

Public Document Pack



Corporate Policy and Performance Board

Tuesday, 8 June 2021 6.30 p.m.
Bridge Suite - DCBL Stadium, Widnes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David WR'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Gareth Stockton	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Angela Teeling	Labour
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour
Councillor Andrea Wall	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 511 8059 or gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 7 September 2021*

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	1 - 4
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion and voting on the item.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	5 - 7
4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	8 - 18
5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES	
(A) BREATHING SPACE	19 - 27
(B) ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21	28 - 33
(C) EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE	34 - 50
(D) CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT 1.4.20 TO 31.3.21	51 - 66
6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
(A) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2020/21	67 - 87

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.

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 26 January 2021 held remotely

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Howard, M. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, A. Lowe, A. McInerney, N. Plumpton Walsh and Joe Roberts

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: I. Leivesley, E. Dawson, G. Ferguson, M. Murphy, J. Unsworth and C. Patino

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CS21 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 3rd November 2020 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CS22 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CS23 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board was presented with the Minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.</p>	
CS24 LOCAL AREA FORUMS	
<p>The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which detailed the planned changes to the Borough's Ward Boundaries and the impact this would have on Local Area Forums.</p>	

It was noted that changes to the Borough's current Ward boundaries were due to come into effect on 7th May 2020, however, following the postponement of the 2020 local elections due to COVID-19, those boundary changes would come into effect on 6th May 2021. The boundary changes would have a number of implications for Local Area Forums, including the Area Forum 'footprints', the population levels within each Forum area and the budget allocations. The report provided Members with details of those implications.

It was anticipated that a number of Area Forums would have some level of budget remaining that would be carried forward to the 2021/22 financial year. It was proposed that any Area Forum budget underspend at 31st March 2021 would be split down to Ward level and allocated to the new Ward that was most closely aligned. In addition where any current Ward boundaries alter as a result of the planned changes, the amount of any budget underspend carried forward would be based upon the proportion of Electorate that made up the old Ward that was transferring to the new one.

RESOLVED: That

1. the proposals for dealing with the impacts that Ward boundary changes will have upon Local Area Forums as set out within the report be endorsed; and
2. a report be presented to the Executive Board recommending that:
 - a. Halton's current seven Local Area Forums be disbanded with effect from 5th May 2021;
 - b. six new Local Area Forums, as set out in Paragraph 4.1, be established in Halton with effect from 6th May 2021;
 - c. the 2021/22 Local Area Forum budget be allocated as set out within Table 1; and
 - d. any Local Area Forum budget remaining as at 31st March 2021 be carried forward and allocated as set out within Table 2.

Strategic Director,
Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

CS25 EU EXIT AND THE END OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD

The Board considered a report which provided

information on the arrangements the Council had put in place, together with its partners, to monitor and if necessary and possible, to mitigate any impacts arising from the end of the EU Exit Transition Period. At the time of the report it was noted that there were no issues of concern had arisen but it was early days.

It was noted that the Council was currently working in partnership with Cheshire Resilience Forum Partners and regional and national agencies, as part of a Command and Control Structure. The aim being to assess and mitigate the impacts of the UK's exit from the EU in Cheshire, whilst supporting the national response through the national strategic responsibilities.

Within the Council there was an internal officer group, which was meeting on a monthly basis. The aim of the group was to monitor potential impacts and escalate matters of concern to Management Team and Members.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the arrangements in place.

CS26 COUNCIL INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on the process of retendering for a number of the Council's major insurance policies that included property, motor and computer. The report outlined details of that process and a wider update on the Council's insurance and risk financing arrangements. It was anticipated that an increase in premiums was extremely likely, despite the Council's excellent claims history.

The Board received information on:

- Levels of self insurance from 2010/11 to 2020/21;
- Direct cost of insurance and risk financing – 2010/11 to 2019/20;
- Public liability claims 2010/11 to 2019/20;
- Employer's liability claims – 2010/11 to 2019/20; and
- Motor vehicle claims – 2010/11 to 2019/20.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS27 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2020/21

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director,

Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 2 of 2020/21.

The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets, and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period:

- Finance;
- Human Resources and Organisational Development;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Policy and Performance;
- Property Services; and
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services.

It was agreed that further information would be emailed to Members on the following matters:

1. the latest Universal Credit claimant numbers for Halton from the DWP;
2. the roll out of laptops to school children in the Borough, details on the process and how well it was working; and
3. the roll out of Microsoft Teams to all schools in the Borough.

Arising from the discussion it was agreed that an update on the recent staff survey would be brought to a future meeting of the Board

In addition, on behalf of the Board the Chair thanked Chris Patino and the team for all their work in providing lunches to those children on free school meals whilst the schools have been closed.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring reports be received and noted.

Meeting ended at 7.53 p.m.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 8th June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community 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 Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

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

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

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

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

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

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

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

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 8th June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board 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 Corporate Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 25th FEBRUARY 2021

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB72 BUDGET 2021-22 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which outlined a recommendation to Council in respect of the Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2021/22.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved at the Executive Board meeting on 19 November 2020. It was noted that there were funding gaps of around £15.2m in 2021/22, £3.9m in 2022/23 and £3m in 2023/24. The Strategy had the following objectives:

- Deliver a balanced and sustainable budget;
- Prioritise spending towards the Council's priority areas;
- Avoid excessive Council Tax rises;
- Achieve significant cashable efficiency gains;
- Protect essential front line services and vulnerable members of the community; and
- Deliver improved procurement.

In terms of consultation, it was noted that the Council used various methods to listen to the views of the public, and Members' own experiences through their Ward work was an important part of that process. Individual consultations had taken place in respect of specific budget proposals and equality impact assessments would be completed where necessary.

The proposed revenue budget for 2021/22 totalled £111.446m. Appendix B outlined proposed budget savings for 2021/22, totalling £1.369m. The departmental analysis was shown in Appendix C and the major reasons for change from the current budget were shown in Appendix D.

The Board was advised the final Local Government

Finance Settlement figures were awaited, along with confirmation of some 2020/21 grant allocations including the Public Health grant. It was confirmed that the Council would continue to participate in the pilot of the 100% Business Rates Retention Scheme, as part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

Further information was provided on the budget outlook, Halton's Council Tax, Precepts for Parishes, Police, Fire and Liverpool City Region Mayor, the Capital Programme, Prudential Code and School Budgets.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Council be recommended to adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A, which includes setting the budget at £111.446m, the Council Tax requirement of £54.509m (before Parish, Police, Fire and LCR Combined Authority precepts) and the Band D council Tax for Halton of £1,549.34; and
- 2) Council be recommended to approve the revenue budget proposals for 2021/22 set out in Appendix B and capital programme set out in Appendix F.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB73 REVENUE SPENDING AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as at 31 December 2020 together with an initial forecast outturn position, and reported the financial impact of Covid-19 and the Government funding made available to the Council to date.

A summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 December 2020 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend would be over the approved budget by £1.180m. It was noted that in comparison to the forecast overspend of £4.752m reported at the end of September 2020, this represented a significantly improved position. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 December 2020.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to only absolutely

Operational
Director - Finance

essential items;

- 2) departments seek to implement those approved budget savings proposals which currently remain to be actioned;
- 3) Strategic Directors take urgent action to identify areas where spending could be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year; and
- 4) Council be requested to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.18.

EXB74 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021-22

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, on the Council’s Capital Strategy for 2021/22.

It was reported that all councils were required to produce a Capital Strategy annually, the aim of which was to ensure that the Council understood the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

Members were advised that the Capital Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Treasury Management Statement, included on the same agenda. It was noted that the successful delivery of the Capital Strategy would assist the Council in planning and funding its capital expenditure over the next three years.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the 2021/22 Capital Strategy, as presented in the Appendix attached to the report.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB75 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2021-22

The Board considered the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, (TMSS) which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy for 2021/22.

The TMSS was appended to the report and detailed the expected activities of the treasury function in the forthcoming financial year (2021/22). Its production and submission to Council was a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management

Code.

The Local Government Act 2003 required the Council to have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years, to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Act therefore required the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy, which set out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. Government guidance notes stated that authorities could combine the TMSS and the AIS into one report, which the Council had done and was included in Section 4.

Members noted that the provision of a Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement was required and a formal statement for approval was contained within the report at paragraph 2.3, with the full policy shown in Appendix A.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to adopt the policies, strategies, statements, prudential and treasury indicators outlined in the report.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB76 PENSIONS DISCRETION STATEMENT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the annual publication of the Pensions Discretion Statement.

The Board was advised that the 2021/22 Statement was based on the previous Statement (2020/21) and that no new discretions had been either added or removed. In addition, there had been no material changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 that would result in a change in the Statement.

RESOLVED: That the Pensions Discretion Statement for 2021/22 be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB77 TAXI LICENSING - TEMPORARY POLICY - AMENDMENT TO THE CURRENT AGE RESTRICTIONS ON LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

The Board considered a report from the Strategic

Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, requesting approval for a temporary amendment to the current age restrictions of licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

The background to the request was provided in the report and a consultation exercise was undertaken with the taxi trade, the responses of which were attached at appendix A and the findings were summarised in the report.

The Regulatory Committee considered the matter at its meeting on 13 January 2021 and after considering the consultation responses and the current economic situation resulting from the Coronavirus Pandemic, recommended that Executive Board approve a temporary amendment to the current restrictions of licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board approves the temporary amendment of the maximum age restriction on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles by two years, for a two-year period, with the following conditions:

- 1) Any vehicle taking advantage of the relaxation of the restriction be subject to 3 tests per year; and
- 2) No vehicle taking advantage of the relaxation of the restriction may be transferred to another proprietor.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB78 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2021-22

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which set out the proposed Calendar of Meetings for the 2021/22 Municipal Year, which was appended to the report for information.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of meetings for the 2021/22 Municipal Year, as appended to the report.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB81 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in

accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB82 ACQUISITION OF ELITE HOUSE, SHAW STREET, RUNCORN

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval for the acquisition of the freehold interest in Elite House, Shaw Street, Runcorn.

The report provided Members with details of the proposals and financial implications for their consideration.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approves the acquisition and of the freehold interest in Elite House, Shaw Street, Runcorn, on the terms reported in paragraph 3.4; and
- 2) authorises the Operational Director – Economy,

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

Enterprise and Property, to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 18TH MARCH 2021

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB86 REVIEW OF COUNCIL WIDE FEES AND CHARGES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the review of the Council wide fees and charges for 2021/22 for services provided by both of the Council’s Directorates.

The Board was advised that, as part of the budget preparations for 2021/22, a review of fees and charges had been carried out. The aim in setting fees and charges was to ensure that the Council fully recovered the cost incurred in providing the service, although this was dependent on a number of factors outside of the agreed charge. These were detailed in the report and noted as including demand, which could change year on year and be affected by weather, economy and demographics; competition, where there may be a strong competitive market; and a statutory element, where some charges were outside the control of the Council and there was no discretion to what could be charged.

Attached at Appendix A was the proposed schedule of statutory fees for 2021/22 and the chargeable rates for The Brindley Theatre and the Registrar’s Service were attached at Appendix B and C respectively, for 2022/23.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A attached to the report and for 2022/23 as set out in Appendices B and C attached to the report, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15TH APRIL 2021

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB91 COVID 19 EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP FUND

The Board received a report from the Strategic

Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which recommended the introduction of a Covid-19 Exceptional Hardship Scheme.

It was reported that as part of its response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Council had provided a range of financial and non-financial support measures to support residents since March 2020. The Shielded Individuals Hub, the Self Isolation Support Scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments, the Discretionary Support Scheme, as well as the Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service were all provided, as described in the report.

A proposal was made to introduce a Covid-19 Exceptional Hardship Scheme, in order to assist residents who suffered hardship due to having to self-isolate without meeting the criteria for other forms of Covid-19 or other financial support.

The Scheme's Statement of Objectives, application process and eligibility criteria were presented for consideration by the Board. Members were also referred to the Appendix, which contained an extract from the Council's Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) regarding contact tracing and self-isolation.

RESOLVED: That the establishment of a Covid-19 Exceptional Hardship Scheme, as outlined in the report, be approved.

Councillor Wharton declared a discloseable other interest in the following item as he was Treasurer for Hale Youth Centre, so the report was presented by the Operational Director – Finance.

EXB92 NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which requested consideration of the renewal of discretionary business rate relief for existing registered charities, not-for-profit organisations and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC), who continue to satisfy the appropriate criteria.

Appended to the report was the list of charities, not-for-profit organisations and CASC's currently in receipt of discretionary rate relief and the costs for each one.

RESOLVED: That

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) discretionary business rate relief of 15% be granted for those registered charities and CASC organisations currently in receipt of such relief, for the period of three years commencing 1 April 2022; and2) discretionary business rate relief of 90% be granted for the not-for-profit organisations currently in receipt of such relief (with lower amounts for two as indicated in the Appendix), for the period of three years commencing 1 April 2022. | <p>Community and Resources</p> |
|--|--------------------------------|

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 8th June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Breathing Space

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report provides Members of the Board with details of the Breathing Space process which came into effect on the 04 May 2021. It provides Council debtors with legal protections to ensure that creditors pause recovery and enforcement action for a period of up to 60 days.

2. RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space) came into effect on 4th May 2021. The legislation aims to give more time to debtors who are struggling with their debts to seek help from a qualified debt advice provider to find a resolution and gives someone in problem debt the right to legal protections from their creditors.
- 3.2 The legislation this report references is The Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space Moratorium and Mental Health Crisis Moratorium) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020
- 3.3 There are two types of breathing space: a standard breathing space and a mental health crisis breathing space.
- 3.4 A standard breathing space is available to anyone with problem debt. It gives them legal protections from creditor action for up to 60 days. The protections include pausing most enforcement action and contact from creditors and freezing most interest and charges on their debts.
- 3.5 A mental health crisis breathing space is only available to someone who is receiving mental health crisis treatment and it has some stronger protections. It lasts as long as the person's mental health crisis treatment, plus 30 days (no matter how long the crisis treatment lasts).

4. CREDITORS

- 4.1 As a creditor, if the Council are told that a debt owed to the Council is in a breathing space, all action related to that debt must be ceased with immediate

effect and the protections applied. These protections must stay in place until the breathing space ends.

- 4.2 The Insolvency Service will send the Council an electronic notification to notify about each debt owed to the Council in a breathing space and the date the breathing space started. The Council need to ensure it applies the protections to these debts from the date set out in the notification.

5. DEBT ADVICE PROVIDERS

- 5.1 A breathing space can only be started by a debt advice provider who is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to offer debt counselling or a Local Authority (where they provide debt advice to residents). It should be noted that the Council currently has no debt advice providers.
- 5.2 Debt advice providers are responsible for the administration of a breathing space. They are the point of contact for the debtor, their creditors (and appointed agents), and the Insolvency Service (who own and maintain the electronic service).

6. THE INSOLVENCY SERVICE

- 6.1 The Insolvency Service maintain the electronic service that debt advisers use to start the breathing space process and then send notifications to the Council during it. They also maintain a private register of details of people whose debts are in a breathing space and the date a breathing space started and ended.

7. APPLYING FOR A STANDARD BREATHING SPACE

- 7.1 Debtors can only access a breathing space by seeking debt advice from a debt adviser. Anyone who cannot or is unlikely to be able to repay their debts can apply to a debt adviser for a standard breathing space. Although all applications must be considered, the debt adviser might decide a breathing space is not appropriate for a debtor.
- 7.2 For example, if a person can access funds or income, they might be able to pay their debts with some budgeting help. Another example would be if they already have assets that could easily be sold to clear the debt. In these cases, a breathing space would not be the right solution. A breathing space might also not be appropriate for someone who can enter a more suitable debt solution straight away, without needing the protections that a breathing space offers.

8. APPLYING FOR A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS BREATHING SPACE

- 8.1 The government committed to develop an alternative route to access the protections for people receiving mental health crisis treatment, so that they do not have to access debt advice first. If an Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) certifies that a person is receiving mental health crisis

treatment, the AMHP's evidence can be used by a debt adviser to start a mental health crisis breathing space.

8.2 In addition to the debtor, the following can apply to a debt adviser on behalf of a debtor for a mental health crisis breathing space:

- The debtor's carer
- Approved Mental Health Professionals
- Care co-ordinators appointed for the debtor
- Mental health nurses
- Social workers
- Independent mental health advocates or mental capacity advocates appointed for the debtor
- A debtor's representative

9. DEBTOR ELIGIBILITY FOR A STANDARD BREATHING SPACE

9.1 Before a debt adviser can start the breathing space, they must confirm their client is eligible and meets all the conditions. These are that the debtor must:

- Be an individual
- Owe a qualifying debt to a creditor
- Live or usually reside in England or Wales
- Not have a debt relief order
- Not have an individual voluntary arrangement
- Not be an undischarged bankrupt at the time they apply
- Not already have a breathing space or have had a standard breathing space in the last 12 months at the time they apply

9.2 The debt adviser must also be satisfied that their client meets both of the following conditions:

- Their client cannot, or is unlikely to be able to, repay all or some of their debt
- A breathing space is appropriate for their client

10. DEBTOR ELIGIBILITY FOR A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS BREATHING SPACE

10.1 To be eligible for a mental health crisis breathing space, the debtor must still meet the same criteria and conditions for a standard breathing space, but they must also be receiving mental health crisis treatment at the time that an application is made.

11. QUALIFYING DEBTS

11.1 Debts included in a breathing space must be qualifying debts. Debts are any sum of money owed by the debtor to the Council, while liabilities are any

obligation on the debtor to pay money to the Council. Most debts are likely to be qualifying debts, including

- Council tax
- Business rates
- Housing benefit overpayment
- Debtors & social care finance
- Merseyflow

Other non-Council debts likely to be included are:

- Credit cards
- Store cards
- Personal loans
- Pay day loans
- Overdrafts
- Utility bill arrears
- Mortgage or rent arrears

11.2 Joint debts can be included in a breathing space, even if only one person applies for a breathing space. The joint debt would become a breathing space debt, and the Council must apply the enforcement action protections to the other people who owe the debt.

11.3 Qualifying debts can include any that the debtor had before the breathing space legislation came into force on 4 May 2021. New debts incurred during a breathing space are not qualifying debts. Neither are new arrears on a secured debt that arises during a breathing space.

12.0 EXCLUDED DEBTS

12.1 All personal debts and liabilities are qualifying debts, except for:

- Council tax liabilities that have not yet fallen due
- Business Rates liabilities that have not yet fallen due
- Secured debts such as mortgages, hire purchase or conditional sale agreements.
- Debts incurred from fraud or fraudulent breach of trust.
- Liabilities to pay fines imposed by a court for an offence.
- Child maintenance or obligations under an order made in family court proceedings
- Crisis or budgeting loans from the social fund
- Student loans
- Advance payments of Universal Credit

13.0 WHAT HBC MUST DO DURING A BREATHING SPACE

13.1 When the Council receives a notification, it must search its own records to identify the debt owed by the debtor. This needs to happen as soon as

possible. If the Council only received notification about one debt, but it is owed two debts (for example, the debtor has a council tax debt and a sundry debt) then the Council should consider applying the protections set out below to both debts and, in all cases, it should tell the debt adviser about the additional debt. It is the debt adviser who will decide if the additional debt qualifies for the breathing space.

13.2 The Council must make sure they stop:

- The debtor having to pay certain interest, fees, penalties or charges for that debt during the breathing space
- Any enforcement or recovery action to recover that debt, by the Council or any agent it has appointed
- Contacting the debtor to request repayment of that debt, unless it got permission from the court.

14. STOPPING ENFORCEMENT ACTION

14.1 Once a breathing space has started, the Council or anybody acting on its behalf must not take any enforcement actions against the debtor or anyone who is jointly liable with them for a breathing space debt.

15. APPOINTED ENFORCEMENT AGENTS

15.1 If the Council is notified that a debt has gone into a breathing space, it must tell any agents it has appointed or instructed to recover it to stop enforcement action. The Council must also tell the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) if they're making deductions from benefits (not including Universal Credit) in respect of its debt.

15.2 Existing deductions from Universal Credit are not included in breathing space. The Council should not tell DWP if they're making deductions from Universal Credit for its debt.

16. CONTACT BETWEEN CREDITORS AND DEBTORS DURING A BREATHING SPACE.

16.1 Generally, during a breathing space, the Council (or any agents the Council has instructed) must not contact a debtor about any collection or enforcement action for a breathing space debt. This includes asking them to pay or starting or continuing any legal action.

16.2 During the breathing space, the Council can contact the debtor's debt adviser about the debt it is owed, or to discuss a debt solution.

The Council, or any agents it has instructed, can only contact the debtor:

- About anything not related to the breathing space debt, like ongoing liabilities or an excluded debt.
- If the debtor asks the Council to talk about a breathing space debt or a debt solution.

- To respond to a query or complaint the debtor has sent to the Council.
- About any action or legal proceedings the court or tribunal have allowed.
- If the Council are required to do so under the Consumer Credit Act 1974 or by the FCA Handbook

16.3 These restrictions are intended to stop contact that reinforces the message that the debtor owes money to the Council or that they need to make payment. These communications can be worrying to debtors.

17. ONGOING LIABILITIES DURING A STANDARD BREATHING SPACE

17.1 Certain debts are considered 'ongoing liabilities' during a standard breathing space. The debtor needs to keep paying these if they can. If they don't, the debt adviser might cancel the standard breathing space. Ongoing liabilities include Council Tax and Business Rates.

17.2 Where a debtor does not pay an ongoing liability, the debt adviser might decide to cancel the standard breathing space. The debt adviser will consider whether cancelling it is unfair or unreasonable to the debtor. This can be done as part of the midway review process. This obligation and review process does not apply to debtors during a mental health crisis breathing space.

18. DEBT ADVISER REVIEW

18.1 During a standard breathing space, a debt adviser must carry out a midway review between day 25 and day 35. This is to make sure they are satisfied the debtor is complying with their obligations.

18.2 If the debt adviser thinks the debtor has been meeting their obligations and communicating with them, the standard breathing space will continue until the end date.

18.3 If the debt adviser thinks the debtor has not met all of their obligations, they can cancel the standard breathing space in respect of some or all the debts.

19. CANCELLING A STANDARD BREATHING SPACE

19.1 Provided they do not consider that the debtor's personal circumstances would make it unfair or unreasonable, the debt adviser must cancel a standard breathing space for one or more of the related debts after carrying out a midway review if they consider that:

- The debtor has not met one or all of their obligations. This includes them not paying their ongoing liabilities (unless the debt adviser considers that the debtor did not have the financial means to do so)
- They have put a debt solution in place
- They have not been able to communicate with the debtor about their breathing space. This includes where the debtor is not contactable or is not available

20. CANCELLING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS BREATHING SPACE

A mental health crisis breathing space does not have a midway review, but the debt adviser will regularly check that the person is still receiving mental health crisis treatment. The mental health crisis breathing space will continue for the duration of this treatment, plus 30 days.

However, the debt adviser must cancel a mental health crisis breathing space if:

- They believe the evidence provided to them about the debtor's mental health crisis treatment contains inaccurate, misleading or fraudulent information, and they do not consider that the debtor's personal circumstances would make the cancellation unfair or unreasonable
- The debtor asks for the mental health crisis breathing space to be cancelled

21. IF THE COUNCIL DO NOT COMPLY

21.1 The Council must apply all the breathing space protections for a debtor after it is notified about a breathing space. If the Council does not, any action it takes is null and void and it may be liable for the debtor's costs.

21.2 The debtor can complain to their debt adviser, who will contact the Council to remind it of its obligations. The debtor can also complain directly to the Council, using its complaint procedure. This might include referring their complaint to any external ombudsman, oversight body or regulatory body.

21.3 If the Council still do not meet its obligations, the debt adviser can tell the Insolvency Service who will contact the Council to remind it of its obligations. Repeated breaches of the regulations can be considered by the regulator, where appropriate.

22. END OF A STANDARD BREATHING SPACE

22.1 A standard breathing space ends:

- 60 days from the date it started
- The day after a debt adviser or a court cancels it
- If the debtor dies during the breathing space period. In this case, the breathing space ends on the day after the debtor died

23. END OF A MENTAL HEALTH BREATHING SPACE

23.1 A mental health crisis breathing space will end either 30 days after the debtor's mental health crisis treatment ended, or 30 days after the date a debt adviser had no response after asking for confirmation from the nominated point of contact about a debtor's ongoing mental health crisis treatment.

24. NEXT STEPS

24.1 When a breathing space ends, the Council can:

- Start applying interest, fees, penalties and charges to the debt from the date that the breathing space ends.

- Take any action to enforce its debt, including contacting the debtor, or collecting debts from benefits
- Start or continue any legal proceedings about its debts

24.2 The Council cannot take these actions if the debtor has gone into a debt solution. This could include a debt relief order or bankruptcy.

24.3 The Council cannot take action if the debtor has made a formal arrangement with the Council to deal with their debt, such as an individual voluntary arrangement.

24.4 An update on the number of debts owed to the Council which have been entered into a breathing space will be provided on a on a regular basis through quarterly performance reports.

25. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

25.1 None

26. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

26.1 Breathing Space may delay collection and enforcement of debts owed to the Council.

27. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

27.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

27.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

27.3 A Healthy Halton

None

27.4 A Safer Halton

None

27.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

28. RISK ANALYSIS

28.1 Breathing Space may delay collection and enforcement of debts owed to the Council.

29. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

29.1 None.

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

30.1 None

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 8 June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Annual Report 2020/21

PORTFOLIO: Resources

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive the Annual Report of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board for 2020/21, to comment in respect of the same, and to make any changes considered appropriate.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be approved.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

N/A

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

N/A

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

Document	Place of inspection	Contact Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit	2 nd Floor Municipal Building	M. Reaney



CORPORATE PPB ANNUAL REPORT

This has been a very difficult and complicated year with the Council and its employees having to deal with the effects of the Covid pandemic whilst maintaining essential services to our Residents. I am proud of the way our Employees worked in completely different roles to ensure services continued, the management team making sure that health and safety regimes were upheld. The cooperation between the Council the N.H.S the emergency services and the Army in delivering the Covid testing system and the vaccination programme proves we have a workforce that can rise to the challenge the Borough faced. It was a significant achievement that the electoral registration and Legal teams were able to organise and deliver the necessary requirements to enable four elections to take place - the Council all out Election, the Police Commissioner election, the Liverpool City Region Mayoral election and parish council elections. All took place without mishap and following Covid rules. The impact of Covid on family stability has led to increase in social services costs and the legal requirements arising from dealing with those problems which the team have managed well.

Throughout the pandemic the Stadium and school meals service ensured that vulnerable children and those of Key workers were able to access a free school meal and food vouchers and hampers to families in difficulty and provided food packs for the shielded community. Staff were also redeployed to help in food preparation in care homes and assist in the delivery of test and trace scheme. The pandemic meant the Council had to rely on virtual and internet systems to deal with requests from residents in order to interact with them to provide services to them, also as most staff had to work from home. This provided a significant challenge to the Council organisation and services which the I.T team were able to respond to and ensure the vulnerable and shielded community were identified and supported.

The Finance department strove to implement the government's financial business support making it possible for more businesses to survive the lack of business activity. Work was also carried out to make sure collection of Business rates and Council tax could be maintained so that services could continue to be funded.

The Property Services department worked hard to ensure the Market when open complied with Covid regulations and would be fit and ready to open when that was allowed.

Throughout the year the board have continued to scrutinise the work under its remit and were able to agree to the Area Forum structural changes and the fair distribution of funds between the different Forum groups, and made sure that all were fully protected from Covid and were able to work in a safe environment.

So I take this opportunity to thank the members and officers, and in particular my lead officer Mark Reaney, for their hard work and

diligence in pursuing the boards objectives throughout the pandemic.

- Councillor Bob Gilligan – Chair, Corporate Policy & Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2020/21, the Board comprised of eleven Councillors – R. Gilligan (Chair), G Philbin (Vice Chair), J Abbott, H Howard, M Lloyd-Jones, C Loftus, A Lowe, A McInerney, N Plumpton-Walsh, Joe Roberts, and K Wainwright.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to Resources, HR and Training, ICT, Property, Democratic Services, Legal Services, Communications and Marketing, Stadium, Civic Catering, Procurement, Corporate Complaints and Area Forums. The Board also has responsibility for monitoring the performance of the reporting departments which during the last year have been Legal and Democratic Services including Communications and Marketing, Human Resources, Financial Services, ICT and Support Services and the Policy and Performance Divisions.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met four times during the year, with all of the meetings taking place remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Set out below are some of the main initiatives upon which it has worked during that time.

AREA FORUMS ANNUAL REPORT

The November meeting received a report which informed Members of the project delivery of the Local Area Forums for the financial period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Members were advised that Local Area Forums (LAF) provided a mechanism for Councillors to respond to community needs and aspirations through the funding and delivery of initiatives and projects. Area Forum money could also be used as ‘match funding’ to help lever in additional funding from a variety of external sources.

It was reported that in 2019/20, £200,000 was allocated to Area Forums, split on a per capita basis across all seven Forums, which covered the Borough. Details of the funding for each of the LAF's, case study information and resident feedback was provided to demonstrate the impact LAF projects had made for Halton's communities. Projects funded through the LAFs were categorised into the following key areas:-

- Children and Youth Facilities;
- Community Events;
- Community Resource and Equipment;
- Community Initiatives;
- Improved Parks;
- Landscapes;
- Pedestrian and Highway Improvements; and
- Community Safety.

It was highlighted that the Area Forum budget had enabled the leverage of other grants and had secured funds from other bodies. Overall, an additional amount of £162,286.82 was 'levered' in to support Area Forum projects, providing a total spend of £413,166.98.

CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

The November meeting also considered an analysis of Corporate Complaints received during the 2019/20 financial year. The report outlined the two stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints; a corporate complaints trend analysis from 2012 to 2020; the nature of those complaints received; and outcomes.

In addition, the report also provided a summary on complaints and queries that had been received by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2019/20.

It was noted that the Ombudsman had made 51 decisions during the year and undertook 38 investigations, 34 of which were not upheld. Members noted that these figures provided reassurance that the Council's internal complaints procedures were robust and effective in resolving fault where it occurred at a local level.

DISCRETIONARY SUPPORT SCHEME

In July, the Board received a comprehensive report providing updates on the Discretionary Support Scheme (DSS), Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and Universal Credit (UC).

DSS was now in its eighth year of operation and during 2019/20, 523 awards were made totalling £143,598. Full details of funding and expenditure were outlined in the report.

In respect of DHP, Members were advised that in 2019/20 grant funding of £469,587 was received and actual expenditure totalled £469,579 representing 1,391 awards. The decrease in the number of awards and total expenditure compared to the previous year had been caused by a reduction in Government funding.

In addition, Members received an update on the roll out of UC. As at May 2020 there were 14,070 Halton residents claiming UC.

ENERGY / CARBON REDUCTION

The Board also received an update report on related activities aimed at reducing CO2 emissions within the Borough. Since the Council's participation in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme, the Council had continued to implement a number of actions to reduce its carbon emissions and impact on the environment and at the same time deliver financial savings. Overall, the Council's CO2 emissions continued to reduce from a baseline of 2006/7 of 26,338 tonnes of CO2, to 11354 tonnes for 2019/20.

It was noted that there had been a slight increase in emissions associated with both fleet transport and business mileage from the previous years. In addition, Corporate buildings had also seen a slight increase, this being solely down to increased gas usage. The report advised members on the progress and impact of changes in the Borough which included: street lighting, roof top solar and biomass, the construction of a solar farm, climate action plan, public decarbonisation fund, municipal fleet decarbonisation plan, 3MG going green and the Astmoor low carbon study project.

PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS

The September meeting received a presentation covering the most recent data on COVID-19 Coronavirus; latest update on Halton outbreak support team approach, and Halton's testing approach in the community and for

schools.

Whilst COVID-19 Coronavirus presented an unprecedented challenge, well-established local arrangements for public health were being used as the basis of an enhanced response. The pandemic was having a profound impact on the Council's finances, its staff, all of its services and the way it operated.

The presentation highlighted the most recent COVID-19 Coronavirus figures for Halton and provided an update on how the Halton outbreak support team were working within the contain framework to successfully identify and manage local outbreaks using information from NHS Test and Trace and how this also worked with the Cheshire Hub.

It was recognised that testing was key and there was a robust programme in Halton with regional sites as well as mobile testing units and walk through testing sites in both Widnes and Runcorn. All of these were accessible on the national portal. In addition, national home delivery testing kits were also available.

PERFORMANCE ISSUES DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

The Board considered in detail the performance of the reporting departments. Issues which were overseen during the year included:

- Accident statistics
- Markets
- School catering and the operation of the Stadium

WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

During 2020/21, the Board retained the expanded Topic Group which oversaw the operation of the Council's Discretionary Support Scheme and included scrutiny of Univeral Credit. The Board agreed that additional topic groups would be established when the need arose. However, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, a decision was taken that topic group work across the Council would be suspended.

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	8 June 2021
REPORTING OFFICER/S:	Strategic Director Enterprise, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Corporate Services
SUBJECT:	External Funding Team Update
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an update to Corporate PPB on the work of the External Funding Team in securing external funding resources into Halton.

The report covers the following issues:

- An update on the team's key activities and priorities;
- Emerging issues in external funding;
- Funding statistics for the period 2020-2021.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Board note the content of the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The report focuses on the period January 2020-December 2020; however, statistics include data between Jan and March 2021 and also a comparative period of the last five year financial period (between April 2016 and March 2020).

3.2 The External Funding Team's role is to help maximize external funding into the Borough. The Team is responsible for preparing medium to large-scale funding bids (primarily over £50,000) on behalf of Council colleagues, public sector partners, the voluntary sector and the private sector, with the aim of maximising external funding opportunities for Halton.

The Team comprises 5 posts and in the period 2020-21 the cost of the Team was £177,457. The Team secured £12,715,110 in 2020/21. This means for every £1 spent on the Team, £71.65 was secured in external funding. We also we brought in £10,000 in fees via the charging policy, making a total of £27,000 secured to date since the Charging Policy was implemented.

The Team focuses mainly on the following funding sources: Government, European, National Lottery, Landfill Funding, Trusts and Foundations.

Key functions of the Team include:

- Maintaining a strategic approach to funding to ensure the most appropriate bids from Halton are submitted and internal competition is averted;
- Undertaking funding searches for specific projects; bid writing and development of supporting documents, e.g. policies and business plans etc.;

- Dissemination of funding information to target audiences, mainly via the production of monthly Funding Bulletins on a range of themes, including a targeted local authority one;
- Lobbying funders, developing strong relationships with key funding bodies, and participating in key forums to ensure Halton gets its fair share of funding;
- Developing strong partnerships with Council colleagues, and the voluntary and private sectors where appropriate, to submit joint bids.
- Develop and deliver an Annual Training Programme for HBC colleagues and partner organisations to enable capacity building.

COVID response

Emphasis over the period 2020-21 has been on supporting organisations and colleagues to secure Covid emergency grant funding.

18 groups were supported directly by the Team to secure emergency funding to a total of £917,942. The Team has also tracked the level of emergency funding secured into the Borough as a whole, this has totaled £1,819,685.52 from 160 grants - see Appendix I. (It is worth noting that emergency funding was secured by Adult Social Care, for example 2 grants from the HBC Care Homes & Re-enablement, 1 grant from the Health Foundation and 1 grant from the Mental Health fund; this totaled £243,329).

The Team also produced a weekly Covid Funding Bulletin of emergency funding which was widely disseminated to the voluntary and community sector and very well received, as well as disseminating details of business grants to our Business Improvement Team for private sector colleagues. The Team also attended the fortnightly Voluntary and Community Action sector calls to ensure we were up to speed with sector issues and able to provide information and support on grant funding.

The Team is focusing now on ensuring colleagues are supported with their funding needs as we move out of the pandemic.

We have also continued to deliver a range of non-Covid work during the period; key schemes include:

- Leading on strands of the Halton's Borough of Culture programme – including securing match funding to the value of £327,000, consultation and evaluation, a heritage hub and Culture HQ, a unit in Runcorn Shopping Centre.
- Supported a number of large-scale European Social Fund (ESF) submissions on behalf of Halton and the Liverpool City Region.
- Supporting Regeneration colleagues on a range of schemes, including Runcorn Old Town/Station Quarter, Unlock Runcorn, Foundry Lane, Astmoor.
- Leading on the delivery of Halton's allocation of the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and the Welcome Back Fund.
- Supporting a range of community-based schemes, such as Windmill Hill Big Local, Open 360, Nightstop CNW, Halton Play Council and Rooftop Garden
- Trustee role & funding lead for Catalyst Science Discovery Centre & Museum Limited.
- Support a number of local and sub-regional forums, including Cultivate: Halton Local Education Partnership, Halton Heritage Partnership, Liverpool City Region Heritage Officers Group.
- Take the lead on Visitor Economy for Halton and on the Connecting Cheshire Digital Partnership.

We continue to look at how we can further support HBC colleagues to bid for funding for priority schemes in order that we do not miss out on any appropriate funding streams. The Team produces a monthly Local Authority Funding Update which highlights current funding streams available for local authorities.

3.3 - Funding context and emerging issues

3.3.1 External Funding Environment – Challenges and Opportunities

For much of the period 2021-22, the majority of funders diverted their funding streams to Covid emergency funding only or closed their grant programmes for a period. Funders are now starting to re-open their grant programmes with a general focus on post-Covid resilience, diversification of activities etc;

Funders are also generally placing more emphasis on environmental sustainability /impact across all types of projects and programme; this aligns with the Government's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and the Team will be looking to ensure that all bids supported consider green measures in relation to their projects.

The Government is starting to release funds in anticipation of the Shared Prosperity Fund, billed as the replacement for the European Structural Funds programme; funds released include Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund. The Team is tracking all of these funds and has produced a Funding Matrix which is regularly updated – see latest version at Appendix V.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) is also the conduit for funding streams including One Public Estate, SIF and Town Centre Fund and the Team supports colleagues to access these funds where appropriate.

The External Funding Team, working in close collaboration with other Departments, needs to ensure well-planned, competitive, sustainable and, where possible, innovative projects are put forward for Halton's priorities.

The External Funding Team aims to respond to any changes in the current funding environment and maintain knowledge of new strands of funding; the Team maintains regular contact with some of the key funders, including landfill funders, Lottery funders and European and Government funding bodies.

The External Funding Team is able to provide the necessary expertise and experience regarding current bid-writing best-practice and key funder priorities and act as a liaison point with the funders. In a highly competitive field, the Team provides a critical yet objective eye to highlight both the threats and opportunities within each organisational plan, project proposal and chosen funding body. Bids are increasingly being asked to submit using the Treasury's Green Book business case model and the Team has received training in this in order to better support such bids.

Case studies from the past 12-months in which the Team played a key role in securing important grant investment to the Borough include:

Cultural Recovery Fund

The Team supported bids to the Government's Cultural Recovery Fund to support organisations to stay closed and still viable during the Covid pandemic. Four grants

were received into the Borough, two for The Brindley and two for Catalyst Science Discovery Centre and Museum totalling £587,000.

Households into Work – ESF

The Team secured an ESF bid for the Combined Authority to a value of £2.3m to extend the Households into Work programme.

Borough of Culture Match Funding

The Team had a remit to secure match funding for Celebrate Halton, our Borough of Culture year 2021 and has secured the following, with huge support from the Council's Community Development Team:

Arts Council England - £15,000 research and development grant
Arts Council England - £100,000 to deliver large-scale public events
National Lottery Heritage Fund - £207,000 to deliver a Celebrate Halton's Heritage project centred around a heritage hub
Town Centre Fund - £93,000 for Culture HQ at Runcorn Shopping Centre

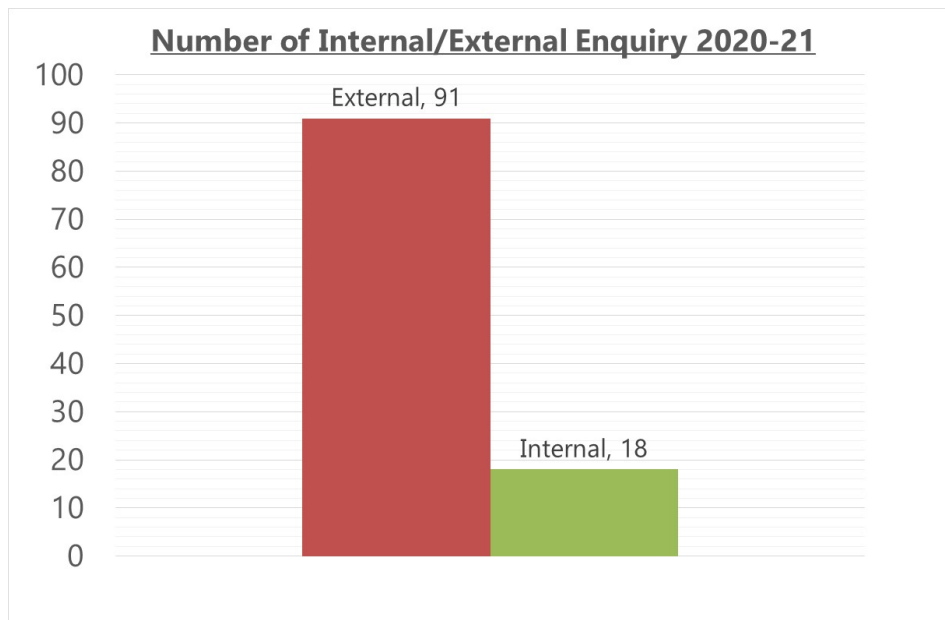
3.3.2 Capacity and Demand

Demand for the service remains high; the Team received 109 requests for funding in 2020/21. Of these:

51 remain active – i.e. scoping meetings, funding searches
29 were referred on to other colleagues/services
21 did not progress for a variety of reasons
7 bids were submitted
1 bids are in progress

The Team works to full capacity which means decisions need to be made at times about where to allocate support, allowing the ability to respond to new enquiries and priorities, manage tight deadlines for bids, horizon scan to ensure opportunities are not missed etc.; Importantly, the Team does not drive projects, but specialists in sourcing funding and bid-writing; the Team does not 'own' bids, the 'owner' needs to drive the project as the specialist in that particular area.

Enquiries can be broken down into internal and external as follows:



We are currently monitoring projects worth £16.3 million, have submitted bids worth £25.6 million and have pipeline projects of £58.7 million. Our pipeline list gives a current profile of the projects the Team will be supporting over the coming year; this pipeline is subject to new priorities being identified – should this be the case, the new projects will be discussed with the Operational Director and relevant Portfolio Holder.

3.4- ESIF Programme

The Team manages the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) on behalf of HBC; this includes both project development and bid-writing. To date the Team has helped secure £19m in ESIF grants since Jan 2016, with another £11m in the pipeline.

There are a number of projects currently being supported as follows:

Ways to Work

The Employment, Learning and Skills Division and 14-19 Programme Team secured European Social Fund (ESF) funding to deliver the **Ways to Work Project**. The Team has been providing intensive continued support in checking and monitoring ILM spend, making quarterly claims to the Combined Authority, carrying out procurement exercise for specialist mentors/coaches, preparation for external audits, change controls submitted to DWP and close liaison with the Combined Authority Compliance Team.

Business Growth Programme

The Team provides continued support for the ERDF-funded Liverpool City Region Business Growth Programme which provides an integrated business support package to SMEs. The project is due to finish in December 2021, but there are plans to extend it until December 2023.

Greening DUN Land Demonstrator Project

The Team helped to deliver the ERDF-funded Greening DUN Land Demonstrator project. The project has developed a solar farm on St Michaels Golf Course which provides renewable energy to HBC buildings as a demonstration site for the Liverpool City Region. The project completed at a cost of £1.3m.

Households into Work

The Team secured an ESF bid for the Combined Authority to a value of £2.3m to extend the Households into Work programme.

Positive Inclusion

The Team helped secure £1.5 million in ESF funding to deliver the Positive Inclusion programme supporting LCR residents into employment.

Skills and Apprenticeship Hub

The Team supported an ESF from the Liverpool City Region to the value of £5.2 million to continue and extend the work of the Hub.

Pipeline Bids

Over the past 12 months the Team has also supported two further LCR-wide projects in applying for European Social Funding (ESF) to deliver schemes. These projects amount to £11million.

3.5- Visitor Economy and Borough of Culture

The Team continues to undertake some key work with Liverpool City Region and Halton partners in relation to Visitor Economy and Culture:

- The Lead Funding Officer sits on the LEP's Visitor Economy Officers Group; and on the Liverpool City Region Heritage Officers Group.
- The Lead Funding Officer leads on strands of Halton's Borough of Culture 2021, including securing match funding, consultation, evaluation, heritage hub and Culture HQ.
- The Team supports Cultivate: Halton Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) which is currently bidding to Arts Council England for a £1 million scheme to deliver a quality arts and cultural programme for children/young people in Halton.

3.6 - Training

The Team delivers a free Training Programme which is available to HBC colleagues and externally to the voluntary and other public sector partners. The courses were delivered from a range of community venues in Widnes and Runcorn with the aim of increasing the quality of bids and capacity building; the courses are being delivered online between January and July 2021 due to Covid restrictions, with the support of Halton and St Helens VCA.

The Annual Programme consists of:

- 4 x half-day bid-Writing sessions
- 2 x half day Monitoring and Evaluation sessions
- 2 x half day Now You've Got Your Grant sessions – *new course*
- 2 x Developing a Fundraising Strategy – *new course*

The training sessions are continually updated to improve bid-writing skill levels among both internal and external colleagues and also give a greater understanding of the context in which funding bids are submitted helping to ensure that bids are prioritised and of the highest possible quality.

3.7- Charging Policy

Executive Board agreed in July 2018 that the Council should pilot a Charging Policy for a period of 12 months, specifically for bid-writing support for external agencies. The

pilot was completed in August 2019 and it was agreed the Policy should be rolled out on a permanent basis.

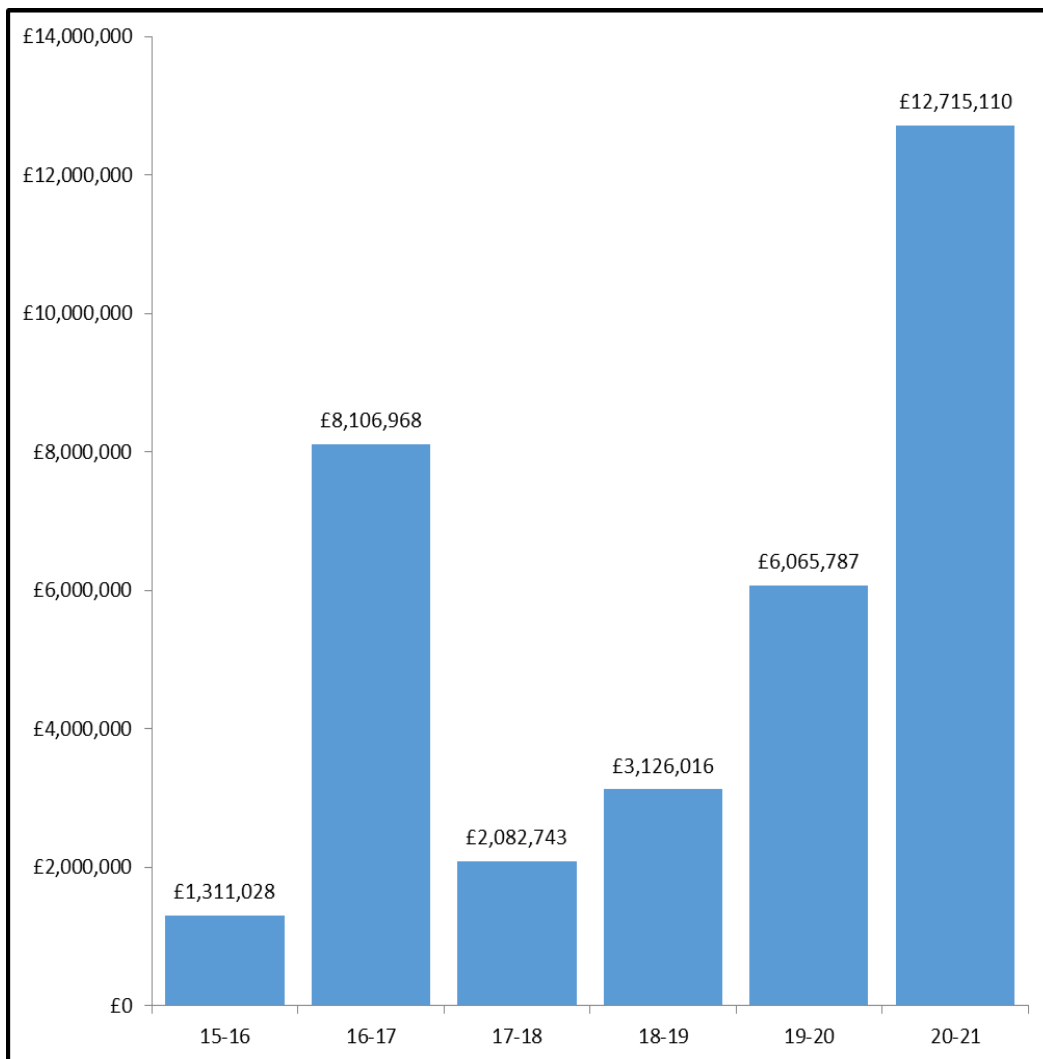
£27,000 in fees has been generated by the Team to date.

It is vital that staff across the whole Council implement the Charging Policy where it applies and seeks the support of the External Funding Team to do this where needed.

3.8- Funding Data

3.8.1 - Funding Secured

The graph below shows details of the funding secured by the External Funding Team between April 2015 and March 2021. In 2020-21 the Team helped to secure funding of £12,715,110.

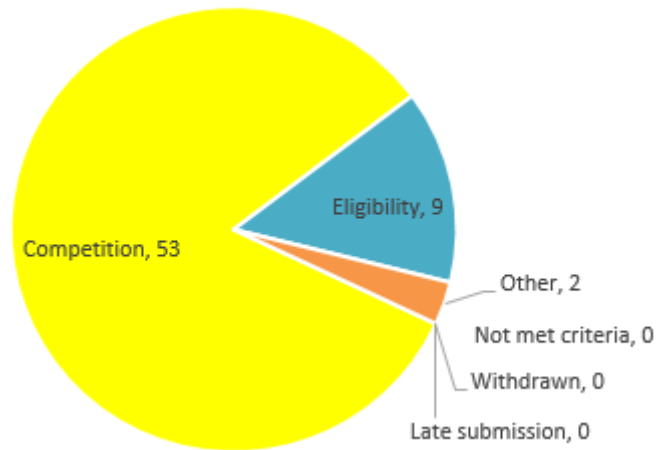
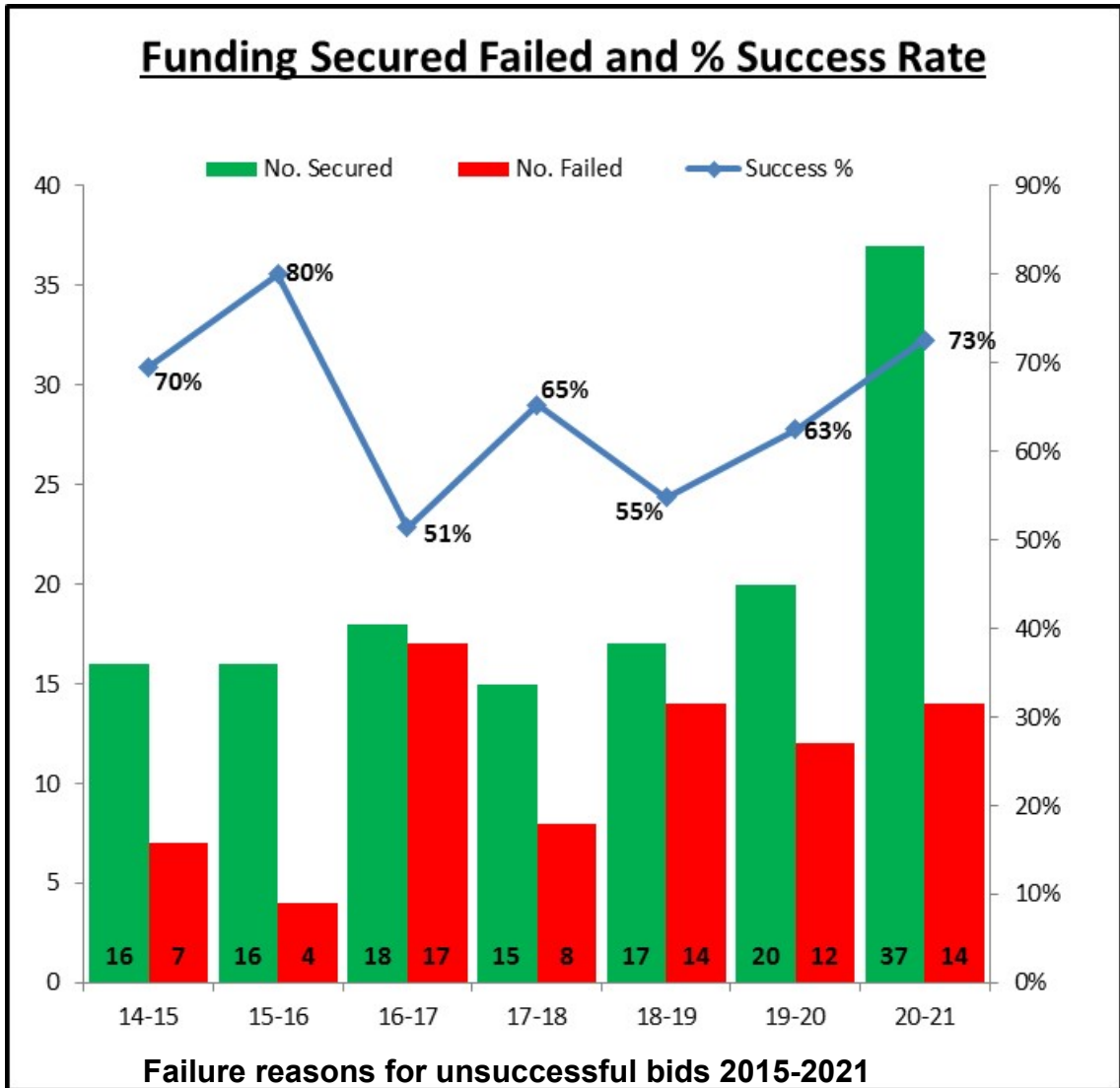


The total funding secured by the External Funding Team in the 6 year period was **£32.09m**. See Appendix III for a full breakdown of grants secured and failed in 20-21.

3.8.2 - Bid Success Rate

The charts below show bid success rates between April 2015-March 2021, as well as details of unsuccessful bid rates and the reasons for these. 64% of bids submitted in the period 2015-2021 were successful.

Success and failure rates 2014/15 to 2020/21:



3.9- CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This year has been busier than ever for the Team and we have risen to the challenge. The focus this year has very much been on supporting organisations in Halton to access emergency Covid funding.

The Team also provided assistance with shielding calls and business support grants.

We retained some of our core work and contributed to some key broader schemes; we look forward to supporting colleagues and Halton organisations to recover and thrive post-Covid, as well as supporting the Council to secure some of the emerging Government funding streams.

The external funding environment remains vibrant and we look forward to securing further investment into the Borough in the year ahead to support the corporate vision and key strategic schemes going forward.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

All projects that request support from the External Funding Team must be supporting at least one of the Council's priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

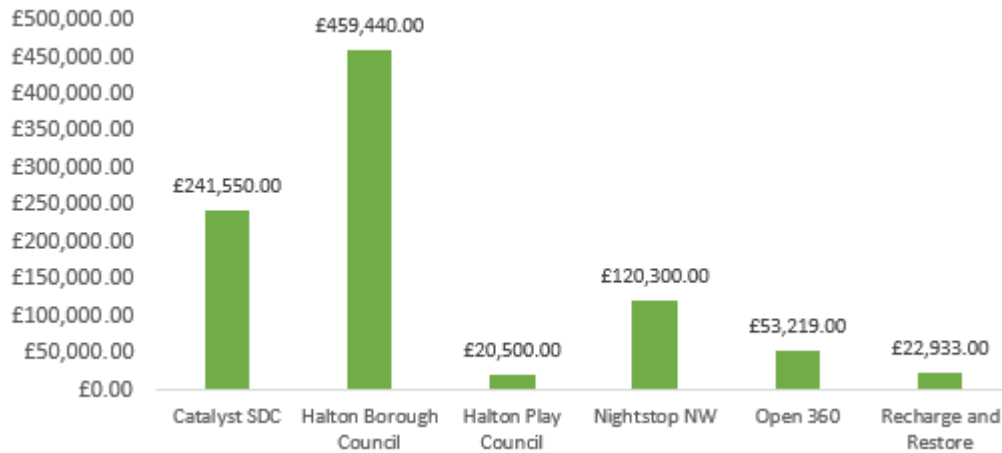
14.0 APPENDICES

Appendix I Covid Grant Funding Stats

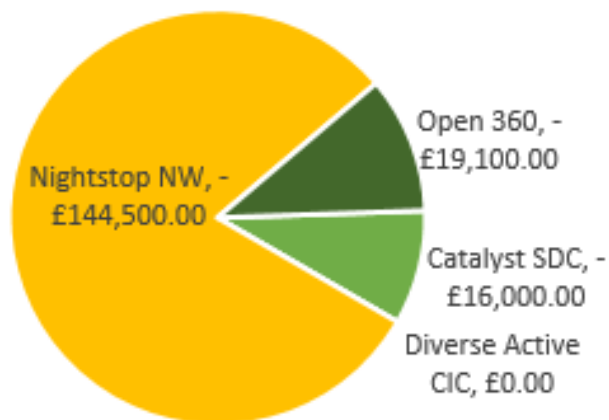
Summary

Statistic	Amount/%	Number of Projects
Total received in Halton	£1,576,356.52	156
HBC Helped Secured	£917,942.00	18
HBC Helped Failed	£179,600.00	9
HBC Helped Possible	£1,097,542.00	27
% HBC Helped Secured	58.25%	
% HBC Helped Possible	69.65%	

Secured Bids with our Help



COVID Failed Bids with our help



All Halton Covid Grants by Funders

Funder	Amount	Funder	Amount
Access to Justice Foundation	£27,016.00	Holiday Activity Fund	£6,034.00
Arts Council	£83,909.00	LCR Cares	£106,704.76
BBC Children in Need	£5,000.00	Legal and General Community Fund	£3,000.00
CCSF – RC	£72,500.00	Lloyds Bank Foundation	£33,000.00
Charities Aid Foundation	£19,170.00	Local Authority Discretionary Grant	£47,500.00
Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner	£17,487.76	National Lottery Community Fund	£217,641.00
Co-op community fund (invite only)	£500.00	Ofcom Community Radio Fund	£4,000.00
Cultural Recovery Fund	£586,990.00	PCC Safer Communities Fund	£1,000.00
Cultural Recovery Fund for Heritage	£151,000.00	Riverside Community Chest C19	£15,950.00
ERDF RHSSF	£114,000.00	Sport England	£63,159.00
ESF Reconnect Fund	£31,599.00	Steve Morgan Emergency Fund	£79,226.00
Garfield Weston Foundation	£30,000.00	Tesco BOH	£7,000.00
HBC BR Grant	£10,000.00	The Clothworkers Foundation	£2,470.00
HBC Small business grant	£10,000.00	Youth Music	£9,500.00
		Grand Total	£1,755,356.52

Worth noting is that as a result of our COVID Bulletins, a number of organisations outside of the Borough managed to secure funding of £84,660.

Appendix II

Sample Covid Bulletin

<https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/business/businesssupport/pdf/Funding/CoronavirusFunds.pdf>

Appendix III

List of bids secured in 2020-21.

	Group Name	Project	Outcome	Amount	Month	Int/Ext	Ward	Source of Funding
Q1	Unlock your You	ESF Project	Secured	£20,000	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESF Community Fund
	Mako Creative	ESF Project	Secured	£19,997	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESF Community Fund
	Gateway Community Initiatives	ESF Project	Secured	£20,000	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESF Community Fund
	Creative Health Initiatives	lottery bid	Secured	£100,000	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	National Lottery Community Fund
	Open 360	COVID-19 Funding	Secured	£4,950	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	LCR Cares Fund
	Nightstop NW CIC	COVID-19 Funding	Secured	£5,000	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	LCR CARES
	Nightstop NW CIC	COVID-19 Funding	Secured	£28,000	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	NLCF A4A C19
	Nightstop NW CIC	COVID-19 Funding	Secured	£10,800	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Steve Morgan Foundation
	Nightstop NW CIC	COVID-19 Funding	Secured	£3,000	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Legal and General Fund
	Open 360	COVID-19 Funding	Secured	£4,350	Apr-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Steve Morgan Foundation
	Unlock Runcorn	Pre-development financial support	Secured	£45,000	May-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Strategic Investment Fund
	Open 360	Covid Funding	Secured	£9,550	Jun-20	Ext	Boroughwide	NLCF A4A C19
Open 360	Covid Funding	Secured	£15,950	Jun-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Riverside Community Chest C19	
Q2	HBC	Borough of Culture Planning	Secured	£15,000	Jul-20	Int	Boroughwide	Arts Council
	Liverpool City Region	LCR Positive Inclusion Project	Secured	£1,545,315	Jul-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESIF (ESF)
	A Better Tomorrow	ESF Project	Secured	£15,393	Sep-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESF Re-Connect Community Grant
	Open 360	ESF Project	Secured	£18,419	Sep-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESF Re-Connect Community Grant
	Recharge & Restore	ESF Project	Secured	£13,180	Sep-20	Ext	Boroughwide	ESF Re-Connect Community Grant


	Halton Play Council	Resource cost for families - Covid	Secured	£500	Jul-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Co-op Community Fund-Covid
	Halton Play Council	Online support and home delivery of resources - Covid	Secured	£20,000	Jul-20	Ext	Boroughwide	National Lottery-Covid
	Recharge & Restore	Covid Funding	Secured	£9,753	Aug-20	Ext	Boroughwide	National Lottery-Covid
	St Pauls/Transform NW	Amazing space	Secured	£68,000	Aug-20	Ext	Boroughwide	FCC
	Runcorn Locks Restoration Society	Unlock Runcorn	Secured	£3,500	Oct-20	Ext	Boroughwide	SIF Pre-development feasibility fund
	Liverpool City Region	Ways to Work 3.0	Secured	£2,300,000	Oct-20	Ext	-	ESF/YEI
	HBC Brindley	Cultural Recovery Fund	Secured	£230,660	Oct-20	Int	Boroughwide	Cultural Recovery Fund
	Catalyst	Cultural Recovery Fund	Secured	£162,000	Oct-20	Ext	Boroughwide	Cultural Recovery Fund
	St Pauls/Transform NW	Amazing space	Secured	£15,000	Nov-20	Ext	Boroughwide	NCT Cornerstone
Q4	Open 360	Support Service	Secured	£9,520	Jan-21	Ext	Boroughwide	Census Support Grant
	Liverpool City Region	Apprenticeship Hub	Secured	£5,200,000	Jan-21	Ext	-	ESF
	The Combined Authority	Households into work 2	Secured	£2,300,000	Feb-21	Ext	-	ESF
	Halton Play Council	Running Costs	Secured	£9,293	Jan-21	Ext	Boroughwide	St James CH Fund
	HBC	Borough of Culture	Secured	£100,000	Feb-21	Int	Boroughwide	Arts Council
	HBC	Foundry Lane P1 Acquisition	Secured	£130,000	Feb-21	Int	Boroughwide	CA SIF
	Nightstop NW CIC	Covid Funding	Secured	£1,000	Feb-21	Ext	Boroughwide	PCC Safer Comm Covid Fund
	Nightstop NW CIC	Covid Funding	Secured	£72,000	Feb-21	Ext	Boroughwide	NLCF
	Catalyst	Cultural Recovery Fund	Secured	£79,550	Mar-21	Ext	Boroughwide	Cultural Recovery Fund 2
	HBC Brindley	Cultural Recovery Fund	Secured	£114,780	Mar-21	Int	Boroughwide	Cultural Recovery Fund 2


Appendix IV – Active Projects

The current active project the team are dealing with are:

St Pauls Building Project, Diverse Active Mamafit projects, Spike Island Playground Refurb, St Lukes – Refurb, SIF Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet, SIF Sci-Tech Daresbury Skills Space, Sankey Canal Restoration, RLRS – Unlock Runcorn, Ways to Work 3.0 1.3 YEI Extension, Ways to Work 2.0 1.1 Extension, RLRS - Unlock Runcorn, Solar Farm on St Michaels Golf course, Ways to Work 1.1 and 1.3, 3MG RGF project, Sci-Tech Daresbury RGF projects, MHCLG Changing Futures Grant Programme 2021-23 – Cheshire and Halton Strategic Partnership, Community Shop /CCG – Runcorn Roof Top Garden, CA – SIF Pre-Development Grant - Foundry Lane Regeneration, Ways to Work 5.0 - ESF 1.1 Funding Call – Inclusive Labour Markets, Windmill Hill Community Hub – St Berteline’s CE Church, Halebank Parish Council – Purchase of Building for Community Centre, Sew Halton – Running Costs/Projects, Changing Places Fund (Toilets), LCR Apprenticeships Hub – ESF bid, Town Centre Commissioning Fund (TCCF) – Halton Lea Town Centre, St Lukes Farnworth, Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF), Ways to Work 4.0 - ESF 1.3 YEI Extension Transitional only – Inclusive Labour Markets, Catalyst SDC and Museum – Heritage offer upgrade, Halton LCEP, HBC Borough of Culture 2021 and Town Deal.

Appendix V – Funding Matrix

Name of fund/ website or link	Brief Summary	Amount	deadline
<p>Levelling Up</p>  <p>Levelling_Up_prospectus.pdf</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-fund-prospectus</p>	<p>The Levelling Up Fund will invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities. This includes a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes, urban regeneration projects and cultural assets. The Fund is jointly managed by HM Treasury (HMT), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Transport (DfT). This cross-departmental Fund represents a new approach to local investment and will end siloes in Whitehall that make it difficult to take a holistic approach to the infrastructure needs of local areas.</p>	<p>Halton is in Priority 2.</p> <p>The Fund will focus investment in projects that require up to £20m of funding. However, there is also scope for investing in larger high value transport projects, by exception. Bids above £20m and below £50m will be accepted for transport projects only, such as road schemes, and can be submitted by any bidding local authority.</p>	<p>To apply for investment from the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, eligible local institutions must submit their bids to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by noon on Friday 18 June 2021.</p>
<p>Community Renewal Fund</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus-2021-22</p>	<p>To help local areas prepare for the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in 2022, the Government has launched a one-year UK pilot Community Renewal Fund. The £220 million fund will support local communities most in need, by piloting programmes and new approaches that empower them to explore how best to tackle local challenges– whether through building skills, supporting local businesses, supporting communities and places, or providing employment support. All places across the UK are eligible for pilot funding. Bids for the UK Community Renewal Fund will be managed by the following lead authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayoral Combined Authorities, where they exist • The Greater London Authority • County Councils 	<p>Each local authority can bid up to a maximum of £3m in funding to help build a safer, greener and more prosperous country.</p> <p>Halton is not listed as one of the top 100 places so no real scope to bid for the pilot.</p>	<p>The shortlist of projects should be submitted by lead authorities to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by noon on Friday 18 June 2021 by emailing UKCommunityRenewalFund@communities.gov.uk</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unitary authorities elsewhere <p>The lead authority of each of the 100 priority places will also receive capacity funding to help them invite bids locally and appraise these bids. Each lead authority will receive £20,000 per priority place. This funding can be incurred from April 2021 for staff or other resources needed to coordinate and appraise bids. It will be paid to lead authorities in the summer and will be paid regardless of whether bids are successful. The fund is competitive and each local authority can bid up to a maximum of £3million in funding to help build a safer, greener and more prosperous country. Separate guidance will be made available for each lead authority.</p>		
<p>CLRF https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-leisure-recovery-fund</p>	<p>Aims to support community-run leisure facilities in England with £5m of National Lottery investment to assist the reopening and recovery of their services. It's an open fund that will be allocated over a single funding round in April and is to cover the period from 1 Apr-30 Sept 2021.</p>	<p>We have limited funds available and to help reach as many communities as possible you can only apply for up to £50,000. We'll consider applications requesting a higher amount, but a decision to award more than £50,000 will only be made in exceptional circumstances.</p>	<p>CLOSED AT NOON ON 29 APRIL – APPLICATIONS NOT SUBMITTED BY THIS TIME WON'T BE ACCEPTED.</p>
<p>Reopening High Streets Safely/ Welcome Back Fund</p>  <p>wbf guidance</p>	<p>The fund will allow local authorities in England to put in place additional measures to create and promote a safe environment for local trade and tourism, particularly in high streets as their economies reopen. We also recognise that the impact of Covid19 on local economies will be significant. Local authorities can therefore also use the fund to develop plans for responding to these impacts, this could include considering how other funding streams could help address those challenges in the future. Part of the fund will be used to provide support for coastal resorts across</p>	<p>Halton has been allocated:</p> <p>Reopening High Streets Safely Fund £114,260</p> <p>Welcome Back Fund Halton £179,260</p> <p>Total £293,520</p>	

	<p>England to support areas as they prepare for a great summer to safely welcome holiday makers in the coming months. The fund can also be used by local authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost the look and feel of their high streets by investing in street planting, parks, green spaces, and seating areas to make high streets welcoming. • Run publicity campaigns and prepare to hold events that will boost footfall and encourage people back into the high streets and thereby supporting local businesses. • Install and refresh signage and floor markings to encourage social distancing and safety. • Improve green space <p>Halton has been selected as one https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/news/70-local-authorities-to-benefit-from-high-streets-task-force-support) The grant provides an email address for queries on the guidance: RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk</p>		
<p>Without Walls (LCR Fund) https://www.cultureliverpool.co.uk/without-walls-fund/</p>	<p>The Liverpool Without Walls Culture Fund, is designed to support organisations and artists in creating performance and visual art outdoors and is brought to you by Culture Liverpool and Arts Council England. This pilot is for creatives to submit ideas to animate and reimagine Liverpool as a stage, fill the streets with cultural content and encourage audiences back into the city centre.</p> <p>The Fund is looking for ideas which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get organisations working in the public realm, reimagining art forms and piloting new forms of presentation for the future • Drive audiences into the city centre and key district centres in order to support the re-emerging retail and hospitality sector 	<p>Allocation to be awarded per LCR local authority. Halton's allocation likely to be c £250k</p>	<p>Funding Allocation to be confirmed April 21 with spend by March 22</p> <p>THIS FUND HAS NOW BEEN WITHDRAWN.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help support local organisations and the freelance community, in particular those who may not qualify for support through previous ACE or DCMS funds • Can be delivered at speed: ideally during Aug–Oct 20. 		
Community Ownership Fund	The government has launched a new £150m Community Ownership Fund to help ensure that communities can support and continue benefiting from the local facilities, community assets and amenities most important to them.	Community groups will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched-funding to help them buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses.	The first bidding round for the Community Ownership Fund will open by June 2021. A full bidding prospectus will be published alongside this.
Changing Places (Toilets) https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-investment-to-provide-changing-places-toilets	Funding will improve access for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets and their carers. Changing Places toilets are larger accessible toilets for people who cannot use standard disabled toilets, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches & space for carers.	Local authorities will soon be invited to “opt in” to receive a proportion of this funding, based on need, to install facilities in their communities.	Local authorities will be invited in June 2021 to “opt in” to receive a proportion of this funding, based on need, to install facilities in their communities.
Changing Futures https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changing-futures-changing-systems-for-adults-experiencing-multiple-disadvantage/changing-futures-changing-systems-to-support-adults-experiencing-multiple-disadvantage#criteria-for-expressions-of-interest	New scheme to help adults across England facing multiple disadvantages like homelessness and mental health issues. Changing Futures Programme to help improve the way that systems and services work to support individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage – including a combination of homelessness, substance misuse, poor mental health, domestic abuse, and contact with the criminal justice system. Main area of interest is Cheshire (Is this us?) Local Authority. Areas might wish to include representation from other partners in area i.e. public health, social care, housing etc.	Grants of up to £15,000 will be available for shortlisted areas in year one (2020/21) to develop a more detailed delivery plan in partnership with the central gov. programme team. Initially up to £35.7m will be available for delivery in year 2 (21/22) & year 3 (22/23). It is envisioned that grants will be in the range of £1.5m – £4.5m per area across initial 2 years.	Halton is part of a successful Cheshire-wide scheme being led by Cheshire East; currently working up full bid
One Public Estate (LCR)	Feasibility funding for public buildings to be repurposed	C £150,000 per scheme	Round 9 to be announced soon

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 8th June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise Community Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Corporate Accident / Incident Report 1.4.20 to 31.3.21

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on the performance of health safety management within the Authority for 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1 the report be received; and**
- 2 the Board notes the contents of the report including the recommendations and actions for 2021/22.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The health and safety report on the performance of health and safety management in relation to Key Performance Indicators for the current financial year is appended.

3.2 It highlights health and safety information.

3.3 The report includes information around the number of actual near misses, over 7 day and significant accidents.

3.4 It includes annual HSE information

3.5 It also includes COVID 19 employee figures

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The report assists in the delivery of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

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

The provision of a safe working environment and reduction in accidents is important in order to provide:

6.1 **A Healthy Halton**

6.2 **A Safer Halton**

6.3 **Efficient and Effective Delivery of Services**

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Accidents which lead to lost time have financial implications for the authority (although these are always secondary to our concern for the well-being of staff and customers).

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues arising from this report.



**CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT
CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021**

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 General	3
1.2 H&S Management System	3
2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	4
2.1 Summary 2020/21	4
2.2 Recommendations 2021/22.....	5
3. INFORMATION	6
3.1 Local/National Information	6
4. LEAD INDICATORS (KPI's)	8
4.1 KPI 1 Risk Assessments	8
4.2 KPI 2 Near Misses	8
4.3 KPI 3 Lone Working Monitoring System	8
5. REACTIVE INDICATORS (KPI's).....	9
5.1 KPI 4 Accidents.....	9
5.2 KPI 5 Violent Incidents	11
6. COVID 19	1
7. Risk Assessment Position Statements.....	16

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 clearly places responsibility on those who create the risk to manage it. The HSE Strategy, 'Helping Great Britain Work Well' highlights that members of the board have both collective and individual responsibility for health and safety. As such, the need is for board-level members to champion health and safety and be held accountable for its delivery.

Part of this includes identifying areas for improvement in health and safety management with the intention of improving staff morale, reducing work-related sickness absence and lowering insurance premiums for legal, moral and financial reasons. In particular having robust health and safety procedures in place provides safeguards against legal action being taken against the Authority.

1.2 Health and Safety Management System

In order to demonstrate how Halton Borough Council as an employer is delivering the HSE Strategy, this report is to provide Management Team with details of health and safety performance in relation to Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Details of KPI's are as follows:

LEAD INDICATORS

Proactive action taken and any outcomes

KPI

1. **Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems**
Rationale – creating a safe working environment
2. **Number of Near Misses**
Rationale – action taken to prevent further similar incidents and before injuries
3. **Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system**
Rationale – demonstrating effective management of lone working risks

REACTIVE [Lagging] INDICATORS

Reactive action taken in response to accidents/incidents

4. **Number of Significant¹ and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents²**
Rationale – identify accident/incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences
5. **Number of Violent Incidents**
Rationale – identify incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences

¹ Accidents that either require more than basic first aid, incur time lost or arise from a failure in health and safety management

² Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, (RIDDOR) 2013, including Fatalities, Specified Injuries, Over 7-day Injuries, Reportable Occupational Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences

National and Local Information together with performance gaps and incident trends form the basis for the Recommended Actions for 2020/21.

By responding positively to identify trends, the Authority can demonstrate compliance with the recommendations of the Health and Safety Executive's guidance HS (G) 65 "Management for Health and Safety".

2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Summary

COVID-19 has continued to dominate our home and work lives for the period this report covers as well as previously and beyond. It has continued to be a difficult time for many having to deal with illness and bereavement as well as other issues.

The pandemic reflection on this current report shows a significant reduction in accidents and violent incidents from last year due to a high volume of home working during the 3 nationwide lockdowns and some Council Buildings closing temporarily.

Across the authority 44 COVID secure checks were carried out on Corporate Buildings with 4 remaining checks to be actioned once further openings have taken place. All schools across the borough including academies also received a COVID secure check visit. The HSE are known to be carrying out visits to check on premises and across Halton 1 Academy and the Municipal Buildings both received a visit with 5 schools receiving HSE check telephone calls. There were no further actions required from these visits or calls.

Restrictions were slightly eased towards the end of the report period.

A number of risk control measures have been implemented across the authority to protect staff and many frontline services have endured major changes in their working practices to comply with Government guidance and ensure their health, safety and welfare. Assistance for staff has also been provided on the Enable e-learning platform via a number of wellbeing programmes and courses plus support from The Mental Health Team.

Reportable and significant accidents for Halton Employees are currently at a total of 11 across both directorates plus 2 near misses. This compares to 45 last year with near misses at 8.

Violent Incidents corporately are showing currently as 6 verbal for Enterprise, Community and Resources, one of which also included the theft of a mobile phone and zero physical incidents. For the People directorate there were 2 verbal incidents, one received in the form of a threatening text message plus 1 physical incident.

Lone Working - registered users on the internal system have increased from the same period last year and number of users actually accessing the system has dramatically decreased. This is, in most part attributed to a reduction of some face to face visits during the pandemic. It is expected the usage for this period next year will once again increase to a more normal level.

Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system are 1658 for both Enterprise, Community and Resources and People, compared to 1905 last year, a drop of 247.

2.2 Recommendations 2021/22

The following recommendations are as a result of the accident/incident analysis data for 2020/21 and will be actioned during the period 2021/22.

No.	KPI No.	ACTION	RATIONALE	RESPONSIBLE
1.	4	Managers to ensure all work areas are checked for COVID security, plus a 'Return to Work Checklist' is to be completed and signed off by the Reset Group before areas fully reopen once restrictions are eased and staff slowly return to the workplace. Environmental Risk Assessments are also to be reviewed. Both documents require 3 monthly reviews until further notice. Occupational risk assessments are also to be reviewed.	Accidents/Incidents COVID reports 2020/21	All managers
2.	2	Managers to ensure all relevant staff are aware of Occupational Road Risk Policy and other linked documents, Driving Documents System usage and the importance of production of documents due to near misses involving RTC's.	Near Misses 2020/21	All managers

3.	3	Review Lone Working Risk Assessments and enforce the 'mandatory' use of the Contact Centre Monitoring system when required. This is particularly prevalent once staff return to normal working practices who may have not carried out visits for some time due to national lockdowns.	Reinforce Management Team decision and safety of lone working employees	All managers - ongoing
----	---	---	---	------------------------

GENERAL ACTIONS

Complete fire audits for all Corporate Buildings	2021/22	Carried over from 2020/21 due to COVID 19
Action a series of Lockdown/Bomb Threat Exercises across main Council buildings	2021/22	Health and Safety Team – time period extended due to COVID19
Review and update Health and Safety policies (Corporate & Schools) requiring timescale or legislation reviews	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
School Audit and Health check visit programme	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team

3. INFORMATION

3.1 Local/National Information

Health & Safety Executive COVID secure visits and annual accident statistics

The Health and Safety Executive are carrying out spot checks and inspections on all types of businesses in all areas to ensure they are COVID-secure.

They are making telephone calls and visits giving advice on how to manage the risks and protect workers, customers and visitors. They are also working closely with local authorities, assisting them in the sectors they regulate such as hospitality and retail.

By calling and visiting premises and speaking directly to employers, they can check the measures that have been put in place are in line with government guidance.

Any corporate building or school should participate in the spot check as failure to do so could lead to enforcement action.

As well as participating in the phone calls and visits, there are sensible and proportionate steps an employer should take to help keep the workplace COVID-secure, including:

- carrying out a COVID-19 risk assessment
- maintaining social distancing
- keeping your workplace clean, with handwashing and hygiene procedures
- well ventilated

Across the Authority, a number of COVID secure visits have taken place actioned by the in house H & S team. 44 Corporate Buildings have been visited so far with 4 to complete upon further easing of restrictions. All schools have also received a COVID secure visit. These visits have included checks on all of the above 4 points and any other occurring issues.

To date the HSE have visited the Heath Academy and Municipal Buildings with no further action required for both visits. 5 further schools received telephone calls from a HSE Inspector, again with no further action.

The HSE has also released its annual workplace fatality figures for 2019/20 (latest available). The latest figures show that between April 2019 and March 2020, 111 people were killed in Great Britain while doing their job, the lowest year on record. 40 fatal injuries to construction workers accounted for the largest share.

The main categories were as follows;

Falls from height – 29

Struck by a moving vehicle – 20

Struck by a moving object – 18

Trapped by something collapsing or overturning – 15

Contact with moving machinery – 11

92 Members of the public were killed due to work related activities in 2019/20 (excluding those that died in Local Authority enforced workplaces – typically around 12-16 deaths per year).

Lateral Flow Testing Sites – COVID 19

Since December 2020 Halton Borough Council have put in place facilities to allow for community lateral flow testing to identify asymptomatic cases. Initially this was actioned at Grangeway and Ditton Community Centres with dedicated testing flow areas for certain work groups.

To the end of March 2021 over 92,000 tests had been carried out with work still ongoing to increase output.

Further sites were opened on a smaller basis and Secondary Schools also implemented on-site testing. Primary Schools were also included with an offer of home testing kits.

Further pop up sites are now in place and the Health Improvement Team are also working with local business's to ensure maximum testing takes place where possible.

This work will contribute to allowing the easing of restrictions as we move towards the summer months.

4. LEAD INDICATORS

4.1 . Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems

4.1.1 An electronic risk assessment system, based on the Intranet, has been 'live' since September 2011. This system is used for the majority of corporate risk assessments.

- Actual number of assessments completed up to 31/3/21 are; 1658

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 1081
People – 577

See section 7 for position statements and comparisons.

4.2 Number of Near Misses

4.2.1 The number reported in the last 3 years are:

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
12	8	2

From the 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 there have been 2 near misses reported on the corporate system.

4.3 Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system

4.3.1 Lone Working – Contact Centre Monitoring update – registered users have increased from the same period last year and number of users actually accessing the system has dramatically decreased. This is, in most part attributed to a reduction of some face to face visits during the pandemic. It is expected the usage for this period next year will once again increase to a more normal level.

See below table.

	Jan – Mar 2020		Jan – Mar 2021	
	Registered Users	No's Using System	Registered Users	No's Using System
Enterprise Community & Resources	66	45	82	17
People	266	132	294	61
TOTAL USERS	332	177	376	78
% OF USE	55%		21%	

5 REACTIVE ['Lagging'] INDICATORS

5.1 Number of Significant and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents

5.1.1 The number of significant accidents and RIDDOR reportable to the HSE for each Directorate excluding schools that took place from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 is 11.

Directorate	Specified Injury	> 7-Day	Significant
Enterprise, Community and Resources	0	2	3
People – excluding schools	1	1	4
TOTAL YTD 2020/2021	1	3	7
TOTAL YTD 2019/2020	1	16	28
TOTAL YTD 2018/2019	1	16	89

Specified injuries have remained the same for the last 3 years whilst over 7 day and significant injuries have decreased dramatically mainly due to 3 national lockdowns. 2 operational services that have remained fully functioning have also reduced their accident/incident statistics.

Over 7 day

Waste Management – 2 last year, 2 this year,
Open Space Services – 3 last year, 0 this year,

Significant

Waste Management – 5 last year, 1 this year,
Open Space Services – 7 last year, 1 this year

- A further breakdown of the categories of incidents Corporately are as follows:

Main Categories

	<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2020/21</u>
STF	22	10	6
Man Han	18	9	1
Equipment	10	7	0

Other Categories 2020/21

Other – gas ventilation – 1
 Hit by moving or flying objects – 1
 RTC – 1
 Sharps – 1

5.2 Number of Violent Incidents**5.2.1 From 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021**

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
Enterprise, Community and Resources	6	0
People	2	1

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2020/21	8	1
TOTAL 2019/20	30	12
TOTAL 2018/19	23	10

The above table shows a significant reduction in incidents due to some services not fully functioning due to 3 national lockdowns. The HDL service suffered 20 verbal threats/abuse last year as against 4 this year. The Positive Behaviour Service suffered 7 physical incidents last year as against zero this year.

5.2.2 Schools

From 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 there have been 11 physical violent incidents and 4 verbal incidents within schools broken down as follows;

Nursery – 1
 Primary – 8
 Secondary – 6

The below table shows a significant reduction due to schools being partially closed at certain points in the year due to the 3 national lockdowns.

Schools	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2020/21	4	11
TOTAL 2019/20	0	45
TOTAL 2018/19	7	40

6. COVID 19

Division	Cause	Incident / Action
Authority wide	COVID 19	COVID 19 - 77 cases of staff working in their normal workplace with 443 recorded COVID absence cases in total across the authority including homeworkers. On all the 77 reports logged for staff working in their normal workplace, there was no evidence of workplace transmission.

7. Risk Assessment Position Statements

Risk Assessment Position Statement - All Directorates

Completed Assessment Comparisons

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 2017/18 **830** completed
People – 2017/18 **312** completed

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 2018/19 **1036** completed
People – 2018/19 **396** completed

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 2019/20 **1234** completed
People – 2019/20 **625** completed

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 2020/21 **1081** completed
People – 2020/21 **577** completed

See graph below.

Risk Assessment Position Statement - All Directorates

01 April 2021

		Enterprise, Community & Resources				People			
		Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review	Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review
R	Home Working Risk Assessment	415	200	48.19	01/04/2021	293	105	35.84	01/04/2021
	Environmental/Fire Risk Assessment	70	44	62.86	02/04/2021	72	39	54.17	01/04/2021
	Fire Risk Assessment								
	Lone Working Risk Assessment	31	17	54.84	02/04/2021	23	5	21.74	26/06/2021
	Manual Handling Risk Assessment	8	5	62.5	29/05/2021				
	Occupational Risk Assessment	254	177	69.69	01/04/2021	53	25	47.17	15/04/2021
	Ladder Checklist	10	5	50	10/09/2021				
	General Risk Assessment	107	63	58.88	01/04/2021	153	68	44.44	14/05/2021
	COSHH Risk Assessment	40	35	87.5	01/04/2021	71	24	33.8	15/04/2021
	COSHH (Advanced) Risk Assessment	14	3	21.43	01/04/2021	4	0	0	
	Transport in Depots Risk Assessment	1	1	100	27/08/2021				
	Workstation	728	531	72.9	01/04/2021	592	311	52.5	01/04/2021

	Risk Assessment			4	21			3	21
	Total	1678	1081	64.4 2	-	1261	577	45.7 6	-

Lynn Pennington-Ramsden
Principal Health and Safety Advisor,
Risk and Emergency Planning
1st April 2021

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 8 June 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 4 of 2020/21

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the period to financial year-end 31st March 2021.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2020-21 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Finance
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development
 - ICT and Administrative Support
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Policy & Performance
 - Property Services
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

The report details progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

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

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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

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

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

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

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

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 At the time at which the Business Plans are developed Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated. Progress concerning the implementation of any high risk mitigation measures which are relevant to the Board were included as Appendix 1 of the performance management report for the second quarter period.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring

Reporting Period: **Quarter 4 – 1st January 2021 to 31st March 2021**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the fourth quarter of 2019/20 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
- Financial Services
 - Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency
 - ICT Infrastructure
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property Services
- 1.3 The emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 The Councils 2020 – 21 year end accounts are presently being finalised and will be published as soon as they become available.
- 1.5 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 7 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

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

Financial Services

Revenues and Financial Management

- 2.2 The 2021/22 net budget of £111.446m was approved by Council on 03 March 2021. The net budget will be part funded from an increase of 1.99% in general Council Tax plus a 3.0% Adult Social Care Precept. The 2020/21 council tax requirement is £54.509m; Band D council tax level (before local and major precepts) is £1,549.34 and continues to be the fourth lowest in the North West.

- 2.3 The Business Rates Team has and continues to support businesses through the pandemic by making Government funded business support grant payments to eligible businesses. During the first national lockdown, grants totalling £17.5m were paid to 1,196 small businesses and a further 312 grants paid to those businesses in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.
- 2.4 Following the first national lockdown and up to 31 March 2021, a further £6.9m of grants have been paid to help support local businesses through further local and national restrictions. In total grants of £24.4m have been administered through the Business Rates Team, this excludes discretionary grants administered by the Investment and Development Division.

In addition to above, from 01 April 2021 the team will start administering the Business Support Re-Start Grant programme to help businesses re-open following the third national lockdown. Businesses will receive levels of grant of up to £18k dependent on the type of business and rateable value banding.

- 2.5 The economic impact resulting from the pandemic initially had an adverse impact on both council tax and business rate collection rates. The council has actively continued to collect older debt but the temporary closure of magistrate courts slowed the process of obtaining liability orders, which helps with progressing debt collection. From February 2021 the Council have been given access to one virtual court hearing per month in order to obtain liability orders, which has helped improve overall collection towards year-end.

Including major preceptors, the amount of council tax billed at 31 March 2021 was £64.3m. The cash collection rate for the period is £59.5m (94.14%). A further £1.695m has also been collected from previous year arrears.

Including preceptors the amount of billed business rates as at 31 March 2021 is £47.2m. The cash collection rate for the period is £45.4m (96.18%).

Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance

- 2.6 The Council's schools have now been removed from the Council's insurance policies with cover now being provided through the Department for Education Risk Protection Arrangement scheme. This provides a more cost effective option for schools and reduces financial risk to the Council.

Benefits

- 2.7 On 28th September 2020 the government introduced Self-isolation Support Payments whereby a payment of £500 will be made to those on low incomes to support them if they cannot work during their self-isolation period, and currently this scheme is scheduled to end on 30th June 2021. At 31st March 2021 the table below shows the number of awards paid.

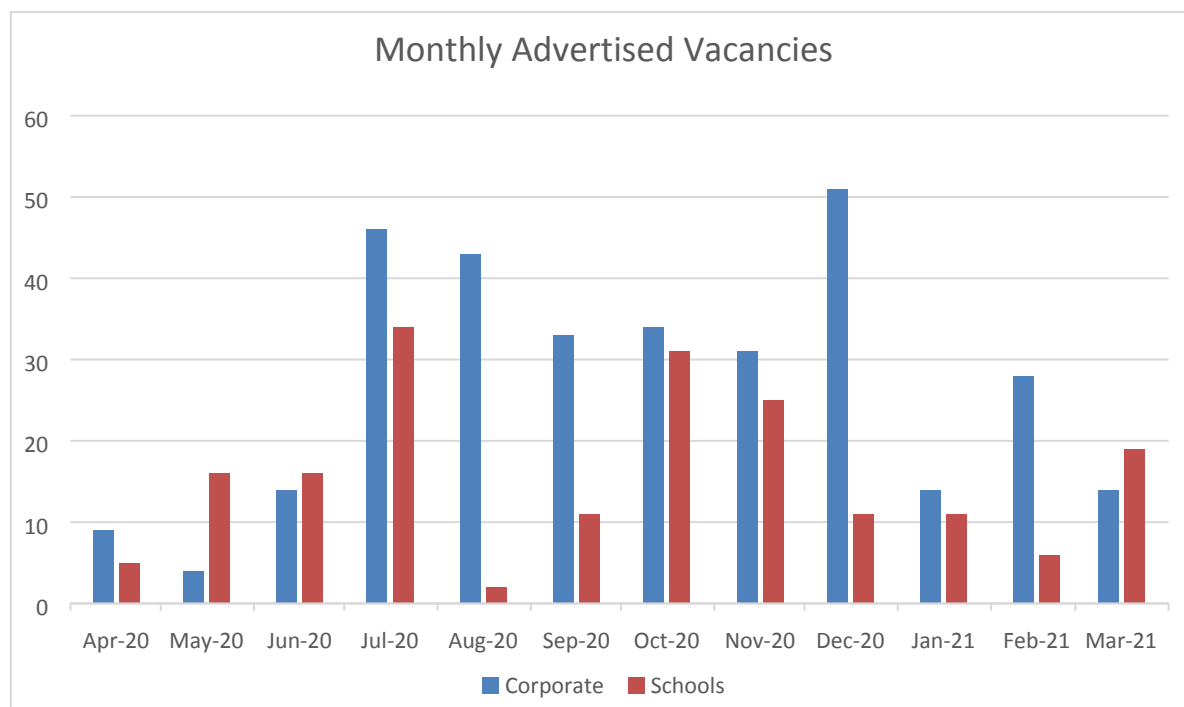
SIP Awards	Mandatory	Discretionary
Fund available	£310,000	£239,999
No. of awards	414	190
Current spend	£207,000	£95,000

- 2.8 The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) statistics indicate at 11th March 2021 there were 16,459 people within Halton claiming Universal Credit. By way of providing context, in March 2020 there were 10,918 Halton residents claiming Universal Credit, and this illustrates the financial impact of Covid19 within the borough.

Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

Recruitment and Organisational Development

2.9 During 2020 – 21 considerable resources were required to support the management of staffing scenarios related to absence, working practices, and restrictions. The resourcing of priority service activity (e.g. Public Health and Adult Care) has been an ongoing feature of the departments work. The resourcing of the two asymptomatic rapid COVID testing centres in the Borough featured significantly in January 2021. The graph below shows the spikes in demand for the filling of vacant posts linked to the impact of COVID-19:



- 2.10 The policy framework developed earlier in 2020 to enable the Council to safely return physical premises and work spaces to operation following the 'lockdown' between March and July 2020 and Nov – Dec 2020 has proved effective. It is being implemented again to manage re-openings as lockdown 3 is eased.
- 2.11 The Supreme Court have now determined that where workers undertake sleep-in shifts by arrangement, they are entitled to be paid the minimum wage only for the hours when they are awake for the purpose of working. The Council has always applied the NJC provision for a flat payment for sleep-in's where they are required and this is compliant with the Local Government Terms & Conditions of Service, and has been confirmed as legal on the conclusion of these cases.
- 2.12 During quarter 4 work began to establish the cohorts, timetable and welcome packs for the Council's new Leadership & Management Framework. Cohorts 1 & 2 will begin their development on 25th May 2021 with cohorts 3 & 4 starting 6th October 2021.
- 2.13 Work has also continued to further develop and enhance the Council's e-learning platform to support the ongoing delivery and accessibility of internal learning opportunities. Examples include Transitioning back to the workplace, COVID hygiene at work and at home, Building manager responsibility, Visual impairment and Adult obesity.

- 2.14 E-learning take-up continues to be strong and 2,542 modules were completed during the reporting period. In addition a number of Virtual Modules have been delivered to support staff specifically related to remote working. These have included Behavioural Science and how it can support remote working, and Conflict resolution, and Change and Stress Management in remote working environments.
- 2.15 in addition to facilitating learning this approach has also offered connectivity and socialisation experiences to staff whilst working away from the office environment.
- 2.16 During 2020 – 21 a total of 37 new apprenticeships starts were undertaken 25 in the Council and a further 12 in schools. This equates to 39% of the annual Public Sector target and is broadly in line with the national position outlined by the Local Government Association of 40 – 60% being achieved by most Local Authorities.

The Council continues to maximise its Apprenticeship Levy Contributions as far as possible and during 2020 – 21 a total of £236,734 has been drawn down.

- 2.17 The Council has published the statutory Gender Pay Gap report for the snapshot date of 31 March 2020. For the Council the median gender pay gap is 10.4%. This is significantly lower than the average Public Sector and whole economy figures of 15.8% and 15.5% respectively. Further information on the calculations and interpretation can be accessed at: <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/pdfs/EandD/genderpaygap.pdf>
- 2.18 The Council has considered its options around how employee capability, working practices, premises and technology can be combined to ensure an effective organisation for the future. The basis of a structured 'Future Work' change programme has been developed during the quarter, and will start to be progressed in Quarter 1 of 2021/22 alongside the Council's COVID recovery Roadmap, and the national easing of COVID restrictions.

ICT Infrastructure and Support Services

- 2.19 The ICT teams covered all emergency calls over this period of lockdown effectively, with all calls resolved quickly without any disruption to key services. Software Systems and Hardware maintenance plans remain in place linked to out of hours and weekend working to compliment extended front-line working hours.
- 2.20 The Halton Cloud continues to support all 2600 desktop users with an average of 1800 concurrent users connected into services at any one time from home. The system uptime over this quarter has been excellent, whilst accommodating a considerable number of changes and adaptations to the requirements profile of our user base over this extended period of the pandemic.
- 2.21 A considerable amount of work has now been undertaken to build and deliver **Eclipse 2-Factor** logon without the need for SMS services from the supplier which will reduce the ongoing costs to the Council. All schools have now had the Eclipse training.
- 2.22 The Records Management Facility remains fully operational and supporting the authority and its clients with new services being developed supporting the authority through centralising data and improving secure access to physical as well as digital data sets. These include for example mail and hybrid mail provision and linkages to new digitised postal services and a review of software solutions and support to Cemeteries and Open Space Services.

- 2.23 A focus upon the support of schools within the authorities SLA is in place to improve their ability to promote on-line learning and enabling those schools yet to put online learning solutions in place. Additionally reactive support to schools is ongoing and extremely busy and schools have been asked if they would prefer work to be undertaken outside of school hours to assist with social distancing and minimize the risks of exposure to pupils and staff.
- 2.24 Initial planning has commenced to implement the Data Quality Outline Development Programme. Work will include a consolidation of various existing policies relating to data quality, retention and data destruction with the intention of creating a simpler unified policy document for the Council.

Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

- 2.25 With regards to School Meals the options which have been provided by the service range from the provision of a hot meal, picnic bags and packed lunches and vouchers as this allows for all potential scenarios regarding the circumstances of each child / school to be accommodated.
- 2.26 These options have now been incorporated into a pilot scheme School Meals Service Level Agreement which has been offered to schools.
- 2.27 early indications are that free school meal take up has risen by 10% and a new system has been developed to monitor the surplus / deficit with regards to the school meals service which will allow for productivity, costs and income levels to be better determined..
- 2.28 During the past 12 months school meals service has completed over 3000 e-learning modules which engaged over 240 employees.
- 2.29 The West Stand of the Halton Stadium is being used as a COVID Vaccine Centre. This arrangement, which has received extremely positive feedback on Social Media, will remain open for the foreseeable future and is likely to be used for additional booster sessions planned for the Autumn.
- 2.30 The first rugby league games have also taken place, the first 4 behind closed doors. The following 3 games, if the roadmap allows it, will be with limited spectators, socially distanced and following the guidelines that are in place. The following fixtures will be held 'as normal'.
- 2.31 Also on the executive level, in conjunction with Halton Borough of Culture, a new concept was developed, which saw over 50,000 Widnes Vikings fans voting for their 'Best Team Ever', including the best team coach. As a result, each Executive Box door will now have a wraparound image placed on it which will tell a little bit of each of the chosen players' history, depicted in words and photographic images.

Legal and Democracy

- 2.32 The significant majority of staff remain working remotely and the provision of legal support across the authority remains undiminished. However the departure of a number of key members of staff during quarter 4 has presented significant challenges in terms of business continuity. Short-term temporary support has been in place whilst the process of recruitment can be completed.

Property Services

- 2.33 The Pre-construction Services Delivery Agreement for the proposed new leisure centre at Moor Lane has now been completed. Planning permissions are now in place and costs and timescales have been agreed. Following completion of the necessary Compulsory Purchase Order process it is anticipated that works would start on site early in 2022.
- 2.34 Arrangements continue to secure the finalisation of handback sites following the completion of the Mersey Gateway project with a settlement deed now being in the final stages of agreement. As sites are handed back the Council will use the funds set aside through the agreement to undertake any necessary remedial works.
- 2.35 £1.3m has been secured for decarbonisation works at Halton Stadium. Design works are progressing and it is hoped works on site can start within the next couple of months. The programme requires works to be complete by late September 2021.
- 2.36 Both the Education and Corporate Maintenance Programmes were fully complete by 31st March although some Corporate matters were deferred to 2021 – 22 as a result of budget pressures..
- 2.37 The refurbishment and remodelling of Adult Learning provision at Kingsway Learning Centre is now complete as are works to the ground floor of 45A Moorfield Rd to improve facilities for the Complex Needs Service.

3.0 Emerging Issues

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

Financial Services

Revenues and Financial Management

- 3.2 From 04 May 2021 the Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space) will give someone in problem debt the right to legal protections from their creditors. There are two types of breathing space: a standard breathing space and a mental health crisis breathing space.

A standard breathing space is available to anyone with problem debt. It gives them legal protections from creditor action for up to 60 days. The protections include pausing most enforcement action and contact from creditors and freezing most interest and charges on their debts.

A mental health crisis breathing space is only available to someone who is receiving mental health crisis treatment and it has some stronger protections. It lasts as long as the person's mental health crisis treatment, plus 30 days (no matter how long the crisis treatment lasts).

When the Council is notified (through the Insolvency Service) of an individual entering Breathing Space it will be required to update systems and records to ensure that all recovery action is immediately suspended for the requisite amount of time. During the Breathing Space period the Council will work with the individuals appointed debt advisor to seek ways in which the debt can be paid i.e. through an agreed payment plan.

- 3.3 In late March 2021 Government issued a statement that market-wide economic changes to property values, such as from COVID-19, can only be properly considered at general rates revaluations, and will therefore be legislating to rule out COVID-19 related material change in circumstances (MCC) appeals.

Allowing business rates appeals on the basis of a 'material change in circumstances' could have led to significant amounts of taxpayer support going to businesses who have been able to operate normally throughout the pandemic.

Although details are still to be finalised the Government will provide a £1.5 billion pot across the country that will be distributed according to which sectors have suffered most economically, rather than on the basis of falls in property values. The £1.5 billion pot will be allocated to local authorities based on the stock of properties in the area whose sectors have been affected by COVID-19.

Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance

- 3.4 The impact of COVID-19 and lockdown measures has resulted in a notable shift in the payment channels used by customers in 2020/21. As reported previously, there has been a significant reduction in the number of customers making payments through the kiosks located at the One Stop Shops, with the volume of payments received decreasing by 89% compared to 2019/20.

In contrast, in 2020/21 the Council experienced a 47% increase in touchtone telephone payments, a 22% increase in Internet payments and a 27% increase in Contact Centre telephone payments when compared to 2019/20.

Cash payments are less efficient for the Council to process, so the changes in customer habits are a welcome development. It does however remain to be seen as to whether these changes will be sustained over the longer term as lockdown measures continue to ease.

It is recognised that a minority of customers are likely to continue to prefer to make payments in cash. The recent introduction of PayPoint as another payment channel will therefore provide such customers with more local payment options, as there are currently 59 PayPoint outlets located across the Borough

Benefits

- 3.5 In March 2020 the Government introduced the Self-employment Income Support Scheme payment in response to the impact of Covid19. We have been informed by the DWP that these payments are treated as taxable income, and therefore would have to be considered for a Housing Benefit reassessment as part of self-employed person's claim. The DWP have recently informed the Council that it is in a position from April 2021 to commence sharing information it sources from HMRC relating to the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme for those cases where Housing Benefit is in payment.

Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

- 3.6 Following the UK's exit from the European Union Revised rules around eligibility to work in the UK have now been clarified and will be effective from 1st July 2021. The Councils recruitment procedures have been amended to accommodate these.
- 3.7 The engagement of Agency workers to meet increased service demand in areas such as Adult Social Care continues and the advent of the COVID pandemic unavoidably delayed the implementation of processes to support services in minimising agency usage. However work is now underway to support service restructuring and the delivery of the necessary corporate processes to reduce the reliance upon the use of Agency staff going forward.

- 3.8 The Council has received clarity on the implications of the 'McCloud judgement' of the Court of Appeal, stating that public sector pension reforms implemented by government in recent years (2014 for LGPS) unlawfully treated existing members differently based upon their age on the 1 April 2012. A significant amount of work is now required to review payroll records for all employees in the Council, schools, and the third party organisations that we provide a payroll service to under a commercial arrangement.
- 3.9 The ongoing administration of pensions is becoming progressively more intensive and complex. Following changes that will come into force from 2021 the Council will be required to report information to scheme administrators on a monthly basis rather than annually and will increase the number of returns from 25 to 300. This will have significant additional resource implications and these are presently being configured.

ICT Infrastructure and Support Services

- 3.10 Following the completion of Union consultation the restructuring of the ICT and Support Services function commenced during quarter 4 and this will move forward as we move into the new financial year.
- 3.11 **From a technical perspective** the coming months will be an extremely busy time as per the last quarter with the upgrade of key server software solutions to accommodate the redevelopment of the infrastructure that supports all desktop, telephony and server-based systems.

This is a major project started December 2020 and completed the 1st phase of the development for all hardware systems allowing for the considerable task of upgrading the Virtual Desktop infrastructure software platforms, this upgrade will allow major developments such as the release of Teams and the Office 365 Suite within this virtual environment to compliment the use of Skype and the delivery of other conferencing mechanisms compatible with both home and office environments.

- 3.12 The level of support for schools to enable the delivery of on-line learning will remain a focus moving into the new financial year. With regards to some out of borough schools that receive support from the Council on a commercial basis there have been some issues with inadequate networking configurations not supporting available solutions and further support is being offered in this regard.
- 3.13 One Stop Shops remained open during the National lockdown as they are seen as an essential service within Halton. Opening hours have been reduced over this quarter to allow the team to support the Contact Centre in managing inbound/outbound calls for COVID Support from Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) individuals

Legal and Democracy

- 3.14 In advance of the elections taking place in May plans are in place to refresh the induction programme for any new Elected Members and work continues on the review of the Council Constitution including the development of new Committee Structures.
- 3.15 In addition, the Local Government Association have produced a new model Code of Conduct for Members which is being considered, with a report expected to be brought to Council at its meeting in July. Training on the code will be provided for all Members at around that time.
- 3.16 The Government has announced that it will not be in a position to bring forward new legislation to allow the continuation of remote meetings beyond 7th May 2021. Lawyers in Local Government, the Association of Democratic Services Officers and Hertfordshire County Council have brought High Court proceedings for a declaration that remote meetings will continue to be lawful. The hearing is

to take place on 21st April with judgement expected shortly after. Of course, the outcome will be very significant for all local authorities.

Property Services

- 3.17 Government is to bring into law by the end of June 2021 a new carbon emissions reduction target of a 78% reduction over 1990 levels by 2035. This brings forward the previous target and will have the effect of speeding up the need to switch away from fossil fuels to heat and provide hot water to our buildings and move to electrically run heat pumps. Funding is being made available via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for such works, from which we have already secured £1.3m for works to Halton Stadium, hence we need to assess our buildings to establish where further works could be undertaken to help meet this agenda..
- 3.18 There are a number of term contracts that are nearing the end of their contract period as such we are currently going through a procurement process for these to ensure we have new contracts in place once the existing ones expire. The contracts in question are CCTV, Alarm monitoring and maintenance and Asbestos management..

4.0 Risk Control Measures

- 4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Monitoring arrangements. As such Directorate Risk Registers were updated in tandem with the development of the 2020 – 21 Business Plans.
- 4.2 Progress concerning the implementation of any relevant high-risk mitigation measures were reported to the Board at Quarter 2.

5.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 5.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.
- 5.2 The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>







6.0 Performance Overview

- 6.1 The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.
- 6.2 It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget.

- 6.3 Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

Financial Management

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
FS 01a	Report 2020-23 Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2020.	
FS 01b	Report 2020/21 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council - March 2021.	
FS 02c	Provide quarterly monitoring reports on the overall budget to Executive Board.	
FS 03a	Publish the Statement of Accounts following external audit by 31st July 2020.	
FS 04a	Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2020.	
FS 05a	Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2020.	

Supporting Commentary


Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will be reported to Executive Board on 19 November 2020. The financial forecast is being regularly updated. Revenue budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax was reported on 03 March 2021.











2020/21 Q3 overall budget information was reported to Executive Board on 25th February 2021..

As a result of the Covid19 pandemic the deadline for completion of the audit of accounts was deferred to 30 November 2020. The draft Statement of Accounts was provided to the External Auditor on schedule on 28 August 2020. A very positive report was received by the Business Efficiency Board from the external auditor on 24th March regarding the year-end accounts and the Council's value for money assessment. The Council's draft 2019/20 Statement of Accounts were approved and any subsequent additions or amendments will be approved by the Operational Director - Finance, in liaison with the Chair of the Business Efficiency Board

The 2019/20 Treasury Management Policy was approved by Council on 04 March 2020.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 01	Receive an unqualified external audit opinion on the accounts.	Yes	Yes	Awaited	-	

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 02	Receive positive comment (annually) from the External Auditor relating to the financial standing of the Council and the systems of internal financial control.	Yes	Yes	Yes		
FS LI 03	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected	94.75%	94.25%	94.14%		
FS LI 04	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received	98.32%	97.50%	96.18		
FS LI 05	Average time for processing new claims (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction)	16.53	19	16.22		
FS LI 06	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	6.63	7.5	4.82		

Supporting Commentary

External Audit of 2019/20 accounts is being finalised following the draft Statement of Accounts being approved by Business Efficiency Board on 24 March 2021.

The Council's external auditor concluded in the 2019/20 Audit Findings Report that *'The Council operates under significant financial pressures, however, it continues to have effective arrangements in place to routinely monitor its budget and take appropriate action to mitigate against any significant variances or additional calls on resources'*.







Council Tax collection and business rates collection are down by 0.43% and 0.88% respectively when compared to March 2020. The impact of Covid and payment deferral of approximately 4,000 accounts leads to uncertainty in the 2020/21 target being achieved.

Additionally the collection of business rates has fallen by 3.8% when compared to the same period last year and the position reflects that referred to above.

The processing of new claims, and of changes in circumstances, are both showing improvement when compared to the same period last year.

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Service

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
PPPE 01a	Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy May 2019	
PPPE 01c	Regular engagement with service managers to identify areas of challenge and develop appropriate bespoke solutions April, September, December 2020, and March 2021.	
PPPE 01d	Full implementation of Leadership and Management Development Programme September 2020.	
PPPE 02b	Establish 20 new existing employee apprenticeships to enable up-skilling in a range of business areas, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2021	
PPPE 04b	Implement resourcing plans with service management in appropriate areas September 2020.	
PPPE 04c	Ongoing monitoring of agency usage and spend April, September, December 2020, and March 2021.	

Supporting Commentary

The actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy forms the basis of the workplan for the year and a new Organisational Development Strategy for 2020 – 23 has been approved by Executive Board.
















Regular engagement with Service Managers continues and a range of interventions have now been delivered or are in progress to meet operational requirements. Broader COVID-19 related issues are being addressed through increased mental health focused training / signposting.

The delivery of the Leadership and Management Development Programme continues with Cohort 1 (MBA) commenced in Sept 2019 with 10 delegates working with Liverpool John Moores University, funded via Apprenticeship Levy. Cohort 2 (MSc) has commenced in September 2020, on the same basis

25 new Apprenticeship 'conversions' have been established in the period since 1st April 2020. Refer to Key Developments section above for further detail and context.

HR services working with services most affected by COVID-19 pandemic to support resourcing decisions in a post-pandemic environment and additional detail regarding agency usage is provided in the table below.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
PPPE LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (Corporate)	11.66	10	10.02 (Days)		
PPPE LI 03	Percentage of Employees without sickness	66.28	70	73.74%		
PPPE LI 04	Total Full Time Equivalent Staffing Establishment	3,431	For information Only	3,317	For information Only	For information Only
PPPE LI 05	Total Staff (head count)	4,575		4,207		
PPPE LI 06	Total Agency Worker Usage (number of placements – year to date)	655	650	746		
PPPE LI 07	Total Agency Worker Cost (gross cumulative cost – year to date)	£2.216 M	£1.5M	£3.70m (Gross Cost)		
PPPE LI 10	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are: ¹					
	a) Women	61.78	55	63.19%		
	b) from BME communities	3.45	2.0	2.78%		
	c) with a disability	0.9	8.0	0.89%		
PPPE LI 13	Average time to recruit (Applicant Tracking System reported figure)	15 days	15 days	11 (Days)		

Supporting Commentary

Paradoxically, the impact of COVID-19, and changes to working patterns and practices had a positive impact on absence levels although the annual target for working days was marginally missed. The periods of lockdown across the year will inevitably have meant that people were not mixing with others both in and outside of the workplace, reducing the incidence of many illnesses, as well as COVID infection.






Number of agency worker placements and spend has been unavoidably and adversely affected by the COVID situation and the need for additional resources. Please see the emerging issues section of this report for additional contextual information.

With regards to top 5% of earners there is positive movement on part (a) and fluctuation exists in (b) and (c), due to turnover. It should be noted that recruitment in to 5% of earners is very limited, and as such scope for significant change is low.

Average time to recruit is presently within the expected range.

ICT and Administrative Support Services

Key Objectives / milestones







Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
ICT 01a	Continued Enhancement of the virtualization platform to enhanced or new technologies - March 2021 .	
ICT 01b	Further development of Cloud Services Platform - March 2021 .	
ICT 01c	SharePoint and Records Management enhancements - March 2021 .	
ICT 01d	Interactive Web Services Enhancement and further SharePoint Integration - March 2021 .	
ICT 02a	Continuing improvements, enhancements and commercial use of Cloud system - March 2021 .	



Supporting Commentary

The extension of the new desktop facilities continues with over 2,600 Virtual Desktop users now utilising the RDSH Platform and this will continue over the coming months to cover all users.

SharePoint and Records Management enhancements have been successfully implemented with technical upgrades to the server infrastructure being planned in line with the release of vendor software. Web services are now deployed using the latest version of the infrastructure.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.5%	99.00%	100%		
ICT LI02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	100%	99.00%	100%		
ICT LI03	School Support SLA: % of calls responded to within <u>agreed</u> target*:					
	a) Priority 1	100%	85.00%	100%		
	b) Priority 2	99%	90.00%	100%		
	c) Priority 3	100%	95.00%	100%		
	d) Priority 4	100%	95.00%	100%		




Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI04	Average working days from delivery to completion of a new PC.	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	1 Day		

Supporting Commentary

All measures are showing a positive outturn at 2020-21 year-end. With regards to new PC's New procedures are in place, with the advent of a full VDi based workforce all desktop's can be replaced the same day – a process is also in place for home workers to drop off and collect a new device, again a same day service.

Legal & Democracy







Key Objectives / milestones



Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
LD 01	Review constitution - May 2019 .	
LD 02a	To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting where desired.	
LD 02b	To induct all new members by October 2019 .	

Supporting Commentary

The revised Constitution was approved at annual Council as planned and all Members have had the opportunity to have a MAP meeting and the cancellation of the 2020 Elections has meant that no new Members joined the Council.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (56 Total).	55 (98.21%)	56 (100.00%)	55 (98.21%)		
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	10 (Days)		
LD LI 04	Average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department (working days).	3 (Days)	3 (Days)	3 (Days)		


Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 05	% of Executive Board minutes published within 5 working days after the meeting.	100%	100%	100%		

Supporting Commentary

All indicators are showing positive performance at the end of 2020 -21 financial year.

Community & Environment

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
CE 0 1a	Deliver a promotion and educational campaign (school meals) - September 2020 and January 2021 .	

Supporting Commentary

Given the current COVID pandemic no work is likely to be undertaken with schools during this financial year.

Key Performance Indicators






Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 01	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.	TBC	n/a	See comment	n/a	n/a
CE LI 02	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.	TBC	n/a	See comment	n/a	n/a
CE LI 03	Take up of school lunches (%) – primary schools.	TBC	n/a	See comment	n/a	n/a
CE LI 04	Take up of school lunches (%) – secondary schools.	TBC	n/a	See comment	n/a	n/a

Supporting Commentary

The measures cannot be reported as a result of the present COVID situation.

Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
EEP 07a	Proposed new Leisure Centre at Moor Lane – commence works on-site by December 2021	
EEP 07b	Crow Wood Lane assisted living development – commence works on site by April 2021 (subject to budget availability)	
EEP 07 c/d	Deliver all annual corporate and schools programmed maintenance projects by March 2021	
EEP 07e	Millbrow refurbishment – commence works on site by July 2021	
EEP 07f	Complete refurbishment of 71 High Street, Runcorn by September 2021	

Supporting Commentary

Matters have progressed on the leisure centre development as detailed within the key developments section of this report..





Design work is continuing on the Crow Wood Lane scheme and will be worked up to tender stage in due course. Awaiting further input from Client side to progress further.



Education and Corporate Maintenance Programmes delivered as planned.

The Millbrow refurbishment has had to be placed on hold due to the COVID situation although it is hoped as the situation eases it may be possible to recommence works later in 2021.

The High Street project has full planning permission, a contractor is on board and waiting to start on site, however as government have delayed the announcement of the Town Deal grant until after the elections the start date has had to be put back

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 01	Greenhouse gas EEP(GHG) emissions indicator (Tonnes CO ₂ e).	11,730 tonnes CO ₂ e (actual 18/19)	11,613 tonnes CO ₂ e (target 19/20)	11,354 tonnes CO ₂ e (actual 18/19)		
EEP LI 04	Occupancy rates of investment and commercial portfolio.	TBA	TBA	100% Investment and 90% Commercial		

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 05	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	TBA	TBA	93%		

Supporting Commentary

CO2 emissions for 2018/19 amounted to 11,730 tonnes. The emissions for 2019/20 were 11,354 tonnes which equates to a 3.2% overall reduction. Energy consumption did actually increase slightly, which in effect was as a result of the Authority acquiring 2 additional care homes within the accounting period. Emissions fell however as the kw/h-CO₂ conversion factor has been amended to reflect the greater mix of renewable energy being generated the overall CO₂ emissions have reduced.

The breakdown is as follows:- School Buildings 3223t, Corporate buildings 4881t, Unmetered supply 1784t, Fleet Transport 1117t, & Business Mileage 349t. The target for 2020/21 has been set at 11,240 tonnes CO₂e, a 1% reduction.

The annual figure for this indicator is a year behind and therefore only reported in the following year.




The investment and commercial portfolio currently has a number of vacancies –71 High St Runcorn, 6 Church St Runcorn, Frankie and Bennies the Hive, plot at Black Cat and the former bus depot Moor Lane. Marketing has commenced of Frankie and Bennie’s unit and 6 Church St. Refurbishment scheme for 71 High St is under consideration

Tenancy rates have risen in the Market despite COVID. Rent free periods were given to traders during the lockdown periods and the various grants have helped support traders throughout the year.





7.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

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

Direction of Travel Indicator

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