



**Corporate Policy and Performance Board**

**Wednesday, 22 January 2014 6.30 p.m.  
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David WR', positioned above the Chief Executive title.

**Chief Executive**

**BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

<b>Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chairman)</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Joe Roberts (Vice- Chairman)</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Ellen Cargill</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Mark Dennett</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Stan Hill</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Chris Loftus</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Alan Lowe</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Angela McInerney</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Councillor Gareth Stockton</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>
<b>Councillor Kevan Wainwright</b>	<b>Labour</b>

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 Ext. 16 8276 or e-mail  
[ann.jones@halton.gov.uk](mailto:ann.jones@halton.gov.uk) for further information.*

*The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 18 March 2014*

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

**Part I**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. MINUTES</b>	
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)</b>	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, to leave the meeting during any 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:** Corporate Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 22 January 2013

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Resources

**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:** Corporate Policy and Performance Board  
**DATE:** 22 January 2013  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive  
**SUBJECT:** Executive Board Minutes  
**WARD(s):** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Corporate Services 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

**Extracts of Executive Board Committee Minutes that are relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board**

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**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2013**

<b>97</b>	<b>PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS WAIVER REQUEST - REVENUES, BENEFITS &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES DIVISION</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which requested a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders for the continued provision of a document outsourcing mail service for the Revenues and Benefits Services Division.

The Board was advised that the current contract for this service was awarded for one year. A tender process needed to be undertaken to award a contract for the Council's future requirements. It was reported that Government Procurement Services (GPS) would manage a new tender process from 2014, which was open to local authorities. The process would comply with EU Public Procurement Regulations 2006 and removed the need for the Council to run its own tender process.

It was noted that the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders was required until 30 September 2014, to allow the continuation of the current mailing service and to ensure service continuity and continued savings for the Council.

RESOLVED: That Procurement Standing Orders 4.1 be waived, to allow the existing Document Outsourcing contract to continue until 30 September 2014, when a Government Procurement Framework will be in place for this mailing service.

<b>98</b>	<b>BUSINESS RATES POOLING</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which sought approval to establish a Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool from 1 April 2014.

The Board was advised that under business rates retention, Councils retain 50% of the business rates they collect, with the other 50% going to Government. The scheme included provision for Top Up Grants and Tariffs, so that total income reflected the needs of each Council. It was noted that nationally, the Top Up Grants were funded by

the Tariffs and the level of both was fixed until the scheme was reset in 2020. The report outlined the arrangement for Top Up Grants to meet the difference for Halton and St Helens.

The Board considered a proposal to create a Business Rates Pool with St Helens and Warrington Councils from 1 April 2014. This arrangement would enable 45% of Warrington's future rates growth to be retained within the Pool and then shared between the three Councils. The report provided further details of the safety net mechanism whereby councils were protected from an excessive drop in funding. This would be activated when a council's Business Rates income fell below a specified level.

It was reported that the application process required the proposal to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by 31 October 2013, and must include details of the potential benefits to Pool members, the lead Council and the management and governance arrangements. If the application was successful, a further report would be brought to the Board to confirm its approval to proceed with the Pool.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) an application be submitted to DCLG, to establish a Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 along with St Helens Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council;
- 2) the Operational Director, Finance, in consultation with the Executive Board Portfolio Holder for Resources, be authorised to prepare and submit by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013 a joint application to DCLG; and
- 3) a further report be presented to the Board following publication of the Provisional Local Government Grant Settlement, in order to confirm whether the Board wishes to continue with establishing a Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 7 NOVEMBER 2013**

<b>102</b>	<b>ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2012-13</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which presented the Annual Audit Letter for 2012/13.

The Board was advised that the Annual Audit Letter (the Letter) summarised the findings from the 2012/13 audit completed by the Council's external auditors. The Letter included messages arising from

the audit of the financial statements and the results of work that had been undertaken in assessing the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources.

Mike Thomas, the external auditor from Grant Thornton UK LLP, attended the meeting and reported that an unqualified opinion had been issued on the Council's financial statements. Of particular note however, was the recognition that the most significant issue that the Council faced was the budget gap and being able to meet its mandatory responsibilities. In addition, the audit recognised that despite the financial challenges, the Council sought opportunities to progress the local economy and continued to have major successes through partnership on a number of significant developments most notably Mersey Gateway, Daresbury Science Park, 3MG Multi-Modal site and the Castlefields development.

The Board wished to place on record their thanks to all Officers that had assisted in the preparation of the audit inspection.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Audit Letter 2012/13 be approved.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2013**

<b>112</b>	<b>DETERMINATION OF THE 2014/2015 COUNCIL TAX BASE</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the requirement for the Council to determine the 'Tax Base' for its area and the tax base for each of the Parishes.

The Council was required to notify the figure for the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Environment Agency by 31 January 2014. In addition, the Council was required to calculate and advise the Parish Councils, if requested, of their relevant tax bases.

The Board was advised that the Tax Base was the measure used for calculating the council tax and was used by both the billing authority (the Council) and the major precepting authorities (the Cheshire Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner), in the calculation of their council tax requirements. It was arrived at in accordance with a prescribed formula representing the estimated full year number of chargeable dwellings in the Borough expressed in terms of the equivalent of Band "D" dwellings. Taking account of all the relevant information and applying a 96.5% collection rate, the calculation for 2014/15 gave a tax base figure of 31,400 for the Borough as a whole.

It was noted that from 2013/14 onwards, the tax base calculation included an element for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (the replacement for the Council Tax Benefit).

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve:

- 1) the Council Tax Base for 2014/15 to be set at 31,400 for the Borough, and that the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Environment Agency be so notified; and
- 2) the Council Tax Base for each of the Parishes be set as follows;

Parish	Tax Base
Hale	643
Halebank	494
Daresbury	150
Moore	316
Preston Brook	319
Sandymoor	950

<b>113</b>	<b>2013-2014 HALF YEAR SPENDING</b>
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The Board received a report of the Operational Director, Finance which reported on the 2013/14 Half Year Spending as at 30 September 2013.

A summary of spending against the revenue budget up to 30 September 2013 was attached to the report at Appendix 1. This provided individual statements for each department. The Board was advised that in overall terms, the revenue expenditure was below the budget profile, although this was only a guide to eventual spending.

The report contained details on a number of significant areas of the budget including:

- The employee budget, vacant posts, overtime and agency staff;
- Expenditure on general supplies and services;
- Children’s residential placements;
- Spending on in-house adoption;
- Income affected by the economic downturn, such as fees and charges, rental income and catering sales;
- The Complex Care Pooled Budget (attached at Appendix 2);
- The collection rate for Council Tax and Business Rates; and

- The Council's net overall spending.

The report also outlined details of a revision to the capital spending programme at Appendix 3 and monitoring of the Council's balance sheet.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to the absolutely essential;
- 2) Strategic Directors ensure overall spending at year-end is within their total operational budget; and
- 3) Council be recommended to approve the revised capital programme as set out in Appendix 3.

<b>114</b>	<b>MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2014/15 to 2016/17.

The Board was advised that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) set out a three-year projection of resources and spending based on information currently available.

The projections in the forecast clearly showed there was a need to make a significant level of savings over the next three years, as a result of the effect of the Government policy to reduce the national deficit through reductions in public sector funding. The strategy took into account the following:

- The 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review;
- The 2013 Comprehensive Spending Review; and
- The 2014/15 and 2015/16 Technical Consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement

The forecast provided initial guidance to the Council on its financial position into the medium term. Revenue savings of approximately £15m, £17m and £14m would be required over the next three years. It was noted that as a result, £46m would need to be removed from the Council's budget which represented 26% of the gross expenditure budget.

The Board was reminded that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had a number of objectives, as listed in the report. The

Council would need to consider these objectives when balancing its budget over the next three years.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved;
- 2) the base budget be prepared on the basis of the underlying assumptions set out in the Strategy;
- 3) the Budget Strategy and Capital Strategy be approved;
- 4) the Reserves and Balances Strategy be approved; and
- 5) the award of Council Tax support for 2014/15 remain at the 2013/14 level of 21.55%.

<b>115</b>	<b>TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2013/14 2ND QUARTER: JULY - SEPTEMBER</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which updated Members on the activities undertaken on the money market, as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

The report provided supporting information on the economic background, interest rate forecast, short term borrowing rates, longer term borrowing rates, borrowing/investments, new long term borrowing, policy guidelines and treasury management indicators. It was noted that debt rescheduling had been undertaken during the quarter.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

<b>116</b>	<b>BUDGET PROPOSALS 2014-15</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on initial revenue budget proposals for 2014/15.

The Board was advised that budget savings proposals for 2014/15 were being developed by the Budget Working Group. However, a number of those proposals detailed at Appendix 1, could be implemented immediately in order to achieve a part-year saving in 2013/14. In addition, a number of the proposals would take time to implement and therefore by commencing the process as soon as possible, would assist in ensuring that they can be fully implemented by 1 April 2014.

It was noted that the Government would announce its Grant Settlement for Local Government in late December 2013, at which point the Council's actual funding gap would be identified. Further savings proposals that would enable the Council to deliver a balanced budget would be recommended to Council at its meeting on 5 March 2014.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the initial budget proposals for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 1.

<b>117</b>	<b>INCOME MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - ONLINE PAYMENTS</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought approval for the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders for the provision of the Income Management System – Online Payments.

The Board was advised that the Council was in the process of replacing its website to facilitate a larger number of transactional services, which required the upgrade of the payment engine to allow integration with current financial systems. It was noted that, as there was only one provider of compatible systems - Paye.net portal and Internet Payments portal - it was not possible to undertake a procurement exercise. Details of the costs for the purchase and installation of the equipment before and after the 30 November 2013 were given in the report. It was further noted that there would be a significant financial saving if the equipment was purchased before this date.

RESOLVED: That the competition requirements of Procurement Standing Order 4.1 be waived to facilitate the upgrade of the Council's online payment engine with Capita Paye.net portal and Internet Payments portal.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2013**

<b>126</b>	<b>DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 – 2013-14</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the second quarter to 30 September 2013.

The Board was reminded that in September 2011, a review of the Council's existing performance management and monitoring arrangements had been undertaken, based upon a set of principles agreed by the Corporate Policy and Performance Board. This was

based around the better management of performance information in terms of both strategic focus and volume. The Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from performance in the relevant quarter for each Directorate, being aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's performance management arrangements, with the Board having a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

It was reported that Directorate Risk Registers were under review and would be refreshed in conjunction with the development of Directorate Business Plans 2014-17; monitoring of high risks would be reported in due course to Executive Board.

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

<b>127</b>	<b>DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT AND DISCRETIONARY SUPPORT SCHEME</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which sought approval for the removal of the ring fence around the Discretionary Support Scheme budget.

The Board was advised that the Discretionary Support Scheme, (DSS) previously administered by the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP), was abolished by the Welfare Reform Act in April 2013. At the same time, Crisis Loans for general living expenses and Community Care Grants were replaced by a new discretionary service administered by the Council. The Council's Scheme was introduced in April 2013 and payments from the Scheme had been made against a set of criteria, previously agreed by Executive Board in consultation with the Corporate Policy and Performance Board (PPB). It was noted that although the DWP did not expect local authorities to replicate the scheme, it was the intention of Government that the funding would be used to provide support to vulnerable people within the Borough.

The report provided information relating to Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), which provided clients with further financial assistance. Members were advised that the DHP budget was under pressure, with an increase of 682% in the number of applications to date, compared with last year. The Board was further advised that the DSS budget was not ring fenced; it was proposed that, in order to relieve pressure on the DHP budget, and to give the maximum flexibility to the Council to help some of the most vulnerable members of Halton's Community, the DSS budget be used to relieve pressure on the DHP budget. Spend on both budgets would be kept under close scrutiny by the Corporate PPB.

RESOLVED: That the ring fence around the Discretionary Support Scheme Fund be removed, to enable the budget to supplement the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund, if that becomes necessary.

<b>128</b>	<b>TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2013-14 MID YEAR REVIEW</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which reviewed activities on Treasury Management for the mid-year point 2013/14 in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Policy.

The mid-year report had been completed in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice and covered the following:

- An economic update for the first six months of 2013/14;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Council's Capital expenditure (prudential indicators);
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2013/14;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2013/14;
- A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2013/14;
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2013/14.

The Board noted that the Council was required to prepare prudential indicators and to report on any significant variations, as part of the Council's on-going requirement to report on the current capital position. Details of these indicators were attached to the report at Appendix 1. The report also provided details of the investment and new borrowing portfolio. It was further noted that the Department for Transport had indicated that it may pay a substantial capital grant to the Council during the latter months of 2013/14. In view of this, the counterparty limits for two banks had been increased and Appendix 2 provided details of the revised counterparty list.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and Council be recommended to approve the revised Prudential Indicators and Counterparty List, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

**REPORT TO:** Corporate Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 22 January 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Policy & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Member Development Group Notes

**WARDS:** NA

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

1.1 Members are asked to note the notes of the last meeting of the Member Development Group held on 17 October 2013.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

(1) The report be noted.

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The notes of the last meeting of the Member Development Group are before CSPPB as a result of changes to the Constitution.

### **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** - 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 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

**Member Development Group****ITEM 2**

*At a meeting of the Member Development Group held on the 17th October 2013  
at the Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes*

**Present:** Councillors Stockton (Chairman), Gilligan, C Plumpton Walsh, N Plumpton Walsh, Wallace, Wharton and Zygadlo.

**Officers:** M Carruthers, S Connor, J Greenough, K Mackenzie and A Miller.

**Apologies for absence:** Councillors J Bradshaw, Ratcliffe, Wainwright and Wright.

<b>MDG7</b>	<b>NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING</b>	
	The notes of the last meeting held on 25 June 2013 were approved as a correct record.	
<b>MDG8</b>	<b>REVIEW OF CURRENT PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS</b>	
	<b>LOD2 - Number of Members with a Member Action Plan (MAP)</b>  The number of Members with a MAP to date since April 2013 were 54 of 56. This number had increased since the last meeting and the Chairman thanked all Members for their input to their own MAP's.	KM
	<b>LOD3 - Percentage of Members attending at least one organised training event in the current financial year.</b>  Since April 1st 2013, 70% (39) Members had attended at least one organised training event. The target for the year was 100% attendance, which had been achieved in 2012 - 2013.  Members were e-mailed by Kathryn on a regular basis to remind them of training events as they arose. Training was also arranged on an ad hoc basis depending on requests made by Members at their individual MAP's.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.	KM
<b>MDG9</b>	<b>LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE</b>	
	<b>Treasury Management Workshop – October 2013</b>  Members present discussed the Treasury Management Workshop for Members held in October, run by Capita. One of the Members of the Group felt that all Members would benefit by attending this training, which she had found incredibly useful.  <b>Update on E-Learning</b>  Sarah Connor, Learning and Development Advisor informed Members that she had arranged a number of dates for e-learning drop in	SC

	<p>sessions, and that she would e-mail all Members with dates. The sessions were likely to be held in the Municipal Building Boardroom, and would show Members how to access and use the e-learning packages that were currently on offer to them.</p> <p><b>Oldham Council Local Leadership Programme</b></p> <p>The Chairman of the Group informed Members that he was aware of a Leadership Programme in Oldham that he thought could be useful for Members in Halton. He would report to a future meeting with further information once this was obtained.</p> <p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>Members asked that their governor training records be kept up to date. Kathryn replied that these were sent to her on a yearly basis, and that she would ensure all records were updated as requested.</p> <p><b>Wirral Council – Members’ E-Learning Area</b></p> <p>Sarah Connor informed Members that Wirral Council had a Members’ Training Portal as part of an E-learning contract. She was in contact with Wirral to see how effective the portal was in encouraging Members to use E-learning sites.</p> <p><b>I-Pad Training</b></p> <p>The Chairman of the Group thanked Alan Miller for all the support he had given to Members who had received an I-Pad over the last few months.</p> <p>It was suggested that Members were now offered some training on an intermediate level of I-Pad use. Alan mentioned that some documents were not ideally viewed on an I-Pad, and this should be considered when opening documents. However, the I-Pads were proving to be very popular with Members, and easy to navigate.</p> <p><b>7th Floor Members’ Room, Widnes</b></p> <p>Jonathan Greenough reported that the current range of IT equipment in the Members Room, 7th Floor, Municipal Building was a mixed kit. The next stage was to change all kits to Microsoft Virtual Desktop. This would be a newer version of Citrix, and would hopefully take place over the next two months.</p> <p>The Members’ Room at Runcorn Town Hall would also be updated.</p> <p>Jonathan and Alan would provide Members with an update at the next meeting to be held on Tuesday 10 December. They would also provide the March meeting with an update as to how IT would be issued to any newly elected Members at their Induction in May 2014.</p>	<p>JS</p> <p>KM</p> <p>SC</p> <p>AM</p> <p>AM/JG</p>
<b>MDG10</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2013 – 2014</b>	

	<p><b>MODULE UPDATE - REVIEW OF INDUCTION PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>The Chairman asked the Group to consider the four different Induction Days for newly Elected Members. Local elections would be held in May 2014, and any newly elected Members would be offered induction Training as part of the Development Programme on offer for newly elected Members in Halton.</p> <p>All Members present were happy with existing arrangements for Day 1.</p> <p>Alan and Jonathan added that they would revise the Introduction to Halton's ICT that was included as part of Day 2. Day 2 would also be tailored to the individual needs of the Members involved.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Group suggested that a visit to Innovation Way at Daresbury should be included as part of Day 3 – Tour of the Borough. The Group agreed this was a useful addition to the day.</p> <p>The Group agreed that Day 4 – Council Meetings was excellent. They noted the suggested that Alan Miller attend in 2014 to show how IT is used in meetings.</p> <p>Members felt that useful contact names/numbers of officers would be beneficial for newly elected Members. They noted that useful numbers were already included in the Members Yearbook and Diary.</p> <p>The Group suggested that an overview of PPB's would also be useful.</p> <p><b>MENTORING PROGRAMME 2014</b></p> <p>A Mentoring Workshop would be held on Thursday 13 March 2014 at 5.30pm in the Marketing Suite, for Members and officers wishing to be newly elected Member Mentors.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>	<p>KM</p> <p>AM</p> <p>KM</p> <p>KM/M C</p>
<b>MDG11</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	There were no issues to be discussed.	
<b>MDG12</b>	<b>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</b>	
	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>The next meeting to be held at 4.30pm in the Marketing Suite on Tuesday 10 December 2013.</p> <p>Future meeting to start at 4.30pm on Tuesday 25 March 2014 in the Marketing Suite.</p>	KM
	The meeting closed at 5.55pm	

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	22nd January 2014
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director, Communities
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Neighbourhood, Leisure & Sport
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Local Area Forums
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Borough-wide

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

To provide Members of the Policy and Performance Board with additional information on the decision making process for Local Area Forum funds.

#### 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) the report be noted.

#### 3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The board received an annual report on Local Area Forum expenditure in October 2013. Following discussion on the report, additional information regarding the allocation of funds was requested.

#### 4.0 **IDENTIFYING LOCAL AREA FORUM PROJECTS**

- 4.1 Local Area Forum projects requiring funding are generated by either:-

- Application forms submitted from local residents and community groups.
- Members exploring solutions to community identified issues or improvements within their wards.
- Requests received via Halton Direct Link or the Contact Centre for initiatives (such as alley gates) to be put in place to address community safety concerns.

#### 5.0 **DECISION MAKING**

- 5.1 Project ideas are received by the Area Forum Projects Co-ordinator who maintains project lists and up to date budgets for each of the seven area forums.

- 5.2 Each Area Forum has a nominated Lead Officer who supports the

delivery of Area Forums and collaborates with Council Members on the programme of projects.

5.3 Project information is circulated to Members for their consideration ahead of Project meetings and supporting information or additional project detail is prepared. Project meetings are held three times a year alongside Area Forum pre-agenda meetings. Decisions can be reached outside of Project meetings if required, for example, due to the need to release funds before planned meetings in order to meet particular project timescales.

5.4 Each Local Area Forum has varying numbers of Wards and Members to be considered in decision making as follows:-

- **Broadheath, Ditton, Hough Green & Hale**  
10 Ward Members
- **Riverside, Appleton & Kingsway**  
8 Ward Members
- **Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View**  
9 Ward Members
- **Grange, Heath, Mersey & Halton Brook**  
12 Ward Members
- **Halton Castle, Norton North, Norton South & Windmill Hill**  
10 Ward Members
- **Beechwood & Halton Lea**  
5 Ward Members
- **Daresbury**  
2 Ward Members

5.5 Members consider projects and make recommendations for approvals in liaison with Lead Officers. The Area Forum Projects Co-ordinator progresses decisions made, providing feedback to applicants, co-ordinating project delivery and administering the funds.

5.6 In considering projects, match funding and leverage of external funding into the Borough is a key consideration, In 2012/13 for every £1 of Area Forum expenditure a further £1.36 of match was drawn into Halton, investment of £821,908 in Area Forum Projects.

## 6.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Local Area Forums are a key tool in engaging with local residents and the budget provides a means of funding both small and medium scale schemes in response to local needs and aspirations. In

addition, Area Forum grants often provide much needed 3<sup>rd</sup> party funding to support larger schemes, helping to lever in much larger pots of external funding from outside the Borough.

6.2 This mechanism provides a platform for community engagement at neighbourhood level which can be utilised to inform policy development and contribute towards the setting and achievement of strategic objectives.

6.3 The projects support safer neighbourhoods generating an increased satisfaction for local residents with their area and a willingness to participate in community life. Local Area Forums contribute towards building cohesion in Halton's communities through projects and initiatives that encourage community connectedness.

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

### 7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Local Area Forums project expenditure has allocated a significant proportion of funding to supporting pre-school, youth activities and sports. Since 2003, 19% of the total expenditure through Area Forums has been on youth facilities.

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

Local Area Forum Project expenditure supports community initiatives that include accessing learning & skills opportunities through locally delivered courses. Many of the community initiatives supported provided volunteer opportunities either with the committees, supporting engagement activity or as part of delivering activities i.e community cafés.

### 7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Many of the community initiatives supported have a well-being impact supporting the ethos of a 'whole area' approach to healthy living. Positive impacts on Health & Wellbeing are a key consideration in supporting projects.

### 7.4 **A Safer Halton**

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents' fear of crime where they live. Residents are likely to feel a stronger sense of belonging and safety in an environment where the communities know each other, are active and there are established links to other stakeholders like police, housing, community wardens, etc. Local Area Forum projects contribute to building community resilience.

**7.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal**

Local Area Forums provide a mechanism for local people to be involved in making decisions that impact on place shaping for their local area. Local people can influence expenditure to improve their local environment and work jointly with the Council towards the communities’ aspirations.

**8.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 There are no significant risks associated with this report.

**9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 The Local Area Forums and grant support are open and accessible to all members of Halton’s community.

**10.0 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>
Minutes of Local Area Forums	Municipal Building, Widnes	Janice Weston

**REPORT TO:** Corporate Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Policy and Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Discretionary Housing Benefit Scheme

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

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To consider the attached Discretionary Housing Benefit Guidance, designed to assist staff when considering applications to the Fund.

**RECOMMENDATION: To recommend to Executive Board the adoption of the attached Discretionary Housing Benefit Guidance.**

## 2. BACKGROUND TO SCHEME

3.1 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) provides claimants with financial assistance, in addition to any welfare benefits, when the Council considers that help with housing costs is required.

3.2 Discretionary Housing Payments are available to claimants who are entitled to:

- Housing Benefit (HB), or
- Universal Credit (UC), and
- Have a rental liability, and
- Require further financial assistance with housing costs

3.3 The level of award may cover all or part of a shortfall in rent or assist with the cost of taking up a tenancy.

3.4 The various types of shortfalls that a DHP can cover include:

- under-occupation in the social rented sector
- benefit cap has been applied
- Local Housing Allowance restrictions

- rent shortfall (in part or in full) between eligible rent and HB award
- non-dependant deductions
- income tapers
- reductions in HB or UC

3.5 In general, 'housing costs' means rental liability and include:

- rent
- rent deposits, or
- rent in advance, or
- other lump sum costs associated with a housing need such as removal costs

3.6 Discretionary Housing Payments cannot be awarded towards:

- Ineligible service charges (example – gardening charges, water charges, meals)
- Support charges (example – charges which relate to care or supervision)
- Increases in rent to cover rent arrears which are not liable for HB
- Sanctions and reductions in benefit (including HB overpayment recovery action)
- Amounts of HB/CTB that have been suspended
- Rent where a person is getting support through a Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) but not HB or UC

### **3. Discretion Housing Payment Guidance**

4.1 Given the significant changes in welfare provision that is taking place it is considered helpful to provide further guidance to staff who administer DHPs.

The attached draft DHP Guidance document attached is intended to do just that. The views of this Board are sought. If the Board is happy with this guidance then members are asked to recommend its adoption to Executive Board. This guidance is intended to give Officers a framework to work to when assessing claims to the Fund. This will help in ensuring an equitable treatment of applications for what is a cash limited sum of money.

4.2 Notwithstanding this each case will still be looked at on its individual merits to ensure that the guidance does not fetter cases of exceptional hardship not covered in this document.

4.3 In addition there is an Appeal Process to Members which is already in existence which provides a further test to the fairness of the application of the policy.

**7. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 It has the potential to affect all Council priorities.

**8. RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 Payments will be monitored from the scheme to ensure that these remain within budget.

**9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 The guidance will ensure a consistent and equitable consideration of applications.

**10. 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>
Various letters from the Department of Works and Pensions	Revenues & Benefits & Customer Services Division Kingsway House Widnes	Peter McCann

Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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Discretionary Housing Payment  
Scheme

DRAFT

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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<b>5. Awards</b>	
<b>6. Right of review</b>	
<b>7. Exceptional circumstances</b>	

**DRAFT**

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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### a) Overview of scheme

The overview of the scheme is defined by national Housing Benefit legislation and is not subject to any localised Halton Borough Council discretion.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) provides claimants with further financial assistance, in addition to any welfare benefits, when the Council considers that help with housing costs is required.

Discretionary Housing Payments are available to claimants who are entitled to:

- Housing Benefit (HB), or
- Universal Credit (UC), and
- Have a rental liability, and
- Require further financial assistance with housing costs

The level of award may cover all or part of a shortfall in rent or assist with the cost of taking up a tenancy.

The various types of shortfalls that a DHP can cover include:

- under-occupation in the social rented sector
- benefit cap has been applied
- Local Housing Allowance restrictions
- rent shortfall (in part or in full) between eligible rent and HB award
- non-dependant deductions
- income tapers
- reductions in HB or UC

In general, 'housing costs' means rental liability and include:

- rent
- rent deposits, or
- rent in advance, or
- other lump sum costs associated with a housing need such as removal costs

Discretionary Housing Payments cannot be awarded towards:

- Ineligible service charges (example – gardening charges, water charges, meals)
- Support charges (example – charges which relate to care or supervision)
- Increases in rent to cover rent arrears which are not liable for HB
- Sanctions and reductions in benefit (including HB overpayment recovery action)
- Amounts of HB/CTB that have been suspended

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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- Rent where a person is getting support through a Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) but not HB or UC

### b) Under occupation social housing (known as “Bedroom Tax”)

In April 2013 the Government brought in a number of Welfare Reform changes that included changes to the amount of Housing Benefit that some people receive. These changes included the Bedroom Tax and the Benefits Cap.

Applications received from tenants affected by the Bedroom Tax will be treated differently under certain circumstances. This is because the Government granted additional DHP funds to Local Authorities to assist with specific household groups including foster carers or properties with a disabled adaptation.

The introduction of the Bedroom Tax means a working-age claimant living in the social rented sector may face a reduction to their eligible rent if they are under-occupying their property.

The rates of reduction to the eligible rent for those affected by this measure are:

- 14% where there is under-occupation by 1 bedroom
- 25% where there is under-occupation by 2 or more bedrooms.

Social Housing tenants who are treated as under occupying their home may apply for Discretionary Housing Payment to assist with the shortfall of payments between Housing Benefit and their rent charge.

DHP may be claimed to give short-term, temporary relief to families who may face a variety of challenges whilst they adjust their finances, are unlikely to be able to meet the shortfall and for whom moving to a smaller property may be inappropriate or impossible.

Whilst any claimant affected by the Bedroom Tax can apply for DHP, central Government (circular S1/2013) has provided an additional £30m (nationally) Discretionary Housing Payment funding to assist claimants in two main groups:

- **Disabled people living in significantly adapted accommodation** – including any adaptations made for disabled children; and
- **Foster carers**, whose housing benefit is reduced because of a bedroom being used by, or kept free for, foster children.

Guidance in this area will be subject to a 12 monthly review and depending on allocation of funding from the Government.

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

### 2.1. Properties with disabled adaptations

Any application received where the claimant indicates the property is adapted for a disability for themselves (or a member of their family) will require further investigation regarding the adaptation before decision-making on award.

Where it is a non qualifying adaptation (see Table 1 below) the application will be decided based on normal under-occupancy guidance and an income / expenses check carried out.

Where there are qualifying adaptations (Table 1 below) then an award of Discretionary Housing Payment will be made to meet the shortfall between Housing Benefit and the rent charged, irrespective of income and expenditure.

This award will be made for the remainder of the financial year from the date of application subject to funds being available.

Table 1 below shows a listing of the qualifying and non-qualifying adaptations. This list is not exhaustive and other adaptations may be considered that are not listed.

**Table 1**

Qualifying Adaptation	Non-Qualifying Adaptation
Internal & external widening of doorways	Grab-rails only
Level Access Shower facility	Stair-rails only
Installation of Wet Room	Level taps only
Hoists installed	Other non-structural changes to property
Ramps	
Stair-lift	
Other structural changes to property	

### 2.2. Foster carers

Under Occupation (bedroom tax) regulations allow for one additional room to be granted to a household where the claimant is registered to provide foster care and/or are currently providing foster care.

Any applications received will be granted an award to meet the shortfall between Housing Benefit and rent charge irrespective of income and expenditure.

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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The award will be granted for the remainder of the financial year from the date that the application has been made subject to funds being available.

### c) Criteria of scheme

For all other claimants affected who are not in the above groups, applications will be considered based upon an assessment of the household income and expenses.

Decisions to make an award of Discretionary Housing Payment will be based upon demonstration of hardship and an inability to meet the rent payments themselves.

In addition to the shortfalls in rent due to Welfare Reform changes as stated above, Discretionary Housing Payment can also be made for shortfalls due to a variety of reasons including:

- Local Housing Allowance restrictions
- Benefits Cap
- Rent shortfall (in part or in full) between eligible rent and HB award
- Non-dependant deductions
- Income tapers
- Reductions in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit
- Removal Costs (max £100)
- Rent in advance (but not for social landlords)

### 4. Treatment of Income and expenditure

The Discretionary Housing Payment application requests an individual to list their weekly expenses across a range of essential and non-essential expenditure.

Table 2 below gives a definition of the expenses that will be considered allowable.

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

**Table 2: Types of Expenditure**

<b>Essential Expenditure</b>
Rent
Mortgage
Council Tax
Water Rates
Gas
Electricity
T.V Licence
T.V rental
Telephone (allowance for 1 phone)
Food
Public Transport
Clothing (allowance per person in household)
Broadband Internet Services
Disability related expenses
School Meals / children's travel to school
Child Minding/Nursery fees
House Insurance / Life Insurance

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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### Overdraft facility / loan repayments

Any amounts that can be attributed to a bank overdraft facility, loan repayments (including catalogues, pay day loans or other money lenders) will be allowable on the first DHP application received.

The individual will be referred for money advice and budgeting with the Councils Money Advice Team and will be expected to seek guidance from the service with their finances.

If the individual does not seek this guidance, then upon receipt of a subsequent application (during a 12 month period) the expenses will not be allowable.

#### 4.1 Variance of essential expenses

The amount of expenses that are listed as an essential expense often varies between individuals and households.

There are no recognised standards on the amounts that could be considered as excessive for expenses such as heating, light, water or food.

Upon receipt of a first application during a rolling 12 month period the total allowable (essential) expenditure will be multiplied by 1.5 in order to take consideration of a household change in circumstances or finances. This will give an allowance for non-essential expenses on this application whilst the household adjust their circumstances before applying for DHP again in the future.

Subsequent applications made during a rolling 12 month period will not provide an allowance for non-essential expenditure and only the expenses that are deemed allowable (Table 2 above) will be considered.

#### 4.2 Treatment of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) income

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will be considered as income in the assessment of Discretionary Housing Payment on the basis that the claimant is expected to have listed their disability related outgoings within their expenses.

Where an application is refused on the grounds of income being more than expenditure, a further check will be carried out with Income & Assessment Team to attempt to verify their disability related outgoings.

Where information is not held with the Team, the claimant will be requested to provide details of any disability related expenses. A list of the types of disability related expenditure (used by Income & Assessment Team) that could be taken into account will be provided to the claimant to help ensure all applicable outgoings are identified.

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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### 5. Discretionary Housing Payment awards

#### 5.1 Amount of awards

Where it is decided to grant a DHP, the amount awarded will be decided as the lower of:

- a) The difference between the claimants' income and expenses assessment OR
- b) The amount of eligible rent shortfall OR
- c) An amount defined as a DHP Maximum Limit which is set as a percentage of the eligible LHA rate (Local Housing Allowance cases) or a percentage of the Housing Benefit eligible rent in cases of RSL's (Registered Social Landlords).

The DHP Maximum Limit amount shall be decided by an amount of a percentage as the Authority shall from time to time determine.

Examples of how the scheme will operate are shown at Appendix 1.

Applications can also be considered for lump sum amounts in relation to:

- Removal costs (Max £100)
- Rent in advance (Housing Solutions cases only)

Individuals who are receiving support from Housing Solutions to be re-housed will be considered for a payment of Discretionary Housing Payment for rent in advance at the start of a tenancy.

Where an individual is not getting any assistance from Housing Solutions their application will be assessed upon their need and consideration of their income, expenses and ability to pay a rent in advance themselves or through family / friends.

Where the need for support is identified a contribution towards the rent in advance payment will be made, ranging between 50% and 100% depending on the individual circumstances

- Any requests for Discretionary Housing Payment to cover rent in advance for social landlords will be refused except where there is evidence of homelessness or the individual is currently occupying homeless accommodation.

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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### 5.2 Length of award

An award will be granted for a period of 12 weeks or less if the circumstances of the claimant require this.

The length of award will be determined by the circumstances of the application:

- One off payment to assist with rent in advance or removal costs to move to alternative accommodation
- Up to a 12 week period awards to assist with rent shortfall as a result of any welfare reforms or general shortfall between Housing Benefit award and rent an individual pays to their landlord
- Annual award for those affected by welfare reforms and who are in substantially adapted properties or foster carers

### 5.3 Number of awards

A claimant may only receive three awards from the Discretionary Housing Payment fund during any rolling 12 month period.

## 6. Rights of Review

The claimant or their authorised representative will have the right to request that the decision be reviewed.

When requesting a review of a decision, the claimant will be expected to give reasons why they feel the original decision should be reviewed and provide additional information to support the request if appropriate.

The review process has two stages:

#### Stage 1 – Officer Review

Senior Officer carries out a review of the initial decision and consideration will be given to the claimants' reasons for review.

There is no time limit in which to ask for a Review.

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

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### Stage 2 – Members Review

The appeal is submitted to Committee Services and is referred to an Appeals Panel, which consists of three Members of the Council.

An oral hearing is arranged with an officer of the Benefits Service, the claimant (appellant) and three Members of the Council.

There is no further right of review, however, the claimant or their representative will retain the right to make a complaint through the Council's complaints procedure or the Local Government Ombudsman.

## 7. Exceptional circumstances

This document offers advice and guidance for staff assessing claims for DHPs. Each case, however, will be judged and assessed on its individual merits.

All cases are considered on an individual basis and where they are deemed to have exceptional circumstances then a panel of officers will review such cases to apply further discretion to the application.

## 8. Amendments to guidance

Amendments to this guidance can be made at any time during the year by way of:

- 8.1 Full review of guidance to be put forward to Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board to revise the guidance in significant areas of impact
- 8.2 Minor amendments to the guidance can be approved by the Strategic Director (Policy & Resources) or Executive Board Member (Policy & Resources). Such amendments that are deemed as minor include:
  - i. number of awards a person can receive in any rolling 12 month period
  - ii. allowable amount relating to household expenses upon receipt of a first application whereby an allowance is granted for non-essential amounts

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

### Appendix 1 – Examples of DHP Awards

- In each of the examples below the figures provided are weekly.
- The “household essential expenses” includes the amount of “rent shortfall” so that the rent the individual has to pay is taken into account in their expenses.
- In LHA cases a DHP Maximum Limit is applied as a set percentage of the household LHA rate. In the case of under 35 year olds, it is a percentage of a one bedroom LHA rate.
- In RSL cases the DHP Maximum Limit is applied as a set percentage of the household HB eligible rent.

#### Example 1.1 – Local Housing Allowance

##### Step 1

Household income	£100
Household essential expenses	£160
<b>Excess difference</b>	<b>£ 60</b>

##### Step 2

Rent	£100
Housing Benefit award	£ 80
<b>Rent Shortfall</b>	<b>£ 20</b>

##### Step 3

In order to safeguard and protect against payments towards excessively high rents, a DHP Maximum Limit will apply to some cases

DHP Maximum Limit award at 50%	<b>£ 46</b>	(limit is based on an LHA rate of £92)
<b>Potential Award</b>	<b>£ 20</b>	(rent shortfall amount)

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

### Example 1.2 – Local Housing Allowance

#### Step 1

Household income	£225
Household essential expenses	£300
<b>Excess difference</b>	<b>£ 75</b>

#### Step 2

Rent	£130
Housing Benefit award	£ 30
<b>Rent Shortfall</b>	<b>£100</b>

#### Step 3

DHP Maximum Limit award at 50% **£ 46** (Max Limit is based on an LHA rate of £92)

**Potential Award** **£ 46** (DHP Maximum Limit)

### Example 2.1 – Registered Social Housing Tenant

#### Step 1

Household income	£ 90
Household essential expenses	£150
<b>Excess difference</b>	<b>£ 60</b>

#### Step 2

Rent	£ 80
Housing Benefit award	£ 60
<b>Rent Shortfall</b>	<b>£ 20</b>

#### Step 3

DHP Maximum Limit award at 50% **£ 40** (Max Limit is based on eligible rent)

**Potential Award** **£ 20** (Rent Shortfall)

## Draft Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme

### Example 2.2 – Registered Social Housing Tenant

#### Step 1

Household income	£ 90
Household essential expenses	£180
<b>Excess difference</b>	<b>£ 90</b>

#### Step 2

Rent	£ 80
Housing Benefit award	£ 25
<b>Rent Shortfall</b>	<b>£ 55</b>

#### Step 3

DHP Maximum Limit award at 50%	£ 40	(Max Limit is based on eligible rent)
<b>Potential Award</b>	<b>£ 40</b>	(DHP Maximum limit)

### Example 3 – Under 35 year old (Local Housing Allowance)

#### Step 1

Household income	£110
Household essential expenses	£155
<b>Excess difference</b>	<b>£ 45</b>

#### Step 2

Rent	£140
Housing Benefit award	£ 55
<b>Rent Shortfall</b>	<b>£ 85</b>

#### Step 3

DHP Maximum Limit award at 50% (£92.00)	<b>£46</b>	(Max Limit is based on one bedroom LHA rate of £92.00)
<b>Potential Award</b>	<b>£45</b>	(difference between income and expenses)

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Corporate PPB
<b>DATE:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2014
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director Children and Enterprise
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Resources Physical Environment
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Markets Update
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Appleton and Mersey

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on initiatives and activities which have taken place at the borough's markets during the period 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

i) Members note the contents of the report.

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Halton Borough has three markets. Widnes Indoor Market; Widnes Outdoor Market; and Runcorn Outdoor Market.

There are a number of commodities and services on offer at **Widnes Indoor Market** including fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, clothing, footwear, DIY and hardware, jewellery and fashion, beauty and styling, home brew, fishing tackle, confectionery, pet supplies, luggage and bags. There is also a Market Café.

The **Widnes Outdoor market** has over 80 stalls. During four days of the week there is a retail market offering clothing for all ages, food products, bedding and linen, cosmetics and toys. The Flea and Collectibles market each Wednesday offers a vibrant mix of second-hand goods and attracts visitors and traders from some distance.

The **Runcorn Outdoor Market** operates on Church Street. It is very much a seasonal market, with an average of 12 traders attending each Tuesday throughout the year. In the summer months this peaks to 20 traders each Tuesday. Given the character of this market, care has to be taken to ensure that there is a balance of commodities being offered.

The promotion of the Runcorn Outdoor Market has been actively supported financially through the Runcorn Town Team. (The team includes market traders). The focus this year has been on raising the market's profile through the local media, advertisements on buses, as well as providing traders with advertising materials.

As Widnes Indoor and Outdoor Markets are the larger markets, a number of events and promotions have been organised to increase the number of visitors to the market

and the wider town centre. Details are contained in Appendix 1.

These include Widnes On Sea, which includes a fairground, small beach and face painting all free of charge. At Christmas a free grotto is held which includes a free gift for children. Regular updates on twitter and Facebook provide information about bargains and events.

We also piloted a couple of themed Sunday markets or , 'Super Sundays' when Widnes Outdoor Market was open for shoppers, marking Hallowe'en and then a Sunday of 'Americana' to celebrate The Tomahawks coming to Widnes for the World Cup.

The market traders have also undertaken events for Charity, including Food Bank donations to help those in need. A number of charities are supported each year by the traders with events organised to raise funds and involve the local community.

### **Changes and Improvements during the last 12 months**

There are a number of changes and improvements that have been made during the last 12 months.

**Market Accessibility** - The Widnes indoor market is accessible for people in wheelchairs and has recently been awarded the kite mark award to recognise outstanding service to young people with disabilities.

**New Trader Incentives** - Officers within the Council's Economy, Enterprise and Property department have worked hard to encourage new traders into the market.

For example, new traders are provided with introductory rent incentives to help them start up their business.

**Links to Business Start Ups** -The market office has also worked with the Enterprise Officers in the department's Employment Learning and Skills division to support particularly young entrepreneurs to consider the market as a 'first step' to running a business.

**New Stalls and Commodities Committee** -To ensure that the range of commodities remains varied, the Council last year formed the New Stalls and Commodities Committee. This Committee is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Physical Environment and includes trader representation. This meeting gives the opportunity for a trader representative to discuss which commodities the market should allow in to the market to ensure a vibrant and varied mix. This ensures that new businesses will be more sustainable when they commence trading in the market.

### **Promotions and Partnerships**

During 2013 two promotions partnerships have been developed with local businesses. These are partnerships which are free to both parties and involve promoting each other and the market

Widnes Ice Rink – Free advertisement in the Widnes Wild Ice Hockey match programme for Widnes Market for every home game in return for use of entrance to promote their offer.

Widnes Vikings FC – Free advertising at home games in return for use of main entrance to promote their offer.

Other partnerships include:

NHS – The NHS has a pitch in the market and brought services into the market and increased footfall. Examples of services provided include smoke cessation, weight loss and alcohol programmes to help local people to have a healthier lifestyle.

Police – Cheshire Police have been located within the market since November 2013 and will vacate in January 2014. This is a more short-term project for the festive season to provide advice on issues such as crime and policing. The presence of the police within the market has helped to enhance security in the market.

The above changes and improvements are helping with occupancy levels when other markets are experiencing an increasing number of vacant stalls.

For example, in February 2012 occupancy rates were at 70%. As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013, the rate is 88% of However, Members are advised that it will be a significant challenge to maintain these occupancy levels during the next 12 months.

## **Training and development initiatives**

Training has been delivered to traders to help them develop their businesses using social media. This training has given advice on using the internet to set up web sites to promote their businesses, enable their businesses to be located on the internet search. This course also provided advice on ways to use face book and twitter to promote their businesses and advertise for free on a regular basis.

A further training course has been arranged to help traders with low cost ideas for keeping their businesses in the public eye and advising them how they can use public relations effectively and benefit. This course will take place in January 2014.

## **Repairs and Maintenance**

Regular repairs have taken place over the years, and the market roof has been a particular concern. However, in 2013, more in depth repairs of the roof took place to prolong its life.

## **Future Priorities**

### **Refurbishment Work**

Improvement work to the public toilets, and disabled toilets facilities has been programmed for January 2014.

However, the improvement work scheduled for the entrance to the open market has been delayed due to a land ownership issue between the Council and Morrisons in this particular location. Plans have detailed that both the Council and Morrisons own land within the public toilets which has impacted upon progress to date.

There is a need to resolve this as soon as possible and an alternative design is being sought.

## **Power Supply**

Paradoxically, the increase in traders at the market is having an impact on power supply and this is a real threat to the future vitality of the market. Whilst the installation of LED lights and decreased use of the uplighters within the indoor market has helped, demand frequently outstrips supply and is having an impact on the ability to attract a more diverse commodity offer in the market.

Equally, how traders are charged for electricity needs to be reviewed. For example, approximately 25% of electricity usage in the market is taken by four traders. However, the payment structure does not reflect this. A major review of energy consumption and usage will be undertaken in 2014

## **WiFi Access**

Traders are increasingly using ICT to help their businesses. Wi-Fi has been on the agenda for a couple of years. Some technical constraints have been resolved and this now needs to be given priority.

## **Traders' Committee**

In 2013 the Traders Committee, (different to the Commodity committee described above), was reformed with the introduction of revised terms of reference. It is important that momentum is maintained given this is a key channel of communication between the markets office and traders.

### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no further policy implications associated with this report.

### **5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Levels of rent arrears at Widnes Indoor Market are still high, although this figure has reduced slightly during the last 12 months. A large proportion of the arrears are historical, going back in some cases over a five year period and relate to former market traders. In the past, the Council has taken a lenient approach in its pursuit of outstanding debts, given the important role the market plays in the town centre.

However, reluctantly, in recent months the Council has been taking a firmer route in reducing the levels of debt, and inevitably, this is resulting in the termination of licences within the market.

Going forward, as part of its on-going review of its services, the Council will need to carry out a cost benefit analysis which links to exploring ways of increasing the commercial viability of the markets, as although the markets generate a surplus each year; this represents a low return on the Council's investment.

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

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

N/A

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

The markets allow potential entrepreneurs and fledgling businesses the opportunity to set up in a supportive and low risk environment.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

N/A

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

N/A

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Markets contribute to supporting the respective town centres. It also encourages local residents to 'shop local'.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There is a risk that the Council does not see a return on its investment through increased footfall in the markets and wider town centres and an increase in traders paying rent.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The report refers to improved access to the market. Future actions will seek to ensure that our markets remain accessible for all.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

## Promotions and Advertising

With examples of press content written for promotions.

**Red Nose Day** for Widnes Market Great British Bake off Comic Relief day on 15<sup>th</sup> March. Nearly £1000 was raised on the day. <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=508732609162667&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365238.&type=3&theater>

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10297286.Widnes\\_stallholders\\_team\\_up\\_for\\_big\\_Comic\\_Relief\\_charity\\_bake/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10297286.Widnes_stallholders_team_up_for_big_Comic_Relief_charity_bake/)

<http://www.runcornandwidnesweeklynews.co.uk/news/runcorn-widnes-news/widnes-market-traders-bake-up-5876428>

**Easter** – Employed a person to walk around the market in a Chicken suit, “laying eggs” for children. Dates 29<sup>th</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> March

**Love Your Market** 15<sup>th</sup> May – 29<sup>th</sup> May. 2 stalls for a tenner for new traders. Also Fashion Show

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=527583717277556&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365090.&type=3&theater>

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10568867.Love\\_Your\\_Local\\_Market\\_success/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10568867.Love_Your_Local_Market_success/)

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10443046.Shoppers\\_enjoy\\_extra\\_events\\_and\\_activities\\_in\\_Halton\\_s\\_markets/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10443046.Shoppers_enjoy_extra_events_and_activities_in_Halton_s_markets/)

<http://www.runcornandwidnesweeklynews.co.uk/news/runcorn-widnes-news/catwalk-wonders-show-stall-style-5862483>

<http://www.runcornandwidnesweeklynews.co.uk/news/runcorn-widnes-news/fortnight-fun-advice-lined-up-5862394>

## Foodbank Support

<http://www.runcornandwidnesweeklynews.co.uk/news/runcorn-widnes-news/market-traders-donate-200-trolley-5862274>

**Widnes On Sea** – Date changed to 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10597547.Seaside\\_fun\\_at\\_Widnes\\_Market/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10597547.Seaside_fun_at_Widnes_Market/)

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10614454.The\\_seaside\\_comes\\_to\\_Halton/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10614454.The_seaside_comes_to_Halton/)

**Cancer Charity Campaign** October – Naked Calendar. 500 copies.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=604128829623044&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365214.&type=3&theater>

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10803101.Market\\_traders\\_strip\\_off\\_for\\_charity\\_again/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10803101.Market_traders_strip_off_for_charity_again/)

**Halloween** – Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Super Sunday Halloween 27<sup>th</sup> October

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10772316.Widnes\\_halloween\\_market\\_hailed\\_spooktacular\\_success/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10772316.Widnes_halloween_market_hailed_spooktacular_success/)

**American Sunday** 3<sup>rd</sup> November

**Christmas** – Built a grotto in vacant shop unit.

[http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10867942.Free\\_grotto\\_at\\_Widnes\\_Market/](http://www.runcornandwidnesworld.co.uk/news/10867942.Free_grotto_at_Widnes_Market/)

## Advertising

### Monthly

**Feb:** 2<sup>nd</sup> week – Valentines/ General outdoor

**March:** 1<sup>st</sup> week Mothers Day / Bake Off <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=501445549891373&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365238.&type=3&theater>

**March:** 3<sup>rd</sup> week Easter

**May:** 1<sup>st</sup> week <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=510218395680755&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365238.&type=3&theater>

**June:** 1<sup>st</sup> week Fathers day <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=538866782815916&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365220.&type=3&theater>

### General/ Promotions Advertising

**May** Widnes Market Sponsored Independence Day. (for 1 month in World Newspapers). Highlighting independent traders in the market etc.

Widnes On Sea <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=556841544351773&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365218.&type=3&theater>

Halloween Sunday <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=589855881050339&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365214.&type=3&theater>

American Sunday <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=597165560319371&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365214.&type=3&theater>

Shop local Saturday <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=611350432234217&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365212.&type=3&theater> – sponsored pages in local press

December: Xmas, grotto <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=61146438222822&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365212.&type=3&theater> <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=607745575928036&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365214.&type=3&theater>

Wrote an article for press regarding old market traders still trading which ran on Weekly News Ray Miller nostalgia page for 2 weeks

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=567554036613857&set=pb.145581875477744.-2207520000.1387365218.&type=3&theater>

**Facebook and Social Media** – massive jump when car damaged in car park, maintained steady rise from then on.

Facebook

Total Page Likes as of Today: 1,213

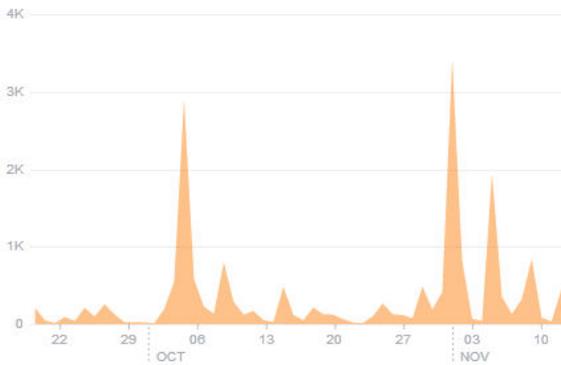


**BENCHMARK**  
Compare your average performance over time.

Total Page Likes

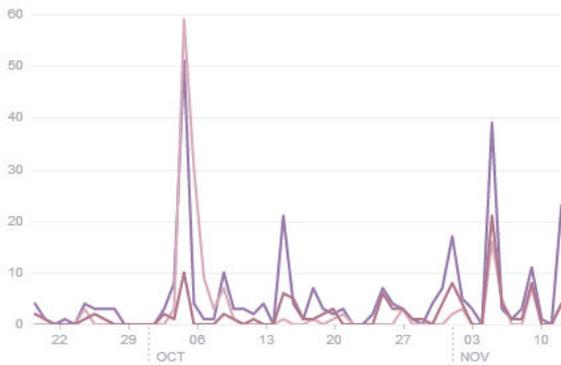
### Post Reach

The number of people who saw your posts.



### Likes, Comments and Shares

These actions will help you reach more people.



### Twitter



**Widnes Market**  
@Widnes\_Market

Traditional market value in a modern setting. Serving Widnes, Runcorn, Warrington and Merseyside, 5 days a week. Closed Tues & Sun. Flea Market Wednesdays.

Widnes, Cheshire · widnesmarket.com

1,055  
TWEETS

1,957  
FOLLOWING

1,714  
FOLLOWERS

Edit profile

**REPORT TO:** Corporate Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Policy & Resources

**SUBJECT:** Performance Management Reports for Quarter 2 of 2013/14

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider, and raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the second quarter period to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2013-16 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Finance
  - Human Resources & Organisational Development
  - ICT and Administrative Support
  - Legal and Democracy
  - Policy & Performance
  - Property Services
  - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency. The report details progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

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

- 1) Receive the second quarter performance management report;**
- 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 Board.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and

Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

**5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

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

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Thematic Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Not applicable.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

## Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring Report

Reporting Period: **Quarter 2 – Period 01<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the second quarter of 2013/14 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2013-16 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
- Financial Services
  - Human Resources & Organisational Development
  - ICT Infrastructure
  - Legal and Democracy
  - Policy & Performance
  - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
  - Property Services
- 1.3 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 8 of this report.

### 2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments within the Directorate during the period which include:-

#### *Finance*

- Work is on-going on the implementation phase of the Council's Salary Sacrifice Scheme which will generate financial savings for the authority whilst allowing staff acquire a vehicle for an all-inclusive fixed monthly payment.
- A new fraud awareness e-learning module is now available to access through the Council's e-learning portal which provides general fraud awareness information for Elected Members and staff at all levels. This initiative will further embed the Council's counter-fraud culture and support the deterrence, prevention and detection of fraud related activity across the organisation.
- The Council's external auditor (Grant Thornton) has completed the audit of the Council's 2012/13 year-end accounts and have provided an unqualified audit opinion. They reported their findings to the Business Efficiency Board on 18<sup>th</sup>

September at which time the Board also approved for publication the Council's Statement of Accounts.

- Grant Thornton's report highlighted the Council's achievement in preparing working papers of a high standard and emphasised the excellent co-operation they received from the finance team. They also included a Value for Money conclusion in which they were satisfied that in all significant respects the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. A copy of the full report is available [here](#).
- In support of the unqualified VFM conclusion for 2012/13, Grant Thornton reviewed if the Council has proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience. The overall conclusion was the Council had in place arrangements that meet or exceed adequate standards including; A proven track record of keeping expenditure within budget; Systems & processes that are well established; and a structured approach to identifying and managing budget pressures.
- The Benefits Cap has now been implemented and 51 households in the Borough have had their Housing Benefit reduced from amounts ranging from £1 to £162 per week. Some of these households have applied for and received Discretionary Housing Payment to provide temporary help with their Housing Benefit reduction.
- Following a review of the Discretionary Support Scheme in September, Corporate Policy & Performance Board (PPB) agreed that the Scheme should be amended to include the provision of fuel and that with immediate effect, and rather than referring people to the Food Bank, food requests would be considered in the first instance. The provision of fuel will be offered once arrangements with Paypoint can be put in place to distribute any awards. A further progress report will be presented to Corporate PPB in April 2014.
- With regards to the on-going delivery of the Efficiency programme the As-Is phase of the review of Intermediate Care Services (Adult Social Care) is nearing completion and is due to be considered by the Efficiency Programme Board in November 2013.
- Wave 5 of the Programme was agreed by Management Team and the Efficiency Programme Board during July 2013. The first workstreams in that wave are now underway; these being the Review of Halton Supported Housing Network, Review of the Libraries Service and the Review of Learning & Achievement Services.

#### *Human Resources and Organisational Learning and Development*

- A new Managers Guide to Learning and Development has been produced which pulls together, for the first time, all management development activity into one easy to use booklet and also links to the Council's People Plan. In addition work continues to be undertaken to develop guidelines for managers and staff as the authority continues to introduce agile working practices.
- Briefings, which have been exceptionally well attended, have been held for Council Officers and school based staff on the requirements of the new Disclosure and Barring Service.

*ICT and Administration Support Services*

- The CareFirst project has taken considerable resource during quarter 2 as ICT support staff worked with the Operational and Strategic Director to review the capabilities of the existing system. A decision has been taken to develop an in-house reporting system which allows for the interrogation of data and facilitates the production of essential statutory and operational reports.
- The project to replace over 165 MFD printers and to replace and upgrade print services machinery is now complete with the deployment of hardware underway with significant savings being achieved.
- The wireless upgrade project has now been completed and key remote sites, including Libraries and Community Centres, have been upgraded to provide considerably more secure wireless access.

*Legal and Democratic Services*

- The development of a proposed Combined Authority for the Liverpool City Region and the proposed financial close of the Mersey Gateway project have both placed heavy demands upon the service and this will continue as these issues are progressed to completion.
- The latest issue of Inside Halton has been distributed to residents and includes a feature providing information on the progress of the Mersey Gateway Project in addition to a reader survey. As the contract for the design and production of the magazine is due to expire in December work is now underway to put in place new arrangements.
- Following work with colleagues from the Procurement and Print Teams the launch of the online design portal has dramatically reduced spend with external design and print suppliers.

*Policy, Planning, and Transportation.*

- The Halton Strategic Partnership Board (HSPB) has developed a work programme of activities that seek to maximise the value of partner organisations collaborating together on issues of mutual interest such as property management, public consultation and enhanced partnership working.
- The new HSPB website has now been launched at <http://www.haltonpartnership.com> which provides a simpler user friendly interface which will minimise future maintenance costs.
- Superfast Broadband roll out under the Council's [Connecting Cheshire](#) project has commenced in Halton. The precise location of the new cabinets and fibre infrastructure will be announced in December 2013.

- The procedures for the Council's Community Right to Bid Policy (Assets of Community Value) has been produced and approved with the first live trial of the procedures underway. A Social Value Policy is now being drafted to meet the Council's duties under the [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#) and the legal requirement to demonstrate that we have considered Social Value as part of our pre-procurement progress.
- The annual cycle of Business Planning will soon commence and Members will be engaged through Policy & Performance Boards in considering issues for inclusion in the coming financial year.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty Independent Review, which can be found [here](#) was published during September 2013 and the recommendations put forward are being assessed to address any implications for Halton. Additionally Equality and Diversity Awareness training for Elected Members has been scheduled during quarter 3.
- The Hate Crime Reduction Strategy has been presented to, and agreed by, both the Safer Halton Policy & Performance Board (PPB) and the Specialist Strategic Partnership (SSP). It will now be presented to the Executive Board and Partnership Board

#### *Catering, Stadium and Registration Services*

- Widnes Vikings completed their second season back in Super League on a high point, winning their last three league games which meant they finished just outside the play offs in tenth place. It is vitally important next season that they do not finish in the bottom two, as relegation is reintroduced at the end of the 2014 playing season.
- Liverpool Ladies also finished their first season winning the Woman's Super League on the last day of the season with over 2,500 spectators attended the event. Everton Ladies have now agreed terms to play at The Stadium next year. This follows the successful 1<sup>st</sup> year of Liverpool Ladies playing and more recently agreeing to rent a room and train here.
- Over 650 pupils and staff from The Grange School in Runcorn held their annual sports day at the Stadium and hailed it as a complete success.
- The British Drum Corp Championships were held at the Stadium, over 20 competing bands and over 2,000 spectators used the Stadium for over 15 hours bringing a unique experience to Halton and a fantastic community event to all who attended.
- A number of events have taken place at the Stadium during the period including twilight walk in aid of Halton Haven, A Wedding Fayre and 10 Weddings and 30 Celebratory Parties.
- Numerous meetings and conferences have been held including:
  - Merseyside & South West CWU
  - National Citizen Service
  - Healthy Schools
  - Health Watch
  - Mersey Gateway meetings
  - N W Cheshire Big Change
  - Children's Trust and Health and Wellbeing
  - Liverpool PCT

- Halton Safeguarding Children
  - NW Ambulance
  - Urgent Care Consultation
  - Cheshire East
  - Capita Business
  - Dental Network Group
- The New School Food Plan was published in July 2013 that encourages Headteachers to take a very active role in increasing the numbers of children having a school meal. This will be an excellent support for the school catering service in increasing the numbers.
  - All pupils at infant schools in England are to get free school lunches from September 2014 and it is hoped that it will save parents about £400 a year per child. Deputy Prime Minister Mr Clegg said “Targeting infants would ensure every child gets the chance in life they deserve, teach healthy eating habits and boost attainment”. The school catering team are now looking at the logistics required to ensure each school kitchen is prepared and a review of additional catering equipment that will be required are now being undertaken.
  - A trial is taking place in 3 schools Farnworth CE, Moorfield and St Martins with All pay which is a company that arranges the payment of school meals, uniform, school trips etc. by parents or guardians over the internet either by computer, mobile phone or Pay point. Whilst the trial has been a success there are a few issues with the software that need to be addressed before this service can be recommended for all schools. The major cost of the service is the transaction charges; however there is a significant saving in school office time. It may be proposed that there will be an SLA arrangement for this service.
  - Since 1998 there is a comprehensive training programme for our catering staff. Courses include: - Professional Cookery, Nutrition, Food Hygiene, Health & Safety, Customer Care and Fire Marshalling. An awards evening was held in July to celebrate the success of the students and the hard work of the catering staff This evening also motivates the staff to continue to improve the quality of the service and provide tasty meals to as many children as possible, Schools are invited to provide nominations for various awards.

#### *Property Services*

- The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) projects at both Wade Deacon and The Grange are nearing practical completion this will be reached in early October at both sites, following which only some outstanding works to the playing field at Wade Deacon will remain.
- The demolition of the former Fairfield High school buildings are currently on site with works due to be completed by the end of November. The demolition of the former Grange Nursery, Infant and Junior school buildings has been delayed slightly as we are awaiting Section 77 approval prior to proceeding, as soon as this comes through works will commence on site.
- The dilapidation claims for Grosvenor House the Corporate Training Centre and 10 Turnstone have now all been agreed, only the claim for Midwood House remains outstanding, this should be finalised within the next couple of months.

- The proposed improvement works to Lowerhouse Lane Depot, following a Health & Safety Executive (HSE) visit, have now been approved by Executive Board and are planned to start on site in October 2013 with completion prior to the end of the financial year.

### 3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of the Directorate including:-

#### *Financial Management*

- I. A common set of Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) have been introduced for internal audit providers in the UK public sector. As a consequence the Internal Audit Team will undertake a self-assessment against the new standards and will prepare a report to the Business Efficiency Board in due course.
- II. Work to identify savings to fund the £15m budget deficit for 2014/15 is well under way. The Budget Working Group has met several times to discuss the first tranche of saving proposals and will shortly begin to review a second tranche of proposals.
- III. The migration of benefits claimants from Incapacity Benefit to Employment Support Allowance remains a major focus for the Welfare Advice Team and the new Personal Independence Payment is also starting to impact. The start of the new appeals process where Mandatory Reconsiderations are required for Department for Works and Pensions benefits from November 2013 is expected to further impact upon the team's workload and will potentially cause further delays within the welfare benefits system. Additionally these issues are continuing to have a negative and unavoidable impact upon response times within the Contact Centre.

#### *Human Resources and Organisational Development*

- IV. Consultations will commence during November with both staff and Trade Unions in relation to budget proposals that have HR implications and a Members Topic Group has been established to consider the implications of introducing a Living Wage within Halton.

#### *ICT and Administration Support Services*

- V. ITC related work will progress across a number of areas during the coming year including:
  - In line with the considerable developments within the Carefirst solution, a project to develop the electronic social care record will also be undertaken using SharePoint as the solution. This will be integrated with the CF6 system and form the base of all digital archival of the social care records that the authority is required to maintain. The new Records Management Unit within the administrative Support Service will work closely with the care teams to ensure the delivery of this new process.

- The Council is in the process of fundamentally redesigning and redeveloping the Council's website and the design is currently being tested in advance of key content can being included.
- Work continues to explore the potential of ICY based partnership working initiatives with a view to maximizing efficiencies and exploiting the potential for income generation.

#### *Property Services*

- VI. The restructure of the Operational Division has now been agreed and implemented. The changes come into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 and will help deliver a £90,000 saving for 2014/15.
- VII. We have now started to look at income generation from our corporate building stock linked to the move to agile working which is having the effect of freeing up space. We are currently in discussions with other public sector partners with a view to them taking some space in Rutland House. This is an area that we will be increasingly focussing on in the future as there is an opportunity to generate a significant amount of income.
- VIII. Proposed changes have recently been announced by Government in respect of the Carbon Reduction Commitment, Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRC), which if implemented will mean that Halton will fall below the threshold required to be included in the scheme from April 2014. This will potentially save the Council the £154,000 which was the cost for 2011/12

#### **4.0 Risk Control Measures**

Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements.

As such progress concerning the implementation of all high risk mitigation measures will be monitored in Quarter 2 and Quarter 4.

#### **5.0 Progress Against High Priority Equality Actions**

Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.

As a result the Board will receive further information following the completion of the Annual Equality Assessment which will be undertaken during Quarter 3.

## 6.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.

### Financial Services

#### Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
FS O1	Report Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board <b>November 2013</b> .	
FS O3	Complete the Draft Abstract of Accounts for certification by Chief Financial Officer by <b>30<sup>th</sup> June 2013</b> . Publish the Abstract of Accounts by <b>30<sup>th</sup> September 2013</b> .	

#### Supporting Commentary

The medium Term Financial Strategy remains on track to be reported as planned and the financial forecast is being regularly updated.

The Draft Abstract of Accounts was certified by the Chief Finance Officer on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013 as planned. The Audit of the Statement of Accounts began on 01<sup>st</sup> July and at this stage publication remains as planned.

#### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	12 / 13 Actual	13 / 14 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 05	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected.	97.11	96.00+	56.40		
FS LI 06	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received.	97.13	96.00+	56.43		
FS LI 10	Average time for processing new claims (Housing & Council Tax Benefit).	11.78	18	14.67		

**Supporting Commentary**

Although the Council Tax collection rate at the same point last year was 57.50%, the Quarter 2 figure represents a significant achievement considering the additional amounts billed as a result of the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme and changes to Empty Property discounts.

The collection of Business Rates has had some large new assessments and rateable value increases and in addition to a number of on-going rate avoidance schemes involving very large properties, has led to a slight drop in the overall collection rate. The collection rate at the same point last year, in comparison, was 58.84%. This impact on collections should decrease as the year progresses.

Despite the significant impact that the Welfare Reforms have had on the Revenues and Benefits Division, performance remains very high and well within target. Though slightly below the performance achieved as the same point last year (11.66 days), this remains one of the best performances in Merseyside and Greater Manchester.

**Human Resources & Organisational Learning and Development****Key Objectives / milestones**

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
HRLD 01	To commence Real Time Tax information reporting to HMRC by <b>June 2013</b> . To further enhance the i-Trent system capabilities. <b>March 2014</b>	
HRLD 02	Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Corporate People's Plan. <b>March 2014</b> Monitor & review implementation of revised Employee Development Review (EDR) process. <b>December 2013</b>	

**Supporting Commentary**

Real Time Tax information reporting has now commenced. The effects on those employees whose pay fluctuates, and who may also claim benefits, is being closely monitored to ensure that any negative impact upon individuals can as far as possible be minimised. Work is in-hand to further develop i-Trent with the provision of electronic payslips currently being explored.

The Learning and Development Team continue to work to ensure that learning and development opportunities are taken which support the objectives of the Council's People Plan. They are also continuing to monitor the EDR's to identify appropriate learning and development requests and opportunities for staff development.

**Key Performance Indicators**

Ref	Measure	12 / 13 Actual	13 / 14 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
HRLD LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness.	10.06	8.5	5.14		
ODHR LI 05	% of training delegates attending as a proportion of places reserved.	88	85	91		
ODHR LI 06	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are:					
	a) women	55.04	50	53.97		
	b) From BME communities.	2.91	1.0	2.73		
	c) With a disability	0.65	5.0	0.63		
ODHR LI 07	No of staff declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act as a % of the total workforce.	1.36	7.50	1.44		
ODHR LI 08	Minority Ethnic community staff as % of total workforce.	0.89	1.00	1.13		

**Supporting Commentary**

Although the number of working days lost to sickness figure is higher than the same quarter last year (4.35) the N.W Employers Organisation have reported a rise in sickness absence figures across other North West authorities and this will require careful monitoring going forward.

Compared to the same quarter last year, there has been a decrease in the percentage of women earners (55.56) and both the disability indicator (0.63) and the BME indicator have also decreased slightly (2.88) compared to the same period last year.

The percentage of the workforce declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act has seen a slight increase in since Q2 last year (1.34). The indicator relating to the percentage of staff from the Minority Ethnic Community has also risen since Q2 2012/13, when the figure was 0.94%.

**ICT & Administrative Support****Key Objectives / milestones**

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
ICT O1	SharePoint and Records Management enhancement. <b>March 2014</b> Continued Social Care Systems Service Support Programme. <b>March 2014</b> Schools Cloud Services developments. <b>September 2013</b> Interactive Web Services and further SharePoint integration. <b>March 2014</b> Development of commercial ICT opportunity within desktop. Hosting and Disaster Recovery provision. <b>March 2014</b>	
ICT O2	Continued development of document management and distribution services. <b>March 2014</b>	
ICT O3	Deliver operational Records Management Unit services. <b>August 2013</b>	
ICT O4	Conduct and evaluate point of contact satisfaction survey for ICT & Support Services. <b>March 2014</b>	

**Supporting Commentary**

The SharePoint and Records Management enhancement project continues to progress in line with planned deployment and is now also linked to the ESCR (Electronic Social Care Record) project. The continuing support programme of developments for the Social Care Systems Service to date has been completed and is in line with Children Services Requirements. A similar project to look at the needs of the Adult Services is now underway.

The delivery of the technology for the Schools Cloud Service is now complete. As the Schools Cloud Service is an on-going development, it will be reported against at each quarter point. The programme for interactive Web Services and the work to further integrate it in to SharePoint is currently in line with the planning process and a management board is now in place to manage the process and its requirement. Additionally developments of ICT commercial opportunities are continuing as expected, with opportunity in many areas being assessed and worked on.

Document Management and Distribution and Records management are now well progressed. A large part of the delivery is the deployment of the new Multifunctional Devices (MFD) as mentioned earlier in the Key Developments section of this document.

The delivery of an operational Records Management Unit service is now fully staffed. There had been slight delays due to extended building works at Picow Farm Road site and the unit will now be available in late November but this has not delayed the administrative process.

**Key Performance Indicators**

Ref	Measure	12 / 13 Actual	13 / 14 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI 01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99	99	99.9		
ICT LI 02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	99	99	99.9		
ITC LI 04	% Of all responsive repairs completed within 2 working days.	92	80	93		
ITC L1 08	Average working days from order to completion of a new PC	9	10	9		

**Supporting Commentary**

Significant levels of performance continue to be achieved with regards to infrastructure & support and the deployment & maintenance of equipment.

**Legal & Democracy****Key Objectives / milestones**

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
LD O1	Secure renewal of Lexcel & ISO Accreditation. <b>January 2014</b>	
LD O3	To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting <b>March 2014</b>	

**Supporting Commentary**

The work progressing according to plan although it has been agreed with the Law Society that the inspection will now be held in April 2013 rather than January 2013. Member meetings continue to take place throughout the year.

**Key Performance Indicators**

Ref	Measure	12 / 13 Actual	13 / 14 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (56 Total)	46 (79%)	56 (100%)	54 (96%)		
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	7	10	10		
LD LI 04	Average time taken to send out first draft business lease from receipt of complete instructions from Property Services (working days)	15	20	20		
LD LI 05	Average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department (working days).	1	3	1		
LD LI 11	% who believe internal communications service has improved.	71	87	N/A	N/A	N/A
LD LI 15	% satisfaction with Inside Halton.	99	90	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Supporting Commentary**

All measures are showing positive levels of performance at quarter 2.

Satisfaction with inside Halton is determined via an annual survey. The current contract expires in December 2013 and a review of the magazine will be conducted during the summer months.

### Policy & Performance

#### Key milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
PPT 04	Review the Sustainable Community strategy and monitor performance b-annually <b>March 2014</b>	

#### Supporting commentary

A review of the SCS is underway to update key aspects of terminology, legislation and other editorial amendments. Performance is measured and reported on a bi-annual basis to the Halton Local Strategic Partnership. Work also continues on improving the quality and capability of the Strategic Partnership website: <http://www.haltonpartnership.com>

### Catering and Stadium Services

#### Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
CE 02	Measure customer satisfaction with Stadium Community Services - <b>January 2014</b> .  Promote off peak opportunities at the start of each quarter to charitable and community organisations to utilise Stadium facilities at a reduced price - <b>March 2014</b> .	
CE 03	School Lunches - Deliver a promotion and educational campaign - <b>September 2013 and January 2014</b> .  Review and update the strategy and action plan to increase the uptake of free school meals - <b>July 2013</b> .  Develop effective joint working and agree funding, with the private/public sector to address childhood obesity - <b>Sept 2013</b> .	

#### Supporting Commentary

The methodology to be used to measure customer satisfaction is presently being considered and off-peak opportunities are proving popular with a number of local and national charities and will be extended further as we progress throughout the year.

Since the initiative to promote off peak opportunities to charitable and community organisations was introduced its popularity has increased, a large number of disadvantaged groups now work closely with the Stadium to take advantage of any opportunities to use the facilities.

All Primary schools have been provided with a Themed calendar with a selection of poster for 2013-2014 to promote National Days, Festivals and Sporting occasions, etc. All reception children's parents have been given an information pack on the benefits of school meals. Headteachers are being encouraged to take an active role in promoting school meals and increasing uptake and schools are being encouraged to work with Catering Services to target those entitled to Free School Meals.

A number of tasting sessions have taken place increasing the number of opportunities for children to try different foods and there is an on-going dialogue with Public Health to address childhood obesity.

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	12 / 13 Actual	13 / 14 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 01	No. of meals served versus hourly input of labour (Previously SH1).	9.85	10.00	9.73		
	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible (Previously SH LI 8)					
CE LI 08	a) Primary Schools	77.46%	85%	87.98%		
CE LI 09	b) Secondary Schools	76.59%	75%	79.08%		
	% Take up of school lunches (%) – (Previously NI52).					
CE LI 10	a) Primary Schools	51.71%	55%	49.21%		
CE LI 11	b) Secondary Schools	53.64%	55%	52.39%		

### Supporting Commentary

Although the present figure of meals served per hour is lower than the annual target the period from April to September is historically the quietest in the School Meals Service. It is fully anticipated that the target will be met or exceeded by year end.

This is an exceptional result for the take up of free school meals by primary and secondary school pupils and may be linked to the present economic climate and more parents are encouraging their children to stay for school lunch.

## Property Services

### Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
EEP O1	Review accommodation in light of budget decisions by <b>July 2013</b> .	
	Identify further property to be considered for sales and implement asset disposals by <b>March 2014</b> .	

### Supporting Commentary

As previously reported, the Council has been consolidating its accommodation portfolio. In light of this, this has made space available to encourage external partners to share office accommodation in Runcorn.

A list of assets for disposal has been prepared and approved by Executive Board. It is intended that this list will be reviewed in March 2014. As part of this process, ward members have been consulted in regard to assets in their respective areas.

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	12 / 13 Actual	13 / 14 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
DIS LI 01	Occupancy of HBC industrial units.	86%	85%	89%		
DIS LI 02	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	92%	90%	95%		

### Supporting Commentary

There has been an upturn in the economy in recent months and, as a result, an increase in enquiries for industrial units. The indoor market is now 95% full, it is likely to remain at this level until Christmas however we generally see a drop in occupancy early in the new year.

## 7.0 Financial Summaries

## FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Employees	7,396	3,558	3,378	180
Supplies & Services	535	324	312	12
Other Premises	133	78	49	29
Agency Related	1	0	0	0
Insurances	1,686	1,092	1,087	5
Charitable Relief	120	0	0	0
Concessionary Travel	2,247	1,097	1,098	(1)
Capital Financing	6	3	9	(6)
Local Welfare Payments	626	26	26	0
Rent Allowances	52,960	25,417	25,417	0
Non HRA Rebates	49	31	31	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>65,759</b>	<b>31,626</b>	<b>31,407</b>	<b>219</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Fees & Charges	-99	-34	-71	37
SLA to Schools	-728	-728	-725	(3)
NNDR Administration Grant	-169	0	0	0
Hsg Ben Administration Grant	-1,166	-583	-583	0
Rent Allowances	-52,370	-25,417	-25,417	0
Local Welfare Grant	-787	-787	-787	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-497	-447	-462	15
Liability Orders	-373	-369	-363	(6)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	-49	-33	-33	0
Transfer from Reserves	-295	-9	-9	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-56,533</b>	<b>-28,407</b>	<b>-28,450</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Net Controllable Expenditure</b>	<b>9,226</b>	<b>3,219</b>	<b>2,957</b>	<b>262</b>
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>				
Premises	426	213	213	0
Transport	60	30	30	0
Asset Charges	24	0	0	0
Central Support Service	2,838	1,421	1,421	0
Support Service Income	-7,464	-3,725	-3,725	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-4,116</b>	<b>-2,061</b>	<b>-2,061</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Department Total</b>	<b>5,110</b>	<b>1,158</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>262</b>

**Comments on the above figures:**

In overall terms spending is below the budget profile at the end of quarter two.

With regards to expenditure, employee costs are below the budget profile due to vacant posts that exist within the Procurement, Revenues and Benefits and Financial Management Divisions. The majority of these posts have now been filled and it is anticipated that the remaining vacant posts will be filled during the course of the year or be put forward as proposed savings for 2014/15.

With regards to income, fees & charges are slightly above the budget which is a result of increased income generated from the sale of Concessionary Travel bus passes and blue badges. Reimbursements and Other Grants income is also in excess of the budget due to the receipt of a number of one-off Revenues and Benefits reform grants.

At this stage it is anticipated that spend will be within budget at the end of the financial year which is predominantly linked to the staffing vacancies.

## HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

**Revenue Budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Employees	1,657	749	743	6
Employee Training	290	22	24	(2)
Supplies & Services	205	118	115	3
Capital Financing	1	1	1	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,153</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>7</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Fees & Charges	-54	-42	-65	23
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-64	-49	-49	0
School SLA's	-390	-382	-391	9
Transfers from Reserves	-32	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-540</b>	<b>-473</b>	<b>-505</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>1,613</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>39</b>
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>				
Premises Support	72	36	36	0
Transport Recharges	16	8	8	0
Asset Charges	1	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	505	252	252	0
Support Recharges Income	-2,207	-1,104	-1,104	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-1,613</b>	<b>-808</b>	<b>-808</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-391</b>	<b>-430</b>	<b>39</b>

**Comments on the above figures:**

In overall terms, spending is slightly below the budget profile at the end of the second quarter.

With regards to income, fees and charges are above the budget profile which is due to charges made to Schools and Academies for the provision of additional HR support services.

At this stage it is anticipated that overall net expenditure will be within budget by the end of the year.

## ICT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Employees	5,504	2,674	2,580	94
Supplies & Services	712	366	256	110
Computer Repairs & Software	554	285	280	5
Communications Costs	407	308	310	(2)
Other Premises	15	8	18	(10)
Capital Financing	266	133	133	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>7,458</b>	<b>3,774</b>	<b>3,577</b>	<b>197</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Fees & Charges	-655	-326	-136	(190)
SLA to Schools	-209	-209	-201	(8)
Transfers from Reserves	-40	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-904</b>	<b>-535</b>	<b>-337</b>	<b>(198)</b>
<b>Net Controllable Expenditure</b>	<b>6,554</b>	<b>3,239</b>	<b>3,240</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>				
Premises	418	209	209	0
Transport	20	10	10	0
Asset Charges	1,646	0	0	0
Central Support Services	1,019	510	510	0
Support Service Income	-9,468	-4,734	-4,734	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-6,365</b>	<b>-4,005</b>	<b>-4,005</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Department Total</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>-766</b>	<b>-765</b>	<b>(1)</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

In overall terms spending is as per the budget profile at the end of quarter two. With regards to expenditure, employee related expenditure is lower than the budget profile due to increased staff turnover within the Admin Division.

Spend on supplies & services is also lower than the budget profile at the end of the quarter. This is a result of tighter budget controls being put in place with regards to the procurement of general equipment and furniture, stationery and printing services.

With regards to income, fees & charges income is lower than the budget profile which is partly due to significant increases to the target in both 2012/13 and 2013/14. This is a future budget pressure which is, at present, being mitigated by reducing expenditure on staffing and supplies & services. At this stage it is anticipated that the overall net Department spending will be on budget at the year end.

**Capital Projects as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
IT Rolling Programme	1,100	550	609	(59)
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>(59)</b>

**Comments on the above figures.**

It is expected that the full capital allocation will be spent by the financial year end.

## LEGAL &amp; DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Employees	1,976	956	928	28
Supplies & Services	339	175	168	7
Civic Catering & Functions	29	1	0	1
Mayoral Allowances	21	21	20	1
Legal Expenses	207	113	119	(6)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,572</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>31</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Land Charges	-97	-48	-51	3
School SLA's	-48	-48	-67	19
License Income	-268	-134	-117	(17)
Other Income	-28	-18	-31	13
Transfers from Reserves	-68	-59	-59	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-509</b>	<b>-307</b>	<b>-325</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>2,063</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>49</b>
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>				
Premises Support	122	61	61	0
Transport Recharges	33	17	15	2
Asset Charges	19	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	484	242	242	0
Support Recharges Income	-1,945	-972	-972	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-1,287</b>	<b>-652</b>	<b>-654</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Net Departmental Total</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>51</b>

**Comments on the above figures:**

In overall terms spending is below the budget profile at the end of the second quarter.

With regards to expenditure employee costs are lower than the budget profile due to vacant posts within the Legal team and Democratic Services team. Some of the posts will be filled during the course of the year and some will be put forward as proposed savings in order to balance the 2014/15 budget. The in-year savings resulting from the vacant posts will act as contributions towards the Department's 2013/14 staff turnover savings target.

Legal costs are slightly in excess of the budget profile which is due to increase in costs relating the child protection cases. Spend in this area will continue to be monitored closely throughout the remainder of the financial year.

With regards to income School SLA income is above the budget profile at the end of the quarter which is due to a good take up of the Legal Services SLA.

At this stage it is anticipated that overall net expenditure will be within budget by the end of the year.

## POLICY, PLANNING &amp; TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2013

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Employees</u></b>	4,958	2,290	2,303	(13)
Other Premises	236	70	62	8
Hired & Contracted Services	438	129	129	0
Supplies & Services	309	154	145	9
Street Lighting	1,793	750	734	16
Highways Maintenance	2,225	580	580	0
Bridges	96	37	37	0
Fleet Transport	1,235	630	630	0
Lease Car Contracts	622	494	494	0
Bus Support – Halton Hopper Tickets	173	102	102	0
Bus Support	531	259	259	0
Out of Borough Transport	51	21	17	4
Capital Financing	406	406	417	(11)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	68	34	34	0
NRA Levy	62	31	29	2
Mersey Gateway	4,966	2,018	2,018	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>18,169</b>	<b>8,005</b>	<b>7,990</b>	<b>15</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Sales	-503	-187	-182	(5)
Planning Fees	-506	-253	-330	77
Building Control Fees	-81	-41	-54	13
Other Fees & Charges	-268	-268	-285	17
Rents	-8	-4	-2	(2)
Grants & Reimbursements	-171	-130	-132	2
School SLAs	-39	-39	-44	5
Recharge to Capital	-2,736	-995	-995	0
Transfer from Reserves	-2,567	-1,022	-1,022	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6,879</b>	<b>-2,939</b>	<b>-3,046</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Net Controllable Expenditure</b>	<b>11,290</b>	<b>5,066</b>	<b>4,944</b>	<b>122</b>

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>				
Premises Support	770	333	332	1
Transport Recharges	568	305	305	0
Asset Charges	7,432	0	1	(1)
Central Support Recharges	3,200	1,600	1,601	(1)
Departmental Support Recharges	446	0	0	0
Support Recharges Income – Transport	-4,699	-2,196	-2,196	0
Support Recharges Income – Non Transport	-2,925	-537	-537	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>4,792</b>	<b>-495</b>	<b>-494</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Total</b>	<b>16,082</b>	<b>4,571</b>	<b>4,450</b>	<b>121</b>

**Comments on the above figures:**

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 2 is below budget profile. This is due to a number of expenditure and income budget areas.

Expenditure on staffing is marginally above the budget to date, this is linked to the staff savings turnover target not being met for the year to date.

Other Premises is below budget to date mainly due to lower than expected utility bills within Logistics division.

Planning fees are currently above the income target to date due to a number of individual developments across the borough. These consist of one off large fee applications which cannot be guaranteed in the future. Therefore, this favourable variance may not continue throughout the financial year.

Schools SLA income is above target in Risk Management due to higher than anticipated demand for the service for the year.

At this stage of the year it is anticipated that the overall spend will be within the Departmental budget at the financial year-end.

## POLICY, PLANNING &amp; TRANSPORTATION

Capital Projects as at 30th September 2013

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
<b><u>Local Transport Plan</u></b>				
<b>Bridges &amp; Highway Maintenance</b>				
Bridge Assessment, Strengthening & Maintenance	3,060	900	899	2,161
Road Maintenance	1,715	600	596	1,119
<b>Total Bridge &amp; Highway Maintenance</b>	<b>4,775</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>3,280</b>
<b>Integrated Transport</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>593</b>
<b>Total Local Transport Plan</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>1,635</b>	<b>1,627</b>	<b>3,873</b>
<b><u>Halton Borough Council</u></b>				
Early Land Acquisition Mersey Gateway	23,046	7,414	7,414	15,632
Development Costs Mersey Gateway	3,500	995	995	2,505
Street lighting – Structural Maintenance	105	55	53	52
Risk Management	118	20	19	99
<i>Fleet Replacement</i>	950	350	346	604
<b>Total Halton Borough Council</b>	<b>27,719</b>	<b>8,834</b>	<b>8,827</b>	<b>18,892</b>
<b><u>Grant Funded</u></b>				
<i>Surface Water Management Grant</i>	214	0	0	214
<i>Mid Mersey Local Sustainable Transport</i>	150	3	3	147
<b>Total Grant Funded</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>361</b>
<b><u>Local Pinch Point Fund</u></b>				
A558 Access Improvements	1,805	0	0	1,805
<b>Total Local Pinch Point Fund</b>	<b>1,805</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,805</b>
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>35,388</b>	<b>10,472</b>	<b>10,457</b>	<b>24,931</b>

**COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2013**

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Employees	12,107	5,881	5,985	(104)
Other Premises	1,366	745	683	62
Supplies & Services	1,457	665	626	39
Book Fund	225	129	129	0
Promotional	264	108	70	38
Other Hired Services	1,019	305	306	(1)
Food Provisions	835	343	323	20
School Meals Food	1,660	546	529	17
Transport	55	27	18	9
Other Agency Costs	877	60	64	(4)
Waste Disposal Contracts	4,799	1,030	1,015	15
Leisure Management Contract	1,492	634	655	(21)
Grants To Voluntary Organisations	333	142	141	1
Grant To Norton Priory	222	111	113	(2)
Rolling Projects	6	6	6	0
Capital Financing	54	11	11	0
<b>Total Spending</b>	<b>26,771</b>	<b>10,743</b>	<b>10,674</b>	<b>69</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Sales Income	-2,174	-1,117	-1,058	(59)
School Meals Sales	-2,224	-737	-762	25
Fees & Charges Income	-2,655	-1,316	-1,251	(65)
Rents Income	-156	-68	-68	0
Government Grant Income	-111	-31	-38	7
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-443	-157	-185	28
Schools SLA Income	-278	-248	-232	(16)
Internal Fees Income	-104	-40	-35	(5)
School Meals Other Income	-2,265	-1,768	-1,790	22
Meals On Wheels	-218	-91	-102	11
Catering Fees	-173	-86	-33	(53)
Capital Salaries	-103	-51	-23	(28)
Transfers From Reserves	-62	0	0	0
Rolling Projects	-6	-6	-6	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-10,972</b>	<b>-5,716</b>	<b>-5,583</b>	<b>(133)</b>
<b>Net Controllable Expenditure</b>	<b>15,799</b>	<b>5,027</b>	<b>5,091</b>	<b>(64)</b>
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>				
Premises Support	1,491	632	632	0
Transport Recharges	2,242	860	868	(8)
Departmental Support Services	9	0	0	0
Central Support Services	3,119	1,601	1,602	(1)
Asset Charges	3,052	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-375	-375	-374	(1)
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>9,538</b>	<b>2,718</b>	<b>2,728</b>	<b>(10)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Total</b>	<b>25,337</b>	<b>7,745</b>	<b>7,819</b>	<b>(74)</b>

**Comments on the above figures:**

Net operational expenditure is £74,000 over budget profile at the end of the second quarter of the financial year.

Staffing expenditure is over budget profile by £104,000, primarily due to the premium pay savings target for the year to date of £128,200. Although there remains some spending on agency staffing it is approximately £70,000 less than at the same stage last year. With the exception of the Stadium, all other divisional employee budgets are under budget profile to date therefore contributing to the achievement of the staff turnover saving targets of £309,948 for the year to date.

The Leisure management contract is over budget profile and is expected to overspend by approximately £ 40,000 by year end. Work is on-going to renegotiate the contract price for 2014/15 to ensure a balance budget is achieved.

Expenditure on other premises and supplies and services is currently £ 101,000 under budget profile to date. The main reasons for this being there is very little advertising across the division, utility bills are lower than expected due to staff being more energy efficient and savings being made on some consumables budgets.

Most Income budgets are underachieving particularly Sales, Fees & Charges, Catering Fees and Capital Salaries. Sales and fees are still struggling to meet inflated income targets in the recessionary market whilst capital salaries has begun to suffer due to changes in capital grant conditions for which some projects do not now permit claims for in-house staff time.

Although waste disposal contract invoices continue to arrive late, recent invoices have been lower than expected giving an expected underspend. However, larger invoices are yet to arrive and revisions to projections will continue to be monitored.

School Meals continues to perform well against budgets, with sales and food costs both having favourable variances.

The budget for the Department will overspend by circa £150,000 by the end of the current financial year. This will be contained within the overall budget for the Directorate.

## ECONOMY ENTERPRISE &amp; PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

## SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2013

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Employees	4,360	2,184	2,225	(41)
Repairs & Maintenance	2,541	1,264	1,262	2
Energy & Water Costs	603	283	279	4
NNDR	647	806	809	(3)
Rents	372	291	291	0
Marketing Programme	85	15	12	3
Promotions	60	12	6	6
Supplies & Services	1,240	536	526	10
Capital Financing	7	4	4	0
Other	4	5	5	0
Agency Related Payments	176	90	90	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>10,095</b>	<b>5,490</b>	<b>5,509</b>	<b>(19)</b>
<b><u>Fees &amp; Charges</u></b>	-501	-398	-398	0
Rent - Markets	-758	-382	-382	0
Rent - Industrial	-970	-440	-422	(18)
Rent – Commercial	-516	-324	-320	(4)
Government Grant Income	-916	-431	-431	0
Transfer from Reserves	-215	-100	-100	0
Recharges to Capital	-649	-325	-325	(0)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-370	-39	-38	(1)
Schools SLA Income	-501	-501	-501	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-5,396</b>	<b>-2,940</b>	<b>-2,917</b>	<b>(23)</b>
<b>NET OPERATIONAL BUDGET</b>	<b>4,699</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>2,592</b>	<b>(42)</b>
Premises Support Costs	1,498	767	767	0
Transport Support Costs	38	16	16	0
Central Support Service Costs	1,707	870	870	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	2,390	0	0	0
Repairs & Maintenance Recharge Income	-2,185	-1,093	-1,093	0
Accommodation Recharge Income	-2,759	-1,380	-1,380	0
Central Supp. Service Rech Income	-1,891	-946	-946	0
<b>Total Recharges</b>	<b>-1,202</b>	<b>-1,766</b>	<b>-1,766</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>(42)</b>

**Comments**

Expenditure for employees remains above budget as staff savings targets are not being achieved. This is due to an insufficient level of staff turnover across the department. In particular the Building and School Cleaning Staffing Service which needs to be fully staffed at all times.

The adverse variances relating to property income has continued in year as tenants vacate Moor Lane ready for the demolition of the site, There still remains a shortfall in income on Seymour Court and contingency plans are in place for 2014/15 budgets. Income within the remaining Industrial sites remains steady at the end of Quarter 2 with most units fully occupied.

The under achievement of Commercial Rent has reduced in Quarter 2 due to renegotiation of contracts which have resulted in additional income received in year.

Work has been undertaken with Managers during the last quarter to realign the budgets based on in year pressures and this is reflected in the variances above.

In overall terms it is anticipated that net expenditure will be above the overall Departmental budget by year-end, primarily as a result of the Staff Savings target and the shortfalls in income.

## 8.0 Explanation for use of symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

<b>Progress</b>	<b><u>Objective</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Indicator</u></b>
Green 	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber 	Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> , whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.</i>
Red 	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</i>

### Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible performance measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention

Green 	Indicates that <b>performance is better</b> as compared to the same period last year.
Amber 	Indicates that <b>performance is the same</b> as compared to the same period last year.
Red 	Indicates that <b>performance is worse</b> as compared to the same period last year.
N/A	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

**REPORT TO:** Corporate Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** Wednesday 22nd January 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Policy & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Sickness Absence – 2nd Quarter 2013/2014

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a report on the number of working days lost in the 2nd quarter 2013/14.
- 1.2 To report on comparative data from 2nd quarter 2012/2013.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDED:

- (1) That the content of the report be noted.

### 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION - SICKNESS DATA

- 3.1 The breakdown for the 2nd quarter of 2013/14 for each directorate is set out below:

Directorates	Total number of staff	FTE	Total no. days lost 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter (July–Sept)
Policy & Resources	754	666	1785
Communities	1172	813	3418
Children & Enterprise non schools	618	484	1655
Primary Schools	1235	905	1613
Secondary Schools	649	564	529

3.2 The cumulative number of working days lost due to sickness absence, per employee, at the end of the 2nd quarter 2013/14 is 5.14 has increased as compared to 4.35 days per employee for the same period 2012/13.

3.3 Number of periods of absence by range of days

	1 day	2-7 days	8 -14 days	15+ days	Total no. of periods of absence	Total days lost
Policy & Resources	74	110	30	49	263	1785
Communities	113	155	63	108	439	3418
Children & Enterprise (non schools)	44	81	27	50	202	1655
Primary schools	118	109	18	54	299	1613
Secondary schools	43	32	9	17	101	529

3.4 Long term sickness absence is included in the overall calculation of working days lost for each directorate. Managers across all directorates are continuing to actively monitor employee absence with the support of the Employee Welfare Advisers.

3.5 The table below shows the top seven reasons for sickness absence lost in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2013/14.

Absence reason	Days lost 2nd qtr 2013/14
Infections, to include colds and flu	534
Work related stress	627
Depression	848
Cancer	927
Personal stress	981
Stomach, liver, kidney & digestion; to include gastroenteritis	1127
Other musculo-skeletal problems	1384

## 3.6 OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATA

The number of days lost due to depression and personal stress have decreased slightly since the last quarter due to the resolution of a number of long term sickness cases. Absence due to infections to colds has also substantially decreased, as expected, this quarter as compared with the last quarter. Welfare Advisers continue to work with managers to support all employees who are off long term sick especially those who are absent with depression/stress to enable a successful return to work.

## 3.7 COMPARISONS OF DATA – 2nd quarter 2013/2014 and 2012/13

3.8 The number of occasions of absences for each of the range of days have decreased as compared to the same quarter 2012/13.

Periods of absence by range of days.

2nd quarter	1 day	2-7 days	8-14 days	15+ days	Total no occasions
2012/13	355	485	145	263	1248
2013/14	392	487	147	278	1304

3.9 The table below gives a few examples of categories where there have been reductions/increases in the number of days lost in the 2nd quarter 2012/13 and 2013/14.

Absence reason	2nd qtr 2013/14 days lost	2nd qtr 2012/13 days lost
Heart, blood pressure & circulation	272	78
Cancer	927	395
Chest/Respiratory	258	446
Infections to colds etc	650	534
Other musculo skeletal	1384	998

3.10 There has been an increase in the overall number of days lost in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2013/14 as compared to the same quarter 2012/13. Absence levels across Policy & Resources and Children & Enterprise increased slightly however there has been a substantial increase in the number of days lost in Primary schools. This is currently being investigated further.

3.11 Employee Welfare Advisers will continue to support managers across the directorates and schools in managing staff attendance.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 As we continue to monitor sickness absence across the Council it is envisaged that the Sickness Absence Policy will continue to be reviewed to ensure absence is managed effectively.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

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

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**
- 6.2 **Employment, Learning, and Skills in Halton**
- 6.3 **A Healthy Halton**
- 6.4 **A Safer Halton**
- 6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 Failure to monitor absence levels and trends may lead to increased levels of ill health and appropriate support may not be given to employees. Sickness absence has both capacity and financial consequences for the Council if not managed effectively.

#### **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

The Council is better protected from future challenge of disability or other discrimination if all employees are treated equally and fairly with regard to their sickness absences.

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

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