were affecting the service.

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

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management report for quarter four of 2024/25 be received.

HEA9 COUNCILWIDE 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.

It was noted that some work had been undertaken to reduce agency costs which has resulted in some improvements, however, it was still too early to realise any significant savings.

A Member of the Board asked whether the Council was exploring any opportunities to share services and it was agreed that this would be confirmed in due course.

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

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Meeting ended at 7.41 p.m.

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HOUSING AND SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 16 September 2025 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor A. McInerney

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Burrows, K. Butler, R. Freeman, N. Goodwin and H. Moir

Also in attendance: Councillor Wright in accordance with Standing Order Number 33.

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
SAF9	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
	The Chair reported that he had met with Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) on four separate occasions. He reported that he was now also a member of the Complaints Management Sub Committee, which had been established by the Police and Crime Panel to manage its responsibility for complaints. As the Chair was unable to attend the last Police and Crime Panel meeting, the Vice-Chair attended on his behalf. The Vice-Chair gave feedback from this meeting and reported that the PCC Annual Report was discussed and this would be circulated to the Board for information and comments.	
SAF10	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	

SAF11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

SAF12 HOMELESSNESS WORKING PARTY - REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adults which outlined the recommendations of the Homelessness Working Party's review of Halton's Homelessness services.

In February 2025, a Homelessness Working Party was established by Councillor Marie Wright in order to increase Elected Members' understanding on homelessness in Halton; the current service offer; pressures; data and how resources were mobilised to provide services that support some of the most vulnerable adults in the Borough.

The report described the scope of the review and its findings were attached as an appendix to the report; section 3.5 of the report outlined the recommendations of the Working Party.

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

- Nightstop was a UK wide network of same-night emergency accommodation services that support young people in crisis;
- The Council had a drop-in facility at the Halton Direct Links, where people who were either homeless or those facing being homeless, could speak to officers. The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) also had specialist officers who dealt with homelessness and mortgage issues. They also supported people who had to attend court. These services were advertised on the Council's website;
- It was suggested that Nightstop needed to be promoted more widely as it was of the view that not enough people knew about the service;
- The Council had a contract with White Chapel, a charity, who go out at night and identify rough sleepers. The Chair requested a briefing about this service;
- Councillor Loftus requested a standing item on every agenda which provided an update on homelessness. Officers confirmed that there was a performance report (item 6 on the agenda) that would provide this

information, however, the only gap was empty properties but consideration would be given to this being included on future reports. The performance report was a new item that the Board had never received before, however, going forward this would be provided to each meeting; and

- A Members Seminar on Asylum Seekers and Refugees was held in November 2024 and consideration would be given to repeating this Seminar in the future.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) endorse the recommendations of the Homelessness Working Party's review of Halton's Homelessness services.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Director of
Community &
Greenspaces

SAF13 IMPROVING HOUSING STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE RENTAL SECTOR: THE RENTERS' RIGHTS BILL

The Board received a report from the Director of Public Health which provided an update on the current measures in place to enforce standards in the Private Rental Sector and the new measures proposed in the Government's Renters' Rights Bill.

The 2011 Census reported that 11% of households in the Borough were in the private rental sector, however, the 2021 Census reported that this number had risen to 14%. In 2024, Metastreet, a housing research consultancy, was commissioned by the Council to undertake a study and this estimated that there were 11, 486 dwellings in the private rental sector which equated to 19% of the Borough's housing stock. The study also predicted that around 4,000 properties in Halton's private rental sector had at least one serious housing hazard.

It was noted that last year, the Council's Environmental Health Team received 172 complaints about housing conditions, which indicated that there was a significant under reporting by tenants. It was hoped that measures contained in the Renters Rights' Bill would provide tenants with more protection and therefore encourage more people to report issues. Furthermore, measures to proactively improve housing standards in the private rental sector, would be set out in the Council's new Housing Strategy, which was currently under consultation. Section 4 of the report set out current laws and policies in

place to help the Council enforce property standards and protect tenants.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) i.e. properties with 5 or more tenants required a license. There were currently 127 HMO's in the Borough, although there was an additional 73 smaller HMO's (3-4 tenants) that did not require a license. However, it was noted that there could potentially be more smaller HMO's, as there was no current requirement for landlords to notify the Council. The Board acknowledged that there were concerns amongst both residents and Elected Members about HMO's, however, they provided a valuable contribution to the housing market and provided much needed accommodation for single person households. Members were assured that once in place, the Housing Strategy would set out measures to control HMO's going forward.

In response to comments/questions from the Board, the following additional information was noted:

- Concerns were raised about expensive leasehold properties in the Borough and therefore the difficulties owners had in selling their homes which forced them into renting them out;
- An opportunity was being explored to establish a Housing Partnership Board which would consist of representatives from all housing associations;
- The regulations in the new Bill would not include lodgers; and
- Members of the Board were encouraged to respond to the new Housing Strategy, which was currently out on consultation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SAF14 EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Board received the Emergency Planning Annual Report, which provided an update on the work undertaken by the Emergency Planning Team and the work programme for 2024/25.

The Emergency Planning Team consisted of an Emergency Planning Manager and two Emergency Planning Officers.

As a Local Authority, Halton had a statutory duty to comply with the following legislation:

- the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004;
- Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH) 2015; and
- Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR) 1996.

Members noted that Halton had a number of Emergency Plans in place with the aim to ensure resilience. These Plans were regularly updated and tested. The Board was advised on examples of local risks, details of the exercises that take place at COMAH sites in the Borough, information on Emergency Centres and the work the Emergency Planning Team carried out with partner agencies both within Cheshire and cross-border, and as part of Cheshire Resilience Forum.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SAF15 COUNTER TERRORISM

The Board received a report which provided an update on the role of Prevent and the work that had been undertaken during 2024/25 and the first quarter of 2025/26. The report also outlined the current actions being taken in regard to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

Prevent was a National Programme that aimed to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and it worked to ensure that people who were susceptible to radicalisation were offered appropriate interventions.

Some Prevent work is funded by the Home Office and delivered in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) through Liverpool City Council's Prevent Team. Halton's lead and point of contact was the Emergency Planning Manager and supported by the Director of Community and Greenspaces. Halton received no dedicated funding for Prevent.

The Home Office tested compliance via the Prevent benchmarking process as part of its annual assurance programme to monitor the delivery of Prevent and focussed on the following areas:

- Multi-Agency Partnership Group;
- Local Risk Assessment Process;
- Partnership Plan;
- Referral Pathway;
- Training Programme;
- Reducing permissive environments;
- Communications and engagement; and
- Channel Panel

It was confirmed by the Home Office in May 2025 that Halton had met all the criteria for the annual Prevent benchmarking exercise for 2024/25.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, often referred to as PROTECT but most commonly known as Martyn's Law, was designed to improve public safety and required certain premises and events to prepare for terrorist attacks. Martyn's Law enacted in response to domestic terror attacks and inquiries like the Manchester Arena inquiry and aimed to enhance protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK.

Halton had an officer working group which was chaired by the Head of Service for Stadium and Markets. The Council had also engaged on the offer from Counter Terrorism Police to deliver training for Council employees. A number of sessions had taken place, which had included SCan Customer Facing and SCan training for CCTV operatives. The Stadium and Leisure Services had also engaged directly with the Police regarding advice and training for staff.

Following some questions from the Board it was confirmed that the Council were responsible for the Stadium and the event organisers were responsible for Creamfields.

It was also suggested that the Council should be notified of any events that happen in the Borough, however, this was not a mandatory requirement.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) endorse the action the Council is taking in regard to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

SAF16 COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION - ENFORCEMENT & CCTV UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on progress and work programme in the Community Safety and Protection Division.

The report provided an update on:

- Environmental Crime and Waste Enforcement;

- Anti-Social Behaviour; and
- CCTV.

Concerns were raised about fly tipping. It was noted that some residents whose wheelie bins had gone missing, could not afford to pay for a replacement and therefore would put rubbish bags out. Another concern was the booking system in place for bulky rubbish; residents would only be allocated a collection date once they had paid for the service. Officers confirmed that the Council had a hardship discretion but concerns would be fed back to the team.

It was also noted that the Police Crime Commissioner was keen to use drones to track and recover stolen bikes and to tackle illegal or antisocial bike and e-scooter use. Drones were a safer alternative to traditional pursuits, which could be dangerous for riders, officers, and the public.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Director of
Community &
Greenspaces

SAF17 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2025/26

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 1 of 2025/26.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2025/26 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to the Board as detailed below:

- Community Safety and Protection;
- Risk and Emergency Planning;
- Drug and Alcohol Action;
- Domestic Violence; and
- Housing.

The reports 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.

It was noted that this was the first performance report to be received by the Board. There would be some changes to Domestic Violence KPI's going forward consideration would be given to include empty homes on future reports.

Concerns were raised that when looking at crime figures, the Police wards did not match up with Council wards. It was agreed that this was a challenge and the

Chair agreed to raise this at his next meeting with Police.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 1 performance management report be received and noted.

SAF18 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 10 July 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 May 2025, together with the latest 2025/26 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 Council's overall spending position as at 31 May 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 18 June 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair), V. Hill, Hutchinson, Nelson, L. Nolan, C. Plumpton Walsh and Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor K. Loftus, McDermott and Wainwright

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, T. Gibbs, F. Harris, I. Jones, A. Plant, N. Renison and R. Taylor

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
EUR1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2025, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.	
EUR2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
EUR3	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
	The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board.	
	RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.	
EUR4	ANNUAL REPORT FOR 24/25	
	The Board considered a copy of the Annual Report from the Chair of the 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 endorsed.

EUR5 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT'S – HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT

The Board received the draft Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR) from the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided a progress update on the Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) policies for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. It also contained the Housing AMR and the Economy AMR.

Local planning authorities were required to publish information, at least annually, that showed progress with local plan preparation. They also needed to report any activity relating to the duty to co-operate, provide any information which may have been collected relating to indicators in the plan and highlight any policies which had not been implemented.

Table 7 in the report provided information on affordable dwellings, however, no data had been captured for affordable units secured via Section 106; this information would be available next year.

A Board Member requested some information on whether there had been an overall carbon reduction and it was agreed that this would be provided in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the draft AMR's so that the documents can be made publicly available and published on the Council's website.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EUR6 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT

The Board considered a report on The Local Plan for Halton, which included the adopted Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (2022) and the Joint Waste Plan (2013). The statutory Local Development Plan is the set of Local Plans (also known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that together form the statutory basis for determining whether or not planning permission should be granted.

The Board received the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The Board received the Draft Authority Monitoring

Reports (AMR) from the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided a progress update on the Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) policies for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Local planning authorities were required to publish information, at least annually, that showed progress with local plan preparation. They were also required to report any activity relating to the duty to co-operate, provide any information which may have been collected relating to indicators in the plan and highlight any policies which had not been implemented.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the draft AMR's so that the documents can be made publicly available and published on the Council's website.

EUR7 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 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 undertaking a household survey of residents in Halton.

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.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

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

EUR8 TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY, SOCIAL VALUE IN PLANNING AND HOUSE EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which requested approval to support the Supplementary Planning Process for the Transport and Accessibility; Social Value in Planning; and House Extensions Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

The Local Plan for Halton currently included the adopted Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (2022) and the Joint Waste Plan (2013). The statutory Local Development Plan was the set of local plans that together formed the statutory basis for determining whether or not planning permission should be granted.

SPD's add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan and they are used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on issues such as social value, transport and accessibility or house extensions.

The report set out the policy links for each SPD and these were noted.

RESOLVED: That the Board support and endorse the development of the above named SPD's through the regulatory planning process, until adoption.

EUR9 LOCAL HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration which provided an

update on local highway maintenance matters.

Members were advised that 25% of Government funding would be contingent on Local Authorities being able to demonstrate that they were committed to improving local highway maintenance.

The Department for Transport (DfT) was seeking to improving its understanding of the condition of the country's roads and in March 2025, requested a data return from all Local Authorities to unlock the uplift in funding. The DfT had created a template containing specific information, which all Authorities were required to publish on their websites by 30th June 2025; this was attached to the report in Appendix A. Once published, and in addition to a further report to be published in October, Halton would be able to secure 25% of funding for the Borough's highway network to be released in January 2026 for expenditure by the end of March 2026, as well as better informing local people of the steps being taken to improve them.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2024/25

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 4 of 2024/25.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2024/25 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to the Board as detailed below:

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services; and
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services.

The reports 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.

RESOLVED: That quarter 4 performance management reports be received and noted.

EUR11 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 7.22 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 10 September 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Stockton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, L. Crampton, T. Gibbs, F. Harris, K. Horne, J. Parry and R. Taylor

Also in attendance: Councillors Thompson, Philbin, Jones and S. Hill in accordance with Standing Order Number 33.

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

	<i>Action</i>
EUR12 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2025 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.	
EUR13 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
EUR14 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The minutes relating to the Environment and Urban Renewal Portfolio, taken from the Executive Board meetings held since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix one for information.	
It was noted that a report went to the Executive Board on 12 June 2025 regarding the cemetery infrastructure works and a range of environmental work at the three of the Council's cemeteries. However, Members reported that they	

had received negative feedback from members of the public, in particular to the long grass. These comments would be passed to relevant officers.

EUR15 PRESENTATION OF THE WIDNES TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

The Board received a presentation which provided an overview of the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework.

The presentation also outlined the objectives and spatial strategies to make the town centre more sustainable, cohesive and diverse. Consultation had taken place across the board, including Members, stakeholders, landowners and members of the public with a particular focus on youth engagement.

The Board was also provided with an update on progress so far.

Following Members discussion and questions, the following additional information was provided:

- Although in the very early stages, officers confirmed that they had spoken to the owners of Green Oaks to ask if they had any plans or aspirations for their site. They had also looked at how other towns had improved their market areas and the lessons that had been learned;
- Councillor Wainwright questioned if there was any intention of moving the market but he was not keen to make any plans on it becoming a food market. It was confirmed that further consultation would be carried out at a later stage where consideration would be given to the market;
- One of the concerns from the consultation was that the town centre was fragmented and needed to be more joined up, particularly to the Waterfront. Officers confirmed that this had been addressed in the framework, however, it was a very ambitious goal and it would require a lot of funding; and
- The Council had successfully won a bid from the INEOS Environment Fund for £50k which would be used to support environmental improvements in Widnes Town Centre. Although such improvements

would be a short-term fix, it was hoped that the public would start to see some positive improvements quickly. This work was being led by Open Spaces and further information would be provided to Board Members via email.

It was agreed that:

- copies of the presentation slides would be circulated to the Board for information and if they had any further questions, officers would respond accordingly;
- a site visit for Board Members would be arranged in 12 months time; and
- a further progress report would be presented in June 2026.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the presentation and the Framework are noted.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EUR16 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT – HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT 2024-25

The Board received the annual Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR) for Housing and Employment 2024-25. Local Planning Authorities were required to publish information on an annual basis that demonstrated progress with Local Plan preparation, reported any activity relating to the duty to co-operate, any information which related to indicators in the Plan and any policies which were not being implemented.

The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) set out housing supply and location priorities for the Borough. The adopted Plan stated that there would be an additional 8,050 net homes provided between 2014 and 2037; an average rate of 350 dwellings per annum. The housing report showed that during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, 387 net houses had been completed, 87 of which were affordable housing. There was also 164 units currently under construction.

The DALP also stated that over the lifetime of the Local Plan (2014-2037), the Council would provide approximately 180 ha of land for employment purposes. During 2024/25 there had been 24.84 ha gross employment land completions, 22.12 ha (net) of employment land completed within a key urban regeneration area and 11% of completions were on Brownfield sites.

Members of the Board received copies of two

infographic handouts which listed the key statistics from both the Housing and Employment Annual Monitoring Reports for 2024/25.

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

- Processing of planning applications was very market driven i.e. if people were buying, developers would build and when not, the market slowed down;
- Since the DALP was published, the figure for net homes had increased and the Council had granted over 1,000 applications in Widnes alone;
- Brownfield sites were difficult/expensive to build on and therefore not always attractive to developers; one third of the Borough was still Green Belt;
- There was no rationale of splitting new builds between Widnes and Runcorn; it was dependent on where developers wanted to build;
- Build on Brownfield sites went through peaks and troughs and was dependent on various factors including land being available; and
- It was noted that a lot of the new build sites in Halton largely consisted of 4-5 bedroom properties. However, affordable housing had to be included on all new sites and Halton's housing stock was predominantly Council Tax bands A and B. Whilst there was a commitment to address the housing crisis it was also important to encourage people to either stay living in the Borough or attract people to come and live here.

Following discussions, it was agreed that at the meeting in February 2026, the Board would receive a presentation detailing the Brownfield, Greenfield and Greyfield sites in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the draft AMR's so that the documents can be made publicly available and published on the Council's website.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EUR17 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2025/26

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 1 of 2025/26.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2025/26 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to

the Board as detailed below:

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services; and
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services.

The reports 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.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 1 performance management report be received and noted.

EUR18 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 10 July 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 May 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.

It was noted that the net Council spending as at 31 May 2025 was £1.073m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year was estimated that net spending would be over budget by £6.185m if no corrective action was taken.

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

Meeting ended at 7.43 p.m.

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CORPORATE AND INCLUSION POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate and Inclusion Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 2 September 2025 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor McDonough

Absence declared on Council business: None.

Officers present: E. Dawson, J. Gallagher, K. Butler and I. Moorhouse

Also present: None.

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD		
		<i>Action</i>
CS11	MINUTES	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 3 June 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CS12	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
CS13	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.	
	In response to a question from the Board, officers clarified that if something like a community centre was handed to a group from the Council, then they would pay business rates for it, however, if they had charitable status then they would get an 80% relief on rates. Additionally, they could ask the Council for an additional 10% relief on those rates.	

Regarding 'health and leisure in Halton', a Board Member noted that there were no bowling facilities in areas like Victoria Park. They suggested that the Executive Board should look to include all aspects of leisure, especially for the active older generation.

CS14 STAFF SURVEY 2025 - THE NEXT STEPS

The Board considered the results of the 2025 Staff Survey as stated in the report. It was the first staff survey since 2019, and it was undertaken to see how the culture had changed and to try and address any staff issues that had arisen. All responses were anonymous, and work was done to initiate responses from non-laptop using members of staff with ballot boxes. Going forward, the initial responses will be analysed along with the text box answers by the Corporate Workforce Board. The Workforce Board will address the concerns raised by officers with those answers and alongside the directorate surveys going forward, will create an action plan to be rolled out to the whole Council.

The following additional information was provided in response to Member's questions:

- To encourage honest responses answering, anonymously was crucial.
- Responses to the survey came from all directorates were evenly spread and proportion to the size of the Directorate, with no big majority from any directorate. Pay grades were not asked as part of the survey.
- In the next survey, the Board suggested that they ask whether each department had a leadership culture and whether they were happy with it. They also suggested that it is asked how long the staff members had worked for the Council. They were keen to see how different departments understood work culture in their areas.
- In response, officers said that questions alluding to this will be included in other corporate and departmental staff surveys planned with Adults and Children's Social Care. All these surveys will be looked at by the Corporate Workforce Board. The Workforce Board may look at reoccurring issues raised and create a focus group to try to resolve the issues.
- There had not been a staff survey for six years because it felt inappropriate to ask for responses to their survey during a pandemic and staff priorities would have been elsewhere.

The Board noted that it was important to show members of staff that their comments made a difference, otherwise they would not respond to the survey again.

Staff sickness had increased from 2024 because the Council had an ageing workforce who would have some illnesses that younger officers do not and consequently these would tend to be of a longer nature. Stress was the main reason for absence in the workforce.

The Board reiterated that Officers should try to get more than 25% of the Council's workforce to respond to the next survey. They suggested a 'pulse' survey every 6 months and doing a 'you say we did' with the Working Board.

There was only a 19% response rate in 2005 but in 2019 there was a 46% response rate which was the highest amount received. Therefore, homeworking did not have an impact. Officers reiterated that they were keen to show staff members that they were actioning their comments.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS15 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

This item was deferred.

CS16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR
QUARTER 1 OF 2025/26

The Board considered a report on the performance in the first quarter of the Council term for 2025-2026 which detailed the progress made against objectives, milestones, and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

It was confirmed that the new Welfare Officers had started in the Benefits Team.

It was noted that there had been a significant improvement with the debt recovery, especially with Adult Social Care where most of the debt was. Additional staff had been brought into Adult Social Care to help resolve the debt issues for clients and families.

The Board suggested that the agency staff usage and costs be reviewed as there had not been a reduction in the usage of them. This was especially the case in Children's

Services; however, they had started work around this. It was agreed that the Head of HR could attend a future meeting to present an update on agency staffing and recruitment.

Regarding the One Stop Shops, the Board emphasised the need for these to remain to support service users who were not technologically confident.

Regarding the local market, the Board commented that work needed to be done to maintain it. The Board asked officers to check whether licences were still required for markets.

It was noted that some services are experiencing shortfalls in School SLA (service level agreement) income, meaning that full cost recovery is not being achieved. Consideration is therefore being given by those services as to whether to continue to offer the SLAs

The Board asked what the effect was following savings with school meal provisions on families and increasing green bin costs with fly tipping.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS17 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY

The Board considered a report on the Council's overall revenue net spend position as of 31 May 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position. The report was presented by the Director of Finance and only focused on revenue spending. 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. In presenting the report, it was noted that the Council had to spend in budget by the end of 2025/26, otherwise this will increase the amount of borrowing required under the Exceptional Financial Support arrangement.

It was shared with the Board that the Council overspent by £16 million in 2024/25 but only had £6 million in reserves available to fund the overspend. Therefore, the Council applied for Exceptional Financial Support in December 2024, of which £10 million will be utilised to fund the remaining 2024/25 overspend. The Council has not yet needed to undertake EFS borrowing, as this will depend on the Council's cashflow. Interest rates to borrow from the PWLB (Public Works Loan Board) are high at present at

6.2% over 20 years, therefore the Council will borrow later in the financial year when rates are expected to be more favourable. It was noted that the Council set the 2025/26 with an expectation of requiring a further £29 million of EFS borrowing.

The Board noted that changes to the home to school transport policy could not be implemented before the schools started the new term in September 2025.

In response, officers stated that due to the time taken to undertake the consultation process, the changes would now be implemented from January 2026 for new children and September 2026 for existing children.

Regarding home to school transport, officers agreed to see how many of these pupils had EHCPs (education, health and care plans).

It was noted that the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (Cipfa) will undertake a financial resilience review of the Council during the Autumn, on behalf of MHCLG. They will report their findings to Ministers, for final EFS approval to be granted during February 2026 to enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2026/27.

Councillor Logan noted that the Children, Young People & Families PPB looked at the results of the consultation on school transport and made recommendations to the Executive Board.

RESOLVED: The Council's overall spending position as at 31 May 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

Meeting ended at 7:56 p.m.

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Audit and Governance Board held on Wednesday, 24 September 2025 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Thornton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Guest, E. Dawson, M. Murphy, S. Baker, G. Ferguson and A. Mottershead

Also in attendance: L. Luddington, M. Derrick, H. Peurala - Grant Thornton UK LLP and D. Lyon, O. Mutelowa – Mersey Gateway

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

	<i>Action</i>
AGB12 MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
AGB13 NEW RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY The Board was presented with a revised Risk Management Policy which had been drafted in conjunction with Zurich Municipal, the Council's insurers. The aim of the Policy was to provide direction and alignment to current Risk Management processes across the Council Directorates. The Executive Board had approved the new proposed policy at its meeting on 11 September 2025, and recommended that the Audit and Governance Board oversee the implementation of the new Risk Management Policy and associated actions. RESOLVED: That the updated Risk Management Policy, with changes outlined in Section 3.3 of the report be approved.	Chief Executive

AGB14 ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Director, Finance, which provided an annual update on developments in regard to the Council's counter-fraud and corruption activity during 2024/25.

The Board considered information relating to the following activities:

- a summary of key development in the fraud risk landscape;
- HR related investigations and whistleblowing complaints received and actions taken (Appendix 1);
- the Council's strategic plans for tackling fraud and corruption, as set out in the Counter Fraud Strategy 2025-2030 (Appendix 2); and
- the Annual Fraud Plan, which outlined the Council's operational approach to preventing, detecting and responding to fraud and related irregularities (Appendix 3).

The Board discussed:

- the use of AI by the National Fraud Initiative and queried if there were plans by the Council to use AI as part of Anti-Fraud investigations. It was noted that the use of AI was an area that could be explored in the future; and
- National Anti-Fraud week in November and during this period the Council could publicise its work around counter-fraud and corruption activity.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the annual update report on anti-fraud and corruption activity be noted;
- 2) the counter fraud work being undertaken be supported;
- 3) the Counter Fraud Strategy 2025-2030 be approved; and
- 4) the Annual Fraud Plan 2025/26 be approved.

Director of
Finance

AGB15 EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

The Board considered a report of the Director of

Finance which presented the 2024/25 External Audit Annual Report.

On behalf of the Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, L. Luddington, presented the Annual Report, which detailed the Council's overall arrangements, as well as providing key recommendations regarding any significant weaknesses identified during the review. It was noted that the report identified a number of significant weaknesses, and the external auditors had made key recommendations where the Council should take action to improve together with management's responses. In addition, a number of improvement recommendations were identified within the report, along with management's responses.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the 2024/25 External Audit Annual Report shown in the appendix be noted, including the recommendations contained within the report; and
- 2) Council be asked to consider the three statutory recommendations contained within the report, at its meeting on 22 October 2025.

Director of Finance

AGB16 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT - 2024/25

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, which sought approval of the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

The AGS was originally presented to the Board in June 2024. Since that meeting a number of amendments had been made to the version previously reviewed and were detailed in the report. It was noted that nine areas had been highlighted as for improvement.

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

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

Director of Finance

AGB17 2024/25 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT AND LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, which sought approval for the Council's 2024/25 Statement of Accounts (Appendix 3), and the report of the

Audit Findings of the External Auditor (Grant Thornton) on the 2024/25 financial statements. The report also sought approval of the Council's Letter of Representation.

It was reported that the Statement of Accounts set out the Council's financial performance for the year in terms of revenue and capital spending and also presented the year end financial position as reflected in the balance sheet. The key elements were detailed in the report.

The External Auditor presented the Audit Findings report which summarised the findings from 2024/25 External Audit. Section 2 of the Audit Findings report presented the finding of the External Auditor in respect of matters and risks identified at the planning stage of the audit and additional and significant matters that arose during the course of their work. Appendix B of the Audit Findings Report presented an action plan of recommendations for future improvement to the Statement of Accounts. These would be reviewed by management for appropriate action.

In addition, the Council was required to provide the External Auditor with a Letter of Representation relating the financial statements, as shown in Appendix 1. The letter was required to be signed by the Chair of the Board on behalf of the Council.

The Board requested that it be noted that following the advice provided by Officers they were happy with the information presented.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the draft Letter of Representation in Appendix 1 be approved and any subsequent additions or amendments be approved by the Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Board;
- 2) the External Auditor's draft 2024/25 Audit Findings Report in Appendix 2 be approved and any subsequent additions or amendments be approved by Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Board; and
- 3) the Council's draft 2024/25 Statement of Accounts in Appendix 3 be approved and any subsequent additions or amendments be approved by the Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Board.

Director of
Finance

AGB18 CIPFA FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE

The Board considered a report which advised of the Council's self-assessment against the CIPFA Financial Management Code. The report assessed the Council's position against the key areas for a number on financial management standards and where appropriate identified follow up action to comply with the Code.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the self-assessment against the Financial Management Code, be approved; and
- 2) the self-assessment against the Financial Management Code be updated and reported on an annual basis and reported to the Board.

Director of
Finance

AGB19 APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER

The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance which detailed the requirements for recruiting an independent member of the Board. In November 2024, the Board reviewed and updated its terms of reference, to ensure they complied with CIPFA's recommended practice. In addition to reducing the size of the Board, it was agreed that a suitably qualified, co-opted, independent Member, would provide additional expertise and knowledge relevant to the Board's role, particularly that of the Council's Audit Committee. These changes were approved by Council at its meeting on 16 May 2025.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the requirements for the post of Independent Member for the Audit and Governance Board outlined within the report, be approved; and
- 2) the proposed process for recruiting an independent Member to the Audit and Governance Board, be approved.

Director of
Finance

AGB20 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.

AGB21 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 4 June 2025. 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. By the end of August 2025, 395 days of audit work had been completed, which represented 37.6% of the total planned days for the year.

Appended to the report were the executive summaries of the reports issued numbering 2 to 13, as listed in the report.

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

AGB22 MERSEY GATEWAY PROJECT

The Board considered an update report that provided an overview of the finances for the Mersey Gateway Project in relation to the financial year to the 31st March 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.31 p.m.

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 2 June 2025 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Leck (Chair), Thornton (Vice-Chair), S. Hill, Hughes, P. Nolan, Philbin, C. Plumptre Walsh, Polhill, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: T. Gibbs, A. Plant, G. Henry, A. Blackburn, E. Beheny, C. Sturdy, L. Wilson-Lagan and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: Three members of the public.

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

		<i>Action</i>
DEV1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2025, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
DEV2	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.	
DEV3	25/00094/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF AN ANCILLARY SURFACE-MOUNTED STORAGE BUILDING ANCHORED TO EXISTING HARDSTANDING AT SAFFIL LTD, SULLIVAN ROAD, WIDNES, WA8 0US	
	The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.	
	The Committee was addressed by Mr McLaren, a representative of the Applicant, who summarised the following benefits of the site <i>inter alia</i> :	

- the building would be used to store finished articles on site;
- consultation had taken place with neighbouring properties and no objections had been received;
- the previous storage facility on the site had been demolished;
- the provision of a storage facility was needed for a temporary period of 10 years and would give the business time to consider its long term needs;
- the storage facility would also secure the employment of 17 employees at the site; and
- the facility offers a flexible and cost effective solution allowing the company to meet its current operational needs without prejudicing any prospective development plans for this area of the site and it was in accordance with the Council's Local Plan Policies.

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

RESOLVED: Approved subject to conditions:

1. Temporary permission – 10 Years
2. Detailing Approved Plans

DEV4 25/00102/FUL - PROPOSED EXTENSION TO THE REAR OF MANUFACTURING FACILITY COMPRISING CLASS B2 INDUSTRIAL FLOORSPEACE INCLUDING A CANOPY AREA AND CLASS B8 WAREHOUSE FLOORSPEACE, INCLUDING OVERHEAD CANOPY SPACE FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING, REMOVAL OF PORTAL FRAME STORAGE FACILITY TO THE FRONT OF THE MAIN BUILDING, CHANGES TO THE CAR PARKING AND HGV TRAILER PARKING, AND ASSOCIATED CHANGES TO ON-SITE PLANT AND OTHER FACILITIES ON THE SITE AT HOWDENS JOINERY LIMITED, ASTMOOR ROAD, RUNCORN, CHESHIRE, WA7 1PQ.

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

Since the publication of the agenda the Lead Local Flood Authority had provided comments on the application. They requested that an updated detailed drainage strategy should be provided prior to commencement. This could be

provided by the applicant prior to determination or added to the decision as a condition.

The Environment Agency had provided comments since the publishing of the report and raised multiple queries. They had also provided some suggested conditions that could be added to the decision that would aid in answering their queries. It was suggested that the information requested could be provided prior to determination or added to the decision as a prior to commencement condition.

The Committee was addressed by Ms Bowater, a representative of the Applicant, and the Applicant Mr Fisher who both summarised the benefits of the proposal *inter alia*:

- years of work had gone into planning and designing a scheme to future proof the business at the Runcorn site;
- the Runcorn site was vital to Howden's Joinery Limited. Manufacturing, storage and logistics were all carried out at this site. 75% of Howden's kitchen cabinets were produced at this site;
- the application complied with national and local planning policies;
- Howden's was investing £100m into this project. The project would safeguard the sites future. Over 450 people were currently employed at the Runcorn site and up to 600 peoples were employed during peak periods; and
- the project would bring growth and security to the Runcorn site.

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

RESOLVED: That Authority be delegated to the Director – Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair to determine the application and that, subject to resolution of the outstanding matters relating to drainage and ecology the application be approved subject to the conditions below to be amended in line with outstanding consultation responses received.

Director –
Planning and
Transportation

Conditions

1. Time limit - full permission

2. Specifying Approved Plans
3. Submission and agreement of Materials
4. Submission and agreement of a Site Waste Management Plan
5. Covering actions for Unidentified Contamination
6. Submission and agreement of Gas Monitoring Report and mitigation as required
7. Implementation and Retention of Parking Layout
8. Restricting Construction Hours for Piling
9. Restricting noise from external plant
10. Submission and agreement of Construction Environmental Management Plan
11. Reasonable Avoidance Measures for Mammals
12. Breeding Birds (time restriction for build)
13. Drainage
14. Notice to Council regarding piling works

DEV5 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following applications had been received / were in progress:

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 appeals have been determined:

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. **(DISMISSED)**

24/00097/FUL

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

Meeting ended at 6.47 p.m.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 1 September 2025 at Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor S. Hill.

Absence declared on Council business: None.

Officers present: A. Blackburn, A. Plant, L. Wilson-Lagan, G. Henry, E. Breheny, S. Moorhouse, C. Sturdy, G. Ferguson, and I. Moorhouse.

Also in attendance: 24 members of the public.

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

Action

DEV6 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2025, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

DEV7 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.

Councillor Woolfall did not take part in any debate or vote on the on the following item as he had previously expressed his views on the proposed development.

DEV8 23/00244/OUT - OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION (WITH ALL MATTERS OTHER THAN ACCESS RESERVED) FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 350 DWELLINGS, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS. FULL DETAILS FOR SITE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS VIA A NEW JUNCTION ONTO CHAPEL LANE FOLLOWING THE DEMOLITION OF ROSE FARM BUNGALOW AND NEW

EMERGENCY ACCESS ON CHAPEL LANE (TO BE DETERMINED BY KNOWSLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL ONLY) AND A SECONDARY EMERGENCY ACCESS VIA SANDY LANE (TO BE DETERMINED BY HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL). ALL OTHER MATTERS ARE TO BE DETERMINED BY HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ONLY AT LAND AT CHAPEL LANE WIDNES CHESHIRE

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

Since the publication of the agenda, it was noted that additional letters had been received regarding the phasing of development sites across the borough. In the current Development Plan, there was no policy requirement to control the phasing of allocated developments in the borough. It was noted that comments regarding bats in the area were outstanding from Merseyside Environmental Trust; therefore, it was recommended that the application be approved, subject to their response.

A statement was circulated to the Committee from Councillor Ball who was a Member for Birchfield Ward. The statement highlighted in detail her concerns with traffic congestion, the impact on residents during construction, the change of use of Sandy Lane, flooding, the loss of greenbelt land and the character change to the area.

The Committee was addressed by Dr Wotherspoon who objected to the proposal. He presented the following points:

- There were concerns with local infrastructure if the development was built, especially with GPs, dentists, schools, roads and the loss of the greenbelt land.
- While he understood that housing was needed, he felt that full consideration was not taken with this site, especially with the additional traffic that would go to the M62 junction.
- Historically, he'd worked as a GP and specialised in road traffic accidents for 27 years before retiring.
- At the north end of Warrington Road in Widnes, which is a single-track road, vehicles would often overtake stationary vehicles and vehicles going the 30mph speed limit on blind corners. This was most dangerous by the M62 roundabout.
- Chapel Lane was a narrow country lane with blind corners and a narrow pedestrian crossing. A short-term solution would be the planned slip-road onto Queensberry Way. For this development, the exit

point should go onto the roundabout by Cronton Lane and not Chapel Lane. This should all be done prior to construction.

- Every house will have roughly two commuting cars, and this would increase with children who worked.
- As the Council has a duty of care to its residents, road safety should be the most important factor to mitigate death or serious injury.
- He appealed to the Committee to take on his advice regarding road safety and act accordingly.

The Committee was addressed by Mr O'Connor, the agent for the applicant, who supported the officer's recommendation to approve the application. He added that:

- The site formed a majority of two allocations and was acceptable under the terms of the Council's Delivery Plan. The development was applicable to all the policies as set out in Halton's Development Plan.
- The new development would include a toucan crossing on Queensbury Way, a traffic calming scheme and cycling infrastructure on Chapel Lane, and environmentally sensitive lighting on Sandy Lane.
- New homes were needed in the borough and the planned access proposals were considered to be acceptable.
- A sensitive design was planned for properties backing onto Uptone Lane.
- A slip-road onto Queensbury Way was not required to meet traffic management regulations as determined by Highways England or from planning policy.
- A six by seven-meter spine road was planned from Chapel Lane to the eastern boundary of the site. This would accommodate a bus route in the future.
- 20% of the new homes would be affordable and all will be energy efficient and built sustainably.
- Sandy Lane would become more desirable for pedestrians and cyclists and Chapel Lane would be environmentally compensated for habitat loss.

In response to questions raised by the Committee, officers stated that:

- Knowsley Borough Council would need to determine the access for Chapel Lane. In terms of highway numbers, Halton Borough Council wanted to support safety, and based on the evidence provided, there was no proof that there would be a detrimental impact because of the planned traffic mitigation measures that would alleviate traffic issues.
- Neither Warrington Borough Council nor National Highways raised any road safety issues with the

development.

- In the UK, there were 1.2 cars per household on average so in peak times there would be 4 vehicles leaving the site per minute. This traffic would dilute at every junction.
- Roughly 10% of the traffic leaving the site may reach the Warrington Road which means there would be an increase of one car every two minutes reaching the motorway junction.
- Chapel Lane would see an increase in traffic, but it would not be detrimental and the planned measures that would come with the site would mitigate this.
- No organisation expressed their objection to the development due to traffic concerns.
- Regarding safety, the application was initially made in 2023, so a road safety assessment was done in between 2017-2021 where there was one recorded collision on Chapel Lane and there were no fatalities on the M62 junction as of 2024. There were no clusters of collisions.
- There were two applications for this site, Knowsley Borough Council were yet to determine the application whereas Halton Borough Council were determining the application for the access point in its area.
- The Committee were looking at material considerations and highway officers looked at traffic considerations offsite.
- The trees to the right of Sandy Lane were not part of the site proposals.
- The left side of the site was part of W5 in the application.
- It was confirmed that another application would come forward regarding the site as it was currently in the outlying stage.
- If the application was refused based on highway safety, it was stated that an appeal would look at the evidence presented from a safety point of view. The evidence available was in favour of the officer's recommendation.
- It was unknown when Knowsley Borough Council would discuss this item but if they refused it and the applicant lost the appeal then the development could not go ahead.

Further to the publication of the AB Update List, it was noted that the Council's Highway Engineer had made several points of clarification to the published report – as listed in the AB Update List.

[Following three warnings to the public attendees regarding their disruption of the meeting, the Meeting was suspended at 19:12 and reconvened at 19:20].

In response to additional questions raised by Members, officers stated that:

- Statistics provide scenarios not certainties, but the overriding NPPF principle of safe and suitable access to the site for all users is met with mitigation offered.
- Mitigation offered includes measures for influencing control of speed as well as improvements to sustainable modes of travel and travel environment.

The Committee noted that a rejection was not strong enough if it was because of 'highway-related' reasons, especially if evidence suggested no significant congestion/capacity issues resultant from the proposal, or mitigation where an impact was noted. If Knowsley Borough Council determined that it was detrimental then the Committee could look at this again when the application returned at a later date.

Officers noted that appropriate access needed to be given for the site and the development could not go ahead if this was not proven.

After careful consideration of the application, updates and comments made by the speakers, the proposal was moved and seconded and the Committee voted to approve the Application.

RESOLVED:

That the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:

S106 agreement relating to off-site highway works, Open Space, Affordable Housing, habitat loss compensation and Green Belt compensation.

a) Schedule of the following conditions:

- Standard Outline Condition
- Condition specifying approved plans
- Levels
- External Materials & surface materials
- Boundary treatment details
- Site investigation, remediation and mitigation
- Any unidentified contamination
- Affordable housing plan
- Tree protection and Arb Method Statement
- Woodland Management Plan for minimum 30 years

- Site Waste Management Plan
 - Site Bin storage, servicing plan and tracking
 - Details of noise mitigation measures
 - Hours of construction
 - Recreational Pressure Home leaflet
 - Ecology lighting scheme for bats
 - Bird and Bat boxes
 - Breeding birds
 - CEMP/agreement of ecological enhancement features
 - Drainage Strategy
 - Drainage Verification
 - Pedestrian and cycle links
 - Scheme of speed calming measures
 - Cycle parking
 - Vehicle access and parking constructed prior to commencement of use
 - Details and implementation of measures for low carbon and renewable energy proposals
- b) If the S106 agreement is not signed within a reasonable period of time, authority given to refuse this planning application.

DEV9 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following applications had been received / were in progress:

24/00463/PRIOR

The Secretary of State had 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:

25/00001/NONDET

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of a building falling under Use Class E into a mixed use, Class E at ground floor and 2 flats (2 x 6 bed) Class C3 at first floor. **(ALLOWED)**

Meeting ended at 7:30p.m.

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on Wednesday, 2 July 2025 in the Board Room, Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott (Vice-Chair), Begg, Bramwell, Fry, K. Loftus, A. Lowe, Stockton and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Hughes and Nelson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Wilson-Lagan and K. Hesketh and C. Ward

Also in attendance: None

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

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chair thanked the previous Members: Councillors Dourley, V. Hill, A. McInerney and Teeling, for their contributions to the Committee over the year.

The Chair welcomed the new members to the Committee, Councillors Begg, Lowe, Nelson and Wainwright.

The Chair also thanked Kim Hesketh, Wendy Pringle and the Environmental Health Department for their work on the Creamfields Event 2024.

		<i>Action</i>
REG1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2025 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.	
REG2	LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY	
	The Committee considered a request to authorise a review of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy.	
	The Policy must be reviewed by the Council every five years and the current policy is due to expire at midnight on 6 January 2026. Members were advised on the consultation process to be followed and a copy of the updated Policy and table reflecting amendments had been circulated to Members.	

Members were advised that, following the consultation process, a report would be brought back to Committee for consideration and recommendation to full Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the Director - Legal and Democratic Services (D-LD) be authorised to undertake a consultation exercise in respect of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy in accordance with section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003;
- 2) the D-LD determine all matters relating to the consultations process; and
- 3) the matter be reported back to the Regulatory Committee following the completion of the consultation process.

Meeting ended at 6.59 p.m.

REGULATORY SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Sub Committee on Thursday, 5 June 2025 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott and Bramwell

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Hesketh, E. Wilson-Lagan and C. Ward

Also in attendance: L. Halliday, H. Durkin, C. O'Hara and Councillor Begg

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

	<i>Action</i>
REGS1 MINUTES	
The minutes of the meeting held on the 18 March 2025 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.	
REGS2 APPLICATION FOR TO VARY A PREMISES LICENCE - RED LION INN, RUNCORN ROAD, MOORE, WA4 6UD	
This is the formal notification of a decision made by Halton Borough Council's Regulatory Sub-Committee at a hearing held under the Licensing Act 2003 ("the Act") on 5 June 2025 in the Boardroom at Municipal Building, Widnes at 10 am.	
The hearing was held to determine an application under section 34 of the Act for a variation of a premises licence for the Red Lion Inn ("the Premises") in Runcorn. The application sought to amend the licensing plan in accordance with the drawing which accompanied the application, to permit the sale of alcohol from an external bar area and to remove the provisions of facilities for dancing and making music as these are no longer licensable activities.	

The hearing has been held as relevant representations have been received from Ward Councillor Neil Connolly, and one local resident.

In attendance were:-

- Members of the Regulatory Sub-Committee comprising Councillor Wallace, Councillor Abbot and Councillor Bramwell (the Sub-Committee);
- Mr George Domleo from Flint Bishop Solicitors, acting on behalf of the Premises Licence Holder, Star Pubs & Bars Limited;
- Mr Andrew Rogers who is the Designated Premises Supervisor at the Red Lion Inn;
- Ms Becky Rogers, from the Red Lion Inn;
- Councillor Neil Connolly; and
- In addition, there were a number of observers, including Councillor Victoria Begg.

The one local resident who objected to the application informed the Council that they did not intend to attend or be represented at the hearing and the matter proceeded in their absence in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005. The Sub-Committee were advised that the relevant representation was still to be considered despite the residents non-attendance.

After the chair of the Sub-Committee, Councillor Wallace, had introduced the parties, the Legal Adviser, Elizabeth Wilson-Lagan, outlined the procedure to be followed.

Licensing Manager, Kim Hesketh, took the Sub-Committee through the contents of her reports and accompanying appendices, explaining the nature of the application and the relevant representations that had been received.

The Hearing

The applicant's Solicitor explained that the Premises Licence holder, Star Pubs & Bars Limited, was a wholly owned subsidiary of Heineken UK, and there was a lease agreement in place between Mr Rogers and Heineken UK, with the family living on the premises. Star Pubs & Bars had owned the premises since 2011 and since then there had been no issues with the premises. The premises had been licensed under the Act since 2005 and probably had some form of licence before then.

The building itself is from the 17th century and acts as a village pub and community hub. It offers both food and drinks, with a 50/50 split. It holds open mic nights, summer fairs and wellness and holistic events. There had been significant investment from the current owners and employed over 40 members of staff. It was explained that there would be a need to employ more members of staff should the application be granted.

The purpose of the external bar was also explained. The internal bar area was not the biggest given the character of the building and could not cope with demand. The external bar would alleviate this pressure and would also mean that parents would not have to leave children in the garden area to get drinks from inside. The applicants have also found that customers still prefer to sit outside following the impact of Covid.

It was also explained that there would be staff stationed outside so they would be monitoring what is going on. There was no intention to increase timings and nothing usual about the application. The applicant is aware of the location and did not want to cause noise nuisance, particularly as they were living in the premises with their baby.

The applicant's Solicitor explained that none of the responsible authorities had objected to the application, with conditions being agreed with the Police on CCTV and Environmental Health on not operating the external bar area after 11pm. To alleviate the concerns of the Councillor and residents, however, the applicant was prepared to offer 2 x additional conditions on providing the contact details of the DPS/ manager to residents on request for them to make complaints and on maintaining a record of complaints.

Following questions from the Sub-Committee, the Applicant's Solicitor explained that there would be no increase in capacity and that the external bar would be stocked with alcohol which would stay in the bar after it had closed at 11pm. The bar itself is a self-secured unit that would be locked and there would be no transporting of bottles or banging of crates once it had closed. The applicant does not allow bottle bins to be emptied after 8 pm but was happy to agree a condition to this affect if members thought it was necessary.

To questions about the complaints on lighting, the Applicant confirmed that there was no strobe lighting and that there were fairy lights but that they have not received

any complaints about lighting.

Councillor Connolly explained that the 11pm curfew for the external bar changed the position and that many of his concerns had been alleviated. He still had issues with planning related matters, which he appreciated were not a matter for this Sub-Committee, parking, capacity for open and ticketed events, lighting from discos and vendors using the car park for events.

In response to questions from the Sub-Committee, Councillor Connolly confirmed that he had received complaints from residents about noise but that these had related to New Years Eve and that since then there had been no further issues. The residents ongoing concerns were more anxiety about potential noise. The applicant clarified that the New Years Eve event had not taken place in the teepee outside but inside the building.

Decision

The Sub-Committee resolved to grant the application subject to the additional conditions agreed with the Police and Environmental Health and the following 2 conditions:-

- 1) A dedicated telephone number and email address for the Designated Premises Supervisor or Manager shall be given to any resident on request to allow for complaints to be made directly and at times when the premises is open;
- 2) A record of complaints shall be maintained to record details of any complaints received. The information to be recorded shall include:-
 - The date and time of the complaint;
 - Any subsequent remedial action undertaken;
 - Where disclosed, the complainants name and location;

The record of complaints shall be kept for 12 months following the complaint and shall be made available to the responsible authorities as and when required.

Reasons

In making its decision, the Sub-Committee had regard to the licensing objectives, the statutory guidance and the Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy as well as all representations made to the Sub-Committee (including the 1

resident representation) and the licensing report.

The Sub-Committee considered as follows:-

1. The Sub-Committee noted that many of the issues that were raised by Councillor Connolly were matters pertaining to planning or matters outside the control of the licensing regime and, having taken legal advice on this matter, these matters were disregarded by the Sub-Committee;
2. The applicant is a very responsible licence holder and they have reassured the Sub-Committee that they will work with residents on any issues brought to their attention. The Sub-Committee also noted the comments of Councillor Connolly that the new landlords are to be commended for they have reinvigorated a county pub and that it is a vibrant destination;
3. In respect of the licensing objectives, the Sub-Committee placed great weight on the fact that none of the responsible authorities had objected to the application and that they were the experts in their respective fields. The agreed conditions that both the Police and Environmental Health had imposed promoted the licensing objectives and were proportionate and reasonable;
4. The Sub-Committee considered that the main issue was the potential for noise nuisance from the external bar, particularly after 11pm, with Councillor Connolly accepting that there were no issues before this time;
5. The concerns of noise nuisance related mainly to one incident on New Years Eve and that since then there had been no further issues;
6. The Sub-Committee considers that the condition imposed by Environmental Health restricting the use of the external bar after 11 pm adequately deals with the concerns of noise and the Sub-Committee notes that Councillor Connolly also agreed that this condition dealt with many of his concerns;
7. The Sub-Committee does not consider that there would be an issue with noise from bottling up given the applicants reassurances that bottle bins would not be emptied past 8pm and therefore they determined not to attach the condition offered by the Applicant to

this affect;

8. The Sub-Committee, being conscious that this was not a review of the current licence, also considered that the issues that had been raised on lighting were of a speculative nature so were the concerns raised on public safety. The applicant had confirmed there would be no increase in capacity and significant weight was placed on the fact that there had been no representations from the Health and Safety Authority or Cheshire Fire; and
9. Overall, the Sub-Committee considers the application promotes the licensing objectives.

The Sub-Committee reminded residents that should any issues arise, there were powers to deal with premises, if a licence leads to the licensing objectives being undermined. The power for residents or responsible authorities to bring review proceedings, where steps could be taken to restrict the licence, impose further conditions, or in extreme circumstances, revoke the licence when evidence showed issues resulted from a licensable activity. Action could also be taken separately by Environmental Health in relation to statutory noise nuisance, if reported. The Sub-Committee hoped that this brought some reassurance to the residents.

Time that the determination shall take effect

Forthwith.

Meeting ended at 11.42 a.m.

REGULATORY SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Sub Committee on Monday, 14 July 2025 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Wilson-Lagan, K. Hesketh and C. Ward (observer)

Also in attendance: Ms. L. Ashton, Mr. B. Longman and Ms. L. Halliday

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

Action

EXB3 APPLICATION TO TRANSFER A PREMISES LICENCE AND VARY THE DESIGNATED PREMISES SUPERVISOR - BLUNDELL ARMS, HALE ROAD, WIDNES, WA8 8SX

This is the formal notification of a decision made by Halton Borough Council's Regulatory Sub-Committee at a hearing held under the Licensing Act 2003 ("the Act") on 14 July 2025 in the Boardroom at Municipal Building at 10am.

The hearing was held to hear two applications made by the applicant, Ms Lorraine Ashton, in respect of the Blundell Arms, Hale Road, Widnes, WA8 8SX ("the Premises"). The first application was made under section 42 of the Licensing Act 2003 for the transfer of a Premises Licence. The second application was made under section 37 for a variation of the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS).

The hearing was triggered as a result of a representation from Cheshire Police to both applications.

In attendance were:-

1. Members of the Regulatory Sub-Committee comprising Cllr Pamela Wallace ("Chair"), Cllr Kath

Loftus and Cllr Mike Fry (collectively referred to as “the Sub-Committee”);

2. Ms Lorraine Ashton, (“the Applicant”);
3. Mr Ben Longman (“the leaseholder of the Premises”);
4. Ms Lesley Halliday (“Police Licensing Officer”);
5. Mr Craig Ward (“Licensing Enforcement Officer”);
6. Kim Hesketh (“Licensing Manager”)
7. Elizabeth Wilson-Lagan (“Legal Adviser”).

After the Chair had introduced the parties, the Legal Adviser outlined the procedure to be followed.

DETAILS OF THE APPLICATION

The applications were for a transfer of the premises licence from Cheshire Retail NW Limited to the Applicant and for the variation of the DPS from [REDACTED] to the Applicant. Both these applications were made with immediate effect at the time of their submissions on 8 June 2025 and 10 June 2025, respectively.

THE HEARING

The Licensing Manager summarised the contents of her report, referring to the appendices which included the Applications (at Appendices A and B) and the Police representations (Appendix C and D). She explained that since the publication of her report, Cheshire Police had submitted witness evidence from Ms Halliday, Special Constable Tobi Booth and Mr Ward. The applicant confirmed that she had received a copy of the witness evidence. Although there was reference to body camera footage, this was not presented to the Committee or the Applicant.

Neither of the parties present had any questions for the Licensing Manager.

The Applicant then presented her case. She explained that she had been in the pub trade for over 58 years and ran pubs for around 30 years, in both England and Wales. During this time she had never had a problem with getting a licence. She stated that she was not aware of the licensing condition requiring a personal licence holder to be on the premises at all times and has never known such a condition in all her years of being in the pub trade. She explained that it was near impossible to comply with the condition.

She stated that she had retired around 16 years ago

but that she had come out of retirement as she had missed the work. She had worked at the Premises for around 3 years. She explained that Mr Longman had taken over the Premises from [REDACTED] and she was helping the pub out. It was not a very busy pub and the intention was for it to become a community pub with the focus on families and children.

The Applicant had nothing further to say at this stage and the Legal Adviser explained that this was her opportunity to put her case and that she may want to address the issues that the Police had raised. The Applicant handed over to Mr Longman.

Mr Longman explained that he was nervous having never attended a Licensing Committee. He is the leaseholder of the premises and provided a background of his involvement in the Premises. He started as an investor around 12/18 months ago when [REDACTED] was the Manager. His previous business partner, [REDACTED], was a nightmare and there was a breakdown in their business relationship. [REDACTED] is no longer involved in the Premises. He noted the history of the pub and the problems around drugs and underage drinking, but explained that this was before he was involved in the day to day running. He was only ever an investor at this time and [REDACTED] ran the business for him and [REDACTED].

Now that he is involved, he wanted to work with the Police Licensing Officer and the Licensing Enforcement Officer. He was not aware of the licence condition requiring someone with a personal licence to be present on the premises at all times or the action plan with [REDACTED]. In respect of the condition, he also stated was impossible to comply with. It meant the DPS would never have a holiday and, whilst there were 3 members of staff with a personal licence, it would not be financially viable to put anyone else in for the course. The bar itself was not very busy and that condition was a problem for the business. He went on to say that he had emailed the Police Licensing Officer and the Licensing Enforcement Officer asking for a meeting to discuss removing the condition but he had not heard from them. Whilst they told him they did not receive his email, he has it on his phone.

In relation to the applicant, he stated that she was the most experienced DPS that he knew. She is going to be working at the Premises all the time and that he was not going to be there. He is not shying away but wants to work with the Police going forward to ensure compliance.

Questions were then put to the Applicant which were initially answered by Mr Longman. He stated that he would require at least 5 members of staff with a personal licence to run the bar in compliance with the condition which made it impossible for them to operate. Ideally, he wanted that condition removed as the pub does not make that much money and it would not be viable to put that many staff through the personal licence course. He stated that with only 3 DPS's (the Sub-Committee understood this to mean personal licence holders), he may be seen behind the bar to ensure compliance, or even cleaning the toilets, as he would hate to see the bar go under.

When questioned on his level of involvement in the business, Mr Longman confirmed that he was the boss, the leaseholder and that he was hands on and he would do spot visits himself to ensure compliance with the licence going forward. He is the boss that you don't want but he can only deal with issues that he sees. Certainly, staff should not be drinking whilst on duty. He stated it was unfortunate that members of staff have drank alcohol whilst on duty in the past but there was a notice on the wall requiring staff not to drink and it was something he would deal with if he knew about it. The Landlord is Cheshire Retail.

The Applicant stated that she would pay the staff wages from the till and leave a note for Mr Longman. But, overall, he was responsible for the financial booking for the business. He was also responsible for staff training and ensuring there was a personal licence holder on the premises at all times.

The Applicant stated that she loved the business and did not want to be at the committee hearing. She confirmed that she had not received any training whilst working at the Premises but had over 50 years' experience. She stated that she was not familiar with the term "DPS" and asked whether this was new terminology.

She also disputed the Police's evidence that she had been [REDACTED]. She had left that evening because of personal issues. She drives to and from work and therefore [REDACTED] as otherwise she could not get home. Mr Longman confirmed that he had said to the Police that she had left because she was [REDACTED] and was not something he wanted to admit. But then said, she was not on duty at the time. The Applicant also disputed the comment made by Mr Ward that she had [REDACTED] during his visit on 2 July 2025. She had been sitting at the end of the bar which is where she sits

when not on duty.

When questioned on how she would ensure promotion of the crime prevention objective, she stated that she would do her best. She would not tolerate drugs and bar people. Other than that there wasn't much more she could do. She did not consider it was her responsibility to ensure compliance with the personal licence holder condition.

Ms Halliday then put forward her case. She stated that she had seen the body camera footage of Special Constable Tobi Booth from the compliance visit on 7 June 2025 and could confirm that Mr Longman had said that Ms Ashton had been on duty and had left after [REDACTED].

She considered that Mr Longman was being economic with the truth when he said that he was not aware of the conditions of the licence, particularly with regards to the requirement for a personal licence holder to be on the premises at all times. This was made known to Mr Longman during the compliance visit on 2 April 2025 which was also followed up in writing. Non-compliance with the licensing conditions had been ongoing for over 18 months which resulted in an action plan being drawn up. Ms Ashton and Mr Longman were made aware of that plan and there has been no engagement to date.

She went on to explain that whenever she has visited the Premises, Ms Aston has not been present and she considered that she was not in control of the business and is just a name on the licence.

Despite the historic problems with drugs, underage drinking and trading outside of hours, nobody was engaging with the Police and ensuring the premises was being ran well. There was no staff training, the refusal register was not being completed or signed off by the DPS as required and the personal licence condition was not being adhered to. Ms Halliday had grave concerns if the applications were granted since Ms Ashton was not in day to day control of the business, [REDACTED] and the lack of engagement in respect of the issues set out in the action plan.

She also made reference to noise complaints. The Sub-Committee were reminded that it was the crime prevention objective that was the relevant issue. Ms Halliday confirmed that she had not received an email from Mr Longman about removing the personal licence

condition.

Questions were asked, particularly in respect of Mr Ward's evidence. Given that Ms Aston had not fully addressed Mr Ward's evidence in her submissions, the Sub-Committee gave both parties an additional 5 minutes to deal with this in the interests of fairness. Ms Aston confirmed that she had told Mr Ward it was not her responsibility to ensure that a personal licence holder was on the premises at all times as this was something Mr Longman sorted out. She confirmed that "Sarah" who was taking over from her on the day in question did not have a personal licence.

Both parties summoned up accordingly.

THE DETERMINATION

The Sub-Committee resolved to **REFUSE**:-

1. The application to transfer the premises licence to the Applicant;
2. The application to vary the Designated Premises Supervisor to the Applicant.

REASONS FOR THE DETERMINATION

In making its decision, the Sub-Committee took into consideration the written representations, the witness evidence and the oral statements made at the hearing together with the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy and the Section 182 Guidance.

In particular, the Sub-Committee found that:-

1. The Applicant was not the person carrying on the business or the person with the day to day responsibility for the premises. This was evidenced by the fact that:-
 - a. Mr Longman was the boss as per his numerous statements to this effect;
 - b. Mr Longman was the leaseholder of the premises;
 - c. Mr Longman was responsible for staff training;
 - d. Whilst the Applicant paid staff wages from the till, she would leave a note confirming this to Mr Longman;
 - e. It was Mr Longman that was responsible for the financial book keeping for the business.
 - f. The Applicant confirmed that Mr Longman was responsible for ensuring there was someone with

a personal licence on the premises at all times – therefore he was the one with the responsibility for complying with the licence condition.

- g. It was Mr Longman who mainly addressed the committee at the hearing and explained how the premises was run as opposed to the Applicant.

As such, the Sub-Committee did not consider the Applicant to be the appropriate person applying to be the Premises Licence Holder (“PLH”) or Designated Premises Supervisor (“DPS”).

1. In addition, the Sub-Committee, in looking to the Police as the main source of advice on crime and disorder as set out in the Section 182 Guidance, placed significant weight on the evidence of Ms Halliday and Special Constable Tobi Booth. They accepted that the premises had a history of offences under the Licensing Act 2003 and non-compliance with the licence conditions. Whilst appreciating this was before the Applicant’s time as PLH and DPS, the Sub-Committee were not confident that she would be able to ensure compliance with the licence and promote the crime objective going forward given the Applicant’s limited responsibility in the business.
2. This was further supported by the fact that:-
 - a. The Applicant had been the PLH and DPS since 8 and 10 June respectively but, despite the historic problems and the action plan that had been agreed by the former DPS, she had not familiarised herself with the licensing conditions. In fact, she stated that she was unaware of personal licence holder condition and the Police Licensing Officer confirmed there had been no engagement with her or Mr Ward on the issues identified in the action plan;
 - b. During the compliance visit on 2 April 2025, Ms Ashton had stated to Mr Ward that ensuring there was a personal licence holder on site at all times was nothing to do with her despite her being the DPS and this being a condition of the licence. At the hearing, the Applicant accepted that she had said this.
 - c. Although the Applicant stated that the condition was unrealistic and wanted to have it removed from the licence, the condition remained live and therefore its non-compliance was an offence under section 136 of the Licensing Act 2003. The

- fact that the Applicant, as DPS, did not seek to comply with that condition was concerning.
- d. Despite the Applicant having over 50 years' experience in the pub trade, including around 30 years managing pubs, she did not come across as being knowledgeable about the Licensing Act or her duties and responsibilities as a DPS and had not received any recent training or any training during her 3 years working at the Premises.
3. The Sub-Committee noted the Police's concerns as to the suitability of the Applicant in light to the allegations that she had been [REDACTED] whilst on duty. Although this was hearsay and less weight was therefore attached to it, the Sub-Committee did consider there was some truth in the allegation given that Mr Longman had confirmed at the hearing that he had told officers on 7 June 2025 that Ms Aston had gone home [REDACTED]. This is further supported by the fact that [REDACTED] whilst on duty appeared to have been tolerated historically at the Premises and as Mr Ward had also noted the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on the Applicant at the time of his visit on 2 April 2025. The Sub-Committee therefore has concerns over the Applicant's ability to run the Premises in a safe and responsible manner.
4. The comments of Mr Longman, about moving forward and ensuring compliance have been noted and are welcomed. However, Mr Longman is not the PLH or the DPS and on the evidence before it, the Sub-Committee considers that granting the applications made by the Applicant would undermine the crime prevention objective.

Meeting ended at 12.51 p.m.

REGULATORY SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Sub Committee on Thursday, 28 August 2025 at The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Abbott and Fry

Apologies for Absence: None.

Absence declared on Council business: None.

Officers present: E. Wilson-Lagan and C. Ward

Also in attendance: None

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

**REGS4 APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE - CAVENDISH
STORE, 6 BALFOUR STREET, RUNCORN, WA7 4PH**

This is the formal notification of a decision made by Halton Borough Council's Regulatory Sub-Committee at a hearing held under the Licensing Act 2003 ("the Act") on 28 August 2025 in the Boardroom at Municipal Building at 10:30 am.

The hearing was held to hear an application made by Mr Abdullah Waris ("the Applicant") under section 17 of the Act for a premises licence at Cavendish Store, 6 Balfour Street, Runcorn, WA7 4PH ("the Premises"). The hearing was triggered by a representation from local residents, Mr Kenneth and Lisa Smith ("the Objectors"), on the grounds of public nuisance.

In attendance were:-

1. Members of the Regulatory Sub-Committee comprising Cllr Pamela Wallace ("Chair"), Cllr John Abbott and Cllr Mike Fry (collectively referred to as "the Sub-Committee");
2. Mr Tony Clarke ("agent for the Applicant")
3. Mr Craig Ward ("Licensing Enforcement Officer");
4. Elizabeth Wilson-Lagan ("Legal Adviser").

The Applicant was not in attendance, having

previously notified the Council that he would be represented at the hearing by his agent, Mr Tony Clake.

The Objectors failed to attend the hearing and the Sub-Committee heard evidence from Mr Craig Ward that notice of the hearing had been served on the Objectors by post on 25 July 2025. As no response had been received to that letter, a further letter attaching notice of the hearing was hand delivered by the Council's Licensing Manager, Kim Hesketh, on 8th August 2025. The Sub-Committee found that the Objectors had been served with adequate notice of the hearing and, in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005, determined to hold the hearing in the Objector's absence.

After the Chair had introduced the parties, the Legal Adviser outlined the procedure to be followed.

DETAILS OF THE APPLICATION

The application was for a premises licence for the supply of alcohol from Monday to Sunday between 7 am and 11 pm at the above Premises. A number of conditions were proposed which were detailed further in the operating schedule attached to the application (Appendix C to the Licensing Report).

THE HEARING

The Licensing Enforcement Officer summarised the contents of his report, referring to the appendices which included a map of the location of the Premises (Appendix A), the details of nearby licensed premises, including their licensed hours (Appendix B), the Application (Appendix C) and Objector's joint representation (Appendix D) and relevant sections of the Revised Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (Appendix E) ("the Statutory Guidance").

Mr Ward explained that the Premises, which was to become a general grocery store, had previously been occupied by the Runcorn Conservative Club who had held a premises licence for the supply of alcohol and regulated entertainment from 24 November 2005 until 30 November 2024. During this time, the licensable hours for the supply of alcohol were Sunday to Thursday 10 am to midnight and Friday and Saturday 10 am to 2 am. There were also a number of licensed premises within the vicinity, including another grocery store, namely the Co-Op, which was located further along on the same street and had similar licensable

hours to those proposed by the application. He went on to explain that none of the relevant authorities, including Environmental Health, had objected to the application and the only matter before the Sub-Committee was the representation received by the Objectors who objected to the application on the grounds of public nuisance. The crux of their objection was that a further licensed premises would increase noise, litter and loitering. They also mentioned issues with road congestion and parking as well as there being no need for another licensed premises.

Mr Clarke then presented the Applicant's case. He explained that the premises would be a general grocery store and part of a chain selling their own goods. He has known the Applicant for a while and confirms that he has industry knowledge and currently works for another client of his in another store. The Applicant now wants his own business and he is fully supported by his boss in this respect. He was financially committed and, whilst there were outstanding planning issues, he was taking the appropriate steps to obtain the relevant permission.

The application itself was, in his view, robust with appropriate conditions for promoting the licensing objectives. In terms of the licensable hours, he stated that these were respectful and ended earlier than the previous licence which went on until 2 am. There had been no objections from the Police or other responsible authorities. In relation to the resident objection, the conditions dealt with the potential for public nuisance. He explained the nature of the conditions and further emphasised that once people had left the vicinity of the premises, they were responsible for their own behaviour. The premises could only monitor people coming in and out of the premises, for which they also had CCTV in place and would be available to the Police. He also addressed some of the residents other concerns regarding the need for another licence premise and stated that this was a planning issue and not a licensing concept.

Mr Clarke addressed the Sub-Committee's further questions on the licensing hours and staff training.

Given that the Objector's were not in attendance, Mr Ward read out their representation in full.

Mr Clarke then summed up the Applicant's case, following which all parties withdrew from the room for the Sub-Committee to conduct deliberations on the matter.

THE DETERMINATION

The Sub-Committee considered the application, the residents' objection and the oral submissions heard from the Applicant's agent at the hearing.

In doing so, the Sub-Committee resolved to **GRANT** the application for a Premises Licence in respect of the above Premises subject to the hours set out below, the conditions set out in the Operating Schedule and the mandatory conditions:

- The supply of alcohol by retail

Days of Operation	Hours of Operation
Monday – Sunday	07:00 to 23:00

- Hours open to the public

Days of Operation	Hours of Operation
Monday – Sunday	07:00 to 23:00

REASONS FOR THE DETERMINATION

In reaching its decision, the Sub-Committee have taken into consideration the Licensing Objectives, the statutory guidance and the Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy.

The reasons for the decision were:-

1. Significant weight was placed on the fact that none of the responsible authorities had objected to the application;
2. The Sub-Committee considered that the Applicant was suitably qualified to run the premises in a responsible manner and in promotion of the licensing objectives;
3. In considering the residents' objection, the Sub-Committee noted that matters had been raised that were outside the control of the licensing regime and pertained to planning, such as the "need" for a further licensed premise, congestion and parking issues. These are matters for planning and highways and were not therefore taken into consideration;
4. In terms of the public nuisance element of the objection, the Sub-Committee considered there was a risk for noise, littering and loitering. However, condition 6 (which requires management and staff to use their best endeavours to prevent persons loitering outside the premises and to ensure that persons refused entry or ejected are asked to leave the

vicinity of the premises), condition 7 (which requires prominent, clear and legible notices must be displayed at all exits requesting that customers respect the needs of local residents and to leave the premises and area quietly and to properly dispose of litter), and condition 8 (requiring staff to monitor the area immediately outside the premises on a regular basis to check for, and to properly dispose of any litter from the premises) adequately dealt with those risks;

5. The Statutory Guidance makes it clear the actions of individuals beyond the immediate area surrounding the premises are matters for the personal responsibility of individuals under the law and not the licensed premises. As such, further conditions were not considered necessary or justifiable;
6. In terms of the opening and licensable hours, the Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy states that "with regards to shops, stores and supermarkets, the norm will be for such premises to be free to provide sales of alcohol for consumption off the premises at any times when the retail outlet is open for shopping unless there are very good reasons for restricting those hours". The Sub-Committee did not consider there were good reasons for restricting the hours, further noting that none of the responsible authorities had objected to the hours; and
7. On the whole, the Sub-Committee found the application promoted the licensing objectives.

The Sub-Committee recommended that the applicant and residents engage in dialogue should there be any concerns in future. In the event that the proposed operation of the premises does lead to issues, residents were strongly advised to report matters to the relevant responsible authorities.

There were powers to deal with premises if a licence leads to the licensing objectives being undermined. Not least was the power for residents or responsible authorities to bring review proceedings where steps could be taken to restrict the licence, impose further conditions or, in extreme circumstances, revoke the licence when evidence shows issues result from a licensable activity. Action could also be taken separately by environmental health in relation to statutory noise nuisance, if reported. The Sub-Committee hoped that this brought some reassurance to the residents.

Meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.

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TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE

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

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Bramwell and Hughes

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Hesketh and E. Wilson-Lagan

Also in attendance: None

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

		<i>Action</i>
TLSC1	MINUTES - 14 FEBRUARY 2025	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 14 February 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
TLSC2	MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2025	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 26 February 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
TLSC3	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 Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with subsection 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 items of business in accordance with subsection 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.

TLSC4 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

Case: 788

RESOLVED: That the renewal application for a Single Status Drivers licence be renewed with a written warning to remain on file for 12 months.

Meeting ended at 2.26 p.m.

TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee on Monday, 15 September 2025 in the The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Hesketh, E. Wilson-Lagan and C. Harrison

Also in attendance: None.

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

		Action
TLB5	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 Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with subsection 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 items of business in accordance with subsection 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.

TLB6 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

Case: 789

RESOLVED: That the Single Status Drivers licence be suspended for a period of 14 days.

Meeting ended at 11.03 a.m.

TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee on Thursday, 18 September 2025 in the The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Bell, C. Harrison and K. Hesketh,

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

		<i>Action</i>
TLB7	MINUTES	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 14 August 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
TLB8	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 Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with subsection 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 items of business in accordance with subsection 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.

TLB9 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

Case: 790

RESOLVED: That the Single Status Drivers licence be suspended for a period of 14 days.

Meeting ended at 11.39 a.m.

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

*At a meeting of the Appointments Committee held on Thursday, 12 June 2025 at the
The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Davidson, Dennett, Thompson and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Young and H. Hamlett

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

APC4	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	<i>Action</i>
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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.

APC5 STAFFING MATTER

Following a recruitment process the Committee considered candidates for the post of Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

RESOLVED: That Richard Rout be appointed to the post of Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

Meeting ended at 1.25 p.m.

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Appointments Committee held on Thursday, 17 July 2025 at the Box 17 - Halton Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Davidson, Dennett, Ratcliffe and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Wainwright

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: R. Rout and W. Rourke

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

		<i>Action</i>
APC6	MINUTES	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2025, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and agreed as a correct record.	
APC7	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.

APC8 STAFFING MATTER

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, detailing retention issues in an area of the Directorate.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approve the attached application for payment of a market supplement (Appendix 1).

APC9 STAFFING MATTER

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, proposing arrangements to ensure that senior level capacity is available in the Chief Executive's Delivery Unit for the duration of the Corporate Director's secondment to the Interim Chief Executive position, from 1 September 2025.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Committee approves the recommended approach set out as the preferred option (Option 3) in the report.

Meeting ended at 10.02 a.m.