

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



*Municipal Building,
Kingsway,
Widnes.
WA8 7QF*

3 December 2013

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE HALTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

You are hereby summoned to attend an Ordinary Meeting of the Halton Borough Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall on Wednesday, 11 December 2013 commencing at 6.30 p.m. for the purpose of considering and passing such resolution(s) as may be deemed necessary or desirable in respect of the matters mentioned in the Agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W. R.', is centered on the page.

Chief Executive

-AGENDA-

Item No.	Page No.
1. COUNCIL MINUTES	SEE MINUTE BOOK
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
3. THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
5. LEADER'S REPORT	
6. MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD	SEE MINUTE BOOK
a) 17 October 2013	
b) 7 November 2013	
c) 21 November 2013	
7. MINUTES OF THE MERSEY GATEWAY EXECUTIVE BOARD	SEE MINUTE BOOK
8. MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD	SEE MINUTE BOOK
9. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8	
10. MATTERS REQUIRING A DECISION OF THE COUNCIL	
a) Further Development of Sci-Tech Daresbury - KEY DECISION (Minute EXB 103 refers)	1 - 6

Executive Board considered a report and presentation of the Chief Executive which updated Members on the proposed arrangements to fund the future development of Sci-Tech, Daresbury.

RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the proposals for the future development of Sci-Tech Daresbury be noted;
- 2) Council be asked to approve the inclusion of Project Tech Space in the Council's Capital Programme, to be funded as set out in the Threshold Report;
- 3) authority be given for the Council to enter into the legal and funding agreements with the Joint Venture Partners for the delivery of the projects; and
- 4) agree to the Council entering into the financial arrangements to deliver the projects.

- b) Determination of the 2014/2015 Council Tax Base (Minute EXB 112 refers)

7 - 10

Executive 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.

RECOMMENDED: That Council 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

- c) 2013/14 Half Year Spending (Minute EXB 113 refers)

11 - 20

Executive Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which reported on the 2013/14 Half Year Spending as at 30 September 2013.

RECOMMENDED: That Council approve the revisions to the Council's 2013/14 Capital Programme set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

- d) Budget Proposals 2014/15 (Minute EXB 116 refers)

21 - 30

Executive Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on initial revenue budget proposals for 2014/15.

RECOMMENDED: That Council approve the initial budget proposals for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 1.

- e) Widnes Waterfront Infrastructure (Minute EXB 119 refers)

31 - 34

Executive Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided an update on regeneration projects at Widnes Waterfront and Johnson's Lane, and sought approval to vary the Capital Programme to allow these projects to proceed.

RECOMMENDED: That Council include the £0.52m remediation costs of the former Bayer site and £0.5m for the provision of infrastructure at Johnson's Lane, Widnes, within the Capital Programme, to initially be funded from Growing Places Fund (GPF) loans (subject to successful bids) which will thereafter be repaid from the capital receipts generated from the sale of the respective sites.

f) Absence of Elected Member

Council are asked to note that Councillor Frank Fraser has been absent from attending Council meetings for four months, due to ill health.

Under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, permission is sought for Councillor Fraser to be granted an extended period of absence from attending Council meetings for a further period of 3 months, concluding on 14 March 2014.

11. MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

SEE MINUTE BOOK

- a) Children, Young People and Families
- b) Employment, Learning, Skills and Community
- c) Health
- d) Safer
- e) Environment and Urban Renewal
- f) Corporate Services
- g) Business Efficiency Board

12. COMMITTEE MINUTES

SEE MINUTE BOOK

- a) Development Control
- b) Regulatory
- c) Appeals Panel

13. PART II

In this case the Board has a discretion to exclude the press and public and, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it is **RECOMMENDED** that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

14. MATTERS REQUIRING A DECISION OF THE COUNCIL

- a) The Draft Final Business Case Submission to the Department for Transport- KEY DECISION (Minute MGEB 15 refers) **35 - 66**

Mersey Gateway Executive Board considered a report of the Chief Executive.

- b) Former Crosville Depot Runcorn- Variation to Capital Programme **67 - 72**

To consider the attached Part II report.

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 7 November 2013
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
PORTFOLIO: Leader
SUBJECT: Further Development of SciTech Daresbury
WARD(S) Daresbury

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Receive a presentation giving an update on the future development of Sci-Tech Daresbury
- provide an update on the proposed arrangements to fund the future development at Sci-Tech Daresbury
- to seek authority to enter into the proposed legal and funding agreements with the Sci-Tech Daresbury Joint Venture

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- 1) **the Board notes the proposals for the future development of Sci-Tech Daresbury;**
- 2) **Council (on 11th December 2013) be asked to approve inclusion of Project Tech Space in the Council's capital programme, to be funded as set out in the Threshold Report;**
- 3) **the Board gives the authority for the Council to enter into the legal and funding agreements with the JV Partners for the delivery of the projects; and**
- 4) **the Board agrees to the Council entering into the financial arrangements to deliver the projects.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 **Sci-Tech Enterprise Zone Daresbury**

Sci-Tech Daresbury is a key strategic site. It is an international hub for world class science. In August 2011, part of Sci-Tech Daresbury became an Enterprise Zone.

A Daresbury Joint Venture Partnership was set up in 2010 and is a 50:50 private:public partnership between Langtree, STFC (Science and Technology Facilities Council), and Halton Borough Council.

The aim of enterprise zones is to attract new businesses with simplified planning rules, super-fast broadband and reductions in business rates. Business rates growth within the zone is retained by Halton Borough Council for the 25 year life of the zone.

3.2 On 13th June 2013 and following the due diligence process, the Daresbury JV Partnership was informed that it had been successful in securing £7.36m of Regional Growth Fund (RGF) grant-aid.

The following 4 projects have now been agreed by the JV Board

- 1) **Project Tech Space** - the construction of high quality, flexible office space which will enable businesses to grow and expand, as well as specialised laboratory space to help businesses which rely on laboratory space to develop their respective products;
- 2) **Power (Phase1)** –Part of the RGF bid will be used to increase the power capacity needed to support future science and technology facilities planned for the campus.
- 3) **Connectivity/Environmental Improvements** this element of the grant will pay for the site clearance, and landscape improvements to bring together sites in a better managed way within a quality environment .
- 4) **Transport Improvements** - to provide better public transport provision to and from Daresbury including neighbouring residential areas, thereby improving access to job opportunities for all.

2 additional medium term priorities have also been identified by the JV Board and will now be subject to further investigation

- Improving Broadband Access to the site
- Creating a loop road within the SciTech development

3.3 The Threshold Report circulated separately to Executive Board members (under PART 2 as it contains COMMERCIALY CONFIDENTIAL information) provides the legal and financial arrangements to deliver at SciTech Daresbury :-

- The 4 Projects mentioned above
- £30million investment
- new business opportunities; and
- create 800+ new jobs

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Daresbury strategic site is included in the Council's Corporate Plan, the Halton Partnership and Halton Borough Council Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan, and supports the Council's Urban Renewal corporate priority. Grant funding is essential to facilitate the delivery of Daresbury.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Threshold Report identifies the financial implications for the JV and the Council in delivering the 4 Projects.

5.2 It is proposed that the Council will provide part of the funding for Project Tech Space, by undertaking £7.8m of prudential borrowing. In order to do this the Council will need to take ownership of the property once constructed and will then lease it back to the Joint Venture Partnership for a period of 25 years. All maintenance and associated costs will be the responsibility of the Joint Venture Partnership for the 25 year period.

5.3 Repayment of the Council's prudential borrowing will be made by the Joint Venture Partnership utilising their existing and future rental income. The repayment of such borrowing will also be underwritten by the Joint Venture Partners as outlined in paragraph 7.1 below.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

They are no implications associated with this report.

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

Overall the development of Sci-Tech Daresbury will assist in providing job opportunities for local people and will go some way in addressing the level of unemployment in Halton. The next phases of development are estimated to create up to 800+ new jobs.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

There are no implications associated with this report.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

There are no implications associated with this report.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The development at Daresbury will act as a catalyst to attract developers and new businesses to the area by creating an attractive, well-accessed and serviced area, which provides a safe and attractive environment for employees and visitors.

The Enterprise Zone aims to deliver 25% of the employment land for the borough. The programme will also provide improvements to the local area, and in particular key gateway sites alongside the A558 and A56.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The Threshold Report identifies the risks to the JV and the Council in delivering the 4 Projects

It is, therefore, recommended that Halton Council enters into a clawback agreement with JV Partners to underwrite and share the risk in the event that the jobs or investments presented in this report do not materialise.

Members are advised that, on balance the benefits of the scheme, that is job creation and growing the borough's economy, outweigh the risks. The risks will be mitigated by sound project management and monitoring of expenditure. Equally, grant will only be drawn down as and when programme milestones have been met. Finally, the Council has a good track record of managing and delivering schemes of this scale and complexity.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no issues arising out of this report.

9.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

9.1 To provide the legal and financial arrangements to deliver at SciTech Daresbury :-

- The 4 Projects mentioned above
- £30million investment
- new business opportunities; and
- create 827+ new jobs

10.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

10.1 None

11.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

As set out in the timetable in the Threshold Report.

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

Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from receiving the following document on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

- Threshold Report (Commercially Confidential)

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REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 November 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Finance

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Determination of the 2014/2015 Council Tax Base

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 There is a requirement for the Council to determine the 'Tax Base' for its area and also the tax base for each of the Parishes.
- 1.2 The Council is required to notify the council tax base figure to Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Environment Agency by 31st January 2014. The Council is also required to calculate and advise the Parish Councils of their relevant tax bases.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

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

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

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Council Tax Base

- 3.1 The 'Tax Base' is the measure used for calculating the council tax and is used by both the billing authority (the Council) and the major precepting authorities (the Cheshire Fire Authority and the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner), in the calculation of their council tax requirements.
- 3.2 The tax base figure is arrived at in accordance with a prescribed formula, and represents the estimated full year number of chargeable dwellings in the Borough, expressed in terms of the equivalent of Band 'D' dwellings.

The Council Tax Base for 2014/15

- 3.3 The council tax base is calculated using the number of dwellings included in the Valuation List, as provided by the Listing Officer, as at 30th October 2013. Adjustments are then made to take into account the estimated number of discounts, voids, additions and demolitions during the period 30th October 2013 to 31st March 2014.
- 3.4 From 2013/14 onwards, the tax base calculation includes an element for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (the replacement for Council Tax Benefit). The estimate amount of Council Tax Support payable for 2014/15 is converted into the equivalent number of whole properties which are deducted from the total. The reduced tax base will not result in an increase in Council Tax as the Council's budget requirement will be reduced by payment of a grant in lieu of Council Tax Benefit.
- 3.5 An estimated percentage collection rate is then applied to the product of the above calculation to arrive at the tax base for the year.
- 3.6 Taking account of all the relevant information and applying a 96.5% collection rate, the calculation for 2014/15 gives a tax base figure of 31,400 for the Borough as a whole.
- 3.7 Taking account of all the relevant information and applying a 96.5% collection rate, the appropriate tax base figure for each of the Parishes is as follows

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

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct policy or other implications arising from this report.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 The council tax base enables the Council to set the level of council tax to be charged for 2014/15, the income from which supports all of the Council's priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There would be a loss of income to the Council if the council tax base is not approved, as it would not be possible to set the level of council tax to be charged for 2014/15.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Working Papers	Kingsway House	P. McCann

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REPORT TO: Council

DATE: 11 December 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Finance

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: 2013/14 Revised Capital Programme

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to a number of revisions to the Council's 2013/14 capital programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the revisions to the Council's 2013/14 capital programme set out in paragraph 3.2 below, be approved.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On 21st November 2013 the Executive Board received a report of spending against the Council's revenue budget and capital programme as at 30th September 2013. A number of revisions to the 2013/14 capital programme were recommended for approval by Council as outlined below.

3.2 The Council's 2013/14 capital programme has been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes have developed. These are reflected in the revised capital programme presented in Appendix 1. The schemes which have been revised within the programme are as follows

- (i) Mersey Gateway Land Acquisition
- (ii) Lowerhouse Lane Depot – Upgrade Works
- (iii) Cremators at Widnes Crematorium
- (iv) Widnes Town Centre Initiative
- (v) Stadium Gym Equipment
- (vi) Stadium Minor Works
- (vii) Grangeway Court
- (viii) Litter Bins
- (ix) Widnes Recreation Site
- (x) Travellers Site Warrington Road
- (xi) Runcorn Hill Park

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 There are no direct implications, however, the capital programme supports the delivery and achievement of all the Council's priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There are a number of financial risks within the budget. However, the Council has internal controls and processes in place to ensure that spending remains in line with budget.

6.2 In preparing the 2013/14 budget, a register of significant financial risks was prepared which has been updated as at 30th September 2013.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

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

Capital Expenditure to 30th September 2013

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2013/14 Cumulative Capital Allocation			Capital Allocation 2014/15 £'000	Capital Allocation 2015/16 £'000
		Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
<u>Children & Enterprise Directorate</u>						
Schools Related						
Asset Management Data	1	1	3	5	0	0
Fire Compartmentation	1	1	10	20	0	0
Capital Repairs	600	600	1,000	1,379	0	0
Asbestos Management	9	9	8	10	0	0
Schools Access Initiative	35	35	75	113	0	0
Education Programme (General)	29	46	50	92	0	0
Short Breaks for Disabled Children	242	242	247	247	0	0
Basic Need Projects	0	0	0	1,160	0	0
School Modernisation Projects	102	150	350	648	0	0
Weston Primary School	0	0	18	18	0	0
Lunts Heath Primary School	115	115	134	134	0	0
St Bedes Infant School	0	0	116	116	0	0
St Bedes Junior School	233	233	348	366	0	0
Weston Point Basic Need	73	73	70	78	0	0
Ashley School	32	32	302	500	0	0
Early Education for 2 Year Olds	24	24	24	356	0	0
Wade Deacon High School (BSF)	962	962	1,300	1,423	0	0
The Grange (BSF)	3,806	3,806	5,000	5,841	0	0
Wade Deacon ICT	1,131	1,131	1,200	1,465	0	0
The Grange ICT	1,131	1,131	1,200	1,465	0	0

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2013/14 Cumulative Capital Allocation			Capital Allocation 2014/15 £'000	Capital Allocation 2015/16 £'000
		Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Employment, Economic Regeneration & Business Development						
Castlefields Regeneration	23	50	620	827	0	0
3MG	1,821	1,850	4,271	5,695	0	0
Widnes Waterfront	0	0	366	488	0	0
The Hive	88	108	160	214	0	0
Decontamination of Land	62	60	117	155	0	0
Daresbury SciTech Scheme	400	400	2,953	3,937	0	0
Queens Arms – Moore Lane	39	39	52	69	0	0
HBT Bus Park	71	71	71	71	0	0
Former Fairfield Site - Demolition	31	31	338	450	0	0
Former Fairfield Site – Contingency	1	1	38	50	0	0
Travellers Site Warrington Road	4	5	637	849	0	0
Widnes Town Centre Initiative	0	0	64	85	0	0
Lowerhouse Lane Depot - Upgrade	17	17	551	735	0	0
Disability Discrimination Act	39	39	108	150	300	300
Total Children & Enterprise	11,122	11,262	21,801	29,211	300	300

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2013/14 Cumulative Capital Allocation			Capital Allocation 2014/15 £'000	Capital Allocation 2015/16 £'000
		Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Policy & Resources Directorate						
ICT & Support Services						
ICT Rolling Programme	609	729	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
Policy, Planning & Transportation						
Local Transport Plan						
Silver Jubilee Bridge Maintenance	828	680	1,400	2,305	2,029	4,990
Bridge & Highway Maintenance	682	835	1,500	2,470	1,816	0
Integrated Transport & Network Management	132	135	420	725	1,020	0
Street Lighting – Structural Maintenance	53	55	105	105	200	200
Surface Water Management	0	0	160	214	0	0
Local Pinch Point Fund Programme – Daresbury Expressway	0	0	400	1,805	589	0
Mersey Gateway						
Early Land Acquisition	7,414	7,414	19,257	23,639	4,421	1,250
Development Costs	995	995	1,400	3,500	0	0
Other						
Risk Management	19	20	100	118	120	120
Mid-Mersey Local Sustainable Transport	7	7	113	150	270	0
Fleet Replacements	63	63	280	950	300	300
Total Policy & Resources	10,802	10,933	26,235	37,081	11,865	7,960

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2013/14 Cumulative Capital Allocation			Capital Allocation 2014/15 £'000	Capital Allocation 2015/16 £'000
		Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Communities Directorate						
Community Dept						
Stadium Minor Works	0	0	45	60	30	30
Stadium Gym Equipment	0	0	23	30	0	0
Widnes Recreation Site	0	0	2,010	2,680	0	0
Children's Playground Equipment	14	20	20	81	65	65
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	13	17	30	340	340	340
Arley Drive	1	4	5	66	0	0
Crow Wood Park	0	0	9	13	0	0
Runcorn Hill Park	22	25	90	120	250	250
Open Spaces Scheme	45	45	45	51	0	0
Runcorn Cemetery Extension	1	3	6	9	0	0
Widnes Crematorium Cremators	0	0	297	396	0	0
Runcorn Busway Works for Gas Powered Buses	30	30	30	30	0	0
Litter Bins	29	29	38	50	20	20
Commissioning & Complex Care						
Grants for Disabled Facilities	150	150	438	584	0	0
Energy Promotion	0	0	4	6	0	0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	69	70	262	350	0	0
Stairlifts	112	125	187	250	0	0
Choice Based Lettings	5	5	5	7	0	0
Bungalows at Halton Lodge	0	0	300	400	0	0

Directorate/Department	Actual Expenditure to Date £'000	2013/14 Cumulative Capital Allocation			Capital Allocation 2014/15 £'000	Capital Allocation 2015/16 £'000
		Quarter 2 £'000	Quarter 3 £'000	Quarter 4 £'000		
Bredon Respite Unit	13	13	13	13	0	0
Grangeway Court	0	0	260	347	0	0
Section 256 Grant/Contingency	0	0	22	29	0	0
Community Capacity Grant	0	0	0	0	351	0
Total Communities Directorate	504	536	4,139	5,912	1,056	705
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	22,428	22,731	52,175	72,204	13,221	8,965
Slippage (20%)				-14,441	-2,644	-1,793
					14,441	2,644
TOTAL				57,763	25,017	9,816

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REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	21 November 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Operational Director – Finance
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Budget Proposals 2014/15
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend to Council initial revenue budget proposals for 2014/15.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That Council approve the initial budget proposals for 2014/15 set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy elsewhere on this Agenda forecasts a potential revenue budget funding gap for the Council of around £15m in 2014/15, £17m in 2015/16 and £14m in 2016/17.
- 3.2 Budget saving proposals for 2014/15 are currently being developed by the Budget Working Group. A number of these proposals, listed in Appendix 1, can be implemented immediately. It is proposed that this is done in order to achieve a part-year saving in 2013/14 which will assist in keeping the Council's overall spending in line with budget. In addition, a number of the proposals will take time to implement and therefore commencing the process as soon as possible will assist in ensuring they are fully implemented by 1st April 2014.
- 3.3 The Government will announce its Grant Settlement for Local Government in late December, at which point the Council's actual funding gap will be identified. Further savings proposals to enable the Council to deliver a balanced budget will be recommended to Council on 5th March 2014.

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The revenue budget supports the Council in achieving the aims and objectives set out in the Community Strategy for Halton and the Council's Corporate Plan.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 The revenue budget supports the delivery and achievement of all the Council's priorities. The budget proposals listed in Appendix 1 have been prepared in consideration of all the Council's priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 Failure to set a balanced budget would put the Council in breach of statutory requirements. The budget is prepared in accordance with detailed guidance and a timetable to ensure statutory requirements are met and a balanced budget is prepared that aligns resources with corporate objectives.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

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

**COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE
2014/15 Budget Savings Proposals**

Item	Budget Proposal	2014/15 £000
1.	Learning Disabilities: A grant for learning disabilities has now been mainstreamed into the Council's core budget.	96
2.	Complex Care Pool: Savings include some additional (beds) income generated based upon care services, a review of reablement and intermediate care and a reform grant which has been mainstreamed into the Council's budget. Certain expenditure will be met from the pooled budget providing a one-off saving.	330 1,600 (1 year only)
3.	Independent Living: Savings from a combination of funds which have led to the reconfiguration of the home improvement agency service, improvements to the Property Pool Plus and a review of the approach to the Mental Capacity Act Co-ordination which has absorbed roles into teams.	100
4.	Community Involvement Team: Increased income generated at Community Centres.	20
5.	Open Spaces: Restructure of Street Cleansing without reducing service delivery (£40,000); additional income from Registration Services (£10,000) and the Brindley (£40,000).	90
6.	Sport and Recreation: Re-negotiation of Leisure Management contract (ends January 2016).	100
7.	Stadium and Catering: Various efficiencies in School Meals (£50,000) and Community Meals (£25,000) in order to reduce the cost of provision without affecting service delivery.	75
8.	Waste and Recycling: Budget savings to be achieved from redesigning the recycling reward scheme (£100,000) and a review of household waste centres (£150,000).	250
9.	Commissioning: Cessation of the YMCA Nightstop contract. Managed underspends in 2013/14 on social care contracts and the social care reform grant carried forward to provide a one-off saving.	46 300 (1 year only)

Item	Budget Proposal	2014/15 £000
10.	Community Services: Additional income generation from Community Day Services businesses.	120 (1 year only)
11.	Carers: A combination of savings from the Carers Centre following their successful lottery bid and the Carers Centre taking over some of the functions of the Carer Development role.	48
12.	Commissioning & Complex Care: The Operational Director has moved to part-time working.	50
	Permanent Savings	1,205
	One-year Savings	2,020
	TOTAL	3,225

CHILDREN & ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE
2014/15 Budget Savings Proposals

Item	Budget Proposal	2014/15 £000
1.	<p>Team Around the Family - Children's Centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in various supplies and services budgets (£50,000) • Income generation from room hire, charging for services, increasing current charges (£25,000) • Reduce marketing budget to a minimum and use electronic systems/ social media systems that are significantly lower costs (£1,000) 	76
2.	<p>Team Around the Family - Family Support; Intensive Support; Integrated Working Support Team; Short Breaks for Disabled Children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of a Family Support Worker post (£30,000) • Cease the counselling contract as the service is duplicated within another contract (£13,000) • Review of financial support to disabled children and families (£30,000) 	73
Item	Budget Proposal	2014/15 £000
3.	<p>0 – 19 (School and Setting Improvement) Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency savings in portage (£10,000) • Reduction in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) training budget in private and voluntary settings (£20,000) • Reduction in the graduate leader fund budget in private and voluntary settings (£90,000) • Reduction in the EYFS workforce development training budget in private and voluntary settings (£30,000) 	150
4.	<p>Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education & Child Psychology Service and Attendance & Behaviour Service – additional income generation through traded services 	70
5.	<p>Children's Organisation and Provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and restructured support which provides Careers Information, Advice and Guidance for young people (£100,000) • Restructure and deletion of two vacant support staff posts (£53,000) 	153
6.	The Education Business Partnership (EBP):	85

POLICY & RESOURCES DIRECTORATE
2014/15 Budget Savings Proposals

Item	Budget Proposal	2014/15 £000
1.	Procurement Division: Income generation from the delivery of procurement related services to external organisations including CCGS and councils.	200
2.	Revenues & Benefits Division: Housing Benefits Section - One off underspend in 2013/14 from holding a number of posts vacant. It is anticipated that given the impact of the Welfare Reforms these posts will need to be filled in 2014/15.	70 (1 year only)
3.	Revenues & Benefits Division: HDL Shops - Changes to rating valuations were made by the VOA from 1/4/13, the cost of which is provided for within the HDL budget. Implementation was expected from 1/4/12 and therefore financial provision was made which is no longer required and will provide a one-off saving.	125 (1 year only)
Item	Budget Proposal	2013/14 £000
4.	Financial Management Division: Net reduction in the staffing budget following a major restructure of the Division and resultant deletion of vacant posts.	50
5.	Concessionary travel passenger numbers are lower than anticipated and therefore it is anticipated that there will be an underspend in 2013/14 which will be carried forward to provide a one-off saving for 2014/15.	50 (1 year only)
6.	Audit & Operational Finance Division: Direct Payments Team - Reduction in the staffing budget from a voluntary reduction in hours for one postholder.	7
7.	Audit & Operational Finance Division: Insurance Section - Reduction in insurance premium costs from adopting an increased level of self-insurance for motor vehicle cover.	20
8.	Audit & Operational Finance Division: Finance Support Team - Savings from bringing invoice scanning arrangements back in-house (£8,000), additional income generated from SLA with schools (£2,000) and introduction of the Early Payment Discount Scheme (£20,000).	30
9.	Audit & Operational Finance Division: Cashiers Section - Reduction in the contract cost for cash kiosk support and maintenance (£5,000) and increased income from cashiers services provided under contract to HHT	10

	(£5,000).	
10.	Audit & Operational Finance Division: Internal Audit - Income generation from external contracts to provide internal audit services to Cheshire Police and Manchester Port Health Authority.	6
11.	Audit & Operational Finance Division: Client Finance Section - Realignment of the income budget following the previous year's introduction of charges for appointeeship / deputyship clients, due to the number of clients being higher than anticipated. This will not alter the level of charges to clients.	10
12.	HR Learning & Development Division: A staffing restructure during 2013/14 will generate a one-off saving from an underspend in 2013/14 and an on-going annual saving from 2014/15 onwards.	156 39 (1 year only)
13.	Marketing, Design and Communications: Ceasing the contract for the provision of external press cuttings.	2
Item	Budget Proposal	2013/14 £000
14.	Legal Services: Reduction in legal books and publications budget (£10,000), full year balance of previous year's savings already achieved (£53,000) and reduction in the staffing budget following a change in grading of Legal Assistant posts (£10,000).	73
15.	Democratic Services Division: Reduction in staffing budget following the deletion of a vacant Member Services and Electoral Officer post (£28,000) and the full year balance of previous year savings already achieved (£5,000).	33
16.	Customer Intelligence Unit: Reduction in the staffing budget through deletion of a vacant Complaints Officer post.	27
17.	Traffic, Risk & Emergency Planning, Health & Safety Division: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved street lighting efficiency through use of long life lamps (£51,000) • Increased income from charges for street works inspections/defects (£10,000) 	61
18.	Councilwide Procurement Savings - Target for achievement of reductions in contract prices across the Council from improved procurement.	700
19.	Salary Sacrifice Car Scheme - Estimated savings in employee oncosts from the introduction of a salary	40

	sacrifice car scheme. The annual saving will increase as take-up of the new scheme increases.	
20.	Reductions in United Utility charges following a review of the basis for charges for surface water drainage at various Council owned car parks. This will provide a one-off saving from repayment of arrears and an on-going permanent budget saving.	8 30 (1 year only)
21.	Carbon Reduction Commitment - The threshold for inclusion within the national carbon reduction scheme has been raised such that the Council no longer falls within the scheme. This will provide a one-off saving from the underspend in 2013/14 and an on-going permanent saving from 2014/15.	200 200 (1 year only)
Permanent Savings		1,633
One-year Savings		514
TOTAL		2,147

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REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	21 November 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Children & Enterprise
PORTFOLIO:	Physical Environment
SUBJECT:	Widnes Waterfront Infrastructure Funding
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on regeneration projects in relation to the Widnes Waterfront sites G Park (former Bayer Cropscience) and Johnson's Lane.

The report requests approval from the Executive Board to vary the capital programme to allow these projects to proceed prior to impending written offers from the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership expected in the new year.

- 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That Council be requested to include the £0.52m remediation costs of the former Bayer site and £0.5m for the provision of infrastructure at Johnson's Lane, Widnes within the capital programme, to initially be funded from Growing Places Fund (GPF) loans (subject to successful bids) which will thereafter be repaid from the capital receipts generated from sale of the respective sites.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Former Bayer Crop Science Site – G Park, Gazeley**

A report recommending the disposal of approximately 40 acres of land to Gazeley UK Ltd by a development agreement was agreed at the 5th September 2013 Executive Board.

The Council owns approximately 40 acres of land at Gorse Lane. This land was a former chemical manufacturing plant for Bayer. The land was purchased by the Council in 2009 for the sum of £5.5M with the acquisition price fully funded by a grant from NWDA. There was known ground contamination at the time of the purchase with an estimated liability of £500K. The terms of the grant condition were that the Council would be responsible for ground contamination; the Council could recover its

reasonable costs of managing the site from future land sales; otherwise 100% of sale proceeds would be recoverable by NWDA.

With the demise of NWDA eventually it emerged that NWDA's interests in this site had passed to BIS. Council officers have been working with BIS and the LEP and have agreed a strategy for the site, subject to Planning.

Further ground investigations since purchase have provided an increased estimate of dealing with the ground contamination of £1.6M. This is approximately £1.0m for groundwater remediation and £0.6m for asbestos contaminated soils and 'hotspots'. Remediation can be phased, enabling the programme to be accelerated for any plot to facilitate the earliest possible development. Groundwater treatment is the priority long lead item which needs to be resolved for early remediation to unlock the site. Officers consider that an early commitment to commence work on dealing with the ground contamination will bring forward the development and encourage occupier interest.

The Council requires £1m towards dealing with the ground contamination, of which there is already £0.48m in the capital programme. This can be repaid (subject to agreement with BIS) on sale of the first parcel of land.

3.2 Johnson's Lane - Ballast Phoenix Ltd

The Executive Board approved, on 11th July 2013, the disposal of c. 6.7 acres of land at Johnson's Lane to Ballast Phoenix Ltd subject to detailed Planning Permission and subject to contract.

The Council owns c20 acres of land at Johnson's Lane. This land has never been developed and does not benefit from access or services infrastructure beyond the edge of Johnson's Lane. The Council placed the whole site on the open market through property agents CBRE in November 2010. There have been a number of inquiries from potential occupiers, but all previous inquirers have been deterred by the amount of work and investment required to bring the site forward for development.

The capital funds will fund the advanced highway works required to access all the plots at Johnson's Lane. This will enhance the marketing of the remaining sites as well as help secure Ballast Phoenix Ltd by removing any uncertainties associated with road construction.

It is anticipated that subject to contract the land receipt from Ballast Phoenix Ltd will be used to repay the HBC capital.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Approval of the capital allocations outlined in this report would present an excellent opportunity to accelerate further developments at the Widnes Waterfront.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Council have applied for a Growing Places Fund loan for both G- Park and Johnson's Lane. It likely the outcome of these applications will be made public in the new year.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

They are no implications associated with this report.

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

Overall the Widnes Waterfront programme will assist in providing job opportunities for local people and will go some way in addressing the level of unemployment in Halton.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Overall the Widnes Waterfront programme has provided new walking and cycling routes as well as a bus service, which offer safe and affordable means of accessing the Waterfront and thereby can overcome many of the transport barriers often faced by people who do not own or have access to a car.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

The projects will provide much needed environmental improvements to the immediate areas, reducing the amount of brownfield land open to abuse by illegal off road motorbikes.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The Widnes Waterfront programme is acting as a catalyst to attract developers, new businesses and leisure uses to the area by creating an attractive, well-accessed and serviced area, which provides a safe and attractive environment for employees and visitors.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are risks to the Council in altering the capital programme to accommodate these projects.

For the former Bayer site the true net value of the purchase price offer cannot be determined at this stage. Final costs and detailed agreement of recovery from BIS will require more detailed investigations. Therefore, at this stage the Council may be liable to repay the full £1.0m remediation costs.

For Johnson's Lane it is anticipated that income from future land transactions will be used to pay the HBC capital.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

Not applicable.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

The Council to alter the capital programme to allow funding to be made available to bring forward the former Bayer site and Johnson's Lane specifically for the provision of remediation and infrastructure.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The do nothing option would mean that the former Bayer Cropscience site and Johnson's Lane sites would remain unused for a further period of time, which potentially would result in further security and maintenance costs to the Council.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Once approval is received recommendations will immediately be acted upon

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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