

# Public Document Pack



## Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

Wednesday, 25 November 2015 6.30 p.m.  
Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

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

**Chief Executive**

### **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Bill Woolfall (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Mike Fry (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Pauline Hignett	Labour
Councillor Valerie Hill	Labour
Councillor Chris Loftus	Labour
Councillor Andrew MacManus	Labour
Councillor Keith Morley	Labour
Councillor Pauline Sinnott	Labour
Councillor Gareth Stockton	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Andrea Wall	Labour
Councillor Geoff Zygadlo	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 511 8059 or e-mail [gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk](mailto:gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk) for further information.  
The next meeting of the Board is on Wednesday, 13 January 2016*

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

**Part I**

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<b>1. MINUTES</b>	
<b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)</b>	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any 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 or 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:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 25 November 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Policy and 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:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 25 November 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Executive Board Minutes

**WARD(s):** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

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

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

## **3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None.

## **4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

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

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

None

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

None

### **5.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

### **5.4 A Safer Halton**

None

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

None

**6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 None.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

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

**APPENDIX 1**

**Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 September 2015**

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

**EXB 40 HALTON HOUSING TRUST PROGRESS REPORT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which provided an update on the progress of Halton Housing Trust for the past twelve months.

The Board received a verbal update from Nick Atkin, Chief Executive of Halton Housing Trust, and Ingrid Fife, Chairman of the Board, Halton Housing Trust (HHT.) They reported on progress to date in delivering some key achievements, partnerships and strategic priorities.

Members were advised that the Trust had a successful year in performance across core areas. In 2014/2015 a further £9m was invested in improving customer's homes and neighbourhoods. This represented over £130m investment in the nine years since housing stock transfer.

The Board noted that the operating environment of the Trust was becoming increasingly challenging. In July 2015, the Budget included a 1% reduction in rents for four years to March 2020, a benefits freeze and a change to the benefits cap. Together with the extension of Right to Buy opportunities, this would have a significant impact on the sector as a whole.

The Trust would have a reduction in income of 14% (£10 million) over the next four years, and a significant amount of work and analysis would be carried out to understand the detailed impact and potential savings by targeting resources more effectively.

Members had the opportunity to ask questions and clarify information contained in the presentation before Mr Atkin and Ms Fife were thanked for attending.

**RESOLVED:** That the progress report be noted.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15 October 2015**

### **TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB 54 MERSEY GATEWAY BRIDGE PROJECT – PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Community and Resources, which provided an update on progress with the Mersey Gateway Bridge project and the performance of the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd (MGCB) against the criteria set out in the MGCB Governance Agreement.

It was reported that the MGCB was a special purpose vehicle established to deliver the Mersey Gateway Bridge project and to administer and oversee the construction, maintenance and tolling of the new Mersey Gateway Bridge and the existing Silver Jubilee Bridge.

Appendix 1 provided an update on the key construction events, including the construction of the main crossing and the landside and highways for Members' information.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the progress with the Mersey Gateway Bridge Project, as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report, be noted; and
- 2) the performance of the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board Ltd, in monitoring the Project Company's performance, as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report, be noted.

### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB 56 PEEL HOUSE LANE SITE – UPDATE ON LAND DISPOSAL AND CEMETERY**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which provided an update on the delivery of the new Peel House Cemetery and sought approval for the sale of land at the front of the site for housing development.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the progress on the delivery of the new Peel House

Cemetery be noted;

- 2) the disposal of the frontage of the site (land edged red on Appendix A) to the company named in the report, on the terms set out in the report and appendices, be approved, subject to planning permission and subject to contract; and
- 3) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property be authorised to arrange for all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

### **RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

#### **EXB 57 EXPRESSWAY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE DISPOSAL**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, regarding the disposal of the Expressway Industrial Estate.

The Board was provided with information on offers that had been received for the sale and disposal of the estate.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the disposal of Expressway Industrial Estate to the company and for the price referred to in the report be approved, with the proceeds shared on a 50/50 basis with the joint owners, following the deduction of legal and marketing costs; and
- 2) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property, be authorised to arrange for all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 5 November 2015**

#### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

##### **EXB 62 THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR OFFER POLICY**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, on the introduction of a new Private Rented Sector Offer Policy (PRSO).

The Board was advised that the Localism Act 2011 introduced provisions that allowed local authorities to end their homelessness duty by means of a private rented sector offer without the applicant's consent, provided certain safeguards were met. Prior to this, most applicants preferred to wait for housing in the social rented sector.

Members were advised that, in order for the authority to make use of the power, the Localism Act required authorities to adopt a clear policy on how the powers would be used. Halton had developed a toolkit and suite of materials to utilise the powers safely and effectively, as set out in the report. It was noted that the proposed PRSO would result in a more effective homelessness service, making better use of the private rented sector and providing significant benefits and choice for homeless households.

RESOLVED: That the introduction of the Private Rented Sector Offer Policy, as detailed in section 3.6 of the report, be agreed.

### **EXB 63 HALTON HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2013-16 ANNUAL REVIEW – KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which sought approval for an amended action plan following the annual review of the Homelessness Strategy for the period 2015/18.

The Board was advised that as part of the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy, the Strategic Action Plan would be reviewed annually. A consultation event was held in June 2015 which involved active engagement with all partner agencies, service providers and Members. It was reported that the review provided clear direction for preventing and addressing homelessness within Halton, and ensured that the Action Plan remained current and reflected legislative and economic changes.

#### Reason(s) For Decision

Local Authorities were required to produce a strategy in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No alternatives were considered as a strategy was required to establish key challenges, objectives and priorities for tackling homelessness in Halton over the coming years.

## Implementation Date

November 2015.

RESOLVED: That the Homelessness Strategy 2013/18 Annual Review and amended Action Plan be agreed, with the content, findings, key challenges and priorities for the period 2015/18 outlined in the consultation report.

## **EXB 65 3MG HBC FIELD – KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which sought approval to dispose of part of HBC Field and to report on the financial terms of the agreement.

The report set out details of the financial terms of the agreement and details of the end users' proposals for the site, for Members' consideration.

## Reason(s) for Decision

To support the development of a key strategic site with the prospect of bringing up to 600 high quality jobs to the Borough.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

To revert back to the original asking price for the land. This was rejected firstly because the prospect of good quality jobs outweighed the reduction in capital receipt for the site. Secondly, the offer presented a long term solution for the site. Thirdly, it allowed certainty in the draw down of capital receipt to be used to repay a Growing Places Fund Loan used to fund the access road to the site.

## Implementation Date

1 December 2015.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Executive Board agree the disposal and option agreement to the end user;
- 2) Council be authorised to enter into the Heads of Terms with the end user, as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report;

- 3) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, and the Portfolio holders for Resources, Physical Environment and Transportation, be authorised to take such action as he judges necessary to implement the 3MG HBC Field; and
- 4) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property, be authorised to arrange for all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

### **EXB 66 LAND DISPOSAL FOR EMPLOYMENT LAND AT JOHNSON'S LANE**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, on proposals for the disposal of Plots A and B on Johnson's Lane, Widnes Waterfront.

The Board was advised that the Council owned approximately 20 acres of land at Johnson's Lane, Widnes. The whole site was placed on the market through property agents in November 2010.

It was reported that offers for Plots A and B had been received, as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the sale of two areas of land (Plot A and Plot B) of approximately 1.8 acres each, to the end users named in the report, for the values named in the report, both subject to planning permission and subject to contract, be approved; and
- 2) the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property be authorised to arrange for all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services.

<b>REPORT:</b>	Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	25 November 2015
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director, Community & Resources
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Transportation
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Petition Requesting Pedestrian Crossing Facilities at Barnfield Avenue, Runcorn
<b>WARDS:</b>	Norton South

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on a petition comprising 25 individual letters from Year 5 pupils at Murdishaw West Community Primary School requesting the installation of pedestrian crossing facilities on Barnfield Avenue and to make recommendations about the future provision of such facilities.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

**The petitioners are informed that pedestrian/traffic surveys have been carried out and that consideration will now be given to a) introducing controlled pedestrian crossing facilities into the existing traffic signals at the junction of busway with Barnfield Avenue and b) to reviewing existing signing and road markings, renewing these as necessary, with both proposals being subject to funding availability.**

### 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 A petition has been received comprising 25 individual letters from Year 5 pupils at Murdishaw West Community Primary School, requesting the installation of pedestrian crossing facilities on Barnfield Avenue adjacent to Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy (OBA)/The Hove/Brookvale Recreation Centre. A supporting video was also provided via a link to Murdishaw West School website <http://www.thelifecloud.net/schools/MurdishawWestCommunityPrimarySchool/> .
- 3.2 There are no Pelican, Puffin or zebra crossings in the area of the school at the present time. There has not been a reported road traffic collision involving personal injury in the area of Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy/The Hove/Brookvale Recreation Centre between 2008 and 2014 inclusive (2014 being the latest full period for which accident records are available).
- 3.3 There are two paths to the east of the school/Barnfield Avenue that give access to the school and that are well used at school times (approximately two 20 minute periods per school day) – one immediately adjacent to the school entrance and one next to the

traffic signals at the busway crossing (a short walk from the school entrance) which also has the benefit of tactile paving. When buses pass through on the busway at the signals, traffic is stopped on Barnfield Avenue and pedestrians can take the opportunity to cross, although without the benefit of red/green man signal indications. Due to the design of the estates, whereby walking was and still is encouraged, parking outside the school is not generally a problem.

- 3.4 As is common with most schools, especially when they close in the afternoon, children will flow out onto Barnfield Avenue and cross where they can, or where they choose, over a much longer length of road than the very limited area covered by the two paths and their respective dropped kerbs. This is simply because of the sheer volume of children who will arrive in a matter of minutes and the variety of different routes they may choose to find their way home or to their next destination.
- 3.5 If this volume of children were to be channelled into one very narrow point, to cross at a controlled pedestrian crossing immediately outside the school, for example, there would need to be suitable and extensive waiting areas. These do not currently exist and the land does not appear to be available to create such areas (especially on the school side) to accommodate such standing areas. Even if it were, it is likely to prove expensive to convert it to the standing area(s) that would be necessary. Also, if a controlled pedestrian crossing were to be provided, vehicles would have to stop at very regular intervals with queues building up at peak times and it is likely that children would be encouraged to cross in between these vehicles, which could prove dangerous.
- 3.6 In addition, experience has shown that where signals have been installed where they are generally only required for very specific and short times of the day, they can become dangerous as drivers become accustomed to passing along the road without stopping and hence they may either fail to stop when they need to or stop suddenly. Furthermore, if a Puffin crossing were installed at the path adjacent to the school entrance, it is felt that this would possibly be too close for vehicles exiting the school to have full and clear sight of the signal heads.
- 3.7 For these reasons and constraints, the installation of a controlled pedestrian crossing adjacent to the school entrance could not be recommended. However, consideration will be given to introducing pedestrian facilities (red and green men) into the traffic signals at the busway when these are next refurbished and subject to funding being available. At this point, it is difficult to say when this will be as it will need to be incorporated into a future capital programme for traffic signal works.
- 3.8 Barnfield Avenue does have physical traffic calming in place throughout its length, in the form of chicanes, speed cushions and speed tables. These physical features are supplemented with red carriageway surfacing in places although this is generally in poor condition. Consideration will, therefore, also be given to renewing or upgrading these road markings when resources become available. In addition, signs will be provided to warn of the presence of a school to help draw drivers' attention to the possibility of children crossing.
- 3.9 Surveys have been carried out to record both the volumes of traffic and the numbers of pedestrians crossing at the three locations shown on the drawing in Appendix 'A'. Such

pedestrian surveys record those people crossing within 50 metres either side of a selected point, and in the specific case of the surveys that have been conducted here, the crossing points are at greater separations than this minimum figure.

- 3.10 The Department for Transport recommended that a controlled crossing may be considered at points where the level of traffic/pedestrian crossing conflict expressed as  $PV^2$  (where P is the number of pedestrians per hour and V the vehicles) reaches a value of  $10^8$  for the 4 busiest hours in a day. In the case of this location, given that the issue is that of children entering and leaving the school over short periods, the relevant value is not reached at any of the crossing points and the pedestrian flows are almost completely tidal being associated with the school.
- 3.11 The busiest of the three zones counted is the most southerly, at the Busway/Barnfield Avenue junction which is a traffic signal controlled junction. Given the footpath layout to the east of Barnfield Avenue and that crossing from this footway by the busway only adds a short extra walking distance for many of the crossing students who may currently cross close to the entrance to the school or at other points, (the exact distance depending on their home address and the location of the access door into the school), there is further justification for the possible introduction of a pedestrian-controlled crossing into the traffic signals at the Busway junction when the junction is next refurbished.
- 3.12 An alternative to a signal-controlled crossing would be the provision of a School Crossing Patrol Officer at this location. An absolute requirement of the Council's appointment criteria is that for a point to be considered for establishment there needs to be a minimum of 5 children under the age of 11 crossing at or within 50m of the proposed location. This was not achieved during the site surveys.
- 3.13 A School Crossing Patrol Officer is provided outside Murdishaw West Community Primary School, but this point is too distant, and the linking footpath provision too indirect for this service to be of any practical use to students needing to cross to and from OBA. Drawing No. 9554 in Appendix 'A' refers.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no other direct social inclusion, sustainability, value for money, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are currently no financial implications.

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

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

The provision of a controlled crossing as part of the traffic signal installation at the busway would improve the facilities for children and young people, however, a separate facility outside of the school entrance cannot be recommended.

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

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

**6.3 A Healthy Halton**

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'A Healthy Halton' priority.

**6.4 A Safer Halton**

The provision of a controlled crossing as part of the busway signals would provide greater protection for children crossing in the area.

**6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal'.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

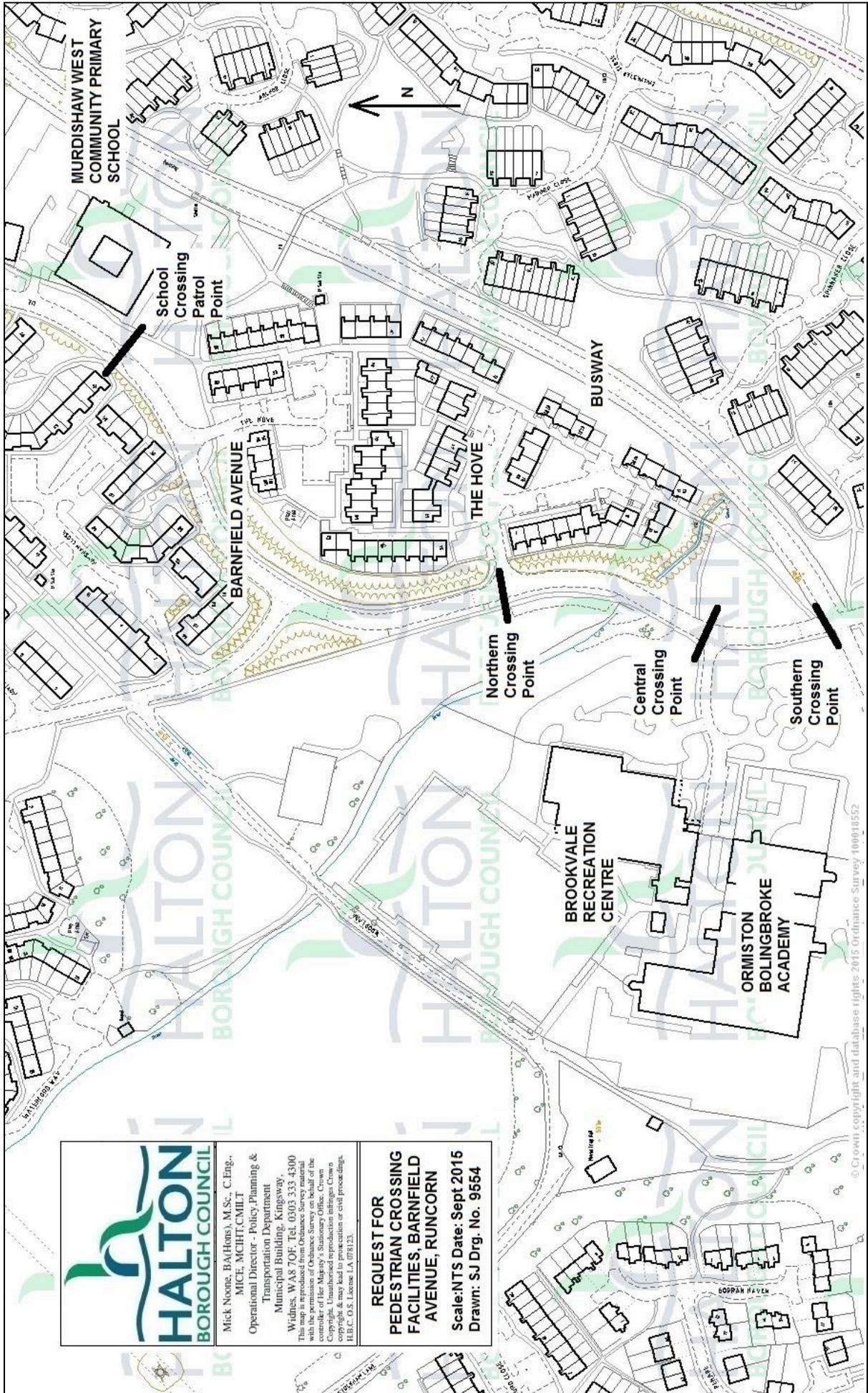
7.1 No full risk assessment is required.

**8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

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

9.1 There are no background papers under section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	25 November 2015
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director, Community & Resources
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Leader
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Annual Update on Armed Forces Covenant and Armed Forces & Veteran Support
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Borough-wide

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

To provide an annual update to the Policy and Performance Board on the Armed Forces Covenant and Armed Forces & Veteran support.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The Policy and Performance Board received a report on the Armed Forces Covenant in Spring 2014 outlining the Council's position in meeting the pledges to support the Armed Forces and Veteran community set out in the Armed Forces Community Covenant. This report provides a further annual update.

### **4.0 ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY**

4.1 The Royal British Legion commissioned a significant piece of research in 2014 to identify the size, profile and needs of the ex-service community and was to provide forecasts on the future profile. A similar piece of work was published in 2005 which led to a strategic review of services and an opportunity for services to be tailored to meet the needs of the ex-service community.

4.2 The research was carried out by Compass Partnership and gathered a wealth of data and desktop research into the hidden population living in communal establishments and conducting face-to-face interviews; 20,700 adults were screened and a final survey sample of 2,121 members of the ex-service community participated. The project was funded by The Royal British Legion and Forces in Mind Trust. The key findings were:-

4.2.1 The estimate of ex-service community living in the UK was between 6.1 and 6.2 million. Of that, 2.8 million are veterans, 2.1 million were dependant

adults (including spouses and widows) and 1 million were dependent children. The remaining amount represents the hidden community living in communal establishments such as care homes and prisons. These figures show a significant reduction since the last report. The estimate in 2005 of 10.5 million.

- 4.2.2 The report estimated that the ex-service community will continue to shrink, predicting it to be 5.45 million in 2020, 4.7 million in 2025 and 3.94 million by 2030.
- 4.2.3 The report identifies the size of the serving community (at the date of publishing) is estimated to be 469,773 made up of 198,810 service personnel including reservists, 101,393 dependant adults and 169,570 dependent children. Around 11% of service personnel are stationed overseas.
- 4.2.4 The total of the armed forces community living in the UK in 2014 is estimated to be between 6.5 & 6.7 million.
- 4.2.5 46% of the ex-service community are now aged 75+, in 2005 it was 28% and the average size of the 75+ cohort in the general population is 10%.
- 4.2.6 The report identified the problems faced by the increasingly elderly ex-service population are similar to those faced by the UK's elderly as a whole; isolation, physical health problems and difficulties with mobility and care.
- 4.2.7 35 to 44 year old ex-service personnel report difficulties with fuel poverty, long term illness, employment problems and depression. The middle age cohort appears particularly vulnerable to a range of problems. Two out of every ten have arrears, problems with depression, isolation and relationship issues. As a comparator this age group of ex-service personnel are more likely to report a range of long term health problems compared with adults of the same age in the general population.
- 4.2.8 The younger veteran cohort, age 16-34 represents 6% of the ex-service community. They are more likely to have a caring responsibility than the UK general population of the same age. Finance and employment are significant problems for this group with one in twenty having taken out a payday loan and over half of working age veterans stating they make little or no use of their skills and experience in their current job. In the age group 16-44 year olds, one in four reports difficulty with employment; fear of unemployment or being forced to take a job for which they are underpaid and over qualified. One in ten reports difficulty integrating into society.
- 4.2.9 The report tackles some myths around veterans. It details media attention portraying veterans are more likely to take their own lives however, research by the Manchester University found that suicide was less common amongst veterans than with the general population except for young early service leavers. Overall, rates of (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) PTSD are around 4% although some groups are higher risk. Heavy drinking is

identified for serving personnel and recent service leavers. The ex-service population in prisons is estimated to be between 3.5% and 7%, a similar picture to the percentage of veterans in the UK population as a whole. Veterans sleeping rough in London is detailed in the report, previous statistics in the 1990's suggested 20% of rough sleepers were ex-service. A 2008 study identified 6% and a recent estimate in 2013/14 identified 127 ex-service rough sleepers which represents 3%.

The full report has further detail on the summary points above and can be accessed via the link:-

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/media/2275/2014householdsurveyreport.pdf>

### 4.3 HALTON'S ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

It remains a challenge to robustly identify accurate data about Halton's armed forces community. The last annual report presented the overall statistics for the armed forces and gave indicative figures from the 2011 census "residents classed as working in the armed forces" being 189 in Halton and the Veteran's Pension & Compensation Service identified 465 from WA7 & WA8 postcodes in 2011/12 giving a total indicative figure of 654. Further data on those in receipt of pension and compensation has been released which identifies 765 from Halton (425 from WA7 and 335 from WA8). This gives a combined figure of 954 (along with the census date), an increase of 300 from the previous figures. There will be veterans that may not be in receipt of either pension or compensation hence, the challenge in accurately providing data. Added to this, the armed forces community can include spouse and dependants.

### 5.0 ARMED FORCES COVENANT

- 5.1 Halton is part of a pan Cheshire Covenant covering the Local Authorities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester, Warrington and Halton. In addition to local authorities, Health, Probation, Chambers of Commerce and Job Centre Plus/DWP are involved in supporting the covenant.
- 5.2 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the civilian community and its local armed forces community. It aims to provide awareness of the role of the armed forces, the sacrifices that in service and ex service personnel and their families make, encourage activities that integrate armed forces and local communities together and continue to foster civic pride in our armed forces.

5.3 The Armed Forces Community Covenant sets out twenty pledges, around five key themes:-

- Housing
- Employment & Benefit
- Education
- Health
- Wellbeing

The intention of the pledges is not to provide advantage for the armed forces community; but to ensure any disadvantages are removed.

Within the Cheshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership each partner has a lead role on a thematic area. Halton has a lead role for Housing, Warrington for Health & Wellbeing, Cheshire West & Chester for Education, Job Centre Plus/DWP for Employment & Benefits and an additional theme of Veteran Support led by Cheshire East & Warrington Clinical Commissioning Group is included in the Cheshire partnership.

#### **5.3.1 Housing in Halton**

There is evidence that securing accommodation can be difficult, in particular for those leaving the forces. The pledges request priority is given to armed forces personnel with high priority for veterans injured or disabled or their spouse and dependants for widow (ers). Halton's Housing Policy awards priority for those leaving the forces. Halton's Housing Solution team provide targeted housing advice for armed forces and veterans with a dedicated weekly housing advice surgery available. The Housing Solutions team has provided support and advice for six ex-forces clients who presented as homeless during 2014/15 and assisted in securing housing accommodation for four.

Halton Housing Trust manage the housing waiting list which allows clients to apply direct and secure social housing. The allocations policy identifies the priority status of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces personnel. All Armed Forces and Reserve Forces personnel or members of their household that meet the allocations criteria are placed in high priority band A, are granted additional preference and have their effective date enhanced by three months. During 2014/15 four veterans registered direct on the housing waiting list and three were permanently accommodated.

#### **5.3.2 Employment & Benefits in Halton**

These pledges identify it can be difficult for service leavers to secure employment and for those with spouses in-service, it can be difficult to seek employment as they often have sole responsibility for childcare.

Organisations and services that provide employment and benefit support need to identify service leavers and veterans to ensure that additional support is offered.

In April 2014 Jobcentre Plus introduced an Armed Forces Marker to the Jobcentre Plus IT system, this is a national initiative. The system logs:-

- HM Forces Service Leaver – Those who have served for more than 4 years in HM Armed Forces, whether as a Regular or as a Reservist. Also known as a veteran. This covers anyone who has ever been in the Armed Forces, regardless of how long ago that may have been, except for the Early Service Leavers (see below).
- Early Service Leaver – those who have served more than one day but less than 4 years.
- Spouse/Partner-HMF person – the spouse or partner of a currently serving member of the Armed Forces, or the spouse/partner of a Service Leaver.
- Reservist – Volunteer and Regular Reservists, who form the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marine Reserve, the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, the Royal Fleet Reserve, Army Reserve and Royal Air Force Reserve.
- Prefer not to say – this should be used where claimants do not wish to answer the question, or have it recorded on our systems.
- Not applicable – this should be used for anyone who does not fit into one of the above categories.

The Council is in dialogue with the Jobcentre Plus Armed Forces Champion and has requested the data capture for Halton.

### **5.3.3 Education in Halton**

Accessing education provision for service families can be outside of routine school admission timetables, sometimes this is linked to whole regiments moving about or could be individual families. Policies should ensure service families are not disadvantaged in accessing schools of their choice by being resident elsewhere. No applications were received for school admissions in Halton in September 2015, similarly to the previous year.

### **5.3.4 Health in Halton**

Access and engaging in health support services for veterans is a priority. There are five pledges which set out that access to services will be made easier for armed forces and their families to support good physical health, positive mental health and wellbeing. Health records should indicate if a patient is a current or former service member. Places on waiting lists for clinical procedures should be maintained where relocation occurs, and the provision of prosthetic limbs will match the standard provided by the Defence Medical Services.

Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) actively supports the armed forces and veteran's agenda. Following a review, which considered the key results of the national pilot veterans' programme, the national Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) specification along with feedback from consultations with CCG's and other stakeholders in the North West of England, all Cheshire and Merseyside CCGs have

collaboratively commissioned a community based Military Veterans Specialist Mental Health Service. Over a period of three months, Halton CCG supported the lead commissioning body, Bury CCG in the mobilisation of the service which is now provided by Greater Manchester West (GMW) Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. Mobilisation has now been completed and the service commenced in its new form on 1 July 2015.

The primary aim of the Military Veteran service is to improve the mental health and well-being of veterans. The secondary aim is to achieve this through the development of sustainable, accessible and effective services that meet the needs of veterans with mental health and wellbeing difficulties who live in the North West. The service will be one part of the care pathway for military veterans and adopts a stepped care approach to ensure veteran's needs are addressed by the most appropriate agency. Moving forward GMW will be reviewing local venues across Cheshire and Merseyside and work has already taken place to identify locations that ensure patient choice and accessibility as per the service specification.

Halton CCG is also a member of the Northwest Armed Forces Network whose purpose is to enable dialogue across organisations in order to provide better health care for the Armed Forces Community including families, veterans and reservists. It advises Commissioners on the implications of legislation affecting the Armed Forces Community and the effect of clinical advances e.g. in prosthetics or improved treatments for mental health problems. The Armed Forces Network has bi-monthly meetings and also holds a bi-annual stakeholder meeting to engage with the third sector and other relevant bodies.

All mental health services commissioned by Halton CCG are accessible by armed forces and their families. They all have a requirement to fast track vulnerable groups when they are identified to ensure that they receive the care they need as soon as possible. The "Living Life Well" website supported by Mental Health Services provides information and support for veterans, for information the link is <http://www.live-lifewell.net/exarmedforces/>. Local veteran support and information & advice organisations have benefited from mental health awareness training and networking with mental health service providers. This supports effective sign posting, suicide prevention and effective referral pathways and links into the appropriate services.

The data set available from GP practices in Halton has seven reader codes to record patients who are:-

1. Military Veteran
2. History Relating to Military Service
3. History Relating to Armed Services
4. History Relating to Royal Navy Services
5. History Relating to Royal Airforce Services
6. Served in the Armed Forces

## 7. Member of the Armed Forces

As at August 2015, the total number of patients registered across the reader codes in Halton's seventeen GP practices is 220.

### 5.3.5 Wellbeing in Halton

Wellbeing cuts across the other four themes however the pledges here are about supporting access to services in communities and support for those who become involved in the criminal justice system. Areas are urged to consider discounts to leisure facilities and other services if possible for the armed forces community. These pledges reinforce the need for partners to work together to ensure signposting and referrals arrangements with appropriate priorities in place.

Live At Ease receives referrals from Cheshire Custody Suite and for those released from prison re-settling back into the area to provide support to individuals.

A future area of focus is to gather a data capture from drug and alcohol services and partners in criminal justice organisations such as probation and courts to provide data on the size of the cohort involved in these services whom are ex-service personnel.

## 5.4 Cheshire Community Covenant Partnership

- 5.4.1 The partnership consists of the Armed Forces Champions from the four authorities, representatives from Health, Job Centre Plus/DWP, 75<sup>th</sup> Engineers & 42<sup>nd</sup> regiments. The group meets quarterly and invites other organisations and service charities for input as appropriate. The partnership rotates Chair and Secretariat, Halton had this role between July 2014 and July 2015. Annually the partnership is required to undertake a review; Halton hosted this on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014, the review event commenced with the Mercian regiment conducting a Freedom of the Borough parade. Halton residents lined the streets, dignitaries from across Cheshire were in attendance and the event was covered by national media.
- 5.4.2 Following the parade, presentations were received from the partner organisations on the key deliverables of the partnership and case study examples from across the Cheshire area.
- 5.4.3 The partnership identified it would be prudent to conduct a health check to reflect on progress and identify future priorities and key areas of focus. Halton's Community Development and Customer Intelligence Teams have supported this work. The Health Check will be completed by the end of the calendar year; the process will be completed online and Halton will provide a summary report which will inform planning future SMART objectives in the short, medium and long-term.

## 5.5 ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUNDS

5.5.1 A national grants scheme has been in place since 2012. In 2015 the arrangements for this fund have been reviewed and revised. New guidance was issued in August 2015 setting out the new framework for the fund.

The national pot is £10million and there are now two routes of applications; small grants up to £20,000 or large grants between £20,001 to £500,000. There are three key priorities for the fund:-

1. Community integration
2. The co-ordination and delivery of support to the Armed Forces community
3. Former service personnel in the criminal justice system

Statutory bodies, registered charities or armed forces units are eligible to apply.

Under small grants, the guidance advises they can consider up to a year's funding for most things however, it won't fund:-

- Topping up existing grants and aids from another Government Department
- Where money only benefits one person
- Repeat or regular projects that require a source of uncommitted funding
- Investments
- Paying for ongoing costs of existing partnership activity
- Organisational fundraising activities
- Endowments (to provide a source of income)
- Projects, activities or services that the state has a legal obligation to provide
- Retrospective funding for projects that have already taken place
- Excessive contingency costs; management or professional fees

The deadline for the first round of small grants was mid-September. The Council is aware that one bid from Halton has been submitted. The decision on the bid will be known on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The second round deadline is 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015. No further dates for future rounds are published as yet.

5.5.2 The large grants process requires an expression of interest to be submitted. The process is two stages. In stage one applicants need to demonstrate:-

- how well the project addresses one of the three priorities
- how it will meet the specific requirements of that priority
- engagement, partnership working and collaboration
- how well targeted the project is

At stage two - the full application - the main assessment criteria are:

- how well the project is likely to be delivered
- to what extent the project represents value for money
- to what extent we can have confidence that the project will have lasting impact, delivering changes that last beyond the funding period

The first deadline was 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015. If invited to stage two applicants will receive notification by 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015. With second stage submission due by 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and decisions notified 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The Council isn't aware of any bids submitted from Halton. No further dates for future rounds are published as yet.

### **6.0 ARMED FORCES DIRECTORY**

The last annual report to PPB detailed progress on the Armed Forces Directory being hosted and developed by the Veterans Council funded by a LIBOR grant. This piece of work involved updating and managing the directory to provide a comprehensive list of organisations and the support they can offer to enable effective self-referrals and signposting. The Veteran's Council was also developing a set of professional standards for non-regulated organisations. This piece of work was intended to have both a regional and national benefit.

The Veteran's Council has ceased to operate, this occurred at very short notice in July 2015. Enquiries have been raised from Cheshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership regarding the circumstances and the future of the Armed Forces Directory.

The development of the directory has been very welcome across the sector, in particular, the work on professional standards. The directory was intended to provide a reliable and robust information service ensuring individuals self-referring and colleagues sign-posting could be assured organisations were credible. It will be detrimental to the armed forces and veteran support sector in this region if the development of the directory and professional standards is discontinued. On a national level, COBSEO (Confederation of Service Charities) has a directory of service charities and is working with the National Council for Voluntary Services (NCVO) to develop accreditation for service charities; how this piece of work evolves may address gaps in the future.

### **7.0 VETERAN'S SUPPORT**

- 7.1 Lord Ashcroft published a report in February 2014 "The Veterans Transition Review" which has recently been reviewed. Lord Ashcroft is the government's special representative on veteran's transition. The original report examined the transition journey of veterans considering the areas of training, employment, health, housing, welfare and finance. The report made recommendations on how to better support transition with key recommendations:-

- Ministry Of Defence and the armed forces should be more proactive in changing perceptions of service leavers
- A new work placement scheme should be created in partnership with industry
- Early service leavers should get the same transition support as longer serving personnel
- A new veterans' card should be given to all service leavers with the number and web address of a single 24/7 contact centre for forces charities
- All personnel should complete an online personal development plan
- A Directory of Armed Forces Charities should be created, including organisations which meet quality criteria

The review statement advises of collaborative work and hi-lights areas that still require significant focus:-

- Information - an abundance of information is available to Service leavers, too much of it is hard to find, poorly presented, confusing and even misleading and it is hard for those who need help to find it quickly. The statement encourages further collaborative work to streamline information for ease of access across the sector.
- Equal access and timely support during transition out of the armed forces in particular through the Career Transition Partnership support with individual service leavers. The statement acknowledges there is progress to date.
- Veterans Research – a project is has commenced, jointly funded by Lord Ashcroft and the Forces in Mind Trust hosted by Anglia Ruskin University. Lord Ashcroft states, “an important part of the solution to the information problem is for policy makers, the media and others to have a single, reliable source of the best available research concerning veterans and Service leavers. In particular, research on Early Service Leavers would be useful. It’s acknowledged this group is the most vulnerable of all Service leavers more likely to experience financial problems, be unemployed, homeless, or involved in substance abuse”.
- Joint working within the third sector
- Tackling public misconceptions of service life

The full initial report and review document can be viewed via the following links:-

<http://www.veteranstransition.co.uk/vtrreport.pdf>

<http://www.lordashcroft.com/2015/07/veterans-transition-review-follow-up-report-july-2015/>

7.2 Armed Forces and Veterans Charities are a significant section of the charity sector with 134 charities, regimental associations and benevolence organisations registered as members of the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobseo) (source Royal British Legion UK household survey of the ex-service community report 2014). In addition, many support

organisations exist which operate without registration to sector bodies.

The Council actively engages with service charities and local veteran support groups recognising their valued role in supporting veterans and their families. In December 2014, Halton BC hosted a Veteran's Networking Event, it was a showcasing event with organisations represented having an opportunity to present informing on their role and delivery in Halton. Organisations in attendance were:-

- British Legion
- SSAFA (Seaman, Soldiers, Airman & Families Association)
- Remploy
- Runcorn Veterans Association
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Job Centre Plus
- Halton Clinical Commissioning Group
- Halton Housing Solutions Team
- Halton Housing Trust
- Halton Borough Council Welfare Rights
- Veteran's Council

The session provided a valuable networking opportunity, contact information for signposting around the five theme's of the covenant were gathered and shared with delegates.

Following the event, British Legion and Veteran's Council commenced drop in surgeries in Community Centres. The Veteran's Council service has been withdrawn due to circumstances described in **6.0** however, the British Legion continue to offer monthly surgeries.

7.3 The Armed Forces Champion has regular liaison with local veteran support groups and appropriate services. A key role is supporting referral mechanisms and establishing pathways to ensure veterans in need of support are accessing the appropriate services in a timely manner.

7.4 The Council's Community Development and External Funding Teams continue to provide support to local veterans groups to work towards applying for charitable funds. Capacity building and governance are key aspects of this work.

## 8.0 WIDER HALTON ACTIVITY

8.1 Since the last annual report, WW1 commemorations have commenced The 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014 marked the start of those commemorations and naturally much of the focus was around this period. Town centre events took place in both Runcorn and Widnes, the Lights Out initiative was promoted and Civic Buildings participated. The Todger Jones statue was unveiled on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2014 and was a high profile civic event. The Chair of the Appeal Committee was selected for a High Sheriff award and also attended a reception at Downing Street having been nominated by Weaver Vale MP.

The Libraries service delivered a programme of activities including an on-going project gathering of local history and experiences of WW1, tea dance at Kingsway Learning Centre, exhibitions hosted at Library buildings and the Brindley Theatre and a joint project with Imperial War Museum North providing two digital kiosks on Halton's two WW1 Victoria Cross residents. Runcorn East hosted a musical performance which local primary schools attended titled "Over by Christmas" to reflect the spirit of the British nation as soldiers departed by rail to the frontline. Widnes Market hosted Widnes on Sea focussing on the weeks before the war was declared. Halton received a beacon to mark VE Day. The beacon was lit in the evening of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015 by Halton's Mayor and local veteran support organisations and residents attended the event.

### **9.0 MOVING FORWARD**

#### **9.1 Corporate Covenants**

The corporate covenant has been designed to complement the armed forces covenant and sit alongside the community covenant. The corporate covenant is designed to allow businesses and charitable organisations to express their support, and commit to ways in which they can provide that support. The Chamber of Commerce, Business in the Community and Halton BC will be hosting a business event with military colleagues in December to raise awareness with the business sector of Corporate Covenants and supporting the role of Reservists.

#### **9.2 Reservists**

Reservists are part of the armed forces community under the umbrella of the covenant arrangements. Employees who are reservists can be mobilised and return to regular places of work hence additional support may be required for individuals to support adjustment. As an employer, Halton BC doesn't currently capture details on reservists in the workforce. Every three years a workforce profile is completed, unfortunately the next one isn't due until 2018 however, details on being ex-forces and reservists will be included.

#### **9.3 Mystery Shopping**

Colleagues from across Council departments will be conducting an exercise to assess advice and guidance at the point of use for armed forces matters in the coming months. The outcomes and any actions identified will be detailed in a future report.

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

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

Ensuring the school admissions process allocates the appropriate priority for serving families and additional support for special needs children in armed forces families is provided in a reasonable timescale.

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

Approximately 5000 early service leavers depart the forces each year with 61%

being employed at six months following discharge. Over a third of service leavers are unemployed and require additional support when entering the job market.

**10.3 A Healthy Halton**

Priority for the health & wellbeing of armed forces and veterans is present in health services in Halton. Traditionally, access to mental health support has been low across the forces however an improved access to psychological therapy (IAPT) service has been commissioned (as described in item 5.3.4).

**A Safer Halton**

**10.4** Some service leavers and veterans find it difficult to adjust to civilian life and become involved in the criminal justice system. Additional support from custody staff and the probation service are pledges identified in the Community Covenant.

**Halton's Urban Renewal**

**10.5** None to report at this stage.

**11.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

**11.1** The covenant is a voluntary statement of pledges to support armed forces personnel, veterans & their families at this stage however, there are indications this will become a statutory requirement in the near future. As the makeup of the armed forces changes from heavy reliance on full-time serving officers to reservists there will be greater impact on regular communities and proactively considering their needs and priorities will enable us to plan effectively.

**12.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

It is incumbent on the authority to ensure Armed Forces Families and Veterans are not disadvantaged and appropriate priorities are awarded in accessing services.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

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

**DATE:** 25 November 2015

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

**PORTFOLIO:** Environmental Services

**SUBJECT:** Garden Waste Collections

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

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with information in respect of the Council's garden waste collection service.

**2. RECOMMENDATION: That Members consider and comment upon the report.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 At their meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015, Members of the Board received a presentation on the Council's garden waste collection service. Members were provided with an overview of the introduction of a charge for providing the service which had been agreed by Full Council as part of the 2015/16 budget setting process, following savings proposals presented by Officers.

3.2 Members were advised that local authorities are legally entitled to make a charge for the separate collection of garden waste and that the significant and continued cuts to the Council's funding had led officers to recommend the introduction of a charge in Halton. The income from charging for the service was intended to make the service self-financing; meaning it would not require a subsidy from Council budgets.

3.3 Members requested that an update be presented to the Board once the chargeable service had been implemented and this report provides information in respect of the issues previously raised by Members together with details of the financial implications and other impacts of the scheme.

## 4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Service Take-up

- 4.1 The chargeable service came into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. Prior to this date, all households that are offered a garden waste collection by the Council were provided with an information leaflet advising of the new charge and explaining the reasons for its introduction.

Overall, there was a very positive response to the introduction of the charge and at the time of writing this report 15,215 households had subscribed to the service; which represents a take-up rate of over 36% of eligible households.

### Financial Implications

- 4.2 The cost of the service for the 2015/16 subscription period is £30 per bin per year, or £25 per bin if paid online via the Council's website. As a number of householders requested to pay for additional bins to be emptied the number of paid subscriptions totalled 15,721 which resulted in income of **£405k**.

The income received from subscriptions is sufficient to cover the operational, management and administrative costs associated with providing the service; meaning that the objective of making the service self-financing has been achieved.

### Garden Waste/Residual waste Analysis

- 4.3 An analysis has been carried out between garden waste tonnages for the four month period following the introduction of the charge in June 2015 compared to the corresponding period in 2014. This was to assess the impact of the charge on the tonnages of kerbside collected garden waste and that deposited at the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

#### 4.3.1 Kerbside Collected Garden Waste

June to September 2014:	3,232
June to September 2015:	1,831
<b>Difference</b>	<b>- 1,401 Tonnes</b>

#### 4.3.2 Garden Waste Deposited at HWRCs

June to September 2014:	737
June to September 2015:	1,099
<b>Difference</b>	<b>+ 362 Tonnes</b>

- 4.4 The above information shows a reduction in the amount of garden waste collected at the kerbside and an increase in that deposited at the HWRCs. This was anticipated as some residents were expected to make their own arrangements to deal with their garden waste.

- 4.5 The increase in garden waste at the Household Waste Recycling Centres is significantly less than the reduction in the amount collected through the green bin service. Reasons for this could include less garden waste being generated in 2015, some residents choosing to home compost their garden waste or private gardeners taking away waste from householders who have paid to have their garden maintained.
- 4.6 Members had concerns that some residents may deposit garden waste into their black bins to avoid paying for their green bin to be emptied; resulting in increased disposal costs. Mechanisms were put in place to mitigate the risks of this occurring. Collection crews were asked to be vigilant and if garden waste was found in black bins, they were left unemptied. Residents were then advised that the bin would not be emptied until the garden waste had been removed and properly disposed of. An analysis of black bin waste shows that there was a reduction in the number of tonnes collected between June and September 2015 compared to 2014, indicating that garden waste being placed in black bins does not appear to have been a significant issue.

#### Payment Rates

- 4.7 As stated above, a £5 discount was applied for payments made on line. To help minimise administrative costs it is a common practice for retailers and service providers to encourage online payments by offering customers a lower fee/charge compared to those who pay by making direct contact with the organisation. In recognising that not all residents may have access to a computer, and that some may have limited skills, the Council offers free equipment and internet access from a number of Council libraries and other community facilities across the borough to provide opportunities for residents to pay online. Despite the Council offering and promoting these opportunities, very few residents actually used these facilities to make payment.
- 4.8 The information below shows the breakdown of how subscription payments were made. As can be seen, the vast majority of payments were made online but almost 2,300 subscriptions were made via the Contact Centre or One Stops Shops at the full rate of £30.
- Via Web: 13,415
  - Via One Stop Shops: 1,665
  - Via Contact Centre: 631
- 4.9 Overall, there was not an adverse public reaction to the introduction of the garden waste charge and the number of complaints and negative comments received was relatively low. Of those received, one of the major issues related to the Council offering a discounted rate for online payments, with residents claiming that this approach was discriminatory and that those who were unable to make online payments, or who preferred not to, were being penalised. This is a matter that Members may wish to give consideration to.

4.10 As the service is managed on a self-financing basis, with all costs associated with operating the scheme needing to be recovered, the Council is unable to offer concessions to specific groups of people. The service charge therefore applies to all households who request the service to be provided regardless of the personal circumstances of the occupiers. Similarly, there is no discount applied to subscribing for the collection of more than one green bin. Members are advised that neither the lack of a concession nor the offer of a discount for additional subscriptions were the subject of any noteworthy level of complaint or challenge from members of the public.

Fly-Tipping

4.11 Members had queried whether the introduction of the charge would lead to significant increases in the fly-tipping of garden waste. Prior research showed that other councils that had introduced similar schemes had not seen such an increase. Officers have been closely monitoring this matter and the tables below show the number of incidents of fly-tipping for garden waste and for other general waste items reported to the Council since the introduction of the charge.

**Table 1 - Incidents of Garden Waste Fly-Tipping**

<b>Month</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
June	6	7
July	8	9
August	11	9
September	15	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27</b>

**Table 2 - Incidents of 'General Waste' Fly-Tipping**

<b>Month</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
June	60	36
July	53	70
August	54	47
September	67	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>199</b>

4.12 The information in Table 1 shows that there has been an increase in the number of reported incidents of fly-tipping of garden waste compared to last year. Whilst this is disappointing, the overall number of reported incidents of fly-tipping remains relatively low. The information in Table 2 shows that the number of incidents of fly-tipping of other waste has also increased during the same period when compared to the previous year.

- 4.13 The increase in 'general waste' fly-tipping, together with the fact that there was actually a reduction in garden waste fly-tipping incidents for the first two months of the subscription period, could suggest that the overall increase in the number of incidents of garden waste fly-tipping was not attributable to the introduction of the charge for collections. Furthermore, it should be noted that as these figures are the number of reported incidents, it may be that there has not been an actual increase in fly-tipping, merely that residents are becoming more vigilant and notifying the Council.

### Scheme Administration

- 4.14 As a new scheme, systems for the implementation and management of the chargeable collection service were required to be developed which included the development of new ICT systems, web applications, online payment mechanisms, Customer Service Delivery systems and administrative processes. A robust system of identifying subscribed properties was also needed to ensure that collections were delivered to those households that had paid for the service and also to reduce the potential for abuse by non-subscribed householders.
- 4.15 Council officers developed and introduced new and innovative systems and processes for the management of the chargeable garden waste service. Indeed, the Council is actively promoting its newly developed ICT systems to other local authorities who may be looking to introduce garden waste charges; representing a potential income generation opportunity for the authority. Officers consider that other local authorities would benefit from adopting the customer service and administrative processes that the Council has introduced and these are also being shared and promoted as best practice.

### Summary

- 4.16 The decision to introduce a charge for garden waste collections was not taken lightly but the Council's financial position was such that it was no longer possible to maintain the service free of charge. As well as providing an opportunity to deliver a self-financing operation; thereby contributing towards the Council's budget savings target, introducing a charge represented a fairer approach as only those who requested the service would pay; in the same way that charges are only made for bulky items collections to those households that request one.
- 4.17 The information set out in this report seeks to demonstrate that the Council has successfully developed and introduced a new chargeable scheme which has made a positive financial contribution to the Council's budgetary position, whilst maintaining a valued front line service which is reflected in the public response and take-up rate.
- 4.18 Members of the Waste Topic Group; Councillors Sinnott, Zygadllo, Stockton and Chris Loftus, are thanked for their contributions to this report.

**5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no new policy implications associated with this report.

**6. OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The financial implications are set out within the body of report.

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

**7.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

No direct impact

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

No direct impact

**7.3 A Healthy Halton**

No direct impact

**7.4 A Safer Halton**

No direct impact

**7.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal**

No direct impact

**8. RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

**9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 There are no equality or diversity issues as a result of this report.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Council Report 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2015 – Budget 2015/16	Municipal Building	Strategic Director - Community and Resources
Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board Report 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2015 – Garden Waste Collections	Municipal Building	Strategic Director - Community and Resources

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

**DATE:** 25 November 2015

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

**PORTFOLIO:** Physical Environment

**SUBJECT:** Local Development Scheme - Update

**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the proposed updates to the Local Development Scheme (LDS) (**Appendix 1**). The LDS is the timetable for production of Halton's Local Plan. It identifies and describes the Planning Policy documents that will be prepared and gives target dates for their production. The Local Plan will set out how the Borough will develop over the next 15-20 years and form the basis for all decisions under the Town and Country Planning Acts. All Councils are required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) to produce an LDS and keep it updated.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the provisional Local Development Scheme appended to this report (Appendix 1), and the Local Plan document highlighted in the LDS, be noted.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The Local Plan for Halton currently includes the Core Strategy and the Joint Waste Plan. These documents have replaced a number of policies from the Unitary Development Plan (known as the UDP); however, there is still a number of saved policies within the UDP in use. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will supersede these remaining 'saved' UDP policies and selected policies from the Core Strategy, it will then sit alongside the remaining policies from the Core Strategy and Joint Waste Plan to provide the Development Plan for the Borough.

3.2 The Council also has the option to produce Supplementary Planning Documents (known as SPDs) (e.g. Sandymoor, Planning for Risk,

Affordable Housing, Hot Food Takeaway) to support policies with the Local Plan or to provide additional guidance.

3.3 There is also a number of supporting and process documents that the Council is required to produce including:

- A **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** is prepared alongside a planning document, including the Local Plan, to ensure that the document as a whole reflects a balance of sustainable development objectives (social, environmental and economic factors). The SA incorporates the requirements of the European Union (EU) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42.
- A **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** is a requirement of the European Habitat Directive and seeks to assess the potential impact of a proposed plan in conjunction with the other plans and policies on one or more European Habitat sites. This is also referred to as the Appropriate Assessment (AA).
- An **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)** will be prepared alongside the Local Plan to identify essential supporting infrastructure and services, how they will be delivered and by whom.
- A **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**, which specifies how stakeholders and communities are involved
- A **Local Development Scheme (LDS)** that sets out details of each of the documents that will be produced, along with timescales and arrangements for their production.
- An **Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR)** setting out progress in terms of producing documents and in implementing policies.

3.4 The Council may also produce a **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** that will set out a statutory charging schedule for new development contributing to the provision of new infrastructure needs resulting from that development.

3.5 The LDS is a public statement of Halton Borough Council's three year work programme for producing of the Local Plan. The process of making Local Plans is a lengthy one, made so by the detailed protocols set out in legal acts and regulations. If due process is not followed this becomes a viable legal ground for challenges either in front of an Inspector at Examination or via court action leading to the plan being found unsound or quashed by the High Court.

3.6 The attached LDS allows for a degree of over-programming to ensure that resource capacity is continually engaged, for example during public consultation periods where work on a document is stalled by necessity.

During these periods work on other documents can take place, this may include collecting evidence to support the Local Plan, monitoring the Local Plan, producing supporting document or process documents, or preparing SPDs. The effect of this over-programming is that it can be difficult to manage SPDs to strict deadlines as work on them is fitted around higher priority deliverables.

#### 4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The documents that comprise the Local Plan have primacy in all planning decisions. This is by virtue of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 – Section 38(6):

*“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of **any determination** to be made under the planning Acts the determination **must be made in accordance with the plan** unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

4.2 The above legal statement is reiterated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Local Plan therefore has significant policy implications across a range of social, economic and environmental issues. All planning application decisions in the Borough will be made in accordance with the policies in the Local Plan.

4.3 NPPF further states, that *“where plans are absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date”* authorities should grant planning permission unless *“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits”*. It is important therefore that Halton maintains an up-to-date Local Plan and that efforts are concentrated towards the most crucial elements of this.

4.4 Given resource constraints it is imperative that the LDS is focussed on the delivery of the key documents that will have the most significant impact for the Borough.

4.5 An LDS is an essential tool in policy production as it allows future participation to be scheduled in advance by stakeholders, industry and the public. The LDS gives prior notice on when Local Plan documents will be consulted upon and produced and each of the key stages of production. Representations, ideas, and sites for development can then be put forward at the appropriate time. Regular updates on the milestones in the LDS are published on the Council’s Website

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The LDS is a 'process document' and as such has no direct financial implications beyond setting the timetable for the production of different planning documents that may incur expenditure on supporting evidence base, statutory assessments or examination costs.

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

**6.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

No direct impacts identified. The LDS is a 'process document' that sets out the programme for the updating of the Local Plan, which is intended to assist in the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy

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

Same as for 6.1

**6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Same as for 6.1

**6.4 A Safer Halton**

Same as for 6.1

**6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Same as for 6.1

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 An LDS is a statutory document. Not having one puts the Authority at the risk of legal challenge. Stakeholders are entitled to rely upon forward notice of the Local Plans that will be produced and may directly impact on their assets or business.

7.2 The LDS is an explicit commitment to the delivery of the Local Plan over a definite period. Not having a specific and relatively fixed work programme for Local Plan delivery means that resources are not prioritised and used as effectively as they could be.

7.3 The risk of not having an up-to-date Local Plan needs to be fully understood. Without a current Local Plan, the development industry has no certainty over where different types of land use will be permitted; appeals against refusal of planning permission are more likely to be upheld in the developer's favour with the possibility of costs awarded against the Council.

An up-to-date Local Plan is needed to retain local control over decision making.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Building stronger communities through community engagement and good planning is a key aspect of the Local Plan. The Council is already committed to equality regardless of age, sex, caring responsibility, race, religion, marital status, maternity issues, gender reassignment, socio economic need, sexuality or disability and these commitments are reflected in the Local Plan as far as is relevant. Planning Policy documents are subjected to Equality Impact Assessments during their production to ensure compliance.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Local Development Scheme	Municipal Building, Widnes	Tim Gibbs

**APPENDIX 1 – Provisional Halton Local Development Scheme - 2015****Development Plan Documents**

\*The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

	Preparation of a Local Plan (Reg 18*)	Publication (Reg 19*)	Submission (Reg 22*)	Examination (Reg 24*)	Adoption (Reg 26*)
Delivery and Allocations Local Plan	December 2015	September / October 2016	May / June 2017	November 2017	June 2018
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule	December 2015	September / October 2016	May / June 2017	November 2017	June 2018

**Supplementary Planning Documents**

	<b>Adoption</b>
Transport and Accessibility	By 2016
Environmental Protection	By 2016
Sustainable Urban Drainage	By 2016

**Supporting Evidence Requirements**

Widnes and Hale Green Belt Study	2016
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHMA) (Annual Update)	Annual
Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	2016
Playing Pitch Strategy	2016
Liverpool City Region Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA)	2017
Halton Retail Study	2016

## **Halton Local Development Scheme**

- 1.1. This document is the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Halton, and sets out the documents that Halton Borough Council will produce, along with a timetable for the preparation and review of these documents. It provides the starting point for local communities, businesses, developers, service and infrastructure providers and other interested stakeholders to find out what local planning policy documents relate to their area and the timetable for their preparation. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a LDS.

### **Policy Context**

- 1.2. The primary legislation that guides the planning system, including the production of Local Plans is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 with amendments from the 2008 Planning Act and 2011 Localism Act. Further detail on procedures for producing Local Plans is contained within the associated regulations, the latest being the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 which came into force in April 2012.
- 1.3. The Localism Act (2011) included a number of changes to the “plan-making” system including the ability for local communities to prepare neighbourhood development plans that would form part of the overall development plan for the area. Another important aspect of the legislative changes is the duty to co-operate which requires the Council to co-operate with other local planning authorities and prescribed bodies to maximise the effectiveness of the preparation of the Local Plan and supporting activities so far as it relates to a strategic matter.
- 1.4. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 by the Department for Communities and Local Government. It sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and the Government’s requirements for the planning system.
- 1.5. National Planning Practice Guidance was launched by CLG in March 2014, it is a completely online resource and is live, which means that guidance can be quickly amended in order to keep it up to date. It provides guidance from CLG to planning professionals to guide them in developing sites, making policies and taking decisions on planning applications.

### **Development Plan**

- 1.6. The statutory Development Plan is the set of Local Plans (also known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs)) that together form the statutory basis for determining whether or not planning permission should be granted.

- 1.7. Local Plans are planning documents that contain policies for the use and protection or development of land, usually including the allocation of land for development. These must be in general conformity with government guidance, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.8. Neighbourhood development plans are community based documents initiated through a parish council or neighbourhood forum. They are required to undergo formal consultation and preparation procedures including an examination by an independent person and a public referendum. Subject to the successful completion of these procedures the neighbourhood development plan will ultimately be adopted by the council as part of the statutory development plan.
- 1.9. The Development Plan for Halton currently comprises: the Halton Local Plan Core Strategy (2013), the Joint Waste Local Plan (2013) and parts of the Halton UDP (2005) that have not been replaced by the Core Strategy or Waste Plan and have not been deleted.
- 1.10. It is intended that in future the Development Plan for Halton will comprise the Halton Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan, along with any Neighbourhood Development Plans that are adopted.
- 1.11. Because Parish Councils or neighbourhood forums must agree to produce Neighbourhood Plans on their own behalf and in their own timescale, the local development scheme does not seek to set this out. To date no parishes or neighbourhood areas in the Borough have yet begun the formal process to begin the development of such a plan.

## 2. Development Scheme

- 2.1. Halton Borough Council is currently only preparing one Development Plan document and this is the Halton Local Plan.

### **Halton Local Plan**

- 2.2. Once adopted, the new Local Plan will provide a robust and up-to-date policy framework to guide future development within the Borough. Specifically, the new Local Plan will:
- a. Replace both the Halton Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted April 2013) and the remaining saved policies of the Halton UDP (adopted April 2005). A Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will no longer be prepared.
  - b. Refresh and update the Vision, Objectives and Strategic Policies of the Core Strategy.
  - c. Include allocations of land for residential, employment, retail, leisure and other land uses.
  - d. Identify areas to be designated and protected for landscape, nature conservation, environmental and heritage reasons.
  - e. Provide policies to guide decision making in the development management process.

### **Timetable**

Start:	January 2014
Initial Consultation (Reg 18):	January 2014
Publication:	September / October 2016
Submission:	May / June 2017
Pre-exam Meeting:	September 2017
Hearing:	November 2017
Receipt of Inspector's Report:	March 2018
Adoption:	June 2018

- 2.3. More detail is provided in Appendix A.
- 2.4. Other documents being prepared by the Council include:
- a. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
  - b. Transport and Accessibility SPD
  - c. Environmental Protection SPD

- 2.5. The following supporting documents may be produced by the Council to support the policy contained within the Local Plan and to provide more guidance to those undertaking development or to those making decisions on planning applications.
- 2.6. **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)** (and their predecessors, supplementary planning guidance) complement or expand upon local plan policies, for example describing in more detail how an allocated site should be developed. A SPD cannot allocate new sites for development nor contain new policies for the use or development of land, and they must not conflict with the adopted development plan.
- 2.7. SPDs are subject to community involvement but do not require independent Examination. They do not form a statutory part of the development plan for the authority but are a material consideration when assessing any planning application to which they relate.
- 2.8. **Local Development Orders (LDO)** are policy instruments that extend permitted development rights for certain forms of development that the local authority considers to be suitable, either in general or limited to defined areas. LDOs are intended to simplify development. Development that conforms to an LDO would not require planning permission.

### **Process Documents**

- 2.9. A **Sustainability Appraisal Report (SA)** is prepared alongside a planning document, including the Local Plan, to ensure that the document as a whole reflects a balance of sustainable development objectives (social, environmental and economic factors). The SA incorporates the requirements of the European Union (EU) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42.
- 2.10. **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** is a requirement of the European Habitat Directive and seeks to assess the potential impact of a proposed plan in conjunction with the other plans and policies on one or more European Habitat sites. This is also referred to as the Appropriate Assessment (AA).
- 2.11. An updated **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)** will be prepared alongside the Local Plan to identify essential supporting infrastructure and services, how they will be delivered and by whom.
- 2.12. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** will set out a statutory charging schedule for new development contributing to the provision of new infrastructure resulting from that development.
- 2.13. **Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)** will set out whether the Council is on target to meet the milestones set out in the LDS, it will provide information on whether the

policy targets included in the Local Plan are being achieved and will identify key issues that are relevant to the borough that should be used to revise the LDS if necessary.

- 2.14. **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – The Halton SCI was updated and approved in 2013. It sets out how the community will be involved in the preparation, alteration and review of planning policy documents produced by the Council and how they can be expected to be consulted on planning applications.

### 3. Evidence Base

- 3.1. The key pieces of Halton's existing evidence base which will be used to support the Local Plan are set out below (please note that other existing evidence base documents may also be used, where required, alongside these):
- a. **Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment** (GL Hearn and JGC, 2011): This has been undertaken with St Helens and Warrington Council's and provides an assessment of past, current and future trends in housing type and tenure, household size and housing need.
  - b. **Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update**: Work ongoing
  - c. **Joint Employment Land and Premises Study** (BE Group, 2010): The study assesses the quantity and quality of employment land in the Borough and recommends future allocations of employment land to maintain economic growth.
  - d. **Halton Retail and Leisure Study** (GVA Grimley, 2009): This is a capacity study looking to identify trading roles and performance of the Borough's main retail centres and to quantify the need, if any, for additional provision.
  - e. **Halton Landscape Character Assessment** (TEP, 2009): This identifies, describes and maps areas according to various landscape character types.
  - f. **Halton Open Space Study** (PMP and HBC, 2006). The study assesses existing and future needs for open space, sport and recreation in Halton and the current ability to meet these needs.
  - g. **Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** (HBC, 2007): Provides a detailed assessment of the extent and nature of the risk of flooding and the implications for future development.
  - h. **Halton Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** (JBA, 2011): Focuses on three primary watercourses and development areas in the Borough.
  - i. **Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study** (Arup, 2010): This study identifies Energy Priority Zones for the delivery of low and zero carbon technologies.
  - j. **Cheshire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment** (ORS, 2014): In association with the Cheshire Partnership this document assesses accommodation and related service needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
  - k. **Liverpool City Region and Warrington Green Infrastructure Framework Draft** (Mersey Forest, 2013): This Framework provides information and new perspectives on green infrastructure across the seven local authorities.
  - l. **Liverpool City Region and Warrington Green Infrastructure Framework Action Plan** (Mersey Forest, 2013): This Plan identifies actions at a city region level that meet key priorities of the Green Infrastructure Framework.
  - m. **Listed Buildings in Halton**: This document details each of the buildings Listed in Halton (at the time of writing the document), including a map and an image of the property or structure.
  - n. **Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy** (HBC and GVA, 2008)

- o. **Widnes and Hale Green Belt Study:** This study reviews and assesses the Widnes and Hale Green Belt (work ongoing).
- p. **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** (annual update): This is the main mechanism to identify a deliverable and developable supply of sites in the Borough for housing.
- q. **Halton Housing Land Availability Report** (annual update): This report provides data on land availability and take-up (build) rates for housing within Halton
- r. **Halton Employment Land Availability Report** (annual update): This report provides data on land availability and take-up (build) rates for employment uses within Halton
- s. **Borough Development Viability Study:** This study will assess the economic viability of development
- t. **Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth:** This document combines the key elements from the Local Transport Plans for Merseyside and Halton (2015).
- u. **Playing Pitch Strategy:** This strategy is currently being prepared and will assess existing and future needs for playing pitch provision in Halton.
- v. **Halton Local List:** This document will be prepared and will identify the non-designated heritage assets in Halton.
- w. **Liverpool City Region Ecological Network** (MEAS, 2015)

## 4. Delivery

- 4.1. There will always be an element of uncertainty associated with a document of this nature. It is legitimate to ask how reasonable and achievable are the targets set out above, and what issues may affect the overall delivery of the LDS.
- 4.2. An assumption has been made over the amount of time that will need to be allocated to public and stakeholder involvement. Whilst this has been based on past experience, it cannot accurately predict how many people will wish to engage with the Council on a particular project.
- 4.3. The programme has to be flexible in terms of staff, both the turnover and the allocation of work – neither can be fully accounted for over a three year period.

### **Project Management and Resources**

- 4.4. Preparation of the planning documents will be led by the Council's planning policy team. The work will be complemented by other council officers with specialist expertise in particular areas e.g. housing, urban design, heritage and conservation, leisure, transport, environment, health and legal. In addition, external resources may be called upon, including Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) and consultants for certain projects.
- 4.5. The Operational Director for Policy, Planning and Transportation has a strategic overview of the production of planning policy documents; the Principal Officer for Planning and Transport Strategy is responsible for the management of the programme and document production.
- 4.6. Elected member involvement in plan preparation is primarily via the Local Plan Working Party. This group provides advice and feedback to officers on a range of planning policy matters. The decision to submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State and subsequent stages up to and including adoption will be via full Council resolution, but agreement to publicly consult on draft documents can be given by the Executive Board?

### **Monitoring and Review**

- 4.7. To ensure that the plan process is achieving its objectives, the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) will set out the progress and effectiveness of the plan preparation processes. The AMR is published annually and will report key milestones in relation to the progress of the development plan documents and other relevant items.
- 4.8. Unforeseen developments such as the closure of a major employer may lead to the requirement for the Local Development Scheme to be reviewed earlier as this may

require new SPDs or DPDs to be produced urgently whilst other documents are delayed.

### **Risk Assessment**

4.9. The table below identifies possible risks that could be encountered in the implementation of this LDS. It sets out an evaluation of the significance of the potential risk and the mitigation measures to manage risk should it occur.

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
1	IT Systems	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient expertise</li> <li>• Resources – software, hardware and staff</li> <li>• Loss of data</li> <li>• Lack of access to data held by other teams</li> <li>• Changes to systems used</li> </ul> <p>Could all lead to slippage in the programme.</p>	Staff training, appropriate resourcing, and improvements to data access could reduce these risks.
2	Staffing Issues	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of experienced staff</li> <li>• Reduced numbers of staff</li> <li>• Sickness</li> </ul> <p>Could lead to slippage in the programme, reduced staff moral and motivation, over work of existing staff potentially leading to sickness within the team and thereby increasing the issue.</p>	Prompt recruitment of new staff, or temporary staff and careful management of the work programme could reduce these risks.
3	Political Delay	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee cycle dates</li> <li>• Last minute changes and amendments</li> <li>• Change in National or Regional Government</li> </ul> <p>Reporting procedures and long lead in times may lead to slippage in the programme.</p>	Ensuring involvement of members throughout the process and regular reviews of the programmed should help to reduce this risk.
4	Change in National / Local Government Policy	High	<p>All stages of Local Plan preparation are influenced by government policy.</p> <p>Changing policies/priorities and uncertainty for the Local Plan.</p>	Ensure that policy team is abreast of changes in policy.
5	The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Capacity	Unknown	<p>PINS have an important influence on the Local Plan timetable, particularly at Examination stage. Inability of PINS to meet deadlines due to nationwide demand will lead to delays in adoption.</p>	This is outside of the our control but will be addressed by National Government where necessary.

	Risk	Likelihood	Issue	Mitigation
6	Team undertaking other work	High	Resources are finite. If the project team is required to input in to other priority areas of the Authority, this is likely to cause slippage in the programme.	Local Plan to be a corporate priority ensuring team remain focused on delivery.
7	Volume of work greater than anticipated	Medium	This may include a higher number of representations than expected, new work areas, or additional evidence base requirements leading to slippage in the programme.	Ensure timetable is realistic and has a degree of built-in flexibility.
8	Duty to Co-operate	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Working</li> <li>• Negotiation</li> </ul> <p>When working to differing timelines, priorities for joint working may differ and lead to delays in evidence or discussion taking place.</p>	Ensure that timetables are realistic and reflect partner authorities' / organisations' ability to contribute to joint working.
9	Consultation Fatigue	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of responses</li> <li>• Lack of understanding with regard to the purpose/content of the plan.</li> </ul>	Ensure approach set out in the SCI is used, where possible adopt new ideas to improve consultation. Use plain English.
10	Local Plan is found unsound	Low	The Local Plan cannot be adopted without additional work leading to delay in adopting the plan.	Work closely with PINS to ensure risk is minimised. Utilise the PAS Soundness Toolkit. Keep up to date with best practice and ensure that staff receive appropriate training.
11	Need for further consultation	Medium	It can be hard to predict where and when extra consultation may be required, but may be as a result of the Hearing or due to the levels of comments received.	Ensure timetable is realistic, reviewed regularly and has a degree of built in flexibility.
12	Need for specialist Input	High	It is normally possible to foresee where there is a need for specialist involvement therefore reducing the risk associated with this issue. However, on occasions e.g. where new Government guidance is created, it may be necessary to use specialists without additional time being built into the programme, therefore causing delays.	Ensure that policy team is abreast of changes in policy and allow for some flexibility in the AMR.

## Acronyms

AMR	Authority Monitoring Report
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DPD	Development Plan Document
LDO	Local Development Order
LDS	Local Development Scheme
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPG	National Planning Policy Guidance
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
UDP	Unitary Development Plan

## Appendix A:

### Local Development Scheme Details

<b>Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (including Policies Map)</b>		
<b>Document Details</b>		
Title	Halton Local Plan (including Policies Map)	
Role and Content	Sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for the development of Halton, including site allocations and development management policies.	
Status	Development Plan Document	
Geographical coverage	Borough wide	
Chain of Conformity	Conforms with the National Planning Policy Framework	
<b>Timetable and Milestones</b>		
Start	Begin collation of evidence and start engaging stakeholders in the early preparation of the document	Commenced
SA Scoping	Consultation on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal	Jan 2016
Initial Consultation (Regulation 18)	Iterative process – identifying issues and options, developing preferred options and taking account of the evidence base	Jan 2016
Publication (Regulation 19/20)	Publish the final draft document and consult for 6 weeks on the content prior to submission	Sep/Oct 2016
Submission (Regulation 22)	Submit the document to the Secretary of State for examination	May/Jun 2017
Pre-exam meeting	To discuss the format of the Examination. (8 weeks after submission)	Sep 2017
Examination hearings	Independent Examination into the soundness of the document. (14weeks after submission)	Nov 2017
Receipt of the Inspectors Report	When the Council receives the report of the Examination from the Inspectorate	Apr 2018
Adoption	Document adopted and published	Jun 2018
<b>Arrangements for Production</b>		
Lead Department	Planning Policy	
Management arrangements	Local Plan Working Party will guide the development of the Plan. Executive Board approval will be required for public consultation on draft Plan(s). Full Council approval will be required for Submission to the Secretary of State and subsequent stages up to and including adoption.	
Resources	To be provided within the Planning Policy budget.	
Involving Stakeholders and Community	Consultation will be undertaken in line with the Regulations and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).	
<b>Post Production</b>		
Monitoring	Monitored by the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).	
Review	The effectiveness of this Local Plan will be reviewed through the data collected within the AMR.	

<b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</b>		
<b>Document Details</b>		
Title	Halton Community Infrastructure Levy	
Role and Content	Sets out the charging schedule to fund necessary infrastructure for different categories of development across areas of Halton.	
Status	Development Plan Document	
Geographical coverage	Borough wide	
Chain of Conformity	Conforms with the National Planning Policy Framework	
<b>Timetable and Milestones</b>		
Start	Begin collation of evidence and start engaging stakeholders in the early preparation of the document	Commenced
SA Scoping	Consultation on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal	Jan 2016
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<b>Arrangements for Production</b>		
Lead Department	Planning Policy	
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Resources	To be provided within the Planning Policy budget.	
Involving Stakeholders and Community	Consultation will be undertaken in line with the Regulations and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).	
<b>Post Production</b>		
Monitoring	Monitored by the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).	
Review	The effectiveness of this Local Plan will be reviewed through the data collected within the AMR.	

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	25 November 2015
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director (Community and Resources)
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Business Planning 2016 – 17
<b>Wards:</b>	Boroughwide

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

- 1.1 To provide an opportunity for the Board to contribute to the development of the Business Plan for the 2016 – 17 financial year.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board receive and consider the information provided and add any further comment / observation that it considers relevant to plan development.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Council develops its business plan in parallel with the determination of its annual budget and the review and refresh of Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers. This process has now commenced for 2016 – 17.
- 3.2 At this stage Members are invited to consider a small number of priorities for development that they would like to see reflected in the Business Plan. Strategic Directors will then develop a draft plan which will be presented to the Board for consideration early in the New Year.
- 3.3 Whilst providing an overall operating context the Business Plan will also provide details of specific objectives and performance measures which would provide a focus for the ongoing monitoring of progress throughout the year.
- 3.4 It is important the Members have the opportunity to contribute to the process of plan development in order that their knowledge of local and organisational issues forms an integral element of plan development.
- 3.5 As Plans can only be finalised once final budget decisions have been confirmed in March 2016 annual targets can only be properly determined once this information, along with year-end outturn figures for 2015 – 16 becomes known.

3.6 To assist the Board the Strategic Director (Community and Resources) will give a short presentation on the issues and challenges for those areas that fall within the remit of this Board over the period of the next plan. Additional information will be circulated in advance of the meeting of the Board on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

3.7 The timeframe for plan preparation is detailed below

Receiving Audience	Timeframe	Information / Purpose
PPB's	Autumn 2015	Discussion with relevant Strategic / Operational Directors concerning emerging issues, priorities etc.
Directorate SMT	Agreed with Strategic Directors	To receive and endorse advanced draft Business Plan content
Management Team	December 2013	To receive and consider proposed Business Plan
PPB's	Jan / March 2016	Receive advanced draft plans and details of relevant service objectives and indicators.
Executive Board	March 2016	To receive advance draft Business Plan for consideration / approval

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Business planning forms a key element of the Council's policy framework and as such its development will take account of known and anticipated changes within the operating environment.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Plans will continue to form the basis upon which progress will be monitored and reported to Policy and Performance Boards throughout the course of the coming financial year. Such reports will routinely contain information concerning key developments and emerging issues as well as the delivery of predetermined actions and targets.

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

The business planning process is one means by which the Council aligns its operational activity with its overall strategic aims and those priorities detailed below.

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 The development of the Business Plan will allow the authority to both align its activities to the delivery of organisational and partnership priorities and provide information to stakeholders concerning work that is planned for 2016 – 17.
- 7.2 As the planning process aligned to the annual review and refresh of organisational and Directorate risks this ensures that these are fully considered when determining future direction and actions.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

There are no equality and diversity issues directly related to this report. However such matters will continue to be monitored and reported annually to the Board through the existing performance monitoring framework.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

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

**DATE:** 25 November 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Community & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report.

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report road traffic collision and casualty numbers within the Borough in the year 2014 and to recommend a continuance of road traffic collision reduction work.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

**1) The overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton over the past decade be noted and welcomed;**

**2) The continuing programme of road traffic collision reduction schemes and road safety education, training and publicity be endorsed.**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Appendix 'A' sets out full details of the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in the year 2014, and compares these figures with those for previous years. These results are disappointing, with increases in the numbers of people being slightly injured (SLI) and of those killed/seriously injured (KSI) compared to the figures for recent years. Within the KSI total, both the number of adults and of children increased but the latter figure is known to be volatile in Halton and can fluctuate from year to year.

### 3.2 In summary during 2014:

- **There were 279 road traffic collisions involving personal injury within Halton, this total was higher than trend lines would have indicated. These incidents produced 376 casualties, a disappointing increase on the 347 recorded in 2013;**
- **45 of the casualties were classed as serious, and sadly there were 6 deaths compared to just 1 in 2013. The total of 51 killed or seriously injured (KSI) is more than 25% higher than in any of the previous four years;**
- **The child serious injury (CKSI) total of 4 represents an increase over 2013's total of 3, but the figure is well below the 2010/11/12 levels and there were no child fatalities in 2014. It must be remembered that the CKSI annual total is subject to relatively large year to year variations.**
- **The number of people of all ages being slightly injured (SLI) rose to 325 from 307 in 2013.**

- 3.3 It remains to be seen if the casualty and collision increases seen locally in 2014 are part of a new trend or just a temporary reverse. KSI numbers have not been falling over recent years and the rates of reduction of casualties and collisions have been gradually reducing. Also of concern, given that they are a more stable indicator of trends, is that national figures also increased in 2014 as set out in the Department for Transport 2014 Comprehensive Annual Report on Road Casualties available via:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2014>

Various mitigating factors are examined by the DfT, including the growth in road traffic in 2014.

Examination of the table and chart on page 3 of Appendix A reveals wide variations in performance between surrounding local authorities, with large annual swings in KSI numbers. In the case of 2013 to 2014 variations, and as was seen nationally, these movements were in the main towards higher numbers of KSI casualties, with Halton unfortunately recording the second largest upturn in the region.

This is felt extremely disappointing, for instead of having led the country in KSI reduction through the 2000's, Halton would now appear to be falling behind others in terms of its performance. However, it must be emphasised that this is based on one or two year's figures only and that casualty figures can be very volatile from one year to the next. Many accidents that do occur may not have necessarily have been avoidable regardless of the effort or engineering measures put into road safety. However, trends will be carefully monitored over coming years in order to try and determine whether there is any correlation between casualties and the reduction in resources being put into road safety.

- 3.4 Halton's 2014 casualty figures reinforce the view that achieving further reductions will prove to be extremely challenging. This also needs to be placed in the context of reduction in Government grants for road safety, the continuing reduction in Government grant anticipated following the next Spending Review and the absence of national road casualty reduction targets.

Since April 2011, Halton has suffered the loss of specific annual Government funded capital and revenue Road Safety grants of £75k and £396k respectively.

## 4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The work on casualty reductions is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in Halton's Local Transport Plan and the Liverpool City Region's Transport Plan for Growth.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct funding implications from this report. However, the funding for casualty reduction work is derived from a number of sources. These include:
- **The Local Transport Plan** - Provides capital funding for engineering based casualty reduction schemes; and
  - **Halton's Revenue Programme** – Provides funding for local road safety education, training and publicity initiatives, the School Crossing Patrol Service and traffic management measures.

Since April 2011, Halton has suffered the loss of specific annual Government funded capital and revenue Road Safety grants of £75k and £396k respectively. Given the continuing reduction in Government grant funding it is difficult to see how the Council will be able to maintain or increase its future investment in road safety measures.

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

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

By helping to create a safer environment, road safety casualty reduction work assists in the safeguarding of children and young people and in the achievement of accessible services.

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

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

#### 6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Any reduction in road casualties will have the direct benefit of releasing health resources and thereby enable funding to be focused on other areas of health care.

#### 6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Road safety casualty reduction work of all types supports this priority through the introduction of initiatives and interventions designed to deliver a safer environment.

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

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal' priority.

### 7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 It is possible that continued reductions in road safety education, training and publicity resources could have an adverse effect on the Borough's road accident casualties and collision numbers but this link can only be established over a period of several years. No full risk assessment is required.

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

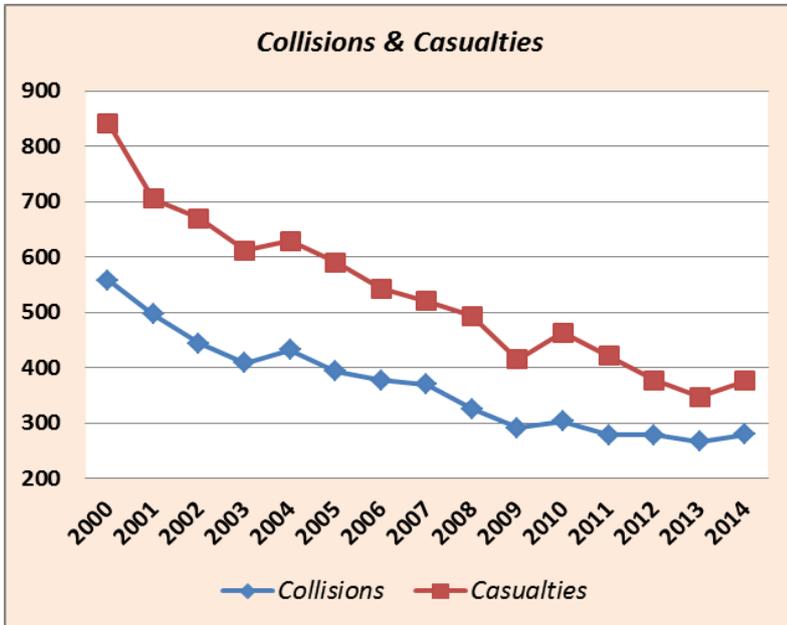
8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

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

9.1 There are no background papers under section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

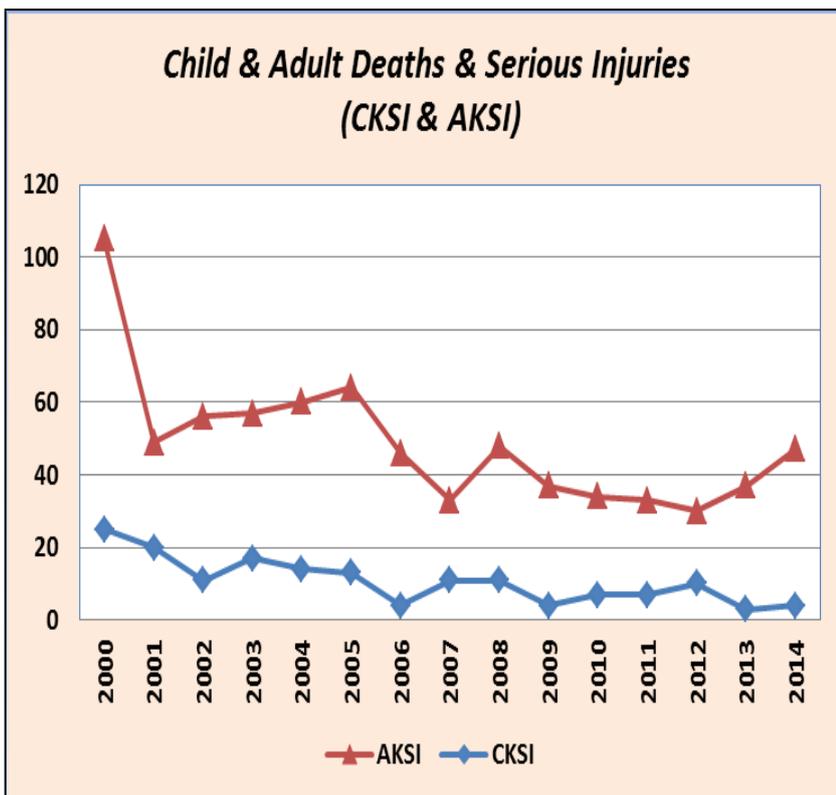
**Halton 2014 Traffic Collisions Review**

2014 saw an increase in the number of road traffic casualties and collisions in Halton relative to the previous year, mirroring increases recorded nationally. The general levels were higher than the local trend for progressive, if fluctuating, general reductions stretching back over a decade.



Year	Collisions	Casualties
2000	558	842
2001	497	706
2002	444	670
2003	409	612
2004	432	629
2005	394	590
2006	377	543
2007	370	521
2008	326	494
2009	291	415
2010	303	464
2011	278	422
2012	278	377
2013	267	347
<b>2014</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>376</b>

The increases were across all classes of casualty CKSI, KSI and SLI. It remains to be seen in future years if these increases were part of a new trend or just a short-term problem.



Year	Child Deaths/Serious Injuries (CKSI)	Adult Deaths/Serious Injuries (AKSI)
2000	25	105
2001	20	49
2002	11	56
2003	17	57
2004	14	60
2005	13	64
2006	4	46
2007	11	33
2008	11	48
2009	4	37
2010	7	34
2011	7	33
2012	10	30
2013	3	37
<b>2014</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>47</b>

**Local Indicators**

**Killed & Seriously Injured, All Ages (KSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 6*)**

2014 saw a large increase in the number of all-age casualties killed or seriously injured (KSI), to a total of 51.

Over the previous five years from 2009 to 2013 totals of 41, 41, 40, 40 and 40 indicated Halton was struggling to achieve further KSI reductions after the preceding years of large decreases. It remains to be seen if the large 2014 number is a one off year or the start of an upward trend.

The five year rolling KSI average (PPTLI 6) rose from 40.4 to 42.4, the rise being entirely due to the 2014 increase in the annual KSI tally.

**Children (Under 16's) Killed & Seriously Injured (CKSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 7*)**

In 2014, 4 children were seriously injured on Halton's roads, with no fatalities, and although this represents an increase over 2013's total of 3, the figure is well below the 2010/11/12 levels.

Due to the numbers being so low, this annual total is traditionally very prone to variations year on year.

The five year rolling CKSI average (PPTLI 7) remained stable at 6.2.

**Slight, All-Age Casualties (SLI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 8*)**

In 2014 there was a 6% increase in the number of people slightly injured in road accidents in Halton, up to 325 from the previous year's low of just 307.

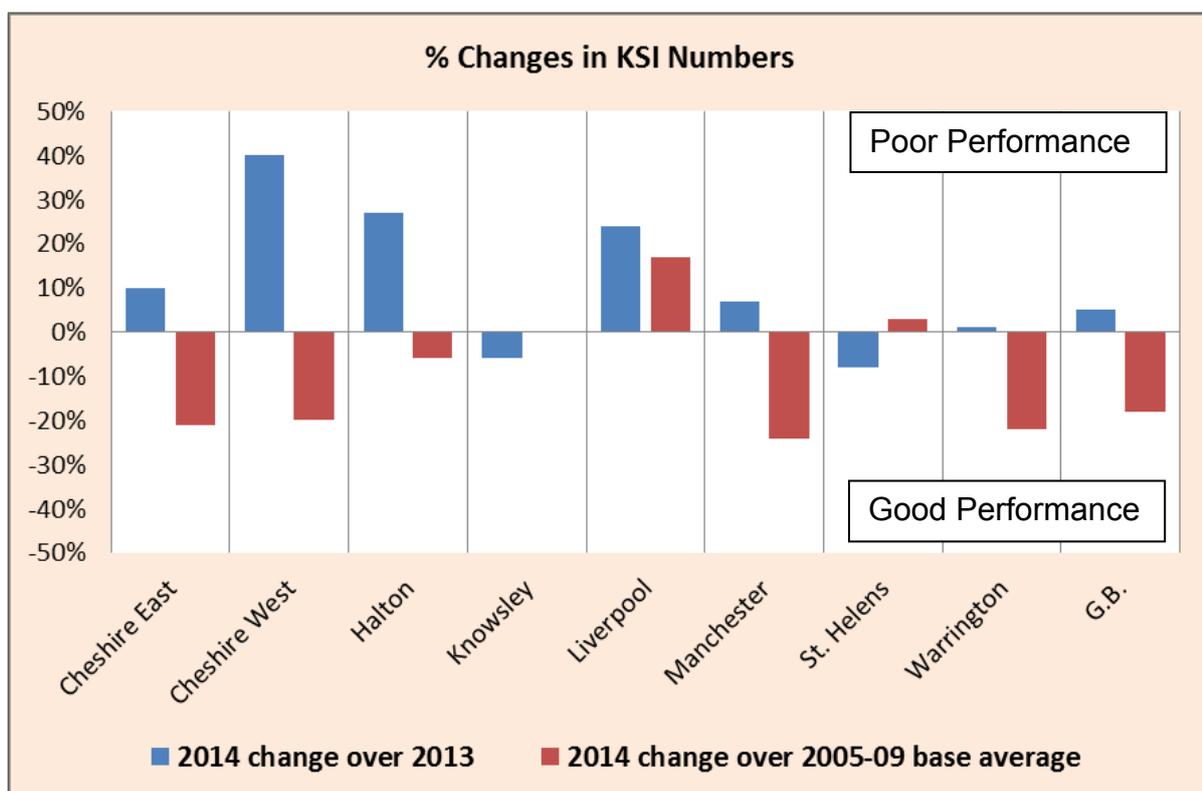
As nationally, the local trend for slight injury numbers has been downwards for over ten years and the 2014 total is the first reversal of the previously well-established trend.

**Strategic Framework for Road Safety**

The Strategic Framework for Road Safety published by the Coalition Government in May 2011 set out a proposed outcomes framework designed to help government, local organisations and citizens to monitor any progress towards improving road safety and decreasing the number of fatalities and seriously injured casualties.

The framework included six key indicators which relate to road deaths, that were intended to measure the key outcomes of the strategy but in Halton the number of road deaths is small and subject to fluctuation. For this reason KSI rates were proposed as key indicators locally and KSI numbers can be used to compare Halton’s performance relative to its neighbours:

KSI	2005-09 average	2013	2014	2014 change over 2013	2014 change over 2005-09 base average
Cheshire East	284	205	225	10%	-21%
Cheshire West & Chester	238	136	191	40%	-20%
Halton	54	40	51	27%	-6%
Knowsley	58	62	58	-6%	0%
Liverpool	218	204	254	24%	17%
Manchester	222	158	169	7%	-24%
St. Helens	65	73	67	-8%	3%
Warrington	104	80	81	1%	-22%
G.B.	30,041	23,370	24,582	5%	-18%



Examination of the above table and chart reveals wide variations in performance between surrounding local authorities, with large annual swings in KSI numbers. In the case of 2013 to 2014 variations, and as was seen nationally, these movements were in the main towards higher numbers of KSI casualties, with Halton unfortunately recording the second largest upturn in the region. This is felt to be extremely regrettable, for instead of having led the country in KSI reduction through the 2000's, Halton would now appear to be falling behind others in terms of its performance. However, it must be emphasised that this is based on one or two year's figures only and remembering that casualty figures can be very volatile from one year to the next. Many accidents occur that could not have necessarily been avoided regardless of the effort or engineering measures put into road safety. However, trends will now have to be carefully monitored over coming years in order to try and determine whether there is any correlation between casualties and the reduction in resources that can be put into road safety.

Given the removal of the Council's Road Safety Grant support and reductions in road safety staff and resources, and further anticipated cuts following the Highways Efficiency Review, it is difficult to see how Halton can take steps to achieve reductions in KSI casualties to reach the government's central projection figure of a 40% cut by 2020, relative to the 2005-09 average figures as a base.