

Public Document Pack



Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 12 June 2023 at 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

S. Young

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Geoffrey Logan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Sandra Baker	Labour
Councillor Victoria Begg	Labour
Councillor Louise Goodall	Labour
Councillor Eddie Jones	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Tony McDermott	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Mike Ryan	Labour
Councillor Aimee Skinner	Labour

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 11 September 2023*

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

Part I

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1. MINUTES	1 - 6
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 or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 23 January 2023 in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), C. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair), Abbott, M. Bradshaw, Bramwell, Carlin, Goodall and Loftus

Apologies for Absence: Councillors V. Hill, Jones and Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Vasic, P. Murphy, A. Jones, J. Farrell, D. Roberts, K. Bazley and S. Ellison

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CYP16 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2022 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CYP17 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CYP18 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The minutes relating to the Children and Young People Portfolio, that had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.</p>	
CYP19 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE UPDATE	
<p>The Board received a report and presentation from the Executive Director of Children's Services, which provided an update of the work undertaken to date following the Ofsted Focused Visit which took place on 13 and 14 October 2021 and the subsequent actions taken in response to their findings.</p>	

The Inspectors looked at the arrangements for Children in Need, including those who were subject to a Child Protection Plan, and their report made several recommendations identified as 'areas of priority action' as outlined in the report.

It was reported that since the inspection steps had been taken to make improvements to the Service, which were outlined to Members. These improvements were overseen by a Children's Improvement Board, with regular reporting arrangements to the Department for Education.

Members were advised of a further focused visit, on 'front door arrangements' carried out on 23 and 24 November 2022. This focused on how the Council responded to contacts, referrals, strategy discussions and child protection processes. Further details on this inspection were provided in the next minute.

RESOLVED: That Members of the Board

- 1) note the steps that have been taken and the role of the Children's Improvement Board; and
- 2) support moving forward the key priorities and actions outlined in the Children's Improvement Plan.

CYP20 OFSTED FOCUSED INSPECTION

The Board received a presentation on the outcome of the Ofsted focussed visit which took place on 23 and 24 November 2022 and the subsequent actions taken in response to their findings.

Members were advised that the focus of the visit was the Council's first response in dealing with contacts and referrals to Children's Social Care and Early Help, including the strategy discussion / S27 process. Inspectors also took the opportunity to review the arrangements for managing allegations against professionals under the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) process and considered the recommendations from previous inspections, most notably the areas for priority action from the last focussed visit in October 2021.

Officers presented the key headlines from the visit and reported that there were no 'areas for priority action' identified, so no serious weaknesses existed in the quality of practice. The next steps were also outlined and discussed and it was noted that any areas for development were now

incorporated into the Improvement and Transformation programme.

The following information was provided in response to Members questions and comments:

- Regarding the recruitment of student social workers, the Council did target colleges and universities and were currently speaking to both;
- Work placements for students did take place in Halton – some work was currently being done with Hope University;
- Details of the areas being incorporated into the transformation programme were discussed – support with the workforce and SEND for example was already happening;
- Ideas on different ways of operating were always welcomed and given consideration; and
- The importance of staff supervision was discussed with regards to its purpose and effectiveness and whether this needed reviewing.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the findings of the Ofsted report; and
- 2) note the update on the improvement actions presented.

CYP21 SUMMARY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING UPDATE

The Board considered a report and received a presentation, which summarised key work taking place locally and at a regional level to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

The presentation gave an overview of work taking place in Halton by a variety of organisations and teams such as: Halton Borough Council; Halton Public Health; NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Halton Place (Integrated Care Board [ICB] formally CCGs); and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Systems (ICS).

Preventative work was carried out by these organisations that aimed to keep children and young people mentally well. The report and presentation described core and statutory services that were available to provide direct interventions and support when children and young people were struggling.

Members' made comments or raised questions and the following information or points of clarification were provided:

- The bereavement support service for adults and children/young people had been extended for 12 months;
- Data relating to the use of services offered by 'Power in Partnership' and 'Nightstop' for 18-24 year olds would be sent following the meeting, as the information was not to hand for the meeting;
- As part of the transformation programme, it was planned that Halton would be included in the digital single point of access in the region;
- Team of Life training – Halton's Educational Psychologists and 30 Emotional Support Literacy Assistants (ELSAs) had accessed this training;
- Nationally people had complained about not being able to get through to crisis lines – this would be checked locally;
- Discussion around low aspirations of children / parents / teachers in some schools / areas in Halton – officers assured that this attitude was always challenged in schools and the Council shared its aspirations / ambitions for pupils regularly;
- Research had shown that 'inherited trauma' was a fact and existed in some families – examples of how nurture could intervene were given;
- The impact of social media on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people was discussed – especially in relation to mobile telephones being used in schools – although recognised by all as a problem it was a cultural issue that was difficult to manage. Officers would raise the matter again with governors at tomorrow's governors meeting; and
- Secondary schools were not on the list of nurturing schools – explained that it was more difficult to offer nurture in secondary settings for many reasons. For example the constant movement of students between classes and having different teachers throughout the day. It was also suggested that there could be some stigma attached to a child in secondary school who was being nurtured.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) receives the presentation; and
- 2) notes the key work and services contributing to the

Executive Director
Children's
Services

positive mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

CYP22 ANNUAL REPORT - COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS RELATING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES 1 APRIL 2020 - 31 MARCH 2021

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services, which presented the Annual Report for comments, complaints and compliments, relating to Children's Social Care Services from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Publication of the Annual Report was a statutory requirement, which provided an analysis on complaints processed under the Children Act 1989 Representation's Procedure and evidenced how feedback from service users had been used to improve service delivery.

The Report also provided Members with compliments made by clients and positive feedback from workers/professionals relating to Children's Services in the People Directorate. The report also demonstrated the positive impact and outcomes on the lives of people accessing services in this Directorate.

Members welcomed the report commenting that compliments were good for staff morale and complaints were not always a bad thing as lessons could be learnt from them. Following Members questions, the following additional information was provided:

- The demand for Children's Services was on the increase in certain areas such as safeguarding and Children in Care, which was up by approximately 15% in the last two years in Halton;
- Each local authority in the Country was different; some maintained their levels of demand and some had seen increases;
- Persistent complainers were on the increase, eg. a complainant contacting more than one person with the same complaint; or one officer being bombarded with complaints from the same person;
- The Council also has a duty of care to the member of staff the complaint is aimed at.

RESOLVED: That the reports presented are accepted are the mechanism by which elected Members can monitor and scrutinise children's social care complaints and compliments.

CYP23 SUFFICIENCY DUTY REPORT 2022-2023 (PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS THE CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT REVIEW (CSA))

The Board received the Sufficiency Duty Report for 2022-23 (previously known as the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Review) CSA.

It was noted that Sections 6 and 7 of *The Childcare Act (2006)* and the associated statutory guidance: *Early Education and Childcare – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (March 2018)*, requires all local authorities in England to undertake and provide an annual childcare sufficiency report to elected Council Members, on how they were meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and to make it available to the public.

The report detailed achievements since the last review and outlined Halton's current position for Members. It also highlighted any gaps in provision and how these were being addressed. The report shared the longer term effects of how Covid-19 was affecting the childcare sector. It was noted that despite the impact of Covid-19, the childcare market in Halton continued to be secure and sustainable, although there were some concerns amongst providers regarding the future with the rising cost of living.

Members welcomed the report; it was noted that from 1 April there would be an increase in the national minimum wage, so this could affect some childcare providers going forward.

RESOLVED: That Members approve the revised Sufficiency Duty Report (previously known as the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment).

Meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 12 June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services

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 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None identified.

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

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

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The minutes relating to the Children and Young People Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this 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 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None identified.

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

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

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2023**EXB62 | SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2024-25 – KEY DECISION**

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Children’s Services, which requested the approval of the School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Schemes, for admission to primary and secondary schools, including Academy, Free School and Voluntary Controlled schools for the September 2024 intake.

The Board was advised that in October 2022, the Local Authority issued a statutorily required consultation on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2024 intake for primary and secondary schools (attached as appendices 1 and 2 respectively). The primary scheme also included the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools for whom the Local Authority was the admission authority.

The report provided details of the consultation, which ran until 11 November 2022; no responses to the consultation were received. Additionally, no amendments to the oversubscription criteria were suggested, as these worked well and met the requirements of the Department for Education’s School Admissions Code.

It was noted that all Halton’s secondary schools were either academies, free schools or voluntary aided and were therefore their own admission authorities, with responsibility for consulting and determining their own admissions criteria and their own Published Admission Number (PAN).

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision was statutorily required.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Other options considered and rejected included the allocation of places to community and voluntary controlled schools through random allocation (lottery), as this method could be seen as arbitrary and random.

Implementation Date

The Policy and co-ordinated schemes would apply for the September 2024 academic intake.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Schemes, for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2024/25 academic year.

EXB63	CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2023/24 – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children’s Services, which provided a summary of the capital funding received by the Council from central Government to support Schools Capital Programmes for 2023/24.

The Board was advised that the Department for Education (DfE) had not announced the School Condition Allocation Capital Grant for 2023/24 however, given the timescales for some of the proposed capital projects, there was a requirement to present this report, so it was compiled using the 2022/23 allocation, which was £747,836.

The report set out details of the indicative funding available to support capital projects across the schools estate and also explained how the School Condition Allocation would be utilised.

Reason(s) for Decision

To deliver and implement the Capital Programmes.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Implementation Date

Capital Programmes for 2023/24 would be implemented with effect from 1 April 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the position regarding capital funding from the Department for Education for 2023/24 be noted;
- 2) the proposals to be funded from the School Condition Capital Allocation be approved; and
- 3) the capital allocations are put forward for inclusion in the budget report to full Council be approved.

EXB64	CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE’S SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICES: RECOMMISSIONING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHESHIRE & MERSEYSIDE ICS – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children’s Services, which requested authorisation to recommission Children and Young

People’s Speech and Language Therapy services in partnership with NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB), with the new contract to start in August 2023.

A comprehensive consultation with a broad range of stakeholders on the requirements of the new service was currently taking place and the service specification for the new contract would be costed following conclusion of the consultation exercise.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the recommissioning of the service in partnership with NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2023

EXB109	HIGH NEEDS PROVISION CAPITAL ALLOCATION – PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY PROVISION – KEY DECISION
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children’s Services, which advised that in March 2022, the Council had received notification from the Department of Education that it would be allocated £3.3m in capital funding over a two year period, to support the provision of new places and/or to expand existing provision for pupils and students with high needs. The report set out the progress to date and sought approval for the proposals made with regard to expanding the special educational needs and disability provision in Halton.

Reason(s) for Decision

The Council is required to demonstrate appropriate identification of need against spend from the High Needs Capital Allocation Grant. To deliver and implement the capital programmes.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Implementation Date

It is intended that the first phase of additional provision could be offered from September 2023, the next phase from January 2024, and the remainder from September 2024.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approves in principle the proposals for the additional Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision and the issuing of statutory notices for those schools where applicable – detailed in Appendix A.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	June 12 th 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Corporate Director, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
PORTFOLIO:	Leader
SUBJECT:	The Big Conversation Update
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To share with the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board the approach to 'The Big Conversation', which is integral to formulating a new Council Corporate Plan, to take effect from April 2024.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) that the Children, Young People & Families Policy and Performance Board endorses the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'.

3.1 Background

It was agreed at Management Team on February 21st 2023 and at Executive Board on March 16th 2023 that we would provide adequate opportunity for meaningful consultation and ultimately produce a Corporate Plan which is totally unique and meaningful to the people of Halton.

- 3.2 This would take the form of 'The Big Conversation' and would incorporate the opportunity for all to feedback via hard copy form, electronically or face to face, between now and the end of the year.

3.3 The Big Conversation: Reimagine Halton - we don't have all the answers!

'The Big Conversation' is all about engaging with the public so that they understand the challenges that the Council is facing.

It is an approach between the Council and everyone who lives or works in Halton to work together in order to create an improved borough in all aspects of everyday life.

3.4 Corporate Plan Survey Themes:

- Effective support for all those in need
- A strong and vibrant economy bringing prosperity to all
- Strong, safe and happy communities that can shape their future
- A Cleaner and greener environment
- Active, healthy and longer lives for all

3.5 Survey Questions:

- What do you think of the 5 themes?
- What can you do to help us to achieve these?
- What can the Council do to achieve these?
- Are there any other themes that you think are missing?
- Ideally, how do you want to access Council services?
- Any other comments?

Targeted engagement of different audiences, for example, Children and Young People: What would make Halton a better place for you to play, live and grow up?

3.6 Data Analysis

All feedback and responses will be scrutinised and evaluated. The 2 facilitators from North West Employers (used in December 2022) will then be invited back to meet with members from both Management Team and Executive Board in order to work through this, summarise accordingly and establish a number of key objectives, which in turn will form the organisation's new Corporate Plan.

3.7 Revised Timescales:

- January – March 2023: Update Management Team/Executive Board and also communicate with the wider audience, namely Divisional Manager's and all elected members
- May – December 2023: The Big Conversation takes place
- May – June 2023: consult HBC Workforce
- December 2023 – January 2024: analyse data and identify the key learning points/issues
- January – March 2024: compose the Corporate Plan and seek approval
- April 2024: the New Corporate Plan is launched

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific policy implications at this stage; however ultimately

there will be a new contemporary and relevant Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is a potential financial implication around the resources required for the delivery of 'The Big Conversation' and the evaluation of the data and qualitative content that it results in.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan is Halton Borough Council's key strategic document. This plan sets out the main vision, themes and values of the Council.

'The Big Conversation' will help to determine the Council's new set of priorities, which will be translated into the plan.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The major risk is that we do nothing and roll out the same priorities as we have done in previous years. To this end the current Corporate Plan is a losing relevance and doesn't fully engage with either the workforce or the people of Halton in the contemporary environment.

- 7.2 The Council is serious about 'Reimagining Halton' aligned with that commitment, this is a perfect opportunity to undertake a meaningful piece of work which will engage the people of Halton and together with our workforce determine a set of new priorities, which will make a difference and take Halton forward over the next 3 – 5 years.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Equality and Diversity may well be a specific Corporate Plan priority, but if not then it will certainly underpin the Plan. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the policy development process.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 At this stage there is nothing specific to highlight within the context of this report; however there is a distinct possibility that as a result of 'The Big Conversation' climate implications will form one, or a key part of one, of the Council's key priorities.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix A: The Big Conversation PowerPoint Presentation



**The Big
Conversation
update....**



Background

The Big Conversation is all about engaging with the public so that they understand the challenges that the Council is facing.

It is an approach between the Council and those who live or work in Halton to work together in order to create an improved borough in all aspects of everyday life.

It also links to 'Reimagine Halton' which will see the Council looking in detail at what we do, how we do it and why we do it – and whether taking a different approach could be more efficient, productive or deliver a better outcome.

www.halton.gov.uk



Consultation

* Different consultation approaches will be utilised dependent on the audience – consultation tools will range from an on-line questionnaire, to iwalkers, along with attendance in person at various forums and meetings. These will also be available offline via libraries, community centres, one stop shops, etc.

* In the first instance we`ll be sending out an on-line survey.

* It is important that we provide some framing to the questions we are asking in order to manage expectations.

Consultation

- Background to the Big Conversation – creation of a web page, a user friendly place to hold some of the background information in terms of key data, statutory and discretionary responsibilities.

List of Stakeholders:

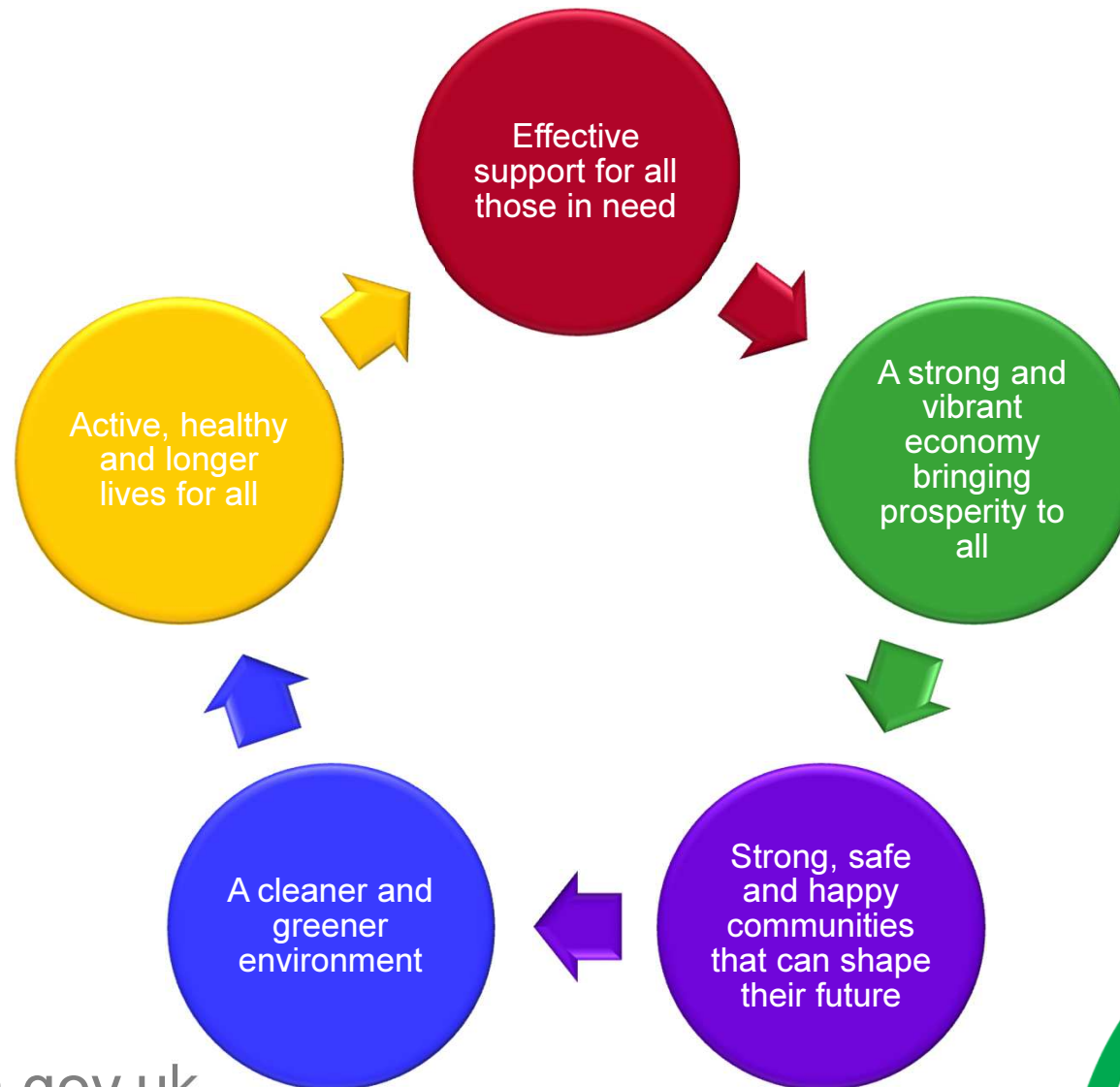
Public/customers, HBC Workforce, Elected Members, Partners, Voluntary Sector, Community Sector, Independent Sector, Businesses, Schools (Heads), Hard to Reach Groups – eg. children and young people/refugees/asylum seekers/travellers/disabled people/people with mental health/minority ethnic groups

Local Authority 'Corporate Plan' suggested themes

In order that the survey doesn't consist of a 'blank sheet' or a 'wish list', highlighting generic themes provides a starting point leading to more meaningful comments and discussion.

These were established via evidence based data from within the Council, along with an in-depth trawl of numerous existing Local Authority Corporate Plans across the country.

'Corporate Plan' Survey Themes



www.halton.gov.uk



The Survey Questions:

- What do you think of the 5 themes?
- What can you do to help us to achieve these?
- What can the Council do to achieve these?
- Are there any other themes that you think are missing?
- Ideally, how do you want to access Council services?
- Any other comments?

Targeted engagement of different audiences, eg. Children and Young People: What would make Halton a better place for you to play, live and grow up?

Publicity & Promotion

- Initially targeting HBC staff (two thirds reside within the Borough – will help to spread the word)
- Inside Halton magazine (June edition)
- Members Briefings & attendance at PPB`s
- iWalkers
- Stickers on Council vehicles eg. Bin lorries
- Constant monitoring throughout

Revised Timescales

- January – March 2023: Update Management Team/Executive Board and also communicate with the wider audience, namely Divisional Manager`s and all elected members
- May – December 2023: The Big Conversation takes place
- May – June 2023: consult HBC Workforce
- December 2023 – January 2024: analyse data and identify the key learning points/issues
- January – March 2024: compose the Corporate Plan and seek approval
- April 2024: the New Corporate Plan is launched

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	12 th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Operational Director, Children's Social Care and Early Help
PORTFOLIO:	Children and Young People
SUBJECT:	Children's Social Care Update
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Members of the Board to receive a presentation detailing the work undertaken to date in relation to the Children's Services Improvement Plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Board:

- i) Note the current position on progress in relation to the requirements as set out by the Department for Education in the Notice of Improvement issued to the Council;
- ii) Moving forward the key priorities and actions outlined in the Children's Improvement Plan.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Children's Services continues to operate under the auspices of an Notice of Improvement issued by the Department for Education in January 2022. This followed the Ofsted Focused Visit completed in October 2021. As such, the Council as required under the conditions of the Notice of Improvement to have an Improvement Plan, whilst also operating with a Children's Improvement Board.
- 3.2 The Improvement Plan is currently being reviewed to ensure that it is aligned with the findings from the most recent Ofsted Focused Visit completed in November 2022, along with the Department for Education 12 month review of the Improvement Notice that was reported to the Council in March 2023. The findings from the latest Ofsted Focused Visit were reported to Members of this Board in January 2023, therefore this information will not be repeated in this report.

3.3 The Department for Education reported the outcome of the 12 month review of the Children's Service Improvement Plan on 14 March 2023. The main highlights in the report included:

- The Council had made stronger progress since June 2022 towards improving the quality of social work practice;
- The improvements and transformations required in Children's Services is better understood and it has been prioritised within the Council;
- Morale had improved across the social care workforce and there was a sense of improved optimism about the way forward;
- Staff commented about the increased visibility of senior leaders, but there was work still to do to support engagement and communication with the workforce;
- Workforce continues to be an issue. Whilst there is a level of stability amongst the workforce, it remain too heavily reliant upon agency social workers, whilst challenges remain in supporting permanent social work recruitment;
- Progress has been slow in the development of partnership working across agencies in the borough. This was primarily linked to personnel changes amongst key officers across the agencies, in addition to the arrangements for the Safeguarding Partnership not proving effective.

3.4 Several priorities for the Council have been set by the Department for Education, and these are detailed below:

- **Workforce capacity and stability** – Strengthen the recruitment processes in Halton and ensure there is corporate support to increase the number of new permanent social workers in Halton.
- **Partnership working** – Develop the safeguarding partnership in line with the Adviser's recommendations. In particular, strengthen the strategic local safeguarding children's partnership arrangements, including developing the partnership response to child exploitation and the relationship with schools.
- **Practice model and social work practice** – With support from Warrington, implement your plan for systemic social work practice in Halton and ensure this is embedded throughout all areas of the service and with partners. Ensure there is a relentless focus on improving practice and developing the Council's approach to audit to inform practice improvements.
- **Communication and engagement** – Review Halton's internal and external communication and engagement to ensure that staff and partners are well informed and are on the journey with the Council. This is particularly important to the success of implementing the systemic practice model.

3.5 The Children's Services Improvement Plan is being refreshed to

ensure it covers the latest findings and priorities as set out in the Department for Education review. The refreshed Children's Improvement plan and road map will be brought to the next PPB for challenge and scrutiny

3.6 It's recognised that there is still much work to be completed to ensure the Council is confident that it has met the requirements of the Improvement Notice, and the findings from Ofsted inspection reports.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None identified.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None identified.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Having a strong and robust framework for identifying and responding across all agencies is the key to ensuring that children and young people are safe and protected, and partners are clear about their responsibilities and role in working together.

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

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi-agency support is in place to support them.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Children who are at risk of harm are identified quickly and services work together to minimise the risk of harm and take action to formally protect children in a timely way.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 All key stakeholders are committed to working together to ensure a

robust and consistent approach to protect children in Halton.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Issues arising from a child's equality and diversity needs will inform the decision-making at the point of contact and it will be ensured that the voice of the child is to the forefront.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None identified.

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

10.1 None.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12 th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency
WARDS:	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates the Board on the progress to date on expanding the SEND provision within Halton, and next steps, following receipt of a £3.3M capital allocation from the Department for Education.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

(1) The Policy & Performance Board note the information provided.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following notification from the Department for Education that Halton would be allocated £3.3M of capital funding (High Needs Provision Capital Allocation) to support the provision of new places or to expand existing provision for pupils and students with high needs, officers wrote to all schools to seek expressions of interest from them to offer new or additional SEND provision at their school, based against need identified within the local authority. Responses were received from nine schools initially, and seven of those expressions of interest met the need identified and were agreed for progression/consideration to the Executive Board.
- 3.2 At the Executive Board meeting on 20th April 2023, the Board agreed to progressing to statutory consultation for five schools where the SEND provision would be new provision (Saints Peter & Paul Catholic High School, Astmoor Primary School, Victoria Road Primary School, St Basil's Catholic Primary school, and Westfield Primary School), and also agreed to the expansion of provision at two further schools who already have existing SEND provision (Woodside Primary School and Oakfield Primary School), utilising the Department for Education High Needs capital funding for all of the proposed capital works. The Board also agreed to the progression of capital works at those two Halton primary schools who already offered specialist provision and were not

subject to statutory consultation (Oakfield Primary School in Widnes, and Woodside Primary School in Runcorn). Subject to final approval by the Executive Board, an initial circa 100 additional SEND places will be made available through this new provision.

- 3.3 The Board were also advised that officers were due to hold discussions with other schools in Halton with regard to the expansion of their existing SEND provision and would report back to the Executive Board accordingly. Discussions have happened at Ashley School, Widnes, and Kingsway Academy, Widnes, both of whom have offered to also expand their current SEND provision.
- 3.4 At the time of writing this report, the statutory consultation process is at a mid-point (running from 10th May 2023 and closing on 7th June 2023) and in addition to the on-line consultation, officers and Head Teachers are undertaking public consultation meetings at Saints Peter & Paul Catholic High School, Astmoor Primary School, Victoria Road Primary School, St Basil's Catholic Primary school, and Westfield Primary School, where any agreed SEND provision will be new provision.
- 3.5 Following completion of the statutory consultation, and an analysis of responses, a further report will be taken back to the Executive Board.
- 3.6 Attached as Appendix A are details of the SEND provision each school intends to offer.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The proposed programme of works will ensure that the Council can continue to offer and expand its in-borough special educational needs provision wherever possible, helping to reduce expensive out-borough placement and transport costs, and meet need more locally within Halton.
- 4.2 The Council has a duty under the Department for Education's Special educational needs and disability code of practice 2015 to support high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN, with a focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning. Through the offer of more localised specialist provision, the local authority can further build on its existing provision and continue to demonstrate the fulfilment of its duties in accordance with the code.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All projects proposed will be funded from the High Need Provision Capital Allocation Grant allocated to the Council by the Department for Education.

- 5.2 By investing in additional SEND provision in-borough, either through expansion of existing provision, or through completely new provision at existing schools, the Council will reduce its High Needs expenditure, which is currently funded through the High Needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, a significant amount of which is currently spent on out of borough provision. It is important that preventative action is taken now to help reduce financial costs to the Council in the future, and by retaining Halton resident pupils at local provision, this will help drive down placement and travel costs for the Council longer term.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Capital Programme will support continuing demand for in-borough special educational needs provision, allowing Halton resident pupils to remain in-borough where possible.

The Strategy will also support the SEND strategic plan to increase sufficiency of inclusive, educational provision in borough. Expanding the in borough offer will also support children and young people with SEND to achieve their aspirations and achieve strong outcomes, fulfilling their potential.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

As above.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

N/A.

6.4 A Safer Halton

N/A.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

N/A

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The demand for specialist support for children and young people with SEND is increasing, and places are currently limited within the borough. By expanding existing provision, and creating additional places, children can receive the support they need within the borough and help to reduce expenditure within the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The proposals meet any requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None identified.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
High Needs Provision Allocation 2022-24 Department for Education	People Directorate	Catriona Gallimore
Special educational needs and disability code of practice 2015	People Directorate	Catriona Gallimore

Expressions of Interest to proceed to feasibility stage and Statutory Notice publication (where applicable)

School	Designation	Provision Offer	Statutory Notice Required
Astmoor Primary	Primary	Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 Social Emotional and Mental Health Resource Base 14 places in total	Yes – as new provision
Oakfield Primary	Primary	Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 Speech Language and Communication Needs and Complex Needs Resource Base 20 places in total (in addition to existing provision)	No as this is an expansion of existing provision
St Basil's Catholic Primary School	Primary	Early Years Foundation Stage Assessment area and Early Years Foundation Stage /Key Stage 1 Complex needs Resource Base 16 places in total	Yes – as new provision
Saints Peter and Paul Catholic High School	Secondary	Key Stage 3 & Key Stage 4 Autistic Spectrum Condition - High functioning Unit 16 places in total	Yes – as new provision.
Victoria Road Primary	Primary	Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 Social Emotional and Mental Health Resource Base 12 places in total	Yes – as new provision
Westfield Primary	Primary	Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 Speech Language and Communication Needs Resource Base 12 places in total	Yes – as new provision
Woodside Primary	Primary	Key Stage 1 Social Emotional and Mental Health Resource Base (as the school already have a Key Stage 2 Resource Base) 7 places in total (in addition to existing provision)	No as this is an expansion of existing provision

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12 th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Operational Director for Education, Inclusion and Provision,
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Report for Quarter 3 2022/23
WARD(S)	Borough wide

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 third quarter period 01 September 2022 to 31st December 2022.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022/23 were agreed by Members and included in the Business Plan, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Education, Inclusion, Provision Services
 - Children and Families 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 third quarter's 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 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Have a strong and robust framework for identifying and responding across all agencies is key to supporting children and young people, and partners are clear about their responsibilities and role in working together.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Having a strong and robust framework to ensure that children, young people and families are supported in their learning and future employment and skills development.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi- agency support is in place to support them.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Children who are at risk of harm are identified quickly and services work together to minimise the risk of harm and take actions to formally protect children in a timely way.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable.

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

None within the meaning of the Act.

Children and Young People Priority Based PPB Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 3 2022-23

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress that have occurred during the period of the report towards the priority of Children and Young People (CYP). The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 1 (section 8).
- 1.2 Please note initials have been provided to indicate which officer is responsible for the commentary to aid Members, as requested by the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board. A key is provided in Appendix 1 (section 8).

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 Internships Work

Internships Work is a new project which plans to enable 4500 young adults, aged 16-25 with additional needs, to benefit from a supported internship per year by 2025. Supported internships are a structured, work-based study programme for young people who have an education, health and care plan. The core element of the supported internship is work placement, facilitated by the support of a job coach.

The Internships Work project is funded by the Department for Education. Halton have been accepted to be part of the project. The first action the Department for Education want to see is the development of an employer forum, seeing effective employer engagement as the key success factor in establishing a supported internship programme. JF

2.2 Halton Borough Council Traineeship opportunities for young people leaving care

Halton's Virtual School, 14-19 Team, Policy, People, Performance and Efficiency Division, Power in Partnership training provider and several teams within the Council are working together to provide traineeship opportunities for a small group of young people leaving care. A traineeship is a course designed to prepare young people aged 16-24 years old for their future careers, giving them a chance to practice skills and become 'work ready' by spending some of the course time in work experience placements.

The first traineeships are due to start in the spring term as a pilot project. Since first developing the work, the Government have announced traineeship funding will change from August 2023. The success of the first wave of traineeships and the impact of the funding change will be evaluated before developing next steps for the project. JF

2.3 High Need Provision Capital

On the 29th March 2022 the Department for Education announced that Halton would receive £1,771,998 in 2022/23 and £1,552,357 in 2023/24 giving a total budget of £3,324,355 High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA). This funding is to support the provision of new places or improve existing provision for pupils and students with high needs. The Local Authority is currently consulting with schools with regard to proposals to expand some of its specialist provision within borough, and will then evaluate any proposals received, and a report will be submitted to the Executive Board outlining the proposals once confirmed should there be a need to agree any significant capital works from this funding under the programme. By enhancing SEND provision within borough the intent is to help ensure Halton

children attend Halton schools, rather than having to attend expensive specialist educational provision out-borough, which will also assist in reducing out of borough transport costs. JF

2.1 Safeguarding Children in Education Officer

The Safeguarding Children in Education Officer was appointed in Q3 and begins in January 2023. They will be line managed by the Headteacher of the Virtual School and work closely with school leaders, colleagues within EIP and multi-agency safeguarding partners. JF

2.2 Virtual School

The new Virtual School Headteacher has established themselves into the role and made strong links with colleagues across Education and Social Care. A new termly deadline for Personal Education Plans (PEP) completion has been implemented to allow greater opportunity for analysis, pupil progress reviews and identification of children causing concern, resulting in 100% of Early Years and Primary PEPs completed in time and 96% of secondary PEPS (compared to 91% in autumn 2021). A PEP for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) has also been embedded for 16-18, with a further rollout to 18+ expected in early 2023. JF

2.3 Family hubs

Excitingly Halton is one of 75 local authorities to be eligible for Family Hub funding to transform existing provision into family hubs model and framework. DM for early help is the strategic lead for coordinating this and working closely with all partners to deliver the new model. A steering group has been set up and will oversee the sign up and the delivery plan for submission on 27th January. Governance structure of accountability has been suggested and ready for management sign off. The vision is that an Early Help Partnership board will be established that will offer scrutiny, challenge and support to many streams of work within early help and prevention including family hubs, supporting families, right to succeed, early help assessments, reducing parental conflict and parenting. PM

2.4 PAUSE

Pause in Halton is now well established and the first graduation took place on 20th January. The programme works with women who have previously had 2 or more children removed from their care. In September the annual event and celebration was held with huge success. The project has already made significant impact on the women and really made a difference to their lives. Evidence already shows positive outcomes including women moving into adult education and gaining employment. A sustainability and cost avoidance report has now been submitted for LA and Partner agency strategic leaders to review and commit funding to secure the project in Halton for a further 3 years. PM

2.5 Corporate Parenting

The Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy is being reviewed for the period 2023 -26. Consultation is currently underway with children and young people, along with key partner agencies and staff in Children's Service. Arrangements for the Corporate Parenting Board have been reviewed with the implementation of revised governance structures. Officers are currently engaging with the Local Government Association to strengthen the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities. PM

2.6 Quality Assurance

Arrangements to strengthen performance and quality assurance arrangements in Children Social Care have recently been introduced. This coincided with the finding from the Ofsted Focused Visit (November 2022). An organisation specialising in quality assurance work, Audit

to Excellence have been commissioned to work alongside officers for a 12 month period to strengthen existing arrangements. PM

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Children in Care

The most significant challenge in Children’s Social Care is the continuing increase in the numbers of children in care which is placing several challenges on the Service, including staffing resources, the availability of placements and the financial pressure on budgets. The Service is looking to strengthen aspects of social work practice, and also to review support services. A particular focus is on strengthening the quality and effectiveness of permanence planning for children in care and there is now revised arrangements in place to support management oversight. In addition, a revised ‘edge of care’ offer is being developed to support children and young people at risk of harm to remain living within their families, where it is safe for them to do so.



Free School Provision




3.2 Halton and St Helen’s were successful in an application to DFE to develop a new SEMH Free School Provision. This was due to open in Halton in September 2022. Unfortunately due to a range of factors and ongoing delays due to site issues, DFE delays, the school will not now open until September 2024. This will impact on number of SEMH places available and hence alternative ways of sourcing such provision are being sought with the wider system. Expressions of interest are being sought to expand provision across Halton with the school sector.

4.0 Performance Overview



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













Objective: Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective multi-agency early intervention (PED01)







Ref	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of early help assessments (MAP/PRE MAP) health/education and other partners are leading on (financial year cumulative to end of quarter Val Armor)	484 all MAP	N/A	365 MAP		N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</i>						
PED01 02	Improve overall attendance at schools: Primary –Pri PRU – PRU	LA - 91.18% Primary – 93.25%	95%	Primary: 93.61%		


	Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total	Secondary- 88.92% Special 85.49% PRU 59.09%	Secondary: 90.38% Special: 86.56% Pru: 66.01%		
Supporting Commentary: <i>Debbie Houghton /Scott Middlehurst</i> Attendance has slightly improved across the LA for secondary, primary, special schools and the PRU so the direction of travel is positive.					
	Milestones	Quarterly Progress			
Ref:					
PED01a	Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools. Debbie Houghton (March 2023)				
Supporting commentary: <i>Debbie Houghton.</i> The direction of travel is positive and we have seen slight improvements in attendance across schools in Halton. The Education Welfare Service (EWS) is continuing to work with schools, parents and other agencies to identify and address the barriers to attendance. All high schools and the vast majority of special schools currently trade with the EWS to support with attendance, however going forward there will be a need for EWS to deliver more services as part of a statutory model in line with DfE Guidance ' Working Together to Improve School Attendance '. This will build on current best practice and further develop partnership working to remove the barriers to school attendance.					
PED01b	Implement Pause project and support women to make positive choices, improving their relationships with their children and preventing further children being taken into care. (Val Armor March 2023)				
Supporting commentary: <i>Val Armor</i> <i>PAUSE in Halton is now over 12 months old and we have celebrated an annual event showcasing the superb work that is being carried out. The project is already having a significant positive impact on the lives of the women involved. The first cohort of women graduated on 20th Jan 23 at a wonderful ceremony highlighting their achievements over the last 18 months. The next step is to find funding from partners and the LA to continue with this offer. A sustainability and cost avoidance report has been submitted to management to consider as part of The Invest to Save model within the transformation team.</i>					
PED01c	Revise Halton's parental offer that will include further developmental of reducing parental conflict training (Val Armor March 2023)				
Supporting commentary: <i>Val Armor</i> <i>The Parenting officer has been in post since January 2022 and now all referrals for parenting go to one central point. This has made it much easier for partners to understand. There has been one parenting event so far in June 2022 and this will be on a rolling programme so partners in the borough are aware of all of the parenting offer. Talks are still in place with IT to develop our own parenting hub. The reducing parental conflict programme has been rolled out over the past 2 years and over 160 workers have been trained. The aim is to embed this work into the everyday work of frontline practitioners. A new partnership with Amnity (training provider) has been established and the parenting coordinator will become a train the trainer and roll this programme out in the next quarter. The success in this parenting role has resulted in the need to look for further funding to have an assistant parenting role to help with the delivery and coordination of the parenting hub. The borough continues to embed nurture principles through all of our parenting work across the workforce</i>					

Objective: Keeping Children and Young People safe by improving practice (PED02)





Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 01	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (Forecast annualised rate at end of financial year)	458	500 (Full year)	448 (year to end Q3)		
Supporting commentary: <i>Liz Davenport</i> <i>Halton's referrals rate per 10,000 is above regional comparators however overall below statistical neighbours. Aug-22 and Sept-22 are now showing above all comparators but has settled below for Dec-2022. Referral numbers in the last six months have increased by 3% when compared to the six months previously.</i>						





Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
<p>The safeguarding contacts rise is 16% for the same periods. Police continue to be the highest referring agency at 34% of all referrals from January 2023 CHAT.</p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need (open cases) per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	360	380	385		
<p><u>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport</u> CIN has decreased since January 2022, falling below our 2020/21 outturn since May-22The six months back from Dec-21 is 11% lower than the six months to June-22. It is worth noting that the figures are made up of those with a CIN plan completed and not those in assessment and waiting for CIN Plan to be completed, should that be the concluding outcome. There has been clear focus from July '22 onwards relating to those CIN cases that have been open for nine months or longer. Panels to review all CIN cases with a plan over nine months have proven effective in establishing case direction, i.e. step-down to EH/universal services or escalation. This has resulted, in part, to CIN numbers reducing specifically around September and October, and now to its lowest level within a 12 month period in December 2022.</p>						
PED02 03	Monitor the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	59	45	61		
<p>At the end of Q2, there was a 10% reduction in individual child protection plans compared to the beginning of Q1 this was not a sustained downward trend and numbers per 10,000 have increased again to a level comparable to Q1. Rates per 10,000 show. Halton as above NW comparators but below Statistical neighbours.</p>						
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	107	90	136		
<p><u>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport</u> Halton have remained above all comparators for CLA for the past 12 months with a 5% increase to Oct-22 to Dec-2022. The number of children in care has been impacted by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children as the LA. In December 2022 there were 22 USAC accounting for 5.6% of the CLA population The projection for year-end figure is this number will reduce to 15 young people once they reach the age of adulthood. However, the Council will retain financial responsibility once they become adults as they have entitlements under Leaving Care duties, whilst still awaiting a 'right to remain' decision from the Home Office. On average over the last 13 months 12 children started a period of care, with nine ceasing per month. In the last 6 months 82 children have entered care, eight of those children and young people had been previously looked after.</p> <p>63 children and young people left care in previous six month, of which 8% were due to a successful adoption and 16% due to the making of a Special Guardianship Order. We have more males than females in care and significantly more children aged between 11-15 years. The number of children accommodated under s.20 has reduced slightly this month however, we continue to have a high number of children subject to an Interim Care Order-i.e. still in care proceedings where their future in care of the LA is yet to be determined.</p>						
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	132	68	114		
<p><u>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport</u> Legal advice meetings continue to add scrutiny to ensuring the threshold for care is met, with cases being diverted under pre proceedings protocol to manage level of intervention rather than when it's safe to do so. The legal process is currently being revised to introduce legal panels to promote additional scrutiny, the final decision for any child entering care remains with the OD. Further work is underway to review those children already in the care system to ensure their care plan reflects their needs, including the suitability of reunification to birth family, or alternative legal order, including special guardianship.</p>						
	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	23	18	20		
<p><u>Supporting commentary Linda Evans</u></p>						
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	71%	85%	53%		
<p><u>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt</u> For this period, there have been 78 return interviews completed with 88 young people by the commissioned service. 45% of young people completed a return interview and 67% were completed within 72 hours, this is a decline from the previous</p>						

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
quarter and includes the Christmas holidays. The Declines for return interviews were 97 incidents by 47 young people over half were declined a point of contact.						
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	38	N/A	4		N/A
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt</p> <p>For this reporting period, there has been a total of 193 notifications. There have been four young people with repeat missing incidents. These four young people have made five or more incidents during the quarter, accounted for 30% of all missing incidents in the quarter. 5% of all young people for the quarter are within the repeat cohort which is made up of 2 males (1 Care, 1 Home) and 2 females (both Care) With You directly engaged with all of the young people in the repeat cohort this quarter.</p>						
PED02 09	Reduce the number of children who go missing in the year (number of children recorded as missing in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	243	N/A	88		N/A
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt</p> <p>There has been an increase 13% of missing incidents from 220 to 193, as well as an increase of 6% young people 83 to 88. It continues to be the case that the majority (44%) of CYP reported missing are residing at home, following the trend seen in the previous quarters. The significant reasons that CYP reported as their main reasons/trigger for going missing this quarter were boundary issues (Home & Care), direct family conflict, substance misuse and issues at school. Looking at the professional reasons identified within the return home interview alongside this, these reasons were largely agreed with, however peer pressure was identified by the professional completing the return home interview as a key trigger for CYP going Missing From Home.</p>						
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	15	20	12		
<p>Supporting commentary: Linda Evans</p> <p>The number of children recorded as at risk of child sexual exploitation is 12. A recent peer review including case audits has identified the need to work collectively with partner agencies review pathways and assessments, including the running of Child sexual exploitation group to ensure all Criminal Exploitation cases are robustly and multi-agency managed by a robust pathway and risk assessment.</p>						
PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	36	12	22		
<p>Supporting commentary: Linda Evans</p> <p>There are 22 children recorded as at risk of criminal exploitation which is a decrease from 27 last month. . A recent peer review including case audits has identified the need to collectively with partner agencies review pathways and assessments, including the running of Child sexual exploitation group to ensure all CE cases are robustly and multi-agency managed by a robust pathway and risk assessment.</p>						











Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service, social workers, managers and senior leaders. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy</p> <p>This work is now underway. The Council continues to be supported by Warrington Council Children's Services under the Department for Education Sector Led Improvement Programme. Whilst the plan is in place and work has begun to implement systemic practice, evidence of it becoming embedded in work to support children and families isn't likely to be evident until autumn 2023.</p>		

PED02b	Review and update Workforce Strategy in line with the Knowledge and Skills framework and the Professional Capabilities Framework. Developing the competencies, skills and knowledge of the workforce making them motivated, stable and ambitious will improve the outcomes for families and keep them at the heart of everything we do. <i>Peter Murphy</i> (March 2023)					
<i>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy</i> A workforce strategy for social workers now exists. The action plan is an ongoing piece of work. The Council has approved the Halton Offer to support recruitment and retention amongst social workers. The workforce strategy will be reliant upon a 'grown your own approach' that will likely mean developing an inexperienced workforce through the recruitment of newly qualified social workers. The Service is also looking at other options, including working with Higher Education Institutes with responsibility for providing social work training programmes, supporting an apprenticeship scheme, whilst increasing the number of placements to student social workers. The Service was recently successful in its submission to Frontline Organisations which is Government funded programme supporting the training of graduates to becoming qualified social workers. Whilst there continues to be an over-reliance on agency staffing across the Service, overall the workforce is relatively stable.						
PED02c	Implement revised structure for children and need service to ensure better resilience and management accountability to provide a safe and structured environment for social workers. (Peter Murphy)					
<i>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy</i> A decision was made with the support of the Department for Education in June 2022 to pause any proposed restructure until there had been a period of stability or until such point there had been a further Focused Visit or inspection by Ofsted. Now this has happened in November 2022, work has begun to re-design service structures. This work is likely to be completed by May/ June 2023.						
PED02d	Implement revised quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice (Peter Murphy)					
<i>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy</i> The Service is updating its Performance and Quality Assurance Framework. Additional capacity and to strengthen of these arrangements has been secured with the commission of Audit to Excellence, along with establishing a designated Quality Assurance officer role. It is reassuring that Ofsted in completing the Focused Visit concluded that the self-assessment developed by the Service reflected an accurate picture of practice and key issues.						
Objective: Improve outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers (PED03)						
Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care (snapshot at end of quarter)	35	20	45		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Liz Davenport / Sam Murtagh</i> A review of the Local Authorities Sufficiency Strategy is ongoing, this will include other more localised residential options operating as a Community Interest Company linked to the Liverpool City Regional Market Reform Programme. Within Halton two sites for children's homes are being explored along with some joint work with the Community Land Trust. This will enable more placements more locally based and also increase the number of placements with the not for profit sector as opposed to the Independent sector (SM) There is a significant focus currently in respect of reviewing those children and young people who are placed in a residential placement to ensure that only those children and young people who require this type of placement remain in such placements. It is planned that Halton will host a face to face "Step Down to Fostering" event early in the New Year – this will focus on a cohort of 10 young people currently in Residential who have a potential plan to be fostered (SM) Weekly high cost tracker meetings take place to ensure appropriate timely plans are in place for young people moving towards independence as well as reviewing progress (SM) Furthermore, the Care Leavers Accommodation Group continues to meet on a monthly basis to discuss all referrals for those young people aged 17 plus who require their own accommodation in line with their Pathway Plan. (SR)						
PED03 02	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agencies (snapshot at end of quarter)	35	35	71		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Liz Davenport / Sam Murtagh</i> All placements are tracked through the resource and placements meeting where sourcing Halton's mainstream foster carers is a primary focus. The current level of sufficiency due to increase of looked after children is resulting in the use of Independent Fostering Agencies, and in some circumstances residential, however as foster carers approvals are also tracked there are means to place with in house carers planned. (SM)						

PED03 03	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	99%	95%	96%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Liz Davenport / Sam Murtagh</p> <p>The Care Leavers Accommodation Group is embedded within the Service with registered landlords being part of the meeting which meets on a monthly basis. The meeting reviews and tracks all young people aged 16 and older who require accommodation in preparation for leaving care. Referrals to this group continue to be coordinated and tracked via the Placements Team. Halton have an embedded Supported Lodgings scheme within the service. Halton have placed three young people currently placed with hosts. Lavender House, our commissioned service continues to be operational. This is a four bedroomed group living property in Runcorn and we currently have four young people placed in this provision. We also have two trainer flats which are commissioned from Social Landlords, one in Widnes and one in Runcorn both of which are operational. A recent review of the Commissioned service with P3 outlined some really positive impacts with the young people placed with all being in some form of employment and/or Educational placement, There are plans to increase the number of trainer flats that the local authority Commission with a meeting planned with the Registered Social Landlords (SM)</p>						
PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET) (snapshot at end of quarter)	51%	65%	55%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Sarah Riley</p> <p>Strong and effective links with the Virtual School continue as supporting care leavers into education, employment and training is a priority area.</p> <p>Monthly tracking is undertaken by the Virtual School to ensure that there are early alerts for young people who are at risk of becoming NEET as well as those currently NEET. The direct work to re-engage this group, undertaken by the KS4 and Post 16 Employability Officer, is to ensure that the views of the young person are heard and that any barriers are addressed when formulating a plan for re-engagement.</p> <p>We have implemented a CSCS card service for NEET care leavers aged 16+, and identified traineeship opportunities within 5 different departments within the Local Authority which are currently being recruited to.</p> <p>We are currently looking to develop and embed a NEET Panel which will discuss all young people aged 16 plus who are NEET with a plan to re-engage them into a positive activity.</p> <p>Monthly meetings are also being held with the Head Teacher of the Virtual School, Divisional Managers for CIC and Care Leavers and Child in Need and Child Protection and the Operational Director to review all care leavers who are not in education, employment and training and consider what support can be provided to support them into a positive destination.</p>						
PED03 05	Benchmarking year – Percentage of CIC Residential and Leaving Care placements that have received a Quality Assurance Visit from the Placements Team within the previous 12 months (cumulative from April to end of quarter)	N/A	N/A	Residential 41% Leaving Care 58%	N/A	N/A
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Sam Murtagh</p> <p>The increase in the number of placement requests this quarter and some staff sickness have impacted on the team's ability to complete some planned quality monitoring visits. However as well as the planned visit there have been a number of responsive visits that have taken place linked to quality concerns from Professionals as well as a result of OFSTED inspection outcome reports (SM)</p>						
PED03 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough placements for Children in Care (Forecast end of year) (Sarah Riley/Sam Murtagh)	Projected spend forecast for 2022/23 Residential £13,805,604.33 IFA £2,713,219.28 UASC Residential £1,550,840.21 IFA £189,878.55	Projected 9,583,822	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Liz Davenport / Sam Murtagh</p> <p>In order to address these rising costs, the following initiatives have been embedded help to reduce spend in this area: Residential Step Down to Fostering, Supported Lodgings, Commissioned Care Leavers Group and Training Flats. This is in line with other neighbouring local authorities, There have also been an increase in the number of Continuing Health Care assessments for the young people in care which may result in joint funding being put in place with Health services This area is also outlined within the broader local authorities Transformation plans (SM)</p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	Ensuring all children in care achieve permanency in a timely way. (Liz Davenport March 2023)	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Liz Davenport <i>The Principal Manager of CIC and CL's Team tracks those children and young people who have been in placement for over 12 months to consider if long term matching is appropriate. There is also a tracker to track those children and young people who are placed at home subject to a Care Order to consider when it is appropriate to consider discharging the Care Order. Whilst the tracker is in place, this has enabled a focus for some children and young people to be matched long term within their foster placements however, this needs to be strengthened to prevent drift and delay for all children and ensure that a long term match is considered in a timely manner. For some children and young people who are placed at home, applications are made to Court to discharge Care Orders however, this is not always as timely as it could be. The use of early permanence placements are not routinely sought. New permanence flow chart to be issued with placement options by end Jan 2023 Specific groups will be reviewed in order of placement starting with children in Residential and moving to Placement with Parents. to promote safer long term planning and reduce risk spend and demand in the system . Permission will not be given to cancel reviews and an outline plan will be required for each child at second review or escalation of concern (dispute resolution) will be issued by IRM. A permanency panel is currently being set up to ensure more robust planning and tracking of permanency across all service areas-including CIN/CP and utilisation of increasing IRM essential role in tracking this through the statutory review process.</i></p>		
PED03b	Ensure that Safeguarding Unit escalate any delays or concerns using escalate policy (Susanne Leece March 2023)	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Susanne Leece <i>The Dispute Resolution Process is used by the Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) in the Safeguarding Unit to challenge drift or delay in planning for individual children. Resolution is often achieved at the initial, informal stage through the IRO having a discussion with the Social Worker and their Practice Lead. This discussion is recorded on the child's file but has not, until recently been reportable from the system. We are now able to accurately report on IRO oversight and challenge and will produce quarterly reports on this from Q4 2022/23.</i></p>		
PED03c	Review and quality assure the commissioning of services for Children in Care and Care Leavers to ensure that they meet the needs of Halton's population and inform future commissioning decisions (March 2023 Sam Murtagh)	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Sam Murtagh <i>Work remains ongoing within the Liverpool City Region framework for Fostering and Residential placements. The Team continues to work with colleagues across the Council to identify further properties for residential purposes within Halton, to assist in driving costs down. As well as the identification of land sites to develop local children's homes(SM)</i></p>		
PED03d	Through the quality assurance of Personal Education Plans (PEP), identify areas of need and support to improve outcomes for individual Children in Care	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Ben Holmes <i>At the end of the Autumn Term 2022, 96% of PEPs were completed within timescale in secondary and 100% of EY and Primary. 79% of Post 16 PEPs were completed, which continues to be an area of focus for the Spring term, but continues to increase. Internal Moderation of PEP judgements have been established and will be expanded to include partners in the process later this academic year. Initial moderation identified some inconsistencies in judgements, which has now been rectified through staff training and implementation of an updated PEP policy. Moderation and analysis has identified further training and support for Designated Teachers and Social Workers in the writing of SMART targets, which will be offered and targeted in Q4.</i></p> <p><i>Of the PEPs completed, the percentage rated as good or better has increased overall, with a return in standards for early years after a dip in the summer term. 91% of EY and Primary and 67% of Secondary and 77% of Post 16. Although there was a reduction in inadequate PEPs at secondary, there has been an increase in Amber (RI) judgements – which is where there will be a focus this term. With the increasing rigour in moderation in Q\$ it is anticipated that there may be a dip in judgements until the SMART target training is embedded within practice.</i></p> <p><i>A member of the virtual school team has now taken on responsibility for 'new into care' PEPs, resulting in initial PEPs now being consistently completed within time scales.</i></p>		

Objective: Improve the offer for children and young people with disabilities and those with Special Educational Needs (PED04)

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plan assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	78.9%	75%	54.1		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Paul Greenwood</i> It has been obvious to see that a combination of actors are leading to a decrease in the team's 20 week completion rate that need to rectify as we move forward. Currently, the combination of trying to address phase transfers all in an autumn term for February and March deadlines and maintaining the rate of new plans been written is unachievable task. The team has also been down to five members where we should have 9. Also, ways of prioritising and managing workloads in the team needs addressing. In order to address these issues we are making plans to bring forward the phase transfers timelines to give appropriate time frames in which to update plans. We now have two new member so f staff that join in January 2023 that will increase capacity and we have one other to recruit. Also, training needs have been identified for the team to develop process and legal knowledge as well as developing the quality of the plan themselves.</p>						
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	535	500	437		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton / Scott Middlehurst</i> We have seen a significant increase in suspensions this academic year across both primary and secondary schools. We are only one term into this academic year and suspensions are already close to the 21/22 figure for the year and are predicted to exceed the target set for 22/23. In order to help address this a working group has been established to identify and support children at risk of exclusion and also to offer training and support to individual schools.</p>						
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	308	350	293		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton / Scott Middlehurst</i> We have seen a significant increase in suspensions this academic year across both primary and secondary schools. We are only one term into this academic year and suspensions are already close to the 21/22 figure for the year and are predicted to exceed the target set for 22/23. In order to help address this a working group has been established to identify and support children at risk of exclusion and also to offer training and support to individual schools.</p>						
PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent suspension (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	15	30	25		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton / Scott Middlehurst</i> We have seen a significant increase in permanent exclusions this academic year across secondary schools with 1 of the 25 to date from a primary school. In order to help address this a working group has been established to identify and support children at risk of exclusion and also to offer training and support to individual schools. We are particularly seeing an increase in permanent exclusion from KS3, possibly the cohort most affected by Covid in terms of missing out on transition support from primary when going into high school. At this same point last academic year we had 14 permanent exclusions compared to the current figure of 25 for 22/23.</p>						
PED04 05	Report on the proportion of children subject to Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) placed in independent and out of borough provisions (snapshot end of quarter) – long term target is to reduce	7.4%	3.6%	8%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Paul Greenwood</i> Current increase in needs around SEMH (especially at KS3) and ASC are still providing in borough placement issues leading to a continued use of OOB placements. The lack of the proposed SEMH school in Halton will not help with this as we move to September and the delays on a build for one of specialist schools is creating place pressures also. We are continuing to move through the expression of interest process for resource bases to hopefully increase numbers in borough for September2023.</p>						
PED04 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for SEND (Forecast end of year)	Overspend £1,108,429	£250000 reduction	Refer Comment	N/A	N/A

Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh


108 pupils are currently placed at non-maintained and independent schools

32 referrals to search for an NMISS placement have been received between April 2022 and December 2022 year to date (57 – Jan to December 2022), compared to 31 referrals April to December 2021 (37 – Jan to December). There are currently 20 open referrals, 16 of whom are male with the greatest need of young people seen in KS3 and SEMH. . Of concern are the growing number of more localised ISS/NMSS reporting they are full leading to possible increased travel time as well as transport costs (SM)

PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	44.6%	65%	51% (prov)	Refer Comment	Refer Comment
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Supporting Commentary: Paul Greenwood

The 51% on the parameters of reception to year 11 is based on anyone with a mainstream school named in section I of the EHCP. This will include resource base children as we name the mainstream school in section I of the plan, removing them from the equation would obviously show a lower percentage under the 50% mark/.



PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	xx	100%	100%		N/A
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Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell

All special schools continue to be good or outstanding in Ofsted Overall Effectiveness grading's.







PED04 09	Increase the percentage of Education Health and Care plans for Child Protection and Children in Care completed in 16 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter) (Adrian Leach)	N/A	75%	Available Q4	N/A	N/A
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Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach /Paul Greenwood

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04a	Develop and Implement the Social Emotional and Mental Health Strategy (SEMH) by March 2023. Impact to be monitored through the action plan. (Adrian Leach)	Refer comment
<u>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</u> Available Q4		
PED04b	Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision (Sam Murtagh March 2023)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh</u> There has been a steady increase in the numbers of children attending short breaks activities:- 35% increase in Q1 (total 134 children) and a 69% increase in quarter 2 (total 214 children engaged). Early information for quarter 3 suggests that again numbers will be higher in comparison to last year. Quarterly and bi-annual meetings are taking place with providers to monitor provision. Two services:- Swimming Lessons and the Personal Assistant Support service were commissioned for one year + 1 year extension option and there has been the recommendation to extend both services to take up the one year to extend the services to March 2024. (SM)		
PED04c	Review direct payments with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people. (March 2023 Val Armor)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</u> This has been reviewed in terms of commissioning to get the best offer and value for parents and carers. The current commission is now in place until march 23 2023.		
PED04d	Improve quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans. (March 2023 Adrian Leach)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</u> Halton are recruiting staff to increase the team capacity as well as addressing the identified training needs of the team in order to develop the quality and timeliness of our plans. In addition, the development of the quality assurance framework and it's coming implementation will start to further identify our strengths and areas for development allowing us to address the quality of plans, advice and timeliness as we move forward. It will be important to be able to draw upon clear evidence and data to support the process.		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04e	Quality assure all provision currently being utilised to ensure that provision meets the needs of our children and young people (March 2023 Sam Murtagh)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh</i> No monitoring visits took place during this period, work has been undertaken to further develop the self-assessment that schools complete to draw out more information on attendance, punctuality, behaviour, learning, progress and achievement for each pupil placed, the next cohort of schools for monitoring is being identified and information is being sent out. Of the 33 schools commissioned, 11 schools have been monitored, which encompasses 56% of pupils. (SM)</p>		
PED04f	Review in borough specialist provision and revise to meet the needs of Halton's children and young people (March 2023 Adrian Leach)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</i> Meetings have and are taking place across the sector with specialist provision and ensuring designations are meeting the changing need and profile. Schools are keen to work effectively as a system to meet these needs, but are facing increasing volumes and complexity of cases.</p>		







Objective: Raise achievement across Early Years and all Key Stages, and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (PED05)

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED05 01	Ensure all eligible children for the vulnerable 2-year-old funding access quality EY provision (internally collected termly information – may not match to published data from Jan census)	91%	100% of eligible	92%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Belinda Yen</i> The DfE provided a target of 516 children to be placed. Halton have placed 463 (not including 13 Out of Borough (OOB) settings) which equates to 92%. This number is slightly lower than usual; process of placement continues as normal; however, some places were declined until parents felt more comfortable for their children to return/commence due to the effects of the pandemic. 95% of day care and pre-school settings are good or outstanding; funded two-year-olds are only placed in good/outstanding Childminders provision 44.</p>						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds.	89%	96%	89%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell /Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> The current 89% figure is based on national data produced from the January annual census as recorded in 'Education provision: children under 5 years of age, Source: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-provision-children-under-5/2022, Published 30th June 2022' This remains the same as the previous quarter as the data set is not due to be updated until June 2023.</p>						
PED05 03	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter)	94%	N/A	95%		N/A
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell /Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> graded 'Requires Improvement'; and 1% are graded 'Inadequate'. There are currently 9 settings who have not yet been inspected and 15 who are 'meeting the requirements' (this is the judgement awarded to Child minders and Out of School Clubs who have an inspection when there are no children present).</p>						
ED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	81.6% (As of 30th April 2022)	N/A	79%		N/A
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Schools have received a range of inspection outcomes with a number of outcomes of good inspections, 1 Require Improvement and 2 schools who were rated as inadequate bur related to specific, exceptional circumstances at school level. Themes are always shared celebrating effective practice and identifying any areas for development across the system. Improvement plans are in place and progressing well with the schools rated inadequate and rigorous challenge and monitoring. Inadequate schools do receive a directive academy order.</p>						









PED05 05	Monitor the percentage of Secondary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter) N.B. 7 out of the 8 schools are academies. (snapshot end of quarter)	50% (as of 30 th April 2022)	N/A	67%	N/A	Refer comment
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Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell


Further inspections have occurred but are not yet published.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED05a	Monitor and evaluate educational outcomes of all pupils, vulnerable pupils (CIC: EHCP etc.), disadvantaged pupils and the impact of funding streams (including Free EY Entitlement, Catch Up funding, Pupil Premium, Sports Premium etc.) to raise achievement for all and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary : Jill Farrell</i> <i>Disadvantaged working groups are led by the local authority, but work across education leads, SENDCO and DSL to ensure there is an effective pupil premium strategy and that funding is being used to best effect to secure improved outcomes and life chances for children and young people.</i>		
PED05b	Monitor and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 lockdown and remote learning offer on all pupils and vulnerable pupils learning (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>Outcomes published in summer 2022 based on statutory assessments and exams showed that bespoke working to meet individual need supported by National Tutoring Programme enabled young people to receive individual tuition that made a positive difference to outcomes.</i>		
PED05c	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>Outcomes published in summer 2022 based on statutory assessments and exams showed that bespoke working to meet individual need supported by National Tutoring Programme enabled young people to receive individual tuition that made a positive difference to outcomes.</i>		
PED05d	Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>Governor training and annual conference was well attended and promoted governor roles and responsibilities in relation to SEND and the role of the SEND governor. Peer reviews are being carried out in partnership with school leadership teams and SEND governors.</i>		
PED05e	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>Halton Learning Alliance was relaunched in the late autumn term and Halton Learning Alliance have agreed the educational vision for the region in line with the Priority Educational Investment Area plans. Key priorities include Early Years development; improving outcomes in reading and maths through all key phases and improving attendance A focus of inclusion runs throughout all key priority themes.</i>		
PED05f	Launch Halton Learning Alliance Strategic Partnership to develop an inclusive, ambitious approach developing contributing, successful citizens locally, nationally and globally. All educational stakeholders and community members acting with morale purpose for Halton children, young people and community members (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>Halton Learning Alliance was relaunched in the late autumn term and Halton Learning Alliance have agreed the educational vision for the region in line with the Priority Educational Investment Area plans. The group has now been reviewed and revised to ensure a refined strategic board which will be focusing upon the key priorities aligned with the PEIA activity but with a long term strategy and place based thinking.</i>		


Objective: Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future (PED06)


Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED06 01	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	3.7%	4.0%	4.4%		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>The same issues remain as was in quarter two, a significant greater number of young people are not available to the labour market due to illness, including mental health issues, in 202/23 compared to the previous year. In addition, there are a greater number of young people who are not in education, employment or training this year. All are allocated to a worker to support them, although not all do want support from the team.</i></p>						
PED06 02	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds whose activity is not known (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>The same issues remain as was in quarter two, there are more young people (and/or their families) who have refused to disclose the young person's activity or where they are currently living in 2022/23 than in previous years meaning more young people are recorded as cannot be contacted or refused to disclose. This means their current situation is not known and we have no other means of gaining the information.</i></p>						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	96.6%	98%	96.02%		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>This is once again a result of the increased number of young people who are not available to the labour market due to illness and who have not sought options for learning due to their illness.</i></p>						
PED06 04	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds participating in education or training that meets the Government definition of full participation (known as Raising the Participation Age)	90.9%	92%	91.2%		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>Whilst current performance is better than the overall figure for 2021/22 our performance this time last year was 92.9% so we are behind where we were this time last year. Once again, the figure is impacted by the increased number of young people not available to the labour market due to illness at this point in the year.</i></p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06a	Closely monitor the cohort of young people not in education, employment or training and identify common patterns/issues to inform actions, guide the effective use of resources and to identify any future commissioning needs (Háf Bell) (March 2023)	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>Ongoing analysis takes place to respond to need and ensure the resources that are available to the team are being used appropriately.</i></p>		
PED06c	Work with schools, the College and training providers to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people and increase the amount of offers made before the end of an academic year. (July 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>Reviews have taken place with all but one secondary school. The first data return for the current Year 11 cohort isn't due until March 2023.</i></p>		
PED06d	Work with schools, the College and training providers to report where young people progress to Post 16 as quickly as possible so those who haven't progressed can be identified and contacted to offer support (Háf Bell)	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>Good flow of information from institutions, including being able to access information from out of borough institutions quicker this year than previous years, helping us identify young people who need support sooner.</i></p>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06d	Work with Post 16 education and training providers in the borough to support the development of provision that does have clear progression opportunities (March 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i></p> <p>Post 16 provision in the borough is limited in terms of range of provision. There is a large range of options at an Outstanding college, although this is oversubscribed and places fill quickly. There is also school 6th form provision and provision in small work based learning providers. Two work based learning providers rely on sub contracted arrangements, limiting control they have over the number of young people they can take. The college and school 6th form work on academic year courses, limiting in year progression.</p>		




5.0 Financial Summary


Q3 2022.23 EIP
Final.docx


Q3 Children and
Families Final.docx




6.0 Appendix I

6.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress		Milestone	Measure
Green		Indicates that the milestone is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Amber		Indicates that it is uncertain, or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Red		Indicates that it is unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the target will not be achieved unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

6.2 Direction of Travel indicator

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

Green		Indicates that performance is better 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 compared to the same period last year.

6.3 Key for responsible officers:

- JF** Jill Farrell, Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service
- PM** Peter Murphy, Operational Director, Children and Families Service

EIP DEPARTMENT**Revenue Operational Budget as at 31 December 2022**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Core Funded					
Employees	3,741	2,806	2,473	333	417
Proposed Pay Award 2022/23				0	
Premises	3	2	0	2	3
Supplies & Services	689	676	660	16	19
Transport	43	32	28	4	2
Schools Transport	1,311	984	1,297	(313)	(928)
Commissioned Services	1,840	531	533	(2)	(4)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	35	4	1	3	(62)
Capital Financing	1	1	1	0	0
Grant Funded					
Employees	3,747	2,321	2,321	0	0
Premises	24	6	6	0	0
Supplies & Services	22	14	14	0	0
Transport	6,728	4,686	4,686	0	0
Independent School Fees	1,589	1,159	1,159	0	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	604	173	173	0	0
Pupil Premium Grant	183	80	80	0	0
Nursery Education Payment	6,000	4,097	4,097	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	1,442	973	973	0	0
Total Expenditure	28,002	18,545	18,502	43	(553)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-93	-89	-124	35	36
Government Grant	-1,513	-1,135	-1,135	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	0	0	-46	46	46
Schools SLA Income	-358	-269	-283	14	67
Transfer to/from Reserves	-991	-941	-941	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-18,566	-13,924	-13,924	0	1
Inter Authority Income	-544	-408	-393	(15)	(29)
Total Income	-22,065	-16,766	-16,846	80	121
Net Operational Expenditure	5,937	1,779	1,656	123	(432)
Recharges					
Premises Support	127	95	95	0	0
Transport Support	439	329	433	(104)	(139)
Central Support	2,308	1,731	1,731	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	13	13	0	0
Recharge Income	-22	-16	-16	0	0
Net Total Recharges	2,869	2,152	2,256	(104)	(139)
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,806	3,931	3,912	19	(571)

Comments on the above figures

The net Departmental expenditure is £0.019m below the profiled budget at the end of quarter three and is based on latest available information. The forecast outturn for 2022/23 estimates net spend will be £0.571m above the approved budget

Core funded employee expenditure is forecast to be £0.417m under budget at year end. As the case in 2021/22 there are a number of vacant positions across the department. The most notable of these was the Operational Director position. This has only recently been filled (internally) which leaves a vacant Divisional Manager position. The vacant DM position is currently being acted up into until end of August 23. It has been forecast that the majority of these vacancies will be filled by the end of this financial year but there will not be full year costs for them in 2022/23, resulting in a one off saving.

Supplies and services costs are forecast to be under budget at year-end by approximately £0.019m as a number of grants have been identified and utilised. All spend in this area is essential spend only and the budget holders across the Department closely monitor all spend.

Again, Schools Transport is the main budget pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. The budget can be split into two main areas; between SEN pupils attending In Borough Schools and those attending out of Borough Schools. The demand for the School Transport service is increasing in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough.

At present there are 491 service users in this financial year, the majority of which attend schools within the borough, 378 compared to 113 out of the borough.

It is worth noting though that this situation is not unique to Halton, it is a pressure across all Councils nationwide. The cost of transport has risen sharply in the current year with average prices increasing by 17% mainly from September 2022. Schools transport spend is forecast to be £0.928m over the approved budget at year end if current demand continues.

Grants to Voluntary Organisations is forecast to be over budget by £0.062m at year end. This is due to the Positive Behaviour Service. The department pays a contribution to this service each year, however, the cost is significantly higher than the budget. This has been covered in previous years by utilising grants available, as yet there has been no such agreement made for 2022/23.

Reimbursements and Other Grant Income has generated £0.046m above budget in 2022/23. Presently this forecast mainly consists of contributions from the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group towards Integrated Youth contracts.

School SLA income is forecast to over generate by £0.067m in this financial year. Certain services such as Educational Psychology and Education Welfare are in high demand from schools. As a result they are generating higher levels of income than initially targeted.

Inter Authority income is projected to underachieve by £0.029m. The Council has limited capacity to accept pupils from other authorities due to its own special schools and units being full.

Capital Projects as at 31 December 2022

Capital Expenditure	22/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Asset Management Data	6	2	2	4
Capital Repairs	1,155	972	972	183
Asbestos Management	29	17	17	12
Schools Access Initiative	36	2	1	34
Fairfield Primary School	20	0	0	20
Kitchen Gas Safety	1	1	1	0
Small Capital Works	124	57	57	67
Cavendish School	469	33	33	436
SEMH Free School	237	231	231	6
Net Expenditure	2,077	1,315	1,314	762

Comments on the above figures

Asset Management (CAD plan updates and Condition Surveys) works, kitchen gas safety works and small capital works will continue in 2022-23 in response or in line with any emergency Health and Safety issues.

The majority of the Capital Repairs works took place during the summer holidays. The remaining programmed works for 2022-23 are mainly single glazing replacements.

Asbestos management surveys are updated annually and remedial work carried out where necessary.

The SEND allocation comprises of two funding sources: Special Provision Capital Fund (SPCF) and the more recent allocation of High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA). The balance of the SPCF allocation will be used to support the SEMH Free School project, which is being procured by the DfE. A feasibility study has been completed to create additional teaching space at Cavendish School. This project is now at Procurement stage and awaiting Planning permission. If this project goes ahead, the HNPCA will be utilised.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2022**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	12,207	9,275	10,797	(1,522)	(2,333)
Other Premises	329	178	189	(11)	(16)
Supplies & Services	891	622	1,381	(759)	(1,104)
Transport	113	45	120	(75)	(104)
Direct Payments	940	635	609	26	35
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	233	150	120	30	40
Residential Care	10,277	6,836	10,450	(3,614)	(4,721)
Out of Borough Adoption	89	67	0	67	79
Out of Borough Fostering	2,673	1,818	2,124	(306)	(418)
In House Adoption	427	243	250	(7)	(9)
Special Guardianship Order	1,780	1,369	1,624	(255)	(345)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,337	1,802	2,087	(285)	(372)
Lavender House	219	146	146	0	0
Home Support & Respite	3	3	167	(164)	(279)
Care Leavers	249	173	136	37	50
Family Support	53	28	49	(21)	(30)
Contracted services	3	2	2	0	0
Early Years	203	102	371	(269)	(358)
Emergency Duty	118	12	38	(26)	(38)
Youth Offending Services	261	61	103	(42)	(68)
Capital Finance	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	33,405	23,567	30,763	(7,196)	(9,991)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-24	-5	-1	(4)	(6)
Sales Income	-4	-1	0	(1)	(1)
Rents	-58	-36	-38	2	2
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-707	-562	-506	(56)	(74)
Transfer from reserve	-1,936	-1,790	-1,790	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-5,833	-4,830	-4,830	0	0
Total Income	-8,612	-7,224	-7,165	(59)	(79)
Net Operational Expenditure	24,793	16,343	23,598	(7,255)	(10,070)
Recharges					
Premises Support	178	134	134	0	0
Transport	18	12	12	0	0
Central Support Recharges	3,036	2,277	2,277	0	0
Internal Recharge Income	-124	-93	-93	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,108	2,330	2,330	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	27,901	18,673	25,928	(7,255)	(10,070)

Comments on the above figures

The net departmental expenditure is £7.255m over budget at the end of the third quarter of the financial year, with the majority directly relating to Social Care Services. Additional growth budget was provided in 2022/23 of £1m for residential care placements. The removal of a £0.486m unallocated savings target, along with additional savings/reductions leaves net growth of £1.470m.

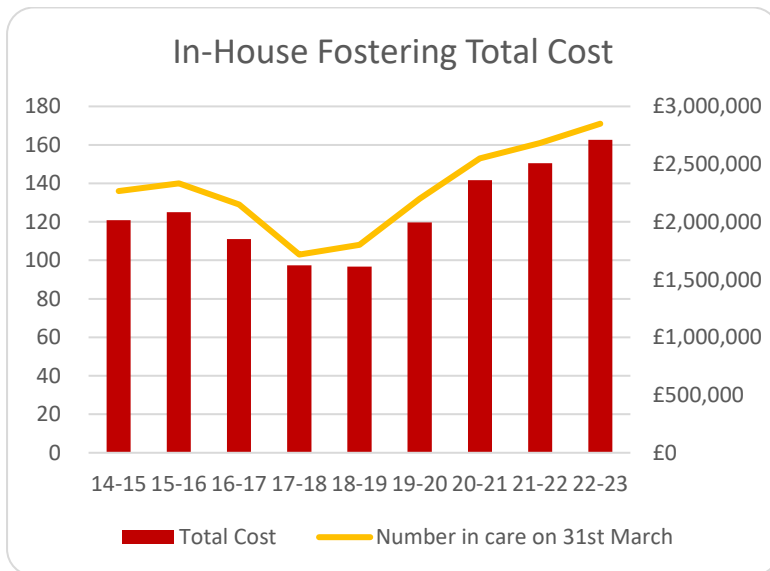
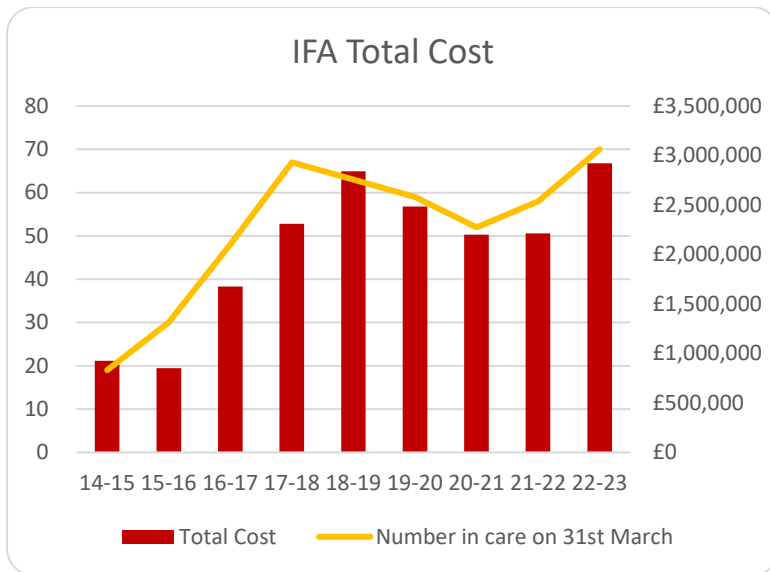
Employee costs are £1.522m above budget at the end of Quarter 3. The continued long term reliance on agency staff is primarily the cause of this overspend. Social worker recruitment is still proving difficult due to an extremely competitive market and highly inflated agency payment rates. Spend on agency staff at the end of Quarter 3 is £4,533m or 50% of employee budget to date. There is further pressure on the budget from the costs of the Innovate managed agency team that was brought in as a result of the Ofsted inspection. This team was originally allocated £1m funding from reserves, however, this amount was insufficient and as this contract was extended for a further 6 months, an additional £0.900m of funding from reserves was allocated. Since Quarter 2 the Innovate contract has been further extended for a maximum of three months at a cost of up to £0.212m.

The final outturn for employee costs is expected to be £2.333m over budget.

Supplies and Services expenditure is £0.759m above budget at the end of Quarter 3 and is anticipated to be £1.104m over budget at the end of the financial year. A large proportion of this spend is due to increased court costs, currently forecast at £0.490m for the full year. Expenditure in relation to independent assessments is also high with spend at Quarter 3 of £0.272m.

Consultancy costs also contribute largely to this overspend and are expected to be £0.248m at the end of the financial year. The majority of these costs relate to the continuing work undertaken in relation to the in-house fostering project. This however, has been extremely successful, having increased the numbers of in-house foster carers and continuing to maintain high retention levels of existing carers.

Whilst this has enabled more young people to be accommodated in house, and thus reduced reliance on the Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) provision, the increasing numbers of children entering care has resulted in an increase on children placed within IFA provision. The graphs below illustrate the numbers in placement and the associated costs:



It is important to note, that whilst the number of in-house foster placements is still rising slowly, a number of foster carers and their placements have also converted to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO's). This has therefore lowered the numbers in foster care, but consequentially has increased the number of SGO placements. SGO's are long term placements for young people, where the carers are granted parental responsibility for the young people in their care. This is a positive outcome for the young person as these are stable placements and the children are no longer classed as a 'child in care'. They are also less expensive than other placements so they are financially beneficial too. Since April 2021 the number of young people residing within an SGO placement has increased by 39 from 148 to 187 with this continuing to steadily increase. This has resulted in increased SGO expenditure with spend currently £0.255m over budget at the end of Quarter 3, and an expected outturn of £0.345m over budget.

Out of Borough Residential Care continues to be the main budget pressure for the Children and Families Department as the costs of residential care have continued to rise year on year. This budget was given an additional growth of £1m for this financial year to alleviate the pressure, however residential care is £3.614m overspent at the end of Quarter 3 with an

anticipated outturn of £4.721m over budget at the end of the financial year. In 2021/22 residential care received COVID funding of £0.794m for the full financial year, but the absence of this funding has further increased the pressure on this budget.

The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) currently placed in care has stabilised since the substantial growth in 2021/22. Home Office funding has been agreed for the vast majority of UASC placed in our care and is now sufficient to cover placement costs, thus reducing pressure in this area. Additional funding may also be granted for those UASC yet to have funding approved. As this funding is likely to be received this has been included within the forecasts.

The table below breaks down the current residential placements based on costs and placement type:

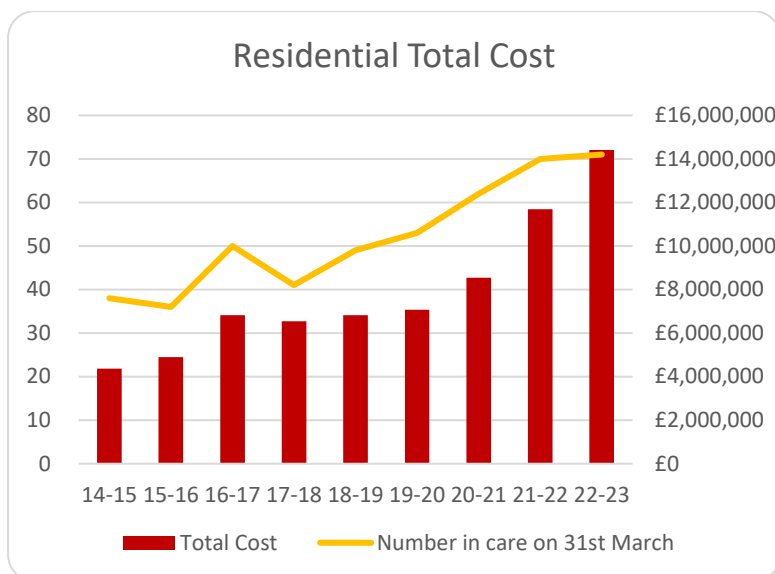
Residential Care

Provision	Weekly Costs	31st December 2022		30th September 2022	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£2000 - £3000	3	383,836	5	662,535
Residential	£3001 - £4000	10	2,142,370	13	2,635,774
Residential	£4001 - £5000	9	2,186,163	8	1,685,973
Residential	£5001 - £10276	20	5,747,363	19	5,813,443
Secure	£6397 - £9675	1	379,458	1	343,422
Leaving Care	£443 - £8225	22	2,612,248	25	2,410,167
Parent & Child	£2000 - £4500	6	954,698	6	995,092
Total:		71	14,406,136	77	14,546,406

UASC Residential Care

Provision	Weekly Costs	31st December 2022		30th September 2022	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
UASC	£300-£400	46	848,747	46	849,385
UASC	£400-£5000	3	651,924	3	700,603
Total:		49	1,500,671	49	1,549,988

The graph below illustrates the rising costs of Residential Care, for consistency this does not include the costs of UASC as these costs were not included previous years.



The numbers of young people in residential care has reduced from Quarter 2, mainly due to a number of young people leaving placements after taking on their own tenancies as they are now over 18. However, overall residential placement numbers are still high, with the costs of new placements significantly higher than previous years. This is a national issue and market factors such as low supply and high demand have resulted in the costs of residential care packages rising considerably over the last year, meaning that the level of spend is unsustainable at the current rate.

A placement sufficiency strategy is underway to address the local supply, the costs of residential placements, plans for future spend and to identify alternative ways of managing placements in a more efficient and sustainable manner.

Work is continuing to identify those children able to step down from residential care, however this is proving difficult and is highly dependent on the needs of the young people in care and the ability to transition them into a suitable foster placement.

High Costs Placement Panel continues to review all high cost packages and endeavours to reduce costs wherever possible. The main focus is on high cost residential packages, however consideration of Leaving Care placements and their incorporation into the Care Leavers Accommodation Group (CLAG) is also included. This ensures young people transfer into their own properties as soon as possible and reduces the necessity for the continuation of placements beyond the age of 18. This is proving to be a successful strategy, with the relevant young people now moving on and placements numbers reducing as previously mentioned in the report.

Work is ongoing to provide alternative placement types where possible for care leavers in order to mitigate some of the rising costs:

- The new in-house Supported Lodgings service is working well and still recruiting for carers. The costs of this service are far less than the costs of current leaving care provision, and as well as the financial benefits, the service will provide a much more home like and supportive environment for young people.
- The two training flats for care leavers are now occupied and placed with support packages in place.

- The new in-house care leaver provision – Lavender House, has recently opened and there are three young people currently accommodated. This is a four bedroom property and a further young person will be placed in the near future.

In House Fostering is £0.285m over budget with an expected outturn of £0.372m over budget. This is due to the increase of in-house foster carers and the ability to accommodate more young people in-house. Work continues to recruit and retain Halton's In-house foster carers, along with training to develop carers enabling them to accommodate more specialist placements and support and mentor each other. This therefore means that costs could increase further still. However, the ability to accommodate young people within in-house provision provides a substantial saving in comparison to IFA or residential care. Further growth is needed in order to fully cover the additional costs.

The Early Years net divisional expenditure is £0.269m over budget at the end of the Quarter 3, with a forecast outturn of £0.358m over budget. This is due to the underachievement of parental income due to income targets being based upon the Early Years provision having high occupancy levels. This underachievement of income will continue throughout 2022/23 and currently there is no possibility that they will become self-sustaining, therefore they will continue to be a significant budget pressure going forwards into future years. Further pressure will be placed on the Early Years budget moving forwards due to the cost of living rises which will increase the premises costs of the nursery settings. Staffing costs have also added additional pressure as they have increased significantly as a result of the recent Local Government Pay Award, putting additional pressure on this already overstretched budget.

Income is £0.059m under budget, primarily due to an income generation target that has been included for the new Leaving Care provision, Lavender House. Due to high demand from our own care leaver numbers, there are no plans as yet to rent one of these bedrooms out to a neighbouring authority and therefore this income target is unlikely to be met.

Overall the financial picture for the Children and Families Department continues to be extremely worrisome. The main concerns relate to the difficulty in the recruitment of Social Workers and the subsequent extortionate agency costs; along with the spiralling costs of residential placements. This level of spend cannot be sustained without resulting in significant financial harm to the Local Authority.