

# Public Document Pack



## Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

Wednesday, 17 June 2009 6.30 p.m.  
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David WR'.

**Chief Executive**

### **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

<b>Councillor Ron Hignett (Chairman)</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Keith Morley (Vice-Chairman)</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Philip Balmer</b>	<b>Conservative</b>
<b>Councillor Peter Blackmore</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>
<b>Councillor Ellen Cargill</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Mike Hodgkinson</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>
<b>Councillor Dave Leadbetter</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Peter Murray</b>	<b>Conservative</b>
<b>Councillor Paul Nolan</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Christopher Rowe</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>
<b>Councillor Dave Thompson</b>	<b>Labour</b>

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*The next meeting of the Board is on Wednesday, 16 September 2009*

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

**Part I**

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<b>1. MINUTES</b>	
<b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)</b>	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and, with personal and prejudicial interests (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members), to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
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***In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.***

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 17 June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy

**SUBJECT:** Public Question Time

**WARD(s):** Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).

1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
  - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
  - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
  - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
  - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

#### **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board  
**DATE:** 17 June 2009  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive  
**SUBJECT:** Executive Board Minutes  
**WARD(s):** Boroughwide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Urban Renewal Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.**

**3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None.

**4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

**5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

**5.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

None

**5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

None

**5.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

**5.4 A Safer Halton**

None

**5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

**6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 None.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.



**APPENDIX 1**

**Extract of Executive Board, Executive Board Sub Committee Minutes Relevant to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD – 5 MARCH 2009**

**EXB 114: MERSEY GATEWAY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT STRATEGY – KEY DECISION**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought approval of the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy (MGSTS), which set out how the proposed Mersey Gateway Project (The Project) could enable improvements in integrated transport across the Borough that would further the economic, transport and sustainability objectives of the Council. By adopting this report as Council policy, the document would have significant weight in the consideration of the various planning applications for Mersey Gate Project that were now with the Government.

Members were advised that the Project was central to the achievements of the environmental and economic regeneration aspirations of Halton and was key to those of the sub-region.

It was further noted that at the local level The Project would bring about a step change in improvements to the transportation connections between Runcorn and Widnes via the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB). By transferring around 80% of the traffic from SJB to the new crossing, the existing SJB would be available for local transport services and facilities. The Project would also deliver amendments to the SJB carriageway and approach roads that were intended to improve the integrity of the bus network by reducing journey times, improving reliability and supporting and underpinning improved bus services across the Mersey between Runcorn and Widnes.

Members were advised that although the key changes to the road system in Halton would be delivered through the Mersey Gateway scheme, as submitted to the Secretary of State for planning approval, to take full advantage of the opportunity presented by these changes would require co-ordinated intervention in the form of better connecting bus services and improved facilities for cycling and walking.

It was noted that the combined programme within the MGSTS would also address existing concerns over accessibility and

connectivity as part of the wider sustainable transport and sustainability agenda for all residents of Halton, particularly those living in the most deprived wards in the Borough.

The MGSTS and the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy (MGRS) were integrated initiatives by the Council to support the delivery of the Project objectives and together set out a rigorous and clear approach to maximising the benefits across the Borough. The Project had seven high level strategic objectives, two of which related directly to sustainable transport.

The MGSTS aimed to deliver the following key vision of the sustainable travel options within Halton:

To identify and promote a network of high quality, safe, affordable, accessible and environmentally friendly travel measures for local residents, businesses and visitors to Halton, which supported the key objectives of the Local Transport Plan and the Project.

Members were advised that the full strategy comprised of five key sections:

- (1) Setting the Scene;
- (2) Halton's Story of Place and its Existing Transport Network;
- (3) National, Regional and Local Policy Context;
- (4) Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy; and
- (5) Measuring progress for the Sustainable Transport Strategy.

Each of the key sections was outlined in further detail in the report along with Phase 1 for implementation between 2014/2015 to 2024/25.

The Board held a wide ranging discussion in relation to the following:

- transport improvements in the most deprived areas;
- inclusion of cycle paths to main council buildings;
- cycle storage had been greatly improved at Council buildings including the provision of showers at Runcorn Town Hall, and
- the possibility of opening locks on the Runcorn side of the Mersey.

REASON FOR DECISION:

By adopting this report as Council policy, the document would have significant weight in the consideration of the various planning applications for Mersey Gateway that were now with the Government.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED: |

The recommended strategy embraced a range of transport interventions and initiatives, which had been prioritised based on funding projects and assumptions. Implementation would be flexible, taking into account a more detailed assessment of specific projects and options prior to committing proposals.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: |

MGSTS was designed to deliver integrated transport improvements facilitated by the new crossing due to open in late 2014.

RESOLVED: That the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy be approved to support the delivery of the Mersey Gateway Project, subject to any minor amendments being delegated to the Strategic Director, Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD – 19 MARCH**

**EXB 120 – REVIEW OF STRATEGIC REGIONAL SITES CONSULTATION.**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought authority to formally respond to the North West Development Agency (NWDA) consultation on the review of Strategic Regional Sites.

Members were advised that in 2005, the NWDA designated 25 sites within the North West as Strategic Regional Sites. The sites were identified on the basis of a number of points, as set out in the report.

Members were further advised that designation was important in terms of site profile, development and ability to access resources to bring them to fruition. Indeed, the consultation letter specifically stated that such sites would have priority, where necessary, for implementation in terms of all Agency resources and in Agency support for bids for other sources. Within Halton, two sites were identified – Ditton Widnes and Daresbury. With reference to Ditton, since the original designation this location was now known as 3MG and it would be recommended to the Agency that this was used in future.

It was noted that the NWDA was now reviewing the list of sites and the closing date for comments was the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

The purpose of the review was to ensure sites fitted the criteria as outlined in the Regional Spatial Strategy reflected the changing nature of policy and the market context including the Stern (Review on the Economics of Climate Change) and Eddington (Transport) reports.

Members were advised that of the 25 previous sites, 7 were proposed for deletion and 15 were proposed for addition. Both Halton sites remained on the list. The sites themselves were identified in broad terms on plans with the exact boundaries to be decided at a later date. Each site had been identified with primary purpose and these were set out in the report.

Members were asked to note that of particular importance was that the new designation for Daresbury had expanded the site to take in both Daresbury Park and the Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus (DSIC) which reflected the ongoing master plan work that the Council was involved with in partnership with the DSIC.

Members were advised that the list of proposed sites made for interesting consideration. They were not all big traditional inward investor sites and included town/city centre and older industrial areas. As such, it was considered appropriate that this Council should seek through its consultation response to have an additional site designated. Looking at the substantial regeneration opportunities that existed within the Widnes Waterfront and the town centres of Widnes and Runcorn and the development opportunities arising from the Mersey Gateway as detailed in the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy, there was clear scope to bring all these together under one designation. Such an area had significant employment opportunities, was close to areas of need, was sustainably accessible and would contribute to the ongoing economic restructuring of this part of the region through assisting in a continued diversification of the local economy. Together, these provided a scale of regeneration opportunities comparable to many defined Strategic Regional Sites.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the designation of both 3MG (Ditton) and Daresbury be supported;
- (2) the NWDA be requested to designate an additional site incorporating Widnes Waterfront, Widnes and Runcorn town centres and the area detailed in the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy; and

(3) the Executive Board authorise the Strategic Director, Environment in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal to formally respond to the North West Development Agency consultation on the Review of Strategic Regional Sites.

**EXB 121 – TRANSPORT CAPITAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME 2009/10**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment, which sought approval to the inclusion of the 2009/10 Transport Capital Implementation Programme into the 2009/10 Capital Programme and the carry over of £1,608,000 of 2008/09 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Maintenance Block Borrowing Approval to 2009/10.

Members were advised that the second LTP had brought with a much less rigorous reporting requirement, based on a collaborative approach between DfT and the local authorities, to enable weaknesses in progress to be jointly addressed and strengths to be built upon.

They were further advised that this new approach required the de-coupling of the link between funding and performance, which resulted in the DfT, in its November 2007 Settlement Letter confirming the Integrated Transport Capital block allocations for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11. The Integrated Transport allocation for 2009/10 was £1,831,000.

Similarly, three year allocations for the Highways Capital Maintenance Block, which were based on a new formula, were also notified and which were set out in the report. The Road Maintenance element of the Highways Block allocation had been reviewed in the context of Performance Indicators for highway maintenance. This led to a prioritisation of non Primary Route Network (PRN) footway reconstruction for the next two years, after which the position would be reassessed. This, in conjunction with a similar review of priorities in the revenue road maintenance programme, would provide an overall budget, for the 2009/10 and 2010/11, which would enable around a doubling in the length of footway reconstruction to be carried out each year. Over £450,000 would be available for carriageway structural maintenance, and this would continue to be supplemented by revenue funding. Performance on the principal and classified road condition indicators were not expected to fall below the top quartile during this period, as a result of re-profiling over this two year period. The Highways Capital Maintenance allocation for 2009/10 was £2,023,000.

Members were further advised that the individual schemes for the Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance Block would be drawn from the programmes included in LTP2, which were outlined in Appendix A to the report.

It was further noted that in addition to the LTP Capital Maintenance Block, Halton was also allocated £14,288,000 of additional funding for use between 2008/09 and 2010/11. This was from the National PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation to enable much needed maintenance and inspection work on the Silver Jubilee Bridge. This funding replaced some of that identified in the SJB Major Maintenance Scheme bid, which was submitted to Government in March 2006 and on which a decision was still awaited. The PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation for 2009/10 was £4,906,000.

In order to increase the efficiency in the procurement and delivery of all bridge maintenance works in the Borough, a single partnering contractor approach had been pursued. Due to the timescales involved in developing this partnership, there was need to defer £1,608,00 of the PRB Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation, from 2008/08 to 2009/10. The DfT were happy to support the principle of this proposal, but had indicated that Section 31 Grant could not be carried over from one year to the next. Instead, it was agreed for the Council to spend £1,608,000 of unallocated "Supporting Borrowing Powers" to be carried over into 2009/10 to fund the "additional" PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance works and hence facilitate the revised expenditure profile. It was therefore proposed to carry over £1,608,000 of LTP Highways Capital Maintenance "Supported Borrowing Power" approvals from 2008/09 to 2010/11. The total PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance programme for 2009/10 was in the sum of £6,514,000 and a list of the provisional programme was appended to the report.

Members were advised that during 2009/10, the Council had allocated the sum of £100,000 of capital funding to enable a programme of works to be implemented to bring unadopted roads up to adoptable standards – the "Adoptions Programme". A report was to be presented to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board in March setting out a proposed policy and procedure for the identification and approval of schemes and how the funding arrangements for each proposal would be determined. In addition, it was noted that the Council's Flood Defence programme comprised a range of maintenance and improvement schemes. Work would also continue to de-silt culverts and highway/land drainage systems at known flooding hotspots throughout the Borough. The Council capital Flood Defence Programme for 2009/10 was in the sum of £100,000.

Further to this, the Council's Street Lighting capital programme for 2009/10 was in the sum of £200,000. This allocation would be used for the renewal of street lighting equipment (lighting columns, lanterns, signs, bollards, etc.) and would address the replacement of age expired equipment and enable improvements to save energy.

It was proposed that the authority agree details of the programmes of work for: PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance; the Adoptions; Flood Defence; and Street Lighting, for the periods 2009/10 and 2010/11, be delegated to the Strategic Director, Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal.

In addition, Halton's Road Safety Grant, which was the funding used to help support the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership was also confirmed in the November 2007 Settlement Letter. The revenue element of this grant was incorporated into the area based grant. The capital element of the Road Safety Grant for 2009/10, which would be paid as a direct capital grant, was in the sum of £72,167.

Members were advised that the final Transport Capital Implementation Programme for 2009/10 would be in line with the capital budget to be agreed by the Council. This programme would be included in the Highways, Transportation and Logistics Department's Service Plan. It was noted that Halton continued to be allocated an element of De-trunked Roads Maintenance Grant, which was used to maintain the Widnes Eastern Relief Road. The De-trunked Roads Maintenance Revenue Grant for 2009/10 was £213,830 which would also be included in the area based grant allocation.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board recommend the Council to approve:

- (1) the incorporation of the Transport Implementation Programme for 2009/10, in the sum of £10,840,200, into the Council's 2009/10 Capital Programme;
- (2) the carrying forward of £1,608,000 of the Local Transport Plan's Highways Maintenance Borrowing Power approvals for 2008/09 into 2009/10, to facilitate the re-profiling of works associated with the Primary Route Network Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation; and
- (3) the authority to agree the detail of the programmes of work for: Primary Route Network Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance; Adoptions; Food Defence; and Street Lighting,

for the period 2009/10 and 2010/11, be delegated to the Strategic Director, Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal.

**EXB 122 - PARTIAL REVIEW OF REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY: PROVISION OF PERMANENT AND TRANSIT PITCHES FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN HALTONSTREET LIGHTING ENERGY PROCUREMENT**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which outlined the proposed formal response to the consultation being run by 4NW on the topic of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs as part of the Partial Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. The consultation closed on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Members were advised that 4NW, formerly the North West Regional Assembly, was the designated regional planning body for the North West of England. They had been asked by the Government to prepare, monitor and review the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) in partnership with others. The RSS was a regional plan that had to be taken into account when decisions were being made about planning applications. It provided a spatial framework for development in the region and for other regional strategies and it promoted the sustainable development of the North West.

Members were advised that currently a Partial Review of the RSS was underway due to the need to complete unfinished policy work within the RSS. This Partial Review covered three key subject areas of Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Show People and Car Parking Standards.

It was noted that the Council currently provided 23 pitches at Riverview Residential Caravan Site in Widnes. A new local authority run site was opened in January 2009 in Warrington Road, Runcorn, next to the existing private site. This new site provided 4 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches. There were two private sites in Runcorn at Windmill Street and Warrington Road; these two sites provided 13 pitches. In total there were 40 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches currently provided in Halton.

It was further noted that the accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers was dealt with by an Interim Draft Policy L6 – Scale and Distribution of Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Provision. It was this policy that was the subject of the consultation. This policy had a policy start date of 2007, therefore all accommodation provision since made from 2007 would be counted towards policy target for pitch numbers.



Within Policy L6 was a table of pitch provision to be achieved by each individual North West authority by 2016. Policy L6 indicated that Halton should provide by 2016 an additional minimum of 60 permanent pitches. The policy also indicated that a further 3% compound increased on an annual basis should be achieved to 2021 and for Halton this would be a further 15 permanent pitches. The policy therefore suggested that by 2021 Halton should provide a total of 111 permanent pitches. The policy made a distinction between permanent and transit pitches and the policy indicated that 5 additional transit pitches should be provided by Halton by 2016. However, as Halton's new site at Warrington Road provided 10 transit pitches, Halton would have already met its allocation apportionment under the draft policy.

The Board was advised that the Council must respond to the consultation using a structured and formatted response form. This consultation response form asked a series of questions with regard to the Interim Draft Policy L6. The first question to deal with the issues of concern asked for a yes or a no response to whether the Council supports policy L6. Question 4 asked for the reasoning behind the response to Question 3. It was recommended that the response to Question 3 would be given as "No". This response was justified on the basis that the policy did not adequately address the issue of distribution in the policy wording. Currently, there was no acknowledgement of the fact that the last round of consultation in July 2008 concluded that provision for Gypsies and Travellers should be undertaken by way of a more balanced share of provision across districts. This approach sought to seek pitch provision distributed to meet the requirements of the Gypsies and Travellers. During the July 2008 consultation this approach was known as Option 3. For the purposes of clarity and avoidance of doubt, the policy text should acknowledge that this was the basis upon which pitch provision would be made and monitored.

It was further noted that question 5 on the consultation response form dealt with the main issue of contention, notably the provisional figure for Halton to provide an additional 60 permanent pitches in the Borough. It was recommended that the response to Question 5 be given as "No". In question 6 we were asked to justify this response, the response to question 6 was outlined in detail in the report.

It was advised that the draft RSS policy figure of 300 across the Cheshire Sub-regional Partnership had then been apportioned, by a no scientific method, to all those authorities in the Cheshire Partnership. The results of this were set out in the report.

In Interim Policy L6 the Halton apportionment figure had been given as 60 pitches. This represented 20% of the sub-regional apportionment. This represented a fifth of the requirement, yet there were nine authorities in the Cheshire Partnership. Halton was the smallest of these nine partners in terms of geographical area and had little land available to accommodate further provision. Some account should also therefore be taken of provision in the context of the geographical size of Councils, which would result in neighbouring authorities' targets being increase relative to Halton. There was little land available in Halton upon which to accommodate such large numbers of pitches. In terms of current pitch provision, only Congleton and St. Helens provided more pitches than Halton. In terms of equity and choice, greater provision should be made in other districts where the Gypsy and Traveller community wished to settle to ensure sustainability, but not to the extent that some Council's had to do nothing.

It was further advised that some attempt should be made to redistribute the assessed need for pitches to ensure a more even provision between Councils, particularly to those who have little or no existing provision and should also focus on those Councils with no Council-owned sites.

Any provision for Halton should be reduced by the number of pitches included in the new development in Runcorn that comprised 4 permanent pitches and 10 transit sites. Consequently, the assessed need should reduce accordingly. It was accepted that this development occurred after the needs assessment that informed RSS figures. It was understood that, as the Interim Draft RSS Policy L6 had a starting date of 2007 this provision would be taken into account in considering Halton's apportionment.

Members were advised that for the above reasons, Halton did not feel that the evidence produced to support the Interim Draft Policy L6 substantiated the pitch provision figures for Halton. The greatest provision should be made in the areas highlighted by the Gypsy and Traveller communities and those authorities currently offering no local authority run sites.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the content of the report be formalised as the response from this Council to the consultation being run by 4 NW on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs;
- (2) Halton's evidence be enhanced via research into the waiting list held for Riverview Caravan Site to see how many people were still actively seeking accommodation in Halton; and

- (3) the Council strongly object to the proposals in RSS Interim Draft Policy L6 for Halton to provide 60 additional permanent pitches.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2009**

**EXB142 - LIVERPOOL CITY REGION TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE REVIEW AND THE DRAFT LIVERPOOL CITY REGION MULTI AREA AGREEMENT**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which provided an update on the current status of the Liverpool City Region Transport Governance Review and the development of the Liverpool City Region Multi Area Agreement (MAA), Transport Platform.

The Board was advised that the Local Transport Act (LTA) was given Royal Assent on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and subsequently became the Local Transport Act 2008. It was noted that the Act was a co-ordinating and enabling Act designed to provide additional powers relating to buses, transport governance and delivery and Road User Charging (RUC).

It was reported that on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009, the existing six Passenger Transport Authorities (PTA) in England, were re-named Integrated Transport Authorities (ITA). Once such PTA was Merseytravel and the responsibilities that the ITA immediately assumed were detailed in the report for consideration.

It was reported that the ITA could also work with local authorities to put forward proposals to Government to extend its boundaries, extend its influence over the highway network (subject to Governance review), extend its powers over the local heavy rail network and change its name.

It was further advised that a draft Governance study which was appended to the report had been developed by the Transport Working Group (TWG) and it was intended that this would be issued to Transport Consultants Atkins when all necessary approvals were in place. The study would be concluded in three stages details of which were outlined in the report.

It was noted that work already completed by the Transport Working Group had identified 7 possible options (the Discussion Model which were also detailed in the report. It was advised that there was a very strong emphasis on wide stakeholder involvement within

the process and it would need particularly strong Member engagement.

The Board was notified of issues concerning governance of the LCR which were actively under consideration. It was reported that to help inform this process and with advice from the Department of Transport (DfT) the TWG had proposed that the Merseyside authorities and Halton would work together to produce a joint Local Transport Plan (LTP3) to ensure that transport issues across the LCR were effectively and efficiently addressed. Members were recommended to note that the Transport Working Group intended to explore the issues and potential for preparing a Joint Local Transport Plan in the future with any final recommendation being brought back to Members for their consideration.

It was further reported that a LCR Multi Area Agreement (MAA) was in preparation which would create a framework within which the six city region local authorities, Merseytravel government and its agencies and other partners could co-operate to deliver improved economic performance. The Board was advised of the first stage of the MAA incorporating the “Story of Place” and Employment and Skills Platform had been agreed and was now being developed to include Housing, Economic development Transport Platforms. The Transport Platform of the MAA, Platform 4 – “Transport for a Growing City Region”, had the overall aim which was detailed in the report.

The Board was informed that some very helpful discussions had been held with GONW in developing the MAA and there had been some key messages over and above the previous guideline not to seek additional funding or to promote particular schemes which were set out in the report.

It was further advised that the MAA proposals were designed to integrate the key LCR priorities with responsibilities for delivering the shared national transport priorities. In addition the proposals would help to deliver against appropriate Public Service Agreements (PSA) target and would link with Local Area Agreements (LAA) to help deliver their transport targets.

Members were advised that the Transport Platform of the MAA was still in the development stage and it was intended for it to be incorporated into the full LCR MAA in early summer. It was noted that the key components of the document were “Asks” of the Government which, if agreed, would enable barriers to the implementation of transport strategies to be addressed. The current proposed Asks were detailed in the report in addition to a package which outlined what the proposals would deliver. It was further advised that GONW had commented positively on the draft Transport Platform but had

suggested a number of areas that required improvement. Members were notified that these comments were now in the process of being addressed and would inform the next draft of the MAA.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposal to engage transport consultants Atkins to carry out the study on the Liverpool City Region Transport Governance be endorsed;
- 2) Members endorse the intention of the Transport Working Group to explore the potential for producing a joint Local Transport Plan for Merseyside and Halton i.e. the Liverpool City Region; and

work to continue to develop the draft Liverpool City Region MAA; Platform 4 – “Transport for a Growing City Region” and the “Asks” of Government contained therein, be endorsed.

**EXB 144 - ST MICHAEL'S GOLF COURSE: AMENDMENT TO THE EXISTING CONTRACT FOR THE REMEDIATION OF THE GOLF COURSE**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought to gain approval from the Board to amend the existing contract for the remediation of St Michael's Golf Course.

It was advised that due to the urgent requirement for action, this item would be excluded from the “call in” procedures.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) having regard to the balancing risks, and the need to expedite the procedure, the Operational Director, Major Projects be authorised to amend the existing contract for the remediation of St Michael's Golf Course to suite the revised scope and cost of work and to include a performance bond to reduce any risk to the Council; and
- 2) That the item be excluded from the “call in” procedures due to the emergency involved.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE 19 MARCH 2009**

**ES103 - DESIGN OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SPD - APPROVAL FOR STATUTORY PERIOD OF CONSULTATION**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought approval for the publication of the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Design of New Residential Development for the purposes of statutory public consultation in April and May 2009.

The report set out the purpose of the Design of New Residential Development, the Stakeholder Consultation stage, the Scoping Stage and Sustainability Appraisal, and the final stage after the public consultation process.

Arising from the discussion, Members queried what form the public consultation would take. In response, it was noted that press notices would be publicised and the developers and architects would contact people who had been taken from the core strategy database. It was suggested that this should be publicised further and people should be entitled to have a say on the SPD. It was agreed that discussions would be held with the Marketing Team in relation the form of public consultation.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Design of New Residential Development be approved for the purposes of statutory public consultation;
- (2) the comments received at the stakeholder consultation stage, as set out in the Statement of Consultation and responses to them are noted;
- (3) further editorial and technical amendments that do not materially affect the content of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director, Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, as necessary, before the document is published for public consultation;
- (4) the results of the public consultation exercise and consequent recommended modifications to the draft SPD be reported back to the Executive Board for resolution to adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document; and
- (5) options be considered in terms of expanding the public consultation process in consultation with the Halton Borough Council's Marketing Team.

**ES104 - REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which, in conjunction with the annual budget review, proposed to increase the charges under the control of the Executive Board in accordance with the schedules shown in the Appendix to the report, for the following: Environmental Information, Requests for Information Regarding Potentially Contaminated Land, Requests for Environmental Information, Environmental Health Services charges, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Charges, Licence fees, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Miscellaneous.

The Board was advised that the charges for road closures had increased by more than inflation due to the costs that had risen in terms of advertising in the local press.

The Board were provided with an update of the figures for the new Roads and Street Works Act 1991 as follows:

(1)	Unit of Inspection (30% of total)	
	Statutory Fee Proposed Cost	£50.00
(2)	Defective Reinstatements Per Inspection (maximum 3 No.)	
	Statutory Fee	£47.50
	Additional single inspection Statutory Fee	£68.00
(3)	Section 50 Street Works Income	
(i)	New apparatus – Inspection 3 No.	
	Statutory Fee	£150.00
(ii)	Existing apparatus Inspection	
	Charges (Statutory Fee)	£150.00

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges be agreed and referred to the relevant Policy and Performance Boards for information.

**ES104 - 2009-10 CHARGES FOR RIVERVIEW GYPSY SITE**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which sought approval for revised site charges for Riverview Gypsy site for the financial year 2009/10.

The report set out the existing weekly charges levied for pitch rental and water/sewerage for 2008/09, and the proposed charges for 2009 which applied to a 48 week year, as set out in the following table:-

	2008/09	2009/10 (proposed)	Difference
Pitch Rental	21 @ £46.66 1@ £54.44	21 @ £48.99 1 @ £57.16	+ 5% + 5%
Water and Sewerage	23 @ £8.78	23 @ £9.59	+ 9%

The Board was advised that the Council's inflation allowance for general income for the coming year was 3%. The allowance for water and sewerage charges was 7% as there was a significant increase in charges introduced by the Utility companies during 2008/09. It was further noted that an above-inflation increase was being proposed in order to move towards a balanced budget and increases of 5% and 9% respectively for pitch rental and water rate, 2% above the Council's general inflation allowances, were proposed.

RESOLVED: That the proposed 5% increase to pitch rental and 9% increase in water charges set out in the report be approved with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2009**

#### **ES112 DRAFT SOUTHERN WIDNES SPD APPROVAL FOR STATUTORY PERIOD OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION - KEY DECISION**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought approval for the publication of the draft Southern Widnes Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the purposes of Statutory Public Consultation.

Members were advised that the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy was an important element of the Mersey Gateway Project that built upon the adopted vision that it was "more than just a bridge" but the "catalyst" for regeneration and investment throughout Halton, Cheshire, the Liverpool City Region and the North West.

The Regeneration Strategy was concerned with how the bridge could deliver a new context for place-shaping, set the agenda for a sustained economic, social, physical and environmental regeneration programme over the next 20 to 30 years and re-connect the communities of Runcorn and Widnes.



The Regeneration Strategy covered an area in excess of 20 square kilometres within the Borough of Halton, including the Southern Widnes SPD area. The area was agreed with the Council to provide a statutory planning basis for policy development due to its influence on the Local Development Framework.

Several key elements of this SPD had been informed by the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy, building upon some of the principles, objectives and development opportunities set out within the document. A number of proposals described in this SPD were therefore based upon the preferred option as expressed in the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy agreed by the Council's Executive Board on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Members were advised that Southern Widnes had been identified within the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as one of the six Action Areas in the Borough that required significant development or redevelopment in order to secure their regeneration. This SPD was therefore supplementary to Policy RG1 (Action Area 1 Southern Widnes) in the Halton UDP.

The purpose of the Southern Widnes SPD was therefore to establish and identify potential development or improvement opportunities within the area that arose from the existing context and the proposals of the Mersey Gateway Project in order to help sustain the existing community and deliver regeneration benefits to the area. This current draft had been prepared by GVA Grimley for the formal stages of public consultation.

The Southern Widnes SPD was specifically designed to:

- Ensure a suitable standard of development;
- Improve the visual and environment quality of the area;
- Create a "sense of place";
- Improve accessibility particularly to the Silver Jubilee Bridge and Widnes Waterfront; and
- Improve sustainability of the West Bank community by introducing new employment, housing and a neighbourhood centre.

Members were advised that Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and Statement of Consultation were all set out in detail in the report and it was noted that they would be available for public consultation, alongside the draft Southern Widnes SPD.

Once the formal public consultation exercise had been conducted, the responses would be recorded and taken into account.

It was intended that a further report would then be taken to the Executive Board, seeking formal adoption of the revised Southern Widnes SPD.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft Southern Widnes SPD be approved for the purposes of statutory public consultation for a six week period;
- (2) the comments received at the stakeholder consultation stage, as set out in the Statement of Consultation and responses to them be noted;
- (3) further editorial and technical amendments that did not materially affect the content of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, as necessary, before the document is published for public consultation; and
- (4) the results of the public consultation exercise and consequent recommended modifications to the draft document be reported back to the Executive Board for resolution to adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document.

#### **ES114 - HIGHWAYS TERM MAINTENANCE CONTRACT EXTENSION**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought consideration of the extension of the current Highway Maintenance Term Contract with Amey LG beyond 2010, as conceived in the original tender documents.

At its meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2005, the Executive Board Sub-Committee resolved to award the Highway Maintenance Term Contract (HMTTC) for an initial period of five years to Amey Infrastructure Services Limited (now Amey LG). The report noted that the tender document had identified the option to extend the duration of the Contract by five years by agreement of the parties. This procurement strategy was identified in the Original European Journal OJEU notice and was designed to maximise value for money from the contract by offering a reasonable term over which contract set up, overhead and operational costs could be recovered.

The HMTTC had now operated for four years and a decision was now required on whether the contract was extended in accordance with the original strategy or whether a new contract was

procured. Amey LG had written to us formally, confirming their desire to extend the current contract and to continue to develop the partnership with the Council. Members were advised that the HMTTC was based upon the Engineering and Construction contract (ECC), one of the modern forms of contracts and took the form of a schedule of rates covering most typical highway operations, principally:

- Reactive maintenance and repair of all highway features;
- Gully emptying and drainage repairs;
- Footway and carriageway structural reconstruction; and
- The winter maintenance function

The indicative value of the contract was £1.6m per annum, although typically around £2.5m worth of work was undertaken by Amey LG each year. The HMTTC was designed to ensure that the Contractor could sustain sufficient resources to deliver not only the core highway maintenance operations but also an emergency response facility 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

Rates contained in the contract were reviewed and adjusted annually to allow for inflation using standardised construction price and cost indices published by the Government. This mechanism ensured that variations of prices used across the Contract term were applied fairly and reflected actual cost changes in the industry.

The HMTTC contained a number of performance indicators against which the contractor was measured on a monthly basis, as set out in the report.

Amey LG provided a workforce comprising approximately 25 operatives plus administrative and support staff operating from a dedicated depot located in Widnes. They were a national company with resources that could deliver all necessary labour, plant and equipment. Health and safety performance was reviewed monthly by the Contract Administrator as part of the Contract progress meeting. Amey's performance had been excellent in terms of reportable accidents and a continual programme of training and updating of operatives skills aimed to continue this trend.

Members were advised that if the option to extend the current contract was not taken up, then the Council would have to find an alternative way of delivering the highway maintenance service. A number of options had been considered:

- Collaboration with neighbouring authorities;
- Inviting "Spot" Tenders;
- Procuring a new Term Contract; and

- Extension of the current Contract.

In considering the request to extend the Highway Term Maintenance Contract to 2010, it was agreed that an update report be submitted to Members.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Highway Term Maintenance Contract 2005 to 2010 with Amey LG (formerly Amey Infrastructure Services Ltd.) be extended for a period of three years to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 with the option to extend the contract for up to a further two-year period by agreement and subject to continuing satisfactory performance; and
- (2) an update report be submitted to the Sub-Committee.

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board  
**DATE:** 17 June 2009  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive  
**SUBJECT:** Specialist Strategic Partnership minutes  
**WARD(s):** Boroughwide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The Minutes relating to the Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal Portfolio which have been considered by the Specialist Strategic Partnership are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.**

**3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 None.

**4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

**5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

**5.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

None

**5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

None

**5.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

**5.4 A Safer Halton**

None

**5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

**6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 None.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

**Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership (UR SSP) Meeting Minutes**

**Norton Priory, Tudor Road, Manor Park, Runcorn WA7 1SX**

**3.00 pm, Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2008.**

**Present:**

Cllr Ron Hignett	(RH) Chair	HBC/Member;
Cllr Marie Wright	(MW)	HBC/Member;
Lynn Smith	(LS)	Norton Priory Museum Trust;
Chris Koral	(CK)	North West Development Agency;
Janitha Redmond	(JR)	English Partnerships
Jane Trevor	(JT)	Job Centre Plus;

**In Attendance:**

Derek Sutton	(DJS)	HBC/Operational Director – Major Projects Dept;
Mick Noone	(MN)	HBC/Operational Director/Transport;
Sue Davies	(SD)	HBC/Culture Services Manager/Culture & Leisure;
Alasdair Cross	(AC)	HBC/Senior Planner/Planning Dept;
Debbie Houghton	(DH)	HBC/Policy Officer/Policy & Performance;
Pat Audoire	(PA) Minutes	HBC/Urban Renewal SSP Co-ordinator

**Apologies:**

Sasha Deepwell		PLUS Dane Housing Group;
Andy Sharp		Daresbury Labs.,
Claire Bunter		Environment Agency;
Dick Tregea		HBC/Strategic Director - Environment
Phil Watts		HBC/Operational Director – Environment & Reg. Svcs;
Gary Collins		HBC/Operational Director – Economic Regeneration.

				<b>Action s</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies, Minutes &amp; Matters Arising</b>	1.1 1.2	Apologies had been received from Sasha Deepwell, Andy Sharp, Dick Tregea and Phil Watts. The Minutes of the meeting of 22 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2008 were accepted as a true record.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest</b>	2.1	None.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Presentation: Growth Points – Alasdair Cross, HBC/Planning</b>	3.1	AC attended to give a presentation on Growth Points. This included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key housing issues as outlined in the Housing Green Paper (July 2007);</li> <li>• A summary of growth points nationally and regionally;</li> <li>• An overview of the mid-Mersey (Halton, St. Helens &amp; Warrington) housing and employment issues;</li> </ul>	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership working;</li> <li>The Mid-Mersey Partnership vision and objectives;</li> <li>the programme has now been submitted and a response is anticipated in December 2008.</li> </ul>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Public Art Action Plan – Sue Davies</b>	4.1	SD and colleagues have been working with Beam.	
		4.2	A number of specific projects have already been suggested, including the new Mersey Gateway bridge: only the budget is now missing.	
		4.3	A half-post will need to be created for two years (to sit with Planning) and the Arts Council will fund this.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Urban Renewal Update – Derek Sutton</b>	5.1	The Halton in the Regions update was circulated. This gave a concise summary of developments in the Region and will be sent out to partners on a regular basis in the future.	
		5.2	The Regeneration Statement Autumn 2008 was circulated.	
		5.3.	The pace of development is now slowing as the impact of the current economic situation is felt.	
		5.4	Eddarbridge has now been purchased by Stobart's. This coupled with the Tessengerlo site is intended to become, in part, a large chilled food warehouse for a new customer being attracted to the borough and this is hopefully due to complete by October 2009. This specific development will create almost 1,000 jobs.	
		5.5	The Windmill Centre redevelopment is due to complete by Christmas 2009 and will offer a variety of high street shops which have not previously been attracted to Widnes.	
		5.6	JT from Job Centre Plus informed the partnership that the effects of the current financial situation are being seen in an increase in benefit claims.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Norton Priory Development Proposal - Lynn Smith, Acting Director, Norton Priory</b>	6.1	LS gave a potted history of the Norton Priory (NP) site, together with a summary of the Runcorn Development Corporation's excavations in the 1970s, which uncovered lots of archaeology.	
		6.2	NP is a nationally and regionally significant ancient monument with its 12 <sup>th</sup> century Undercroft and the St. Christopher statue (previously a major London exhibit). NP are currently working with Jura Consultants to prepare a draft options appraisal prior to an HLF bid to develop a £6m redevelopment, providing a 'must see' heritage site of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century. This will include development of the main site, the walled garden and links to Halton Castle.	
		6.3	MN asked about access to the site. LS confirmed	



			that this was an issue, but that there was no alternative and they needed to pre-warn visitor groups.	
7.	<b>LSP Update: LAA &amp; Commissioning; Community Strategy refresh – Debbie Houghton</b>	7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5 7.6 7.7	DH gave a review of the issues around the Local Area Agreement (LAA) refresh and the current commissioning situation. There is the potential for reward grant, but this will be challenging. The refresh of the LAA was agreed in Summer 2008, when Government Office (GO) finalised some outstanding targets. A draft Action Plan needs to be forwarded to GO by the end of December and quarterly performance monitoring will need to be included in this. Other SSPs already have focus groups in place to monitor performance. RT will organise and lead on an urban renewal focus group to deal with performance monitoring. The final draft Action Plan will need to be completed by the deadline of 16 <sup>th</sup> February, 2009. PA referred to the report on the ongoing Community Strategy review, informing partners that targets will need to be updated and brought into line with the LAA. This work is currently in hand and will be shared with the partners in due course.	PA
8.	<b>Members' Agenda Items</b>	8.1	None.	
9.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	9.1	None.	
10	<b>Next Meeting</b>	9.	The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, 20 <sup>th</sup> January, 2009 at the Municipal Buildings, Widnes (Marketing Suite).  Future meeting dates beyond that:  Tuesday, 21 <sup>st</sup> April, 2009; Tuesday, 21 <sup>st</sup> July, 2009; Tuesday, 17 <sup>th</sup> November, 2009; Tuesday, 19 <sup>th</sup> January, 2010.  <b>Partners are asked to update their business diaries accordingly.</b> The meeting closed at 4.30 pm.	

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17 June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Performance Management Reports  
Quarter 4 to year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of the 4th quarter performance management reports on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services etc. for:

- Highways, Transportation & Logistics
- Environmental & Regulatory Services
- Health & Partnerships
- Culture & Leisure
- Economic Regeneration
- Major Projects

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board**

- 1) Receive the 4th quarter performance management reports;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Policy and Performance Board.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The departmental service plans provide a clear statement on what the services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. The service plans are central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

3.2 The quarterly reports are on the Information Bulletin to reduce the amount of paperwork sent out with the agendas and to allow Members access to the reports as soon as they have become available.

It also provides Members with an opportunity to give advance notice of any questions, points or requests for further information that will be raised to ensure the appropriate Officers are available at the PPB meeting.

**4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

**5.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

5.1 Not applicable.

**6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

6.1 Not applicable.

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

7.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.

## QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

**DIRECTORATE:** Environment

**SERVICE:** Economic Regeneration

**PERIOD:** Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2009

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This monitoring report covers the Economic Regeneration Department fourth quarter period up to year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 6.

### 2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

#### **Recession measures**

- A Real Help Now event for local people was delivered at the Stadium in March aimed at helping people who were recently unemployed or under threat of redundancy.
- A business breakfast briefing took place in March to explain to local businesses what help is available from which organisations (76 local business and supported by eight partner agencies)
- The new WNF (Working Neighbourhoods Fund) Apprenticeship project that was due to start in April was accelerated and commenced in January 2009. Up till the end of March 25 new apprentice opportunities identified in local businesses with 20 of them filled. The new apprentices include 15 young people who were previously NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).
- The department made a successful bid to the LSC's (Learning & Skills Council) to deliver the Local Redundancy Response ESF (European Social Fund) Programme in Halton. This can assist people who have recently been made redundant or are under threat of redundancy to improve their skills and gain employment.
- A twelve page 'recession special' Halton Today which will be mailed to approximately 2,400 local businesses is under production
- A radical overhaul of the web site [www.runcorn-widnes.com](http://www.runcorn-widnes.com) has taken place to include recession measures from partners

- A programme of targeted events and clinics is under development and will start shortly including surgeries from ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) and Halliwells solicitors
- A partners recession group has been established involving Business Link, HBC, Halton Chamber and the LSC which will focus on what is happening with businesses locally

#### **Other key developments**




- Significant progress has been made on developing the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP). The HEP is the partnership that has been developed by the Employment Learning and Skills SSP to bring together agencies and key local providers to offer businesses a joined up service.
- A new Halton Investors' Handbook has been developed by the HEP and has been distributed to key partners/organisations. This identifies the 'complete employment offer' for businesses.
- The new Halton Employment Partnership Team was formed in February 2009. This is co-located with the HPIJ at Rutland House and provides the capability of developing bespoke training packages with local companies with a view to equipping unemployed people with the necessary skills to gain employment. A new training room has been developed to deliver bespoke employability programmes at Rutland House and a second room is under development at the Stadium.
- The Enterprising Halton Programme supported 78 new start ups during the year and despite the recession the number of initial business enquiries has increased significantly since January 2009.
- The Inaugural Business and Tourism Awards took place in February. This joint venture between Halton Chamber of Commerce and Halton Tourism Business network was held at The De Vere Hotel, and was hosted by BBC Radio Merseyside's Roger Phillips who spoke very positively about what was happening in Halton on his radio show.
- Meetings have taken place with Heritage Lottery Managers to discuss a way forward for the Heart of Halton Plaque Scheme. This would place plaques at key locations to commemorate local people and events. The concept was well received and we have been asked to consider making the scheme larger than our original plans. A bid will now be brought together to encompass all the suggestions they made.
- The new Halton tourism DVD has been finalised and was used at Business and Tourism Awards. In the future it will be used by local hotels and tourism forum members to promote Halton.
- A date for the New Mersey Gateway Public Enquiry has been announced. As a consequence the Economic Development Officer (Development) has been working almost full time preparing the Council's case for the enquiry and it is expected that this level of activity will continue throughout the enquiry. This combined with recent staffing reductions and long term sickness mean that only the highest priority work is now taking place.
- Total crime on Halebank Industrial Estate has reduced by 65.5% during 2008-09, whilst on Astmoor Industrial Estate it has reduced by 32.2%. This is the first year that the two Business Improvement

Districts have been operational and crime reduction has been a high priority within the BID plans. Mobile security patrols have been introduced, CCTV enhanced and smartwater property marking has been introduced across the estates.

### 3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

- Various government departments are developing response programmes to the recession. It would seem that not all of these are joined up. Some are being commissioned at a national level and some at a more local level. It will be important to keep all initiatives under review to ensure Halton maximises the benefits they bring and also to understand the degree that they duplicate or enhance existing programmes.
- There will be an OFSTED inspection of LSC/DWP funded programmes within Economic Regeneration in the next quarter. Whilst the majority of the inspection will focus on the more traditional Adult Learning & Skills Development programmes, some projects within Enterprise & Employment will also be inspected.
- Following the DIUS (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills) consultation in 2008 of informal adult learning, the Government have now published the Learning Revolution White Paper, which sets out the proposals for adult learning in the future. Local Authorities will play a key role in managing this and an adult learning pledge will need to be signed by the LA. How the Foundation Learning Tier will impact on existing First Steps funding is still unclear as losing this funding to FE colleges would have a significant impact on the adult learning service.
- The NWDA has now completed the procurement for the regional Intensive Business Start up Support Programme. Within Merseyside local authorities have been given the opportunity to manage the start up contracts for their own areas subject to local authority monies being used as co-finance. This would provide an opportunity for Enterprising Halton to better co-ordinate business start up and support services in the borough. Proposed NWDA contract documentation is presently subject to review by Legal Services.
- The TMP (The Mersey Partnership) secondment that provided a tourism officer has now come to an end. The workload of the team is being reviewed to ensure key tasks continue.
- Meetings have been held with representatives from Halton Miniature Railway to look at what could be developed in the future
- Following the completion of the Halton Economic Review 2008 work is progressing on the Borough's next Economic Development Strategy.

**4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES**




<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>18</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>6</b>
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The majority of objectives/milestones have been achieved during the year. For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

**5.0 SERVICE REVIEW**




- The service delivered to Children’s Centres by the Adult Learning & Skills Development Division is being reorganised with a view to delivering a more localised and responsive service. The creation of 5 new Children’s Centre tutor posts will enable staff to be based out within 5 different Children’s Centres.
- A further meeting of the Town Centre Management PPB Scrutiny Panel took place during March. At the meeting the Elected Members endorsed the transfer of the Town Centre Manager post from Economic Regeneration to Environmental and Regulatory Services with a view to better integration of town centre management and the cleansing and maintenance of the town centres.

**6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>2</b>
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Targets for five of the seven “Key” performance indicators have been met, however those relating to inward investment enquiries and job creation were not. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

**6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
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For further details, please refer to Appendix 3.

## 7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

For further details, please refer to Appendix 4.

## 8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2008-09 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

For details please refer to Appendix 5.

## 9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS

During 2007/08 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.









## 10.0 DATA QUALITY



The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.


## 11.0 APPENDICES









Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones  
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators  
Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators  
Appendix 4- Progress against LPSA Targets  
Appendix 5- Progress against Risk Treatment Measures  
Appendix 6- Explanation of traffic light symbols








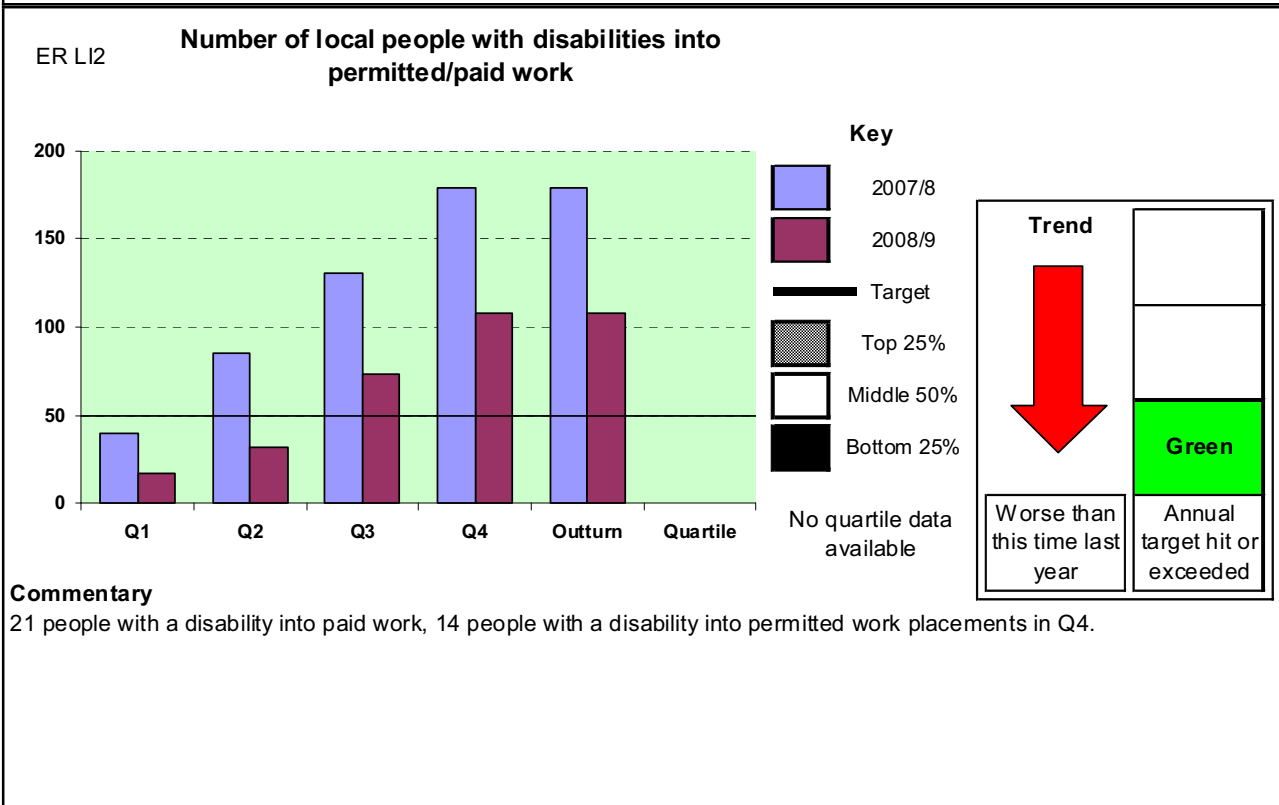
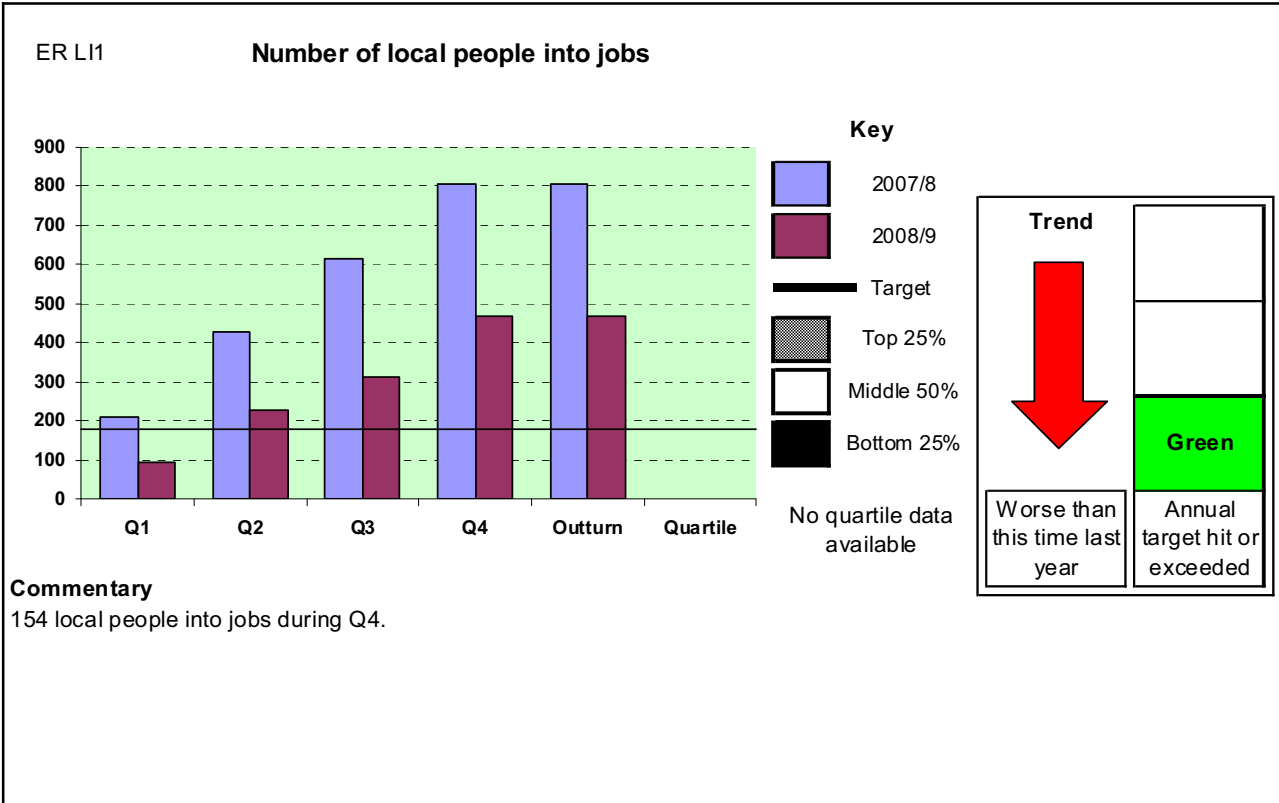
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
ER 1	To foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship, particularly amongst the low skilled, making Halton an ideal place to start and grow economic activity	<i>Enterprising Halton Competition, Nov 2008</i>		Competition completed.
		Secure continuation of Enterprise coaches, Jun 2008		Enterprise coaches service continued.
		<i>Enterprise week programme, Nov 2008</i>		Enterprise week very low key due to vacancies although the Halton Enterprise Fair took place on 21/1/09.
		<i>Launch Enterprising Halton DVD, Dec 2008</i>		DVD of Enterprising Halton including video clips of Enterprise Fair now nearing completion.
ER 2	To develop a culture where learning is valued and raise skill levels throughout the adult population and in the local workforce	<i>Completed sector skills plan for logistics with first provision commencing, Sep 2008</i>		Complete
		Completed sector skills plan for Science with first provision commencing, Mar 2009		A joint Urban Renewal & ELS PPB Topic on 'Skills in the Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Sector' (agreed in Q4) will commence in the next quarter. Provision is likely to commence in the autumn of 2009, given priority being placed on other sectors e.g. logistics, customer services, retail.
		<i>Recruitment of dedicated apprenticeship officer post, Jul 2008</i>		Now expected to recruit Q2 2009/10
		<i>Halton Learner awards, May 2008</i>		The next Adult Learners Awards ceremony is planned for May 2009.

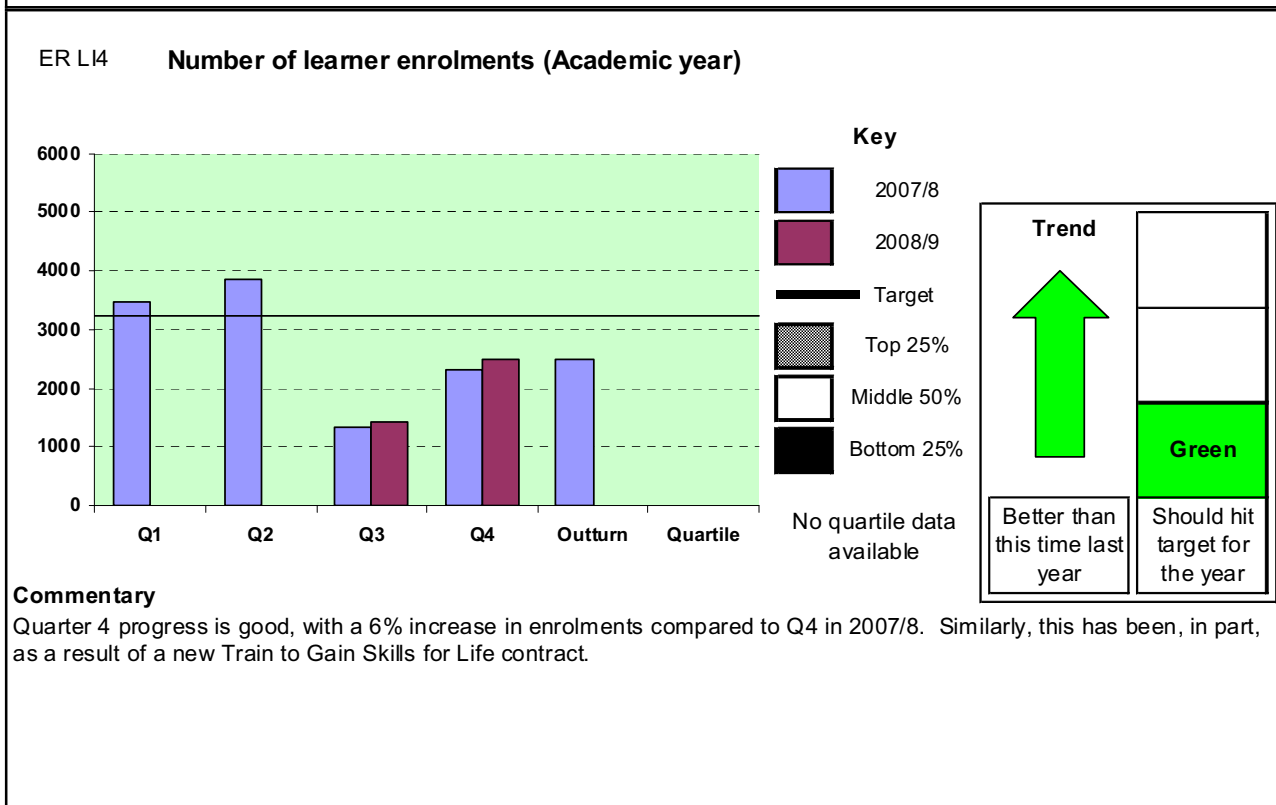
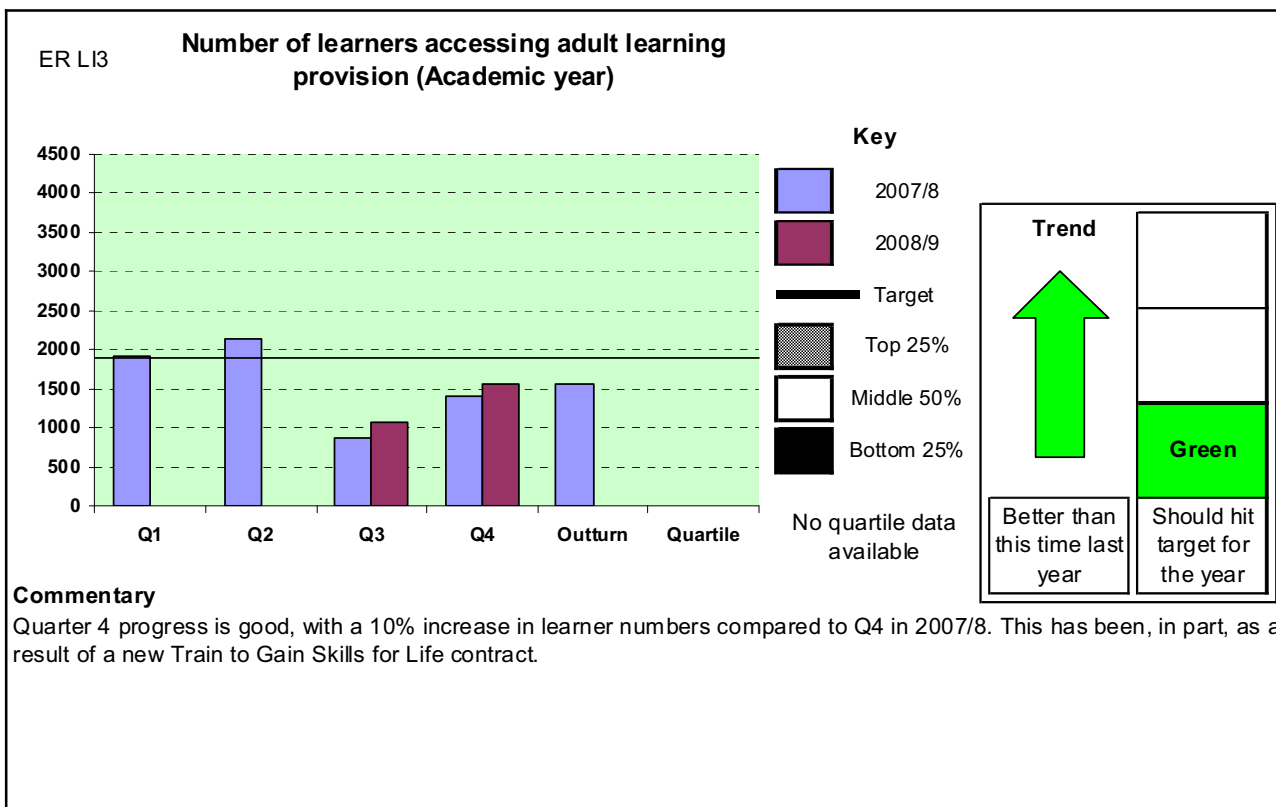
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		<i>Delivery of 5 adult/family learning courses in each CYPAN area, Mar 2009</i>		A new SLA has been agreed between the Adult Learning & Skills Development Division and Children's Centres. This will commence April 2009. Courses were delivered.
ER 3	To promote and increase employability of local people, to identify and remove any barriers to	<i>Complete reconfiguration of E&amp;E division to embed outreach, Jul 2008</i>		Reconfiguration delayed but outreach is embedded.

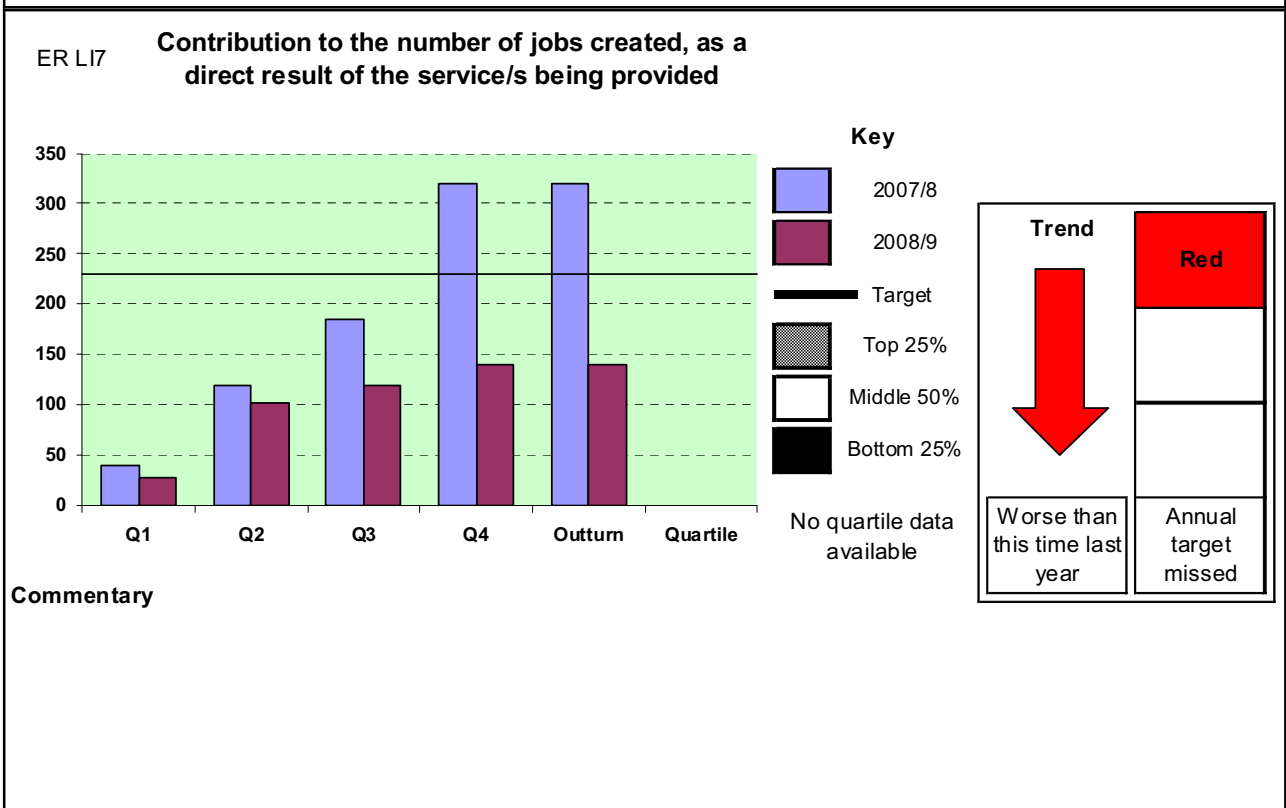
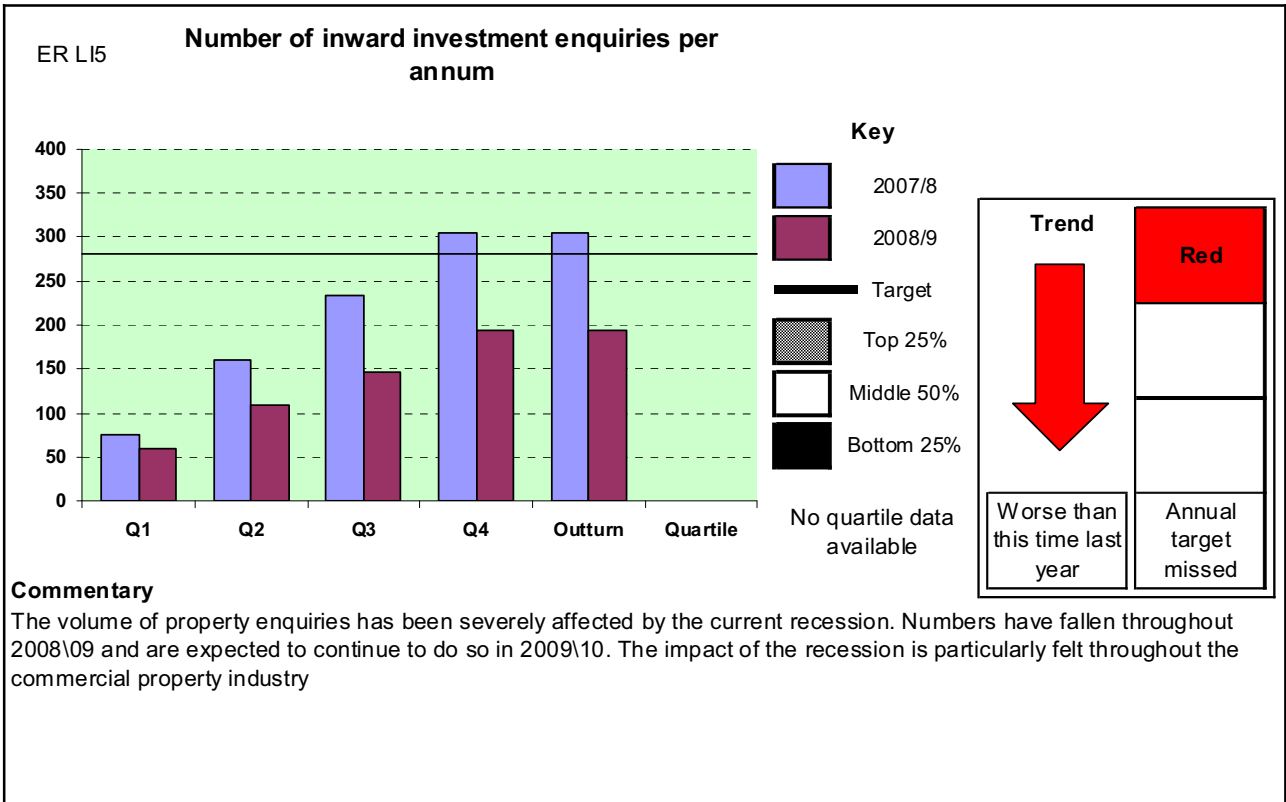
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
	employment to get more people into work	<i>Deliver targeted outreach campaigns (2 in each priority ward), Mar 2009</i>		<p>During Q4 HPIJ continued to deliver weekly outreach services across 20 LSOA locations to better engage with harder to reach customers. A series of targeted outreach campaigns took place in Q4 as follows:</p> <p><b>Castlefields</b> – 3000 properties leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Phoenix Park. Free refreshments and entertainment. ASDA vouchers used as incentives to engage with priority group customers</p> <p><b>Halton View</b> – 800 properties leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Warrington Road Children’s Centre. Free refreshments and entertainment. ASDA vouchers used as incentives to engage with priority group customers</p> <p><b>Riverside</b> – 2100 properties leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Catalyst Museum. Free Entry into the museum along with children’s entertainment to engage with priority group customers</p> <p><b>Halton Lea</b> – 1600 properties were leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Palacefields Community Centre. ASDA vouchers used incentives to engage with priority group customers along with FREE raffle prizes</p> <p><b>Windmill Hill</b> – 1000 properties leafleted promoting family fun day at Windmill Hill Play Centre.</p>

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		<i>Launch pre-recruitment partnership, Jul 2008</i>		The Halton Employment Partnership Team is now in place and delivery commences from April 2009.
		Complete Employment strategy for disabled and carers with launch of disability employment network, Sep 2008		The strategy has been delayed due to delays in government announcements in this area. It is presently being finalised. The Disability Employment Network has been formed.
ER 4	To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable knowledge based economy	Commence delivery of logistics campaign, Sep 2008		The six-month logistics campaign reported to PPB on June 18 2008 was completed in January 2009.
		<i>Deliver a new tourism promotion DVD, Nov 2008</i>		The DVD has been finalised and used at the recent awards. It was delayed due to the need to shot new footage in good weather.
		<i>Launch with SOG the Heath new build marketing programme, Jul 2008</i>		Programme completed. The first new building is nearing completion
		<i>Deliver Major events programme, Mar 2009</i>		All delivered
		<i>Deliver capital of culture youth event, Jul 2008</i>		Delivered at the Stadium and Brindley
ER 5	To create and sustain a thriving business environment	<i>Commence delivery of Widnes Industrial Area Action Plan, Dec 2008</i>		A business led steering group has been constituted and a chair elected. All the actions contained within the 2008\09 Action Plan have been completed

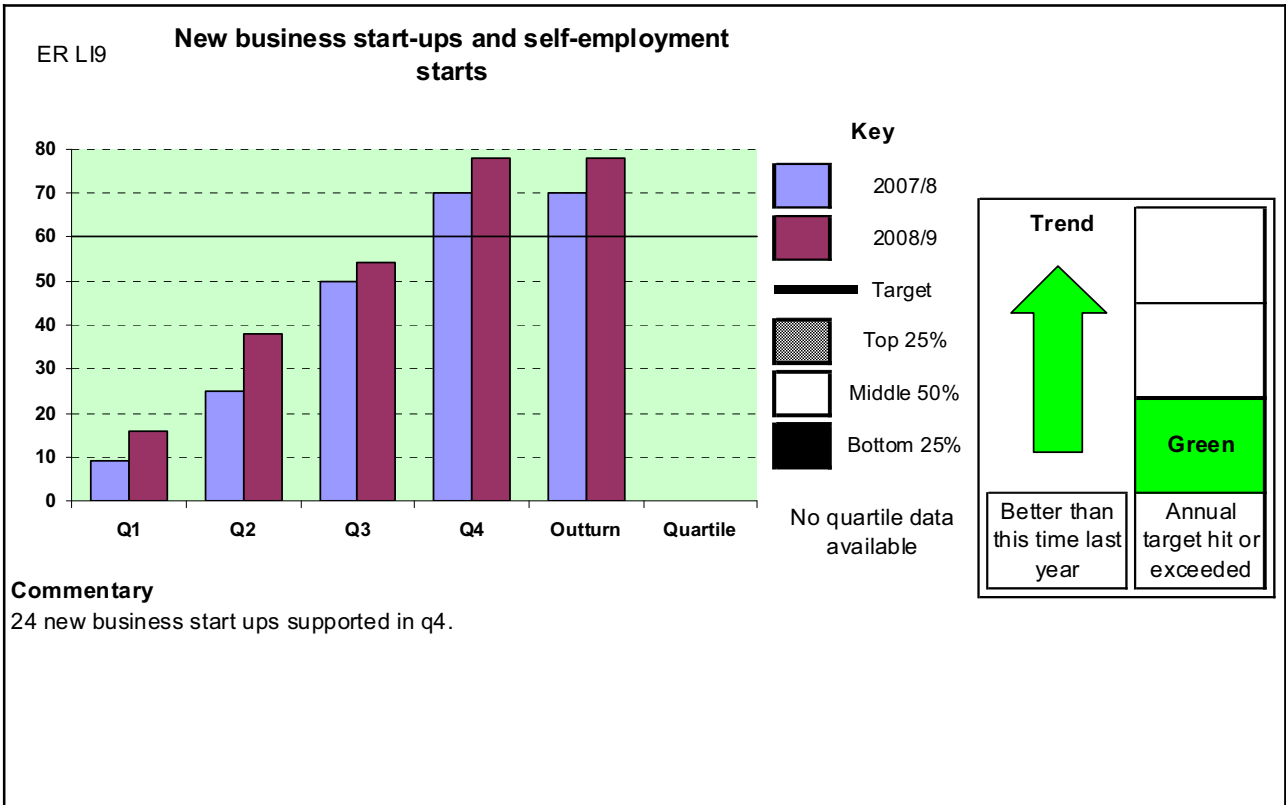
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Complete Business Improvement District phase 1 actions (CCTV, security, signage), Mar 2009		All actions associated with the implementation of Phase 1 of the BID programme have been completed
ER 6	To revitalise the town centres to create dynamic, well designed high quality commercial areas	<i>Deliver a continental market in widnes, Dec 2008</i>		The market took place in Widnes town centre in October
		<i>Launch a weekly Runcorn street market, Sep 2008</i>		After much planning and discussion with external agencies and consultation with local shops the street market is scheduled to take place in May/June 2009 subject to necessary permissions
		<i>Deliver gum cleaning programme, Aug 2008</i>		Completed July\August 2008
		<i>Deliver Christmas programme, Dec 2008</i>		A full festive programme inc' Christmas Lights, reindeer parade, grotto etc was delivered November\December 2008


















Ref <sup>1</sup>	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
<b>Cost &amp; Efficiency</b>						
ER LI13	Cost per job created and/or safeguarded to which the authorities inward investment promotional activity has made a significant contribution. (£)(Audit Commission ECR18d)	153.15	140	N/a	N/a	Data not available at this time.
<b>Quality</b>						
ER LI12	Percentage of business customers using the inward investment services (including aftercare) expressing satisfaction with the services & support provided (Audit Commission ECR18e)	92	85	N/a	N/a	Data not available at this time.
<b>Service Delivery</b>						
ER LI6	Inward investment enquiry conversion rate (%)	13.5	11.5	11.9		Although the percentage target has almost been achieved, the actual numbers of businesses taking property within the borough has fallen by 40%
ER LI8	Contribution to the number of jobs safeguarded, as a direct result of the service/s being provided	443	400	235		Number of vacancies has fallen by 53% over the last 12 months (JCP statistic) so it is proving very challenging in finding alternative jobs for people being made redundant.




<sup>1</sup> Key Indicators are identified by an **underlined reference in bold type.**




Ref <sup>1</sup>	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary												
ER LI10	No of day visitors per annum to the borough (Calendar year)	4.261m (2006) Annual count	+2%	4.363 (2007)		Tourism now estimated to contribute 2,578 jobs to Halton economy.												
ER LI11	Footfall in the town centres (millions)	12.5	+2%	13.78		Target has been exceeded.												
NI 13	Migrants English language skills and knowledge	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data not available until Autumn 2009.												
NI 151	Overall employment rate	N/a	N/a	70.4%	N/a	NW 72.1% and GB 74.5% (data June 07 – July 08)												
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits	N/a	N/a	17.8%	N/a	<b>NI152 for Halton</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Aug-07</td> <td>18.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov-07</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feb-08</td> <td>17.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May-08</td> <td>17.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Aug-08</b></td> <td><b>17.8</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	%	Aug-07	18.2	Nov-07	18	Feb-08	17.9	May-08	17.8	<b>Aug-08</b>	<b>17.8</b>
Date	%																	
Aug-07	18.2																	
Nov-07	18																	
Feb-08	17.9																	
May-08	17.8																	
<b>Aug-08</b>	<b>17.8</b>																	
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods	31.6	30.6	30.6		<b>NI153 for Halton</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Aug-07</td> <td>31.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov-07</td> <td>31.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feb-08</td> <td>30.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May-08</td> <td>30.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Aug-08</b></td> <td><b>30.6</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	%	Aug-07	31.3	Nov-07	31.1	Feb-08	30.8	May-08	30.7	<b>Aug-08</b>	<b>30.6</b>
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May-08	30.7																	
<b>Aug-08</b>	<b>30.6</b>																	
NI 161	Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data not available at this time.												
NI 162	Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data not available at this time.												

Ref <sup>1</sup>	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
	numeracy					
NI 163	Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher	57.2 (2006)	65.4	57.4		ONS annual population survey +/- 3.1
NI 164	Working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher	33.9 (2006)	N/a	32.6	N/a	ONS annual population survey +/- 3.1
NI 165	Working age population qualified to at least Level 4 or higher	16.8 (2006)	N/a	16.2	N/a	ONS annual population survey +/- 3.1
NI 166	Average earnings of employees in the area	£427.2 (2007)	N/a	£419.1 (2008)	N/a	Median Earnings (Nomis)
NI 171	Business registration rate	48.3 (2007)	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data available winter 2009.
NI 172	VAT registered businesses in the area showing growth	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data available winter 2009.
NI 173	People falling out of work and on to incapacity benefits	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Baseline yet to be established by Five Boroughs Partnership
NI 174	Skills gaps in the current workforce reported by employers	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	This indicator will be reported every 2 years. Data from the 2009 study will be available April 2010.

LPSA Ref.	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Perform 07/08	Perform 08/09 Q4	Traffic light	Commentary
12	Increase the number of people who have been claiming an incapacity benefit into sustained employment of at least 16 hours per week for 13 consecutive weeks or more	18 for year ending 31/03/06	179 3 year cumulative to 31/03/09	72	171		<b>The cumulative total as at 31/03/09 is 171 against an overall target of 179.</b> Therefore a further 8 customers need to remain in employment/self-employment during the tracking period of 13wks (April-June 09). There are 12 IB customers that have been supported into work/self-employment currently being tracked. Should at least 8 of these customers remain in sustained employment by 30.6.09 the 179 to target will be achieved.

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
ER 1	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Lack of resources in schools to promote enterprise</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Potential use of WNF and development of entrepreneurs in residence</p>	09/11/2008		WNF has been secured for Halton Education Business Partnership to develop and introduce Entrepreneurs in Residence project to promote enterprise in both primary and secondary schools. A proposal for a joint appointment of a Halton Schools Enterprise Officer between the Education Business Partnership and Young Enterprise is well advanced.
ER 2	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Reductions in real terms LSC funding</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Increased efficiency and bidding for other budgets</p>	08/12/2008		Additional funding streams have been secured including:  Train to Gain Employability Skills Programme Response to Redundancy
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Increasing LSC focus on in work training at cost to unemployed skills development</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Working with LSC and JCP on provision plans</p>	09/02/2008		The Halton Employment Partnership brings together key agencies including HBC, JCP and the LSC in presenting a 'complete employment offer' to businesses and those looking for work. WNF funding has been secured for unemployed skills development and other LSC/DWP monies are available to support both unemployed and employed people. It is essential that the HEP partners work effectively to ensure to training is delivered to the detriment of others.



Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Potential development by LSC of contestability resulting in possible loss of funding</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Identify additional income and efficiencies</p>	08/10/2008		<p>As a result of the Department submitting a successful PQQ with LSC, it means that HBC can submit relevant ITTs. Additional funding streams offered through ITTs have been secured including:</p> <p>Train to Gain Employability Skills Programme Response to Redundancy</p>
ER 3	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Existing main funding sources cease March 31 2008</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> New business plan based on reduced income and make bids to new income sources</p>	08/06/2008		<p>The service has levered-in external funding from new LSC contracts and has secured significant WNF for enterprise development and worklessness. New draft business plan agreed, awaiting approval of divisional re-organisation to finalise business plan.</p>
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Not achieving progress on disabled employment fast enough</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Develop a disabled employment strategy and action plan</p>	08/07/2008		<p>Production of strategy delayed due to the need to await major government announcements in this area that have been delayed. However, a Disability Employment Network has been established and the Strategy is being finalised to reflect recent welfare benefit reform affecting disabled people in receipt of working age benefits.</p> <p>Progress on supporting disabled people into work has been achieved. During the year 90 disabled people have been placed into jobs or permitted work placements.</p>

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
ER 4	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Redeployment of resources to Mersey Gateway lowering performance in inward investment</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Re-prioritise workload and cease lower priority work.</p>	08/10/2008		Increasingly the majority of the Economic Development Officer's (EDO) time is taken up with New Mersey Gateway related projects, particularly in the run up to the Public Enquiry. It has been possible to back fill a number of the EDO's back office type functions with a secondee from SOG Ltd. However, there exists a resource gap, in terms of both officer time and more particularly the necessary skill sets, to service major inward investment and company expansion projects. This has to be offset to a degree due to the down turn in enquiries.
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Continued focus on Liverpool for tourism spend resulting in other areas being marginalized</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Increased lobbying and identify alternate funding</p>	08/12/2008		TMP continues to focus attention on a limited number of big schemes despite lobbying for a new approach. That said, £65,000 has been secured from the NWDA towards the Lewis Carroll centre by going direct to the agency.
ER 5	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Impact of new crossing on existing businesses</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Ensure provision of alternate premises</p>	08/11/2008		The relocation of a number of key businesses in the line of the bridge has recently been agreed. However, there remains a considerable amount of work to do to accommodate businesses who's relocation needs are both complex and difficult to satisfy within the Borough



Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
ER 6	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Impact of major works over next 12 months</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Work with traders to manage situation</p>	08/11/2008		The construction phase of the Stadium Development in Widnes has contributed to congestion in the town centre. The recent opening of a new multi-story car park at Runcorn Station has alleviated a number of parking problems around the station.
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Longer term impacts on parking as centres become busier</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Work with travel team once parking surveys complete on wider accessibility plans</p>	08/11/2008		Work still underway on parking issues within Highways.
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Maintaining and improving cleanliness as centres become busier</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Work with E&amp;RS on schedules</p>	09/04/2008		The pending transfer of the Town Centre Management function to the Council's Waste Management Service will seek to rationalise and, therefore improve, the cleansing of the Borough's town centre
	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Implications of increased night time activity e.g. cleanliness, accessibility</p> <p><b>Control Measure:</b> Development of night time management plan</p>	09/02/2008		A number of new licensed premises have, or are about to, open in Victoria Square increasing the pressure on the public services with respect to the management of public order, safety and cleanliness. Cheshire Constabulary have made the policing of the town centres a priority and have scored a number of recent successes. The licensed traders in Victoria Square have also made a proactive approach to the police to fund additional public safety measures

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<b><u>Green</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded.</p>
<b><u>Red</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has not been achieved.</u></p>

**Environment Directorate**  
**Quarter 4 (2008 – 09) Overview Report**

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress within the directorate for the period year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

**2.0 Key Developments**

2.1 The principal key developments that have emerged during the course of the period, a number of which are related to initiatives to enhance the cohesiveness and quality of local service provision and to mitigate against the impacts of the national economic downturn, include:-

- I. The early implementation of the Apprenticeship Project which has led to 20 placements within local businesses, 15 of which were taken by individuals previously not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- II. The establishment of a Partners Recession Group, to provide a focal point in addressing challenges faced by local businesses and a multi-agency Halton Employment Team to develop and deliver training packages and bespoke employability programmes.
- III. A significant reduction in crime within Astmoor and Halebank industrial estates which has reduced by 65% and 32% respectively.
- IV. The reclamation of 120 hectares of land on the 3MG site and further development of 800, 000 sq ft of warehouse space by Stobart Ltd.
- V. The development of a Liverpool City Region Multi Area Agreement (MAA) to provide a framework for regional co-operation to improve economic opportunities.
- VI. The approval of the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy which comprises of nine improvement themes which are to be taken forward in two stages during the periods to and beyond 2025.
- VII. The completion of the Accessible Transport Study that will be reported to the Urban renewal Policy and Performance Board in June 2009.
- VIII. The Waste Management and Recycling contract is currently at the final stages of evaluation and a preferred bidder was announced during April.

- IX. During the final quarter of the year 3,000 households were added to the green waste collection service and the blue wheeled bin recycling scheme. This brings total numbers of properties to 37, 800 and 42, 000 respectively.
- X. Additionally during the last quarter of the year 17 fixed penalty notices were issues for litter offences and 6 were issued for dog fouling offences. Of these 13 were paid, 5 offenders elected to go to court and 5 are still currently in process.

### **3.0 Emerging Issues**

- 3.1 Those primary emerging issues that have been identified during the period and that will impact upon the work of the Directorate are:-
  - I. the inspection by OFSTED of the LSP /DWP funded programmes within Economic Regeneration that will be undertaken during spring 2009.
  - II. Continuing the progression of Halton's next Economic Development Strategy following the Economic Review of 2008.
  - III. The commencement of the Mersey Gateway Public Enquiry on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and the establishment of an independently managed Public Enquiry website. Recommendations are expected to be made by the Inspector to central government, before Christmas 2009, with a final decision expected early in 2010.
  - IV. Guidance from the Food Standards Agency in March 2009 will result in approximately 120 premises being added to the intervention programme for 2009 – 10. This results from the new inclusion of child minders serving food as part of their service.
  - V. A review of Haltons Waste Management Strategy will be undertaken during 2009 – 10
  - VI. Following a successful England Schoolboys trial match during autumn last year discussion are now underway to host a full England Schoolboy international at the Stobbart Stadium during early 2010. If successful this will have a positive impact of raising the profile of the borough and further enhancing the reputation of the stadium as a premier venue for major sporting events.
  - VII. There have been significant above inflation increases in food costs over the recent period and this will create some tension between the way in which meals can reasonably be costed without adversely affecting the demand for nutritional meals particularly for those who fall above the free meal threshold but are on comparatively low incomes.

#### 4.0 Service Objectives / Milestones

4.1 The significant majority of service objectives within the directorate have been delivered as planned and most notably positive progress has been made in regards to:-

- I. The delivery of targeted outreach campaigns in priority wards across the borough to increase local employability and identify and reduce the barriers in the path to employment and the delivery of the Widnes Industrial Action Plan to improve the business environment.
- II. Continued improvement to parks, sports grounds and nature reserves and the securing of further National Lottery Funding for restoration works to Runcorn Hill Park.
- III. The expansion and extension of waste recycling wheeled bin schemes across the borough.
- IV. The delivery of the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme, the submission of the mid-term Review to the Dept for Transport and the delivery of the Vehicle Fleet Replacement Programme, all achieved within planned timescales.
- V. The ongoing delivery of the Castlefields regeneration programme, the revision of phase 2 implementation to include a new health centre and confirmation of funding for a further phase of the RSL programme.
- VI. The development and delivery of Action Plans across all schools to allow shared learning and to raise awareness and promote healthy eating and meal take up.

4.2 Of those service objectives that have been assigned red traffic lights a number result from the outcome being achieved by alternative means or whereby external forces have had a negative affect upon the achievement of key milestone dates. Those objectives / key milestones that have not progressed as originally planned include:-

- I. The adoption of the Southern Widnes Regeneration Area SPD, originally planned for March 2009, has been delayed as a result of the need to consider options and traffic routes in relation to the Mersey Gateway Project. Implementation is now scheduled for autumn 2009.
- II. The commencement of the Waste Management & Recycling Contract has been slightly delayed although this process should be complete by 01<sup>st</sup> June 2009.
- III. The School pathfinder Scheme, intended to widen the range of home to education / training transport, has not been implemented as a result of the DCSF deciding not to provide funding to any local authorities. Further guidance from DCSF is now awaited.

- IV. The completion of public art work within the Widnes Waterfront District which has been delayed due to land contamination issues. The project will now be taken forward into 2009-10.

## **5.0 Performance Indicators / Targets**

- 5.1 The majority of performance indicators within the Directorate that can be reported have achieved or exceed their annual target.

Most notably positive progress has been shown in relation to:-

- I. 800 local people have been assisted into employment during the year, an increase of almost 100% on that achieved during 2007-08.
  - II. High levels of resident satisfaction have been achieved for parks and open spaces [97%] and the standard of cleanliness and maintenance of parks and green spaces [94%].
  - III. Excellent performance has been achieved in relation to principal and classified road condition and nationally Halton is amongst the highest performing authorities.
- 5.2 There are a small number of indicators that have failed to achieve targeted levels, in some cases very marginally, and these include:-
    - I. The number of inward investment enquires which has also fallen from 2007 / 08 levels. Given the current economic climate this decline is not unexpected as is likely to continue into the current financial year with the commercial property industry being particularly exposed.
    - II. Although there has been an expansion of services recycling, composting and landfill targets have not been met. Further initiatives are planned for the coming financial year which should have a positive impact in this area.

## **6.0 Financial Summary**

- 6.1 Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2008/09 financial statements for the Department will be prepared and made available via the Council's Intranet once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised. A notice will be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available

## QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

**DIRECTORATE:** Environment  
**SERVICE:** Major Projects  
**PERIOD:** Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2009

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This monitoring report covers the Major Projects Department fourth quarter period up to year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2008/09 financial statements for the Department will be prepared and made available via the Council's Intranet once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised. A notice will be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 3.




### 2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Heron Business Park Phase 1 units are completely sold. Phase 2 was completed in March.  
Castlefields Local Centre was 'vested' in January, i.e. Halton Borough Council took ownership of it.  
The Phase 1 housing element of the new Village Square was completed.  
The Stobart Group concluded the reclamation of 120 ha., at 3MG and their development of 800,000 sq. ft. in two units has begun on site.

### 3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

It is becoming clear that the HCA's (Homes and Communities Agency) priorities are considerably different from those of English Partnerships. This is calling into question our ability to deliver partnership projects on Castlefields and elsewhere.

### 4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES




<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>5</b>
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Two CPOs were scheduled for completion in the year. One has not been required because the private sector has managed without. The other's private sector supporter has pulled out and alternatives have been found to secure several of the sites concerned. However, the financial situation has been responsible for a slowdown in development and the non-achievement of several targets. For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

**5.0 SERVICE REVIEW**




The Budget Review identified a £30,000 saving to be achieved in 2009-10 by the loss of the post of Divisional Manager Projects Development.

**6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
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Targets have been met for all "Key" performance indicators. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

**6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
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Targets have been met for all "Other" performance indicators. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

**7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS**

There are no LPSA targets for this service

**8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES**

During the production of the 2008-09 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Service Objectives.



Where a Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

No risks have been identified as High for the service.

## **9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS**

During 2007/08 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.





No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.




## **10.0 DATA QUALITY**






The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.




## **11.0 APPENDICES**

Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones  
Appendix 2- Progress against All Performance Indicators  
Appendix 4- Explanation of traffic light symbols

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
MP 1	To implement a regeneration plan for the Widnes Waterfront EDZ in accordance with the EDZ Team Plan and Regeneration Masterplan resulting in 44 ha. of regenerated land on the Widnes Waterfront	Implementation according to Masterplan Phase 2:		Consultants Taylor Young & the BE group have completed Phase 2 Widnes Waterfront Masterplan.
		Completion of CPO procedures, Mar 2009		The development partner has withdrawn support for the CPO; future options are being considered.
		Public Artwork completed, Mar 2009		Contamination issues with the identified site have delayed the implementation, Nevertheless a planning application for the art work has been submitted for Widnes Warth and the project will be taken forward in 2009-10.
		Linear Park completed. Mar 2009		Moss Bank Park completed ahead of schedule.
		Implementation according to Masterplan Phase 2: Completion of Phase 1 of Venture Fields Leisure Development. Dec 2008		Funding issues and the withdrawal of a major tenant hampered the scheme's progress, but the securing of a replacement operator and progress on securing North West Development Association funding for land remediation have kept the scheme on the rails for a revised 2009-10 start-on-site.




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
MP 2	To implement a regeneration plan for Castlefields according to the Castlefields Team Plan and Regeneration Masterplan (See Team Plan) resulting in the achievement of The Masterplan's Vision of an improved estate	Implementation according to Masterplan Phase 2: Commence demolition and redevelopment of the existing local centre. Mar 2009		<p>Housing redevelopment and demolitions on schedule.</p> <p>Phase One of the Village Square completed. Local Centre acquired by 'vesting' on 27th January 2009.</p> <p>Phase Two of the Village Square is being revised to accommodate a new health centre within the development. Demolition now anticipated July/ August 2009 due to the inclusion of the new health centre.</p>
		Implementation according to Masterplan Phase 2: Develop phase 3 of the programme. Mar 2009		Funding has been secured for a further phase of the RSL housing programme.
MP 3	To implement a regeneration plan for 3 MG (Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park) resulting in the creation of a regionally-significant rail freight park	Completion of CPO procedures. Mar 2009		The purchase of the Eddarbridge site by the Stobart Group means that the CPO planned for it will probably not be required as the objective of redeveloping Eddarbridge is being achieved ahead of schedule, albeit in a different way.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Implementation of infrastructure works including road access to Halton Borough Council Field. Aug 2008		Planning permission was gained in September 2008 from both Halton Borough Council and Knowsley MBC for the link road to the A5300 Knowsley Expressway. The diversion of the sludge main has been completed. The Landscaping Scheme is currently on target for completion in Spring 2009.
MP 4	Monitor investment levels in the 3 town centres in order to comply with Community Plan objectives (See Team Plan) and ensure a continued improvement in the quality of Halton's Town Centres	Ensure continued investment in town centres of at least £1 million per annum. Mar 2009		Stadium Developments' project at the Windmill Centre is on schedule for an Easter 2010 opening.
		Co-ordinate the commencement on site of Phase 1 of the Canal Quarter development with residential and civic developments. Mar 2009		The HCA has indicated a withdrawal of grant support due to changed priorities. Alternatives are being explored.
MP 5	Reclamation of contaminated and derelict land including 48 ha. at St Michael's Golf Course to produce a safe and attractive replacement course	Phase 1 reclamation of 18 ha. of the Golf Course begun with grant of £180,000 from Defra to finalise designs for Phase 2. Mar 2009		The decision on the grant application to DEFRA for £3m for Phase 1 is still awaited. Many queries from DEFRA have been answered and work continues preparing the planning application. Fencing works to northern boundary completed.
		Formal determination and funding application to Defra. Mar 2009		DEFRA decision is due April 09



Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
MP 6	To implement the Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan	Three meetings of Urban Renewal SSP held. Mar 2009		Meeting held in January 2009
		Urban Renewal allocation of WNF allocated and fully spent. Mar 2009		Redistribution of the allocation was agreed and spend was completed
MP 7	To meet the strategic housing needs of Halton's diverse communities.	Complete construction of a short-stay Gypsy and Travellers Site, Warrington Rd, Runcorn. Sep 2009		Project completed.

Ref <sup>1</sup>	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
<b>Service Delivery</b>						
MP LI2	New office accommodation (sq ft)	50000	50000	50,000		Forward Point and Turnstone Park completed since the Quarter 2 report
MP LI4	Local business premises improved	18	12	13		Target exceeded
MP LI6	Land reclamation programme (acres)	28	10	120		The DEFRA announcement on the funding for the golf course remediation is awaited. Heron Phase 2 – 1.59 ha reclamation complete, Stobart development has reclaimed approx. 120 acres of heavily contaminated land.
MP LI8	EDZ Programme: Outputs as set out in ERDF offer letter (% achieved)	100	100	100		Completed. The Objective 2 programme terminated in December 2008.
MP LI11	EDZ Programme: Outputs as set out in Succession Masterplan	100	100	100		Succession Masterplan commissioned in Q3
MP LI15	EDZ Programme: Outputs as set out in the North West Development Agency Performance Plan	100	100	100		All the performance plan projects completed
<b><u>MP LI9</u></b>	Castlefields Regeneration: Outputs as set out in Masterplan (% achieved)	100	100	100		Preliminary work completed necessary to go to market with the Lakeside site. CIG approved delaying this, subject to market conditions.

<sup>1</sup> Key Indicators are identified by an **underlined reference in bold type**.

Ref <sup>1</sup>	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
MP LI12	Castlefields Regeneration: Outputs as set out in Masterplan Phase 2 & SPD (% achieved)	N/a	100	100		Preliminary work completed necessary to go to market with the Lakeside site. CIG approved delaying this, subject to market conditions.
<b><u>MP LI13</u></b>	Urban Renewal: Outputs as set out in Succession Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan (% achieved)	N/a	100	100		Targets Met
<b><u>MP LI14</u></b>	3MG: Outputs as set out in Masterplan (% achieved)	100	100	100		Targets met including £1.7 million of ERDF drawn down.

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<b><u>Green</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded.</p>
<b><u>Red</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has not been achieved</u>.</p>



## QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

**DIRECTORATE:** Environment

**SERVICE:** Highways, Transportation & Logistics

**PERIOD:** Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2009

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This monitoring report covers the Highways, Transportation & Logistics Department fourth quarter period up to year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2008/09 financial statements for the Department will be prepared and made available via the Council's Intranet once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised. A notice will be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 6.

### 2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

#### 1. Progress on Mersey Gateway:-

##### **(i) Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy**

The Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy was approved by the Executive Board on 5 March, 2009. The Strategy, in tandem with the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy, is designed to inform the overall planning process for the Mersey Gateway Scheme. The Strategy comprises 9 improvement themes, that will be taken forward in two phases. Phase I is planned for implementation between 2014/15 and 2024/25. Phase II is planned to be implemented beyond 2024/25.

##### **(ii) Mersey Gateway Public Inquiry**

The Mersey Gateway Public Inquiry will be held at the Stobart Stadium, Halton, starting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and will last for 8-10 weeks.

The Pre Mersey Gateway Public Inquiry meeting was held on 24 March, 2009, at the Brindley Art Centre and Theatre. The Inquiry was chaired by the Inquiry Inspector, Mr Alan Gray, and included an item on the pre-Inquiry timetable for the submission of evidence. The Council's and statutory objectors evidence is to be submitted by 21 April and all other evidence by 28 April. The Inquiry will sit Tuesdays to Thursdays 10:00 - 17:00 and Fridays 09:30 – 13:00. There will be no sittings on Mondays. The outline Inquiry timetable will be published w/c 11 May.

An independently managed Public Inquiry Website has been set up, which will be regularly updated with details of the Inquiry documentation/timetable/proceedings etc. Please see link below:-

<http://www.persona.uk.com/mersey/index.htm>

The Inspector will be making his recommendations to Government in autumn 2009, with a decision expected early next year.

Detailed work is underway in preparing for the procurement phase of the project, which will continue to be progressed as far as is practicable, pending the announcement of the outcome of the Public Inquiry.

2. **Accessible Transport Study:-** The stakeholder consultation event took place 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009. The consultant's report will be presented to Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, in September 2009.
3. **Road Construction:-** Construction of the Upton Rocks Distributor Road (Queensbury Way to A5080 Cronton Road) commenced in September 2008 and is due for completion in May 2009. Phase 2 of the A56/A558 improvement started in December 2008 and involves the widening of Daresbury Expressway up to the Science Park access. Completion of the A56/A558 scheme is due in May 2009.
4. **Regional Funding Advice:-** The North West Region has submitted its advice to Government on Regional Funding Advice (RFA) in February 2009. The advice covers spending priorities for transport, housing and regeneration, economic development and skills priorities. The key elements of the advice on transport spending that affect Halton are as follows:
  - In order to address a 36% over programming problem, the Mottram, Hollingworth and Tintwhistle bypass and the associated Glossop Spur schemes are recommended to be deferred until after 2015/16;
  - Those schemes not currently approved by DfT, (e.g. The Silver Jubilee Bridge Major Maintenance Scheme), have been assessed and found to be broadly consistent with the wider regional strategy and policy;

- In response to a proposal to incorporate LTP Integrated Transport and Maintenance Block allocations into the RFA process, the Region considers that there is insufficient evidence to make informed recommendations on the distribution of funding either between the maintenance and integrated transport block allocations, or between these block allocations and the funding for major schemes;
- The Region intends to undertake research to assess the advantages and disadvantages of allocating some of its RFA for schemes costing less than £5m, which for small authorities like Halton, can pose significant funding problems; and
- The Region also identified a number of studies to be undertaken by the Highways Agency ('Strategic Park & Ride', 'Behavioural Change', 'Access to Intermodal Freight Terminals' and 'Housing Growth Points') and priorities for rail option development ('Strategic Park & Ride'; 'Train Lengthening'; 'Core City Station Expansion'; 'Metrolink'; and 'Enhancements between Pennine Lancashire and Manchester and Liverpool and Manchester').

**5. Housing Growth Points** The DCLG have advised that Halton's Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF2) expressions of interest have not been invited to be progress towards a full business plan. However, Halton was successful in gaining funding through the Programme of Development whereby the Mid Mersey Growth Point (Halton, Warrington and St Helens) has been given a total allocation for 2009/10 to 2010/11 of £4.2m; the distribution of this funding is currently being determined. A Growth Point manager is now in post. The Mid Mersey Growth Point Authorities have also submitted a bid for around £50k of funding from the DfT's Strategic Studies Budget to consider the feasibility of 3 schemes as follows:

- Sankey Valley Way and Clock Face Minerals Line pedestrian, cycle and bridle routes (Joint study between all three Authorities – to be led/managed by Warrington);
- Strategic Park and Ride (including P&R at Daresbury), addition of forecast modelling (Study led/managed by Warrington); and
- Daresbury Station Guidance on Rail Infrastructure Projects (GRIP) Analysis: Stages 1, 2 and 3; Output Definition, Pre feasibility and Option Selection (Joint study between Warrington and Halton – to be led/managed by Halton).

If successful, these studies would complement work already being done by Warrington on Strategic Park and Ride in the sub region, together with those schemes in St Helens and Warrington which have been invited to be progressed to full business case stage for Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2), and other infrastructure schemes as identified in the Growth Point Programme of Development (PoD).

6. **KickStart Round:-** Guidance has now been received from DfT and a bid is proposed with both Halton Borough Transport and Arriva (North West) to further improve local bus services within Runcorn.
7. **Rail Improvements:-** The new multi storey car park at Runcorn Station is now operational and a new off peak and weekend tariff has been introduced. A bid has been made through DfT's Strategic Studies Budget for funding towards a study into the feasibility of a new railway station at Daresbury, (see item 5). Improvements to the Halton Curve are included in the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy (see item 1), however, it should be noted that the opportunity will be taken to accelerate this project should funding become available.
8. **Major Bridge Maintenance:-** In order to maximise efficiency in the delivery of an increased programme of major bridge maintenance on the Primary Route Network, it was viewed advantageous to appoint a single Partnering contractor. The term of the contract will be for an initial four-year period plus a potential two-year extension with an estimated minimum value of works of £12m. The HBC Bridge Maintenance Partnership Contract was originally awarded to Wrekin Construction in January 2009. Although the financial viability of Wrekin was independently confirmed as satisfactory both in August 2008 (when shortlisting) and December 2008 (shortly before award), in early March HBC discovered that Administrators had been appointed to take over Wrekin's operations. At that point the Contract was still in a preliminary stage and Wrekin had not commenced any work on site nor established any site facilities. As a result, HBC elected to offer the Contract to the organisation whose overall tender submission was evaluated to be the second most advantageous. This company is Balvac Ltd who is part of the Balfour Beatty Group. Balvac have confirmed the continued validity of their tender offer which was a very narrow second place behind Wrekin's and we have now sanctioned award of the HBC Bridge Maintenance Partnership Contract to them. It is felt that the course of action we have taken has mitigated the adverse effects to the bridge maintenance programme to an absolute minimum and we are confident that we can retrieve the delay in delivering the work.
9. **Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan:-** the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) has now been put out for consultation. A Sustainability Appraisal is being prepared, of which the Scoping Report is also being consulted upon.
10. **Liverpool City Region (LCR) Transport Governance Review**  
The Local Transport Act 2008 (LTA) established the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority as an Integrated Transport Authority (ITA), and amongst other things presented new opportunities to improve transport governance and delivery arrangements and hence the provision of transport and highway services. The Transport Working Group, which provides a lead on

transport matters in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) is proposing to commission consultants to review governance arrangements in the LCR. This is an important review as it will consider what highway, transport or traffic management powers should be transferred to the ITA, it could therefore have significant implications for transport services and delivery within Halton. It should also be noted that the Transport Working Group has decided to explore the potential benefits of producing a Joint Local Transport Plan for the LCR.

**11. Liverpool City Region Multi Area Agreement**

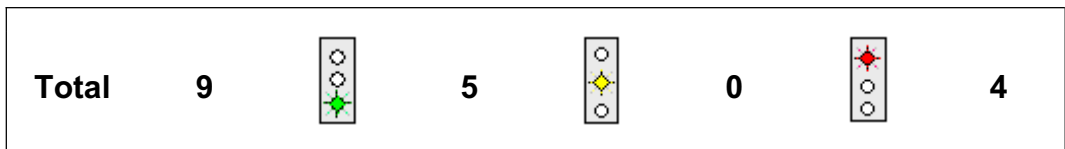
A LCR Multi Area Agreement (MAA) is in preparation, which will create a framework within which the six city region local authorities, the ITA, Government and its agencies, can cooperate to deliver improved economic performance. The first stage of the MAA incorporating the ‘Story of Place’ and Employment and Skills Platform has been agreed and is now being developed to include Housing, Economic Development and Transport Platforms. The MAA Transport Platform is entitled, ‘Transport for a Growing City Region’. The Transport Platform is still in the development stage; however, it is intended to be incorporated into the full MAA in early summer. Key components of the document are the ‘Asks’ of Government, which if agreed, would enable barriers to the implementation of transport strategies to be addressed. These ‘Asks’ are expected to be:

- Improving access to employment and opportunities;
- Improving capacity and connectivity in the LCR network; and
- Low Carbon Transport City – reducing emissions and addressing climate change.

**3.0 EMERGING ISSUES**

Nothing to report this quarter.

**4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES**

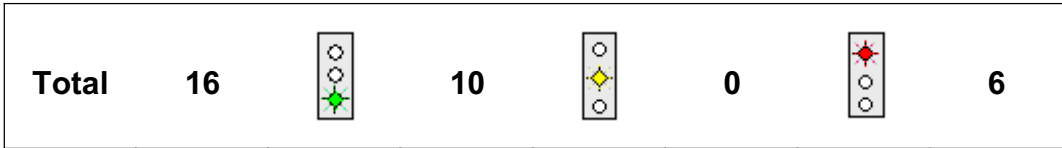


For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

**5.0 SERVICE REVIEW**

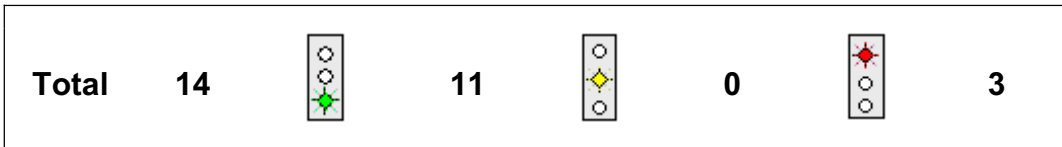
**Energy Costs:-** Options to reduce the costs of street lighting are still being investigated, these include the removal of unnecessary lit signage and the installation of more energy efficient lighting infrastructure. It is intended that these options will make an energy saving of £50,000.

**6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**



For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

**6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**



For further details, please refer to Appendix 3.

**7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS**

There are no LPSA targets for this service

**8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES**

During the production of the 2008-09 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

Please refer to Appendix 4 for details

## 9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS

During 2007/08 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.




Please refer to Appendix 5 for details.

## 10.0 DATA QUALITY




The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.




## 11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones  
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators  
Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators  
Appendix 4- Progress against High Risk Treatment Measures  
Appendix 5- Progress against High Priority Impact Assessments  
Appendix 6- Explanation of traffic light symbols




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
HT 1	Mersey Gateway – Complete the procedural processes to achieve all necessary orders for the construction of Mersey Gateway within the timescales required.	Publish all necessary orders to enable the construction of the Mersey Gateway to proceed in accordance with timescales set. May 2008		All orders and applications were published in May 2008.
		<i>Complete Public Inquiry into objections raised to enable scheme to progress in accordance with required timescales. Feb 2009</i>		Public Inquiry is due to start on the 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2009 and will last 8-10 weeks. Essentially, the delay was as a result of the DfT's Road Strategy Division ongoing deliberations over the Council's application for a Road User Charging Order to introduce charges on the SJB. The application was made on 16 December 2009. It was the TWA Orders Unit view that it would take a while for the road user charging order to catch up procedurally with the others made by Halton earlier in the year and that it would not, therefore, be possible to start a combined inquiry into all the linked applications in March 2009.
HT 3	LTP Capital Programme - Deliver the LTP Capital Programmes to ensure that the transport system is maintained and developed to meets local needs	To deliver the 2008/09 LTP Capital Programme. Mar 2009		The 2008/09 LTP Capital Programme has been delivered.









Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
HT 4	Local Transport Plan 2 – Submit progress reports as required by DfT and monitor progress against the Council’s transport objectives to meet statutory requirement and ensure progress is maintained.	Submit Mid Term Review. July 2008		The final draft of the LTP Mid Term Review was submitted to DfT in July 2008.
HT 5	Silver Jubilee Bridge Maintenance Major Scheme – Secure funding, complete procurement and deliver works to enable the bridge and associated structures to reach a steady state of maintenance.	Funding secured, procurement means established and delivery programme initiated May 2008.		<p>A number of contracts, procured through competitive tendering, have been completed in advance of award of the Bridge Maintenance Partnership Contract.</p> <p>Balvac Ltd have now been appointed as the single partnering contractor, (31-3-09) and are mobilising to address the major maintenance works programme for 2009/10.</p>
		Review progress, revise SJB maintenance Strategy document and deliver 2008/09 works programme. Mar 2009		<p>DfT have consented to a carry over of an element of funding into 2009/10 to allow procurement of a Partner Contractor to deliver the majority of the maintenance works programme over the 3 year period of Section 31 PRN Grant funding.</p> <p>The works programme for 2009/10 has been expanded to include works carried over from 2008/09. The revised programme is on</p>





Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
				target and the revised SJB maintenance strategy is in draft. The milestone therefore has been met.
HT 6	Vehicle Fleet Replacement Programme - Secure procurement and funding methods and deliver new fleet to improve the quality of the service offered.	Complete first phase of vehicle replacement programme, which involves replacing 45 vehicle & plant items. Jun 2008		The volatility of the supply chain during the 1st quarter had a knock on effect throughout the year and resulted in the late arrival of various Fleet items.
		Complete acquisition method options appraisal for the second phase of the replacement programme, which involves the balance of fleet items due for replacement. Oct 2008		The 2008 vehicle replacement programme has largely been completed, but due to the economic downturn and manufactures specification changes the delivery of a couple of specialist vehicles has been delayed.
HT 7	Improving the quality and accessibility of public transport services in Halton to encourage the use of sustainable transport and increase its accessibility by vulnerable groups	<i>Implement School Pathfinder Scheme, which involves widening the range and availability of home to education and training transport. This is subject to funding being made available in March 2008. Apr 2008</i>		Pathfinder funding bid for additional home to school travel provision was submitted to the DCSF in 2007. DCSF took the decision not to fund any of the bids from authorities.  Halton Strategic Partnership is funding a major review into the future availability of accessible transport services in Halton. Consultants have been appointed and the results of the review will be




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
				<p>reported in September 2009.</p> <p>Additional accessible vehicle resources have been introduced to the HBC passenger fleet and that operated by HCT. The two fleets are being better co-ordinated as part of the "Door 2 Door" service.</p>

Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
<b><u>HTL</u></b> <b><u>LI6</u></b>	No. of passengers on community based accessible transport	183877	190000	186,175		There appears to be an error in the calculation of the actual figure for 2007/08, (it is lower than shown), resulting in a higher target for 2008/09 than would have been set. This has in turn resulted in performance for 2008/09 not being able to meet the target. If the actual figure for 2007/08 is incorrect future targets will need to be reviewed.
<b><u>NI 167</u></b>	Congestion during morning peak times	N/A	N/A	N/A		DfT have agreed that Halton should comply with Variant 3 which only requires monitoring of the indicator using DfT data without targets being set.
<b><u>NI 175</u></b>	a) To increase the percentage of households who live in the top five most deprived wards in the Borough, who do not have access to a car living within 40 minutes travel time to Whiston Hospital from 29% in 2005 to 40% in 2007 and 100% in 2008, 2009 & 2010	100	100	100		Halton Borough Council Priorities Funding remains in place for the continuation of the pre-bookable discounted taxi service for patients and visitors wishing to access Whiston and Warrington Hospitals.
	b) To increase the percentage of households who live in the top five most deprived Wards in the Borough who do not have access to a car living within 40 minutes travel time to Warrington Hospital from	100	100	100		Halton Borough Council Priorities Funding remains in place for the continuation of the pre-bookable discounted taxi service for patients and visitors wishing to access Whiston and Warrington Hospitals.







Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
	0% in 2005 to 20% in 2007 and 100% in 2008, 2009 & 2010.					
	c) To increase the percentage of 16-19 learners who live in the top five most deprived Wards in Halton living within 30 minutes travel time by public transport to the Bridgewater Campus from 84% in 2005 to 90% in 2007 and 89% by 2010.	86	87	82		The percentage of households living in the top five most deprived Wards in Halton living over 30 minutes travel time by public transport of Riverside College's Runcorn Campus remains below target. This is a reflection of the recent lack of funding opportunities such as DfT "Kickstart" funding. The DfT have however announced a new round of "Kickstart" funding, and Halton BC is working with Arriva (North West) to develop a "Kickstart" proposal to provide improved bus service links to Riverside College's Runcorn Campus. This bid will need to be submitted in July 2009, and if successful funding will be available in 2010/11.
	d) To increase the percentage of 16-19 learners who live in the top five most deprived Wards in Halton living within 30 minutes travel time by public transport to the Widnes Campus from 89% in 2005 to 95% in 2007 and 93% by 2010.	89	91	86		The percentage of households living in the top five most deprived Wards in Halton living over 30 minutes travel time by public transport of Riverside College's Widnes Campus remains below target. This is a reflection of the recent lack of funding opportunities such as DfT "Kickstart" funding. The DfT have however announced a new round of "Kickstart" funding, and Halton BC is working with Halton Borough Transport Ltd to







Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
						develop a "Kickstart" proposal to provide improved bus service links to Riverside College's Widnes Campus. This bid will need to be submitted in July 2009, and if successful funding will be available in 2010/11.
<b><u>NI 176</u></b>	Percentage of people of working age living within a catchment area of a location with more than 500 jobs by public transport and/or walking	N/A	N/A	N/A		Target to be set.
<b><u>NI 177</u></b>	Number of local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area in one year	5,940,000	6,565,000	5,599,000		The drop in patronage is possibly due to the economic downturn. Target may have to be adjusted.
<b><u>HTL LI10</u></b>	No. of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions. (Previously BVPI 99ai)	50	72	44		Indicator is measured on a calendar year basis. Target has been exceeded.
<b><u>HTL LI11</u></b>	No. of children (<16) killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions. (Previously 99bi)	4	13	11		Indicator is measured on a calendar year basis. Target has been exceeded.
<b><u>HTL LI12</u></b>	No. of people slightly injured in road traffic collisions. (Previously 99ci)	493	540	477		Indicator is measured on a calendar year basis. Target has been exceeded.



Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
<b><u>HTL LI15</u></b>	Condition of Unclassified Roads (% unclassified road network where structural maintenance should be considered). (Previously BVPI 224b)	8	9	8		Target has been met. Halton is currently within the top quartile for unclassified road condition.
<b><u>NI 47</u></b>	People Killed and Seriously Injured	10.7%	-1.4%	14.9%		This indicator is based on a 3 year rolling average. Good performance is typified by a positive change, poor performance will return a negative figure suggesting an increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured in traffic collisions, compared with the previous 3 year rolling average. This year's outturn (14.9%) is a positive figure and greater than the target; therefore the target has been exceeded.
<b><u>NI 48</u></b>	Children Killed and Seriously Injured	29.5%	6.7%	9.7%		This indicator is based on a 3 year rolling average. Good performance is typified by a positive change, poor performance will return a negative figure suggesting an increase in the number of children killed or seriously injured in traffic collisions, compared with the previous 3 year rolling average. This year's outturn (9.7%) is a positive figure and greater than the target; therefore the target has been exceeded.
<b><u>NI 168</u></b>	Percentage of principal road network where structural	TBC	2%	1%		Target has been exceeded. Halton is one of the top performing authorities for principal



Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
	maintenance should be considered					road condition.
<b>NI 169</b>	Non principal roads where maintenance should be considered	4%	6%	3%		Target has been exceeded. Halton is one of the top 10% best performing authorities for classified roads.
<b>NI 178</b>	Bus service punctuality,  Part 1: The proportion of non frequent scheduled services on time (%):  a) Percentage of buses starting route on time  b) Percentage of buses on time at intermediate timing points  Part 2: For frequent services, the excess waiting time (minutes)	97.4  84.8  N/A	97.5  85.2  N/A	96.6  83.19  N/A	  	Target has been missed mainly due to delays on routes affected by the Liverpool 'Big Dig'.  Target has been missed mainly due to delays on routes affected by the Liverpool 'Big Dig'.  Target to be set








Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
HTL LI1	Number of third party compensation claims received due to alleged highway / footway defects	108	120	97		Number of claims well within target and continuing to show a year on year reduction.
HTL LI2	Increase MOT test facility turnover by 5% per annum (£)	160,000	168,000 (+5%)	186,000		Income levels have remained buoyant throughout what has been a difficult trading year. Despite the economic difficulties the annual target has been exceeded.
HTL LI3	% of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people (Previously BVPI 165)	67.35	67	67.35		Performance in 2007/08 has been maintained in 2008/09 and has resulted in the target being met.
HTL LI4	No. of temporary traffic control days caused by roadworks per km. (Previously BVPI 100)	0.31	0.6	0.4673		Figure is well within the target.
HTL LI5	% of footpaths and ROWs that are easy to use. (Previously BVPI 178)	94.15	96	88%		The performance has reduced due to the increased number of 'alleygates' whereby rights of way have been closed. In the light of this a new target will be considered.
HTL LI7	% of bus stops with Quality Corridor accessibility features. (No. of stops – 603)	33.8	36	44.14		Efforts during 2009/10 will be focused on improving bus stops on the Core Bus Route Network as identified in the Halton Bus Strategy 2006/7 – 2010/11.
HTL LI8	% of people satisfied with local public transport information. (Previously BVPI 103)	N/A	N/A	N/A		Measured on a tri-annual basis, the next survey is to be carried out 2009/10.
HTL	% of people satisfied with	N/A	N/A	N/A		Measured on a tri-annual basis, the next



Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
LI9	local bus services. (Previously BVPI 104)					survey is to be carried out 2009/10.
HTL LI13	Average number of days taken to repair street lighting fault: non DNO. (Previously BVPI 215a).	6	5	5		Target has been achieved.
HTL LI14	Average number of days taken to repair street lighting fault: DNO. (Previously BVPI 215b)	29.54	40	24.73		Target has been exceeded.
HTL LI16	% of footways not in good condition (across categories 1 & 2) (Previously BVPI 187)	50	25	N/A		DfT have accepted Halton's proposal for a locally derived performance indicator that will take account of footway condition across the whole Borough and as such this indicator is no longer relevant. The definition and formula calculation of the proposed indicator are currently being developed.
HTL LI17	Damage to roads and pavements (% dangerous damage repaired within 24 hours)	99.58	98	98.47%		Figure is within target.
HTL LI19a	No of sites with new bus shelters	46	24	56 (10 in 08/09)		Target has been exceeded.
HTL LI19b	No of sites with replacement bus shelters	44	57	50 (6 in 08/09)		Target has not been met due to delay in implementation of the busway study.
HTL LI20	Percentage of schools with School Travel Plans in place	69.4	76	87.3		Target has been exceeded.

Ref	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
HTL LI21	Percentage of employers (> 100 employees) with Green Travel Plans in place	33	24	56		Target has been exceeded.
HTL LI22	Proportion of LGV's that pass the annual MOT test first time	100%	90%	82%		A change in vehicle testing technology by VOSA has had a negative impact on the first time pass rates nationally. Although the target has been missed the outturn still exceeds the national average first time pass rate figures.

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
HTL 5	<p><b>Risk Identified:</b> Absence of Major Maintenance funding due to lack of positive DfT response to Major Scheme Bid</p> <p><b>Control Measures:</b> Implement first three years of maintenance strategy using LTP funding confirmed through PRN Bid</p> <p>Continue to press DfT for Programme Entry approval of MSB to allow delivery of remainder of maintenance programme</p>	<p>March 2011</p> <p>September 2010</p>	<p></p> <p></p>	<p>Award of the HBC Bridge Maintenance Partnership to undertake all major bridge maintenance in the Borough has been made to Balvac Ltd who are mobilising resources to commence delivery of the PRN funded programme of maintenance.</p> <p>Major works have also been completed or initiated in advance of the formation of the Partnership through normal competitive tendering processes.</p> <p>DfT have been advised of the changes to the funding profile associated with the procurement of a single Partner contractor and have given approval to carrying an element of 2008/09 PRN Grant funding into 2009/10.</p> <p>Correspondence with DfT with regard to answering queries related to the Major Scheme Bid and its relationship with Mersey Gateway continue to be ongoing.</p>

Strategy /Policy / Service	HIGH Priority Actions	Target	Progress	Commentary
Transport Coordination	Develop and implement a programme of Equality and Diversity training	March 09		All Transport Co-ordination Section Staff are undergoing diversity and equality training. This is to be rolled out to transport operators.
	Co-ordinate rolling programme of Equality Impact assessments on all Strategy, Policy, and Service Areas	March 09		This is being addressed as part of the Halton Accessible Transport Review which is currently underway.
	Develop and implement a system of stakeholder engagement, participation and consultation	March 09		This is being addressed as part of the Halton Accessible Transport Review which is currently underway.
	Evaluate accessibility of all buildings	March 09		This is not within the remit or capability of the Transport Co-ordination section and this action should probably be addressed by Property Services. However, as part of our current work to update the HBC Commuter Plan, a basic transport audit of main council sites has been undertaken. The results of this transport audit could be shared with Property Services to support any accessibility evaluation.
	Collect and manage data to inform the Directorate Equality Strategy	March 09		Transport Co-ordination and Halton Community Transport are now systematically collecting diversity / equality data on all clients who are using client transport services in the Borough. This will be reported on an annual basis, as part of the Directorate Equality Strategy.

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<b><u>Green</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded.</p>
<b><u>Red</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has not been achieved</u>.</p>

## QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

**DIRECTORATE:** Environment

**SERVICE:** Environmental & Regulatory

**PERIOD:** Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2009

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Environment & Regulatory Services Department second quarter period up to 31 March 2009. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2008/09 financial statements for the Department will be prepared and made available via the Council's Intranet once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised. A notice will be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available."

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained in Appendix 6.

### 2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

#### PLANNING

##### Planning Policy

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment was published in February 2009.

The Waste Development Plan Document (DPD) completed public consultation on strategy and site issues. Public consultation on Preferred Options is timetabled for September 2009.

The Planning for Risk SPD completed public consultation and is due for adoption in September 2009.

A significant amount of progress has been made on the Core Strategy DPD and associated evidence base. This DPD will be placed on public consultation in September 2009.

Representations were submitted to 4NW on 27th March in response to the stakeholder consultation on Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision figures proposed for Halton. This followed the Exec Board Report of 19th March.

The Sandymoor SPD was adopted in February 2009.

**Development Management**

Development Management Summary Stats for Q4:

Applications Received - 203

Applications Decided - 113

Applications on hand (undecided) - 115

N.B. There are certain applications (such as tree preservation orders) that are not counted in the statutory CLG speed of processing statistics (NI 157). This accounts for the difference between the figures reported above and the figures given for NI157.

Summary of major applications received (but not necessarily decided) over the last Quarter.:

09/00018/FUL

Proposed development of 74 No. new dwellings (for rent and shared ownership) comprising a mix of apartments, bungalows and 2, 3 + 4 bed houses on land Opposite Murdishaw Community/Play Centre Barnfield Avenue Runcorn Cheshire. Received 14/01/2009.

09/00096/FUL

Proposed redevelopment of garage, filling station, former drill hall and adjacent land to provide 31 No. apartments in two buildings , including car parking and amenity space areas (resubmission of 08/00195/FUL) at Surrey St Garage/drill Hall And Surrounding Land Surrey Street/Greenway Road Runcorn Cheshire WA7 5TT. Received 10/03/2009.

09/00101/OUT

Outline application with landscape matters reserved for Class A1 Foodstore (total floorspace 10,885sq.m) with associated parking and servicing facilities at Ashley Retail Park Lugsdale Road Widnes Cheshire WA8 7YT. Received 13/03/2009.

09/00129/OUT

Outline application (with all matters reserved) for residential development of up to 469 No. dwellings on Land At Sandymoor Runcorn Cheshire. Received 27/03/2009.

09/00144/OUT

Outline application (with landscaping matters reserved) for the erection of 15 No. dwellings with access and associated works at Eight Towers Weates Close Widnes Cheshire WA8 3RH. Received 23/03/2009.

These applications are those that result in the biggest changes to the built infrastructure of the Borough. More information on any application can be



found on the online planning system <http://www.halton.gov.uk/planningapps>

### **LANDSCAPE SERVICES**

The service restructure that has seen the creation of distinct yet inter-related operation units (Parks, Streetscene, External Contracts) was completed in the final Quarter of 2008/9. The new units are working very well and improvements are evident on the ground.

The Division had provided a landscape maintenance service to the Halton Housing Trust since the creation of that organisation in December 2005. During that period the Division has delivered a good quality service to the Housing Trust. Halton Housing Trust went through a Competitive Dialogue Contract Award process during the year 2008/9. The Landscape Services Division took part in that process. Three organisations, including the Landscape Services Division made it through to the final stage. Unfortunately the Division was beaten by four percentage points into second place. The Landscape Services Division actually put in the cheapest price. The winning contractor was Vale Contract Services. The Division completed its contract with the Halton Housing Trust on the 31st March 2009. Five staff TUPE Transferred to Vale Contract Services. A further three who were due to transfer had secured alternative employment within HBC. The loss of the contract does not adversely effect the Landscape Services Division as it was delivered by a self contained team.

During Q4 the Landscape Services Division underwent a Service Review as part of the Council's efficiency Review. The service was chosen to act as a pilot for future reviews. The results of the review will be published in Q1 of 2009/10.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

The authority is required by law to appoint a public analyst(s) to undertake formal analysis of food in accordance with food law. The authority has a procedure for the appointment of public analysts. the formal appointment process for the Lancashire County Analyst was completed and they now have the legal status of our public analyst

In April 2009 the Food Standards Agency (FSA) will launch a new system for Local Authorities to record and report data regarding the regulatory food safety function. This will include changes in the data recorded by the authority and the manner in which the returns are submitted. Work to make the necessary amendments to the data requirements has been ongoing during 2008-2009.

The core regulatory function of the team will now be monitored as part of the authority's Comprehensive Area Assessment by a new national indicator 184. This outcome measure will assess the number of food premises in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law. This data will be reported via the FSA's Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System. There is at present no set target of expected performance. At present about 70% of premises in Halton are broadly compliant with food law.

### **WASTE MANAGEMENT**

The Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) procurement project

completed its final stage during quarter 4 with technical, legal and financial evaluations of the final submitted bid documents. A preferred bidder is to be announced in April with the new contract due to commence on 1st June 2009.

Participants submitted detailed solutions for the future Resource Recovery Contract (RRC) during March. Evaluation of the detailed solutions for this contract, which will provide future facilities for the treatment of residual waste, are now being concluded and the results will be provided to members in future reports.

During this last quarter 3,000 households were added to the green waste collection service, taking the total number of properties served to 37,800. A further 3,000 properties were provided blue wheeled bins for recycling, taking the total number of properties with blue wheeled bins to 42,000.

During this quarter 17 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for litter offences and 6 were issued for dog fouling offences. Of those issued 13 were paid, 5 elected to go to court and 5 were still in process at the time of writing this report.

### **3.0 EMERGING ISSUES**

#### **PLANNING**

Work continues on the emerging Single Regional Strategy with consultation on the Principles and Issues Paper closing on 30th April 09.

#### **LANDSCAPE SERVICES**

The Landscape Services Division design team currently has a very large workload. Projects such as Playbuilder, the Runcorn Town Hall Park project and Parks for People have stretched the section. It was agreed in Q4 that a temporary position of Landscape Architect be created for a period of 2 years so that the Division can deliver the Council's projects.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Over this quarter there have not been any significant new or emerging issues for the contaminated statutory function. Major development and the implementation of the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy continue to form the section's workload. There are currently four active Part 2A sites at various stages within the assessment and remediation process.

In March 2009 the Food Standards Agency issued guidance that childminders that served food as part of their service should be included in Local Authority intervention programmes. Previously this category of premises had been considered relatively low risk and had not been included on the intervention programme. The effect of this guidance will be to add approximately 120 premises to the intervention programme for 2009-2010. Whilst many of these premises may ultimately be rated as low risk, there is still an expectation from the Food Standards Agency that each premises will receive an intervention to determine the risk rating for food safety and standards.

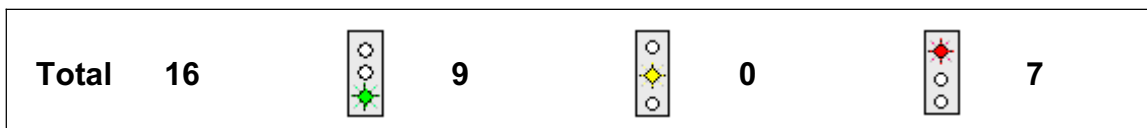
The primary purpose of the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) is to

control risks from work activities. The role of the Enforcing authorities (EA's) is to ensure that duty holders manage and control these risks and thus prevent harm to people at work and those affected by work activities. HSE and LAs both have a duty to 'make adequate arrangements for enforcement' under Section 18 of HSWA. S18 guidance sets out the standards that HSC requires EA's to meet in order to comply with their duty to make "adequate arrangements for enforcement" and has mandatory status. The HSE and Local Authorities Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA) have issued a consultation document on S18 guidance to replace existing guidance on 'Priority Planning. The new guidance will be issued under S18 HSWA and will provide the necessary detail to help LA's comply with the S18 Standard on Priorities and Planning. The new guidance requires a shift of focus in terms of interventions as it reflects HSE new strategy and the key outcomes of the Hampton review. It sets out a new approach of effective Health and safety regulation by justified risk. The document recognises that a new system will require changes in LA systems, internal management and work recording systems therefore HELA are to introduce the new guidance from September 2009 and to risk rate in April 2010.

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**

A full review of Halton's Waste Management Strategy is due to take place in 2010. Officers are currently considering options for carrying out that review and reports on the project will be presented to members throughout 2009/10.

**4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST MILESTONES/OBJECTIVES**



For further details please refer to Appendix 1.

**5.0 SERVICE REVIEW**

**PLANNING**

The Policy Team took advantage of the free service from the Planning Advisory Service to review the work undertaken so far on the Core Strategy Preferred Options DPD. In the North West only Lancaster City Council has an adopted Core Strategy and therefore it was felt important to examine best practice in other regions with adopted Core Strategies to ensure Halton benefited from this experience. Senior officers from Chelmsford in Essex provided recommendations for improvements to the process and those recommendations have now been actioned. This innovative method of sharing experience will ensure Halton remains as efficient as possible in plan making.

**LANDSCAPE SERVICES**

During the 2008/9 year the Landscape Services Division went through a

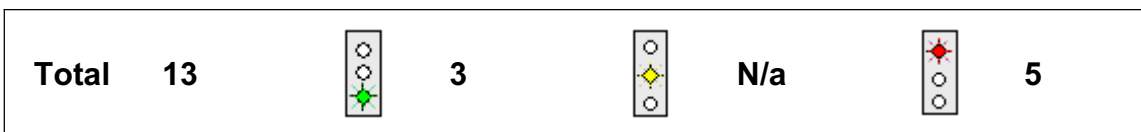
restructure which was designed to enable it to effectively deal with current demands and priorities. In the final Quarter of the year the Division was chosen as a pilot for a service review as part of the Efficiency Review. A findings and recommendations report will be presented in the first Quarter of 2009/10.

In Q4 the Halton and St Helen's PCT began its funding for two additional Playground Maintenance Operatives. The individuals were recruited in March 2009. The funding will last for 5 years and will enable the Council to create and maintain five additional playground facilities. The Head of the PCT recently spoke at a national conference about this innovative project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

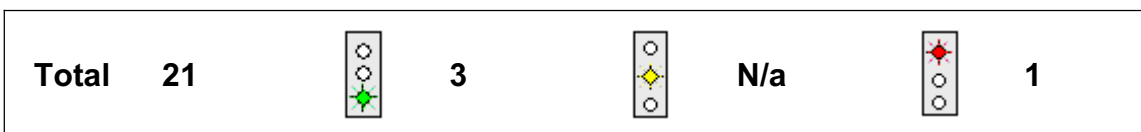
From 6 April 2008 the existing statutory arrangements in relation to stray dogs (The Dogs Act 1906) were repealed, and the statutory duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which used to be jointly administered by the Police, fell solely to local authorities. Local Authorities retained their existing daytime statutory duties in relation to the seizure of stray dogs, but also assumed sole responsibility for providing an out of hours service. In order to harmonise standards and provide transparency to service users, as well as providing economies of scale it was agreed to adopt a subregional approach involving Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool and Sefton Borough Councils. As part of a general review of animal control procurement kennelling services and stray dog collection, were included in a two-part tender for three years, having an optional extension of up to 12 months. The Out of Hours Stray Dog Collection Service had been awarded to Animal Wardens Ltd and the kennelling contract was awarded to RSPCA (Liverpool Branch). In the interests of animal welfare, and in order to promote responsible dog ownership, the consortium introduced a two-tier fee with respect to reclaiming kennelled dogs, with a much lower fee for those claimed within two days, than those claimed after two days and up to seven days. It is anticipated this will improve the number of strays re-united with their owners, whilst also reducing costs. The two services are scheduled to commence in May 2009 running until at least May 2012.

**6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**



For further details please refer to Appendix 2.

**6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**



For further details please refer to Appendix 3.

## **7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS**

For details against progress towards LPSA targets, please refer to Appendix 4.

## **8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES**

During the production of the 2008-09 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

Please refer to Appendix 5.

## **9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS**

During 2007/08 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.






There were no high priority equality actions established for this service.

## **10.0 DATA QUALITY**




The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.

## **11.0 APPENDICES**






Appendix 1- Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones  
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators  
Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators  
Appendix 4- Progress against LPSA targets  
Appendix 5- Progress against Risk Treatment Measures  
Appendix 6- Explanation of traffic light symbols

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
EAR 1	Continue Borough-wide Playground Refurbishment Project to ensure compliance with national standard.	Establish funding and agree 2 playground refurbishments (which will take place in the financial year 08/09). Jun 2008		Playgrounds at Hale Park and Crow Wood Park have been refurbished.
		<i>Monitor and report the success of playground refurbishment.</i> Mar 2009		
EAR 2	Continue to improve Parks, Sports Grounds, Open Spaces and Local Nature Reserves (LNR's).	Secure 8 Green Flag Awards (1. Hough Green Park, 2. Pickerings Pasture LNR, 3. Phoenix Park, 4. Rock Park, 5. Runcorn Hill Park & LNR, 6. Victoria Park, 7. Victoria Promenade, 8. Wigg Island Community Park). Jul 2008		In 2008/9 10 Green Flag Award's were secured.
		Secure funding, from the National Lottery Fund, for Runcorn Hill Park & LNR restoration. Jun 2008		Funding for the masterplan phase was secured.
EAR 3	To prepare and adopt a local development framework (LDF) and to review the LDF on a regular basis ensuring that an up to date development plan is available (statutory requirement). To achieve this by producing the following targets:-	Adoption of the Planning for Risk SPD. (This document decides how new developments, which could create significant potential off site accidental risks, should be balanced against the benefits they will bring). Apr 2008		Public consultation has been completed. The draft SPD is being updated. Adoption is planned for September 2009.
		Adoption of the Core Strategy. (The Core Strategy will set out a vision, spatial objectives and core policies for the future		The emerging Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2009 indicates publication of Core Strategy Preferred Options for public

**APPENDIX ONE - PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES/MILESTONES  
Environmental & Regulatory**




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		development of the Borough to 2021). Jan 2009		consultation in September 2009, with adoption in October 2011. The Milestone opposite, taken from the LDS 2007, refers to the publication of a Core Strategy Preferred Options document by Jan 2009.
		Adoption of the Southern Widnes Regeneration Area SPD. (This document provides the policies and proposals for the comprehensive development/redevelopment of the Southern Widnes area). Mar 2009		Adoption is now going to be September / October 2009 in the emerging Local Development Scheme 2009. The delay has been due to the need to consider options and traffic routes for the Silver Jubilee Bridge and new Mersey Gateway.
EAR 4	Implementation of actions to meet the objectives of the Council's Waste Management Strategy	Extension to kerbside multi-material recycling service. (The new scheme will see the existing paper collection scheme, in designated areas, increased from four-weekly to fortnightly collections to include cardboard, plastic bottles, cans, glass bottles and jars). By no later than Sep 2008		The scheme was extended to a further 20,000 properties in August 2008.
		Extension to kerbside green waste collection service. (The extension will cover an additional 3000 homes). Jun 2008		See key developments - Although the milestone date was not met, the target to extend the green waste collection service in 2008/09 was met with the roll out of the service to a further 3,000

**APPENDIX ONE - PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES/MILESTONES  
Environmental & Regulatory**

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
				properties taking place in February 2009.
		Extension to the network of neighbourhood recycling 'Bring Sites'. (These are sites where residents can bring materials to be recycled e.g. glass, paper, but no shoes or light bulbs. An additional two sites will be implemented). Oct 2008		Additional recycling facilities were installed in 2008/09 including sites in the Halton Lea, Heath and Windmill Hill wards.
		Development and delivery of a co-ordinated Environmental Education Campaign. (This will promote environmental stewardship to residents and businesses). Oct 2008		Although the milestone date was not met, in this last quarter work commenced on the delivery of a comprehensive communications campaign to change public perception and behaviour relating to waste and recycling.
		Extension to wheeled bin kerbside paper recycling collection service (the extension will provide blue bins to all suitable properties) by no later than Mar 2009		See key developments – this target was met.
		Introduction of pilot kerbside battery recycling collection scheme. By no later than Oct 2008		This scheme is now to be implemented in 2009/10
		Develop a Waste Prevention Strategy Sep 2008		A draft strategy has been developed which is to be published in 2009/10.

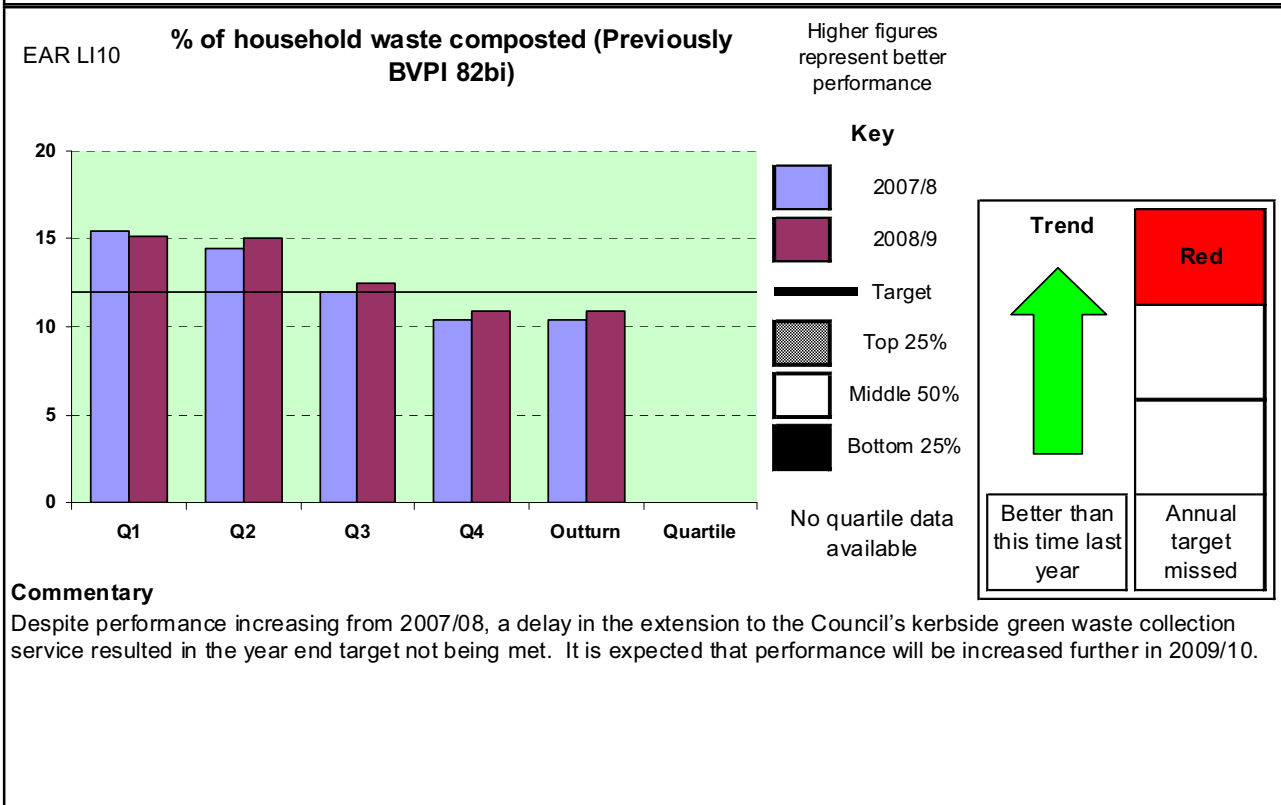
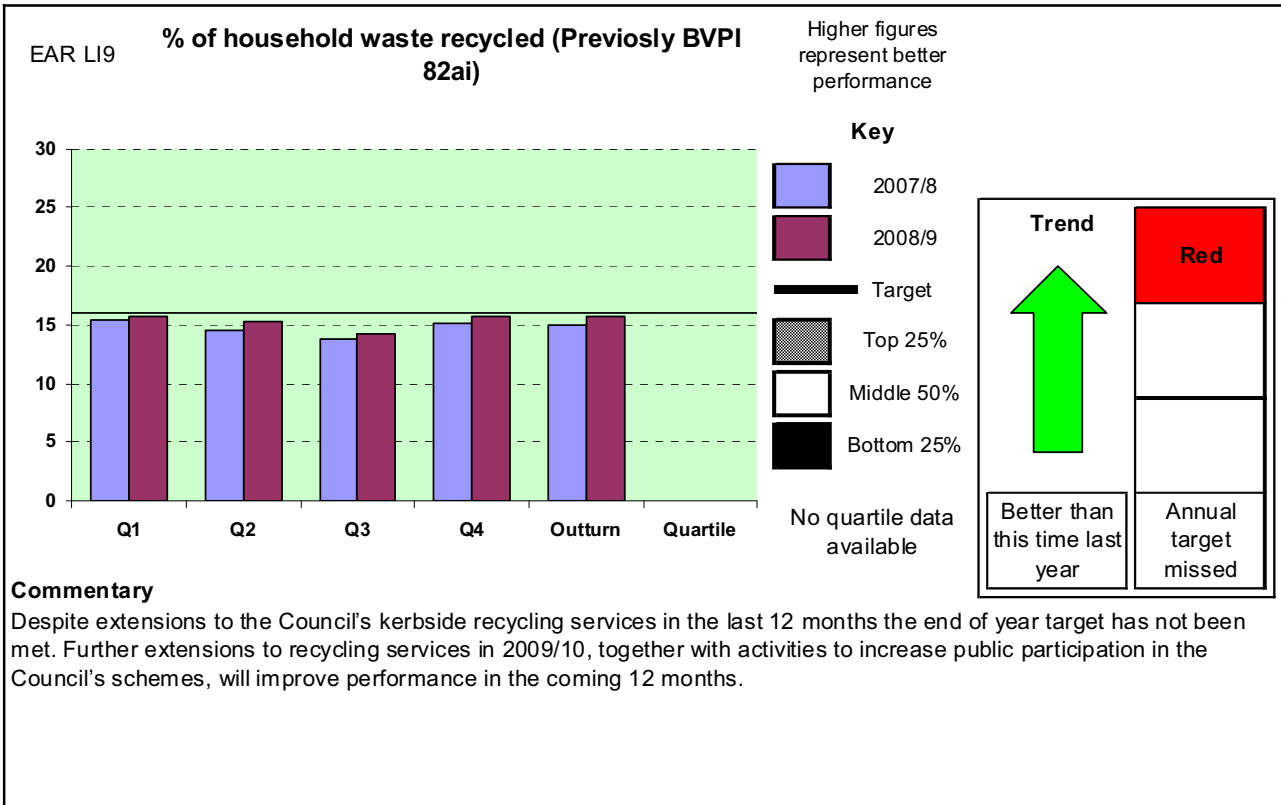
**APPENDIX ONE - PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES/MILESTONES**  
**Environmental & Regulatory**

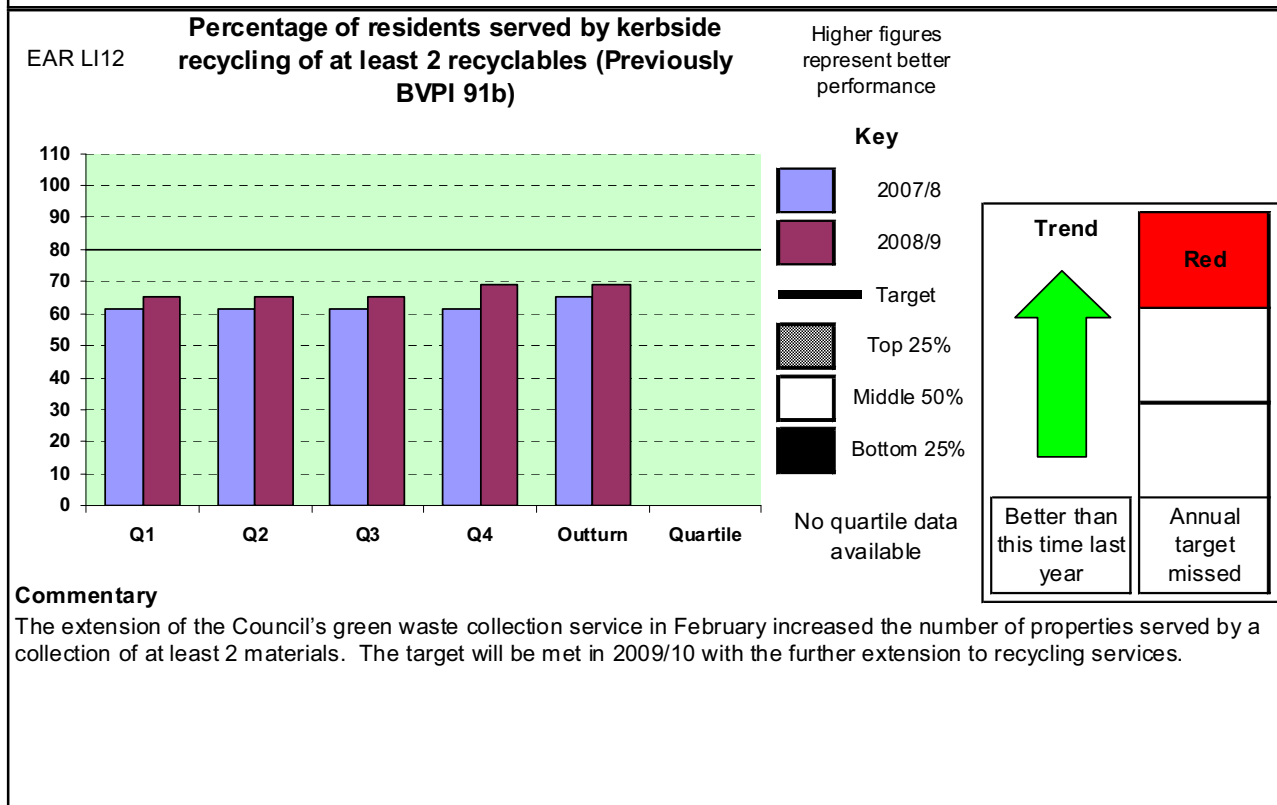
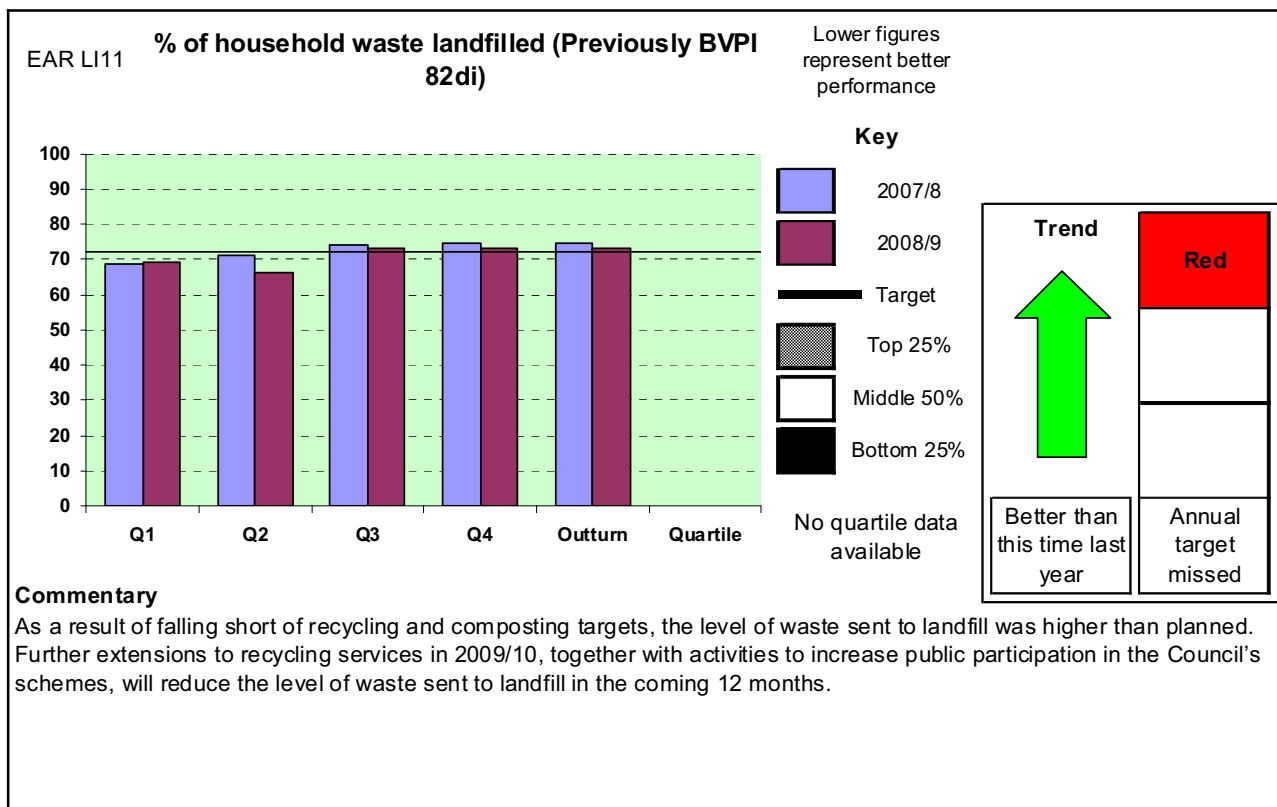


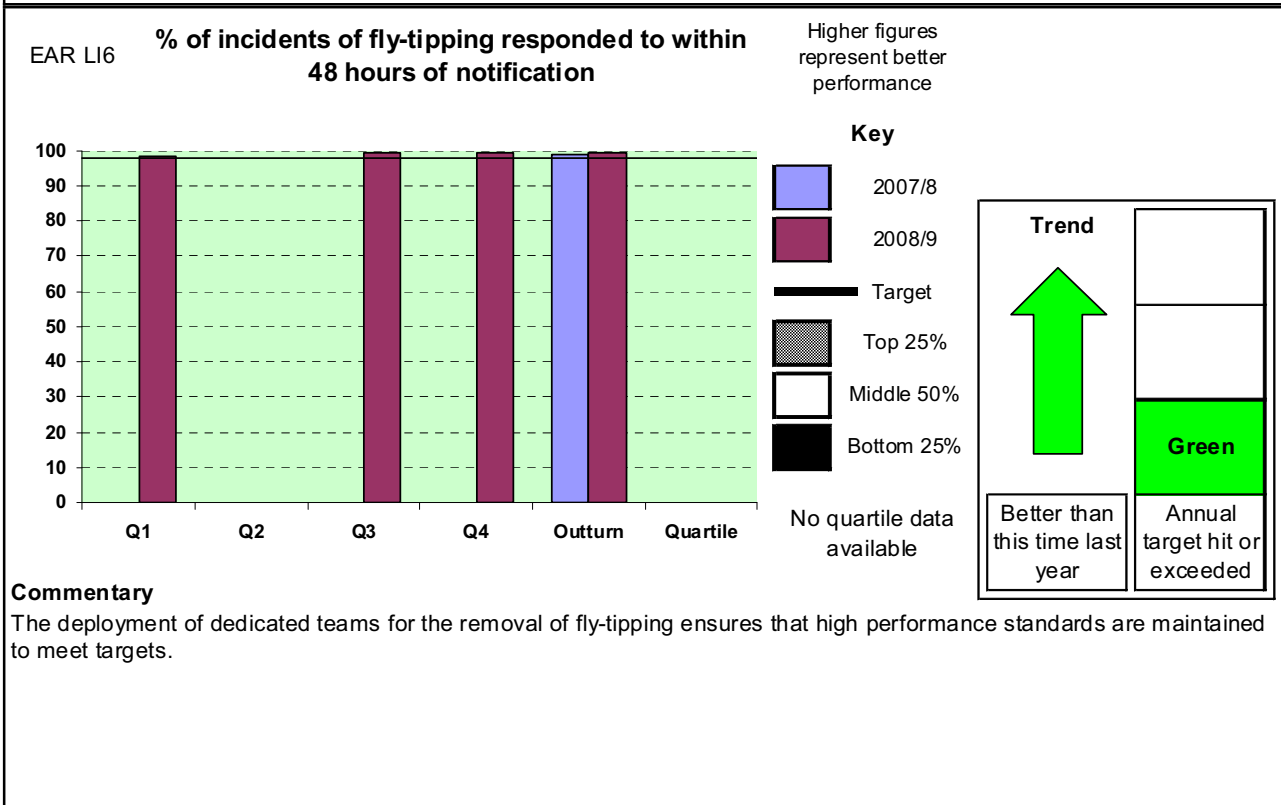
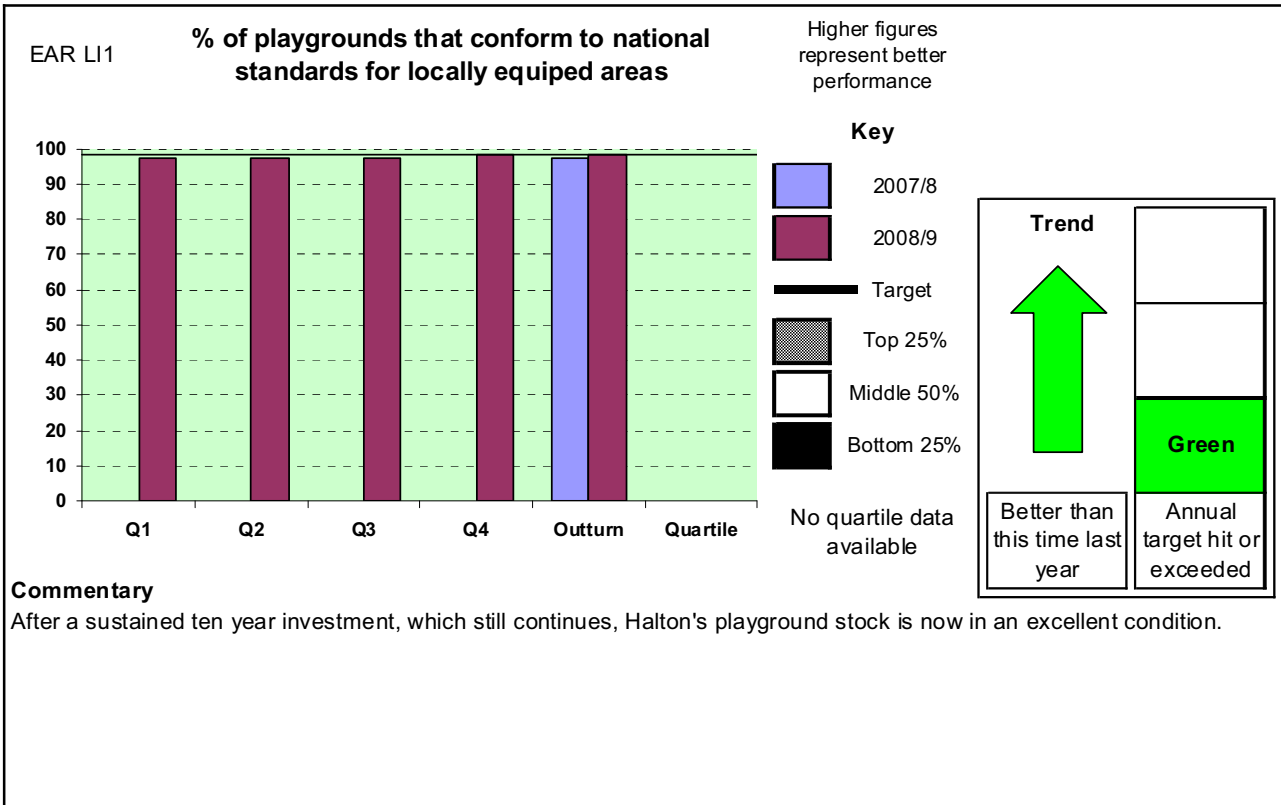
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
EAR 5	To procure waste management facilities/services to meet the requirements of the Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy.	Commencement of new Waste Management and Recycling Contract. (This contract will allow economies of scale to be derived in waste transfer, recycling and household waste sites as Halton joins in joint procurement with the other Merseyside Authorities). Oct 2008		See key developments
EAR 6	To develop and publish an integrated Environmental Nuisance Prevention and Enforcement Strategy. (This strategy will allow a co-ordinated response from the Service to reported nuisances and their remedy. A key aim is the attendance of one officer to deal with all nuisance issues on site).	Develop a Strategy in consultation with relevant HBC officers and external agencies and other stakeholders. Jan 2009		Work is continuing with the development of a strategy, a draft of which is anticipated to be produced in the first quarter of 2009/10.
EAR 7	Carry out local Streetscene environmental improvements. (Street Scene is part of the Council's Environment Directorate that incorporates a number of services that have an important impact on the "street" and public open spaces in terms of their appearance	Undertake 20 small scale environmental improvements. Will include items such as installation of new street furniture, repair of existing street furniture and improvements to soft landscape. Dec 2008.		20 Smallscale environmental improvements have been undertaken.
EAR 8	Implement the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy. Take a	<i>Continue to identify and classify potentially contaminated sites</i>		

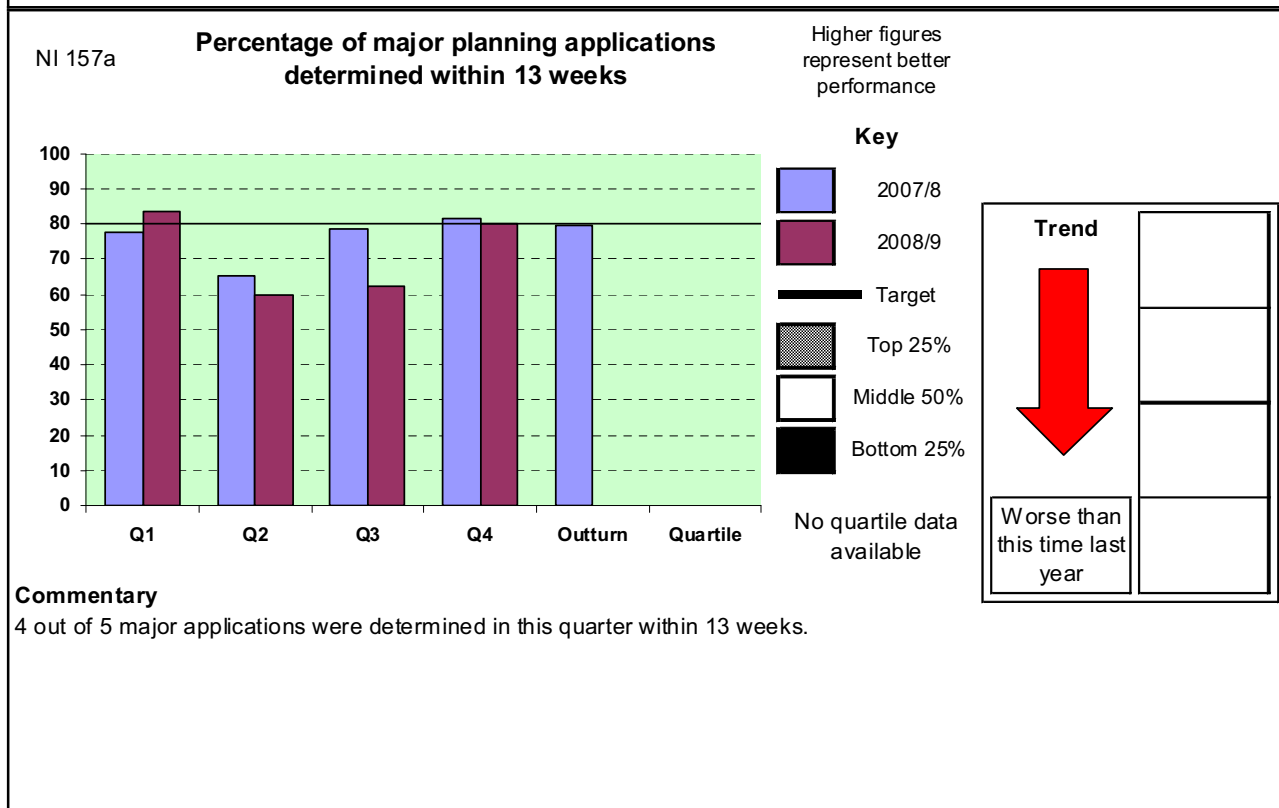
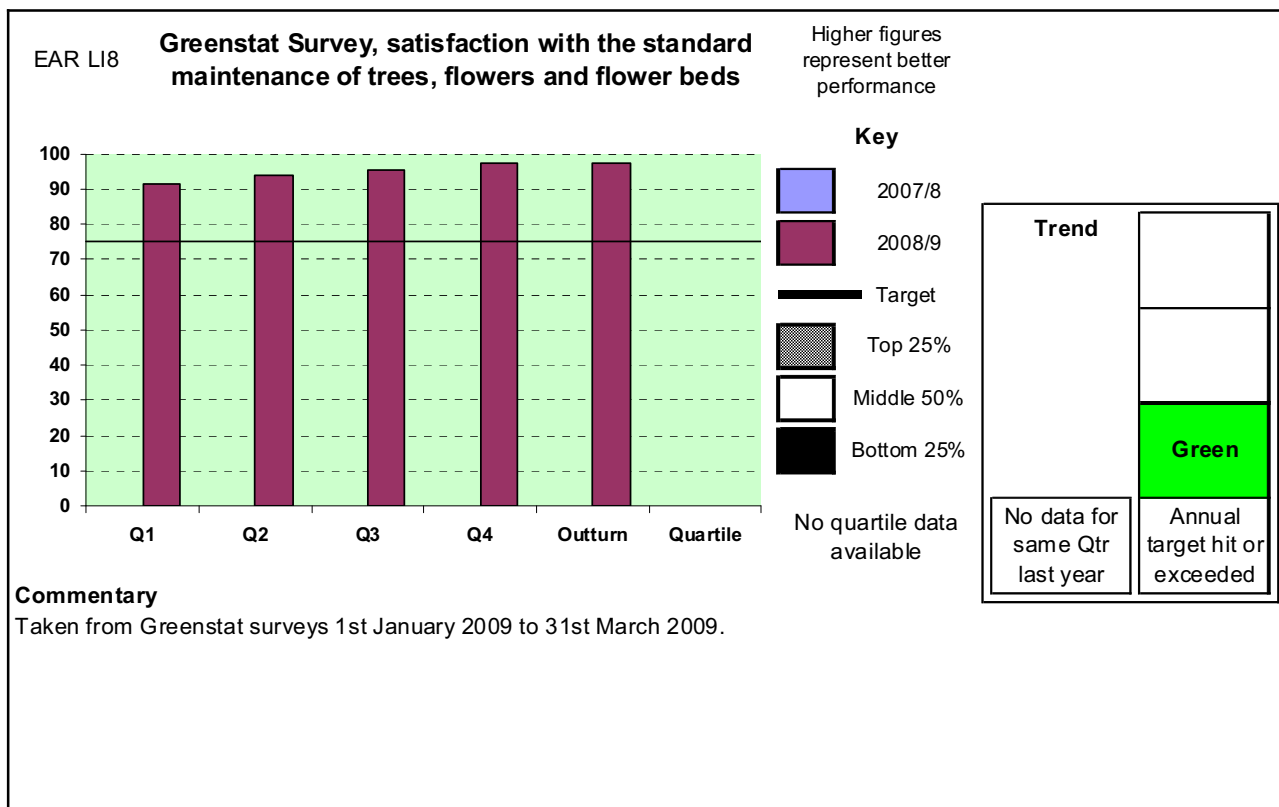
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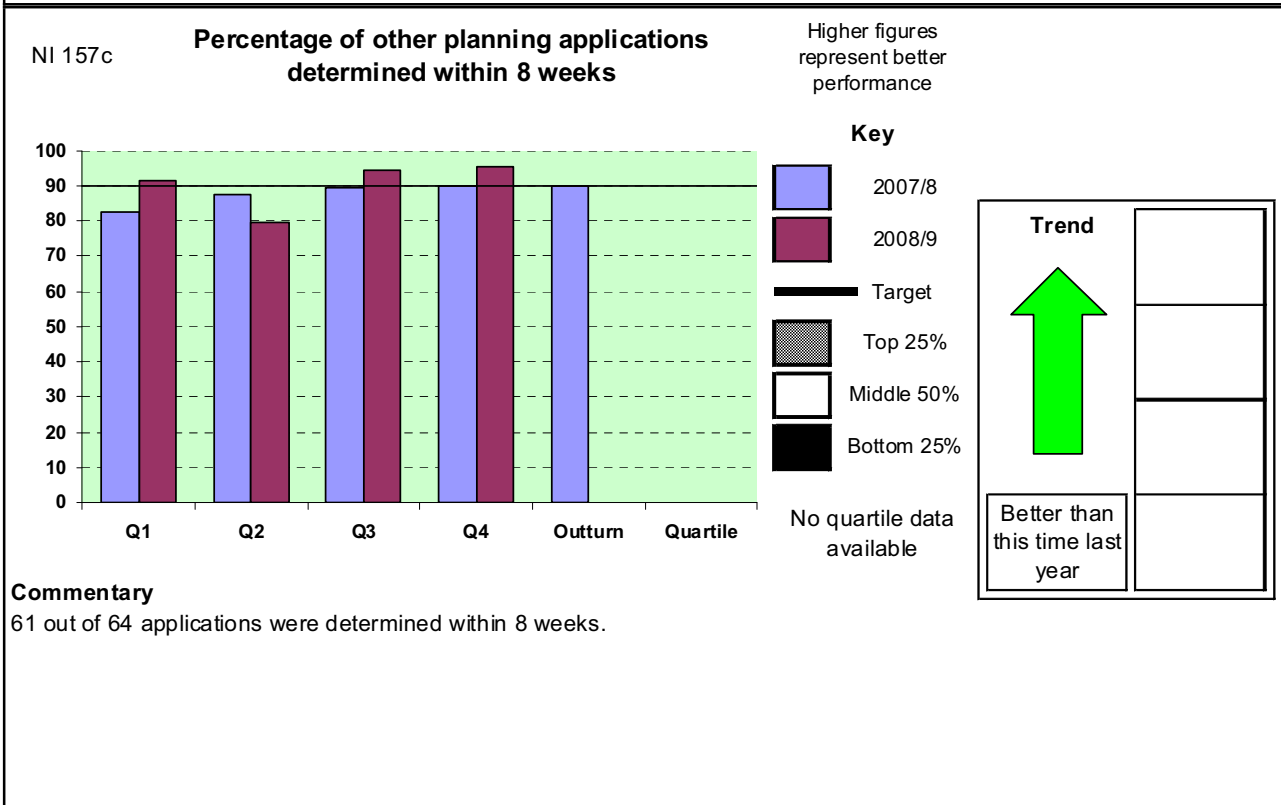
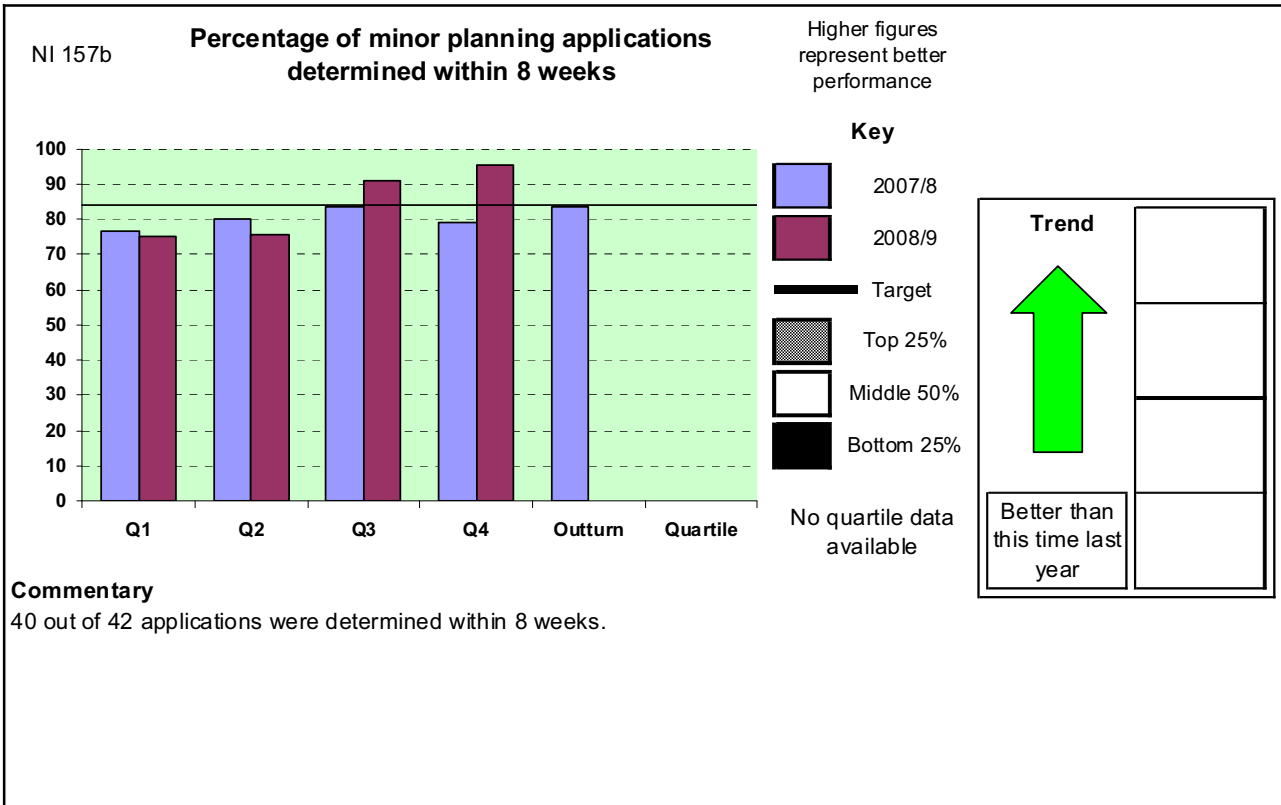
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
	strategic approach to inspecting the borough for potentially contaminated land under the provisions contained in Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and to describe and publish this in a written strategy.	<i>from available data. Mar 2009</i>		
<i>Continue comparing the potentially contaminative land uses to information on pathways and receptors and categorise into risk categories A B and C. (Ordered and rational manner to identify and prioritise sites. Categories are a broad risk assessment with A as the highest category and 1400 potential sites). Mar 2009</i>				
<i>Complete the identification of the Group A, B and C sites. Mar 2009</i>				
<i>Commence detailed inspections of high risk sites (group A) Mar 2009</i>				

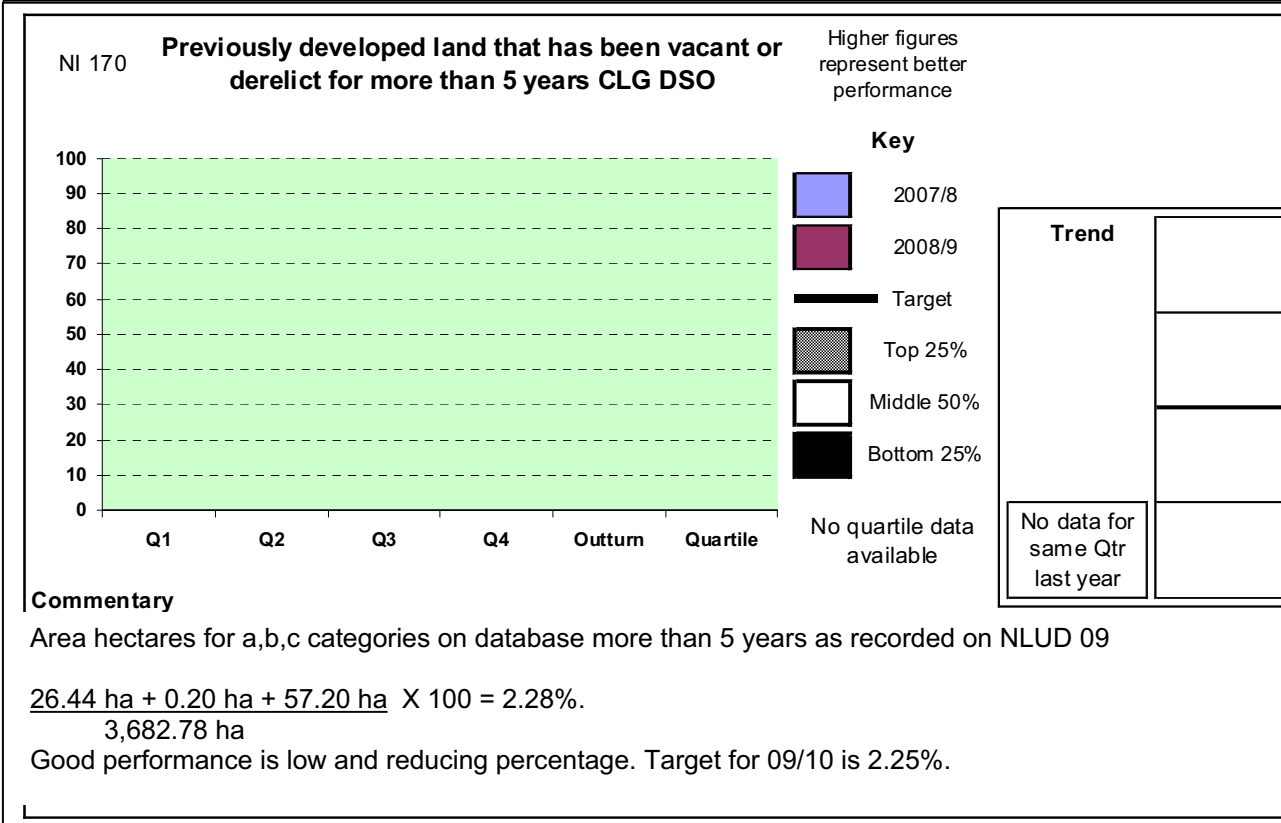
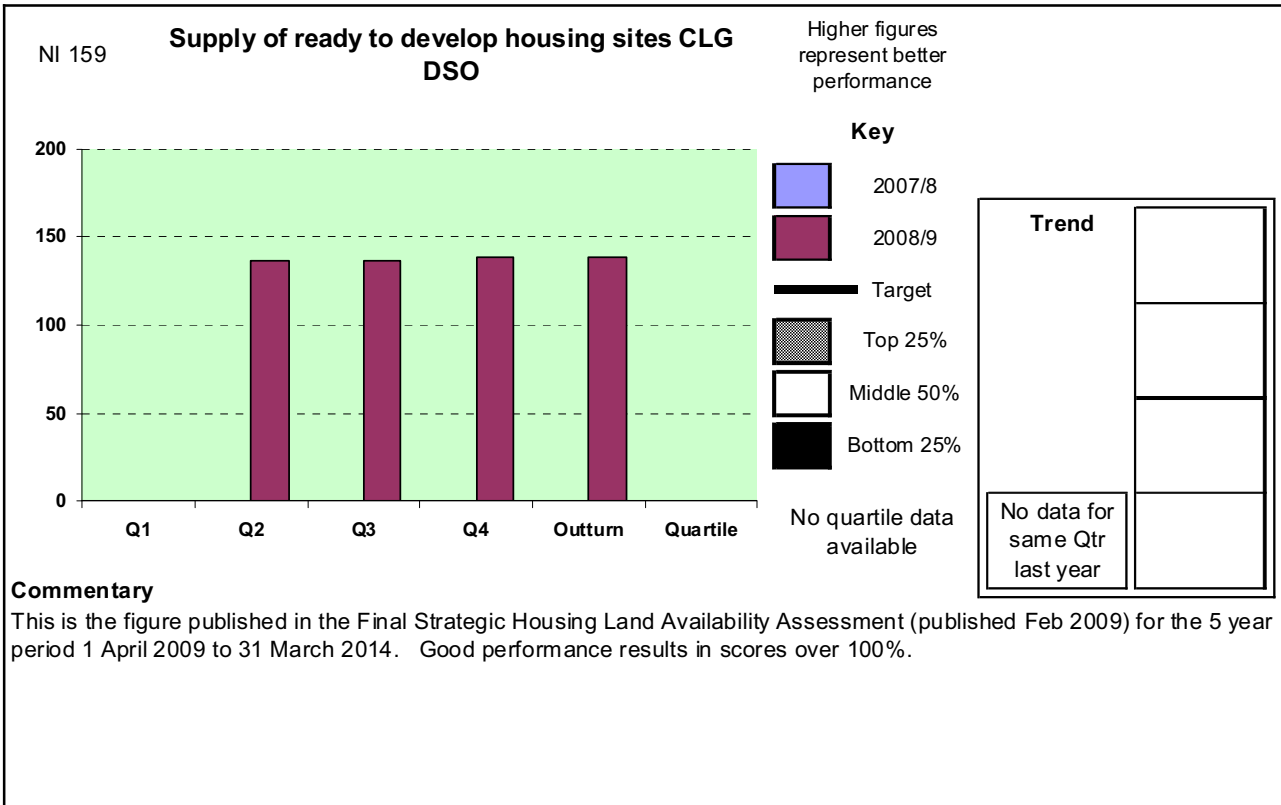




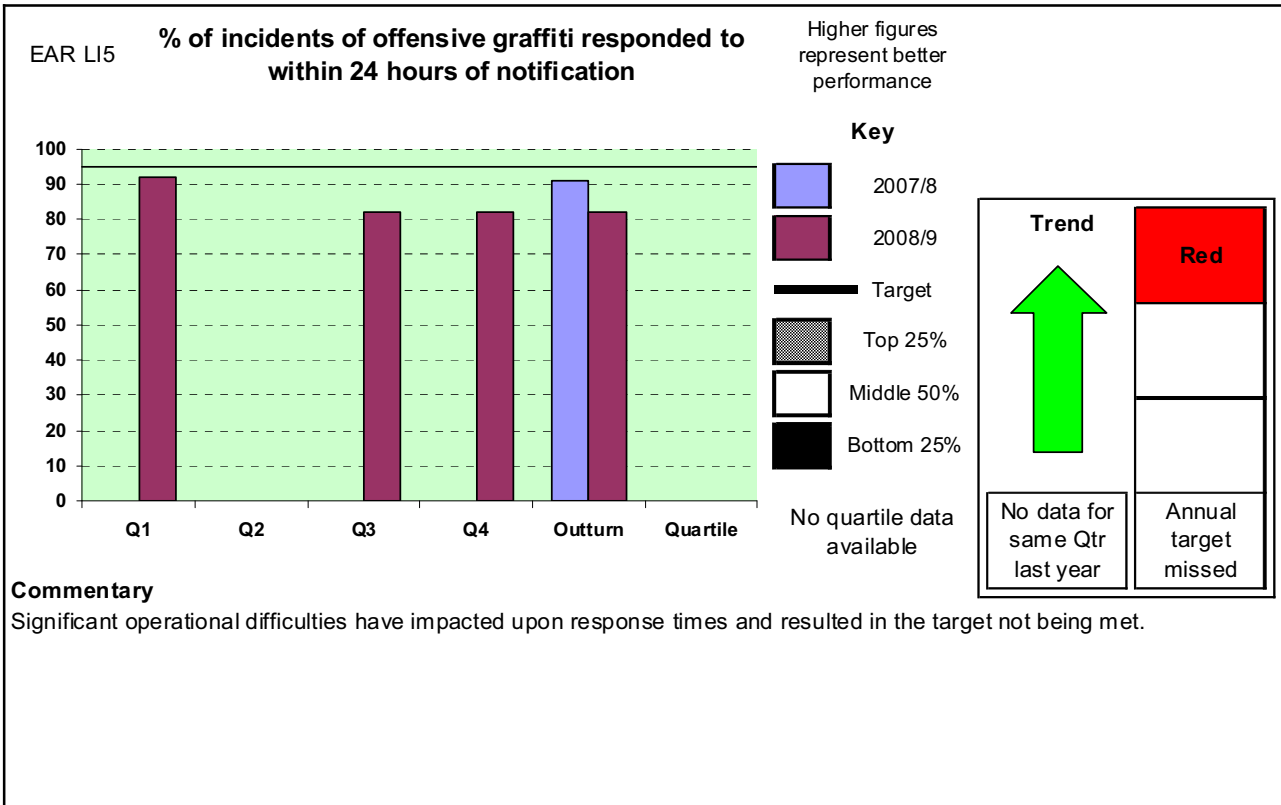












Ref.	Description	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
<b>Quality</b>						
EAR LI3	Number of Green Flag Awards achieved for Halton	6	9	10		Ten parks were awarded Green Flag Awards in 2008/9.
EAR LI7	% of residents satisfied with the cleansing standards in Halton	-	75	N/a	N/a	Figure not available
EAR NI 182	Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulation services BERR DSO	-	-	82	N/a	This indicator covers Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing This indicator measures whether businesses think they have been treated fairly and helpfully by local authority regulators. By specifically measuring this, the aim is to inspire local authorities to recognise the important contribution regulatory services make to local and national priorities, and inspire regulatory services to recognise their own role in supporting local business. The figure reported is based upon satisfaction surveys undertaken by environmental health.
EAR LI13	Resident satisfaction with parks and open spaces (Previously BVPI 119e)	-	75	97.14		Resident satisfaction as recorded by Greenstat continues to be very high. A recent Halton 2000 survey result recorded 87% satisfaction. Slightly less than the Greenstat result's, which are mostly carried out face to face, but up from 71% when the last survey was done.
EAR LI2	Greenstat Survey, satisfaction with the standard of cleanliness and maintenance	-	88	94.28		Satisfaction continues to improve.

**APPENDIX THREE - PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER INDICATORS  
Environmental & Regulatory**

Ref.	Description	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
	of parks and green spaces					
<b>Service Delivery</b>						
EAR LI18	% of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours (Previously BVPI 218)	94.58	100	96.24		Despite performance being higher than in previous years, the year end target has not been met. Operational changes have been put into place to ensure that performance will be improved in the coming year.
NI 154	Net additional homes provided PSA 20	-	518	395	  	The target figure for the year is 518 as contained in the LAA. This indicator can only be provided on an annual basis retrospectively as it involves site visits to monitor development on the ground. The net figure for 2007/08 was 314 net dwelling gain, although the gross dwelling gain was 546. There was significant demolition in Castlefields, Runcorn accounting for the difference between the gross and net figures. The key problem is in the financial market with restricted lending on mortgages and development scheme funding. This has meant that house builders have not been able to deliver the number of houses planned for and are currently building out sites on a 'pay as you go' basis in order to manage cash flow. This is the feedback from the Growth Point House Building Partnership. There is sufficient land made available for housing development through the planning process.
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) PSA 20	-	20	80		Social rented stock was increased by 16 new build completions in 07/08, in 06/07 the total increase was 82, in 05/06 it was 28. Traditionally in Halton there has not been a problem with affordability for

**APPENDIX THREE - PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER INDICATORS  
Environmental & Regulatory**

Ref.	Description	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
						housing. For this reason there is no planning policy on affordable housing. Affordable housing will need to be addressed by the Core Strategy and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document. Figures for this indicator will be provided on an annual basis in September 2009.
NI 184	Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	-	-	72	N/a	There is at present no set target of expected performance. At present about 72 % of premises in Halton are broadly compliant with food law. The team is committed to making realistic improvements in this rate, however there are factors outside the control of the team that influence compliance rates. In particular these include profitability of businesses and high management and staff turnover. It is recognised by the FSA that such factors will be a particular influence in urban and more deprived areas.
NI 189	Flood and coastal erosion risk management	-	-	N/a	N/a	This indicator will be reported by the Environment Agency according to the DCLG document "National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Handbook of Definitions 1 April 2008.
NI 190	Achievement in meeting standards for the control system for animal health Defra DSO	-	-	N/a	N/a	It is intended that an indicator measuring the degree to which a local authority is meeting the standards of performance agreed in the Animal Health and Welfare Framework Agreement will be introduced from 2009/10. The Framework Agreement is currently being reviewed and the proposed indicator will reflect the outcome of this review.


**APPENDIX THREE - PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER INDICATORS  
Environmental & Regulatory**

Ref.	Description	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
NI 191	Residual household waste per head Defra DSO	-	-	889.79	N/a	This indicator measures the kilogrammes of waste produced per household, and replaces the previous indicator that measured kg of waste per head of population. Overall in 2008/09 there has been a reduction in the level of waste produced in Halton compared to the previous year.
NI 192	Household waste recycled and composted	-	-	26.69	N/a	Despite extensions to the Council's kerbside recycling services in the last 12 months the end of year target has not been met. Further extensions to recycling services in 2009/10, together with activities to increase public participation in the Council's schemes, will improve performance in the coming 12 months.
NI 193	Municipal waste land filled Defra DSO	-	-	73.56	N/a	As a result of falling short of recycling and composting targets, the level of waste sent to landfill was higher than planned. Further extensions to recycling services in 2009/10, together with activities to increase public participation in the Council's schemes, will reduce the level of waste sent to landfill in the coming 12 months.
NI 195	Improved street and environmental cleanliness levels of,					
	a) litter	-	-	9	N/a	
	b) detritus	-	-	5	N/a	
	c) graffiti	-	-	1	N/a	
	d) fly posting	-	-	0	N/a	





**APPENDIX THREE - PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER INDICATORS**  
**Environmental & Regulatory**

Ref.	Description	Actual 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
NI 196	Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping	-	-	3	N/a	The total number of enforcement actions taken in 2008/09 has increased from 2007/08, however, there has been an increase in the number of fly-tipping incidents dealt with by the authority. The Council's grading is therefore categorised as '3' or 'Good'.
NI 197	Improved local biodiversity – active management of local sites Defra DSO	-	-	16	N/a	



LPSA Ref.	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Perform 07/08	Perform. 08/09 Q4	Traffic light	Commentary
7	<b>Improving health and well-being:</b> The number of people reporting to the NHS stop smoking services who had set a quit date and who are still not smoking at the four weeks review (during the year 1 April to 31 March)	850 (2005/6)	2000 (2008/9)	1119			

Key Objective	Risk Identified	Risk Treatment Measures	Target	Progress	Commentary
<b>EAR 3 To prepare and adopt a local development framework (LDF) and to review the LDF on a regular basis ensuring that an up to date development plan is available (statutory requirement). To achieve this by producing the following targets:-</b>	Production of unsound plans resulting in abortive costs and repetition of work.	Consultation with relevant internal officers and external experts to ensure proper evaluation of requirements to pass tests of soundness	08/04/2008		
	Risk of changes to central/regional & Local Authority Governed Policy affecting the agreed strategy.	Final strategies should be flexible to account for such changes and continual monitoring of policy should be maintained to keep abreast of any potential changes	08/04/2008		
	Failure to produce strategy could jeopardise future government funding e.g. planning delivery grant.	Ensure delivery of strategies in line with government requirements.	08/04/2008		
<b>EAR 4 Implementation of actions to meet the objectives of the Council's Waste Management Strategy</b>	Overall failure to meet the commitments of the Waste Management Strategy	Waste Action Plans to be developed to meet performance targets	08/09/2008		The Council's Waste Action Plan was approved in July 2007. The Plan set out a programme to deliver enhanced recycling services, which continue to be rolled out, to meet targets (see key developments).



Key Objective	Risk Identified	Risk Treatment Measures	Target	Progress	Commentary
		Monitoring and control measures in place to ensure that targets and pledges are met.	08/09/2008		Monitoring of performance is an on-going activity within the Waste Management Division to ensure that targets and pledges are met.
	Unwillingness of Public to participate will result in targets not being met	Sufficient resources in place to deliver a continual and comprehensive consultation, promotional and educational campaigns.	Ongoing		A comprehensive communications campaign, to change public perception and behaviour to increase public participation with recycling schemes, is being delivered to support the on-going promotional, awareness raising and educational activities.
<b>EAR 5 To procure waste management facilities/services to meet the requirements of the Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy.</b>	Failure to meet recycling targets and the requirements of the European Landfill Directive - Leading to financial penalties.	Proper procurement process to ensure waste management infrastructure in place, and continual monitoring of performance against targets	08/07/2008		See key developments
	Failure to identify and develop potential partnerships - Leading to missed opportunities, loss of potential economies of scale and targets not being met.	Proper consideration of options and negotiations with potential partners to ensure that partnership arrangements are delivered that reflect the best interests of the Council	08/09/2008		

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<b><u>Green</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded.</p>
<b><u>Red</u></b>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 08/09 target <u>has not been achieved</u>.</p>

**REPORT:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board  
**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Environment  
**SUBJECT:** Urban Renewal PPB 2008/9 Annual Report  
**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT**

1.1 This report presents a draft Annual Report of the activities of the Urban Renewal PPB during 2008/9 for comment/amendment. Subject to endorsement by the PPB, the Annual Report will go forward with the Annual Reports of other PPBs to a forthcoming meeting of the full Council for adoption.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That**

- (1) the PPB consider, comment upon and if necessary agree amendments to, the attached Annual Report of the PPB's activities in 2008/9; and**
- (2) the PPB endorse the attached/amended Annual Report for the purpose of its adoption at a forthcoming meeting of the full Council.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Annex comprising the draft Urban Renewal PPB Annual Report for 2008/9

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None arising from this report itself.

## **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None arising from this report itself.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 2008/9 departmental service plans and Quarterly Monitoring Reports  
6.2 Urban Renewal PPB Agendas and Minutes



Councillor  
Hignett

## ANNUAL REPORT URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD APRIL 2008 – MARCH 2009

“In thanking all of the Officers and Members of the Urban Renewal PPB for their support throughout the year, it is worth noting that for Urban Renewal this has been an exciting and productive year. Many of the Council’s programmes have been coming to fruition, making a significant contribution to Halton’s regeneration. The Board has considered many programmes and projects which contribute hugely to improving the quality of Halton’s environment. Tough decisions have had to be made in the light of the impact of external influences, particularly with regards to funding, but nevertheless continued progress in regenerating the urban infrastructure is to be welcomed.”

**Councillor Hignett**  
**Chairman, Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board**

### MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**During 2008/9 the Board comprised eleven Councillors –**

Councillor R. Hignett (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor K. Morley (Vice Chairman)	Labour
Councillor P. Balmer	Conservative
Councillor P. Blackmore	Liberal Democrat
Councillor E. Cargill	Labour
Councillor M. Hodgkinson	Liberal Democrat
Councillor D. Leadbetter	Labour
Councillor P. Murray	Conservative
Councillor P. Nolan	Labour
Councillor C. Rowe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor D. Thompson	Labour

The Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board’s primary function is to focus on the work of the Council (and its Partners) in seeking to bring about the Urban Renewal of the Borough. It is also charged with scrutinising progress against the Corporate Plan in relation to the Urban Renewal Priority. It is responsible for evaluating performance and formulating policy in relation to the following areas:

- Major Projects
  - Highways and Transportation,
  - Environmental Health and Planning,
  - Economic Regeneration,
- with the additional responsibility for
- the Park Ranger service (as from 2005/6)
  - Contaminated Land (as from 2005/06)
  - Strategic Housing (as from 2006/07).

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met six times during the year. As well as considering Executive Board decisions relevant to the work of the Urban Renewal Board, agreeing the Service Plans of the relevant Departments and monitoring their general activities and performance against them, set out below are some of the main activities and issues that the Board has worked on during the year:

### Corporate Responsibilities

- The Board considered petitions from Residents regarding the future of St. Marie's Church, Widnes, from residents concerning traffic conditions in Dale Street, Runcorn. and from employers regarding the creation of the Astmoor Business Improvement District.
- The Board reviewed the Travel Policy and Procedure of the Health and Community Directorate
- The Board considered reports of Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy which advised on progress towards targets set in the Community Strategy and 2007 Local Area Agreement.
- The PPB endorsed the Public Arts Strategy and referred it to the Executive Board for approval.
- The PPB received the minutes of the Urban Renewal SSP.
- The Board received and accepted a summary of the findings of the first Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Health.

### Highways and Transportation

- the Board supported taking the Local Transport Plan (LPT2) Interim Review Report to Executive Board for approval to submit to Government Office North West.
- The PPB agreed nominations of Members to sit on the Council's Public Transport Advisory Panel for the 2008/09 municipal year.
- The Board received a report which highlighted the emerging key findings of the Halton Accessibility Study and agreed the options to be used as a basis for consultation at a key stakeholder event.

### Major Projects Department

- The PPB received a presentation on the operations and developments of the Stobart Group on the 3MG site from Mr. Steve O'Connor, a Director of the Stobart Group.
- The Board received a presentation from Lynn Smith – Acting Director of Norton Priory Museum which outlined the research that had been carried out there over the past five years.
- The Board considered the North West Development Association-funded projects which were completed in 2008/9, and those which had been identified for funding in 2009/10. In addition the PPB agreed the Widnes Waterfront Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) Performance Plan for the financial year 2009/10.
- The PPB received a presentation on Urban Renewal activity in the Borough.

### **Economic Regeneration**

- The Board agreed a 'Heart of Halton' Plaque scheme
- The Board approved the development of a logistics focused, proposition-based marketing and PR campaign.

### **Environmental and Regulatory Services**

- The Board considered developments concerning Growth Point Status including submission of returns for Community Infrastructure Fund and Growth Fund, and recommended acceptance to the Executive Board.
- The Board considered developments in relation to the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, and the consequences of the adoption of it for Halton. .
- The Board considered and supported the drafting of the Core Strategy as a central enabling document in the delivery of Corporate priorities.
- Members considered how the Landscape Services Division and The Parks and Countryside Service performed during Year 10 of the APSE Performance Network's Benchmarking process in relation to Parks, Open Spaces and Horticultural Services, recording their thanks and congratulations on their success.
- Members considered the progress made with the Hale Park Restoration scheme.

### **Housing**

- The Board considered and agreed the draft housing strategy which had been the subject of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.
- The PPB considered and agreed the Commissioning Strategy for Extra-Care Housing.

### **Other**

- The Board agreed an Overview and Scrutiny Action Plan for 2008/9.
- Members undertook a guided tour of regeneration sites in the Borough

### **WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2008-9**

The Board established work groups to consider the following areas:

- Workforce and Skills for the Logistics Industry (Joint Group with Employment, Learning and Skills PPB);
- The Future of Town Centres Management (continuation of);
- Implications of de-linking the Silver Jubilee Bridge; and
- Housing Strategy (continuation of);

**WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2009-10**

The Board agreed the following topic ideas for inclusion in its work programme for 2009-10 :

- Workforce and Skills for the Science Industry, with a focus on Daresbury (Joint Group with Employment, Learning and Skills PPB); and
- Continuation of the work of the Implications of de-linking the Silver Jubilee Bridge Group; and
- the LDF Working Party; and
- Housing Strategy (continuation of);

**Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work please contact Committee Services in the first instance, telephone 0151 424 2061 extension 1125 or email [michelle.simpson@Halton.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.simpson@Halton.gov.uk)**

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17 June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

**SUBJECT:** Mid-term Review of the Sustainable Community Strategy

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide the Board with an amended version of the Sustainable Community Strategy for comment.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

**That the Policy and Performance Board considers the draft mid-term review of the Sustainable Community Strategy and that any observations or comments the Board makes are reported to Executive Board.**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND

Local Authorities are required to prepare and implement a Sustainable Community Strategy. We are expected to work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership to agree priorities and to engage and involve local communities. The current Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted in 2006. It contains a long-term vision and objectives with delivery targets for the period 2006-2011. Since it was prepared a number of changes have taken place making it necessary to conduct a mid-term review of the Sustainable Community Strategy. This is an update, not a complete revision. Recent perception surveys and the revised State of the Borough Report (2009) confirm that the underlying vision and priorities from 2006 remain relevant. Widespread engagement has therefore not been undertaken for this mid-term review. However, in 2010/11 work will commence on a full review and roll forward of the strategy with wide engagement, linking up with work being done on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

The main objectives of this mid-term review were:

- i. To explain what our vision statement means – what will Halton be like in 2025 if we are successful? The statutory guidance on the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007



requires that a Sustainable Community Strategy should include a long-term vision for the area.

- ii. To review the indicators and targets for each priority. Since the current strategy was produced the National Indicator set and LAA targets have been introduced. The aim is to have a single coherent set of indicators and targets in the Sustainable Community Strategy which encompasses both LAA targets and key local targets.
- iii. Incorporate the Housing and Homelessness Strategy (a requirement of the Statutory Guidance referred to above)
- iv. To ensure that appropriate cross-cutting targets are agreed, covering social inclusion, cohesion, equalities and closing the gap.

#### **4.0 WAY FORWARD**

The attached draft of the mid-term review has been drawn up following consultation with partners and will be considered by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board on 20 May 2009. Any resulting changes will be reported verbally to the Board. The revised Sustainable Community Strategy has to be adopted by full Council (Local Government Act 2000). Following consultation with the Policy and Performance Boards it is planned to take the final draft to the full Council meeting on 22 July with a recommendation from Executive Board for final adoption.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The opportunities and challenges facing Halton are well-known. The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the steps we need to take to bring about real improvement and how we will measure progress. The Local Area Agreement is a set of targets agreed with Government which reflects the Community Strategy. The mid-term review is an opportunity to bring these together in a single coherent document.

#### **6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Sustainable Community Strategy is the primary policy document for the Council and its partners who have a statutory duty to have regard to it.

#### **7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

The delivery of the Strategy will require the application of resources by all the partners in Halton, and consideration of impact on priorities is already part of the Council's budget setting process.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

The Community Strategy sets out our priorities for Children and Young People, Employment Learning and Skills, Healthy Halton, Safer Halton and Urban Renewal in Halton.

## **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

The key risk to the revision of the Strategy is lack of consensus. This is mitigated by consulting key partners and Policy and Performance Boards.

The risks to delivery of the Strategy are set out in the Partnership Risk Register.

## **10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Addressing inequality is a key theme in the Strategy.

## **11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **DRAFT V9**

### **MAKING IT HAPPEN IN HALTON – A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR A SUSTAINABLE HALTON**

#### **What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?**

A key role for local authorities and their partners is to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy for their area. This should aim to enhance the quality of life of local communities through actions to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the area and its inhabitants. They must also:

- allow local communities to express their aspirations, needs and priorities;
- co-ordinate the actions of the council and of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally;
- focus and shape the existing and future activity of those organisations so that they effectively meet community needs; and
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development both locally and more widely.

They must have four key components:

- a long-term vision for the area focusing on the outcomes that are to be achieved;
- an action plan identifying shorter-term priorities and activities that will contribute to the achievement of long-term outcomes;
- a shared commitment to implementing the action plan, and proposals for doing so;
- arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the action plan, for periodically reviewing the Sustainable Community Strategy, and for reporting progress to local communities.

Sustainable community strategies will reflect local circumstances and needs. They will:

- engage and involve local communities;
- involve active participation of councillors within and outside an Executive Steering Group;
- be prepared and implemented by a broad 'local strategic partnership', through which the local authority can work with other local bodies;
- be based on a proper assessment of needs and the availability of resources.

This Sustainable Community Strategy has been prepared in accordance with these principles. It lies as the centrepiece of a portfolio of documents which help define the task for partners in improving life in Halton. The portfolio includes:

- The State of Halton Audit
- Consulting the Communities of Halton
- Priority Baseline Reports
- A Local Development Framework
- A Community Engagement Strategy
- The joint strategic needs assessment for Health
- The joint strategic needs assessment for Community Safety
- The Halton Economic Review

The Sustainable Community Strategy provides an overarching framework through which the corporate, strategic and operational plans of all the partners can contribute. Of particular note is the newly emerging relationship between the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework. This is the replacement for the Unitary Development Plan, made up of a Core Strategy and individual planning documents for particular areas or issues. It gives a more flexible and responsive approach to planning in Halton.

Importantly, the Local Development Framework takes forward the land use elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy. It takes into account all of the plans and strategies which affect the quality of life in Halton (such as health, housing and education) and impact upon future development. The Sustainable Community Strategy is based on the socio-economic profile of the borough and listening to the views and aspirations of the local community. The Local Development Framework provides a vehicle through which the planning process can enable these to happen.

## **FOREWORD**

The Halton Strategic Partnership brings together key representatives from all the major organisations that are vital to building a better future for Halton. Its role is to agree on a common purpose and a common sense of direction which is set out in this Sustainable Community Strategy. Having done so, it provides a framework through which organisations, groups and individuals can co-operate to achieve our common goals. The Partnership is committed to making life better for everyone who lives, works, invests or visits the borough.

This is a refresh of Halton's second Sustainable Community Strategy and whilst we can take pride in what has been achieved to date, there is still much more to do. This document sets out a vision of the Halton we would like to see emerge by 2025. It sets out the steps we need to take together to bring about real improvements that will change lives for the better. Those steps concentrate on the things that matter most to most people. The Strategy is about focusing on the issues that will make the biggest difference in the long-term.

This Strategy is relatively short. However, it is based on a significant body of research and consultation. This document outlines some key goals, some headline actions, and a scorecard of key performance measures by which we will be judged. It aims to guide the development and implementation of more detailed plans and actions to be undertaken by the Council, the Police, Health Agencies and others. Everyone has a role to play in making it happen in Halton. Working together we can make a difference and build a better future for the borough.

## INTRODUCTION

Halton has inherited more than its share of issues over the years, many rooted in the area's industrial past. Making the borough a better place to live and work presents some major challenges and opportunities for us all.

This Sustainable Community Strategy is for all the communities of Halton. It sets out the steps we need to take together to bring about real improvements that will change lives for the better. In particular, we need to achieve real progress on five strategic themes that are set out clearly in this plan:

- A Healthy Halton
- Halton's Urban Renewal
- Children and Young People in Halton
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton

These priorities have been derived from what local people feel is important, and from the facts and figures about conditions in Halton. However, the strategy also recognises that Halton is not insular or isolated. Halton is an important component in the development of a thriving and successful Liverpool City Region, and more widely in a dynamic and sustainable North West region. Halton can only succeed as part of a successful and thriving North West. This Sustainable Community Strategy builds upon the wider strategic developments which are taking place in the region. Partners from Halton play a key role in shaping sub-regional and regional plans and arrangements. This connectivity – both strategically and operationally – is an important part of the Halton approach.

Halton's local strategic partnership (LSP) – the Halton Strategic Partnership has developed the Strategy. As partners we have built on existing collaboration and are fully committed to working more effectively together and with the community to help improve the quality of life for people in our borough.

This Strategy outlines key goals for the borough, some of the headline actions to be taken, and measures by which progress can be judged. It guides the development of more detailed plans and actions – to be undertaken by the Council, Health Trusts, the Police, Fire Service, community and voluntary sector, and others – whose actions are the important step that makes a difference to people on the ground. We all have a part to play in making it happen.

## **ABOUT THE HALTON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

The Halton Strategic Partnership Board brings together representatives from all sectors in the borough. It is the strategic level Board and a key part of the broad-based Halton Partnership. It serves the function of a 'local strategic partnership' (LSP) for the area. Local Strategic Partnerships are promoted by the Government and designed to help ensure that action taken at local level by a whole range of groups and organisations is properly 'joined up' and meets the needs of local communities.

The Halton Strategic Partnership Board, and this Sustainable Community Strategy, provides a common sense of direction for the community and an overarching framework within which different partnerships, organisations and groups can co-operate together, committed to common goals and dedicated to improving life for people in the Borough.

### **Members of the Halton Strategic Partnership Board**

Halton Borough Council  
Cheshire Police  
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service  
Halton & St Helens Primary Care Trust  
Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council  
Halton Housing Partnership  
Halton Sports Partnership  
Riverside College Halton  
Halton Voluntary Action/Community Empowerment Network  
Jobcentre Plus  
North West Development Agency  
Faith Community  
Greater Merseyside Connexions Service  
Halton Association of Secondary Heads  
Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise  
Government Office North West

## **PLANNING A BETTER FUTURE FOR HALTON**

This Sustainable Community Strategy is about what is most important for Halton and about working together to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the borough. It sets out key priorities and shows the direction we need to progress in together, and gives us challenging improvement targets to work towards. It provides an overall guide and framework for the activities of partners and other organisations in Halton. It will guide the development of more specific plans and projects working across Halton.

To make real progress we will need to pool ideas and resources, and work even more closely and effectively together. Working in partnership and concentrating on what matters most will make the difference in planning a better future for Halton. This includes:

- knowing where we are heading, focusing on the priorities and agreeing clear objectives
- working productively together, sharing understanding of the borough's problems and their root causes, and joining up and co-ordinating our efforts to tackle them
- championing Halton's cause in the wider world, lobbying at regional and national levels, and working with wider UK and European partners for mutual benefit
- learning from experience, finding out and putting into practice what works best
- checking on our achievements, monitoring progress and keeping on track

The process to develop this Strategy was important. It was vital that the process was inclusive. Many people and groups were involved so we could build a clear picture on what was important and how we should go forward. Some of the key steps included:

- A review of our achievements since the first Sustainable Community Strategy was launched in 2002, and an honest assessment of how well partnership arrangements have worked
- Commissioning new State of Halton reports to look objectively at statistical conditions and changes and trends in social, economic and environmental conditions
- A major telephone survey of residents was carried out to seek their views on what life is like in Halton
- A review of regional and national strategies, and those of partners, was carried out to assess the likely impact of this activity in Halton



- An inclusive process of debate and discussion on the way forward took place with members, officers, officials and volunteers of all the organisations involved with the partnership
- A thematic assessment of the challenges facing the borough, and a thorough review of outcomes, outputs and targets was carried out. These helped to demonstrate how the strategy and partnership working could make a difference in the future.

This process of engagement with people and partners was vital. It is only if there is a shared view of the challenges that Halton faces, and a broad sense of ownership of the resulting strategy, that there will be any chance of its ambitions being realised.

## WHAT IS HALTON LIKE?

**Halton is a largely urban area of 119,500 people. Its two biggest settlements are Widnes and Runcorn that face each other across the River Mersey, 10 miles upstream from Liverpool.**

Since 2001 the population of Halton has increased steadily to its current estimate of 119,500 (2007) and is projected to continue to increase to 124,200 in 2016. Following national and regional trends, Halton has an ageing population, which is increasingly making up the majority of residents in the borough.

As a result of its industrial legacy, particularly from the chemical industries, Halton has inherited a number of physical, environmental and social problems. We have been working to resolve these issues ever since the borough was formed in 1974. Gaining unitary status in 1998 has helped to bring together more wide reaching activities and has increased the resources that the Council and its strategic partners, have been able to invest in Halton.

Halton shares many of the social and economic problems more associated with its urban neighbours on Merseyside. The Index of Multiple Deprivation for 2007 is one of the most comprehensive sources of deprivation indicators, as some 37 different indicators are used. It shows for example that overall, Halton is ranked 30th nationally (a ranking of 1 indicates that an area is the most deprived), which is third highest on Merseyside, behind Knowsley and Liverpool, and 10th highest in the North West, although this is an improvement on being fifth highest in 2004). Other authorities, St Helens (47th), Wirral (60th) and Sefton (83rd), are all way down the table compared to Halton.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation for 2007 suggests that deprivation has improved in the borough, since ranking 21<sup>st</sup> in 2004 there has been a decrease in 2007 to the 30<sup>th</sup> most deprived Authority in England. The proportion of Halton's population in the top category (i.e. the top 20% of super output areas) has also decreased from 50% in 2004 to 47 % in 2007. However, there is still room for improvement. Halton's concentration of deprivation has improved from 20th worst in England in 2004 to 27<sup>th</sup> in 2007. Concentration is a key way of identifying hot spots of deprivation within an area. Of England's 975 'Super Output Areas', which form the top 3% most deprived areas within England, eight are situated in Halton. The most deprived neighbourhood in Halton is ranked 306th out of 32,482 and is situated in Central Runcorn. Much has been done but clearly there is still much to do. Highlights of the key successes and challenges to date are:

- Claimant unemployment in the borough had fallen from 5.0% in January 2000 to 3% in December 2007, but this was still the 3rd highest claimant count rate in the North West. Due to the current economic climate, recent trends in unemployment have shown a sharp rise over the past twelve months, up to 4.8% in December 2008 and 5.9% in March 2009. The claimant count rate only includes those

people who are eligible for Jobseekers allowance and therefore underestimates the true number of people who are unemployed. The Annual population Survey for July 2007-June 2008 estimates that the unemployment rate in Halton was 6.8% compared to an England average of 5.4%, at a time when claimant unemployment averaged 3.1%.

- The employment rate, i.e. the proportion of the potential workforce actually working at 70.4% in the 2007-2008 Annual Population Survey shows that Halton is in the bottom 12 of 43 Local Authority districts in the North West. The borough rate is also significantly lower than the England average of 74.5%.
- Life expectancy in the borough has improved in the past decade. Between 2001-2003 and 2004-2006 female life expectancy in the borough increased from 78.2 years to 78.4 years. Life expectancy at birth for men in Halton also increased over the same time period from 73.9 in 2001-2003 to 74.3 in 2004-2006. This increase in life expectancy in Halton has kept pace with other Authorities. Between 2001 and 2006 Halton has risen from a rank of 374 for females to 370 out of 376 authorities with 376 being the lowest rank. For men the ranking has risen from 371 to 356. Standardised Mortality Rates for all causes, all ages, ranks Halton 2<sup>nd</sup> highest (i.e. worse) out of 354 English Local Authorities for 2006. At 127 it is 27% above the national average.
- GCSE passes in the borough are improving, between 1997-2008 the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A\*- C increased by 38.3 percentage points to 71.1%. This is now greater than the national rate of 65.3%. Pupils gaining no GCSE passes (or equivalent) was 2% in 2008 compared to 1.4% nationally. Skills among the workforce remain low, with 20% of working age people lacking any qualifications in 2007.

## OUR VISION FOR HALTON

**Halton will be a thriving and vibrant borough where people can learn and develop their skills, enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality; sustained by a thriving business community; and within safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.**

How Halton will look in 2025 depends on a variety of factors, both local and national. True, the Halton Strategic Partnership will be able to influence the outcome through how successful its joint working on cross cutting issues has been, but the over riding influence will be the state of the national economy at the time and how quickly Halton will have been able to leave the effects of the current recession behind. Recessions traditionally last 12 –18 months on average, but their effects on the economy, employment levels and wealth can take 3 – 4 years to recover their pre-recession position.

Physically, the main change in this period will be the completion of the second Mersey crossing upstream from the existing road bridge. This will help relieve the Borough's road network of the regional traffic currently using and congesting the existing bridge at peak times. The new bridge will help open up sites in the south Widnes/north Runcorn corridor for employment development that could create many hundreds of new jobs taking advantage of the improved traffic flows. 3MG will also be able to capitalise on this extra capacity to establish itself as one of the most computerised transport interchanges in the UK.

However the Borough's success in 2025 will not just be dependent on new physical facilities (not understating their importance) but also on the social, community and environmental characteristics of the time. Halton Strategic Partnership enthusiastically embraces the Government's agenda on such issues as:

- Social inclusion and community cohesion
- Closing the gap between the most deprived parts of the Borough and the most affluent.
- Equality and diversity among the population
- Sustainability
- Climate change
- Improving the health of local residents
- Improving life skills and opportunities for Halton residents

Closing the gap between the poorer and richer parts of the Borough embraces many of these issues because the spatial pattern is repeated. The worst health, the lower employment levels and lower skill levels are concentrated in the more deprived areas. Initiatives such as Neighbourhood Management with the backing of the Halton Strategic Partnership are very important in tackling these issues.

Paradoxically the gap appears to widen in times of economic growth because at such times all areas improve but the more affluent areas tend to improve more, thereby widening the gap. However when times are harder, for example in the recession, then the gap is less pronounced. This emphasises the importance of intervention as market forces cannot be relied on to narrow the gap.

### **A Healthy Halton**

Of the five priorities, poor health continues to be the one that affects most people, with 33% of Halton's population placed in the worst 4% for health deprivation in England. The cancer rates and life expectancy figures, particularly for women, are among the worst in the country.

To overcome this we envisage a focused effort by all the partners that will improve Halton's overall position by concentrating on the areas with the worst health outcomes. The target will be to reduce early deaths.

### **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Modern day Halton has inherited an exceptional legacy of obsolete and poor quality land, buildings and physical infrastructure that undermines the development potential and attractiveness of the area. Putting this right is a key to greater prosperity and boosting the image of the borough.

To achieve our vision we will

- Work with partners and the local community to support The Mersey Gateway scheme to fully realise its benefits. This will be a major focus over the coming years
- Provide affordable housing for sale and rent for those who need it most.
- Upgrade and fully utilise the borough's rail, road, commercial waterways and power infrastructure in order to maximise the potential for economic development.

### **Children and Young People in Halton**

For children and young people, three specific ambitions have been set, which better define what we are trying to achieve for children and young people.

These are that:

- Every Young Person is successful when they leave school
- Children and young people will do well whatever their needs and wherever they live
- Children and young people are physically, emotionally and sexually healthy.

Work will continue on specific responsibilities or issues, which affect specific groups of children or young people. These chosen ambitions are relevant to all children and encapsulate some of the specific difficulties experienced by particular cohorts of children and young people. Each ambition is a condition of well being for all children and young people that no one single agency can

achieve on its own. Rather a coherent partnership approach is vital if we are to succeed in making the necessary difference to each of these outcomes.

### **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton - Our long-term vision**

Historically, high economic inactivity rates across the borough, with particular pockets of high deprivation and social exclusion, have been endemic in the local economy. Progress has been made in recent years but the current economic downturn has meant rising levels of unemployment and inactivity with worklessness rates currently standing at 17.8% in Halton, with some wards experiencing levels as high as 30.6% against a national average of 11.7%.

Our vision is the creation of a strong economy able to compete in the challenging global market. This can only be achieved by targeted investment in skills, a vibrant employment market and creating a strong culture of entrepreneurship. Our target will be to ensure that no area of Halton has unemployment at more than 20% above the borough average and to reduce the number of adults of working age claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods.

### **A Safer Halton - Our long-term vision**

We want to make Halton a great place to live with an attractive quality of life and excellent local environment. However, this is very much dependent on reducing current levels of crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and improving the local environment in our neighbourhoods. Halton has seen a 16% reduction in total recorded crime from 2005 and 2008. In the same time period vehicle crime has reduced by 29% and criminal damage by 34%. The Safer Halton Partnership - with its focus on action at the neighbourhood level - has contributed to these welcome reductions. However, this remains a pressing problem for most people in Halton, and fear of crime remains at unacceptable levels and impacts upon too many lives.

Taking the successes to date and working to improve on them, the Safer Halton Partnership aims to increase the confidence of communities in their neighbourhoods through coordinated enforcement and communication. Safeguarding adults is a key issue for the partnership, therefore policy and performance is scrutinised by the Safer Halton Partnership Board at every meeting. And whilst further guidance on the National review of 'No Secrets' is still awaited, work on the views of service users and carers, training and protecting adults will continue. Improving local conditions and encouraging people to get involved to help shape what happens in their local area is key to the partnership. With the continued provision of Area Forums, Police Community Action Meetings (CAMs), Community Watch Schemes and 'Face the People' Sessions, the Safer Halton Partnership offers opportunities for local people to have their say and help make a difference.

## WHAT IS THE FOCUS?

Taking action is one thing, but unless it is focused on the right things it is unlikely to yield the right results. This is why the Partnership invested a good deal of time and resources sounding out public opinion and gathering the facts and figures needed to identify the overall priorities for the borough.

Between 2000 and 2009, five separate State of Halton reports have been researched and published, highlighting a range of challenges and opportunities facing Halton. Their findings have been checked and challenged by the Partnership and tested against public opinion. This led to the identification of a number of priorities for the borough over the medium term which, in combination, addresses the overall aim of making it a better place to live and work. These include:

- Improving Health
- Improving the skills base in the borough
- Improving educational attainment across the borough
- Creating employment opportunities for all
- Tackling worklessness
- Tackling the low wage economy
- Improving environmental assets and how the borough looks
- Creating prosperity and equality of opportunity
- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Improving amenities for all age groups
- Furthering economic and urban regeneration
- Tackling contaminated land
- Creating opportunities/facilities/amenities for children and young people
- Supporting an ageing population
- Minimising waste/increasing recycling/bringing efficiencies in waste disposal
- Increasing focus on community engagement
- Running services efficiently

The key challenge is how best to frame the response to these through the Sustainable Community Strategy. To do this challenges have been grouped into five key themes as set out in the vision, which are:

- A Healthy Halton
- Halton's Urban Renewal
- Children and Young People in Halton
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton

Each of these thematic areas has been examined more closely in a series of Baseline Reports, which identify in detail the issues where we need to concentrate our improvement efforts. The Partnership intends to focus heavily on these key issues and to focus its future investment into achieving the challenging targets in each chosen theme.

To help do this, five Specialist Strategic Partnerships (SSPs) have been established. Their task is to design and deliver strategies and action plans to address priorities. Their plans are based on the information from the Baseline Reports and on the expertise of the Partnership members. Each of the five major themes is addressed in turn in the next part of this Strategy.

The Partnership also works to improve the quality of life at a neighbourhood level. It does this by working through the seven geographical Area Forums established by the Council and supported by the partners. Each Area Forum has dedicated resources to draw on to help deliver improvements in their area and expenditure proposals are expected to support one or more of the five priorities.

Halton is enthusiastic about extending neighbourhood management as a means to engage and empower local communities. This will address problems in deprived neighbourhoods by managing and co-ordinating resources and services to achieve a greater combined impact. A sound neighbourhood approach will lay the foundations for delivery of improvements to liveability and public services, transforming neighbourhoods and empowering local people. Halton already has many front line services organised on a neighbourhood basis. Community Support Officers, policing, community development workers, housing management, street-scene teams and youth workers are organised on an area basis. Children's Centres will also co-ordinate service delivery at a local level. A neighbourhood focus will provide management and co-ordination mechanisms for joining these, and other services such as health and social care up on a local basis. This Sustainable Community Strategy provides a framework through which these arrangements can be brokered.



## **A Healthy Halton**

**Our overall aim:** To create a healthier community and work to promote well being and a positive experience of life with good health, not simply an absence of disease, and offer opportunities for people to take responsibility for their health with the necessary support available.

### **Why Health?**

Statistics show that health standards in Halton are amongst the worst in the country. Because of this health has been singled out as a priority in most urgent need of improvement across the borough. As previously discussed the population in Halton is ageing which could put even greater demands on health and social care services. At the same time lifestyle choices in the borough especially amongst the young, in terms of diet, smoking, alcohol, exercise and other factors continue to give cause for concern for the future.

### **Key Objectives**

- A. To understand fully the causes of ill health in Halton and act together to improve the overall health and well-being of local people.
- B. To lay firm foundations for a healthy start in life and support those most in need in the community by increasing community engagement in health issues and promoting autonomy.
- C. To reduce the burden of disease and preventable causes of death in Halton by reducing smoking levels, alcohol consumption and by increasing physical activity, improving diet and the early detection and treatment of disease.
- D. To respond to the needs of an ageing population by addressing the needs of older people, improving their quality of life and thus enabling them to lead longer, active and more fulfilled lives.
- E. To remove the barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health by working across partnerships to address the wider determinants of health such as unemployment, education and skills, housing, crime and environment.

### **Background**

The recent State of the Borough Report identifies Halton as one of the most deprived districts in England. In terms of health deprivation the borough currently ranks 371<sup>st</sup> out of 408 districts in the country. The Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies 53 'Super Output Areas' in Halton that fall within the top 20% of most health deprived wards nationally and that approximately 40,000 people (33% of the population) live in the top 4% most health deprived wards in England.

When compared with other areas in England, Halton is within the worst 10% of areas for life expectancy. In particular female life expectancy is the third

worst in England (78.4). Male life expectancy (74.3) is also 3 years less than the national average.

The two biggest killers in Halton are heart disease and cancer. Heart disease is still the single biggest cause of premature death in Halton, and more people have it in this borough than they do in other boroughs across the country. For those under 75, men are more likely to have heart disease than women.

In terms of cancer, Halton has the worst early death rate in the country (167.8 per 100,000 population). Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death in Halton. There has also been a steady increase in the number of women developing breast cancer and death rates from the disease have increased recently. Breast cancer is the second largest cause of cancer death in Halton.

Some of the reasons why Halton residents suffer disproportionately high death rates from major causes of death include poor diet, high smoking rates and inadequate levels of physical activity.

In recent years, the burden of ill health caused by alcohol consumption has also increased significantly. Recent statistics show that approximately 24% of adult residents in Halton binge drink. Whilst twice as many men as women drink above safe limits the number of women doing so has increased significantly from 6.9% in 2001 to 12.4% in 2006.

The latest Alcohol Profiles for England show that Halton is amongst some of the worst districts in the country in terms of months of life lost due to alcohol, alcohol specific and attributable mortality and hospital admissions due to alcohol.

In 2003 the Halton Health Partnership appointed a team of consultants from Lancaster University to examine the reasons for Halton's poor health record. Whilst there was much speculation around the role of Halton's industrial legacy and existing levels of pollution, the study revealed that economic, social and lifestyle factors were largely responsible for the high rates of illness and death.

When taking these factors into consideration, it becomes easier to understand why some communities suffer disproportionately from poorer health than others. Therefore, we would expect to set specific neighbourhood targets where appropriate.

During 2008 Halton & St. Helens Primary Care Trust produced two key documents, 'Ambition for Health' and the 'Commissioning Strategic Plan'.

Ambition for Health is a key document for Halton & St. Helens Primary Care Trust in terms of improving the health of the local population. The document sets out key "ambitions" that are based on understanding of the needs of the local population. These are as follows:

- To support a healthy start in life
- To reduce poor health that results from preventable causes
- To ensure that when people do fall ill from some of the major diseases, they get the best care and support
- To provide services which meet the needs of vulnerable people
- To make sure people have excellent access to services and facilities
- To play our part in strengthening disadvantaged communities

Following on from this Halton & St. Helens Primary Care Trust then produced the Commissioning Strategic Plan. This document turns the Ambition for Health goals into action by delivering transformational change in a number of key areas that support the strategic priorities.

The six priority areas identified in the Commissioning Strategic Plan are:

- Alcohol
- Obesity
- Early detection: Diabetes, respiratory, heart disease, cancer
- Early Detection: Depression
- Prevention: Tobacco Control
- Safety, Equality and Efficiency: Planned and Urgent Care

In addition to this, addressing the wider determinants of ill health is a key issue for Halton if it is to effectively respond to national and local targets. This will mean working across partnerships to achieve our goals. The list below highlights some of the areas where further joint working is required:

- Taking steps to reduce unemployment in areas with poor health statistics
- Improving educational attainment and increasing access to training opportunities for those living in deprived areas
- Improving the quality and provision of social housing
- Improving access to services such as social and leisure facilities, supermarkets, health services and transport.
- Understanding how knowledge and perceptions of health related issues can affect the local population
- Reducing social isolation
- Reducing crime and improving community safety
- Maximising community resources and facilitating effective community engagement and participation

Individuals also have a role to play in improving their own health and well being. Lifestyle factors such as a poor diet, smoking, and lack of exercise can all have a negative impact on an individual's health. Actions and services aimed at increasing participation in sport and leisure activities and promoting a healthy diet and lifestyle can contribute towards improving the health of local people. However, whilst agencies can work together to improve access, affordability, and quality of services, it is also important to encourage local residents to play an active role in improving their own health.

Well being is about more than health. It is about the ability to enjoy a range of activities that actually make life worth living. This is about having access and the ability to enjoy culture in all its forms - sport, arts, libraries, leisure, entertainment, hobbies, friends and family, and shopping. We aim to enhance these opportunities for people. Happy people are more likely to be healthy people and vice versa.

We therefore also need to address all of the determinants of mental health and well-being for different population groups. Children and young peoples emotional and mental well-being is addressed within Children's Trust structures.

### **Linkages to other priorities**

#### **Halton's Urban Renewal**

A high quality built environment is an important contributory factor in determining the health and well-being of local people. Good quality, accessible buildings, served by a good quality transport infrastructure create a more vibrant community where people are proud to live and work. In turn this contributes to the health and well-being of local residents.

#### **Children and Young People in Halton**

Improving the health and well-being of children and young people is a key priority. Being healthy as a child can have an influence on long term health outcomes. The Healthy Halton Specialist Strategic Partnership works closely with the Children and Young Peoples partnership to address issues such as childhood obesity and teenage pregnancy. In addition low educational attainment is one of the key determinants of poor health outcomes and leads to many health inequalities within neighbourhoods.

#### **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Improving access to employment opportunities is a key determinant in improving the health of the local population. Being in employment increases choice and opportunity and enhances quality of life. Areas of high unemployment are shown to have higher levels of poor health therefore anything we can do to increase wealth creating factors within those communities will automatically improve health outcomes. Linked to this is the need to increase access to learning opportunities and offering people the chance to improve their skills thereby improving their chance of gaining employment.

#### **A Safer Halton**

Personal experience of crime and anti-social behaviour can have a significant impact on our health and well-being. Tackling crime is high on the public agenda and a key priority for neighbourhoods. One of the key areas for both the Health Partnership and the Safer Halton Partnership is the current issues surrounding alcohol harm. Both partnerships are working together to address these issues.

## Improvement Targets

Halton Local Area Agreement Indicators relating to Health

By 2011 we aim to:

- Increase adult participation in sport from 20.13% (2006 baseline) to 24.02%: Sport: NI 8.
- Slow the rate of increase in alcohol-harm related hospital admissions from 2180 in 2007/08 to 2323 in 2009/10 and 2309 by 2010/11: Alcohol related hospital admissions: NI 39.
- Increase the number of drug users in effective treatment from 513 (2007/08 baseline) to 544: Drug Treatment: NI 40.
- Increase the prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth from 12.1% (Quarter 2 2008) to 23%: Breastfeeding: NI 53.
- Reduce obesity in primary school age children from 22.4% to 21.3%: Obesity NI: 56.
- Reduce the conception rate in girls under 18 by 55%, compared to 1998: Conception: NI 112.
- Reduce the number of young people misusing substances from 12.6% in 2008 to 9.8% in 2011: Substance Misuses: NI 115
- Reduce all age all cause mortality for Males from 906 per 100,000 population (2007/08 baseline) to 755: Life expectancy: NI 120.
- Reduce all age all cause mortality for females from 673 (2007/08 baseline) to 574 by 2010/2011: Life expectancy: NI 120.
- Increase the number of people age 16+ who have stopped smoking from 914 per 100,000 population (2007/08 baseline) to 1128: Lifestyle: NI 123.
- Improve the number of people over 65 who say that they receive the information, assistance and support needed to exercise choice and control to live independently from 30.4% (2008 base) to 32.8%: Independent living: NI 139
- Improve the number. of vulnerable people supported to maintain independent living from a Baseline in 2007/08 of 98.17%, to a target of 99.04% in 2011: NI 142
- No. of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment – target to be set by March 2010.: Mental Health: NI150

**Local targets**

- Reduce the death rate in under 75s from circulatory disease by 57% from 1995-97 baseline in 2009-2011
- Reduce the death rate from Cancer (in under 75s) by 25% in 2009-11 from 1995-97 baseline
- Increase the number of people with a long term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition from 43% (07/08 baseline) to 49% (2010/2011): Managing long term conditions: NI 124

## **Halton's Urban Renewal**

**Our Overall aim:** To transform the urban fabric and infrastructure, to develop exciting places and spaces and to create a vibrant and accessible borough that makes Halton a place where people are proud to live and see a promising future for themselves and their families.

### **Why Urban Renewal?**

Modern day Halton has inherited an exceptional legacy of obsolete and poor quality land, buildings and physical infrastructure that undermines the development potential and attractiveness of the area. Putting this right is a key to greater prosperity and boosting the image of the borough. This is why Urban Renewal is Halton Borough Council's second most important priority.

### **Key Objectives**

- A. To create and sustain a twenty first century business environment with the required variety and quality of sites, premises and infrastructure that can support high levels of investment and economic growth and increase Halton's competitiveness;
- B. To promote regional employment sites at 3MG, Daresbury and the Widnes Waterfront;
- C. To secure the commencement of the construction of the Mersey Gateway bridge;
- D. To revitalise the town centres; to create dynamic, well-designed high quality commercial areas that can continue to meet the needs of local people, investors, businesses and visitors;
- E. To support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet people's expectations and add to their enjoyment of life;
- F. To ensure Halton designs in and maintains high levels of accessibility to places and spaces, so that opportunity and need are matched, and provide excellent connectivity to the wider world through transport and ICT links;
- G. To enhance, promote and celebrate the quality of the built and natural environment in Halton including tackling the legacy of contamination and dereliction, to further improve the borough's image.

### **Background**

Halton helped maintain the momentum of the industrial revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and was a cradle to both invention and innovation. Reflecting this industrial and manufacturing history, Halton has a legacy of ageing infrastructure, obsolete and redundant buildings, a relatively poor built and

natural environment, an overly mature housing stock and an under-provision of modern amenities to support a far more discerning population.

Much has already been achieved to green the environment, both within the town centres and at our gateway approaches. Town centres have experienced new private sector investment, whilst small businesses have taken advantage of grant assistance to rejuvenate tired, rundown or unproductive premises. Award-winning leisure facilities have been provided around the borough and new housing and jobs are being provided because of the confidence in Halton's future.

The business environment is expanding thanks to developments on the Widnes Waterfront, 3MG, Daresbury, The Heath and the key infrastructure development of the Mersey Gateway river crossing:

- The Widnes Waterfront is located in South Widnes, fronting onto the River Mersey. The programme aims to regenerate 80 ha., of low quality industrial land, supported by a cocktail of funding opportunities. Work includes commercial, retail and leisure developments, together with environment, infrastructure and public realm enhancements - all of which will have been completed by 2015. This programme has been identified as a North West Strategic Site and supports the borough's Employment, Learning & Skills priority amongst others;
- 3MG (Mersey Multi-modal Gateway) in Ditton is quickly becoming a regionally and nationally significant intermodal freight park which anticipates an approximate total investment of £100m. This major scheme will create up to 5,000 new jobs and 3 million sq.ft of rail-related distribution facilities by 2015. In addition, the Stobart Group have acquired the Mersey Gateway Port at Weston in Runcorn, which will offer an integrated transport and logistics facility;
- The Mersey Gateway project will provide a landmark new bridge over the River Mersey between Runcorn and Widnes. It will transform the borough of Halton, improve the lives of local people and create new opportunities for business and investment in Halton, Cheshire, the Liverpool city-region, the north west and beyond. The new bridge will cross the river 1.5km east of the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB), be a tolled crossing, have three lanes in each direction and be linked to the major road systems in the area, keeping traffic moving and raising the profile of the borough. The Mersey Gateway bridge is due to open to the public in 2014 and will overcome one of the biggest congestion problems in the region. Modifications will be made to the existing SJB to improve facilities for local public transport, walking and cycling;
- The Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy will support and promote significant developments in both Runcorn and Widnes Town Centres, continuing regeneration programmes such as the Canal Quarter (Runcorn), Ashley Retail Park and Windmill Centre (Widnes), which are under way in both towns;



- The Daresbury Science & Innovation Centre is a state-of-the-art facility offering high quality office, workshop and laboratory space. The Innovation Centre aims to bring together science and technology-based businesses into an innovative scientific environment. The building provides facilities and specialist support critical to young businesses whether at the creation, growth or acceleration stages of their development.

Exciting new expansion developments are also anticipated at The Heath Business Park and the Halton Lea and Widnes retail areas.

Halton together with our partners in St.Helens and Warrington has been awarded Growth Point Status. This will help foster increasing partnership working across traditional boundaries, better integrating the provision of new housing and employment opportunities across the sub-region whilst promoting sustainable development and the timely provision of supporting infrastructure (including Green Infrastructure).

Two large sites for private sector-residential developments in the borough over the past decade have been at Upton Rocks, Widnes and Sandymoor, Runcorn. The focus of these developments has been a concentration on the executive end of the housing market, in order to encourage managerial and professional socio-economic groups to move to the borough. However, land remediation has cleared the way for housing development at Halebank and plans are being progressed to develop residential accommodation at the Canal Quarter in Runcorn, where leisure and retail facilities will also be delivered along the banks of the Bridgewater Canal. In addition, a £130 million major sustainable regeneration programme is taking place in Castlefields, where high quality mixed-tenure housing is replacing grim deck access flats. The existing local centre will be demolished and redeveloped to create a new community hub centred around a Village Square, offering shops, residential accommodation and health and community facilities – all amidst many and varied environmental and leisure enhancements, including the very successful Phoenix Park. Further housing renewal opportunities have been identified including areas of Runcorn New Town and West Bank, Widnes.

The creation and maintenance of high quality places and spaces that support a twenty- first century economy and lifestyles which are accessible and well connected, is a pre-requisite of Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy and its Urban Renewal Strategy. Much of this is dependent upon the borough's extensive expertise for land reclamation, which has been developed out of need to address and overcome the borough's legacy of contamination from the chemicals industry. This is detailed in the Borough's Contaminated Land Remediation Strategy.

Land is being reclaimed at the rate of approximately 10 hectares per annum. Much of this reclamation is located on the historical chemical sites adjacent to and part of the Widnes Waterfront. For example, Moss Bank Park and further additions to the Trans Pennine trail have been completed adding valuable

amenity space within a modern industrial environment. Development of new 'Alternative Technologies' by Halton, to make safe the severe contamination on these sites, will provide the economic solution to bring forward significant industrial and intermodal developments in the borough, e.g. as in the Widnes Waterfront and the 3MG Intermodal Logistics Park.

Environmental improvements and better quality open spaces, in addition to a better quality built environment and transport offer, are vital as steps to promote Halton's assets. A positive image is a key requirement if we are to boost the confidence and aspirations of local people and business.

## **Linkages to Other Priorities**

### **A Healthy Halton**

Providing a better, cleaner and greener built environment where employment and leisure opportunities are fostered and resident prosperity overcomes health issues associated with deprivation. Improved access to hospitals.

### **Children and Young People in Halton**

Creating an environment that provides the basis in which our children are able to flourish

### **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Developing employment opportunities for all in a thriving business environment where skills meet business needs. Improved access to further education facilities

### **A Safer Halton**

Instilling pride in our local community where residents feel safe and cherish their neighbourhoods, wishing to help eradicate violence and unsocial elements

## **Improvement Targets**

Halton LAA Indicators relating to Urban Renewal

By 2011 we aim to:

- Assist in raising residents' overall satisfaction with the area from 70% in 2008 to 73.4% in 2010 (baseline and target provisional pending publication of final places survey data): Residents' Satisfaction: NI 5.
- Reduce per capita CO2 emissions within the local authority area, from 10.1 tonnes per capita in 2007/08, (based on Defra 2005 data) to 8.98 tonnes per capita, by 2010/11 (based on Defra 2008 data): Climate Change: NI 186.
- Ensure 34% of municipal waste is recycled or composted by the local authority by 2010/11 compared to 25.1% in 2007/08: Waste: NI 192.

- Build additional homes within Halton at an annual rate of 518 between 2008/2009 and 2010/2011: Housing: NI 154.
- Improve access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling. Targets set for access to Whiston and Warrington Hospitals (100%) and Runcorn and Widnes comprises of Riverside College (89% and 93% respectively): Transport: NI 175.

### Local Indicators

- ***Assist in achieving an increase in the numbers of jobs in Halton by?????***
- To bring 10 hectares of derelict land back into beneficial use annually.
- Facilitate the relocation of businesses affected by the construction of the Mersey Gateway Bridge.

## **Children and Young People in Halton**

**Our Overall Aim:** Halton's ambition is to build stronger, safer communities which are able to support the development and learning of children and young people so they grow up feeling safe, secure, happy and healthy, and are ready to be Halton's present and Halton's future

### **Why Children and Young People?**

Children and young people are the future of Halton. In time they will become the adults that take responsibility for all aspects of life in the borough. Therefore, it is self-evident that we should invest in Halton's future by investing in them. This will make sure they have the best possible start in life, have places to go and things to do that are positive and life enhancing, and the opportunity to fulfil their potential and succeed.

### **Key Objectives**

Halton's Children's Trust has identified three entrenched areas, where a strong partnership approach is needed to improve outcomes for children and young people. These will form the foundation for the new Children and Young People's Plan 2009-12. These areas under which the key outcomes can be clustered, are:

- A. Children and young people do well wherever they live and whatever their needs
- B. Children and young people are physically, emotionally and sexually healthy
- C. Young people are successful when they leave school

### **Background**

Development in early childhood, success while at school through educational and other achievement, and the acquisition of important, employable skills, are key determinants of individuals' life and employment chances. They have a major effect on people's ability to access employment, the income they earn, their aspirations, behaviour, health and longevity, and on the range of positive choices they are able to make in life.

The Government policy, Every Child Matters: Change for Children, describes a vision of improving outcomes for all children and young people and narrowing the gap between those who do well and those who do not. In Halton, as elsewhere, this requires radical change in the whole system of children's services including:

- The improvement and integration of front line services - in early years settings, schools, the health service and play and recreation - and to raise standards of achievement for all learners

- More specialised help to promote opportunity, prevent problems and act early and effectively if and when problems arise
- The further development of services around children, young people and families through the delivery of better and more easily accessible services may involve co-location through, for example, extended schools, children's centres, and the bringing together of professionals in multi-disciplinary teams
- Dedicated and enterprising leadership striving for the highest standards at all levels of the system
- The development of a shared sense of responsibility across agencies for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm
- Listening to children, young people and their families when assessing and planning service provision, as well as in face-to-face delivery

To bring about improvement in the life chances and employment prospects for children and young people in Halton, we need to remove socio-economic barriers to early development, and deliver the Every Child Matters agenda through the Children's Trust, and through better joint commissioning and integrated delivery of services through the widely agreed Children's and Young People's Plan.

The key agencies that have an impact on children and young people need to build on existing cooperation. Firstly we need to develop policies based on evidence of what works most effectively that are focused on delivering the outcomes highlighted above. Then we must create a model of what measures and services to enhance life chances and employment need to be like to make the most positive impact in Halton. Finally, we should devise an action plan to make any changes needed to shift from the measures and services that exist now, to what they need to be in the future.

## **Linkages to other Priorities**

### **A Healthy Halton**

Children's health is a key priority mainly because being healthy is the best basis from which children can go on and develop throughout their lives. Education is a key influence on health and affects health-related behaviour such as smoking, drinking, drugs and exercise. To tackle the issues such as obesity and teenage pregnancy in Halton, Children and Young People work closely with the Health Partnership to ensure there is a joined up approach.

### **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Investment in Halton's urban fabric and infrastructure will help to make Halton a place where our children and young people will want to live as adults. Also the provision of access to quality transportation links for education and leisure opportunities is a key priority.

### **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Increasing the number of young people in education, employment and training will involve close working with partners from Employment, Learning & Skills. Employment opportunities and training offers a number of key options to our young people post-16 as they look for the best pathway going forward.

### **A Safer Halton**

The provision of pleasant, safe and secure neighbourhoods will provide children and young people with a safe environment in which to play, grow and prosper. Providing positive activities for young people are delivered through the Safer Halton Partnership to discourage crime and anti social behaviour.

### **Improvement Targets**

Halton Local Area Agreement Indicators relating to Children & Young People

By 2011 we aim to:

- Increase the stability of placements for looked after children from 69% in 2008 to 81.5% by 2011: Children in Care: NI 63.
- Reduce the proportion of children in poverty from 27% in 2008 to 24.2% by 2011: Children in Poverty: NI 116.
- Reduce obesity among primary school age children in Year 6 from 22.4% in 2008 to 21.3% by 2011: Child Obesity: NI 56.
- Reduce the under 18 conception rate by 55% by 2011 from the 1998 figure: Teenage Pregnancy: NI 112.
- Increase the proportion of young people achieving a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 from 33.5% in 2008 to 42.2% by 2011: Level 3 Qualification: NI 80.
- Reduce the number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training from 11.5% in 2008 to 7.7% by 2011: Not in education, employment or training: NI 117.
- Reduce the number of first time entrants aged 10-17 entering the Youth Justice System from 249 in 2007/08 to 234 by 2010/11: First time entrants: NI 111.
- Reduce the number of young people misusing substances from 12.6% in 2008 to 9.8% in 2011: Substance Misuses: NI 115

**Local indicator**

- Reduce the gap of attainment of 5 A\*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths) by 25% between those living in the worst 10% Lower Super Output Areas nationally and the Halton average by 2011
- Reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents: Road Traffic Fatality: NI 48

## **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

**Our overall aim:** To create an economically prosperous borough that encourages investment, enterprise and business growth, and improves the opportunities for learning and development together with the skills and employment prospects of both residents and workforce so that they are able to feel included socially and financially.

### **Why Employment, Learning and Skills?**

A robust economy lays the foundation for any prosperous and successful place and provides jobs, opportunities, wealth and aspirations for local people. Historically, in Halton there has been a sustained mismatch between the needs of local business and the skills of local people, low rates of entrepreneurship and high levels of welfare dependency, meaning that opportunity and need are out of balance and contributing to the widespread deprivation in Halton. Sustainable economic growth and prosperity requires a commitment to encourage and support a vibrant business sector together with a renewed commitment to creating sustainable employment, and high quality learning and skills opportunities to satisfy all stakeholders in Halton.

### **Key Objectives**

- A. To foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship and make Halton an ideal place to start and grow economic activity
- B. To develop a culture where learning is valued and raise skill levels throughout the adult population and in the local workforce
- C. To promote and increase the employability of local people and remove any barriers to employment to get more people into work
- D. To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable knowledge-based local economy.
- E. To maximise an individual's potential to increase and manage their income, including access to appropriate, supportive advice services.

### **Background**

Despite a range of local and national initiatives, Halton is still characterised by widespread deprivation. Attainment at school, in further education and the acquisition of employable skills are key determinants of individuals' life and employment chances. They have a major effect on people's ability to get a job, on the income they earn, on their aspirations, behaviour, health and longevity, and on the range of positive choices they are able to make in life. This means that the creation of a strong economy able to compete in today's challenging global market can only be achieved by continuing targeted investment in skills, a vibrant employment market and a strong culture of entrepreneurship.



Research shows that the skill base of the local area is relatively poor compared to Great Britain as a whole and to other surrounding local economies. Halton has a relatively low percentage of adults with further education qualifications and a high number of adults experiencing problems with numeracy and literacy. Looking to the future, estimates indicate that the majority of new jobs will require some form of recognised education qualification. Over 95% of new jobs will need qualifications of at least NVQ 2 level and over 70% at NVQ 3 and above. In addition, in an increasingly technologically developed society and in a borough where up to 30% of adults experience some form of difficulty with literacy there is a danger that a digital divide is created between those able to access and navigate jobs and services and those who cannot.

High economic inactivity rates across the borough, with particular pockets of high deprivation and social exclusion, are endemic in the local economy. Halton continues to display higher than average rates of benefit dependency, whilst at the same time many people are not claiming their full entitlements which would enable them to enjoy a minimum standard of living. Targeted information, advice and advocacy are crucial to allow people to access the support, whether related to work or to benefits, they need for the benefit of both themselves and local economy.

The Halton economy is heavily reliant upon a narrow range of industry sectors and, in common with the rest of the UK, is becoming susceptible to national and global pressures, which may have a negative effect upon the business sector, employment opportunities and could increase the numbers of individuals and families at risk of becoming financially and socially at risk.

## **Linkages to Other Priorities**

### **A Healthy Halton**

Being out of work or suffering financial exclusion have been shown to be significant contributors to health inequalities, whilst being in employment has been proven to have significant benefits for an individual's physical and mental health. By providing opportunities for skills, training and employment and enabling people to move from inactive benefits to employment, the Employment, Learning and Skills priority contributes towards improving the Health and mental wellbeing of Halton's residents.

### **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Halton residents will need a high quality, responsive skills and training infrastructure to take full advantage of the new opportunities for employment and business development being afforded through Halton's programme of Urban Renewal.

### **Children and Young People in Halton**

In addition to the importance of attainment at school, it is vital that Children and Young People are offered a wide range of good quality learning, skills and employment opportunities in order for them to fulfil their potential to

succeed and to ensure that they are not at risk of poverty or financial disadvantage.

### **A Safer Halton**

By enabling people to become engaged in employment, learning and skills opportunities, they are encouraged to move away from becoming involved in anti-social behaviour or crime. The Employment, Learning and Skills priority aims to ensure that positive progression routes to training and employment are available to all Halton residents to enable them to improve their life chances.

### **Improvement Targets**

Halton Local Area Agreement Indicators relating to Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

By 2011 we aim to:

- Reduce the proportion of working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods from 31.5% in 2007/2008 to 28.5% by 2010/2011: Benefits: NI 153.
- Increase the proportion of the working age population qualified to at least Level 2 from 60.1% in 2007/2008 to 67.5% by 2010/2011: Level 2 Qualification: NI 163.
- Maintain the VAT registration rate at 42.8% through to 2010/2011: VAT Registration: NI 171.

### **Local Indicators**

- Reduce the proportion of adults with no qualifications by 15%.
- Increase the proportion of adults qualified to Level 3 by 25%.
- Increase average household income in Halton to more than 90% of the national average.
- Increase the rate of self-employment by 20%.
- Ensure unemployment in any Lower Super Output Area is less than 20% above the borough average.

## **A SAFER HALTON**

**Our overall aim:** To ensure pleasant, safe and secure neighbourhood environments, with attractive, safe surroundings, good quality local amenities, and the ability of people to enjoy life where they live.

### **Why a Safer Halton?**

Crime and the fear of crime affect everybody's lives. It is a major concern according to every survey of Halton residents. These surveys also show that cleaner, tidier neighbourhoods would make the biggest difference to improving life for people in their local area. We want Halton to be a clean, green, safe and attractive place to live. People should tolerate value and respect each other, their property and the places where they live.

### **Key Objectives**

- A.** To investigate and tackle the underlying causes of crime and disorder and respond effectively to public concern by reducing crime levels
- B.** To improve the understanding of alcohol and drug/substance misuse problems, their impact in Halton, and reduce the harm they cause
- C.** To create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained, safe and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting the priorities of residents
- D.** To understand and tackle the problem of domestic abuse in all its forms
- E.** To reduce the levels of crime that disproportionately affects some of the more deprived areas within the borough

### **Background**

The Safer Halton Partnership has a wide-ranging remit focused on two major concerns of Halton people. Crime and the local environment have consistently been two areas the public have raised as high priorities in successive consultations over the last few years.

We want to make Halton a great place to live with an attractive quality of life and excellent local environment. However, this is very much dependent on reducing current levels of crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and improving the local environment in our neighbourhoods. Recent years have seen a 16% reduction in total recorded crime from 2005 and 2008. In the same time period vehicle crime has reduced by 29% and criminal damage by 34%. The Safer Halton Partnership - with its focus on action at the neighbourhood level - has contributed to these welcome reductions. However, this remains a pressing problem for most people in Halton, and fear of crime remains at unacceptable levels and impacts upon too many lives.

At the same time, whilst general satisfaction levels with Halton as a place to live have risen, it is the condition of their local environment which is of most concern to residents. Therefore, the Strategy aims to increase the confidence of communities in their neighbourhoods. This is about improving local conditions and encouraging people to get involved in helping to shape what happens in their local area. Area Forums, Police Community Action Meetings (CAMs), Community Watch Schemes and 'Face the People' Sessions, offer opportunities for local people to have their say and help make a difference. They also help make the police, council and others more accountable to residents, check that the priorities are right; that they respond to local concerns, and will take more effective action against the issues that most impact on their quality of life.

Tackling the causes as well as the symptoms of neighbourhood issues are a responsibility shared by all partners. Increasingly, they will look to better co-ordinate their activity through neighbourhood management arrangements to have a greater impact. This will increase the effectiveness of work that can prevent and intervene early in the conditions which lead to dissatisfaction.

### **Linkages to other priorities**

#### **A Healthy Halton**

Personal experience of crime or anti social behaviour can have a significant impact on our health and mental wellbeing. Tackling crime is high on the public agenda and a key priority for neighbourhoods.

#### **Halton's Urban Renewal**

When designing and planning new buildings such as housing estates and shopping areas, it is important that we consider community safety issues and design out crime. This may be through better lighting, CCTV, removing inappropriate planting etc

#### **Children and Young People in Halton**

Providing positive activities for young people and raising their aspirations will make them less likely to commit crime or anti social behaviour. Working with young people and their families is vital if we are to change behaviour, where their behaviour has already become a problem.

#### **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Creating employment opportunities and training for residents to access jobs is key to driving down crime. In particular those who have already committed crime, or have drug and alcohol problems are much less likely to re-offend if they can gain employment.

## **Improvement Targets**

Halton Local Area Agreement Indicators relating to a Safer Halton

By 2011 we aim to:

- Increase residents overall satisfaction with their local area from 70% in 2008 to 73% in 2010 (baseline and target provisional pending publication of the final Places Survey data): Overall satisfaction: NI 5.
- Increase voluntary and community sector satisfaction from 22.2% (2007/8) to 29.7% (2010/11) by creating a strong environment in which it can thrive: Thriving third Sector: NI 7.
- Reduce acts of serious acquisitive crime from 16 per 1000 population in 2007/08 to 15 per 1000 population by 2010/11: Serious acquisitive crime: NI 16.
- Reduce the perceptions of anti social behaviour from 24% in 2008 to 21% by 2010/11: Perceptions of anti social behaviour: NI 17.
- Reduce the assault with injury crime rate by 7.5% compared to 2008/09: Assault with injury: NI 20.
- Reduce the re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders by 19% each year until 2011: NI 30.
- Reduce the repeat incidents of domestic abuse from 127 in 2007/08 to 108 by 2010/11: Repeat incidents of domestic violence: NI 32.
- Reduce the number of arson incidents from 1277 in 2007/08 to 855 by 2010/11: Arson: NI 33.
- Slow the rate of increase in alcohol-harm related hospital admissions from 2180 in 2007/08 to 2323 in 2009/10 and 2309 by 2010/11: Alcohol related hospital admissions: NI 39.
- Increase the number of drug users in effective treatment from 513 in 07/08 to 544 by 10/11: Drug users in effective treatment: NI 40.

### **Local Target**

- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents: People killed or seriously injured: NI 47.
- Reduce the number of incidents of anti-social behaviour in the worst 5 Lower Super Output Areas compared with the rest of the Borough from 97.88 per 1000 population in 2007/08 to 83.2 per 1000 population by 2010/11 (total of 11% reduction).

## **Cross Cutting Issues**

### **Introduction**

The Sustainable Community Strategy is concerned with addressing local needs in order to make the 2025 vision a reality. This strategy tries to take a positive view of the future. It will be better to shift our focus to prevention measures, to promote positive lifestyles and the many excellent aspects of life in Halton, including more timely interventions to help people at the times when they most need support. At the same time a number of issues that cut across the key priority areas contained within this Strategy must be kept in mind as we meet the challenges faced within each priority area.

The Halton Strategic Partnership wants to develop policies and programmes which leave a lasting and positive effect on future generations of people in Halton. We also want to look forward and help to achieve sustainable development both locally and more widely to promote regional, national and global aims. Our approach will be guided by the following principles:

- Anti-discrimination
- Equality of opportunity
- Independence not dependence
- Individual needs
- Accountability
- Integration
- Involvement in decision making

The people of Halton and a focus on their full range of needs, is the key cross cutting theme that underpins this strategy. Analysing needs allows us to anticipate likely changes and plan accordingly. We want to sustain progress and increasingly provide a much greater range of opportunities, and the ability to take advantage of them. We want to sharpen up service delivery and focus on the things that will make the most difference. The key measure of whether service delivery is transformed is how far and how fast we can narrow the gap in outcomes for the most disadvantaged in Halton, as measured by comparison with both Halton and national averages.

In short, we want to build a sustainable community that balances and integrates social, economic and environmental progress; that meets current expectations and prepares for future needs; and that respects the diversity of the place and people. The Partnership has identified the following components as being crucial to success.

### **(a) Respect and Enjoyment**

The communities of Halton have a strong sense of community identity and belonging. They also tolerate and respect differences, and believe in 'live and let live'. Co-operation, collaboration and helpfulness are vital. There needs to be plenty of things to do and places to go - culture, leisure, sport, community, shopping - for all members of the community, young and old alike. People

should feel their chances in life are good and crime, drugs or anti-social behaviour does not taint their lives.

**(b) Thriving Places**

The local economy has to flourish and provide a range of opportunities for all Halton people for both training and work. The economic infrastructure has to be top quality with a variety of land and premises (industrial, commercial and retail) available to support economic prosperity, growth and change. In addition, we want to see a strong business sector, which feels valued locally, and is well supported to create new enterprises and new jobs which can benefit local people.

**(c) Well Planned**

We need to retain a clear sense of place and retain features that make Halton distinctive. We want to see buildings and open spaces that are accessible, well designed and of the highest quality. Places and spaces that are safe, valued and promote a feeling of well-being. The housing market has to be dynamic and inclusive with a range of options available that are affordable for local people.

**(d) Accessibility**

People make places work, and all the communities and facilities of Halton (jobs, schools, town centres, health) need to be well connected and well served by the transport network. We need appropriate levels of car parking in the right places, a well managed and maintained road network, and a properly functioning public transport network to help people get about and reduce car dependency. We need to further develop opportunities for walking and cycling, and ensure our connection to the outside world through motorways, railways, ports and airports remain excellent. The further development of technology and digital opportunities will also enable Halton to be more accessible to the world.

**(e) Well Served**

People need to have good access to a range of services that are appropriate to their needs and that make their lives worthwhile. This includes good schools, further and higher education opportunities and lifelong learning, high quality health, leisure and social care facilities, including quality services for vulnerable adults, children and families. In addition a good range of information, advice and signposting is needed, and wherever possible services should be situated together to make access easier.

**(f) Well Run**

There has to be a sense of pride, responsibility and civic values which present themselves in a place that is well governed and managed. This includes democratic, representative and accountable governance through Halton Borough Council with community wellbeing at its heart. It also encompasses effective community engagement and enabling active participation by local people in the decisions that affect their lives. A strong and vibrant voluntary and community sector is a sign of success along with effective partnerships that lead by example.

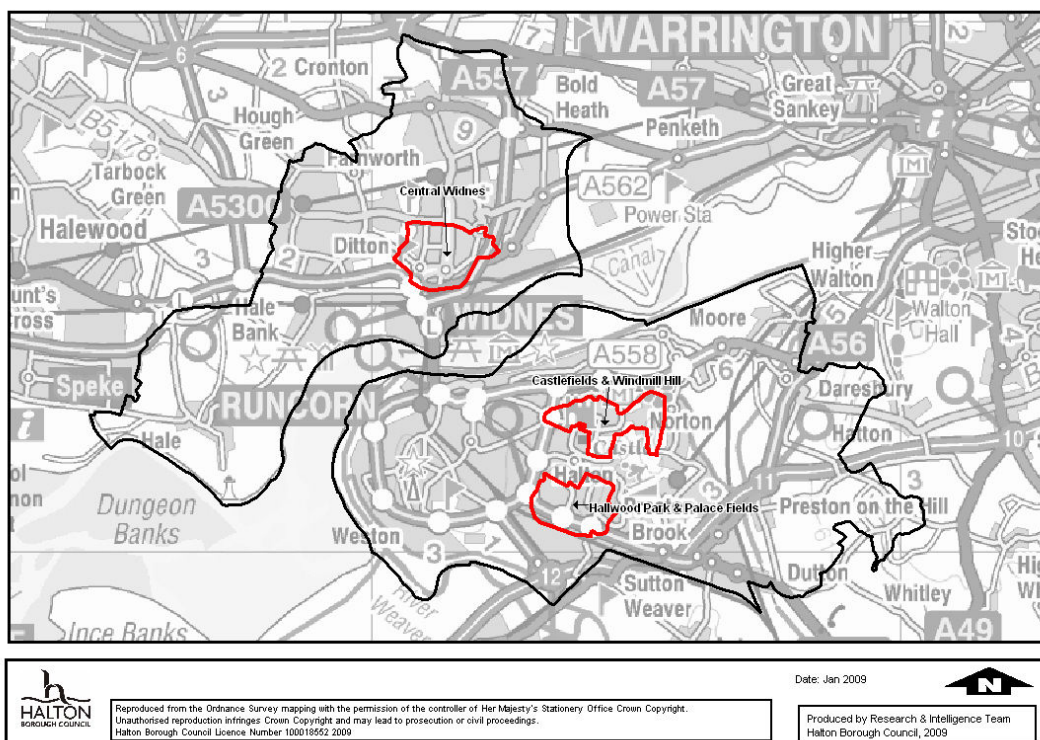
The objectives and targets outlined in this Strategy and all the improvements aspired to need to be adequately resourced in order to make happen. A key purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that the resources available are targeted and used effectively to bring about improvements in the Borough.

## Issues

### 1. Social Exclusion

This is about what happens when people face a multitude of problems such as poor housing, high crime, poor health, worklessness, discrimination and poor relationships. These problems link and reinforce each other creating a vicious circle for people. Often they are clustered in specific neighbourhoods.

Since 2006 Halton has received ring-fenced funding from the 'neighbourhood element' part of the then Safer & Stronger Communities block of the Local Area Agreement. The money is to develop Neighbourhood Management in those areas of the Borough that fall within the 3% most deprived nationally under the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2005. The funding runs until 2010. In Halton work is focused on three pilot neighbourhoods, each of which falls within the above category; Central Widnes, Hallwood Park & Palace Fields and Castlefields & Windmill Hill. The map below shows the boundaries for these 3 neighbourhoods.



Neighbourhood Management is designed to help close the gap between the most deprived parts of the Borough and the rest, with regards to health, education, employment and crime. The development of neighbourhood management in Halton is being directed by a strategic partnership board that



consists of many of the key local service providers and partners. This board reports directly to the Halton Strategic Partnership Board

One key example of this is the effort to reduce worklessness in the neighbourhood management areas. The gap between out of work benefit claimants within the neighbourhood management areas and Halton overall had reduced since 2006, but has increased slightly in the last months, probably as a result of the economic downturn.

According to the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation in 2007 Halton has again improved its overall deprivation score but it remains amongst the 30 most deprived areas of England. Halton has become less deprived overall on a national scale but the gap between the most affluent and deprived areas of the borough is growing. Serious progress must be made to increase wealth and to narrow the gap for those who are most disadvantaged if residents are to enjoy the quality of life that many others take for granted.

Overall poverty, unemployment and material deprivation have diminished in crude terms. However, Halton continues to display high rates of benefit dependency, which may increase in the current economic climate. At the same time many people are still not claiming their full entitlements which would allow them to enjoy a minimum standard of living. Therefore, information, advice, guidance and advocacy are crucial in allowing people to access the help they need to navigate an extraordinarily complicated benefits system. This is not only beneficial for the recipients themselves but also for the local economy as research shows that most transfer payments are spent locally. Halton is also characterised by high levels of personal debt, with up to 10% of households struggling to support debt levels. This in turn impacts on people's health and well being and the positive contribution they can make to the local economy. Therefore, debt advice and innovative community finance initiatives are a continuing need.

## **2. Economic Climate**

The adverse economic climate now has major implications for us all. The Halton Strategic Partnership has a role to put in place measures to support residents and businesses and where possible provide intervention measures to try and prevent house repossessions, loss of jobs, etc. Where they do occur we need to ensure services are there to help pick up the pieces, whether this is access to training, benefits, debt advice, target hardening against burglary, alcohol abuse support or counselling.

On top of the implications of the current economic climate on the residents of Halton, there are implications for partners in terms of meeting its Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets by March 2011. Several of Halton's LAA indicators are likely to be severely affected by the current climate, with others indirectly impacted upon.

## **3. Climate Change**

Halton has adopted a climate change indicator, per capita CO2 reduction, as part of its LAA. This cross cutting indicator includes CO2 emissions from

domestic housing, business and the public sector and road transport. Local, regional and national partners and organisations will work together to encourage and influence residents, businesses and other organisations to make CO2 reductions and also to put our own house in order.

There has already been much progress around tackling climate change. Halton is committed to the Carbon Strategy and Reduction Plan and a target of reducing CO2 by 20% by 2015. As part of the strategy, we have invested in a number of areas to reduce energy costs and consequently CO2 emission reductions.

#### **4. Sustainability**

The goal of sustainable development – integrating and improving environmental, economic and social outcomes both now and in the future – is at the heart of the strategy. This Strategy sets the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of Halton through to 2025 that will contribute to the overall sustainable development across the UK.

Part of Halton's success has been its ability to change and evolve, and its resilience in the face of adversity. It has had to cope with the loss of much of the manufacturing industry it formerly depended on. The effect of this was dramatic, leading to population loss and a legacy of deprivation across the communities of Halton. However, the position has stabilised and welcome signs of an improvement can now be seen. This resilience is the key to the future. The Halton Strategic Partnership sees this as one of the strengths on which a sustainable future can be built.

The vision for the future is of a Halton that has sustained itself. This is a place where people want to live and work. It is somewhere that provides a high quality living environment, sensitive to a range of needs, and recognises the diversity of its residents. This Strategy is all about giving people opportunities and choice. We want to build people's aspirations and abilities so they can exercise greater control and choice in their lives. Having done so we want to ensure we provide the quality of life and opportunities locally so that people choose to live and work here.

#### **5. Equality & Diversity**

Building stronger communities through community engagement must be a key outcome for the strategy. There has been much progress in this area of work since 2006. For example, an Equalities and Community Cohesion Group now meets regularly and reports to the Halton Strategic Partnership.

The Partnership is determined to deliver its vision of a better future for Halton's people. We are committed to equality for everyone regardless of age, sex, caring responsibilities, race, religion, sexuality, or disability. We are leaders of the community and will not accept discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

This commitment to equity and social justice is clearly stated in the adopted equal opportunities policy of the Partnership. This states that the Partnership:

- is committed to promoting equal opportunities in Halton
- values diversity and encourages fairness and justice
- wants equal chances for everyone in Halton to work, learn and live free from discrimination and victimisation
- will combat discrimination and will use its position of influence in the borough, wherever possible, to help overcome discriminatory barriers

As well as accepting our legal responsibilities, we are committed to broad principles of social justice. The Partnership is opposed to any form of discrimination and oppression and looks to enhance quality of life by supporting individuals and communities who experience marginalisation and exclusion. Our policies apply to all of those who come into contact with us. This includes current users of directly provided services, users of services provided on our behalf, potential users of services, other agencies and professionals, employees and job applicants, and the general public.

The Partnership wants to create a culture where people of all backgrounds and experience feel appreciated, valued and able to participate fully and constructively in the life of the local community. Discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, sexuality, disability, age or any other unjustifiable reason will not be tolerated. As a Partnership we are committed to a programme of action to make this policy fully effective.

Halton is committed to equality of opportunity for disabled people and to ending discrimination. The passing of the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995 has given a new focus to our commitment to disabled people. Underlying this Strategy is a commitment to turn policy into practice. We want to identify and support all family carers and cared for people with disabilities in Halton by striving to improve their quality of life and life chances. We want disabled people living and working in Halton to be able to realise their full potential. We will make progress towards this by removing barriers and changing the attitudes which prevent disabled people from gaining access to employment and to the services provided by partners.

Partners will work collaboratively to develop effective procedures and policies to combat all forms of unlawful discrimination and to share good practice. They will ensure that all services are provided fairly and without discrimination. Reasonable adjustments will be made so that services are accessible to everyone who needs them. People's cultural and language needs will be recognised and services will be provided which are appropriate to these needs. Partners will monitor the take up of services from different sections of the population. The information collected will be used to inform service planning and delivery. Equality Impact Assessments will also be carried out on Partnership policies and services to assess how policies and services impact on different sections of the community. The results of the

Equality Impact Assessments will highlight areas for improvement, which will be dealt with through the Partnership Improvement Plan.

## **6. Population**

Following national and regional trends, Halton's population continues to age with older people making up an increasing proportion of the population:

**Younger people (0-14 year olds):**

projected to grow by 2% (2006-2021).

**Working age (15-64 year olds):**

projected to decline by 2% (2006-2021).

**Older people (65+):**

projected to grow by 43% from 16,400 in 2006 to 23,500 in 2021.

The growth in older people will increase the demands for both formal and informal support. While small decreases in the working age population mean there are fewer people to provide and pay for this additional support.

## **7. Housing**

The priorities set out within the Halton Housing Strategy 2009-11 mirror the priorities contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy.

It is recognised that many housing objectives can make a contribution to more than one of the Sustainable Community Strategy's aims and objectives. This is a summary of some of the main areas that link to the Sustainable Community Strategy. A full breakdown of these areas is set out in the table attached to the Housing Strategy.

The Government and the regional housing board have identified the "big issues" for housing for the next decade. Halton does not necessarily exhibit these problems to the same degree as other areas, so the challenge for Halton is to develop solutions and secure resources for local problems that are not reflected in national or regional policy.

Partnership working will be key to this process and we will endeavour to work with partners across local authority boundaries to seek joint solutions to common issues and to help shape sub regional policy.

There is an emerging affordability issue in the Borough, caused by the relationship between house prices and local incomes. Consequently the demand for social rented housing has increased in recent years but the number of available social rented dwellings has declined. Equally the private rented sector cannot fully meet the demands of those unable to afford to buy or access social rented housing due to low supply and high rents.

Other housing demand issues include a mismatch between demand for private sector terraced housing and the number of terraces available (which could result in market decline in poorer areas) and the predicted demographic change in the elderly population which is likely to result in increased demand for supported housing and related services.

In terms of housing condition, the private sector is generally in good condition although there are concentrations of older terraced housing with the potential to fall into decline without investment by the owners. The condition of privately rented property is generally poorer.

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are on target to meet the 2010 target of making all homes decent, which in turn should improve energy efficiency. Although vacancy levels are generally comparable with national and regional figures the proportion of private sector dwellings vacant for more than six months is a growing cause for concern.

Overcrowding is higher in the social rented than owner occupied sectors, though there is potential to alleviate this through making better use of the housing stock.

In relation to local populations and communities, Halton has a very small Black and Minority ethnic population, although the demographics of that population are rapidly changing due to Eastern European migration.

Although homelessness remains an issue in Halton, the number of presentations has dropped considerably since the last Housing Strategy was produced. Recent prevention service developments for homeless people are proving successful and should have a positive impact on acceptances and the number of people in temporary accommodation.

Worklessness is an issue on many social housing estates across Halton and the Council is working with RSL partners to develop projects aimed at tackling worklessness on these estates.

The Council is improving provision for Gypsies and Travellers in accordance with the recommendations of the Cheshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, with the development of a 14 pitch transit site.

Supply and demand analysis for particular client groups reveals a need for increased accommodation for the elderly, particularly extra care accommodation, making better use of the existing stock of adapted dwellings and a range of accommodation for people with mental health problems offering varying levels of support.

Government expenditure on housing is set to increase nationally; however, this will be specifically targeted at housing growth and affordable housing at the expense of private sector renewal. It will also be targeted at specific interventions developed at a sub regional level.

The Council is likely to receive a reduced capital allocation over the term of the Strategy and there is uncertainty over the levels of funding available for adaptations and new supported housing schemes.

### **8. Community empowerment and engagement**

It is now recognised that both individuals and whole communities can and should take some responsibility for improving quality of life. This requires action especially through Local Government and other public and voluntary sector services, to empower local communities so that they develop skills and can access resources to play their part effectively.

### **9. Cross Cutting Targets**

There are many key targets that we work towards achieving in partnership, all of which are included in the improvement targets in each of the five priority areas within this document. See pages 19, 24, 28, 32 and 35 for detailed target information.

## **HOW WILL WE MAKE IT HAPPEN IN HALTON?**

All the objectives and targets outlined here are achievable. How well and how quickly this happens depends crucially on the availability of resources and how smartly they are used. That means money, people, physical resources, proper intelligence and information, allied with the strength of will to use them in the best way. A key purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that the resources available are targeted and used effectively to bring about improvements in the borough. This means:

- Being clear and agreeing about what we need to achieve so we are all pulling in the same direction
- Maximising the funding we can generate or draw in to benefit Halton and developing our own resources and the capacity to help ourselves
- Co-operating to be more effective, cutting out duplication and waste, and pooling the budgets, knowledge and efforts of different organisations and groups where this makes sense
- Listening and responding to what matters most to people locally
- Targeting what we do to where it can make most difference
- Doing the kind of things that experience has shown will really work and be successful
- Checking on progress, letting people know how we are doing, and adjusting where necessary to keep on track

Without the tools and the will to do the job, the improvements set out in this Strategy will not happen.

### **Money**

The organisations that make up the Partnership already spend hundreds of millions of pounds of public money each year in Halton. Much of this goes to maintain essential services like health, policing, schools, transport and waste collection that we tend to take for granted. The way money is spent on these statutory services – ‘mainstream budgets’ – has to be steadily re-focused to achieve the specific objectives and improvement targets within this Strategy. The Sustainable Community Strategy provides a tool to help partners refocus their budgets.

The Strategy also provides a framework to help identify and secure additional funding for the borough from a variety of sources. It sets out shared policy objectives along with clear aims and targets across the five agreed key themes. This gives a framework in which partners can make budgetary decisions that reflect Halton's priorities.

Halton received Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, which provided tremendous support (more than £30million) to the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy. In 2007 Halton was awarded a further £16million from the Working Neighbourhood Fund, to continue with the important projects already serving the communities needs, up until 2011.

Local Area Agreements provide a mechanism for the partners to genuinely work together to achieve the same goals and to spend the resources discussed above. They provide an opportunity to map resources and activity, streamline current processes, pool and align budgets, eliminate duplication, attract new funding and to target activity to where it is most needed to achieve the overall vision for Halton. In particular agreements will target funding at the most deprived neighbourhoods and towards specific at-risk groups.

### **People & Assets**

Allied to cash, the efforts, skills and determination of people living and working in the borough are key to success. This applies to individuals interested or already active in helping their local community as well as to those who work in public, voluntary and other organisations serving Halton. We need to boost skills and knowledge and stimulate confidence and motivation that will strengthen the Borough's capacity to help itself. We must ensure that we are organised and co-operate in ways that are effective and deliver real benefits. Also, we need to provide better ways for people to work collaboratively and across organisational boundaries to increase their own job satisfaction and their impact on the challenges they deal with.

Most of the steps we need to take in moving Halton forward will involve some use of land, buildings, equipment and materials. Hundreds of millions of pounds are currently invested in publicly owned physical resources of various kinds within the borough. We need to make optimum use of these assets, cutting out any unnecessary duplication and ensuring they are well adapted to local requirements.

In particular we have to respond to the rise of consumerism and the desire of people to access a range of services through a single portal. The advent of Halton Direct Link, Health Care Resource Centres, extended schools and Children's Centres provide models of exemplary service delivery which are highly valued by local people. Increasingly, partners will need to look at much greater efforts towards co-location and joint use of facilities. Not only is this more cost efficient, but it gives partners a proper customer focus.

### **Intelligence**

Without proper information, and making it easily accessible to people, we are working in the dark in trying to bring about improvement in Halton. This covers information about local needs and conditions, and what people think is most important for their communities. It is about the information we need to understand what is likely to work well in achieving our targets for Halton. It's about keeping people – local people and partner organisations – in the picture about the progress we are making together.

The Partnership has made a big commitment to improving the way information is gathered, used and shared. Of particular note are:



- a) A data 'Observatory' that holds key statistical information on all aspects of living conditions in Halton. The Observatory provides data at a variety of spatial levels – super output area, ward, neighbourhood and district level – and allow for comparison with our neighbours and regional and national averages. It will greatly help people to understand the geography and nature of disadvantage in Halton.
- b) The Partnership has a database of consultation and community engagement in Halton. This will enable people to access a rich source of attitudinal data on a range of issues. It will also help people to plan and execute better community engagement in the borough.
- c) The Partnership website provides an easy to access source of material on all aspects of the Halton Strategic Partnership's work throughout the borough. The site covers the full range of activities from events and award ceremonies to new policy changes. There are dedicated sections for each of the priority areas that outline the aims and objectives plus provide access for meeting minutes. There is also a newly added policy section, developed to keep partners up to date with any changes.

## **MANAGING RISKS**

The Partnership recognises the scale of its ambition and is realistic in its expectations of what can be achieved given the scale of resources being deployed. It also recognises that risk management must be an integral part of the performance management framework and business planning process. This will increase the probability of success (and reduce the likelihood of failure) by identifying, evaluating and controlling the risks associated with the achievement of its objectives.

The risk management process focuses attention and resources on critical areas, provides more robust action plans and better informed decision-making. It also fosters a culture where uncertainty does not slow progress or stifle innovation and ensures the commitment and resources of the Partnership to produce positive outcomes.

As part of implementing this Sustainable Community Strategy the Partnership will adopt a Risk Management Strategy and establish a Strategic Risk Register. The Strategy will set out the risk management objectives, the role and responsibilities for risk management of the Board and individual Specialist Strategic Partnerships, and will categorise risks and the approach to risk management action plans.

The risk management objectives include the;

- Adoption of Risk Management as a key part of the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Identification, evaluation and economic control of strategic and operational risks
- Promotion of ownership through increased levels of awareness and skills development

The Partnership's risks can be broadly categorised as either "strategic" or "operational". Strategic risks cover those threats or opportunities which could impact upon the achievement of medium and long-term goals.

A major review of strategic risks was carried out in 2006 when this Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted. That was followed up by an assessment of operational risks through each of the Specialist Strategic Partnerships as part of their action planning and Local Area Agreement process.

## **HOW WILL WE KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING?**

The targets in this plan are a first step towards aligning our vision for Halton in 2025. If we succeed in achieving our targets they will translate into real improvements for local people, building on the work done to date. This is why it is important to know how we are doing and what progress we are making in meeting the improvement targets we have set ourselves. By monitoring progress closely we can identify and build on successes, provide necessary assistance or support where progress has not met expectations, and adjust our efforts and resources to adapt to changing circumstances.

A range of high level outcomes have been set in the Strategy. These provide a benchmark and clarity in how our progress can be measured in the future. For all five themes there are several key objectives and a small number of key targets for each. In particular these reflect the government floor targets, local public service agreements and key desired outcomes. Together these form a 'score card' for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

We want to be judged by what we do and not by what we say. Every year the progress on the Sustainable Community Strategy will be reviewed and the scorecard published as part of our Annual Report. This will allow for scrutiny of the work of the Partnership. Local people are the best judges of how well we are doing. The Partnership works on their behalf and they are best placed to venture an opinion on how the quality of life in Halton rates. As well as the scorecard the Partnership will repeat its Quality of Life survey at regular intervals to track public perceptions of how well the Strategy is being implemented. This regular dialogue is a key part of our performance-monitoring framework. We genuinely want to know what people think of the things we do, how we go about tasks and what we should pay attention to in the future.

The forward programme of the Partnership in pursuit of the Strategy will be reviewed and updated to ensure it responds to changing circumstances. As well as the high level scorecard, each Specialist Strategic Partnership will have a more detailed action plan. This will contain a richer hierarchy of outcomes, outputs, targets and milestones. Each Partnership will be accountable for its own performance and the Board will seek qualitative monitoring reports on how work is progressing. One of the key features of the Strategy is the understanding of how each of the themes are linked and impact on each other. The Strategy establishes the importance of a number of key crosscutting themes that are common across all Partnership activity. A Performance and Standards Group reporting directly to the Board has been established. This group takes responsibility for all aspects of performance management and ensure proper oversight, scrutiny and accountability of all activities that take place under the auspices of the Partnership and this Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **ENGAGING THE PEOPLE OF HALTON**

Wholesale improvement in the quality of life enjoyed by local people can only come about if a significant part of the community is involved in making it happen. This can take place informally, in many different ways within the community itself. However this has to be complemented by action taken with the support of a variety of public, voluntary and other bodies.

The views of the public were an important factor in deciding the overall themes and direction of this Sustainable Community Strategy. Channels of communication like the borough's Area Forums and the Police Community Action Meetings provide extra ways to share, discuss and resolve local issues. A whole range of services actively consult with and involve their customers, and staff from a range of organisations work closely with local people on a day-to-day basis.

The Halton Strategic Partnership sees itself, through this Strategy and the actions of partners, as providing leadership. This can only be achieved if they remain in touch with the people and communities they represent and serve. The Strategy aims to create an environment in which everyone can get involved in making things happen in Halton. We want to foster active participation by as many people and agencies as possible. The Partnership will look for ways to make itself more accountable to communities through events, panels, area forums and open and transparent decision-making processes. A number of steps define this:

**Customer focus** – Services and processes have to be designed around the needs of the people who actually use them. At the same time users need to have an appropriate role in specifying the services that are delivered.

**Consultation & engagement** – Partners will create specific and purposeful opportunities for people to give their views on what is needed and how it should be delivered. Wherever possible people should be actively involved in decision-making, service specification and design.

**Communication** – Letting people know what is happening, how they can get involved and encouraging dialogue between partners and local communities is vital. Various media and methods will be used in appropriate and sensitive ways to build and maintain the communication effort.

The Partnership has spent a considerable effort in developing an inclusive approach to engagement through its bespoke strategy and network arrangements. Full details are available on the Partnership website. Community empowerment is about members of a community feeling able to achieve their own goals, with some measure of control over the processes and strategies to attain these. It is a process whereby communities are encouraged to become increasingly self-reliant in improving their neighbourhoods and livelihoods. It is a cyclical, participatory process where local people co-operate in formal or informal groups to share their knowledge and experiences and to achieve common objectives. It is a process rather

than a blueprint, and one that underpins this Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

This Sustainable Community Strategy highlights key objectives for each strategic theme and improvement targets by which success can be judged. These targets collectively form the Partnership Scorecard. We will report back to partners and the public each year on progress against this Scorecard.

If we succeed in achieving our targets, they will translate into real improvements for local people, including:

- longer, healthier lives
- a better urban environment and reasons to feel pride in Halton
- higher standards of education and skills and the greater employment and other life chances that go with them
- fewer people trapped by poverty, excluded or held back through some form of deprivation or disadvantage
- the freedom to feel safe and enjoy life in an attractive neighbourhood

**Back cover**

If you have any queries or comments you would like to make about this Sustainable Community Strategy, please contact:

The Halton Strategic Partnership Team,  
c/o Halton Borough Council,  
Municipal Building,  
Kingsway,  
Widnes,  
WA8 7QF

Telephone 0151 424 2061  
or email [lsp@halton.gov.uk](mailto:lsp@halton.gov.uk)

You can find out more detail on the work of the Partnership on our website:  
[www.haltonpartnership.net](http://www.haltonpartnership.net)

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

**SUBJECT:** Local Area Agreement Refresh and 2008-09 Performance Report

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To report on progress towards meeting Local Area Agreement targets at the end of the first year of the Agreement.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION THAT:**

- i. The report is noted.
- ii. The Board considers whether it requires any further information on the actions being taken to deliver the LAA targets.

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The revised Local Area Agreement (LAA) was signed off by the Secretary of State in June 2008. The purpose of the LAA is to agree a set of targets for Halton with government and local partners. Named partners have a duty to co-operate in striving to achieve these targets. There are 32 indicators in the LAA, together with statutory education and early years targets. The agreement covers the period April 2008 to March 2011.

3.2 The Agreement was "refreshed" in March 2009. The indicators and targets were reviewed with Government Office. There were a number of gaps and estimates in the original agreement, and the principle changes were to fill these gaps using information that had become available between June 2008 and March 2009 such as the results of the Places Survey. A summary of the changes is attached as appendix 1. It is not expected that there will be many further changes, except in one area. The economic downturn will inevitably have an impact on the likelihood of achieving some targets relating to the economy and housebuilding, and the government has identified a list of indicators for which targets will be reviewed before the end of March 2010, by which time the impact of the downturn will be clearer.



3.3 A report on progress over the first year of the Agreement is attached at Appendix 2, covering those indicators which fall within the responsibilities of this particular Policy and Performance Board. This is based on the targets in the refreshed agreement.

3.4 In reading the report members should bear in mind that:

1. All the national indicators are built into the quarterly service plan monitoring reports. The intention of this report is pick out the LAA indicators from the different service plans so that it is possible to see a clearer picture of progress overall.
2. Certain indicators are only reported some time after year end, so in those cases no progress report is yet available. There are also some survey based indicators for which no further data will be available until the survey is repeated in 2010.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

4.1 The Local Area Agreement reflects the priorities in our community strategy for improving the quality of life in Halton. It is the main mechanism by which government will performance manage local areas. It is therefore important that we monitor progress, and that members are satisfied that adequate plans are in place to ensure that the improvement targets are achieved.

#### **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Local Area Agreement acts as a delivery plan for the sustainable community strategy and as such is central to our policy framework.

#### **6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Achievement of our Local Area Agreement targets has direct implications for our comprehensive area assessment. Further consideration of any areas of under-performance may give rise to other implications for the Council and its partners.

#### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 This report deals directly with progress and delivering one of our five priorities.

#### **8.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 The key risk is failure to improve the quality of life for residents of Halton in accordance with the objectives of our community strategy. This risk can be mitigated by regular reporting of performance, and reviewing the action being taken where under-performance occurs.

**9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 One of the guiding principles of the LAA is to reduce inequalities in Halton.

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

10.1 Document:

Local Area Agreement 2008. Place of inspection 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Municipal Building.  
Contact officer – Rob MacKenzie (0151 471 7416)

## CHANGES TO HALTON'S LAA OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK – March 09

Ref	Description	Reason for Change
NI 5	Overall satisfaction with the area	Targets now agreed, provisional data became available early 2009 following Places Survey.
NI 7	Environment for a thriving third sector	Targets now agreed, data became available early 2009 following survey conducted by Office of the Third Sector.
NI 8	Adult participation in sport	Had used local data, now have national data which became available early 2009 following Sports Participation survey.
NI 16	Serious acquisitive crime rate	Minor typing error corrected.
NI 17	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	Small changes to targets as provisional Places Survey data now being used instead of local data.
NI 20	Assault with injury crime rate	Presentation style was changed by GONW, and more up to date data was made available.
NI 30	Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders.	Presentation style changed.
NI 32	Repeat incidents of domestic violence	Small changes to targets as national definitions now being used instead of local data.
NI 33	<i>Arson Incidents</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 39	Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates – Rate per 100 000 admissions	Baseline updated which impacted on targets.
NI 40	Drug users in effective treatment	Baseline updated which impacted on targets.
NI 53	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth	Baseline has been changed, but targets remain the same as previously agree.
NI 56	<i>Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6</i>	<i>No Change.</i>
NI 63	<i>Stability of placements of looked after children</i>	<i>No Change.</i>
NI 80	Achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	Baseline has been changed, but targets remain the same as previously agree.
NI 111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17	Small changes to targets as baseline supplied has been revised by GONW.

Ref	Description	Reason for Change
NI 112	Under 18 conception rate	Updated baseline, targets remain the same.
NI 115	Substance misuse by young people	Survey data now available and being used.
NI 116	<i>Proportion of children in poverty (To be reviewed in 2010)</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 117	16-18 year old not in education, training or employment WNF Reward Indicator (To be reviewed in 2010)	National data now available and being used.
NI 120	<i>All-age all cause mortality</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 123	<i>16+ current smoking rate prevalence</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 139	People over 65 who say that they receive the information, assistance and support needed to exercise choice and control to live independently.	Places survey data now available and being used.
NI 142	<i>Number of vulnerable people supported to maintain independent living</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 150 C4	Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment	This indicator has been deferred and used as a placeholder due to lack of relevant data available. Will be reviewed in the next refresh.
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods WNF Reward Indicator (To be reviewed in 2010)	Minor typing error corrected.
NI 154	<i>Net additional homes provided (To be reviewed in 2010)</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 163	Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher WNF Reward Indicator	Baseline has changed and targets reviewed, taking into account the economic climate.
NI 171	VAT registration rate (To be reviewed in 2010)	National data now available and being used.
NI 175	<i>Access to services and facilities by public transport walking and cycling</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 186	<i>Per capita CO2 emissions in LA area</i>	<i>No change.</i>
NI 192	<i>Household waste recycled and composted</i>	<i>No change.</i>

PLEASE NOTE THAT TWO INDICATORS HAVE BEEN DELETED FROM HALTON'S LAA.  
THESE ARE:-

Ref	Description	Comment
NI 124	People with long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition	Data unavailable
NI 173	People falling out of work and on to incapacity benefits	Data unavailable

**Halton Local Area Agreement Annual  
Progress Report  
2008 - 09**

**Urban Renewal**

This report provides a summary of progress in relation to the achievement of targets for Halton Local Area Agreement.

It provides both a snapshot of performance at 2008 – 09 year-end and a projection of expected levels of performance to the period 2011.

The following traffic light convention has been adopted to illustrate both current and projected performance in relation to each of those measures and targets within the LAA.

#### **Traffic light convention 2008 / 09**



2008 – 09 target has been achieved or exceeded.



2008 – 09 target has not been achieved

#### **Traffic light convention for 2011 projection**



2011 target is likely to be achieved or exceeded.



The achievement of the 2011 target is questionable



2011 target is highly unlikely to be / will not be achieved.

The following indicators are not included within this performance report:



NI	Descriptor	Reason
5	Overall satisfaction with the area	Survey Based Data. Next survey to be undertaken in 2010.
175	Access to services and facilities by public transport walking and cycling	Data not available 2008/09

#### **Performance Overview**

Ref	Description	08 / 09 Target	2011 Target
154	Net additional homes provided		

## URBAN RENEWAL

### NI 154 Net additional homes provided

Baseline 2007 – 08	2008 - 09			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
522	518	<b>397</b>		518	

#### Supporting information / commentary

As anticipated, the outturn figures for 2008/9 show the impact of the ‘credit crunch’ on the house building industry in terms of lower numbers of dwelling completions than in previous years a reduction of 27% on last years completion rates.

The availability of development finance to fund construction and the availability of personal mortgages for the purchase of completed dwellings have led to far fewer completions and the cessation of speculative building.

Discussions with partners from the house building industry in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment stakeholder workshops indicate that house builders are only finishing units that were already under construction and are now only ‘building to order’ on the Borough’s large housing sites.

These comments have been substantiated by annual site visits for housing monitoring undertaken in April 2009. At the present time there is sufficient land available now for house building to accommodate 5613 units (2008 Housing Baseline Report). A positive change in the current economic climate is required to stimulate the housing market sufficiently to bring housing completions back on target. For this reason an amber traffic light has been allocated to indicate the position in 2011.



**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Environment

**SUBJECT:** Footway Condition and Structural Maintenance Programme

**WARDS:** All Wards

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 Members have requested a report on the condition of footways in Halton in response to a recent press release from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP), which highlighted the condition of footways nationally to publicise problems that broken pavements pose to older and infirm people.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:** That

2.1 The decision of Executive Board on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2009, to prioritise footway reconstruction within the Highways Capital Maintenance block budget allocation, doubling the area of footways to be reconstructed for the next two years, be endorsed.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Performance Indicator BVPI 187**

The press release from CSP alleged that Halton's pavements were the "worst in the Northwest" and that 50% of our pavements are in need of repair. Their press release used data from best value performance indicator (BVPI) 187. This indicator, which measures the condition of walking routes, has its limitations in that it reports only on a small percentage of the footway network, where structural maintenance should be considered. These are the higher use, category 1 and 2 footways, i.e. those usually associated with main distributor, classified roads and town centres, totalling around 46 Km in length and forming less than 5% of the footway network in Halton. It does not generally include footways in residential areas or along unclassified roads. Although the indicator has been dropped from the new National Indicator set, it is acknowledged that the condition of footways is a very valuable indicator, not only in terms of accessibility and safety, but also in the contribution that well maintained footways make to the appearance of local neighbourhoods, and also of the level of public satisfaction with the Borough's highways service provision. We therefore propose to develop a new local indicator that will

measure the condition of all footways and which will be used as the basis for reporting performance for future service monitoring.

Data for BVPI 187 is based on Detailed Visual Inspection surveys (DVI), which identify the detailed condition of footways in terms of a wide range of visible defects within defined lengths. The indicator reports the percentage of surveyed footways that exceed a Condition Index (CI) of 20. The index is set relatively low and can easily be triggered by minor defects such as cracked flags, minor depressions or surface fretting.

Historically, Halton has recorded an average score for this BVPI as shown in the table below. However in 2007/08 the indicator jumped to 50%, double the previous year's score. This was despite positively targeting the footway reconstruction programmes over the same period, toward the treatment of the worst sections of category 1 and 2 footways, as identified in the BVPI surveys.

<b>BVPI 187</b>	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Average of all authorities	25.33	24	24	22.4
Average of Unitaries	25.48	21	23	22.5
<b>Halton</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>50</b>

This significant change in value was queried immediately and Jacobs Babbie, who undertake Halton's pavement management functions, were asked to re-visit and verify the results. Unfortunately, Jacobs Babbie reported no errors were apparent in either the survey methodology or data analysis and there had been no change in the collection of the data from previous years.

### 3.2 Factors affecting the survey.

However, there are a number of factors that appear to have had a bearing on the results of the survey:

1. The surveys undertaken in 2006 and 2007 were immediately prior to the commencement of significant pre-planned programmes of footway maintenance works:

- In the Ditton area of Widnes where 18 separate sections of footway have since been reconstructed.
- In Grangeway and Boston Avenue where Quality Transport Corridor improvement works were carried out during 2007/08

2. The wide footways in these areas have required a higher than normal level of expenditure, and therefore works have tended to be phased over a period of three or four years, having the effect of delaying an overall improvement in the percentage of footways that record above the CI threshold.

3. Because the survey also records relatively minor defects, and the condition index threshold is set quite low, footways that are otherwise perfectly serviceable have been included in the results. This applies mainly to existing 'Bitmac' footways, which on site inspection, do not require further structural work.

### 3.3 Footway Safety Inspections and Repairs

Members will be aware that regular safety inspections of the whole highway network are carried out, every street in the Borough being inspected four times per year. Any safety defects identified during this walked inspection are repaired within 24 hours. Other "serviceability" related defects, i.e. those that might affect the ability of the network to meet the needs of users in the longer term, are also recorded and are subject to further inspection and assessment for repair or reconstruction as necessary' within routine or structural maintenance programmes.

### 3.4 Footway survey and reconstruction programme

Whilst recent footway reconstruction programmes have targeted the Category 1 and 2 footways, the condition of the major part of the footway network must also be considered. A comprehensive "coarse" survey, comprising an assessment of 1620 footways across the whole Borough, was carried out during summer 2008. The aim was primarily to get a full and accurate picture of the condition of the full network, but also to enable a comparison to be made of the relative condition of 'residential pavements' with the BVPI 187 footways.

Similar to the BVPI survey, it is a 'scored' system based on surface and kerb condition, but also takes into account pedestrian usage and the 'importance' of the route in the road hierarchy. Because the BVPI survey is restricted solely to category 1 & 2 footways this 'comparative' attribute is not measured. The recorded scores range from zero (footways requiring no treatment) to 40. Only 7% of the network scores greater than 12. This equates to around one hundred sites. Below this value, the distribution of scores 'evens out' with more sites registering an equal score, making prioritisation more difficult below this level.

The 'coarse' survey will be used as a guide, to target more detailed visual inspections of the identified footways, which can then be prioritised on a more precise basis, for reconstruction or repair. This will ensure that footways in most need of repair will be treated first. However, it should be noted that other factors may also need to be taken into account in the preparation of annual footway reconstruction programmes such as the co-ordination of works with carriageway surfacing, utility works or quality corridor improvement schemes.

### 3.5 Local performance indicator

The survey will also assist in the development of a new local indicator of footway condition, to replace the restricted scope of BVPI 187. This will allow year-on-year comparison of footway condition across the **whole network** and demonstrate trends in improvement or deterioration Boroughwide. It will have the advantage of taking account of the condition of **all** of the Borough's walking routes, rather than reporting on just a 'static' restricted sample of 5% of the network, and will identify trends and inform future maintenance programmes on a fair and equitable basis.

**3.6 Footway reconstruction budget**

In recent years footway reconstruction annual programmes have comprised approximately 20 schemes funded from the available budget. The Highways Capital Programme which was approved by Executive Board on 19 March 2009 included proposals to increase funding for footway structural maintenance, achieved through a re-profiling of the footway / carriageway allocations. This should enable approximately double the area of footway reconstructions to be undertaken for the next two years and will make real in-roads into the top one hundred sites identified in the recent footway survey described in 3.4 above.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no policy implications in relation to this report.

**5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Resource implications in connection with the footway reconstruction programme are as described in paragraph 3.6. Future footway reconstruction programmes will be prepared using the borough-wide condition survey as described in paragraph 3.4 and will therefore include a greater proportion of footways within residential areas. This will impact positively on the sustainability of the environment within the local communities.

**6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

**6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

There are no direct implications in relation to this report.

**6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

There are no direct implications in relation to this report.

**6.3 A Healthy Halton**

There are no direct implications in relation to this report.

**6.4 A Safer Halton**

The approved increase in funding for footway structural maintenance will enable both a greater area, and more reconstruction schemes to be completed at an earlier date than would have otherwise been achievable. This will improve pedestrian safety in those areas.

**6.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal**

The approved increase in funding will result in an improvement in the appearance of the Borough’s public spaces and will improve accessibility within local neighbourhoods.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

There are no specific risks in relation to this report.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

The improved pedestrian safety resulting from the proposed increase in funding will have a positive differential impact on those groups in the community who are disadvantaged due to age or disability.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
BVPI 187 Footway Condition Indicator – graphical output for 2007-07 & 2007-08	Highways Division Rutland House Halton Lea, Runcorn	Dave Cunliffe
2008 Halton Footway Survey	Highways Division Rutland House Halton Lea, Runcorn	Dave Cunliffe
Footway Reconstruction Programmes 2005-06 to 2008-09	Highways Division Rutland House Halton Lea, Runcorn	Ian Munro

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17 June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director - Environment

**SUBJECT:** Highway Improvement Scheme – A5080 Lunts Heath Road / B5419 Wilmere Lane Junction

**WARDS:** Farnworth

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To inform members of progress made in the development of a proposed highway improvement scheme at the junction of Lunts Heath Road and Wilmere Lane junction, Widnes, as requested by the Farnworth Ward Councillors.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) The progress made in the development of a scheme to improve the junction of Lunts Heath Road and Wilmere Lane be noted and
- (2) Options for funding for the design and implementation of a scheme are explored.

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### **3.1 Background to the Scheme**

3.1.1 The origins of the need to consider a highway improvement scheme date back to 2005, when the Birchfield, Farnworth and Halton View Area Forum requested investigation of a scheme to close the existing left-turn slip road from Lunts Heath Road to Wilmere Lane. A number of layout options were considered by the Area Forum, however due to various site and safety constraints, it has not been possible to propose a solution that could be implemented from the Area Forum's limited budget allocation.

3.1.2 At the Forum's January 2008 meeting, concerns were raised about increased traffic flows, which were resulting in congestion and unsafe traffic manoeuvres at the junction, and the Highways Division was asked to investigate these problems. It was recognised that the cost of a scheme to resolve capacity and safety issues at the junction would be beyond the scope of the Area Forum budget and that if a scheme were to proceed, funding would be required from other capital budgets.

- 3.1.3 At the end of October 2008, Area Forum members requested that a report be prepared for the Urban Renewal PPB to consider a highway improvement scheme to address the problems at the junction.

### **3.2 Progress to Date**

- 3.2.1 A traffic survey was undertaken in February 2008 and following analysis of the traffic movements at the junction, a range of options to improve its layout and capacity was prepared. Initial budget cost estimates of the options range from £87,000 for an improved priority junction, to £199,000 for a widened junction with traffic signal control.
- 3.2.2 Operational capacity and road safety are key factors to the satisfactory performance of an improved junction layout. Traffic modelling work has been undertaken to test the operation of the design layout options. The results of this work have indicated that a simple remodelling of the current priority junction would not be sufficient to provide the increased capacity necessary to cope with current and future traffic demand. However, conversion of the junction to either traffic signal control, or to a roundabout layout would reduce the potential for conflicts, build-in capacity and would provide improved pedestrian crossing and cycle facilities.
- 3.2.3 Further preliminary design work, traffic modelling and junction analysis will be required, using a cost benefit and accident prediction approach, before a preferred scheme can be proposed for the improvement of this junction.

### **3.3 Issues**

- 3.3.1 There are housing allocations in North Widnes contained within the UDP which when implemented could generate additional traffic and the resultant traffic growth in the area may impact upon the design of the Wilmere Lane junction. These would need to be taken into account in the junction analysis.
- 3.3.2 In addition to road safety and capacity issues, there are a number of other considerations to be taken into account in the junction design:
- The junction lies on the designated abnormal load route and therefore the improved junction layout will need to accommodate these vehicles and loads;
  - The ongoing routine maintenance and energy costs of the amended junction need to be considered within the cost benefit analysis;
  - The location of existing access to residential properties within the junction must be taken into account in the planned junction layout and residents who are affected by the scheme, consulted at an early stage of the development of proposals.
- 3.3.3 There is currently no funding allocation for either the design or implementation of this potential improvement scheme in any approved

programme. This is a matter for consideration by the Council's Executive Board, however, two main sources of funding could be considered:

- Local Transport Plan Local Safety Scheme Budget. Although not specifically listed in the current LTP implementation programme, the scheme addresses the key shared priorities of improving road safety and tackling congestion. Pedestrian, cycle and public transport accessibility will also be improved in the redesign of the junction. Therefore the scheme would be an appropriate use of the integrated transport block funding through the LTP.
- Mid Mersey Housing Growth Point related funding. Transport infrastructure improvements were identified within bids for funding from the Communities Infrastructure Fund (CIF) and through the Programme of Development (POD). Unfortunately, the expression of interest for CIF funding for transport improvements in North Widnes was not successful. However POD or Section 106 funding may be available in the future, as housing developments are brought forward.

3.3.4 It is not proposed to carry out any further work on the design or analysis of the improvement scheme for Lunts Heath Road / Wilmere Lane junction until appropriate funding has been approved and the scheme has been accepted into the Council's Capital programme. It could also be deemed inappropriate to do any further work until the sites allocated in the UDP are brought forward and accepted. It is not anticipated that this will be until 2011.

3.3.5 Potential sources of funding for the scheme will continue to be explored and pursued.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no policy implications relating to the scheme design and implementation

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Resource Implications

Scheme design and implementation costs are not yet known at this stage. These would be a matter for the Executive Board to consider for acceptance of the scheme into the Capital Programme.

5.2 Sustainability Implications

An improved junction arrangement at Lunts Heath Road / Wilmere lane would reduce congestion, improve road safety and enhance access to north Widnes. The scheme would also include sustainable transport improvements through the provision of pedestrian, cycle and public transport facilities.



5.3 Best value implications  
There are no best value implications at this stage.

5.3 Legal Implications  
There are no legal implications.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

There are no direct implications for children and young people, however, the provision of improved pedestrian and cycle facilities at the junction could allow these groups to negotiate the junction in greater safety.

### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

None

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

The scheme would include pedestrian, cycle and bus stop improvements, promoting sustainable modes of travel, aimed at reducing reliance on the motorcar.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

The scheme would address road traffic accident problems related to the existing layout of the Lunts Heath Road / Wilmere Lane junction. Improving the junction capacity would also reduce congestion and delays and improving traffic flow through the junction, which, in turn, should reduce the incidence of potentially unsafe manoeuvres that currently occur. The scheme meets the key LTP shared priority of safer roads.

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

The scheme would address the existing traffic congestion that occurs during peak times at the junction that might constrain future development. Additional capacity for traffic growth resulting from future housing developments in north Widnes would be built into the design. The scheme meets the key LTP shared priority of tackling congestion.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

There are no specific risks in relation to this report.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

There are no equality and diversity issues.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Scheme layout options	Highways Management Division	Dave Cunliffe x3017?
Traffic survey data – vehicle turning counts	Environment Directorate Rutland House, Runcorn	
Road traffic accident plots.		

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board  
**DATE:** 17 June 2009  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Health & Community  
**SUBJECT:** Homelessness Strategy Consultation Exercise  
**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To consult PPB on the draft Homelessness Strategy for the Borough.
- 1.2 To inform PPB of the findings of the consultation exercise with stakeholders and service users.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- i) **That the PPB notes the results of the consultation exercise attached as Appendix 4. (The findings of dedicated consultation exercises with the service users at YMCA, Grange Way Court and Belvedere will be presented for PPB to consider also).**
- ii) **That a final document is prepared for adoption by Executive Board which incorporates PPB's recommendations and any relevant comments from the consultation exercise.**

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires each local authority to review the extent and nature of homelessness in their area and to produce a strategy and action plan to prevent and tackle the problem. Halton's first Homelessness Strategy was published in 2003, creating a 5 year programme of measures to develop and improve services for households who become homeless and to prevent homelessness.
- 3.2 The next strategic phase will build on the progress made and will focus heavily on prevention and early intervention strategies.
- 3.3 Attached are three Appendices:  
Appendix 1- Executive Summary (Strategic Review and recommendations.)  
Appendix 2- Strategic Review.

Appendix 3- Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013.

3.4 Some of the key findings of the Review are as follows:

- Halton's first Homelessness Strategy met the majority of its aims. Achievements include the setting up of a Homelessness Forum, rent deposit scheme, and a Homeless Prevention Service.
- In 2007/08 296 households applied to the statutory homeless service. Of which 221 households were accepted as having a priority need and being homeless through no fault of their own. This represents a 14% reduction since 2003/04.
- In total the homeless service (including prevention work) dealt with 1,093 customers.
- More households seeking help have multiple problems such as mental health, and substance misuse.
- Homelessness due to parental evictions remains high.
- Levels of homelessness amongst those with dependent children also remains high.
- Debt related homelessness requires earlier intervention.
- A wide range of support services are available for those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.
- Consultation highlighted a desire for service user involvement to shape service delivery.
- General satisfaction was expressed regarding provision, but services needed to be better co-ordinated.

3.5 Key Recommendations include the following:

- Provide mechanisms to enable service users to contribute to service development.
- Ensure a comprehensive approach to intelligence gathering and analysis.
- Enable specific service developments and interventions focused on those most at risk and those facing multiple problems.
- Combine homelessness services with measures to improve employability, linking with training and employment services.
- Ensure mechanisms for cross departmental and organisation work to improve service delivery and development of joint planning to resolve barriers for re-housing, particularly for those with drug and alcohol issues and mental health problems.

3.6 An outline Action Plan is included in Appendix 3 (pgs 19-27). Some of the work detailed here is currently underway, or some preparatory work has been undertaken for example scoping the introduction of a gateway system.

4.0 **CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

4.1 A formal consultation exercise was carried out in March 2009, to seek views on the draft documents referred to above. The Council

received only 6 formal responses of which 3 were from external sources, 1 from an Elected Member and 2 from internal officers. Appendix 4 is a list of the respondents and their comments.

- 4.2 However it should also be noted that the 'blue print' for developing the draft Homelessness Strategy was presented to the Borough's Homelessness Forum. The Homelessness Forum also had the opportunity to consider and comment on the findings and draft strategy on several occasions ahead of a wider consultation exercise.
- 4.3 The Council consulted with service users regarding the Homelessness Service as part of the options appraisal, which informed the Council's thinking on the most appropriate service delivery model for the operational service. The views of young service users aged 16-25 years were also considered during a Youth Homelessness Conference in October 2008. The views from these consultation events have been fed into the review findings and addressed via the strategy action plan. The general public has also had the opportunity to comment via the Council's web site.
- 4.4 Specific service user consultation regarding the Homelessness Strategy (as opposed to the operational aspects of the Housing Solutions service) has also taken place. This will provide a credible foundation on which to proceed. (Results to be presented at the meeting).
- 4.5 The majority of comments received from the formal consultation exercise referred to in paragraph 4.1 relate to presentational issues, or the need to update some information due to a time lag from the documents being written and the consultation exercise-taking place. One of the respondents (HHT) felt that some comments contained within the documents required further expansion or clarification. These comments will be acted upon accordingly and any factual inaccuracies will be corrected.
- 4.6 The key thing to note is that the respondents were supportive of the preventative emphasis of the new strategy, of the general strategic direction and objectives and recommendations contained within the draft strategy.
- 4.7 The next steps are to revise the draft documents, taking account of all appropriate comments. It is recommended that the existing three documents be merged and simplified into two documents i.e. The Homelessness Review being one document and the Homelessness Strategy (containing an executive summary of the Review) being the second document. It is also proposed that the recommendations are rationalised where possible in order to clarify and prioritise strategic thinking and to aid delivery of resulting actions.

5. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Homelessness Review has mapped linkages to the Council's strategic priorities and the new strategy will complement existing corporate strategies.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 It is anticipated that a significant proportion of the actions identified can be achieved within existing budgets. However some additional expenditure may be required overtime as projects develop. The effective use of existing resources, including re-configuration where necessary and any potential new funding streams will be explored to reduce any impact on budgets.

7. **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 Failure to adopt a new Homelessness Strategy for the Borough will be in breach of the Homelessness Act 2002 and would hinder the Council's efforts to reduce homelessness in the Borough.

- 7.2 There is a need to continually engage with stakeholders and service users regarding the Borough's Homelessness Strategy and to communicate key messages to ensure that the Council in conjunction with its partners achieves the desired targets and outcomes. The Borough's Homelessness Forum is key to this process.

- 7.3 There is also a need to refresh the strategy on an annual basis, to ensure that it remains 'current'.

8. **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 The service will not discrimination due to age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation or ethnic origin and will assist some of the most vulnerable groups in our local community. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed which highlights that the Homelessness Strategy will make a positive contribution to equality and diversity issues in the Borough.

Halton

Homelessness

Strategy

Draft

Part 2

Strategy 2008 - 2013

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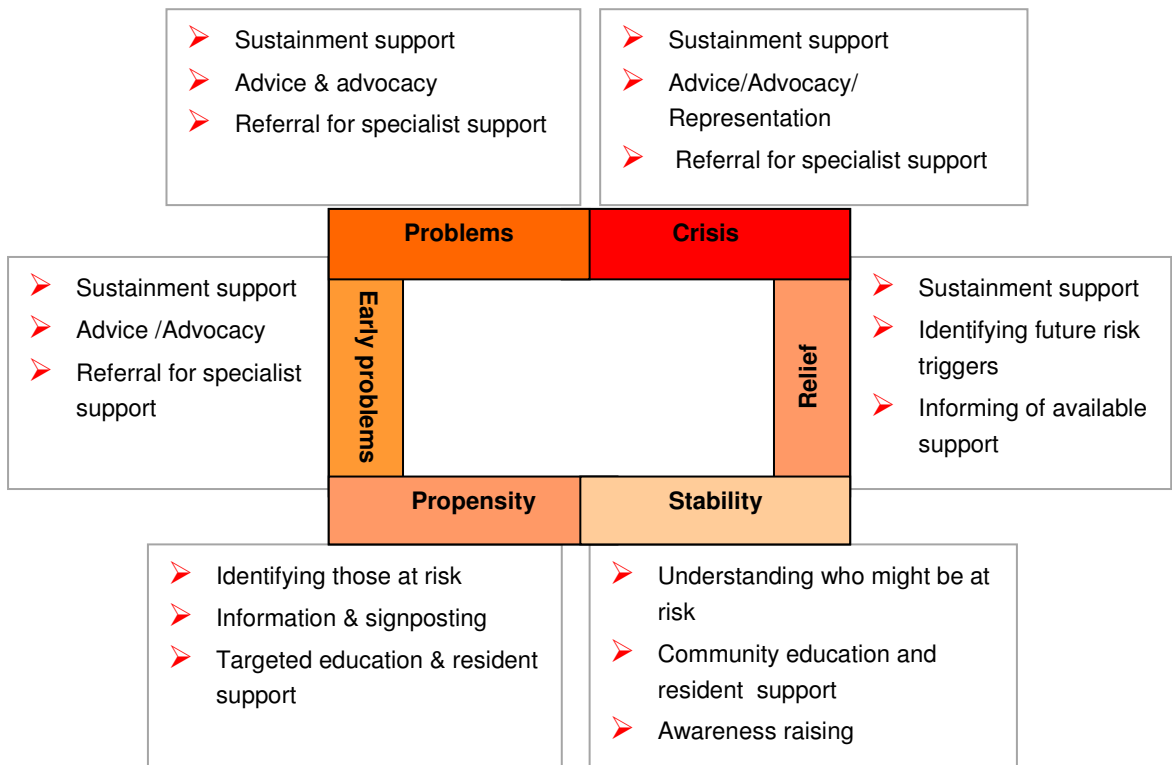


## The new direction 1 Strategic aims & priorities

- 1.1. This strategy is designed to deliver a programme that will reduce homelessness in Halton. It will promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of existing services and also remodel provision to enable earlier and more appropriate interventions.
- 1.2. The strategy aims to position homelessness centrally to key housing and welfare related concerns within Halton; creating constructive partnerships between council departments and with external agencies; and supporting strategic and infrastructure development that increase homelessness prevention. It will ensure that underpinning strategic activity is a sound management process for comprehensive review, evaluation, planning and delivery.
- 1.3. Strategic activities will be supported by the council, in partnership with other major service and accommodation providers. The council’s role is to coordinate and facilitate development, although there will be a need for other organisations to undertake work and assist with investment.
- 1.4. The Homeless Strategy to 2013 will address seven major priorities:

### Priority 1. Intervene much earlier in the homelessness risk process

- 1.4.1. Whilst crisis intervention and relief will be enduring features of homelessness provision in Halton, this strategy will enable earlier points of access to preventative action. Fig 1 shows the shows the types of intervention at different stages of homelessness risk.



- 1.4.2. The aim will be to develop new approaches that avoid problems arising- giving people support to tackle risks earlier. Over time this will shift the emphasis of provision from crisis intervention to risk reduction.

### Priority 2. Ensure that services are developed and coordinated to deliver a comprehensive, inclusive and effective approach to homelessness prevention

- 1.4.3. The considerable developments in service provision over the past five years have laid a substantial foundation for homelessness prevention. There is now a need to consolidate those changes into a coherent and efficient whole and to develop a new model for provision that delivers the earlier intervention focus.

**Priority 3. Fill gaps in prevention activity to reduce the highest risks and proliferate proven, effective prevention and earlier intervention**

- 1.4.4. This requires the development of a wider range of services that are targeted to those most at risk.

**Priority 4. Ensure support for the most marginalised and vulnerable client groups in the most appropriate settings – particularly for those with multiple needs**

- 1.4.5. The strategy needs to tackle those at risk of chronic homelessness. Whilst this affects a limited number of people, those concerned represent some of the most vulnerable in Halton living in the most extreme forms of homelessness.

**Priority 5. Ensure that those living in unsatisfactory housing conditions and at risk of homelessness can access appropriate housing, without risking homelessness**

- 1.4.6. This demands both individual support to plan movement between homes and wider structural development that will open up options for those in need.

**Priority 6. Ensure that emergency or short term housing is available for households in crisis, with appropriate and effective move on opportunities**

- 1.4.7. The provision of temporary accommodation should be appropriate to the level of need – offering periods of supported housing for those who cannot live independently and the fastest possible route to settled accommodation for those who do not need support. This priority also addresses the need for efficient use of resources and the potential to release funds for other interventions.

**Priority 7. Development of a robust process for strategic development to ensure relevance and maintain momentum across the life of the strategy**

- 1.4.8. This priority seeks to establish strong management and a delivery cycle of review, evaluation, planning and action.

## 2 Strategic outcomes

2.1. Strategic action will be geared to the following measurable outcomes

Outcomes	Measured by
<b>An increase in home retention or planned moves from one home to another for those facing home loss</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of baseline data and targets by 2010</li> <li>• A 20% reduction in the number of homelessness presentations by 2013</li> <li>• Elimination of rough sleeping by 2013</li> </ul>
<b>Reduction of homelessness risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of early interventions showing a successful outcome</li> <li>• Baseline data and performance targets in place by April 2010</li> </ul>
<b>Faster and more efficient access to appropriate settled homes for those who become homeless</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 50 % reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 2010</li> <li>• Targets set by 2010 for further yr on yr reductions</li> <li>• Elimination of the use of B&amp;B as temporary accommodation, for statutory homeless households by 2013</li> </ul>
<b>A robust evidence base for prevention success and good practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single set of performance indicators in place by April 2009</li> <li>• Performance review process in place by July 2009 and ongoing annual reviews</li> <li>• Baseline data in place by April 2010</li> <li>• Good practice benchmarking &amp; evaluation process in place by October 2009 and annual reviews</li> </ul>

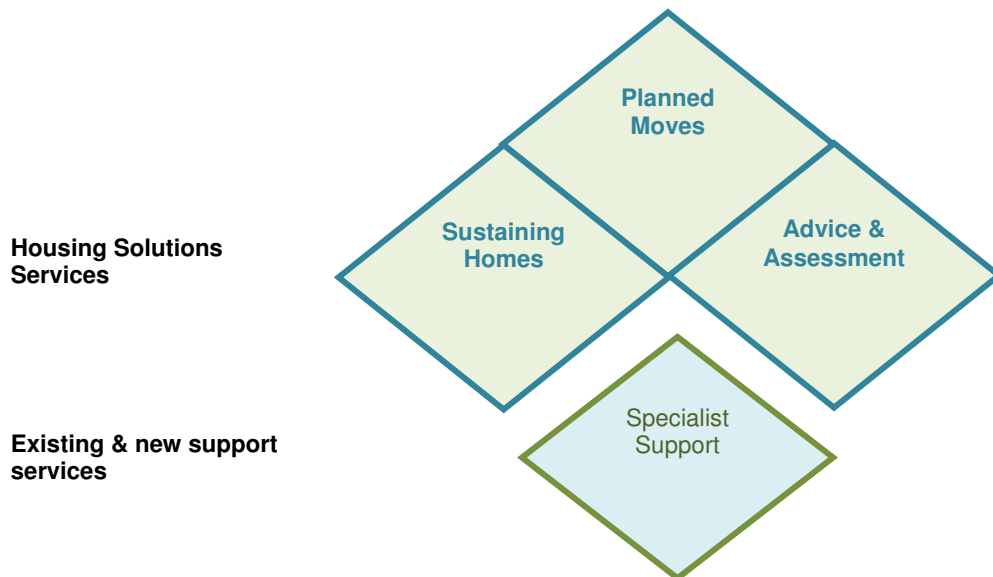
**3 Delivering the strategy** To deliver the strategic priorities, there are four major delivery programmes –

<p><b>1. Development of the Housing Solutions model</b></p> <p>A new focus for homelessness prevention work- taking the priorities relating to service development and placing them within a coherent framework, where their impact on homelessness prevention can be assessed and developed</p>	<p><b>2. Development of accommodation-related strategies and initiatives</b></p> <p>Capturing the strategic priorities relating to the development of temporary and long term accommodation options</p>
<p><b>3. The development of evidence and the proliferation of good practice</b></p> <p>Setting evaluation and research criteria and processes to increase understanding of the causes &amp; effects of homelessness, deliver a deeper analysis of risk and improve knowledge about prevention success and good practice</p>	<p><b>4. The development of strategic management</b></p> <p>This involves the review and revision of the role of the homelessness forum and the development of mechanisms to ensure delivery, track progress and maintain momentum.</p>

## Strategic activity

### 4 Development of the Housing Solutions model

- 4.1. The Housing Solutions model brings together statutory homelessness and Prevention Services to deliver a comprehensive approach, which aims to reduce homelessness. The model is based on 3 interventions **Sustaining Homes**: to help people avoid risk and keep their homes; **Planned Moves**: to help people progress from one settled home to another without experiencing homelessness; and **Advice & Assessment**: access to guidance on options and assessment of entitlements when someone becomes or is threatened with homelessness.
- 4.2. These elements will build on the existing council advice and assessment services to develop new methods of delivery.
- 4.3. The 3 interventions will be underpinned by access to specialist support provision - both existing and new – which include Supporting People commissioned services and for example, those provided through Community Safety and Children's Services.



- 4.4. The whole service will be accessible through a Gateway process, ensuring efficiency and coordination in provision.

#### Housing Solutions Gateway

- 4.5. This will provide a single point of access for those needing help from Housing Solutions and related Supporting People commissioned services, and will deliver
- Common assessment & planning process so that those using the various interventions and specialist services do not have to undergo multiple assessments.
  - Referral protocols between all services accessed
  - A common system for monitoring service provision and success
  - The Gateway will be scoped in 2008/9,
  - Implemented over the course of 2009

## Housing Solutions Advice & Assessment

- 4.6. This service will help anyone facing imminent homelessness to keep hold of their home for as long as possible and plan their move, or to assess their entitlement to rehousing under the homelessness law. This stage is essentially crisis intervention, incorporating the council's statutory duty to help those at risk of homelessness.

### Key activities

- 4.7. **Stronger Integration of the current Homelessness and Prevention services.** Following the return of the Statutory Homelessness service to the council's direct management, a three month review process will lead to further integration for a single service providing

- A full assessment of need
- Housing options guidance
- Assessments under the homeless law,
- Access to temporary and long term housing

- The review and plan will deliver full integration - Oct 2009

- 4.8. **Develop shop front access to Housing Solutions.** This will enable the Advice & Assessment service and the Planned Moves facilities to work from one centre.

- The centre will be scoped in 2009
- implementation in 2010

- 4.9. **Improve integration and cooperation with non-Gateway services** This will target agencies supporting children and young people, those with mental health or drug and alcohol problems - to make sure that there is pro-active Housing Solutions engagement with clients in key risk groups. Initiatives will be developed to provide

- Early warning and referral processes – Q2 2009/10
- Programmes reciprocal training of staff – Q3 2009/10
- Joint assessment and planning protocols – Q4 2009/10

## Housing Solutions Planned Moves

- 4.10. This service will provide a range of re-housing options and choice for residents, alongside advice and support, which will enable them to avoid homelessness and plan a sustainable move to settled housing.
- 4.11. The Planned Moves stage will incorporate support to access Choice Based Lettings [CBL], low cost home ownership schemes and to the private sector. The service will offer assistance through electronic home search facilities, the Deposit Guarantee Scheme and referral to supported short term and other temporary accommodation schemes.

### Key activities

- 4.12. **Develop a home visiting service to families with children over 16 at risk of eviction.** This will involve working with relevant community agencies to target those most at risk and providing families with

- Advice about rehousing options and expectations
- Low level mediation and guidance

- Referral to further sources of support –including intensive mediation, debt advice, employment and training services
  - Home visiting practice and methods of targeting established by Q3 2009/10
  - Full Service Package In Place Q2 2010/11
- 4.13. **Development of short term accommodation access policy and protocols.** These will ensure consistent effective and efficient take up of temporary and short term supported housing for statutory and non statutory homeless people. It will dovetail with the development of a temporary accommodation strategy, [see 7.3. below]
- Policy & protocols in place – Q1 2009/10
- 4.14. **Change the Deposit Guarantee Scheme** to a bond or insurance system and develop the service to enable credit referencing – see 5.7. below
- 4.15. **Develop a furniture & removals scheme** and ensure consistency in access Community Care Grants and similar payments. – see 5.5. below
- 4.16. **Develop Home Search support** – this will assist the introduction of CBL, offering a mixture of information literature, web-based search facilities and guidance to make use of the various bidding and applications processes involved in accessing housing.
- 4.17. Home Search will also include outreach services and open days for specific risk groups – eg young people - linked to public education programmes, [see 4.19 below] which will enable understanding of the schemes and ensure realistic expectations about the process and options
- Development of scheme- [contingent on CBL] 2010.
  - Development of outreach and educational services - 2010/2011.

### Housing Solutions Sustaining Homes

- 4.18. This service will educate, advise and support residents to remain in their homes – whatever the tenure. This stage represents the earliest intervention to avert risks which might lead to homelessness.

#### Key activities

- 4.19. **Develop a Public Education programme** – aimed at raising awareness of risks and options for key groups, focusing on those most at risk – single parents and single young people. This service will involve work in schools, youth centres and through Sure Start/Children’s Centres. It will also involve the development of a peer education programme, which will lend a greater degree of credibility and authority and also develop the skills and knowledge of the peer tutors. This programme will build on developments in good practice and local provision eg from Halton YMCA and the CLG education DVD.
- Scoping of this development in 2009/10
  - Pilot schemes in 2010/11
  - Rolling out of programmes in 2011/12.
- 4.20. **Develop a resident support programme** – providing information & signposting packages to residents, alerting them to potential risks and sources of help. This will involve working particularly with RSLs’ homelessness strategies & financial inclusion programmes to scope, pilot, evaluate and roll out the following elements:

- New resident information packs for all tenures distributed via landlords and lenders
  - Specific guidance to private tenants to ensure financial capability and successful operation of Local Housing Allowance
  - Landlord good practice sharing – regular forums and briefings from RSL and other providers on what works re pro-active management and community activity to prevent homelessness
  - Resident seminars and open days to develop understanding of rights and responsibilities and help available via Housing Solutions services and specialist support provision; and focusing on key themes such as financial and household management.
- Resident information pack development – Q3 2009/10 delivery rolled out 2010/11
  - Private tenants guidance scoped – Q3 2009/10, delivery rolled out 2010/11
  - Develop mechanism to gather landlord good practice – Q4 2009/10 - Roll out 2010/11
  - Resident seminars and open days – Q2 2011/12

4.21. **Develop work with “problem noticers”** - this will enable key workers from Primary Health and social care services [health visitors, midwives and children’s workers] to identify risks and make appropriate referrals for their clients, encouraging proactive engagement with Housing Solutions and specialist support services to prevent homelessness.

- Scoping and feasibility studies with specific key workers Q1 2010/11
- Development of training programmes Q2 2010/11
- Information resources and referral protocols Q3 2010/11
- Piloting of schemes Q4 2010/11
- Roll out 2011/12

### Specialist Support Services

4.22. Each intervention stage within Housing Solutions will be underpinned by access to a range of specialist support services - both existing and new. These services are grouped in “virtual” packages according to the type of prevention support they offer. This way of categorising does not affect how the services are delivered, or who will deliver them, but allows a coherent overview of currently disparate services and gives greater clarity to service planning, with additional focus for evaluating prevention success and identifying development priorities.

<b>Financial advice</b>	<b>Emergency funds and financial support</b>
Maximising income Banking Savings Budgeting Debt avoidance & management	Rent Deposit Housing benefit Discretionary Housing Payments Community Care Grants
<b>Employment &amp; skills development</b>	<b>Legal rights &amp; enforcement</b>
Job searching Coaching Training Access to learning	Advice Advocacy Negotiation Court /tribunal representation



Improving conditions & security	Support to reduce personal risks
Mediation	Domestic violence
Improving physical conditions	Parenting & family
Adaptations	Independent living skills
Increasing safety	Mental health
Education on rights & responsibilities	Anti Social Behaviour cessation
	Drug and alcohol abuse cessation

- 4.23. In addition to the development of the Gateway, which will change access to a number of existing services, the strategy will seek the creation and development of further risk reduction and preventative initiatives.

#### Key activities

- 4.24. **Develop a legal and financial advice and representation strategy for Halton** which averts homelessness risk and reduces repossessions and evictions. The advice strategy will work with key agencies within Halton – CAB, Welfare Rights Service, RSLs and Shelter, along with the Legal Services Commission to develop an action plan to meet need. Two essential developments from the strategy will be
- 4.24.1. **A comprehensive financial advice and support programme** – focusing on maximising income, savings, banking, debt management and court representation. This will involve scoping need and capacity and proliferation of existing financial inclusions toolkits and good practice.
- 4.24.2. **Specialist legal advice & court duty services** – ensuring that all those needing advice and representation when faced with repossession can obtain help as early in the process as possible. This will involve developing the skills and capacity within the Advice & Assessment element of the Housing Solutions service to deliver specialist advice and representation services, and working local advice agencies to develop their provision.
- Strategy delivered by April 2009
  - Financial Advice and legal advice and representation programmes developed in between April 2009 and March 2010. Phase 1 focusing on debt relief and representation. Roll out 2010/11
- 4.25. **Integrate homelessness prevention with employment & skills development services:** ensuring strong links, joint work and planning between Housing Solutions and services that increase the opportunities for employment. Develop
- Service delivery relationships including referral processes to employment and skills services;
  - Educational events about prevention for those attending employment training programmes
  - Improvement of access to training for homelessness young people.
  - Reciprocal training to increase understanding of services and available support
- Scope Q2 2009/10
  - Embed employment and training related information within Housing Solutions services Q3 2009/10
  - Reciprocal training beings Q1 2010
  - Referral arrangement and joint activity 2010/11



## 5 Development of accommodation strategies & initiatives

- 5.1. Structural changes to prevent homelessness include the wider strategic objectives to develop sources of accommodation, affordable housing and regeneration of neighbourhoods, which are contained in the Housing Strategy 2008-2013. Activity set out here aims to augment detailed Housing Strategy work so that homelessness prevention is optimised.

### Key activities

- 5.2. **Review and revise the council's allocation policy pre-CBL**, changing the current policy to broaden the criteria for maximum points on the housing register, to those at risk, increasing prevention options and removing perverse incentives to apply as homeless.

- Review the options for revised criteria and research current access and RSL capacity Q3 2008/9
- Produce options appraisal Q4 2008/9
- Implementation of new allocations policy in Q1 2009/10.

- 5.3. **Devise & implement a temporary accommodation and "move-on" strategy** to ensure the right balance of provision and support across all needs groups and geographical areas and deliver appropriate move-on capacity.

- 5.4. The strategy will set out the goals and development plan for temporary accommodation, including the following specific features,

- Review of demand, supply accessibility and appropriateness of all forms of temporary and short term housing across Halton
- Assessment of the capacity to contract and expand certain types of temporary accommodation – eg reducing B&B use, increased use of mainstream housing and of supported housing for specific need groups
- Scoping the potential for furniture packages linked to use of mainstream housing as temporary accommodation
- Assessment of the capacity for temporary-to-permanent schemes – working with RSLs to develop access to units on temporary basis and the options for transition into permanent offers
- Development of a move-on protocol – this will involve an audit, plan and joint work with providers to increase overall move-on
- Assessment of the potential for additional short-term supported accommodation – schemes for consideration include:
  - Accommodation in Widnes
  - Self referral emergency access
  - Specialist accommodation and day centre provision for those with chronic substance misuse and street homelessness
  - Provision for dedicated transition placements for care leavers that take account of their history and potential risks in independent living, eg; supported lodgings.

- Temporary Accommodation Strategy to be available by Q1 2009/10
- Roll out in 2009-2012

- 5.5. **Develop a furniture & removals scheme and ensure consistency in access to Community Care Grants and similar payments.** This will deliver speedier and more sustainable moves to settled homes – particularly for young people

and will require joint work with short term and settled accommodation providers to scope the furniture project scheme

- Scoping by Q3 2009/10- implement in 2010/11.
- Training for agencies to support successful grant applications to be provided by Q2 2009/10
- Ongoing good practice exchange established through the homelessness forum from Q3 2009/10.

5.6. **Ensure Choice Based Lettings [CBL] works to prevent homelessness and takes account of those who are most at risk.** Work with CBL developers and participate in the development project at strategic and operational levels to deliver accessibility as part of the Planned Moves service by ensuring:

- The allocation of sufficient priority to homelessness in any banding process
  - The allocation of sufficient priority to those who are in high need and unsuitable housing to reduce the need for households to become homeless in order to gain priority
  - The need to ensure genuine choice for homeless bidders – to reduce the prospect of repeat homelessness
  - The provision of sufficient support to those who are most vulnerable to enable equal access to the bidding process.
- Full provision in place by Q4 2011/12

5.7. **Support the development of the private rented sector as a source of housing to prevent homelessness** by developing the capacity of the Deposit Guarantee Scheme[DGS] through the following activities

5.7.1. **Change the DGS into an insurance /bond scheme** - reducing oversubscription and increasing access.

- Feasibility study by Q1 2009/10
- Rolling out the new scheme in phases across 2009/10.

5.7.2. **Develop capacity for the DGS to act as a credit reference agency** and obtain affordable credit checks

- Feasibility study Q3 2009/10
- Potential implementation in 2010/11

5.9. **Ensure provision of information and evidence about take up of the DGS** – tracking outcomes for all applicants – to inform sector development initiatives with the Landlords' Forum, setting up a regular programme of information provision

- Landlord Forum information available from Q4 2009/10.

5.9. **Support the viability of appropriate sites and facilities for Gypsy and Travelling communities.** Working in the context of the county-wide Gypsy & Traveller Assessments and related work programme to

- Ensure that relevant issues are discussed at the Homelessness Forum- participating in information gathering and awareness raising.
  - Provide support and ongoing information so that Housing Solutions staff understand the specific homelessness prevention and accommodation rights of the communities.
- Instigate a regular programme of awareness activity from Q4 2008/9.

- Deliver training Q4 2009/10.

## 6 Development of evidence & the proliferation of good

**practice** A key feature of this strategy is the establishment of mechanisms which ensure that future development and prioritisation are informed by sound evidence and the latest understanding of good practice. It is crucial that methods of forecasting and evaluation, and the capacity to pass on knowledge from service delivery and improvement, are given strategic priority alongside the development of new initiatives.

### Key activities

- 6.2. **Deliver a statistical evidence base**, making use of existing local and regional intelligence to show what is needed and what works.
  - 6.2.1. Devise key data sets & recording processes that will optimise data collection for key categories:
    - Those at risk, including demographic and geographical factors
    - Key risk factors, including personal and structural factors
    - Levels of risk
    - Levels of crisis
    - Performance of key services in meeting needs or averting risk
    - Successful Outcomes for service users
  - 6.2.2. Review the capacity to provide common baseline data across Housing Solutions and the majority of specialist support services – linked to the Gateway. This will include a review of Multi-Agency Monitoring in contributing to the data capture needed; and integration of data collection across the Housing Solutions services.
    - Review and data requirements completed by Q4 2009/10
  - 6.2.3. Develop a model of forecasting which informs the data capture and service monitoring processes
    - Q 2 2009/10
- 6.3. **Undertake a programme of research into the risk of homelessness amongst minority communities within Halton** and their homelessness prevention needs, to ensure that of communities are appropriately represented in homelessness prevention and Housing Solutions services, targeting:
  - those with mental health problems
  - young people at risk
  - Gypsy & Traveller communities
  - those with physical disabilities
  - members of Black and Minority Ethnic groups
  - members of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities,
  - Devise research programme by Q3 2009/10
  - Roll out to 2012/13
- 6.4. **Devise a user consultation and feedback strategy** to inform service and homelessness strategy development.
  - Strategy available from Q1 2010/11.

- 6.5. **Develop a good practice knowledge base** – using links and reference materials to build a virtual library, and develop good practice and new solutions seminars to work across agencies and sectors and to evaluate and refine solutions, ensuring that this feeds into new service development strategies. These processes will involve user participation.
- Start from Q4 2009/10.
- 6.6. **Instigate routine evidence evaluation & reporting for strategic development** – via Homelessness Forum, Homelessness Strategy meetings and briefings
- Devise process Q1 2009/10
  - Implement Q2 2009/10
- 6.7. **Support the development of services that currently deliver risk reduction and prevention.** This will involve providing evidence of need, evaluation of services in relation to homelessness prevention, and good practice assessment and proliferation. Target services will include
- Mediation and Parenting support
  - Domestic abuse Sanctuary Schemes and related provision –
  - Anti- social behaviour cessation projects
- Mechanisms for evidence provision and good practice sharing – Q4 2009/10.

## 7 Development of strategic management

- 7.1. A vital component of the strategy is ensuring that its initiatives are delivered and developments over the life of the strategy remain relevant and timely. This requires a capacity to measure and evaluate performance – of both the strategy and of the services and projects it supports. It also demands a set of structures and processes that will ensure action and maintain momentum and commitment.

### Key activities

- 7.2. **Develop clear and quantifiable outcomes** for all existing and new initiatives based on homelessness prevention success.
- Implement from Q1 2010/11
- 7.3. **Devise a single set of performance indicators for evaluating the success of the strategy** [linked to the National Indicator set]. The set should be based on the following elements
- Implement from Q1 2010/11

**Definitions and measurement of homelessness and prevention** should include all groups and all types of homelessness

<p><b>The measurement of homelessness</b> should cover all those without secure accommodation that can reasonably be occupied</p>	<p><b>Measurements of success in resolving homelessness</b> should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Numbers making homelessness applications</li> <li>→ Numbers needing temporary accommodation</li> <li>→ Numbers gaining access to settled accommodation</li> <li>→ Numbers gaining access to supported accommodation</li> </ul>
<p><b>The measurement of prevention</b> should cover all those who are at risk of homelessness but retain their home or successfully move directly from one settled term home to another</p>	<p><b>Measurements of success in preventing homelessness</b> should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Numbers retaining homes</li> <li>→ Numbers making successful planned moves</li> <li>→ Numbers of previously homelessness households or those at risk who continue to sustain settled living</li> <li>→ Numbers of households reducing homelessness risk factors</li> </ul>

#### 7.4. **Create a robust strategy management process**

##### 7.4.1. **Review and development of the Homelessness Forum**

- Devise new terms of reference to create a strategic supervision and action planning focus.
- Scope the potential for a Homelessness Strategy “Board” supported by wider operational sub group/s, with a very clear focus for members and activities.
- Enable representation of the forum on relevant bodies – such as PCT and social care related activity.

This process should ensure that the homelessness strategy integrates with other strategic areas – particularly children & young people, mental health and employment – encouraging a wider input and user involvement. Its also spreads responsibility for strategic management across all interested parties, to maximise delivery against the action plan.

- New terms of reference agreed – Q2 2009/10
- Implementation of supervision and planning mechanisms – Q3 2009/10
- Implementation of wider membership and user involvement –2009/10 – 2010/11
- Implementation of a programme for Homelessness Forum members to represent homelessness prevention on other forums and to keep the Homelessness Forum informed about current developments. Q 1 2010/11

##### 7.4.2. **Instigate a consistent Strategy reporting and review process** – creating: routine accountability through the council’s executive and member reporting mechanisms; transparent feedback about decisions relating to homelessness developments; assessment of progress; and evaluation of priorities. Establish a periodic [eg: annual] cross-divisional and agency strategy review process.

- Set out reporting and review process – Q4 2008/9
- Implement process - Q1 2009/10

- Initiate cross divisional/agency review Q1 2010/11

7.5. **Develop management of and access to development funding streams** to enable cost/benefit analysis and the realistic development of initiatives. This will involve

- Mapping current sources of funding contributing to prevention activity – ensuring a capacity to track the value of investment
- Develop an investment strategy for prevention services and activity – including analysis of spend to save options, cross -agency support to obtain funding, and direct investment by strategic partners.
- Develop a knowledge base of funding opportunities
  
- Mapping exercise completed by Q3 2009/10
- Investment strategy completed Q1 2010/11
- Knowledge base developed Q3 2010/11

Table 1: Priorities and related Delivery Programme

Delivering the strategic priorities	Delivery Programme			
	Housing Solutions	Accom Strategies	Evidence & Good Practice	Robust Strategic Management
1. Intervene much earlier in the homelessness risk process	Sustaining Homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public education</li> <li>Resident support</li> <li>Joint work with "problem noticers"</li> </ul> Planned Moves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home visiting family support service</li> </ul>	PRS Development	Statistical evidence base	Quantifiable outcomes & Single set of performance indicators
		Revise allocations policy	Good practice base	
		CBL development	Support risk reduction services	
2. Coordinated & comprehensive approach to homelessness prevention	Gateway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate services</li> <li>Shop front service</li> <li>Cooperation with non-Gateway services</li> </ul> Planned Moves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short term accommodation access protocols</li> <li>Home Search Support</li> </ul>		Statistical evidence base	
			Support risk reduction services	
			3. Fill gaps in prevention activity to reduce the highest risks and proliferate proven interventions	
Good practice base				
4. Support for the most marginalised	Gateway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperation with non-Gateway services</li> </ul>		Temporary accommodation & move on strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New schemes</li> </ul>	Research programme
				Good practice base
5. Ensure that those living in unsatisfactory housing conditions have to access appropriate housing	Planned Moves services		Revise allocations policy CBL development PRS Development Gypsy & Traveller sites	Support services delivering risk reduction
		Statistical evidence base		
		Good practice base		
6. Ensure appropriate emergency and short term or housing & effective move on		Temporary accommodation & move on strategy Furniture Scheme	Good practice base	
			7. Robust strategic development	Evaluation & reporting
Funding Management				

## Outline action plan

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
Development of the Housing Solutions model									
<b>Housing Solutions Gateway</b>									
	Scoping & development						2, 4	P 1,3,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing services</li> <li>→ Numbers achieving successful outcomes</li> </ul>
	Implementation							NI 7, 39, 40, 142, 156	
<b>Housing Solutions Advice &amp; Assessment</b>									
<b>Stronger Integration of the current homelessness and prevention services</b>	review and plan will deliver full integration						2	P 1,3 NI 7, 39, 40, 142	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing services</li> <li>→ Numbers achieving successful outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Develop shop front access to Housing Solutions</b>	Scoping & development						2	P 1,2,3	
	Implementation							NI 5	
<b>Improve integration and cooperation with non-Gateway services</b>	Early warning and referral processes		Q2				2, 4	P 1,3,4,5 NI 7, 39, 40, 142	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Number of agencies actively engaged</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing services</li> <li>→ Numbers achieving successful outcomes</li> </ul>
	Programmes reciprocal training of staff		Q3						
	Joint assessment and planning protocols		Q4						
<b>Housing Solutions Planned Moves</b>									



Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
<b>Develop a home visiting service to families with children over 16 at risk of eviction</b>	Full Service Package In Place			Q2			1, 3, 5	P 1,3,4,5 NI 7, 116, 117, 142, 153, 156, 163	→ Numbers achieving successful outcomes (planned move or remaining at home)
<b>Development of short term accommodation access policy and protocol</b>	Policy & protocols in place		Q1				2, 5	P 1, 5, 156	→ Successful implementation → Number of agencies actively engaged
<b>Develop Home Search support</b>	Development of scheme						2, 5	P 1,2,3, NI 5, 142	→ Successful implementation → Numbers accessing services → Numbers achieving successful move
	Development of outreach and educational services								
<b>Housing Solutions Sustaining Homes</b>									
<b>Develop a public education programme</b>	Scoping of this development						1	P 1, 3,4,5 NI 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 142, 153	→ Successful implementation → Number of events and information packages → Number of peer support providers → Reduction in homelessness incidences
	Pilot schemes								
	Rolling out of programmes								
<b>Develop a resident support programme</b>	Resident information pack development and roll out		Q3				1	P 1, 3,4,5 NI 32, 39, 40,	→ Successful implementation

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
Delivery programme	Private tenants guidance scope and roll out		Q4				1	116, 117, 142, 153	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Number of events and information packages</li> <li>→ Number of agencies actively engaged</li> <li>→ Number of residents participating</li> <li>→ Reduction in homelessness incidences</li> </ul>
	Landlord good practice sharing scope & roll out			Q1					
	Resident seminars and open days scope and roll out								
	Develop work with “problem noticers”	Scoping and feasibility studies with specific key workers			Q1				
	Development of training programmes			Q2					
	Information resources and referral protocols			Q3					
	Piloting of schemes			Q4					
	Roll out								
<b>Specialist Support Services</b>									
Develop a legal and financial advice and representation strategy for Halton	Strategy delivered		Q1				3	P 1,3,5 NI 30, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 142, 153, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing services</li> <li>→ Number of successful outcomes</li> </ul>
	Financial Advice and legal advice and representation programmes developed & rolled out								
Integrate	Scoping		Q2				3	P 4	→ Successful

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
<b>homelessness prevention with employment &amp; skills development service</b>	Reciprocal training		Q3				5	P 1,3, NI 116, 142, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ implementation</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing training and employment services</li> <li>→ Number of agencies actively engaged</li> </ul>
	Embed employment and training related information within Housing Solutions services			Q1					
	Referral arrangement and joint activity								
<b>Development of accommodation related strategies and initiatives</b>									
<b>Review and revise the council's allocation policy pre-CBL</b>	Review the options for revised criteria and research current allocations access and RSL capacity	Q3					5	P 1,3, NI 116, 142, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Reduction in number of homelessness applications</li> <li>→ Reduction in number of homelessness applications</li> </ul>
	Produce options appraisal	Q4							
	Implementation of new allocations policy		Q1						
<b>Devise &amp; implement a temporary accommodation and "move-on" strategy</b>	Temporary Accommodation Strategy to be available		Q1				6, 4, 5,	P 1,3,5, NI 39, 40, 116, 142, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Number of agencies actively engaged</li> <li>→ Reduction in waiting lists</li> <li>→ Reduction in B&amp;B use</li> <li>→ Higher rate of appropriate move on</li> </ul>
	Roll out elements across 3 years								
<b>Develop a furniture &amp; removals scheme and ensure</b>	Scoping of furniture scheme		Q2				5, 6, 4	P 1,3, NI 39, 40,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Higher rate of</li> </ul>
	Implementation of scheme								

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
consistency in access Community Care Grants and similar payments.	Training For Agencies To Support Successful Grant Applications		Q2				5, 4	P 1,2,3, NI 116, 142, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ appropriate move on</li> <li>→ Successful tenancy sustainment</li> </ul>
	Ongoing good practice exchange established through The Homelessness Forum From		Q3						
Ensure Choice Based Lettings [CBL] takes account of those who are most at risk of and works to prevent homelessness	Development work						5, 4	P 1,2,3, NI 116, 142, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing the service &amp; at earlier points of risk</li> <li>→ Higher rate of satisfaction</li> <li>→ Successful tenancy sustainment</li> </ul>
	Full provision in place by								
Support the development of the private rented sector as a source of housing to prevent homelessness	<b>Change the DGS into an insurance /bond scheme</b>						5	P 1,2,3, NI 116, 142, 156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Numbers accessing the service</li> <li>→ Number of successful placements</li> <li>→ Landlord satisfaction</li> <li>→ Reduction in costs</li> </ul>
	Feasibility study		Q1						
	Roll out the new scheme in phases								
	<b>Develop capacity for the DGS to act as a Credit reference agency</b>						5	P 1,2,3, NI 116, 142, 156	
Feasibility study		Q3							

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
	Potential implementation								
	<b>Ensure provision of information and evidence on take up of the DGS</b>								
	Landlord Forum information available		Q4						
<b>Support the viability of appropriate sites and facilities for Gypsy and Travelling communities.</b>	Instigate a regular programme of awareness activity	Q4					5, 4	P 1,2,3,5 NI 5, 17, 116, 142, 156	→ Reduction in homelessness incidences → Continuation of permanent site
	Deliver training		Q4						
<b>Development of evidence and the proliferation of good practice</b>									
<b>Deliver a statistical evidence base</b>	Review and data requirements completed		Q4				All	P 1,2,3,4,5 NI 7, 17, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 153, 142,154, 163,	→ Successful implementation → Forecasting accuracy
	Develop a model of forecasting		Q 2						
<b>Undertake a programme of research into the risk of homelessness amongst minority communities within Halton</b>	Devise research programme		Q3				4, 3 & all	P 1,3,5 NI 7, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 153, 142,154,	→ Successful implementation → Number of evidence reports that improve practice → Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives
	Roll out								

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
<b>Devise a user consultation and feedback strategy</b>	Strategy available			Q1			All	P 1,3,4 NI 5, 7,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Number of users taking part</li> <li>→ Number of events and opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Develop a good practice knowledge base</b>	Start process		Q4				All	P 1,2,3,4,5 NI 5, 7, 17, 30, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 153, 142, 154, 163,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Successful implementation</li> <li>→ Number of agencies taking part</li> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Instigate routine evidence evaluation &amp; reporting for strategic development</b>	Devise process		Q1				7 & all	P 1,2,3,4,5 NI 5, 7, 17, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 153, 142,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Raised profile of homelessness prevention within the council</li> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> </ul>
	Implement		Q2						
<b>Support the development of the services that currently deliver risk reduction and prevention</b>	Mechanisms for evidence provision and good practice sharing		Q4				1, 4 7 all	P 1,3,5 NI 7, 17, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 153, 142, 163,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> <li>→ Number of evidence reports</li> </ul>
<b>Development of robust strategic management</b>									
<b>Develop clear and quantifiable outcomes</b>	Implement			Q1			7 & all	P 1,2,3,4,5 NI 7, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> <li>→ Reduction in</li> </ul>

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
								153, 142, 154, 163,	homelessness incidences
<b>Devise a single set of performance indicators for evaluating the success of the strategy</b>	Implement			Q1			7	P 1,2,3,4,5 NI 7, 32, 39, 40, 116, 117, 153, 142, 154, 163,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Raised profile of homelessness prevention within the council</li> <li>→ Reduction in homelessness incidences</li> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Create a robust strategy management process</b>	New terms of reference agreed for Forum		Q2				7	P 1,2,3,4,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Number of agencies taking part</li> <li>→ Actions delivered</li> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> <li>→ Raised profile of homelessness prevention within the council &amp; externally</li> <li>→ Reduction in homelessness incidences</li> </ul>
	Implementation of supervision and planning mechanisms		Q3						
	Implementation of wider membership and user involvement								
	Implementation of programme for Homelessness Forum members to represent homelessness prevention on other forums			Q1					
	Set out reporting and review process	Q4							

Delivery programme	Key activity	Timeline					Homelessness Strategic Priority	Community Strategy priority & LAA NI	Measurement of success
		2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
	Implement process		Q1						
	Initiate cross divisional/agency review			Q1					
Develop management of and access to development funding streams	Mapping exercise completed		Q3				7	P 1,2,3,4,5 N1 7 & rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Development of services in comparison to costs</li> <li>→ Appropriate service improvements and new initiatives</li> <li>→ Increased reach of services</li> </ul>
	Investment strategy completed			Q1					
	Funding knowledge base developed			Q3					



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<p>Paul Garnett Housing Benefit</p>	<p>Amendments required regarding Housing Benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Page 9, 5.1.2. – The Halton Service should be The Benefit Service.</li> <li>▪ Page 47-48, 5.6.2. – Two major functions – subsidy and discretionary housing payment – wording not appropriate. Discretionary payment is only £30,000 out of £40 million so not a major function. Take out the part about two major functions and just say ‘HB Department last year spent £40 million in HB helping people to afford their rented home. In addition, a small sum was paid out in discretionary housing payment to prevent hardship’.</li> <li>▪ 5.6.3. – Penultimate sentence – ‘claims <i>usually</i> take less than...’</li> <li>▪ 5.6.5. – ‘From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, changed to Housing Allowance’.</li> <li>▪ 5.6.7. – ‘Single room rent’ not correct – should be ‘shared room rate’.</li> <li>▪ 5.6.8. – ‘Around 33,000’ – actually 29,500 for the New Year.</li> </ul>
<p>Cllr. Marie Wright</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nothing relating to repeat homelessness and how to address it.</li> <li>▪ No mention of furniture recycling (major issue for those leaving hostel accommodation – no furniture = don’t sustain tenancy = repeat homelessness).</li> </ul>
<p>Emmanuel Mensah Supported Housing Manager (Younger People and BME Services) Plus Dane Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Priority 1 – The council should consider setting up a specialist team solely responsible for interview / assessment of all 16 and 17 year olds guaranteed on the same day that they present themselves homeless. This would help to deliver the mediation agenda more effectively. Also, the council should work in partnership with RSLs to deliver ‘Your Housing Options and Issues’ awareness training to Year 10 and 11 pupils in secondary schools, particularly those who are about to be excluded from school, as evidence suggests they often end up homeless.</li> <li>▪ Priority 2 – The council could work in partnership with RSLs to facilitate the development and employment of tenancy sustainment officers to work with all new tenants and existing ‘at risk’ (of failing tenancies through ASB or rent arrears) tenants.</li> <li>▪ Priority 3 – The council should actively work in partnership with RSLs with a view to agreeing robust protocols to reduce the risk of failing tenancies, e.g. for ASB cases, use of mediation and floating support services and for arrears pursuance, use of human rights assessment and welfare benefit advice to</li> </ul>

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	<p>maximise income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Priority 4 – The council should consider addressing the need of BME elders for independent accommodation, access to translation service and BME panel / focus groups.</li> <li>▪ Priority 5 – The council should ensure housing transfers and housing exchange policies are sensitive to the needs of BME households living in over-crowded homes. Also, the council should address the need for larger units of accommodation for BME communities and adequate permanent pitches for Gypsy and Traveller elders.</li> <li>▪ Priority 6 – The council should consider managing / putting back into use empty properties and under-occupied properties, both private and otherwise.</li> <li>▪ Priority 7 – The council should promote good practice to support RSLs and other landlords in raising performance standards. Also, the council should work with the North West Regional Assembly / North West Regional Housing Group (NWRHG) to direct investment towards improving access to housing where there is housing need.</li> </ul>
<p>John Mackie Executive Director Halton YMCA</p>	<p>These are the combined comments from our Management Team on the three documents, the items we have not commented on are either not directly relevant to our work or we totally agree with the statements. We will be more than happy to discuss any of this document with you or other interested parties in the future.</p> <p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4.5 – Halton YMCA statistics support this evidence and can provide these if required.</li> <li>▪ 5.10 – Although this provision is adequate in Runcorn, there is a need for this in Widnes, which Halton YMCA is currently working on with Cosmopolitan HA.</li> <li>▪ 5.14 – Halton YMCA strongly agree with this statement, especially in regard to the NEET and has evidence to support this if required.</li> <li>▪ 6.4 – This confirms our evidence of a need for a similar foyer in Widnes, which Halton YMCA aims to provide.</li> <li>▪ 6.6 – This particular recommendation is a driver of Halton YMCAs current business plan.</li> </ul> <p>Recommendations:</p>

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- R22, 2<sup>nd</sup> point – Halton YMCA is matrix accredited for this provision.
  - R22, 3<sup>rd</sup> point – Currently, Halton Haven Hospice is in talks with Halton YMCA regarding their furniture provision based on Picow Farm Road.
- Homelessness Strategy Part 1:
- 5.19 – This ties in with our Widnes project, including those leaving care.
  - 5.40 – Halton YMCA strongly agree with the need to support residents with benefits advice including ‘better off calculations’.
  - 4.26 – Halton YMCAs proposed new foyer in Widnes will include a mother and baby, which will help to improve the current statistics.
- Mental Health and Homelessness:
- 5.54 – Halton YMCAs statistics for 2008 show that 25% of our residents are suffering from minor mental health issues and we are therefore working on a strategy to improve mental health and well being.
- Conclusions and Recommendations (Page 50):
- D –Halton YMCA is actively working towards providing this support within its hostel and would welcome a multi-agency approach to support this initiative.
  - E – Halton YMCA training has, for a number of years, been providing this training skill and financial information to the community and would welcome a link with current RSLs in Halton to discuss expanding this.
  - 6.9 – This should read ‘direct access’ not ‘emergency access’.
  - 6.11 – We would like to refer once again to the need for a hostel in Widnes, which we aim to provide.
  - 6.22 – As above.
- Recommendations (Page 55):
- 6.25 (R23) – Halton YMCA support the development of a common move on process and protocol. We would like to see a copy of the Mental Health Strategy, which we were not aware of.
- Homelessness Strategy Part 2 (Housing Solutions Planned Moves, Page 8):
- 4.13 – Halton YMCA welcome this initiative for consistency in homeless provider projects.

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	<p>Key Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4.19 – Halton YMCA welcome partnership working within communities, i.e. children and youth centres and schools, building on previous experience of working in this area.</li> <li>▪ 4.25 – Halton YMCA would welcome partnerships in regard to ‘worklessness solutions’ for residents of Halton and has worked in this area for the past three years.</li> <li>▪ 5.4 – Highlights again the need for homeless accommodation in Widnes, which we intend to provide.</li> <li>▪ 6.7 – Halton YMCA will continue to deliver ‘places to go – things to do’, contributing to positively impact on anti-social behaviour and would welcome working in partnership with RSLs and housing solutions.</li> </ul>
<p>Joanne Sutton Housing Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On the whole, the review and strategy are really comprehensive and well laid out.</li> <li>▪ The review / strategy should perhaps consider the use of empty homes as a way of increasing the supply of housing – this has not been an issue in the past but is now coming to the fore.</li> <li>▪ The action plan is very detailed but a column to show who will lead and deliver the actions would be helpful.</li> <li>▪ The comments were tracked within the documents – typos, grammatical / spelling errors etc. were highlighted, as well as issues with page and other numbering, but detailed below are the comments relating to content.</li> </ul> <p>Introduction and Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Page 4, point 2.8 – seems a bit strange to have this sentence at the end, particularly as it does not fit with the description of a deprived borough in this paragraph.</li> <li>▪ Page 12, point 7.1 – is 1720 the total number of households on the waiting list during the whole year? This figure is normally presented as a snapshot.</li> <li>▪ Page 12, point 7.3, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence – this is inaccurate – the HNS found a shortfall of 176 affordable homes per annum but recommended that these should be split between rented and shared ownership housing. Plus, the 500 homes (also per annum) is a floor target, which is set by the NW Regional Spatial Strategy and which, in any case, is increased by the Growth Point. Suggest changing to ‘Minimum targets for new development in the borough contained in the latest North West Regional Spatial Strategy have increased (300 to 500 per annum) and there are plans to develop an additional 100 homes per annum as part of the Growth Point programme. The council along with its Growth Point partners (Warrington and St. Helen’s</li> </ul>

## Responses to Homelessness Strategy Consultation

councils) will be working with the Homes and Communities Agency and private developers to maximise provision of affordable housing as part of the programme’.

- Page 13, point 7.8 – should perhaps read ‘the prospect of a *possible* [as opposed to *significant*] downturn...’
- Page 13, point 7.8, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence – whilst there are less buy-to-let mortgages available, experience shows that households unable to sell are choosing to rent their homes instead until the market picks up, therefore, the downturn in the PRS may not be as certain or significant as suggested here.
- Page 14, point 8.2 is repeated.
- Page 14, point 8.3 – if prospects are uncertain, how do we know they will be bleak?

### Part 1 – Strategic Review:

- Page 7, point 5.1 – suggest changing the last sentence to read ‘The population is now relatively young but ageing, there is little inward migration and according to the 2001 Census, the ethnic minority population is less than 2% of the whole (although it is likely that the ethnic minority population is now higher following accession of the A8 European countries).’
- Page 8, point 5.8 – income levels in Halton are lower than in other areas.
- Page 9, point 5.15 – Housing Strategy is 2008 to 2011 not 2013.
- Page 9, point 5.15, 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point – delete ‘with a target of 176 dwellings a year’.
- Page 15, point 3.2, 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point – the landlords forum was established before the homelessness strategy and accreditation scheme. Also, the scheme is more about improving conditions and management standards in the sector rather than increasing capacity.
- Page 16, point 3.2 – consider mentioning the Hough Green Road development here.
- Page 16, point 3.3, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point – the housing partnership predates the last homelessness strategy. This implies that the strategy was instrumental in the development of the partnership.
- Page 16, point 3.3, last bullet point – this needs updating as it says the Nightstop Services was *due* to start in *2008*.
- Page 25, chart 11 – could this chart be clearer? Also, homelessness is spelled incorrectly in the chart title.

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- Page 27, chart 12 – could the abbreviations be set out in full?
- Page 29, chart 16 – the final 4% of the pie chart is not listed in the legend.
- Page 39, point 5.12 – sentence should read ‘including a £40k *reduction* in council tax...’
- Page 47, point 5.62 – acronym needs to be explained – Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).
- Page 56, point 7.2 – suggest that it should read ‘restricted to one offer (*in their choice of either Runcorn or Widnes*)...’
- Page 57, point 7.6 – suggest that it should read ‘Halton Borough Council plans to introduce Choice Based Lettings (CBL) in 2010...’ and ‘properties will be well matched *helping to improve prospects of tenancy sustainment*...’
- Page 57, point 7.7 – suggest it should read ‘which can impact negatively on homeless households *if not modelled and managed effectively*’.
- Page 57, point 7.8 – suggest that the last two sentences should read ‘The Regional Spatial Strategy sets a minimum target for the provision of 500 new homes per annum in Halton. Halton’s status as a Growth Point, in partnership with St. Helen’s and Warrington councils, will see the development of an additional 100 homes per annum. The council will be working closely with the new Homes and Communities Agency to maximise affordable housing in the borough. This *will* reduce some of the pressure on the register and any future scheme.’
- Page 57, point 7.10, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence – this is very limited and only applies to certain categories of HMOs.
- Page 59, point 7.17, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence – there is nothing in the housing strategy about this – perhaps it was sourced elsewhere?
- Page 59, point 7.18 – suggest it should read ‘A permanent *council owned* encampment...’
- Page 61, point 7.34, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence – anecdotal evidence shows that households unable to sell are renting their homes out, therefore, downturn in the PRS due to reduced buy-to-let activity may not be as severe as expected.
- Page 62, R25, point iii - acronym needs to be explained – Community Care Grants (CCG).
- Page 64, point 8.8 – suggest it should read ‘coupled with a limited *re-let* supply...’
- Page 65, point 8.18 – reduction in stock may not be as severe as expected due to anecdotal evidence,

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	<p>which suggests that those unable to sell their homes are renting them out (as mentioned above).</p> <p>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Page 11, point 5.1 – Housing Strategy is 2008 to 2011 not 2013.</li> </ul>
<p>Mike McCue Policy Officer Halton Housing Trust</p>	<p>Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The draft Homelessness Strategy was circulated by the council to stakeholders for consultation on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The council originally requested responses to be returned by 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009. However, in response to a request from the trust the council agreed to the deadline being extended to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2009. This would then enable the trust to be able to provide a full and meaningful response.</li> <li>▪ The trust would suggest that future consultation documents, especially of this length, provide a longer response timescale. This would encourage a wider range of responses.</li> <li>▪ This response has been prepared following discussions between the Senior Management Team of the trust as well as a cross section of other staff with a professional interest in the homelessness service. Our response has been structured to provide some general comments that relate to the consultation exercise as a whole. This is followed by more specific comments / queries that are referenced to points within each of the three documents that formed part of the consultation documentation.</li> </ul> <p>General Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The trust generally agrees with the assessment of what was achieved by the earlier strategy.</li> <li>▪ We are supportive of the direction of travel and emphasis of the new strategy, with its emphasis on preventative work / action.</li> <li>▪ The trust believes the strategy provides a sufficient insight to the council’s thinking in dealing with homelessness issues and from this to be in a position to develop our own ‘mini-strategy’ for the trust on how, as a key, partner we can play our role in both preventing and dealing with homelessness.</li> </ul> <p>However, the trust also has some general reservations concerning this consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The documents are too lengthy. The use of three separate documents is thought to be questionable and sometimes confusing to follow.</li> <li>▪ The strategy is difficult to read and understand, even for those people who are directly involved in this service area. The trust would suggest that the council considers producing a summary document, which</li> </ul>

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would make the subject more accessible for both key stakeholders but also for residents.

- In some areas there is insufficient attention to detail in terms of the presentation. Examples have been highlighted in the detailed comments section of this response.
- The trust believes there may have been a missed opportunity in not presenting this consultation at the draft stage to both the Halton Housing Partnership and the Homelessness Forum. By doing so the comments of both groups could have been canvassed and taken into account.
- The strategy lacks sufficient detail on both accountability and monitoring arrangements of its delivery and in particular how progress against the strategy will be fed back to service users.

Document 1 – Introduction & Executive Summary of the Strategic Review; Detailed Comments:

- Page 5, pt 2.8 – An ‘annual shortfall in affordable housing of 176 homes’ is mentioned. It is unclear whether this shortfall relates to social housing for rent only or includes an element of shared or low cost home ownership properties.
- Page 7, pts 3.4 & 3.5 refer to some initiatives from the 2003 strategy still to be delivered including concerns about “a desire for stronger user consultation”. There does not seem to be any reference about how this could be addressed in the following 3 recommendations (R7, R8, and R9).
- Page 8, pt 4.7 lists a number of challenges evidenced from the services involved in Multi Agency Monitoring that need to be addressed. The trust agrees with the list of challenges as stated, but wonders if there is an argument here to at least mention the difficulties of trying to address these in the context of the current and continuing economic downturn?
- Page 8, R11 – Where this recommendation talks about ‘specific service developments and interventions focused on those who are most at risk’, should there should be a reference in here to victims of domestic violence?
- Page 9, 5.5 – Whilst in reality there may well be ‘a difficulty tracking outcomes’ ..... ‘due to the one-off nature of many contacts’ as this point states, it does also beg the ‘So what?’ question. Is this situation likely to be addressed in some way? If it cannot be addressed easily is there a need to highlight that this situation may continue in the foreseeable future?
- Page 9, 5.6 – As the integration referred to in this point was actually completed in October 2008, this point



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needs to be updated.

- Page 11, R16 – This particular recommendation does not seem to be advocating any new or change of approach in dealing with the issue relating to domestic violence/abuse. The trust finds this somewhat surprising; bearing in mind that figures obtained from the Data Observatory in December 2008 which illustrated that Halton had by far and away the highest incidence of domestic violence cases per 1000 population across the whole of Cheshire. This data is included within this response as an appendix for information.
- Page 11, R18 – This recommendation is to ‘Enable research into the homelessness-related needs of those with mental health problems and dual diagnosis...’ However this lacks information on how this will be achieved. Would the council look into actually funding such research itself?
- Page 12, pt 6.4 & R20 – Point 6.4 acknowledges the imbalance of short-term housing in Halton. Despite this the associated recommendation at R20 only seems to be targeted at certain client groups. It seems to leave the question about whether this imbalance of where the short-term housing is, unanswered.
- Page 13, pt 7.4 states there are ‘several challenges for CBL in relation to homeless prevention...’ and then provides three bullet points. Two of these bullet points do not appear to be challenges. CBL schemes invariably put homeless cases in high bands anyway and the whole thrust of these schemes is around providing greater levels of genuine choice. Research on CBL schemes actually demonstrates that they improve the housing opportunities for homeless groups compared to traditional allocation policies.
- Page 14/15, R25 – The second bullet point in this recommendation relates to gypsies / travellers. This appears to be the very first reference to this client group in the document. Nothing seems to be said about this group in any of the earlier points in this section. We would also query whether this also fits within the section on the Private Rented Sector.
- Page 15, pts 8.1 & 8.2 – Both these points say exactly the same thing. Is this simply duplication or has some text been missed out inadvertently?

Document 2 – Part 1 Strategic Review; Presentational Issues:

- The text in a number of the ‘Figures’ boxes that are inserted at various points within the document do not show the bottom line of the text clearly.
- There is a numbering problem in both sections 1 and 2 of this document that needs correcting. After the

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section headings all sub points within each section start with the number 5.

- Appendix 3 listed on the contents page but not included in the document.
- Appendix 4 mentioned in 5.37 and 8.22 but not included in the document.
- Acronyms are used which are not explained sufficiently, e.g. pt 5.68 – ‘DHP’; and pt 7.37, R25 iii – ‘CCG’

Document 2 – Part 1 Strategic Review; Detailed Comments:

- Page 20, pt 3.12 mentions review consultation generally agreeing that much has been achieved. It also provides an example of ‘the shortfall of temporary accommodation in Widnes’ as some frustration being expressed. This issue and whether it is likely to be addressed is not referred to again within the document. (There is a cross reference here with the bullet point made on Page 3 of the trust’s response relating to page 12 of the Introduction and Executive Summary document).
- Page 40, pt 5.5 – This point starts ‘At the time of writing...’ and the text that follows appears to be a number of months old. This refers to the homeless service being in the process of going back under council control. As the integration referred to in this point was actually completed in October 2008, this point needs to be updated
- Page 56, pt 5.73 & page 57, pt 5.76 - Pt 5.73 refers to general satisfaction with provision but then lists five bullet points of areas that need to be developed. When reviewing the subsequent list of areas ‘identified for development work’ in pt 5.76 on the next page, two of these bullet points do not seem to have been covered; i.e. the first one – better knowledge of services, publicity, communication etc; and the fourth one relating to more user involvement in service development and design.
- Page 56, pt 5.74 –some form of explanation is required that links this point to the diagram inserted underneath it. As it is currently presented the reader doesn’t necessarily make this connection.
- Page 63, pt 6.24 – refers to the potential for re-modelling short-term accommodation. The possibility of offering units of RSL accommodation is mentioned as an example. Towards the end of the example, one sentence states that ‘Such schemes would need to be accompanied by support with furnishings’. It would be helpful to expand upon this point by providing further clarity on what level and who would provide this.
- Page 68, pt 7.26 – mentions furniture projects and states that ‘There are no such projects available in Halton’. The trust been supporting such a scheme run by Halton Haven for a number of months.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Page 74, pts 8.11 to 8.15 – All these points relate to debt and end with a statement that if left unchecked ‘could increase overall homelessness by at least 5% in Halton.’ There is no mention in here of consideration of a Mortgage Rescue Scheme as a preventative measure to tackle this issue. Similar Schemes have now been adopted and implemented by a number of neighbouring councils.</li><li>▪ Page 78, User Consultation Events – there is a lack of any detail about these events. In particular how well they were attended and what were the key issues that emerged. As presented, it leaves the reader with the impression that only a low level of consultation has been carried out. This could be misleading.</li></ul> <p>Document 3 – Part 2 Homelessness Strategy 2009-2013; Outline Action Plan Page 21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Action Plan is difficult to follow. Part of this is due to the failed attempt to use a ‘repeat’ heading for the columns at the top of each page. Text from previous columns on the preceding page actually runs in to the repeat heading on the next page.</li><li>▪ Some timelines are given as Q3/Q4 2008/09. If these have been met, does this need to be stated somewhere? If they have not been met then do they need to be revised?</li></ul> <p>Document 3 – Part 2 Homelessness Strategy 2009-2013; Detailed Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Pages 3 and 4 Strategic aims and priorities – lists a total of 7 priorities, none of which appear to refer to user consultation.</li><li>▪ Page 6, pt 2.1 - One of the measures of deliverable outcomes given is ‘elimination of the use of B &amp; B as temporary accommodation for statutory homeless households by 2013’. Is this realistic in the current economic climate?</li><li>▪ Page 9, pt 4.8 – Refers to shop front access to allow two arms of the service to work from one centre. When considering the earlier acknowledgement in other documents of an imbalance of short-term accommodation between Runcorn and Widnes, how will this proposal overcome the difficulty of covering two towns? Will this create a different imbalance relating to access to certain parts of the service?</li><li>▪ Page 9, pt 4.9 – When considering earlier comments made in this response, there is a strong rationale to include domestic violence within the list of key risk groups listed in this section.</li><li>▪ Page 10, pt 4.12 – Should the home visiting service mentioned here relate to ‘families under 16’?</li><li>▪ Page 10, pt 4.16 - the measures given to ‘develop Home Search support’ in this point seem to be restricted</li></ul>
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## Responses to Homelessness Strategy Consultation

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	<p>to making things easier for users to access the systems. It does not seem to cater for the most vulnerable service users who may be unable to access or use the system to their best advantage, i.e. does the level of support needed here include support workers acting as ‘buddies’ for the most vulnerable cases who if necessary may bid on the user’s behalf?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Page 11, pt 4.20 – refers to landlord good practice sharing. Is this seen as part of the existing Halton Housing Partnership arrangements or is it something else?</li><li>▪ Page 16, pt 6.5 – ‘Develop a good practice knowledge base...’ is given as a key activity. The last sentence states ‘These processes will involve user participation’. It would be helpful to provide some indication of how this would be practically delivered.</li><li>▪ Page 17, pt 7.2 – ‘Develop clear and quantifiable outcomes...’ is given as a key activity. There should be some mention here about outcomes for users. For example, is it intended that satisfaction measures for users of the service would form part of this development?</li><li>▪ Page 17 &amp; 18, pt 7.3 – The bottom half of the table on page 18 gives some idea of the measurement of success in preventing homelessness. The list of measures given does not appear to cover all the preventative actions when compared to what is said in points 2.6 and 2.7 of the Introduction and Executive Summary document.</li></ul>
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**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Environment

**SUBJECT:** Nominations of Members to the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel - Municipal Year 2009/10.

**WARDS:** Boroughwide.

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the Report is to seek nominations of Members to sit on the Council's Public Transport Advisory Panel for the Municipal Year 2009/10, and report on the key issues discussed / raised by the Panel when it met during the Municipal Year 2008/9.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:-**

- 1) The Chair of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, nominates a Chair and three Members to the Public Transport Advisory Panel and for the Member nominated as the Chair to agree such deputies, as may be required from time to time;**
- 2) The Board endorse the nominations; and**
- 3) The key issues discussed by the Panel during the Municipal Year 2008/9, as set out in Appendix One of the Report, are noted.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 At the start of each Municipal Year, it is necessary to nominate a Chair and three other Members to attend meetings of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel.

3.2 The purpose of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel is to:-

- Monitor the performance of the public transport network within the Borough to ensure it meets the mobility needs of local communities;
- To make recommendations to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on future developments and

improvements to the conventional local public transport network; and

- To review and comment on the effectiveness of the Council's public transport priorities.

3.3 A summary of the key issues discussed at the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel, during 2008/9, is shown in Appendix 1

3.4 The Board is asked to support those nominations proposed by the Chair of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, which will be announced at the meeting.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

It is widely recognised that good quality and affordable public transport services can help to improve access to key facilities for children and young people within the Borough. A key role of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel is to review progress and comment on emerging initiatives.

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Halton Borough Council and its partners continue to provide a wide range of accessible and affordable public transport services within the Borough aimed at improving access to key employment, learning and training facilities within the Borough. These are reported at meetings of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel.

##### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Improving access to health care facilities is acknowledged as a key priority in the Halton Access Plan and Halton Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11. Progress on achieving these improvements are reported and discussed at the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel.

##### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

No direct implications.

##### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Improving access to key regeneration areas by sustainable forms of transport including public transport, walking and cycling is widely acknowledged as playing a key role in sustainable regeneration and urban renewal. The Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel plays a key role in discussing and shaping the future direction of those initiatives associated with public transport within Halton.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 7.1 Good quality and affordable public transport services can play a key role in ensuring all sections of the community can access a wide range of facilities.

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

- 8.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.

## **Appendix One**

### **Summary of the key Issues discussed at the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel – Municipal Year 2009/10.**

#### ***Meeting – Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008***

1. The Meeting received a presentation from Mr Robin Tudor (General Manager Corporate and Community Affairs – Liverpool John Lennon Airport), detailing progress being made to implement a range of transport improvements to improve access to the Airport for employee's and passengers. The Airport has an adopted Airport Surface Access Strategy, which contains targets to encourage more people to travel to the Airport by public transport and other sustainable modes of transport. Mr Tudor highlighted the increase in the number of local bus services linking the Airport, including the service 82A from Widnes and Runcorn. The Airport also welcomed the funding Halton BC has given to 'pump priming' the service 700 (now X2), which links the Liverpool Airport to Widnes and Manchester.
2. The Panel reviewed and commented on planned changes to the local bus and rail services, in particular the new improved service 13, which links the Cherry Sutton area of Hough Green with Widnes town centre and the Widnes Waterfront regeneration area. The frequency of the service, which has been increased to hourly (Monday to Saturday daytimes) is now operated by a dedicated low floor easy access vehicle. It was noted that the North West Development Agency (NWDA) has provided grant funding for the service.
3. The Panel received an update from the North Cheshire Rail Users Group, highlighting the work of the Group to improve station environments through the Station Adoption Scheme. The Group highlighted that they had recently adopted Runcorn East Station with Arriva Trains Wales.

#### ***Meeting – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008***

2. The Panel received a presentation from Passenger Focus (the independent national rail; and bus passenger watchdog).
3. The Panel were consulted on the draft Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy.
4. The Panel were consulted on draft responses being made by Halton Borough Council to the following European and national transport policy documents:-



- Consultation on revised arrangements for Bus Quality Partnerships (Department for Transport) stemming from the Transport Act 2008;
- Response to the consultation document issued by the European Commission Services Director – General ‘Energy and Transport’ (July 2008) on greater integration of air and rail passenger service links across the European Union.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17th June 2009</b>
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	<b>Strategic Director Environment</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Rights of Way Improvement Plan</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>Borough wide</b>

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Board on Halton Borough Council's first Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan, to enable any comments to be incorporated into the document prior to the Plan being presented to the Executive Board for approval.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) The Board forwards any comments on the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan to the Executive Board for consideration.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced a requirement that all highway authorities in England and Wales prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

Rights of Way Improvement Plans are not about rights of way in isolation, they are intended to deliver an integrated network of routes in and between town and country. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan must assess:

- The extent to which the local rights of way network meets the present and likely future needs of the public;
  - The opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area; and
  - The accessibility of local rights of way to blind and partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.
- 3.2 The Plan must also contain a 'Statement of Actions' that the highway authority intends to carry out in order to improve its network, with particular regard to issues identified within the assessment. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has issued guidance to local authorities on how it should approach the

preparation of its Plan, which has been followed in the preparation of this Plan.

- 3.3 The rights of way network is undoubtedly a major means of accessing the countryside and key services, but on its own does not show the full picture. There are many other routes and sites that are used by the general public for informal countryside access and every day journeys that are not legally recorded as definitive public rights of way. With this in mind, the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Halton considers the whole network of access routes, public open spaces and sites as well as definitive rights of way and highways. It also assesses the whole spectrum of users and journey purposes, from disabled access needs to routes to open access land.
- 3.4 Once the ROWIP is published the Council is required to make a new assessment and review it within 10 years. Thereafter, they are required to review the plan at not more than ten year intervals.
- 3.5 The ROWIP is a strategic document and will form a distinct strand of Halton's Local Transport Plan (LTP). This is Halton's first full 10 year Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- 3.6 A copy of Halton's Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan Summary document is shown in Appendix 1, however, a copy of the full Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan will also be made available at the meeting and is available for inspection in the Member's rooms. An addendum to the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan issued to all consultees on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009 can be seen in Appendix 2.
- 3.7 The Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan is currently out to consultation with a wide range of users and stakeholders to enable their views to be taken into consideration, prior to the Plan being put to the Executive Board for its consideration, which is anticipated to be in July 2009.
- 3.8 The views of the Board on the draft ROWIP are requested to enable them to be considered and incorporated into the final document prior to the final plan being presented to the Executive Board, for approval.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 In developing the draft ROWIP, a broad range of local, regional and national policies have been assessed, to help identify the future needs and demands of walkers, cyclists and horse riders. In order to address these requirements, the Plan proposes an extensive list of rights of way policies and a detailed action plan, the implementation of which will be dependent on resources.

## **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Resource Implications**

There are no direct resource implications resulting from this report. However, the Action Plan, contained within the ROWIP, gives a broad assessment of the requirements of the proposed actions, both in term of staff and funding, should the Plan be approved. Current resources enable an ongoing programme of improvement and maintenance to existing Public Rights of Way. Further clarification on how the Plan is to be implemented is provided in Section 5.

Whilst there is a statutory requirement to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, there is no requirement on Local Authorities to implement the plan. Specific funding has not been allocated by Central Government to deliver the improvements, so local authorities will have to secure additional funding to implement any proposed improvements, which cannot be funded through available capital and revenue resources.

Rights of Way Improvement Plans are meant to be aspirational and ambitious in identifying potential improvements to the network. Therefore the net has been cast wide when considering ways to improve the network, whilst recognising that it would not be possible to implement them all immediately.

It therefore follows that the Council will need to work in partnership with a range of organisations in order to deliver many of the proposed actions.

### **5.2 Social Inclusion Implications**

The development of the rights of way network and other access routes will provide a fair and inclusive network that will help all sections of the community access opportunities.

### **5.3 Sustainability Checklist**

The ROWIP will help to address sustainability issues by improving the quality and sustainability of the environment and improving sustainable access to the countryside and to key services.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

The ROWIP will assist in providing a safe and sustainable transport network that will provide access to schools (including those in the Building Schools for the Future initiative), colleges, recreational and social facilities. It is thus supportive of the 'Children and Young People

in Halton' priorities contained within the Council's Corporate Plan and Halton's Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

## **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

The ROWIP will assist in providing safe and sustainable access to employment and training opportunities and as such will help to address worklessness, which is a priority of the Council's Corporate Plan, the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement and the Liverpool City Region's Multi Area Agreement.

The maintenance and improvement of the Rights of Way network also has the ability to facilitate/support the Council's Supported Employment Scheme.

## **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

The ROWIP will assist in encouraging more people to take exercise through walking, cycling and horse riding and thereby help to address health issues associated with obesity. Indeed, one of the ROWIP's Strategic aims is to 'Promote the health benefits of the network and make it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily lives and lead healthier lifestyles'. The RoWIP is therefore supportive of the health priorities contained within the Council's Corporate Plan and Halton's Local Strategic Partnership's Community Plan and Local Area Agreement.

## **6.4 A Safer Halton**

The ROWIP will assist in providing for safer travel to key services and recreational activities. One of the Strategic Aims identified in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan is to 'Improve the Safety and Attractiveness of Routes Affected by the Transport Network'.

This Aim is supported by the proposed ROWIP policy R10 (Imp2) 'Improving Network Safety'. It can therefore be seen that the RoWIP is supportive of the 'Safer Halton' priorities contained within the Council's Corporate Plan and Halton's Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

## **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

The development of public rights of way network and other access routes can be a key element in the regeneration process, by providing safe sustainable access to employment, education, health, retail shopping, social and tourism opportunities. The RoWIP is therefore supportive of the 'Urban Renewal' priorities contained within the Council's Corporate Strategy and Halton's Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy.

## 7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

There are no inherent risks, associated with the recommendations made within this report. However, the development of an effective ROWIP will help to address those risks identified in the network assessment, which impact on the achievement of a fully inclusive rights of way network and other access routes.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan	Rutland House	Janet Whelan ext 3008
Halton Bridleway Study – Groundwork Merseyside	Rutland House	Janet Whelan ext 3008
Halton Rights of Way User Survey 2007/08) – Mott Macdonald	Rutland House	Janet Whelan ext 3008

**Summary assessment of Implications:**

**Resource Implications**

There are no direct resource implications resulting from this report. However, the action plan, contained within the ROWIP, gives a broad assessment of the implications of the proposals, both in term of staff and funding requirements, should they be approved. Current resources enable an ongoing programme of improvement and maintenance to existing Public Rights of Way.

Whilst there is a statutory requirement to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, there is no requirement on Local Authorities to implement the plan. Specific funding has not been allocated by Central Government to deliver the improvements, so local authorities will have to secure additional funding to implement any proposed improvements, which cannot be funded through available capital and revenue resources.

Rights of Way Improvement Plans are meant to be aspirational and ambitious in identifying potential improvements to the network. Therefore the net has been cast wide when considering ways to improve the network, whilst recognising that it would not be possible to implement them all immediately.

It therefore follows that the Council will need to work in partnership with a range of organisations in order to deliver many of the proposed actions.

**Social Inclusion Implications**

The development of the rights of way and minor highways network and other access routes will provide a fair and inclusive network that will help all sections of the community access opportunities.

**Sustainability Checklist**

The ROWIP will help to address sustainability issues by improving the quality and sustainability of the environment and improving sustainable access to the countryside and to key services.





# **HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **DRAFT RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

### **SUMMARY**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are a fundamental element of an integrated transport system. Halton's current Local Transport Plan covering the period 2006/07 to 2010/11 acknowledges that PRoW help to address all four shared transport priorities and all seven of the Quality of Life issues. These are summarised as follows:

- Tackling Congestion – by providing routes remote from motorised traffic that cater for sustainable transport modes;
- Delivering Accessibility – by providing and maintaining routes that give access to local facilities and employment;
- Safer Roads – by providing routes for otherwise vulnerable road users that are remote from motorised traffic;
- Better Air Quality – by encouraging less polluting modes of transport;
- Sustainable and Prosperous Communities – by providing opportunities for walking and cycling, the plan offers affordable travel to those who do not have access to a car;
- Enhancing 'People Friendly' Places – by creating a network of routes that are safe and which increase accessibility to the countryside;
- Protection and Enhancement of Landscapes and Biodiversity – by ensuring that routes are maintained in ways that protect the needs of plants and animals;
- Enhanced Personal Security – by designing walking and cycling routes to maximise personal security;
- Healthier Communities – by providing and promoting a comprehensive network of attractive routes, where people can exercise through walking and cycling, which in turn can assist in promoting general well being along with reducing obesity and diseases such as coronary heart disease, strokes and diabetes;
- Fewer Transport Related Noise Problems – by providing convenient alternatives to car based travel for short journeys; and
- Progress Towards Climate Change Objectives – by providing walking and cycling facilities that reduce dependence on motorised traffic and thereby carbon emissions.

1.2 Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced a requirement that all highway authorities in England and Wales prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

1.3 Rights of Way Improvement Plans are not about rights of way in isolation, they are intended to deliver an integrated network of routes in and between town and country. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan must assess:

- The extent to which the local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- The opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area; and
- The accessibility of local rights of way to blind and partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.

- 1.4 The plan must contain a Statement of Actions that the highway authority intends to carry out in order to improve its network with particular regard to issues identified within the assessment. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has issued guidance to local authorities on how it should approach the preparation of its Plan and we have followed this guidance in the preparation of our Plan.
- 1.5 The Rights of Way network is undoubtedly a major element of facilitating access to the countryside and to services, but this on its own does not show the full picture, as they are also a major recreational and transport resource. In addition, there are many other routes and sites that are used by the general public for informal countryside access and every day journeys that are not legally recorded as definitive public rights of way.
- 1.6 With this in mind the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Halton considers the whole network of other access routes<sup>1</sup>, public open spaces and sites, including the potential of 'Open Country', as well as definitive rights of way and highways. It also looks at the whole spectrum of users and journey purposes, from disabled access needs to routes to open access land.
- 1.7 Once the ROWIP is published the Council is required to make a new assessment and review it within 10 years. Thereafter, it is required to review the plan at not more than ten-year intervals. This is Halton's first full 10 year Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The ROWIP is a strategic document and will eventually form a distinct strand of Halton's Local Transport Plan (LTP). It is also supportive of the Council's Mersey Gateway Sustainability Strategy.

## **2.0 Geographical Context**

- 2.1 The Rights of Way Improvement covers the whole of the borough of Halton.
- 2.2 Halton is a largely urban area with a current population of 119,500 people. Its two biggest settlements, Widnes and Runcorn, face each other across the Mersey, ten miles upstream from Liverpool and are linked by the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB). It shares boundaries with Liverpool, Knowsley, Warrington, St Helens and Vale Royal. The Borough is made up of the towns of Widnes and Runcorn together with the villages of Hale, Moore, Daresbury and Preston Brook, which are set in attractive countryside.

## **3.0 Vision Statement and Strategic Aims**

- 3.1 The Vision Statement for Halton's PROW is as follows:

Halton Borough Council aims to develop, promote and protect a local rights of way network that meets the needs and likely future needs of the public for outdoor recreation, exercise and access to services. Through the preparation and implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) the Council will evaluate and improve access to local rights of way and other access routes, the countryside, and services within and around Halton for residents and visitors.

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<sup>1</sup> Other Access Routes – Routes for non-motorised traffic that are not definitive public rights of way e.g. Cycleways, amenity/leisure paths, independent footpaths etc

3.2 In order to achieve this vision ten Strategic Aims have been derived following a network assessment and consultation with the public and members of user groups and assessment of the network. These form the foundation of the RoWIP and are as follows:

1. Improve standards of maintenance across the network;
2. Maintain an accurate and up to date Definitive Map and Statement;
3. Promote the health benefits of the network and make it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily lives and lead healthier lifestyles;
4. Improve accessibility by improving and developing routes that cater for the needs of people with disabilities;
5. Increase the use of the network for sustainable transport and utility trips;
6. Improve the safety and attractiveness of routes affected by other parts of the transport network;
7. Support the rural economy, local businesses countryside and tourist sites through the promotion of Halton's PROW network and other access routes, to residents and visitors;
8. Seek opportunities to enhance the network through the planning process, plans and strategies;
9. Improve connectivity of the network and create opportunities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians; and
10. Seek opportunities to enhance and extend the PROW network through cross boundary working.

These ten strategic aims are derived in Chapter 8 of the RoWIP.

#### **4.0 The Process**

4.1 The process of developing the Rights of Way Improvement Plan has been influenced by a number of factors, including the statutory ROWIP guidance, Halton's statutory Highway duties and powers, the Countryside Agency's advice (now Natural England) and wide ranging stakeholder consultations with the Merseyside Local Access Forum, Cheshire and Warrington Local Access Forum, statutory agencies, path user groups, landowners and parish councils.

4.2 In order to develop a sound basis for its ROWIP, Halton identified and evaluated the needs of various users and assessed the current levels of public rights of way and other access provision. Some of the key issues identified in the assessment were:

- There is no effective bridleway network as such available to horse riders and there is currently no provision to cross the River Mersey on horse back ;
- The footpath and cycle track networks are both rather fragmented in parts;
- There is the opportunity to extend the network across the boundary into a wider network for all users through cross boundary working;
- With proper provision the SJB has the potential to provide the only suitable sustainable river crossing and to be the gateway for all north/south long distance routes;
- There are very few circular routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders;
- Some routes are severed by busy roads and railway lines; and

- More links are required to create greater connectivity of the public rights of way network and other access routes and to connect with strategic routes and initiatives.

4.3 In addition to this work, users were asked to identify those improvements they would like to see happen. The views expressed included:

- Create more off road routes for all users;
- Improved/better maintenance of routes;
- Provide more information about access i.e suitability for prams/push chairs/wheelchairs/visually impaired etc;
- Improve signing and way marking (including distance and destinations);
- Create additional linkages and circular routes to provide a connected network;
- Provide improved/safer road crossings;
- Provide better lighting of routes;
- Increase/Improve publicity and access to it;
- Remove physical obstructions/obstacles from paths;
- Improve access for all;
- Upgrade paths to provide more multi-user routes;
- Remove stiles and replace with kissing gates;
- More surfaced routes;
- Improve paths surfaces;
- Educate motorists with regards to other users in particular cyclists and horse riders; and
- Provide an updated record of PROW's and other access routes.

4.4 The information gained from both the network and user needs assessments have been carefully considered and distilled into the 10 Strategic Aims, identified in section 1 above, which provide guidance and a focus for all improvement measures contained within the Plan.

4.5 The core of the Plan is a 'Statement of Action, which outlines the work the authority proposes to undertake to secure an improved network of local rights and access opportunities. Halton's 'Action Plan' has been developed to address the issues identified in the:

- Assessment of needs and demands; and
- Opportunities provided by the network;

It also assesses the links to the wider public benefits and local key strategies. It then addresses the issues through the development of a broad range of measures and initiatives, which are focused on achieving the 10 Strategic Aims of the Plan.

## 5.0 The Action Plan

5.1 This section describes the proposals contained within the Action Plan, which are shown in Table 1. The following provides a key explaining the table headings and symbols used within the Action Plan.

**Ref:** A unique reference number that identifies the proposed Action

**Action:** What we are proposing to do in order to achieve the Strategic Aim

**Resources:** Whether the proposed Action can be carried out by existing staff and budget or whether additional resources will be required.

The following symbols are used to denote the resources required:

Staff Time

- ☺ Existing HBC Staff
- ☺ ☺ Partnership with others
- ♀ Additional Staff resource required

Funding

- £ Within existing budgets
- ££ Small increase in funding required
- £££ Moderate increase in funding required
- ££££ Major funding required

**Timescales:** The timescale within which we are proposing to complete the action. Timescales will need to be flexible in order to make use of opportunities as they arise to maximise public benefit.

**Partners:** A list of key partners and stakeholders

**Links:** Links to other actions within the Action Plan

**Links to Local Transport Plan:** This denotes those actions that support the Council's Primary Transport Strategies (PTS)

- PTS 3 – Cycling
- PTS 7 – Highway Maintenance
- PTS 10 – Provision for people with disabilities
- PTS 11 – Public Rights of Way and Greenways
- PTS 12 – Quality Transport Corridors
- PTS 17 – Travel Plans
- PTS 18 – Walking

**Benefits:** The groups identified as benefiting from the proposed actions.

**Table 1: Proposed Action Plan**

<b>Strategic Aim 1: Improve Standards of Maintenance Across the Network</b>										
<b>Evidence of Need:</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Users would like to see better maintenance of routes;</li> <li>➤ Poor path condition and infrastructure deters users;</li> <li>➤ Poor condition of routes e.g dog fouling and litter are a deterrent to users;</li> <li>➤ Current users stated that they wanted better maintenance of routes, more/better signing/way marking, better lighting and more physical improvements such as more/better surfaced routes; and</li> <li>➤ Well way marked routes increases confidence of users and assists land managers.</li> </ul>										
Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
M1	Continue to conduct an annual condition survey of the whole public rights of way network	☺	££	Ongoing			All Users, Landowners	HBC, Groundwork Merseyside	M2	PTS 7, 10, 11, 18
M2	Continue to maintain a fully signed and way marked network through the annual works programme using data obtained from the annual survey and user reports	☺	££	Ongoing			All Users, Landowners	HBC	M1, H5	PTS 7, 10, 11, 18
M3	Where appropriate increase seasonal vegetation clearance and maintenance levels on rights of way and other access routes e.g. The Mersey Way increased to 3 cuts per year and 12 safety inspections (1 per month)	☺	££	√			All Users, Landowners	HBC	M8,H5	PTS 7, 11, 18
M4	Conduct a Bi-annual condition survey of all cycle tracks	☺	£	√			All Users	HBC	M5, M6	PTS 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
M5	Using the information gathered in the survey to review the inspection and maintenance programme - develop a vegetation management plan and cleansing regime	☺	££	√			All Users	HBC	M4	PTS 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
M6	Identify signing and stencilling requirements and draw up an implementation programme	☺	£	√			All Users	HBC, Users	M4	PTS 3, 7, 18
M7	Continue to upgrade and improve path surfaces to ensure that they are in keeping with their environment and suitable for their expected use	☺	£			√	All Users	HBC, Other Organisations, Developers	M2, M5	PTS 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
M8	Develop a management strategy for the control of ragwort on the rights of way network, other access routes and road side verges. Publicise the procedure for reporting ragwort 'hot spots'	☺	££		√		Environment, All Users, Landowners	HBC	M3, M5	PTS 7

**Strategic Aim 2: To Maintain an accurate and up-to-date Definitive Map and Statement**

**Evidence of Need:**

- There is a statutory duty to update and maintain the Definitive Maps and Statements;
- There is a need for a more accurate and up to date Definitive Map and Statement that, is more accessible. This will remove uncertainty over the correct alignment and status of paths, and increase general awareness of the access network. In some cases this can have the same effect as creating new paths, as people are made aware of paths that they never knew existed;
- There is potential for the Lost Ways Project to add/upgrade certain identified routes to improve the connectivity of the network;
- To discover the true extent of public access there is a need to map existing routes with no legal status that link the Public Rights of Way and other access route networks and seek to formalise and add them to the definitive map and statement where possible;
- Users are keen to protect routes without legal status;
- In the past claims for potential Public Rights of Way have not been pursued to completion due to the current process being difficult for members of the public; and.
- The network assessment has identified gaps in the access network.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
L1	Continue to review the Definitive Map and Statement and publish a new up-to-date Map and Statement that covers the area managed by Halton, by 2010	☺	££	√		√	All Users, Landowners	HBC, Users, Landowners, LAF, Parish Councils	L2, L3, L5, L6, L8	PTS 11, 18
L2	Distribute copies of the new Definitive Map to all Council Direct Links, Local Libraries and Parish Councils	☺	£	√			All Users, Landowners	HBC	L1	PTS 10, 11, 17,18
L3	Make a digital version of the new Definitive Map available on the Council's website	☺	£	√			All Users, Landowners, Developers	HBC	L1,T10	PTS 10, 11, 17, 18
L4	Develop a recording system (similar to that used for Public Rights of Way) for cycle tracks, permissive routes and other access routes using CAM's and make the information available to the public	☺	£				All Users	HBC	L5	PTS 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
L5	Seek to formalise and record all those routes identified as having no legal status or status unknown during the desk top assessment	☺	££	√			Walkers, Cyclists and Equestrians	HBC, Landowners, Users, Parish Councils, LAF	L1, L4	PTS 7, 10, 11, 17, 18
L6	Identify all cross boundary routes and work to ensure consistency of status and alignment.	☺ ☺	££		√		Landowners, All Users	HBC, Neighbouring Authorities	L1,L8	PTS 3, 7, 10, 11, 17, 18
L7	Develop and maintain such digital registers as are required by legislation, incorporating such additional information as may be deemed appropriate.	☺	£		√			HBC		PTS 7, 11
L8	Continue to catalogue existing Definitive Map anomalies, determine preferred actions and seek implementation.	☺	£££		√		Landowners, All Users	HBC, Users, Landowners	L1, L6	PTS 11, 18



**Strategic Aim 3: To Promote the Health benefits of the network and make it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily lives and lead healthier lifestyles**

**Evidence of Need:**

- There are clear health benefits associated with outdoor activity;
- There is a lack of awareness of the potential health benefits of using the public rights of way and other access routes
- The Public Rights of Way and other access routes can assist partners trying to improve the health of Halton residents by providing opportunities for exercise and recreation; and
- The number of people in Halton with long term illness is higher than the national average.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
H1	Establish links with other Council officers, plans and strategies involving health issues.	☺	£		√			HBC		PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18
H2	Establish links with the Primary Care Trust and other Health Organisations.	☺ ☺	£		√			HBC, PCT, Disabled User Groups,	H3, H4, H6	PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18
H3	Work in partnership to promote the health and well being associated with using the PROW network and other access routes.	☺ ☺	££		Ongoing		All Users	HBC, PCT	H2,H7,H8	PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18
H4	Use the PROW network and other access routes to support existing health initiatives such as 'Walking the Way to Health'.	☺ ☺	££		Ongoing		Walkers	HBC, PCT	H2	PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18
H5	Establish a 'Green Gym' programme to assist with the maintenance and improvements of the rights of way network and other access routes.	☺ ☺	££		√		All Users	BTCV, Groundwork Merseyside, HBC	M2,M3	PTS 3, 7, 18
H6	Seek to establish links with Doctors Surgeries, Dentists, Health Centres etc to distribute information on the access network.	☺	£	√			All Users	HBC, Others	H2	PTS 3, 10, 11
H7	Identify and develop circular and linear routes that can be used to encourage walking and cycling for health.	☺	£		√		Walkers, Cyclists	HBC, Groundwork Merseyside, Users, Disabled Groups	H3	PTS 3, 11, 18
H8	Promote these routes accordingly e.g short starter routes.	☺	££	Ongoing			Walkers, Cyclists	HBC, PCT	H3	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18

**Strategic Aim 4: To Improve Accessibility by improving and developing routes that cater for the needs of people with disabilities.**

**Evidence of Need:**

- Too many physical barriers on the access network, deters use;
- There is a need to make the access network more accessible by removing unnecessary barriers and improving key routes;
- Fewer barriers on routes will increase use;
- People with limited mobility require a range of routes of varying length and terrain;
- There is a lack of promotion material specifically catering for mobility impaired users and equestrians; and
- Need to publicise barrier free routes.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
A1	Undertake an accessibility audit of the whole PROW network and other access routes.	☺	£££	√			All Users	HBC, Disabled Access Groups, Groundwork Merseyside	A2	PTS 10
A2	Using the information provided by the accessibility audit identify where new routes can be developed or improvements can be made to make the network more accessible to people with restricted mobility and develop an appropriate programme of works/projects.	☺	££££			√		HBC	A1	PTS 7, 10, 11
A3	Establish links with Disabled Access Groups and other groups/organisations that represent people with disabilities.	☺	£	√				HBC, Disabled Access Groups, Groundwork Merseyside	A1, A4, A5	PTS 10
A4	Work in partnership with mobility impaired people to assist in developing a more accessible network.	☺ ☺	£		√			HBC, Disabled Access Groups, Groundwork Merseyside	A1, A3, A5, A7	PTS 10
A5	Work in partnership with visually impaired people to develop improvements to the network that will make it more accessible to them. Seek to provide opportunities for users to enjoy sensory experiences where possible.	☺ ☺	Not Known		√			HBC, Disabled User Groups	A1, A3, A4, A7	PTS 10
A6	Ensure that all new and improved routes comply with the DDA and the British Telecom 'Countryside for all' Design Standards where reasonable and practical to do so.	☺	£	Ongoing				HBC, Developers	A7	PTS 3, 7, 10, 12, 18
A7	Promote new and existing routes that are barrier free.	☺	££		√		All Users	HBC	A4, A5, A6, A8, A9	PTS 10
A8	Continue to implement the principles of the least restrictive option when authorising new structures.	☺	£	Ongoing			All Users	HBC, Landowners,	A2, A7,	PTS 10
A9	Continue to encourage landowners to allow the Council to install gates in place of existing stiles that require repair or replacement.	☺ ☺	£	Ongoing			Walkers, Disabled Users	HBC, Landowners	A7, A8	PTS 10

**Strategic Aim 5: To Increase the use of the Network for Sustainable Transport and Utility Trips**

**Evidence of Need:**

- Public Rights of Way and other access routes can make a positive contribution to addressing accessibility to jobs, education, health, shopping and other quality of life issues for socially excluded people in Halton;
- The Transport and Access networks could be better integrated;
- Improving infrastructure in urban areas is likely to increase levels of walking and cycling;
- Whilst promotional materials are well received, non-users are unaware of the existence and potential benefits that the local access network can have for the community;
- Potential users lack confidence using rights of way and other access routes;
- Subtle messaging, language and pictures are key to empowering people to have confidence in using the network. Information needs to be appropriate and inclusive to people's needs to allow them to make their own decisions about their ability to use a route;
- Marketing and promotion needs to be improved; and
- Publicise barrier free routes.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
ST1	Continue to identify and improve off-road routes linking communities with schools, employment centres and local services.	☺	£			√	Walkers, Cyclists	HBC, User Groups, Schools, Colleges, Employers	ST3, ST12, SA1	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
ST2	Improve enforcement and management of the urban public footpaths and other access routes to combat litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling.	☺	££		√		All Users	HBC, User Groups		PTS 7
ST3	Continue to seek improvements for non-motorised travel in proposals for new developments. Seek to secure funding from developer contributions.	☺ ☺	£			√	All Users	HBC, User Groups, Developers	ST1	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
ST4	Develop walking and cycling from public transport interchanges.	☺ ☺	£		√		Walkers, Cyclists	HBC, Transport Providers	ST5, ST7, ST10, ST11, T11	PTS 3, 12, 18
ST5	Promote the use of public transport on leaflets and website.	☺	££			√	All Users	HBC	ST5, ST9	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
ST6	Publish rights of way guidance for developers.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC		PTS 7, 10, 11
ST7	Identify existing links between the rights of way network, other access routes and local bus and rail services.	☺	££		√		Walkers, Cyclists	HBC User Groups	ST4, ST8	PTS 3, 11, 12, 17, 18
ST8	Ensure that rights of way, cycleway and other access route connections are considered when planning new bus routes and stops.	☺	£			√	Walkers, Cyclists	HBC, Developers, User Groups	ST7, ST9	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17,

										18		
ST9	Promote selected routes through time tables, bus route information maps, bus interchanges and train stations.	☺ ☺	£			√		All Users	HBC, Bus and Train Operators	ST5, ST7, ST8	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18	
ST10	Ensure that, wherever possible promoted routes can be accessed using public transport.	☺	£			√		All Users	HBC	ST4	PTS 12	
ST11	Provide relevant public transport information on promotion leaflets for walking and cycling.	☺	£			√		Walkers, Cyclists	HBC	ST4	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 18	
ST12	Where appropriate work to integrate the PROW and other access routes with work and school travel plans.	☺ ☺	£				√	Walkers, Cyclists	HBC, Schools, Colleges and Businesses	ST1	PTS 17	
ST13	Continue to seek to upgrade footpaths where appropriate to provide greater opportunities.	☺	£££				Ongoing	All Users	HBC, User Groups, Neighbouring Authorities, Landowners	ST14, SA1, CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18	
ST14	Seek to develop a multi-user route across the River Mersey.	☺ ☺	£££					√	Walkers, Cyclists, Horse Riders	HBC, User Groups, Sustrans, BHS	ST13, T7, T8, T9	PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18

**Strategic Aim 6: Improve the Safety and Attractiveness of routes affected by the Transport Network**

**Evidence of Need:**

- Path users find crossing busy roads difficult which deters use;
- Driver attitude and awareness of equestrians and cyclists could be improved; and
- The illegal use of motor vehicles on the access network causes safety issues for users and concern to landowners. Attempts to restrict access to resolve problems can impact on other users and quite often, the problem simply moves elsewhere.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
SA1	Undertake a safety audit to identify points where the PROW network and other access routes are crossed by the road network and seek opportunities to make and fund improvements.	☺	££		√		All Users	HBC	SA2, SA3, ST1, ST13	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
SA2	Identify where 'missing links' in the network, which require users to travel along busy roads and develop solutions including verge improvements, creation agreements/orders.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC	SA1, SA3, CO6, CO7	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
SA3	Identify locations where the network is crossed by the rail network and, working with the appropriate authorities, develop measures to improve safety as required.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC Network Rail Train Operating Companies	SA1, SA2, SA4, SA5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
SA4	Identify roadside verges that are suitable for use by non-motorised traffic and footway improvements that can provide safe links between routes. Compile a register of identified verges.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC	SA1, SA2, SA3, SA5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 18
SA5	Create 'Behind the Hedge' routes to provide missing links where appropriate, and safe to do so.	☺ ☺	£££			√	All Users	HBC, Users, Landowners	SA1, SA2, SA3, SA4	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 18
SA6	Improve driver awareness of equestrians and cyclists.	☺ ☺	££	Ongoing			Equestrians, Cyclists	HBC, Road Safety Partnership		PTS 3, 11
SA7	Work in partnership to promote road safety for equestrians.	☺ ☺	££	Ongoing			Equestrians	HBC, BHS, Road Safety Partnership	T14	PTS 11, 12
SA8	Continue to provide education and training that promotes cycle safety and seek to extend this to include equestrians.	☺ ☺	££	Ongoing			Cyclists, Equestrians	HBC, Sustrans, BHS, Users, Road Safety Partnership		PTS 3, 11

**Strategic Aim 7: To Support the Rural Economy, Local Businesses, Countryside and Tourist sites through the Promotion of Halton's PROW network and other access routes to residents and visitors.**

**Evidence of Need:**

- A good accessible network will benefit tourism, local businesses and the rural economy;
- Improvements to Public Rights of Way and other access routes that link to tourist attractions will greatly enhance the visitor experience;
- Development and improvement to the bridleway network, together with suitable network promotion and increased information can boost Equine tourism , which can make a considerable contribution to the local economy;
- Coastal tourism will benefit from a better connected access network;
- Marketing and promotion needs to be improved;
- There is a lack of promotion material specifically catering for mobility impaired users and equestrians; and
- In the past promoted events have been popular but limited to walking and cycling groups this should be extended.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
T1	Identify and list sites requiring improved links to the surrounding network of PROW and other access routes. Investigate, prioritise and implement options for securing improved access to poorly served sites.	☺	£			√	Site Managers, Landowners, All Users	HBC, Users, Site Managers	T2,T3,T4	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 18
T2	Identify and develop circular and linear recreational routes to and from Countryside and Tourist Sites.	☺	£			√	All Users, Providers	HBC, Users, Site Managers	T1,T4	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T3	Identify and develop access opportunities to Open Access and Registered Common Land.	☺	££		√		Walkers	HBC, Users, Landowners	T1	PTS 10, 18
T4	Seek to develop links with tourism and accommodation providers to distribute information on the access network and promoted routes.	☺	£		√		All Users, Providers	HBC, Providers	T1,T2	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T5	Provide information on the accessibility of routes as determined by accessibility audits using suitable formats and medias.	☺	££			√	Users	HBC		PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T6	Identify, develop and promote links from the Trans Pennine Trail into the surrounding urban centres and tourist destinations.	☺	££			√	Users	HBC, Sustrans, Users		PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T7	Develop strategic routes for all users including horse riders where possible, to support the development of long distance routes such as the North West Coastal Trail and to facilitate connections between other initiatives such as the Weaver Valley Park, The Mersey Waterfront, Upper Mersey Forest park.	☺ ☺	££££			√	All Users	HBC, MLAF, Neighbouring Authorities, Users, 4NW, Other Organisations	ST14, T9, P6	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18

T8	Seek to provide a multi-user River Crossing, including provision for equestrians, to facilitate proposed regional and national trails.	☺ ☺	££	√			All Users	HBC, MLAF, BHS, Sustrans, Users	ST14	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
T9	Continue to support partners in the development of new routes and trails.	☺ ☺	£			√	All Users	HBC, Other Authorities, Other Organisations	ST14, T7	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
T10	Continue to develop the PROW website and seek to include interactive web routes for all users with links to local services and tourist attractions.	☺	£	√			All Users	HBC	L3	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T11	Provide public transport information at key sites and along promoted routes.	☺	£		√		Users	HBC, Transport Providers	ST4	PTS 3, 11, 12, 18
T12	Establish links and work with Parish Councils to erect map display boards at suitable locations throughout the Borough.	☺	££		√		Users	HBC, Parish Councils		PTS 11
T13	Seek to continue to develop the series of 'Halton Village Walks' leaflets.	☺	££			√	Walkers	HBC, Groundwork Merseyside		PTS 10, 11, 18
T14	Research and develop other promotional leaflets for walkers, horse riders and cyclists.	☺	££	√			All Users	HBC, Grounwwork Merseyside, Users	SA7	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T15	Seek to Identify and develop routes to link tourist accommodation e.g. hotels, B+B's to the network and other attractions.	☺	£		√		Providers, Visitors, Users	HBC, Providers		PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
T16	Produce a leaflet distribution strategy	☺	£	√			All Users	HBC		PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18

**Strategic Aim 8: To Seek Opportunities to enhance the network through the Planning Process, Plans and Strategies.**

**Evidence of Need:**

- In the past a number of developments have had a detrimental effect on the access network;
- Many developments have the potential to contribute to the access network through dedication, permissive and concessionary means;
- The development of access opportunities through consultation on newly proposed tourist attractions will provide further opportunity for users and potentially secure new routes, ensuring that public rights of way and other access routes can further contribute to the local economy;
- Plans for all developments i.e housing, industrial, new tourist attractions/accommodation etc should include provisions for walking, cycling and horse riding where appropriate;
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans have the potential to link with a number of plans and strategies through shared aims and objectives; and
- There are opportunities to promote the network with partners who have similar aims and objectives to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
P1	Seek to prevent developments that have a detrimental impact on the existing network.	☺	£	Ongoing			All Users	HBC	P3, P5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
P2	Continue to ensure that all new developments link to the network by appropriate dedicated footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.	☺	£	Ongoing			All Users	HBC, Developers, Users		PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 18
P3	Seek to improve the recognition & protection of public rights of way and other access routes in the planning process and the use of planning gain to enhance facilities.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC, Developers	P1	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
P4	Establish firm linkages with existing plans and strategies to integrate public rights of way, other access routes and the ROWIP to enable shared aims and objectives to be delivered.	☺	£	√			All Users	HBC		PTS 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18
P5	Produce a Guide to Development and Public Rights of Way for the Planners and Developers.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC	P1	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
P6	Improve current links with partners and seek to establish new relationships to facilitate the identification and development of cross boundary routes and national and regional trails.	☺ ☺	£		√		All Users	HBC, Neighbouring Authorities, LAF's	T7	PTS 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18



**Strategic Aim 9: To Improve Connectivity of the Network and Create Opportunities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.**

**Evidence of Need:**

- The access network is fragmented particularly for equestrians and cyclists;
- There is a lack of provision for equestrians which means that many have to travel along the highway for recreation or to access a limited number of routes;
- Improvements are needed to improve connectivity of routes;
- Horse riders and cyclists want a range of circular routes of varying lengths;
- Horse riders would like longer cross boundary routes and links to National Trails;
- All users want more off-road routes;
- There is a need to establish clearer relationships with cycling and equestrian groups to assist in route provision and development; and
- There is a need to map definitive routes, cycle routes, permissive agreements and other access opportunities to identify wider connectivity and areas lacking access.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
CO1	Upgrade footpaths to bridleways, where appropriate, to assist in the development of a more cohesive network of routes available to equestrians and cyclists.	☺	£££		√		All Users	HBC, Users, BHS, Neighbouring Authorities	ST13	PTS 3, 10, 11
CO2	Upgrade cycle tracks to bridleways, where appropriate, to assist develop a connected network of routes available to equestrians.	☺	£££		√		All Users	HBC, Users, Landowners, Neighbouring Authorities	ST13	PTS 10, 11
CO3	Upgrade footpaths to shared use cycle tracks, where appropriate, to develop a connected network of routes for cyclists.	☺	£££		√		Cyclists	HBC, Users, Sustrans	ST13	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CO4	Seek Creation Agreements/Orders to make missing links, where sufficient need has been established.	☺ ☺	££			√	All Users	HBC, Users, Landowners	ST13	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CO5	Ensure that all gates fitted on routes with equestrian rights have latches that can be operated from horse back.	☺	£	√			Equestrians	HBC, Landowners		PTS 10, 11
CO6	Continue to identify and develop off road walking, cycling and horse riding routes.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC, Users,	SA2	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CO7	Seek to identify and develop linkages to improve connectivity of the existing network and new routes.	☺	£		√		All Users	HBC, Users	SA2	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CO8	Seek to identify, develop and promote the use of 'Quiet Lanes' to benefit all non-motorised users.	☺	£			√	All Users	HBC		PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18

**Strategic Aim 10: To Seek Opportunities to enhance and extend the Public Rights of Way network and other access routes through cross boundary working**

**Evidence of Need:**

- Horse Riders want to be able to access the Salt Marshes at Frodsham, the Aston Ring and other neighbouring bridleway routes/networks;
- Horse riders requested the creation and development of routes in the north of the Borough;
- There are opportunities to extend and improve the network available to Halton residents for walkers, horse riders and cyclists; and
- There is the opportunity to facilitate the development of national and regional trails through the Borough.

Ref	Action	Resources		Targets & Timescales			Benefits	Partners	Links to other ROWIP actions	Links to LTP Policies
		Staff	Funding	Yr 1 & 2	Yr 3 & 4	Yr 5+				
CB1	Re-establish links with St Helens Bridleway Group and St Helens Council to facilitate the development of the Old Mineral Line, as a multi-user route for walkers, horse riders and cyclists.	☺	££	√			All Users	St. Helens BC, Groundwork Merseyside, Users, Landowners	CB2, CB4, CB5, CB6	PTS 3, 10, 11, 17, 18
CB2	Research the status of the route along the north side of the Manchester Ship canal with a view to upgrading to a bridleway to improve access for walkers, horse riders and cyclists, through the Upper Mersey Valley Regional Park	☺ ☺	££	√			All Users	Warrington BC, HBC, Groundwork Merseyside,	CB5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CB3	Seek to move the Mersey Way at Hale further away from the shore to ensure longevity of the route and upgrade sections of bridleway to provide a multi-user route for all users that connects to the Mersey Waterfront Park.	☺ ☺	££££	√			All Users	HBC, Landowners, Users	CB5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CB4	Establish links with the new Chester and Cheshire West Unitary Council with a view to replacing the old bridge across the Weaver Navigation to provide a multi-user connection into the Weaver Valley Regional Park and the Weaver Way for horse riders, walkers and cyclists.	☺	££££		√		All Users	HBC, Chester and Cheshire West BC, Users, Landowners	CB5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CB5	Identify, create and develop cross boundary links into neighbouring networks.	☺ ☺	£££			√	All Users	Neighbouring Authorities	CB1, CB2, CB3, CB4, CB6, CB7	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CB6	Establish links with partners to enable the development of the North West Coastal Trail in Halton.	☺ ☺	££££	√			All Users	Neighbouring Authorities, 4NW	CB5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18
CB7	Seek to develop, with partners, a multi-user crossing over the River Mersey.	☺ ☺	££££			√	All Users	HBC, Neighbouring Authorities, MLAF, Users, Sustrans, BHS,	CB5	PTS 3, 10, 11, 18

## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

### 6.1 Implementation

Whilst there is a statutory requirement to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, there is no requirement on Local Authorities to implement the plan. Specific funding has not been allocated to deliver improvements, so Local Authorities have to bid for funding to deliver the proposed improvements.

Rights of Way Improvement Plans are meant to be aspirational and ambitious in identifying potential improvement to the network. Therefore we have cast our net wide when considering ways to improve the network whilst recognising that it would not be possible to implement them all immediately.

The Council will need to work in partnership with a range of organisations in order to deliver many of the proposed actions. Additional funding will be required and will be sought from both internal and external sources.

### 6.2 Monitoring

It is intended that the Council's existing Public Rights of Way Milestone Statement will be the delivery mechanism for the ROWIP improvements. Details of proposed site specific schemes will be included within the Milestone Statement Progress Report, which outlines a programme of works.

### 6.3 Identifying 'Quick Wins'

It is clear that many of the Actions identified will require much time and the allocation of substantial resources to deliver. There are however, some actions that can be delivered within a shorter timescale, and within current resources. These actions are likely to be delivered within a shorter period of time as their implementation does not rely on identifying additional external funding. In broad terms, the improvements, which Halton Borough Council and their partners can best make progress on delivering, are those within the control of the Council.

The Council will therefore endeavour to identify 'Quick Wins' to ensure the improvement and development of the network progresses whilst more detailed/complex schemes are developed.

## 7.0 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP) POLICIES

7.1 In preparing the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, it became clear that in order to provide direction on many of the issues identified, it was necessary to develop a wide range of policies, which are summarised below.

### Policy R1

Halton Borough Council will seek to support the aspirations and work of partner authorities and organisations in identifying opportunities and securing improvements and additions to the rights of way network and other access routes through their own policies and the planning system. The authority will look to partners for support in pursuing the

aims and objectives of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, through cross boundary working.

### **Policy R2 (U1) Walking**

Halton Borough Council will protect and seek to enhance the network available to walkers and cater for their needs. Priority will be given to making the existing network more accessible to those with limited mobility, where appropriate.

### **Policy R3 (U2) Cycling**

Halton Borough Council will protect and seek to enhance the network available to cyclists. Opportunities to expand the available traffic-free and 'on-road' networks will be pursued, where appropriate.

### **Policy R4 (U3) Horse Riders and Carriage Drivers**

Halton Borough Council will protect and seek to enhance the network available to horse riders and carriage drivers. Opportunities to expand and improve the available traffic free and 'on road' networks will be given a priority. Opportunities to expand the network will be pursued, where appropriate.

### **Policy R5 (U4) Motor Vehicles**

In pursuing the aims of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Halton Borough Council will have due regard to the rights of motorised vehicular users, where appropriate.

### **Policy R6 (U5) Access for All**

In developing and improving the local rights of way network and other access routes, Halton Borough Council will have due regard to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Council will seek to make the local rights of way network and other access routes as accessible as possible to people through the provision of clear information and by adopting an approach of the least restrictive option in route management, as outlined in Policy R15 (M2) Authorising new Bridges and Associated Structures on Local Rights of Way.

### **Policy R7 (U6) Encouraging Greater Use of the Network**

Halton Borough Council will seek to raise awareness of the availability and benefits of use of the network. The Authority will support the aims of other bodies promoting greater use of the network and encourage partner authorities to be pro-active in their efforts to meet the needs of existing and potential users.

### **Policy R8 (U7) Minimising Conflict**

In pursuing the aims of its Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Halton Borough Council will seek to ensure that the rights of farmers/landowners are respected and encourage responsible use of the network. Where appropriate, the Authority will initiate measures to minimise conflict between users.

### **Policy R9 (Imp1) Improving Network Connections**

Halton Borough Council recognises that one of the biggest problems faced by users is the lack of connectivity of the networks, especially bridleways. Where problems are identified, opportunities will be sought to improve connectivity where appropriate, with priority given to multi-user connections.

### **Policy R10 (Imp2) Improving Network Safety**

Halton Borough Council will seek improvements to the safety of vulnerable users where they have cause to cross a highway in order to access the local rights of way network and other access. Where safety is identified as being a concern, the Authority will consider a wide range of options such as revised verge management, improved visibility, signing etc. Priority will be given to improving those routes which cater for a combination of horse riders, cyclists and walkers.

### **Policy R11 (L1) Dealing with Public Path Orders**

Public Path Order (PPO) applications will normally be supported by the authority where there is seen to be benefits to both landowner and user. PPO's will normally be processed in the order in which they are received, except in the following circumstances where orders may be considered sooner:

- Where processing of an order would allow the Council to pursue a significant access opportunity such as identified through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
- Where an order has been made by the Council in the capacity as Planning Authority to facilitate approved development; and
- Where the processing of an order could save "significant" costs incurred in other Rights of Way functions.

PPO's will be prioritised as above to enable orders to be made that have a significant impact on the path network.

### **Policy R12 (L2) Dedications and Creation Agreements**

Halton Borough Council has powers to accept the dedication of a new right of way under Section 25 of the Highways Act 1980. Agreements will be considered:

- Where a dedication is offered in lieu of a Modification Order and satisfies the evidence for that order, enabling the early addition of the route on the Definitive Map; and
- Where the requirement to make a dedication forms part of an obligation under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 106.

Maintenance liability will normally only be accepted where;

- The addition of a path is of strategic public benefit;
- No initial additional expenditure by the authority is necessary to bring a path into a fit state of use; and
- Limitations on use of the route are not onerous to the public.

The Council will also consider dedication or creation agreements that secures a line/corridor through which it intends to develop a future route, previously identified through the Greenways Study, Bridleways Studies, ROWIP etc. When pursuing such agreements physical works may or may not be required by the landowner and any ensuing maintenance liabilities will be accepted by the Council.

### **Policy R13 (L3) Width of New Routes**

Halton Borough Council has a duty to assert the rights of the public (Highways Act 1980, Section 130) when making orders or consulting on new routes. As a result, the authority requires a minimum width of 2m. for footpaths and 4m. for bridleways, which are created by PPO or dedication, except where a path has been previously fenced on both sides, when there is presumption that the full available width should be recorded as the width. Where possible a 'gold standard' width of 5m for bridleways will be sought.

For Greenway routes intended for all users and those routes that are considered to be of strategic importance, the Council will seek a width of 10m to cater for the different classes of user and to allow for the provision of trees, hedges and benches to enable walkers to rest.

However, the Council recognises that sometimes it will be necessary to accept a lesser width or localised narrowing in order to create a route. It will therefore, endeavour to achieve the best and most appropriate width that fits the routes proposed purpose and its surroundings.

### **Policy R14 (M1) – Maintenance of the Network**

Halton Council has a duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to enjoy the path network (Highways Act 1980 S130). The authority will normally prioritise its actions as follows:-

- Where public safety can be substantially improved;
- According to the level of public use;

- Where the Council feels there would be a significant benefit to those with limited mobility;
- Where the Council's actions could result in a significant positive impact on the local rights of way network;
- Where actions by landowners and managers are in direct conflict with the Highways Act 1980;
- Where the Council is bringing a path into a 'fit' condition with the intention of adding it to the Definitive Map; and
- Where there is evidence that either the Definitive Map or Statement is incorrect.

### **Policy R15 (M2) Authorisation and Management of Structures on Local Rights of Way**

Halton Borough Council will seek to keep the number of newly authorised structures erected on the local Rights of Way network to a minimum, to minimise the impact on legitimate users. In order to achieve this only gates will normally be authorised to avoid unnecessary problems caused by stiles.

In most cases the least restrictive option available will be favoured, although careful consideration will be given to the needs of the farmers and horse owners for structures to be stock proof.

It should be noted that where a structure is no longer needed for stock control purposes and does not meet the criteria for authorisation, the authority will request the removal of that structure, leaving a clearly 'way marked' gap.

### **Policy R16 (M3) Authorising new Bridges and Associated Structures on Local Rights of Way**

Where a landowner creates a new ditch, pond or channel that crosses an existing right of way, a suitable bridge or structure must be provided, which can accommodate all legitimate users safely and without restriction.

### **Policy R17 (M4) Enforcing the Removal of Agricultural Obstructions**

The Council will endeavour to resolve any agricultural obstructions by negotiation with the Landowner/farmer. However, where this fails, the Council will take action to address the identified problem using its powers under Sections 134 and 137A. of the Highways Act 1980.

**Addendum to 'Halton Borough Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Consultation Draft 2009'**

*The Council's Executive Board on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009 approved the Mersey Gateway Draft Sustainable Transport Strategy 'Gateway to Sustainability', which is referred to in Section 12 of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). It follows that the strategy has now been fully adopted. In order to help you assess the impact of this document on the ROWIP the following description is now provided, which should be read in conjunction with the other local policies and strategies described in Section 3.2 of the ROWIP:*

*'The Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy (MGSTS) sets out how the Mersey Gateway Project can both facilitate and encourage sustainable transport in Halton, and both provides for, and enables sustainable transport interventions and initiatives to be delivered and implemented.*

*The MGSTS is supportive of the ROWIP. In particular it provides opportunities to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the River Mersey on the existing Silver Jubilee Bridge.'*

*It should also be noted that paragraph 1.6 of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan should read:*

*'The ROWIP is a strategic document and will eventually form a distinct strand of Halton's Local Transport Plan (LTP). It is also supportive of the Council's Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy.'*



**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Environment

**SUBJECT:** Winter Maintenance Performance

**WARDS:** All Wards

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report reviews the measures put in place to deliver the duty to treat highways for snow and ice and in particular the delivery of the service in the 2008 /2009 gritting season.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. That the report be received.**

## **3.0 BACKGROUND AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 Until the advent of the Railways and Transport Act 2003, Local Authorities in England and Wales did not have a legal duty to provide highway winter maintenance facilities.

3.1.2 Despite there being no legal duty, the Council in common with all other Highway Authorities, recognised its obligation to keep the borough's highways open in periods of severe weather. It must however, act in a responsible manner and only provide resources in line with the levels of budget available to it. The change in legislation brought that obligation into a more formal framework defined as "ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice".

3.1.3 Halton undertakes a winter service that makes use of the latest technology and developments and is effective in treating the network for snow and ice. The operational aspects of the service are set out in Halton's Winter Maintenance Plan and fully meet both these legislative demands and also the requirements and obligations of the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management.

3.1.4 As part of a programme of improvement to service delivery a number of developments and innovations have been introduced since Local Government reorganisation passed the responsibility for the operation to Halton. These include improvements to the Winter Service fleet,

route optimization and GPS control which have formed part of a gradual development that has been undertaken within the existing budget resource. These are detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

### **3.2 Halton's Winter Maintenance Plan**

3.2.1 Operational procedures are set out in Halton's Winter Maintenance Plan, which details the scale of the Service and defines the operational procedures to be employed and the process by which the service is managed. The Plan is reviewed annually and revised to meet changing circumstances in both the logistics of the service delivery and the extent of the network that can reasonably be treated within the target treatment time and also within the available resources.

3.2.2 To meet the needs of the service a risk assessment of the entire network is carried out to confirm the need for treatment. The assessment ensures that treated routes are included only where they meet criteria established after discussion and consultation with stakeholders and from operational experience. Whilst the Plan is reviewed in its entirety on an annual basis the risk assessment procedure ensures that where necessary changes to the treatment area can be implemented to respond to changing conditions or network incidents.

3.2.3 The Winter Maintenance Plan details the procedures adopted when ice or snow is predicted and the priority attached to various categories of road. The plan is geared to treat essentially the classified road network, major distributor routes and bus routes within the target treatment time of four hours. Four main gritting routes are scheduled, predominantly centred upon:

- Runcorn Expressways
- Runcorn Area
- Widnes Area
- The Busway and Widnes Eastern Bypass

Additionally, a towed gritting vehicle treats streets that are difficult to access with the main fleet.

Gritting of most footbridges and many strategic footpaths that are remote from the road network is also carried out on a precautionary basis, when ice or snow is forecast. Gritting is carried out manually, by hand or using propelled salt spreaders. It is a very labour-intensive operation and places a high demand on both labour and financial resources to treat the lengths of paths currently scheduled. However, due to lower intensity of use, salt can persist for longer periods on footpaths than on carriageways and therefore, footway gritting is not therefore carried out as frequently as road gritting.

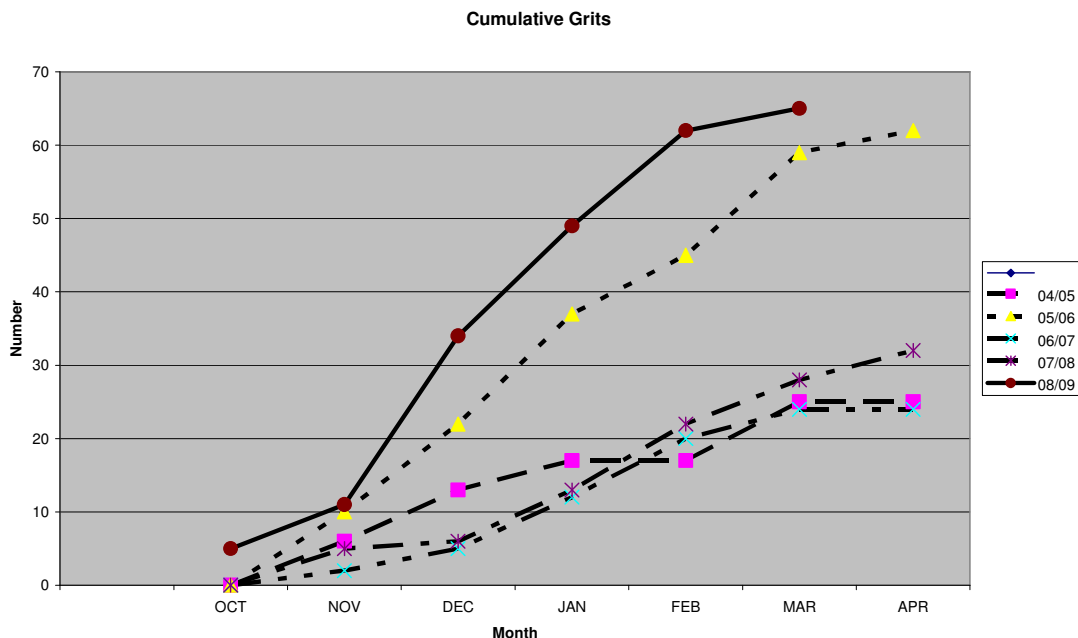
3.2.4 The Plan has provision for treatment for roads of lower category if severe winter conditions persist. These secondary routes include access to schools, sheltered accommodation, doctor's surgeries and

public buildings. Secondary routes are treated once the primary roads have been completed but these are done only should conditions persist. These routes have lesser but still demonstrable priority. Secondary route treatments are not automatic and require additional authorisation by supervisory staff for the Contractor to carry out this work.

3.2.5 The plan has been successful in keeping all the major vehicular routes through the Borough open at all times. The Highways Division estimates the number of occasions when salt will need to be applied to the highway network at no more than 35 occasions in a typical year.

### 3.3 2008/09 Winter Maintenance Season

3.3.1 Depending upon the information source used, the 2008/9 winter weather has proved to be the worst since 1991 and possibly even longer. In response to weather conditions, from October 2008 gritting was carried out on Halton's highway network on 65 occasions, spreading over 2000 tonnes of salt. This is more than double that normally expected during the winter season. The treatment included footbridges and strategic footpaths on 36 occasions and secondary routes on four occasions. Due to the severity of the conditions the Council has spent considerably in excess of its winter maintenance budget last year and this was only be achievable at the expense of other highway services that it is obliged to provide.



The above graph illustrates the number of grits undertaken this season in comparison with previous years.

3.3.2 The Council undertook gritting of all major roads listed in the plan every night between the 24<sup>th</sup> December and the 6<sup>th</sup> January and again between the 30<sup>th</sup> January and 2<sup>nd</sup> February, sometimes on more than

one occasion. Additional gritting was also completed in areas outside the primary and secondary gritting routes where specific additional needs had been identified. Despite the financial constraints, an additional programme of precautionary gritting within Runcorn and Widnes Town Centres was introduced due to the severity of the conditions.

- 3.3.3 The Council also maintains a stock of over 50 grit bins and these were kept filled throughout the worst of the severe icy conditions.

### **3.3.3 National Salt Stock Shortages**

- 3.4.1 During the most severe part of the gritting season the Government was obliged to introduce urgent measures to control the availability of rock salt nationally. Halton was required to report its stock levels daily and to make available any surplus to assist neighboring Authorities when their stocks ran low. Due to its careful management of salt supplies, salt stocks and gritting operations, Halton was fortunate in that stocks were kept at optimum levels and Halton was able to provide assistance to several neighbouring authorities on several occasions.

- 3.4.2 Early in April, all highway authorities were invited to provide feedback to the government through a formal 'Salt Shortage Debriefing exercise'. Halton were able to contribute 'lessons learned' in relation to salt supplies from the recent winter season.

### **3.5 Halton and St Helens Primary Care Trust Funding**

- 3.5.1 Resulting from the sharp increase in ice-related slipping injuries, The PCT has contributed £25,000 per annum over the next five years to extend gritting operations, targeted at pedestrian routes around schools and shopping areas.

- 3.5.2 This funding will enable the Council to undertake more extensive footway treatment around schools, in town and local centres and at public buildings. Work is underway to design hand-spreading routes at these locations. Additionally, extra mechanical salt spreaders have been purchased to enable the routes to be covered efficiently, although due to the number of locations and estimated time taken to complete this work, this scale of treatment will be limited to the more severe or prolonged periods of ice or snow

- 3.5.3 Over 30 requests for additional grit bins were received from businesses and members of the public during this year's severe weather period. The requested locations were risk-assessed on the basis of site topography (gradient, alignment etc.), pedestrian usage and location (proximity to schools, shops etc.) and we were able to provide bins from our small stock at a number of locations immediately. The PCT funding has allowed the purchase of more grit bins for deployment throughout the Borough where the location meets the risk assessment.

- 3.5.4 All Halton's schools and nurseries have been asked whether they want to have a supply of salt provided for use within school premises during the next winter season. This supply of salt together with storage bins is being provided from the PCT funding.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Legislation makes it a duty to provide a properly planned and resourced service. The Winter Service Plan is reviewed and revised

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Winter Maintenance operations affected all service users alike. There are no specific issues applicable to children and young people. The PCT funding will specifically target schools and walking to school.

##### **5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Access to areas of employment ensures that business can function at all times. Winter maintenance is vital in ensuring that business and places of learning are not restricted by the conditions

##### **5.3 A Safer Halton**

The action by the PCT in supporting gritting operations illustrates the considerable risk to the public from icy surfaces. Whilst the Council cannot undertake to protect all road users from risk the procedures and measures in place demonstrate how careful planning can minimize risk.

##### **5.4 Halton's Urban Renewal**

There are no specific implications for Urban Renewal.

##### **5.5 Sustainability**

The use of more efficient plant and materials has reduced wastage and limited the levels of pollution inherent in this operation. Extended gritting treatment of footways during the winter season will promote walked journeys and reduce reliance upon motor vehicles.

##### **5.6 Legal Implications**

The development and application of the Winter Maintenance Plan ensures that Halton continues to meet its legal obligations under the Act.

##### **5.8 Social Inclusion**

Winter Maintenance operations affect all service users. Enhanced gritting of footways will benefit particularly those with limited access to motor vehicles.

#### **5.9 Crime and Disorder**

There are no specific implications

#### **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 Failure to meet our legal obligations would expose the Council to considerable financial risk from litigation.

6.2 This operation ensures as far as practicable, the safety of the public and reduces potential damage to infrastructure and property.

#### **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

There are no equality and diversity implications.

#### **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Well Maintained Highways - The Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 2005

Halton Borough Council Highway Maintenance Strategy Document, 1998

Halton Borough Council Winter Maintenance Plan 2008-2009

Highways Act 1980

Railways and Transport Act 2003

Place of Inspection: Rutland House

Contact Officer: C Dutton

**WINTER SERVICE DELIVERY**

- **Route optimisation and Thermal Mapping** – this is a process of assessing the relative temperatures of the network to ensure that treatment takes place to those locations most prone to frost and ice.
- **Weather forecasting** – Using a system of sensors embedded in the road surface and instruments mounted at the roadside data can be collected in real time of conditions within Halton. The system is supplied and installed by Vaisala a specialist company who collect and process the data before supplying it to the weather forecasting bureau. The information allows for site specific forecast to be prepared giving detailed guidance on the probable short term conditions in Halton. Call out staff have direct access to forecasters and can discuss the situation before making the decision whether to mobilise the gritting crews.
- **Salt storage** – The Council have provided purpose built storage bays for salt. These have been completed at Picow Farm in Runcorn and the provision of purpose built bays at Lower House Lane Depot, Widnes are under discussion.
- **Upgrading of the fleet** – All five gritting vehicles are now purpose built, large capacity modern units with all necessary fittings and attachments to meet the requirements of the service. The main fleet vehicles are leased and the reserve vehicle owned by the Council. To allow access to certain areas that are unsuitable for the standard gritting vehicles a further towed unit has been obtained which although having limited capacity, is able to deal with the less accessible routes.
- **GPS monitoring and control** – Initially GPS monitoring was introduced to enable confirmation that the requirements of the plan were being met. This was particularly necessary to counter public liability claims. The system has now been extended to enable automatic control of salt spread and width without the need for active driver involvement. The system makes for the most economic use of salt, minimising wastage whilst ensuring cover of the entire road surface.
- **Salt Treatment** – Salt used on Halton's roads is treated with a coating derived from the production of molasses. The coated salt has much improved flow characteristics and thus can be more effectively spread with less effort and loss. Savings in the quantity of salt used for the equivalent effect on snow and ice has been noticeable. The treated salt also has lowered corrosion properties making it safer to spread on bridges and other steel structures and less damaging to the gritting plant.

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Health and Community

**SUBJECT:** Review of Warrington Road Transit Site

**WARD(S):** Daresbury

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

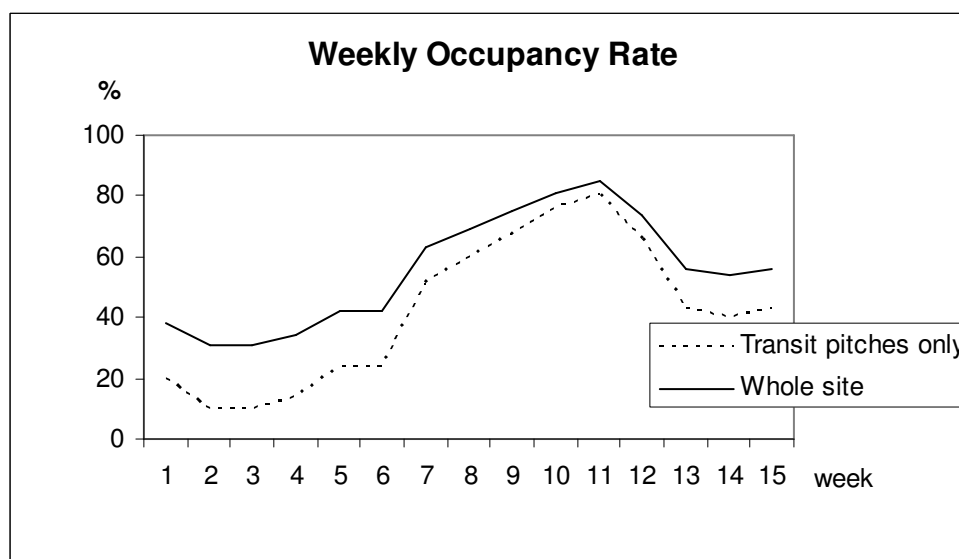
- 1.1 In approving the pitch charges for the new Traveller transit site on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008, the Exec Board Sub resolved that a report be submitted after six months to review income against costs.
- 1.2 In order to consider the effectiveness of the facility and its financial impact in the widest sense, it is appropriate that the report be brought for scrutiny to this Board first, with any recommendations or observations being passed on to the Executive Board Sub.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) **That the Board considers the contents of the report and forwards any recommendations to the Executive Board Sub for consideration.**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The transit site opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Appendix 1 shows weekly occupancy levels since then (summarised in the chart below), which overall have averaged 56% of capacity, but this figure is rising due to increased occupancy in recent weeks.





- 3.2 Anecdotal evidence suggests that the reasons for the initial low level of occupancy were the fact that the early months of the year in particular are periods of reduced Traveller migration, and word had not spread to Traveller groups of the facility's existence.
- 3.3 Appendix 2 shows the draft budget used for estimating purposes when determining the necessary pitch charge. The second column is an attempt to forecast the full year budget based on known costs, estimates, and income to date, but the figures must still be considered with some caution due to no bills having been received yet for utility costs. True operating costs will not be known until the facility has operated for a year or more.
- 3.4 Estimated pitch fee income has been revised downwards on the basis that 90% occupancy is unlikely to be achieved in the first year due to the low levels achieved so far, with 60% now being the assumption. This revised budget estimate increases the forecast annual deficit from £619 to £9,479, but in establishing the true financial impact of the facility on Council budgets, regard should also be taken of the previous cost to the Council of managing unlawful encampments.
- 3.5 Financial provision for dealing with unlawful encampments has never appeared as an explicit item in Directorate budgets, but in May 2007 an exercise was undertaken to try to quantify the cost for the period 2005/06 and 2006/07. The combined results from the relevant sections in each Directorate were as follows –

Staff time	£94,053
Facilities (bins, toilets etc.)	£13,490
Clear up costs	£42,600
Private Bailiffs	£69,100
Land protection measures	£38,470
TOTAL	£257,713

or £128,856 per year.

This excludes the substantial Police costs involved as well.

- 3.6 Police records show that during 2005, the year before a managed approach was started with Haddocks Wood, there were 83 encampments in Halton. During 2006, 2007 and 2008, the period of the Haddocks Wood managed encampment, there were 66, 21 and 10 encampments respectively.
- 3.7 Although it is early days, since the transit site was established there have been only 2 encampments. This may increase over the summer months as migration increases, but it is interesting to note that most of the Travellers now accessing the transit site pre book by phone, rather than just turning up as an unauthorised encampment.
- 3.8 Of the two encampments referred to in 3.7 above, one group moved to the transit site and the other was moved from the Borough when they declined to move to the transit site following a Police direction under

s62 of the CJPOA Act 1994. They had claimed the charge of £11 per night was too much, a view expressed by most Travellers using the site.

- 3.9 Only 2 complaints have been received about the site, neither of which have been substantiated. This is in part attributable to the Warden who, supported by Council officers, has settled in quickly to his new role and has been instrumental to maintaining an orderly site.
- 3.10 What the last 3 years has clearly demonstrated is that a managed approach and the provision of an authorised stopping place have led to a marked decrease in unlawful encampments and the associated costs. Whilst the transit site is unlikely to achieve a balanced budget this year due to early losses when the site first opened, there is nevertheless a significant saving in costs when compared to expenditure incurred in previous years when an unmanaged approach was followed.
- 3.11 Halton's new approach to managing Traveller issues has been applauded by Traveller organisations, the Police and neighbouring Cheshire Councils, and in practical terms is achieving its objective of reducing unauthorised encampments. The reduction in encampments has also been welcomed by local businesses. It also means that Halton has already met its target for the provision of transit site accommodation proposed in recent draft figures set out under the partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no implications arising from the report itself since it is just an information report, but some may arise following debate of the report, depending on the recommendations to be passed to Executive Board Sub.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Should the Board wish to recommend change to reduce the financial deficit there are three options. The first would be to raise the pitch charge to a level that covers the shortfall, but it should be borne in mind that at £77 per week the charge is already higher than the charge set for Riverview which offers increased facilities and permanent residence, and also higher than many Housing Association rents.
- 5.2 The second would be that the proportion of the site given over to permanent occupation could be increased to minimise the risk of income loss due to under occupation, reserving a smaller number of pitches for transit use. The downside to this approach would be the additional capital cost of increasing facilities to accommodate this, the potential increase in unauthorised encampments that could not be moved quickly using s62 of the CJPOA Act 1994, and a potential increase in associated enforcement/clear up costs.

5.3 The third option would be to actively publicise the site amongst the wider Traveller community to ensure the site is as full as possible at all times, but this would be in contrast to the wider community's expectations.

5.4 Alternatively, given the remaining uncertainty about running costs and occupancy levels, the Board may wish to retain current charge levels and further review costs after a full financial year of operation.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Offering Travellers a safe place to stay for a reasonable period should improve access to education services.

### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

N/A

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Travellers have a reduced life expectancy compared to national rates, and this site will afford Travellers the opportunity to access health and social care services more readily, thereby reducing health inequality.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

Roadside encampments are inherently unsafe, and reducing their occurrence through the provision of this site will reduce those risks.

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Proactively managing the problem of unlawful Traveller encampments will lessen the concerns of businesses in the area, particularly those on the industrial estates that historically have seen most encampments, and help to persuade them to remain and develop in Halton

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Not applicable

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.0 Not applicable.

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<u>Document</u>	<u>Place of inspection</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Report to Exec Board Sub 16/10/08	Runcorn Town Hall	S Williams

**APPENDIX 1**

Week ending and number of days occupied

Pitch	<u>15th Feb</u>	<u>22nd Feb</u>	<u>1st Mar</u>	<u>8th Mar</u>	<u>15th Mar</u>	<u>22nd Mar</u>	<u>29-Mar</u>	<u>05-Apr</u>	<u>12-Apr</u>	<u>19-Apr</u>	<u>26-Apr</u>	<u>03-May</u>	<u>10-May</u>	<u>17-May</u>	<u>24-May</u>		
Warden's Pitch	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	2	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7		
	3	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7		
	4	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7		
	5	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7		
	6	0	0	0	3	4	0	7	7	7	6	7	7	1	0	0	
	7	0	0	0	0	3	3	7	7	7	7	7	7	1	0	0	
	8	0	0	0	0	3	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	7	7	7	7	7	
	13	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	0	0	0	1	
	14	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	4	0	0	1	
<b><u>Transit Pitches only</u></b>																<b>TOTALS</b>	
Possible occupancy days	60	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	<b>1110</b>
Actual occupancy days	12	7	7	10	17	17	36	42	47	53	56	46	30	28	30		<b>473</b>
Percentage occupancy	20%	10%	10%	14%	24%	24%	51%	60%	67%	76%	80%	66%	43%	40%	43%		
Cumulative																	<b>43%</b>
<b><u>Site Overall (excl. Warden)</u></b>																	
Possible occupancy days	78	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	<b>1443</b>
Actual occupancy days	30	28	28	31	38	38	57	63	68	74	77	67	51	49	51		<b>806</b>
Percentage occupancy	38%	31%	31%	34%	42%	42%	63%	69%	75%	81%	85%	74%	56%	54%	56%		
Cumulative																	<b>56%</b>
<b>Potential Income</b>	£858	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	£1,001	<b>£15,873</b>
<b>Actual Income</b>	£330	£308	£308	£341	£418	£418	£627	£693	£748	£814	£847	£737	£561	£539	£561		<b>£8,866</b>

## APPENDIX 2

<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Original budget estimate*</u>	<u>Revised full year forecast**</u>
Warden (with free pitch)	13,000	13,000
Telephone	250	250
Water	4,266	2,844
Cleaning materials	450	450
Septic Tank Emptying	9,000	6,000
Electricity (individual meters/elec. cards)	7,362	4,908
Landlord elec. supply (lighting/amenity block)	2,000	2,000
Refuse collection	8,000	8,000
Maintenance	5,000	5,000 ***
Annual fire/elec. safety check	500	500
Insurance	500	71
None domestic rates	2,500	2,595
Sink fund for cyclical maintenance.	2,000	0
	<b><u>54,828</u></b>	<b><u>45,618</u></b>
 <b><u>Income</u></b>		
Rent (13 pitches X 52 weeks X £77 (£11 per day) )	46,847	31,231
Sale of elec. prepayment cards	7,362	4,908
	<b><u>54,209</u></b>	<b><u>36,139</u></b>
<b><u>Net Expenditure</u></b>	<b><u>619</u></b>	<b><u>9,479</u></b>

\* based on 90% occupancy rate

\*\* based on 60% occupancy rate

\*\*\* The site is under a 1 year defects liability period under the building contract, therefore actual spend on repairs may be much less than estimated.

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Environment

**SUBJECT:** Policy & Performance Board Topic Issues Work Programme 2009/2010

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The meeting of this Board on 21<sup>st</sup>. January 2009 agreed the Topic Issues which it wished to pursue in 2009/10. This report seeks approval to the draft Topic Briefs covering those issues then selected and asks Members to consider the membership of the relevant Topic Groups.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That**

- (1) Members of the Policy and Performance Board agree details of the Topic Briefs which have been considered by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board; and**
- (3) consideration be given to the composition of each Topic Group.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1.1 Each year the PPB identifies a number of areas that it intends to scrutinise in detail as part of its work programme for the year.

3.1.2 At the meeting of the Board on 21<sup>st</sup>. January 2008 it was agreed that the topics to be considered in 2009/10 would be:

- A joint group with Employment and Skills on Workforce and Skills for the Science industry, focusing on Daresbury; Lead Officer - Siobhan Saunders (Economic Regeneration).
- Additionally, all Members are invited to attend the Local Development Framework Working Party (continuation).

3.1.3 A Draft Topic Brief has been written for the new Science Skills topic and discussed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. It is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration.

3.1.4 Members are asked to consider and agree this Brief, and to agree the composition and membership of all the Topic Groups.

3.1.5 Topic Groups will meet through the 2009-10 Council year and be expected to report back to this Board at its last meeting of the year.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None at this stage.

**5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None at this stage

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

6.1 There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.

## TOPIC BRIEF TEMPLATE (Part I)

### TOPIC TITLE

Workforce and Skills for the Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Sector in Halton

**PPB(s) responsible:** Urban Renewal & Employment, Learning and Skills

**Officer Lead:** Siobhan Saunders **Tel** 0151 906 4804

**Support Officer:** Tim Leather\Martin Gratton **Tel** 01928 516126

**Planned start/end dates** April 2009 **Target PPB meeting** TBC

### Topic description and scope

- Identify the current, and model the future, skills needs of the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector in Halton.
- Identify any disparity between the anticipated future skills needs of the sector and the anticipated provision of a competent and flexible local workforce
- Audit the current and anticipated supply of demand led training specific to the needs of the sector within Halton
- Assess whether existing demand led training will meet the skills needs of the sector in Halton
- Identify opportunities, in partnership with public planning/funding bodies (e.g. LSC and its successor, the Skills Funding Agency), FE and HE sector and the private sector, to improve the provision of demand led training
- Explore in-work training opportunities within existing companies within the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector locally, including Apprentices and Train to Gain.

### Why this topic was chosen

The Borough of Halton already has a vital critical mass in the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector.

- *Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus; one of the UK's two premier large-scale research facilities*
- *Daresbury Innovation Centre; high specification incubation facilities for small technology based businesses and university spinouts*
- *The Cockcroft Institute; the National Centre for Accelerator Science*
- *The Heath Business And Technical Park; the former global headquarters of the ICI now home to over 175 individual businesses many in the fields of science and research.*
- *The presence of a great many existing businesses, many based at The Heath, at the cutting edge of science and innovation*
- *The imbedded skills base of the existing chemical industry*
- *Proximity to the Northwest's premier FE and HE facilities*
- *An unrivalled position at the heart of the Northwest's communications network*
- *A portfolio of existing facilities and development land to attract new and expanding companies in the sector.*

The sector has therefore been recognised, alongside logistics, as key to the future prosperity of the Borough.



Within this context, it is vital that the sector has access to a highly skilled, motivated and flexible workforce.

It is equally vital that the young people of the Borough are able to take advantage of the employment opportunities within the sector through access to appropriate training pathways.

**Key outputs and outcomes sought**

Outputs

1. A clear understanding of :-
  - The current and future skills demands of the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector in Halton
  - The current provision of training locally specific to the needs of the sector
  - Any disparity between the demand for, and the supply of, a highly skilled workforce over the medium and long term
  - The mechanisms necessary to support the recruitment needs of the sector which will also to make employment opportunities within the sector available to the people of Halton.
2. The establishment of a clear set of job profiles where people can easily find the skills/qualifications that local business require for local jobs
3. Identification of good practice

Outcomes:

A body of skills related intelligence around the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector that will foster an understanding of the skills position of the borough.

**Which of Halton's 5 strategic priorities this topic addresses and the key objectives and improvement targets it will help to achieve**

A Healthy Halton, Key objectives B, C, E  
Urban Renewal, Key objectives A, D, E.  
Children and Young People, Key Objectives D, E.  
Employment Learning and Skills, Key objectives B, C and D

**Nature of expected/desired PPB input**

Working group reports to be considered by full PPB

**Preferred mode of operation**

Joint Councillor and officer working group  
Review of recent skills surveys  
Skills Audit of Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Sector in Halton  
Primary research  
1-2-1 sessions with main agencies and providers  
Recommendations for action developed

**Media/communication implications**

Science, technology and advanced manufacturing is a key growth sector for the Borough of Halton. The work of the group will maximise the media/communication possibilities associated with the sector.

**Agreed and signed by:**

**PPB Chair .....** **Officer .....**

**Date:.....**

**Date:.....**

**Review date:** April 2010

**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sector Skills Action Plan 2009/10: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

	Action	Outcome	Start date	Finish date	Person/s Responsible	Progress
1.	Constitute a task group to address the future skills needs of the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sectors locally	The creation of a sustainable, multi-agency task group with private sector representation	April 09	May 09	Halton Borough Council	
2.	Define precisely the Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Sector in Halton	Clearly identify the scale and composition of the sector locally	April 2009	April 2009	Halton Borough Council	
3.	Audit the sector in Halton	Identify all companies within the sector in both absolute terms and by activity	April 2009	May 2009	Halton Borough Council	
4.	Model the labour demand and projected skills needs of the sector until 2020	A clear, evidence based analysis	May 2009	September 2009	Halton Borough Council in partnership with LSC/Sector Skills Councils	
5.	Canvas the views of the business community within the sector locally to ascertain more precisely the labour needs of the	A more precise and tailored analysis of the demand for labour and skills over the medium term	May 2009	September 2009	External consultants	

	Action	Outcome	Start date	Finish date	Person/s Responsible	Progress
	sector and to qualify the results of the modelling exercise					
6.	Audit existing education and training provision pertinent to the sector locally	Identification of any gaps or shortcomings in existing provision	May 2009	July 2009	Halton Borough Council/LSC	
7.	Develop a clear and quantifiable route way whereby the young people of the borough can progress from full time education into training and then into a meaningful career in the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector while simultaneously providing the sector with a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce	The creation of a viable route way which is aligned with other regional and sub-regional provision, for example the City Region Employment Strategy	June 2009	March 2010	Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Skills Group	

**REPORT TO:** Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 17 June 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Environment

**SUBJECT:** Topic Group – Workforce and Skills for the Logistics Industry – Summary Report

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the ideas put forward in June 2008 to identify the future skill needs within the logistics sector in Halton and, to assess whether existing activity will meet those needs, including the identification of opportunities for improved performance. In addition, to explore in-work training opportunities within logistics companies in the borough.
- 1.2 The recommendations will lead to an improvement in the employment opportunities within logistics, particularly in terms of Halton's long term unemployed adults residents.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- a) **That approval is given to Council Officers to conclude the work of this Topic Group;**
- b) **That the recruitment model for the 3MG development is tested, including feeding back on:**
  - i. **Number of applicants**
  - ii. **Number of interviews**
  - iii. **Number of successful job outcomes for Halton residents, of which:**
    - 1. **% are from LSOAs**
    - 2. **Age breakdown**
    - 3. **gender**
- c) **That Skills for Life support (maths, English, ICT) is embedded within any skills roll out relating to logistics training;**
- d) **That the 3MG development makes full use of apprenticeships;**
- e) **That real case studies evidencing progression opportunities within the logistics sector are identified and positive promotion of these are actively encouraged.**

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Urban Renewal PPB in January 2008 (URB41) selected this topic as a joint topic group with the Employment Learning and Skills PPB. The joint topic group was subsequently formed. The Terms of Reference and Member representatives were agreed by the Urban Renewal PPB as Cllr Hignett (Chair), Cllr Leadbetter and Cllr Rowe in June 2008 (URB54). The Terms of Reference and Member representatives were agreed by the Employment, Learning and Skills PPB as Cllr Parker Cllr Findon and Cllr Austin in June 2008 (ELS8). The joint topic group has met regularly since its inception and debated matters relating to the terms of reference and the recommendations.

#### **4.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 Work on furthering this topic has been undertaken and a clear understanding has been reached on:
- The current demand for skills from logistics sector related companies in Halton;
  - The likely future demand for logistics skills;
  - The kinds of companies locating to the 3MG site over the next 5 to 10 years.
- 4.2 The Halton Employment Partnership has been established supported by key partners including:
- Learning and Skills Council;
  - Skills for Logistics;
  - Riverside College Halton;
  - Job Centre Plus;
  - Halton People Into Jobs;
  - The Warrington Business School;
  - Halton Borough Council.
- 4.3 A Halton Investors' Handbook has been produced, specifically tailored to the logistics sector and sets out the skills and recruitment offer of the Halton Employment Partnership. The Handbook has been used in marketing the Halton Employment Partnerships offer to logistic companies considering opportunities at 3MG (Mersey Multimodal Gateway).
- 4.4 A pilot skills and recruitment offer is being tested with the first occupier at 3MG. This pilot can be rolled out to all future occupiers on 3MG and boroughwide.

#### **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The proposals are in line with Council policy to skill up and support Halton people into Halton jobs.

## **6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 All the proposals are sustainable.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **7.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Supports key objectives D and E.

### **7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Supports key objectives B, C and D.

### **7.3 A Healthy Halton**

Supports key objectives B, C and E.

### **7.4 A Safer Halton**

None applicable

### **7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Supports key objectives A, D and E.

## **8.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 8.1 None applicable

## **9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 9.1 The Halton Employment Partnership operates under the Council's Equality and Diversity policy.

## **10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 10.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.