

Public Document Pack



Corporate Policy and Performance Board

Tuesday, 6 June 2023 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn

S. Young

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor John Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Rosie Leck	Labour
Councillor Geoffrey Logan	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Angela McInerney	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Sharon Thornton	Labour
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

*Please contact Kim Butler on 0151 511 7496 or
kim.butler@halton.gov.uk for further information.*

The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 5 September 2023

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

Part I

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2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion and voting on the item.	
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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.

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on
Tuesday, 24 January 2023 in the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Hutchinson, P. Lloyd Jones, A. Lowe,
N. Plumpton Walsh, Teeling and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Philbin, Wainwright and Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, E. Dawson, P. Garnett and J. Yates

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CS22 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 1 November 2022 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CS23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CS24 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.</p>	
CS25 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES	
<p>The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 20 July 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.</p>	

CS26 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND - 1 OCTOBER 2022-31 MARCH 2023

The Board received a report from the Operational Director, Finance, which updated Members on the progress of the delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Halton was awarded grant funding of £1,297,880 and any unspent grant as at 31 March 2023 must be returned to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The report outlined the Spending Plan which set out how the grant funding would be utilised via a combination of Council Departments and the Voluntary Sector, to deliver help and assistance to vulnerable households. The Benefits Division would co-ordinate the use of the grant on behalf of the Council in order to maximise the benefit of the grant funding for the Borough and to ensure that it would be fully utilised.

£178,000 was allocated to a Discretionary Support Scheme for individuals or families who needed urgent help to pay for things such as essential food, toiletries, household items or essential fuel bills. During the period 1 October – 31 December 2022, 421 households had received support.

The Household Support Fund was intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners and people with disabilities. Free school meal vouchers of £12 per week would be issued during school holidays. £100 would be awarded to vulnerable pensioner households in receipt of council tax reduction. By December 2022, 4,181 vulnerable pensioners had been awarded the payment.

Progress on delivery of the Household Support Fund to be continued to be reported to the Board.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) progress with delivery of the latest Household Support Fund be noted; and
- 2) preparations for administration of the extension of the Household Support Fund and the Energy Bills Alternative Funding Scheme be noted.

The Board asked that thanks be noted to the Benefits Team for their work co-ordinating this grant funding.

*Operational
Director - Finance*

CS27 ENERGY / CARBON REDUCTION UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Officer, Chief Executive's Department which provided an update on related activities aimed at reducing the Council's impact on the environment and CO2 emissions from Council activities.

Since it started to measure its carbon emissions in 2006/2007, overall emissions have reduced in the Council's operations from 26,338 tonnes of CO2 to 9,327 tonnes. In 2020/21, emissions were 9,770 tonnes of CO2 and in 2021/22 the overall emissions had reduced a further 4.5% to 9,327 tonnes.

The report outlined a number key projects which had been completed or commenced during 2022 which included:

- Plans to extend the existing Solar Farm at the former St. Michael's Golf Course;
- Electric Vehicle charging infrastructures to be provided at Lower House Lane Depot and Air Source Heat pumps to be installed at the Leisure Centre, which would significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the building;
- Raised awareness of climate change which included an e-learning course for Officers and Members;
- The launch of the Big Halton Forest Project. The aim was to plant an additional 130,000 new trees over the next 7 years; and
- The continuation of the LED street lighting upgrade programme; 90% of the Borough had now been completed.

There was a number of projects that the Council was working on in partnership with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority which included:

- Green Homes Grant;
- Sustainable Warmth Fund;
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund; and
- Solar Together.

Following discussions, it was agreed that the Council would look into whether any wind turbines could be accommodated and whether solar panels could be installed on school buildings.

RESOLVED: That the report and the ongoing work be noted.

Chief Executive

CS28 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

The Board considered a report which provided a statistical analysis of the Corporate Complaints received during the 2021/22 financial year.

The report outlined the two stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints; a corporate complaints trend analysis from 2021-22; the nature of those complaints received; and outcomes. In addition, the report also provided a summary on complaints and queries that had been received by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2021-22. It was noted that the Ombudsman had made 13 decisions during the year and upheld 3 complaints.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

CS29 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 2 of 2022-23. The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets, and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period:

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

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 2 Performance Management report be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 6th June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

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

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

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

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

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

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

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

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 6 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 Corporate Services Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2023**

EXB61	TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24 TO 2025/26
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which outlined a recommendation to Council in respect of the budget savings proposals and the implementation of a transformation programme for the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The Board was advised that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MFTS), approved at its meeting on 17 November 2022, had identified funding gaps for the Council over the next three years. The latest MFTS forecast a total budget funding gap of around £25m over the next three years, with a gap of £17m for 2023/24.

Appendix 1 outlined proposed budget savings totalling £6.881m over the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26. Given the significant forecast budget gap for 2023/24, further work would be undertaken to review the assumptions within the forecast and to identify further saving proposals and the scope to use one-off reserves to deliver a balanced budget for 2023/24.

In order to identify sufficient savings to bridge the forecast budget gaps, a more fundamental approach was required to transform delivery via the implementation of a three year Transformation Programme as outlined in Section 5 of the report.

The Board discussed the proposal to close both Warrington Road and Ditton Daycare Centres. Further information was provided on the significant financial losses made at both sites for a number of years, proposals to provide places for 2 to 4 year olds within the current nursery setting at the same site, communication with staff, parents and Trade Unions and a letter from Derek Twigg - Halton Member of Parliament.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council's latest financial position and forecast budget gaps, as outlined within the section three of the report, be noted;
- 2) Council be recommended to approve the budget savings proposals for 2023/24 to 2025/26 presented in Appendix 1; and
- 3) Council be recommended to approve the three year transformation programme and funding arrangements, as outlined within section five of the report.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2023

EXB74	BUDGET 2023/24
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The Board considered a report from the Operational Director, Finance, which outlined a recommendation to Council in respect of the Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2023/24.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approved at the Executive Board meeting on 17 November 2022 had identified a funding gap of around £21.1m in 2023/24, £1.9m in 2024/25 and £2.0m in 2025/26. The Strategy had the following objectives:

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

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

The Board received regular reports summarising spending in the current year against the budget. The latest report indicated that spending was forecast to be over budget in the current year by approximately £7.1m against a net budget of £111.7m.

The proposed revenue budget for 2023/24 totalled £140.880m; the departmental analysis of this was shown in Appendix B and the major reasons for change from the current budget were shown in Appendix C. A total of £2.830m of savings were approved by Council on 1 February 2023.

The Board was advised that the proposed budget incorporated the grant figures announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement. Additional funding for Adult's and Children's Social Care was announced as part of the provisional settlement and details of these were set out in the report.

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

Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the Council's revenue budget, capital programme and council tax 2023/24.

Implementation Date

8 March 2023.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended

- 1) to adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A, which includes setting the budget at £140.880m, the Council Tax requirement of £60.714m (before Parish, Police, Fire and LCR Combined Authority precepts) and the Band D Council Tax for Halton of £1,675.29;
- 2) to approve the capital programme set out in Appendix E;
- 3) to approve the introduction of a Council Tax Premium of 100% to properties where there is no resident and which are substantially furnished (typically referred to as second homes) from 1 April 2024, subject to legislation being enacted; and
- 4) to approve the Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out in Appendix F.

EXB75	CAPITAL STRATEGY 2023/24
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, on the Council's Capital Strategy for 2023/24.

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

Members were advised that the Capital Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, included on the same agenda; this detailed the expected activities of the treasury management function and incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy for 2023/24. It was noted that the successful delivery of the Capital Strategy would assist the Council in planning and funding its capital expenditure over the next three years.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the 2023/24 Capital Strategy, as presented in the Appendix attached to the report.

EXB76	2022/23 SPENDING AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022
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The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as of 31 December 2022 together with a forecast outturn.

A summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 December 2022 was presented in Appendix 1, and Appendix 2 provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend would be over the approved budget by £7.098m. It was noted that this represented a lower figure than the figure of £7.586m forecast at 30 September 2022. The revisions to the Capital Programme were listed in the report and the revised Capital Programme was attached at Appendix 3.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to only absolutely essential items;
- 2) Strategic Directors take urgent action to identify areas where spending could be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year; and
- 3) Council be requested to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.16.

EXB77	TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2023/24
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The Board received the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, (TMSS) which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy for 2023/24.

The TMSS was appended to the report and detailed the expected activities of the treasury function in the forthcoming financial year (2023/24). Its production and submission to Council was a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code.

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

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

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

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

EXB78	TAXI LICENSING MATTER - PROPOSED INCREASE IN THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE TABLE OF FARES
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The Board considered a report of the Regulatory Committee which recommended a proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares.

It was noted that the request to increase fares had been received from members of the taxi trade and was due to the impact of costs of living crisis on the trade over the last 12 months. The Council had the discretion to fix the fares for Hackney Carriages within the Borough and fares may be varied in accordance with the statutory procedure set out in the report.

The report detailed the proposed increased, comparisons with neighbouring authorities and the written responses that had been received from the taxi trade in support of and against the proposal that were considered by the Regulatory Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) agree the proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Table of Fares; and
- 2) authorise officers to commence the public notification and consultation in line with the statutory procedure as detailed in the report.

EXB79	CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023-2024
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The Board received a report of the Chief Executive, which set out the proposed Calendar of Meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, which was appended to the report for information.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal Year, as appended to the report

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2023

EXB87	PENSIONS DISCRETIONS STATEMENT 2023/24
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The Board received the annual Pensions Discretions Statement for 2023-24 for Halton Borough Council.

The Council was required to publish a Pension Discretion Statement annually, to advise the discretions it intended to exercise under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – this was appended to the report.

It was reported that the Pensions Discretion Statement for 2023-24 was based upon the statement for 2022-23, which was approved by Executive Board in February 2022. It was noted that no new discretions had been added.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the Pensions Discretions Statement for 2023-24.

EXB88	THE CORPORATE PLAN: INTERIM APPROACH AND THE WAY FORWARD
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The Board considered a report which outlined the approach to producing an interim Corporate Plan for the Council. In order to progress the initial work, North West Employers had facilitated and supported a session with members of the Board and Management Team on 6 December 2022. Following the session, it was agreed that an interim Plan with a Statement of Intent would be in place by March 2024 and a Corporate Plan would be produced from April 2024. The report set out the key themes for Halton, timeline and engagement with the public (the ‘Big Conversation’).

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) agree on the interim approach outlined and the way forward culminating in a new Council Corporate Plan being launched on 1 April 2024;
- 2) the report be noted;
- 3) approves the Statement of Intent for publication on 1 April 2023; and
- 4) endorses the approach to facilitate the ‘Big Conversation’.

EXB89	DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF
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The Board considered a report from the Operational Director, Finance which presented two applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The report outlined details of the applications from Widnes Gymnastics Academy and Runcorn Amateur Boxing Club, in respect of their premises and the potential annual cost to the Council of granting discretionary rate relief to each organisation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the application for 15% discretionary rate relief from Widnes Gymnastics Academy with effect from 14 July 2022, be approved; and
- 2) the application for 90% discretionary rate relief from Runcorn Amateur Boxing Club with effect from 1 June 2022, be approved.

EXB90	REVIEW OF COUNCIL WIDE FEES AND CHARGES
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the review of the Council wide fees and charges for 2023/24 for services provided by the Council's Directorates.

The Board was advised that, as part of the budget preparations for 2023/24, a review of fees and charges had been carried out. The aim in setting fees and charges was to ensure that the Council fully recovered the cost incurred in providing the service, although this was dependent on a number of factors outside of the agreed charge. These were detailed in the report and noted as including demand, which could change year on year and be affected by weather, economy, regional and national events and demographics; competition, where there may be a strong competitive market; and a statutory element, where some charges were outside the control of the Council and there was no discretion to what could be charged.

Attached at Appendix A was the proposed schedule of statutory fees for 2023/24 and the chargeable rates for The Brindley Theatre and the Registrar's Service were attached at Appendix B and C respectively, for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A attached to the report and for 2023/24 as set out in Appendices B and C attached to the report, be approved.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2023

EXB105	HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND NO.4 2023-24
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The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, which sought approval for a proposed Scheme and Spending Plan, regarding how the Council's grant allocation of £2.6m from the Government for the 2023/24 Household Support Fund might be utilised. The grant allocation would provide continuation of the

Household Support Fund for a further twelve months from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

A Spending Plan had been prepared, as set out in the Appendix, regarding how the grant funding might be utilised via a combination of Council departments and the voluntary sector, to deliver help and assistance to vulnerable households over the twelve month period. The Plan would also provide a basis for monitoring spending against the grant, as required by the DWP and ensure that it was fully utilised in accordance with the grant guidance by 31 March 2024.

The Spending Plan must be submitted to the DWP by 17 May 2023. It was proposed that any subsequent revisions to the Plan would be approved by the Operational Director, Finance, in consultation with the Leader. Regular monitoring reports would be presented to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Scheme and Spending Plan for the 2023/24 Housing Support Fund, as outlined in the report and appendix, be approved;
- 2) regular progress reports be presented to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board; and
- 3) any subsequent revisions to the Spending Plan be approved by the Operational Director, Finance in consultation with the Leader.

EXB106	DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF
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The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented an application for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The report outlined details of the application from SHAP Limited in respect of their premises and the potential annual cost to the Council of granting discretionary rate relief to the organisation.

RESOLVED: That the application for discretionary rate relief for SHAP Limited be approved at 15% with effect from 11 January 2023.

EXB107	ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION 2023
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The Board received a report of the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, which sought the approval of Council to a small number of changes to the Constitution.

The revised version of the Constitution picked up the changes to the Council's working arrangements that had taken place during the year, as well as other changes which were intended to assist the Council to operate more effectively.

Members were referred to Appendix one where the proposed amendments were listed; these had been considered by the Chief Executive and the Leader, in accordance with Article 16.02.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board recommends Council to approve the changes to the Constitution including the matters set out in Appendix one.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 6 June 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director, Legal & Democratic Services

SUBJECT: Annual Report 2022/23

PORTFOLIO: Resources

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive the Annual Report of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board for 2022/23, to comment in respect of the same, and to make any changes considered appropriate.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be approved.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage

4.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None

5.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

6.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

None.

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

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



CORPORATE PPB ANNUAL REPORT

The Council faces severe financial constraints placed on it by 13 years of austerity cuts imposed by successive Conservative governments. The fact that we are still able to maintain services at an acceptable level is due to the diligence and dedication of Council Officers and Councillors working in partnership together. We are now faced with a budget underfund of £25 million over 3 years which means further savings and cuts must be found, so the budget process for 2024-2025 has begun.

The Finance Department is working diligently to ensure that Business Rates and Council Tax are collected in a timely and efficient way. The Benefits Division is working to get the Government's Household Support Fund out to all those families that are entitled to it, this is all taking place whilst administering the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction schemes.

A major cost to the council is the necessity to use agency workers to fill essential posts in social services and administrative areas; This is a problem other councils are having to deal with, caused by a variety of factors including pressure in the jobs market and the after effects of Covid. H.R services are working on training schemes to improve staff ability to rise through the structure as well as establishing a method of succession planning, making Halton an attractive employer.

The Health and Safety team continue to do excellent work in making sure all staff work safely and efficiently and are equipped to carry out their work.

In order to increase efficiency and make the council services even more accessible to residents and increase workforce flexibility the I.T Department is updating computer systems to improve security and make them more user friendly. And a major project is taking place to transfer all appropriate hard copy documents to digital formats making information and statistics gathering quicker.

Property Services Department is working to ensure council buildings are efficiently maintained and that provision of working space is achieved at an economic cost. They also manage multiple development projects across the Borough and successfully completed the Mersey Gateway Handback sites project. Great steps have been made in reducing energy costs by the installation of LED lighting and improving insulation. The new leisure centre

will be connected to the solar farm on St Michaels golf course and benefit from the installation Air source heat pumps will result in reducing heating costs. The Markets team has come forward with an in-depth 3-year plan to keep the market as a venue people will be delighted to use. To achieve this they will implement multiple advertising platforms by harnessing the latest online technology to spread the word to inform more people of what the market has to offer.

The DCBL stadium and catering team continue to strive to make the stadium an attractive and interesting venue for sporting events and recently also held a pop concert featuring Bryan Adams that drew in over 7,000 people.

The Legal Services Department continues to provide strong legal support to the Social Services teams as they cope with increased pressures. They also deal with the complex legal issues that arise from major project developments. The Member Services and Member Development Team works diligently to make sure Councillors are fully equipped and kept up to date and provided with the information necessary to carry out their roles.

I would like to thank my lead officer Mark Reaney for his help and support and members of the PPB for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

Councillor Bob Gilligan – Chair,
Corporate Policy & Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2022/23, the Board comprised of eleven Councillors – R. Gilligan (Chair), G Philbin (Vice Chair), N Hutchinson, P Lloyd-Jones, A Lowe, N Plumpton-Walsh, G Stockton, A Teeling, S Thornton, K Wainwright and A Wall.

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

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met four times during the year. Set out below are some of the main initiatives upon which it has worked during that time.

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 2022/23

The oversight of the administration of the fund was a very significant part of the Board's work throughout the year, with reports brought to each meeting. In June, the Board was advised that on 23 March 2022, the Government announced an extension to the Household Support Fund, which previously operated from October 2021 to March 2022. The Fund was intended to support vulnerable households particularly those including children and pensioners.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had issued guidance and grant allocations for councils, with the grant funding covering the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022. Halton's allocation of grant funding was £1,297,880 of which 5% was permitted to provide for the costs of administering the grant. A spending plan had been prepared regarding how the grant funding might be utilised via a combination of Council departments and voluntary sector partners, to deliver help and assistance to vulnerable households over the six month period. The plan would also provide a basis for monitoring spending against the grant, as required by the DWP and ensure that it was fully utilised in accordance with the grant guidance by 30 September 2022.

In order to ensure at least one third was allocated for vulnerable households with children, free school meal vouchers of £12 per week would once again be provided to approximately 7,500 eligible pupils at an estimated cost of £630,000 (summer half term holidays and summer school holidays). To support vulnerable pensioner households with at least one third of funding, all 4,303 pensioners currently receiving Council Tax Reduction would be provided with an award of £120. It was estimated that this would deliver approximately £516,360. The remaining grant (up to a third) would be used to assist other vulnerable households.

In September, the Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, which provided an update on the progress of the delivery of the grant allocation received by the Council for the six month extension to the Fund. A spending plan had been prepared and was attached as Appendix A to the report. Detailed information relating to spending for the period 1 April to 30 June 2022 was included as Appendix B.

It was noted that the DWP were currently working through the design and governance of the new HSF for the period 1 November 2022 to 31 March 2023. No details of the scheme were as yet available however one change highlighted was there would be requirement to spend on particular groups of people as stipulated in the current HSF.

It was proposed that once the DWP had issued final guidance for the new HSF the Operational Director – Finance, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board (PPB), would recommend the new HSF scheme for approval by Executive Board.

At the November meeting, the Board received a report from the Operational Director, Finance, which updated Members on the progress from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

A Spending Plan had again been prepared and attached as an appendix. This demonstrated how the grant funding might be utilised via a combination of Council departments and the Voluntary Sector to deliver help and assistance to vulnerable households over the six month period.

It was suggested that the Household Support Fund be promoted in various places e.g. schools and nurseries to ensure people are aware of its availability.

In January, it was noted that good progress was being made with the distribution of the latest Fund. Of the total £1,297,880 available grant allocation, £785,105 had to date been paid to eligible households Preparations are being made to administer the extension of the Household Support Fund from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and also the new Energy Bills Alternative Funding Scheme, once Government guidance and grant allocations are received for each.

RESOURCING THE COUNCIL

In September, the Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency, which provided Members with an overall view of the resourcing challenges currently faced by the Council, their impact, implications and options.

It was noted since the start of 2021/22 financial year, the number of Council service vacancies submitted for advertisement had increased significantly. The rise in numbers had created a significant challenge as the Council's recruitment service was not resourced at a level sufficient to manage workflow of such

volumes. This had created delays in service provision, which remained prevalent. The key reasons for the increase in volume of vacancies were set out in the report. However, in addition to these reasons, there was also a failure to attract candidates to some roles which resulted in re-advertising and repeated recruitment activity.

The Board was also advised that the recruitment service also processed recruitment for school on a chargeable SLA basis. 45 schools had bought into the service and Members were updated on revised legislation in respect of school recruitment which was introduced in April 2020 and the impact this had on the recruitment service.

Members noted data outlined in the report which showed an upswing in vacancies across both the public and private sectors and in particular across the Liverpool City Region (LCR). All local authorities in the LCR were reporting recruitment issues and certain post types continued to provide the highest level of challenge across the city region, namely social worker roles, caring posts in the adult care sector, nursing posts in the adult care sector, technical and professional roles across a broad range of service areas and more recently administrative type posts.

In order to address some of the recruitment issues experienced, a revised approach to attracting candidates to Council roles was to be explored. The report detailed the measures which were under consideration as part of this new approach. In addition, the Council was also engaged in a strategic programme of work with the other five LCR Council's headed up by the Chief Executive of the LCR Combined Authority, designed to consider the high level challenge of resourcing the local government sector more generally in the short, medium and long term.

ENERGY / CARBON REDUCTION

In January, the Board considered a wide-ranging report which provided an update on related activities aimed at reducing the Council's impact on the environment and CO2 emissions.

Since it started to measure its carbon emissions in 2006/2007, overall emissions have reduced in the Council's operations from 26,338 tonnes of CO2 to 9,327 tonnes.

The Council was given guidelines by the Government in 2009 that public bodies would aim to reduce their carbon emissions by 30% of their 2009 carbon emission baseline by 2020. The Council calculated its baseline carbon emissions in 2009 as 26,825 carbon tonnes. In reporting year 2020, the Council had reduced its carbon emissions to 11,354 carbon tonnes. This was a reduction of 57%. In 2017, the Government reset the baseline in the expectation that

public bodies would reduce their carbon emissions by 50% by 2031.

The Council's 2017 baseline was 14,811 carbon tonnes. In reporting year 2021/22, the Council had managed to reduce its carbon emissions to 9,327 tonnes. This is a reduction of 37%. In 2020/21, emissions were 9770 tonnes of CO₂. For 2021/22, the overall emissions have reduced to 9327 tonnes, a further reduction of 4.5%.

The report covered a number of the Council's initiatives in detail.

PERFORMANCE ISSUES DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

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

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

WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

During 2022/23, the Board retained the expanded Topic Group which oversaw the operation of the Council's Discretionary Support Scheme and included scrutiny of Universal Credit. The Board agreed that additional topic groups would be established when the need arose.

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	6 th June2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Interim Divisional Manager - HR Operations Division, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, Chief Executive's Directorate
PORTFOLIO:	Corporate Services
SUBJECT:	Corporate Accident / Incident Report 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To report on the performance of health safety management within the Authority for 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

- i) **the report be received; and**
- ii) **the Board notes the contents of the report including the recommendations and actions for 2023/24.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

3.2 It highlights health and safety information.

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

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

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

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

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

The provision of a safe working environment and reduction in

accidents is important in order to provide:

- A Healthy Halton;
- A Safer Halton; and
- Efficient and Effective Delivery of Services

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

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

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

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

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.



CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT
CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 clearly places responsibility on those who create the risk to manage it. The new HSE Strategy ‘Protecting People and Places 2022 to 2032’ allows for the HSE to adapt and respond to a changing landscape. It also allows it to continue to support the delivery of wider government priorities including the move towards net zero and improving the health of the nation.

The HSE now also has added responsibilities, such as becoming the appointed ‘Building Safety Regulator’ and also has an extended role in chemical regulation following Brexit.

It remains the same that the fundamental principle of health and safety law is that those who create risks are best placed to manage them. The expectations and evidence suggest that most workplaces have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage safety for themselves.

1.2 Health and Safety Management System

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

LEAD INDICATORS

Proactive action taken and any outcomes

KPI

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

REACTIVE [Lagging] INDICATORS

Reactive action taken in response to accidents/incidents

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

Rationale – identify incident trends and actions required to prevent similar Occurrences. Encourage all staff to report incidents to give a true picture and enable

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

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

appropriate mitigations to be put in place.

National and Local Information together with performance gaps and incident trends form the basis for the Recommended Actions for 2023/24.

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

2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Summary

As the authority moves forward from the pandemic an expected rise in accidents and violent incidents has been evident as services continue to return to their pre pandemic status. This is continually monitored.

In December 2022, the authority changed from 2 to 5 directorates. The figures quoted in this report are given as overall figures. It is anticipated that a more detailed picture will emerge in the next report as the directorates will have been in place for sufficient time to allow data to be scrutinised more accurately.

This has also had an impact on data monitoring Risk Assessments as departments move under new directorates and new sections have been created. This data should be in a more settled state by the time of the next report.

Reportable and significant accidents for Halton Employees are currently at a total of 8 across all directorates (no change) plus 7 near misses (Reduction of 3) from the last data reported.

Violent Incidents corporately are showing currently as 14 verbal and 10 physical incidents (Both showing an increase 4 and 3 respectively). Within schools for this period there were 22 physical incidents and 5 verbal, again both showing an increase of 1 physical and 3 verbal incidents..

Lone Working Contact Centre Monitoring update – registered users are now showing a slight increase which was expected as services continue to pick up. The latest data is encouraging but there is still work to be done. Again, due to the change of directorates the data is being assessed. Encouraging staff to use the system is ongoing and a clearer picture of areas to be targeted should become clearer as the areas are smaller.

Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system and are shown at point 7. The figures shown cover the new directorates, with many being reviewed still. In addition, the risk assessment system has undergone changes after concerns over its ease of use were raised. As a result of focus groups, those suggestions have been implemented.

The HSE recently released their annual statistics which includes 123 workplace fatalities (Construction, Agriculture and Manufacturing are the top 3 workplace categories).

The HSE have announced they are to conduct checks on school premises to ensure correct management of asbestos that is required under the Control of Asbestos

Regulations 2012. In addition, the HSE have also launched an asbestos awareness campaign entitled “Asbestos and You”.

Work on maintaining appropriate Bomb and Lockdown procedures in HBC buildings is continuing with a number of exercises planned, some of which have been conducted. Results have been passed to managers for consideration and action. In addition staff have been reminded regarding the importance of maintaining both personal and building security via the corporate bulletin system.

2.2 Recommendations 2023/24

The following recommendations are as a result of the accident analysis data for the first half of 2022 from 1st April and will be actioned during the period 2023/24.

No.	KPI No.	ACTION	RATIONALE	RESPONSIBLE
1.	1	All managers and assessors to ensure risk assessments on the corporate risk assessment system across all areas are reviewed and up to date as per safety bulletin 2021 8.	Position statements, section 7 below.	All managers and assessors - ongoing
2.	3	All Managers to ensure preparation / training in relation to ACT and the enactment of Protect Duty	Ensuring safety of staff, public and anyone involved with council business	All managers - ongoing
3.	3	Ensure staff follow Safe Systems of Work (SSOW) to reduce likelihood of involvement in an accident.	Reduction of accidents, suffering and associated financial implications.	All managers - ongoing

GENERAL ACTIONS

Action a series of Lockdown/Bomb Threat Exercises across main Council buildings	2023/24	Health and Safety Team
Review and update Health and Safety policies (Corporate & Schools) requiring timescale or legislation reviews	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
School Audit and Healthcheck visit programme	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
Programme of departmental audits actioned and ongoing for all corporate areas	2023/24	Health and Safety Team and Team Managers.
Action Fire / Bomb / Lockdown risk assessments / procedures council buildings. This has been achieved by a series of audits.	2023/24	Health and Safety Team and team Managers

3. INFORMATION

3.1 Local/National Information

National:

The HSE recently released their annual report which gives current statistics in relation to workplace incidents 2021 /2022.

- **1.8 million** working people suffering from a work-related illness, of which
 - **914,000** workers suffering work-related stress, depression or anxiety
 - **477,000** workers suffering from a work-related musculoskeletal disorder
 - **123,000** workers suffering from COVID-19 which they believe may have been from exposure to coronavirus at work
- **2,544** mesothelioma deaths due to past asbestos exposures (2020)
- **123** workers killed in work-related accidents
- **565,000** working people sustained an injury at work according to the Labour Force Survey
- **61,713** injuries to employees reported under RIDDOR
- **36.8 million** working days lost due to work-related illness and workplace injury
- **£18.8 billion** estimated cost of injuries and ill health from current working conditions (2019/20)

The HSE are currently running a safety campaign entitled “Work Right”. It is primarily targeted at the various tradespersons (employees and managers) engaged in construction and associated activities. The current focus is called “Asbestos and You” which highlights the dangers and the procedures and management requirements when working in areas, suspected of containing asbestos e.g. older buildings. The HSE website now has an information area entitled Asbestos Essentials, where managers, workers and public can access the relevant information. The HSE have created electronic newsletters to enable associated staff to be kept up to date with any new developments.

Prior to schools closing for their summer break, the HSE announced that they would be undertaking spot checks at schools in relation to Asbestos management, to ensure compliance with Asbestos regulations. To date the Health & Safety Team have only been made aware of one High School being contacted with no visit taking place. The campaign is designed to ensure staff have awareness of asbestos and to ensure, where present, the material is being appropriately managed. The HSE has also reiterated its advice on violence in the workplace. HBC has a number of strategies already in place which are reviewed on a regular basis.

Local:

As staff return to the workplace managers have been encouraged to ensure that not only are work areas suitable but that the welfare of staff is paramount. HBC are currently running a number of mental health sessions which are open to staff.

Retraining of staff is also underway (e.g. Evac chair). In addition updated online training packages have been launched on the enable system i.e. fire marshal training package has been included.

As an authority Halton Borough Council has for many years been working on implementing Bomb/Lockdown procedures and policies in all buildings and schools as well as actioning Bomb/Lockdown exercises in main buildings. The HBC Bomb/Lockdown policy was first produced in 2009. Work will be continuing to review and improve this process. In addition staff have received reminders in relation to staff and building security via the corporate bulletin system. In addition, a number of training sessions for managers and decision maker sessions lead by counter terrorism officers have taken place.

In addition, staff have had increased awareness of the ACT training package which is available online.

The Health & Safety Team are currently carrying out, unannounced visits to HBC buildings in order to gauge the readiness of those buildings in relation to Fire/ Bomb / Lockdown procedures. Areas being scrutinized include, signage, identifying the OIC, written plans etc. Further details will be included in the next report.

4. LEAD INDICATORS

4.1 . Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems

4.1.1 An electronic risk assessment system, based on the Intranet, has been 'live' since September 2011.

- Actual number of assessments completed up to 01/09/22 are; 1936

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 1226
People – 710

From 1st December the five new directorates were formed and although some data is available, the reliability is currently being scrutinised.

See section 7 for known position statements and comparisons.

4.2 Number of Near Misses

4.2.1 The number reported in the last 3 years are:

2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
2	10	5

From the 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 there have been 5 near misses reported on the corporate accident/incident system.

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

4.3.1 Lone Working – Contact Centre Monitoring update – registered users have decreased by 1 but registered usage has increased. This will be monitored from the data provided.

The tables below show the last reported figures (two directorates) and the current (last 3 months) figures for the new five directorates

	June – Sept 2021		June – Sept 2022	
	Registered Users	No's Using System	Registered Users	No's Using System
Enterprise Community & Resources	82	25	61	37
People	310	89	253	113
TOTAL USERS	392	114	314	150
% OF USE	29%		47%	

January to March 2023

	Adult Services Directorate	Children's Services Directorate	Chief Executives Directorate	Environment and Regeneration Directorate	Public Health Directorate	Total
Number of Registered Users	81	128	25	51	28	313
Number of Users to be deleted (not used for over 12 months)	14	5	2	0	3	24
Number of new users awaiting training	2	8	0	1	1	12
Number of users using the system in last 3 months	47	79	18	42	19	205
Percentage of users using the system in the last 3 months	58.02%	61.71%	72.00%	82.35%	67.85%	65.50%

5 REACTIVE ['Lagging'] INDICATORS

5.1 Number of Significant and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents

5.1.1 The number of significant accidents and RIDDOR reportable to the HSE for each Directorate excluding schools that took place from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 is 10, a fall on this time last year.

NB: The figures have been collated under the old directorates as the system at this time is still updating on the new five.

Directorate	Specified Injury	> 7-Day	Significant
Enterprise, Community and Resources	0	3	6
People – excluding schools	0	0	1
TOTAL 2022/2023	0	3	7
TOTAL 2021/2022	0	2	6
TOTAL 2020/2021	1	3	7

Main Categories (Including Non – Reportable)

	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
STF	6	23	22
Man Han	1	11	10
Equipment	0	2	3

Other Categories 2022/23

Hit by moving or flying object – 10
 Hit something fixed or stationary – 6
 Hit by moving vehicle – 1
 RTC – 1
 Sharps – 9
 Injured by an animal – 2
 Entrapment – 1
 Entanglement – 0
 Trapped by something clasping – 0

Please note the majority of accidents in the main and other categories resulted in minor injuries, not reportable or requiring further action.

Days Lost

- The main categories of days lost are as follows;

Days Lost

	2019/20	2021/22	2022/23
1. Slips, trips and falls	20	67	192 (+125)
2. Manual handling	77	77	200 (+123)
3. Equipment	25	0	0

- The total days lost is 392 on the above categories. This represents an increase compared to 2021/22.
- Many of the slips have involved inclement weather e.g. ice on walkways, wet leaves that had landed on footpaths.
- Slips, Trips and Falls and Manual Handling each have individuals with over 100 days absence (Slips, Trips and Falls – 119 days, Manual Handling – 183 days). The average for both being 2-4 days depending on any resulting injury.
- Accidents categorised as ‘Other’ totalled 9 days lost.

5.2 Number of Violent Incidents

5.2.1 From 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
Enterprise, Community and Resources	8	4
People	5	8

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2022/23	13	12
TOTAL 2021/22	12	0
TOTAL 2020/21	8	1
TOTAL 2019/20	30	12

EC&R- HDL sites (4 - Verbal), Markets (2 - Verbal, 2-Physical), Leisure 4 (2 – Verbal, 2 - Physical).

People Directorate – PBSS (11, 3-Verbal, 8-physical). Care Homes (2, verbal)

5.2.2 Schools

From 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 there have been 16 physical violent incidents and 1 verbal incidents within schools against staff.

Schools	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2022/23	1	16
TOTAL 2021/22	2	16
TOTAL 2020/21	4	11
TOTAL 2019/20	0	45

6.3 Schools**Pupils**

	Minor/NFA	Significant	Major/Specified Injury	Totals
Total 2022/23	42	15	5	62
Total 2021/22	105	5	1	111
Total 2020/21	67	3	3	73
Total 2019/20	59	13	10	82
Total 2018/19	92	14	4	110
Total 2017/18	113	7	0	120

6. Risk Assessment Position Statements

On 1st December 2022 the authority moved from two to five directorates. Work is currently ongoing to move relevant risk assessments to the appropriate new directorate. During this period, the accuracy of the figures obtained cannot be verified. This should be resolved by the next reporting period.

Previous:

Risk Assessment Position Statement - All Directorates

01 September 2022

		Enterprise, Community & Resources				People			
		Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review	Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review
Risk Assessment Type	Home Working Risk Assessment	401	245	61.1	01/09/2022	276	122	44.2	14/09/2022
	Environmental/Fire Risk Assessment	60	39	65	01/09/2022	80	54	67.5	13/09/2022
	Fire Risk Assessment								
	Lone Working Risk Assessment	30	13	43.3	14/09/2022	24	9	37.5	14/09/2022
	Manual Handling Risk Assessment	7	4	57.1	17/11/2022	3	2	66.67	30/05/2023
	Occupational Risk Assessment	251	198	78.9	06/09/2022	53	27	50.94	03/09/2022
	Ladder Checklist	10	9	90	14/09/2022				
	General Risk Assessment	114	63	55.3	10/09/2022	144	61	42.36	06/09/2022
	COSHH Risk Assessment	53	53	100	07/09/2022	71	46	64.79	06/12/2022
	COSHH (Advanced) Risk Assessment	14	12	85.7	08/11/2022	7	6	85.71	24/05/2023
	Transport in Depots Risk Assessment	1	1	100	16/08/2023				
	Workstation Risk Assessment	721	589	81.7	03/09/2022	621	383	61.67	02/09/2022
	Total	1662	1226	73.8	-	1279	710	55.51	-

September 2019 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1046 People 418
 September 2020 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1255 People 650
 September 2021 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1052 People 507
 September 2022 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1226 People 710

Current:

Directorate	Expected	Completed	%
Adult Services	92	74	80.43
Chief Executives	252	216	85.71
Children's Services	148	100	67.57
Environment & Regeneration	139	117	84.17
Public Health	36	31	86.11
Total	667	538	80.65

Lynn Pennington-Ramsden
Principal Health and Safety Advisor,
HR Operations
Chief Executives Directorate.
1st April 2023

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	6 th June 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 Corporate 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 Corporate 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.



**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:

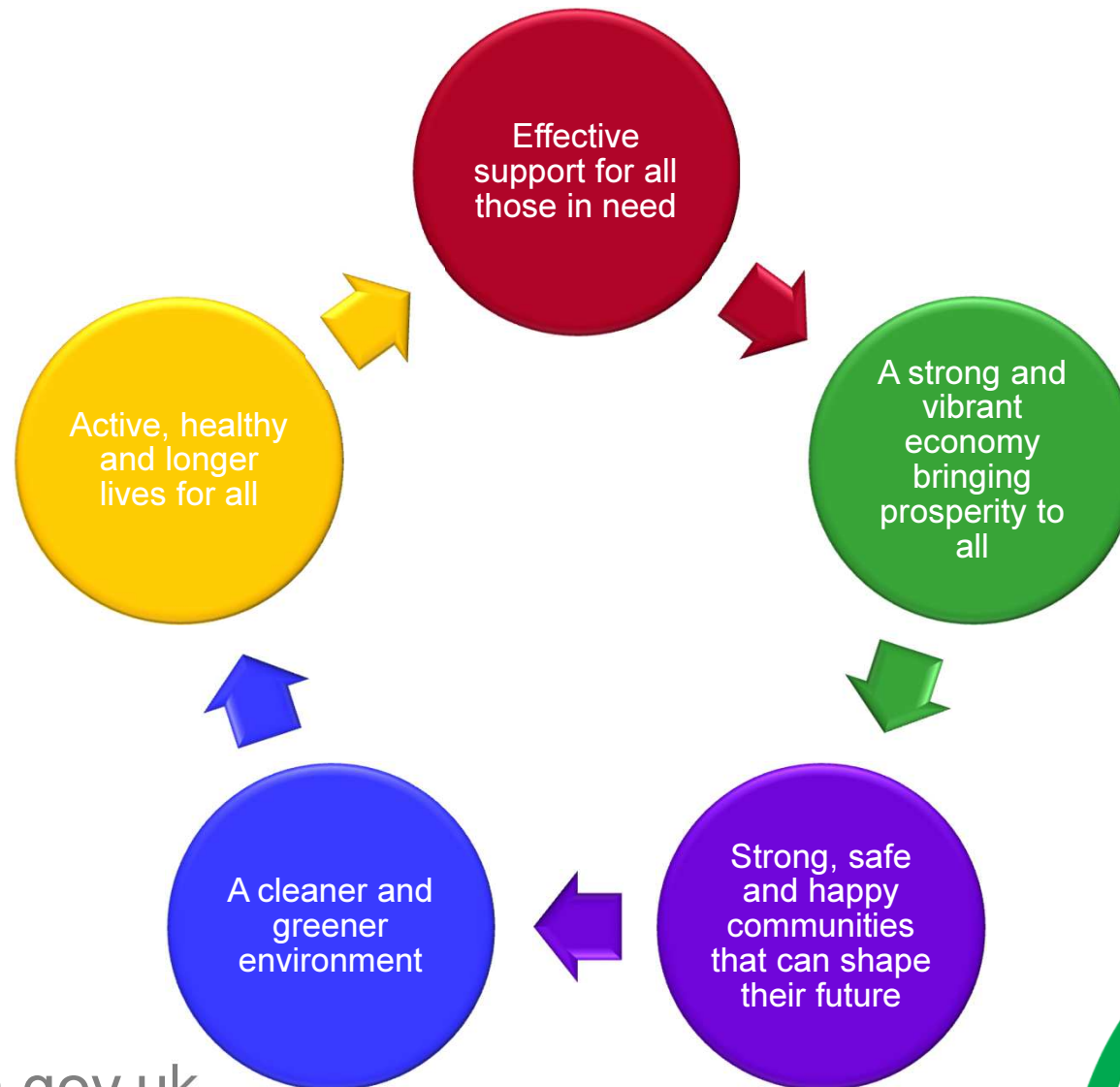
Public/customers, HBC Workforce, Elected Members, Partners, Voluntary Sector, Community Sector, Independent Sector, Businesses, Schools (Heads), Hard to Reach Groups – eg. children and young people/refugees/asylum seekers/travellers/disabled people/people with mental health/minority ethnic groups

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:	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	6 th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Operational Director – Finance
PORTFOLIO:	Corporate Services
SUBJECT:	Household Support Fund
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update regarding delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 and spending plans for the Fund during 2023/24.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;

- (i) **The actual delivery of the Household Support Fund for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, as outlined in the report, be noted;**
- (ii) **The Spending Plan for the Household Support Fund for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 as presented in Appendix 2, be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Household Support Fund 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023

- 3.1 On 24th January 2023 the Board received a progress report regarding delivery of the third tranche of the Government's Household Support Fund between 1 October 2022 and 31 March 2023. The Fund is intended to support vulnerable households with the pressures caused by the significantly rising cost of living.
- 3.2 For this six month period Halton was awarded grant funding of £1,297,880, with any unspent grant as at 31 March 2023 being returned to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 3.3 The DWP made a number of changes to its guidance for the latest scheme. The main change was that there would be no ring fence of any proportion of funding for any particular cohort of people. The second key change was a requirement for councils to operate at least part of their scheme via an application basis ie. Residents should have the opportunity to come forward and request support.

Actual Expenditure

- 3.4 In order to meet the requirement to operate part of the scheme on an application basis, £167,314 was awarded by the Discretionary Support Scheme, through its telephone application process.
- 3.5 The DWP guidance stated that the latest Household Support Fund was intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners, and people with disabilities.
- 3.6 In order to provide assistance to vulnerable households with children, free school meal vouchers of £12 per week were issued during the school holidays, and spend in this area was £536,592.
- 3.7 To support vulnerable pensioner households, all pensioners currently receiving council tax reduction were provided with an award of £100, and a total of £405,500 was spent.
- 3.8 The Benefits Division co-ordinated use of the grant on behalf of the Council, and Appendix A details how the grant funding has been utilised via a combination of Council departments and the Voluntary Sector.

Household Support Fund 2023/24

- 3.9 In the Chancellor's 2022 Autumn Statement it was announced that the Household Support Fund would be further extended from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. On 20th February 2023 it was confirmed that Halton had been allocated grant funding of £2.6m for 2023/24.
- 3.10 The Government have once again included the requirement that part of the funding must be distributed via an application process. However, the Council can still proactively target particular groups of households.
- 3.11 On 20th April 2023 Executive Board approved a Spending Plan regarding how the £2.6m grant allocation might be utilised, in order to ensure that arrangements could be put in place in time for the Summer half term school holidays.

Discretionary Support Scheme – Application Process

- 3.12 In order to meet the requirement to operate part of the scheme on an application basis, it was agreed to allocate £356,000 of the funding to the Discretionary Support Scheme within the Benefits Division, which has an existing telephone application process.
- 3.13 The DWP guidance once again states that the Household Support Fund is intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners, and people with disabilities.

Free School Meal Vouchers

- 3.14 In order to provide assistance to vulnerable households with children, it has been decided to once again allocate funding to low income families with children, by issuing free school meal vouchers of £12 per week during all of the school holidays.
- 3.15 It is estimated that the free school meals vouchers will cost approximately £1,170,000 in total. This will provide approximately 7,500 children with free school meals throughout all of the school holidays over the coming twelve months.

Pensioner Households on CTR

- 3.16 To support vulnerable pensioner households, it has been decided that all pensioners currently receiving council tax reduction (CTR) will be provided with a one-off award of £120.
- 3.17 It is estimated that 4,181 pensioner households on CTR will benefit from this award, at a total cost of £501,720. A number of pensioners have previously been unwilling to provide their bank details to receive payment. In these cases they will instead be sent Paypoint vouchers, with full instructions as to how they can be used at any Paypoint outlet across the Borough.

Public Health and Care Leavers

- 3.18 It has been agreed to allocate £100,000 to Public Health who will target support at vulnerable households who may fall outside those covered by the rest of the Spending Plan.
- 3.19 Public Health will also target support to families who have pre-school age children and are flagged on the Income Deprivation Index affecting children. In addition, families who have disabled pre-school age children will be targeted for support. Public Health have been allocated £82,126 for this particular project.
- 3.20 Children's Services currently have 135 recent care leavers and up to 50 young people in care who will become 18 years old over the next 12 months. An allocation of £82,127 has therefore been made to Children's Services in order to assist care leavers with the following; energy bill support; household packs to help with keeping warm, saving energy and cooking; and emergency food and hygiene packs.

Voluntary Sector Partners

- 3.21 Once again Voluntary Sector Partners will be asked to assist the Council with the delivery of this support to residents. The grant allocations made for the previous six month period to Citizens Advice, Food Banks, Affordable Warmth etc. have been doubled for the coming year. Each organisation will provide a detailed proposal of how they intend to utilise

the funding and throughout the year they will provide the Council with monitoring information for submission to the DWP.

Delivery Co-ordination, Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

- 3.22 The Benefits Division will once again co-ordinate use of the grant on behalf of the Council. In order to maximise the benefit of the grant funding for the Borough and ensure it is fully utilised, discussions have been held with colleagues across the Council. A Spending Plan has been prepared as set out in Appendix 2, regarding how the grant funding will be utilised via a combination of Council Departments and the Voluntary Sector to deliver help and assistance to vulnerable households over the twelve month period.
- 3.23 The Spending Plan is intended to provide clarity of what actions are required of the relevant Council Departments and Partner Organisations, with lead officers being identified. It will also provide a basis for monitoring spending against the grant, with periodic submissions to the DWP and to ensure the funding is fully utilised in accordance with the grant guidance by 31st March 2024.
- 3.24 Progress with delivery of the Household Support Fund during 2023/24 will be reported regularly to the Board.
- 3.25 If the grant is not fully spent by 31 March 2024 and/or is not spent in accordance with the grant guidance, it will be clawed back by the DWP.

4.0 POLICY AND 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

The delivery of support from the Household Support Fund to the Borough’s vulnerable households, has the potential to support all of the Council priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 If the grant allocation from the Household Support Fund, is not fully utilised in accordance with the DWP guidance by the deadline date of 31 March 2024, any remaining grant funding will be clawed back by the DWP. The Spending Plan presented in the Appendix 2 is intended to ensure that the grant funding is fully utilised by the deadline and will be monitored closely throughout the year.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Household Support Fund Allocations and Guidance	DCLB Stadium	Paul Garnett Divisional Manager Benefits

**Household Support Fund
Final Expenditure 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2023**

Total grant allocation	£ 1,297,880
Less administration costs (5%)	64,894
Available grant funding	1,232,986
1. Vulnerable Households with Children	536,592
Free school meal vouchers for school holidays: Autumn half term 24 th – 28 th October 2022 (1 week) Christmas holidays 22 nd Dec 2022 – 3 rd Jan 2023 (2 weeks) Spring half term 20 th – 24 th February 2023 (1 week) Easter holidays 3 rd – 14 th April 2023 (2 weeks)	
2. Vulnerable Pensioner Households	405,500
Award £100 per pensioner	
3. Discretionary Support Scheme	167,314
By application	
4. Other Vulnerable Households	94,722
Distributed via; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halton CAB £49,977 • Widnes Food Bank £10,000 • Runcorn Food Bank £10,000 • Holiday Activity Fund £5,000 • Affordable Warmth – Energy Projects Plus £9,745 • Halton Voluntary Action £10,000 	
Total	1,204,128

**Household Support Fund
Spending Plan 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024**

Total grant allocation	£ 2,595,761
Less administration costs (5%)	129,788
Available grant funding	2,465,973
1. Vulnerable Households with Children	1,170,000
<p>Free school meal vouchers for school holidays: Summer half term 29th May 2023 – 2nd June 2023 (1 week) Summer holidays 20th July 2023 – 1st September 2023 (6 weeks) Autumn half term 30th October 2023 – 3rd November 2023 (1 week) Christmas holidays 22nd Dec 2023 – 2nd Jan 2024 (2 weeks) Spring half term 12th – 16th February 2024 (1 week) Easter holidays 29th March 2024 – 12th April 2024 (2 weeks)</p> <p>Based on estimated 7,500 children entitled to FSM Paid for 13 weeks £12 voucher per week</p>	
2. Vulnerable Pensioner Households	501,720
<p>Based on 4,181 pensioner households receiving CTR/HB Award £120 per pensioner</p>	
3. Discretionary Support Scheme	356,000
<p>By application Based on HSF3 allocation for 6 months of £178,000.</p>	
4. Public Health	100,000
<p>Awards to vulnerable residents who do not qualify under any other categories, to include; prescription charges, electrical medical equipment costs, targeted healthy eating sessions, bus passes to get to work for those who do not qualify for benefits, and budgeting workshops.</p>	
5. Public Health	84,126
<p>To make awards to families who have pre-school age children who are flagged on the Income Deprivation Index affecting children. In addition families who have pre-school age children who are disabled will be supported.</p>	
6. Care Leavers	84,127

To make cost of living awards to recent care leavers and to those young people who will become care leavers in the next 12 months.	
7. Other Vulnerable Households – HSF3 amount doubled	
Halton CAB	80,000
Widnes Food Bank	20,000
Runcorn Food Bank	20,000
Holiday Activity Food programme	10,000
Affordable Warmth – Energy Projects Plus	20,000
Halton Voluntary Action	20,000
Total	2,465,973

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 6 June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

PORTFOLIO: Chief Executive's

SUBJECT: Member Development Group Notes

WARDS: N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the notes of the Member Development Group held on 28 November 2022.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The notes of the last meeting of the Member Development Group are before CSPPB as stated in the Constitution.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 FINANCIAL 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 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

None.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Member Development Group

At a meeting of the Member Development Group held on 28th November 2022 held in the Boardroom, Municipal Building Widnes.

Present: Councillors A. Teeling (Chair), J. Bradshaw, B. Gilligan, A. Lowe, and P. Wallace.

Officers: K. Mackenzie, S. Riley and A. Scott.

Apologies for absence: Councillors V. Begg, I. Bramwell, T. McDermott, M. Ratcliffe, T. Stretch and D. Thompson.

MDG 13	NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	The notes of the last meeting held on 20 July 2022 were approved as a correct record.	
MDG 14	ELECTED MEMBERS IT – WAY FORWARD	
	<p>The Group were informed of the proposed way forward for Members IT. The revised IT package that was suggested would solve the current issues that elected Members were experiencing when using Microsoft Teams and email with existing devices. Office 365 would allow a single web browser to work on either a Samsung or Apple device, similar to a desktop experience. The tablet was more secure device compared to a laptop, and the new device could also link to multiple screens. The iPad would consist of a keyboard for Members ease of use, with stylus and more efficient battery storage. The rollout would be in the New Year onwards, with training offered for all Members during the transition period.</p> <p>This item would be included in the agenda for the next meeting to establish how the rollout had gone in practice, and to consider any new issues arising from the new devices moving forward.</p>	
MDG 15	REVIEW OF CURRENT PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS	
	<p>LOD2 – Number of Members with a Member Action Plan (MAP)</p> <p>The Number of Members with a MAP to date since the election of May 2022 was 54.</p> <p>LOD3 – Percentage of Members attending at least one organised training event in the current financial year.</p> <p>Since May 2022, 63% of Members had attended at least one training and development event. The target was 100% for the year 2022-2023.</p>	

MDG 16	LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE	
	<p>Members noted that the new Member Induction Days would be held on 10 and 11 May 2023 following the local election on 4 May 2023. Day 1 would be updated to reflect the new Council structure.</p> <p>Members had attended training sessions on the following:</p> <p>Local Government Finance – 2 November 2022</p> <p>Dementia Awareness delivered by Dementia Friends – 22 November 2022</p> <p>Members noted that a training session would be arranged on Race Equality. The training had been made available to all HBC staff, and the offer would be made available to all elected Members in March 2023. Members noted the ideal delivery for this training was via Zoom.</p> <p>Members were reminded that there were a number of eLearning courses on offer for Members via the eLearning portal on the Intranet. If any Member needed assistance they should contact Alison Scott or contact training reception via the following link - Trainrec.Trainrec@halton.gov.uk</p> <p>Members were reminded of the North West Employers offer available with details on their website https://nwemployers.org.uk/ Members could find details of their seminars on offer and LGA workbooks.</p>	
MDG 17	ANY OTHER BUSINESS/MEMBER SUPPORT ISSUES	
	None to report.	
MDG 18	DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING	
	RESOLVED: The next meeting to be held in March 2023.	
	The meeting closed at 6.50pm	

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	6 th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Reports for Quarter 3 of 2022/23
PORTFOLIO:	Corporate Services
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the third quarter period to 31st December 2022.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022-23 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
 - Finance
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development
 - ICT and Administrative Support
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property 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 performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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

performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

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

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

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 At the time at which Annual Business Plans are developed Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring Report

Reporting Period: 01st October to 31st December 2022

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the third quarter of 2022 / 23 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
- Financial Services
 - Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency
 - ICT Infrastructure
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property Services
- 1.3 The emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

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

2.2 Financial Services

2.3 Benefits

Processing Times

At 31st December 2022 processing times for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction were as follows: new claims 25.32 days and changes in circumstances 12.50 days.

Household Support Fund

At the end of December 2022 we are half way through the current Household Support Fund (HSF) period 1st October 2022 – 31st March 2023. By 31st December 2022 free school meal vouchers have been issued for the Autumn half term (24th – 28th October 2022), and for the Christmas holidays (22nd December 2022 – 3rd January 2023) representing a total value of £258,228.

By the middle of December 2022, 4,181 vulnerable pensioners have been awarded a £100 payment, and this represents a total value of £418,000. In addition, for the period 1st October 2022 – 31st December 2022 the Discretionary Support Team have paid £77,785 from the Household Support Fund and this has helped 421 households. Also our partners in the voluntary sector including Halton Citizens Advice Bureau, Holiday Activity Food programme, Runcorn and Widnes Food Banks and Halton Voluntary Action have been helping Halton residents from the HSF.

2.4 Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance

Invoice Payment Performance

As at the end of quarter three, 90.96% of the Council's supplier invoices had been paid within 30 days of receipt.

Corporate Card Programme

The Council operates a corporate card programme and generates an income stream in the form of a rebate based on the level of spend via corporate cards over a 12 month period. A strategy has therefore been adopted to pay supplier invoices by card where suppliers have the facilities to receive card payments and are happy to do so.

This approach has proved to be successful and the Council's card provider has recently confirmed that the Council is to receive rebate income of £91,164. This is based on card spending of £12,949,469 for the period December 2021 to November 2022 (rebate percentage of 0.0070%).

Early Payment Scheme

The Council has become the first local authority in the UK to adopt a new fintech platform to provide an option of discounted early payments to suppliers. The Council has contracted to use Saltare's Early Pay solution, which is seen as being an option which complements the Council's other early payment options for suppliers.

The platform works on the basis that once an invoice is approved for payment it will notify the supplier with the offer of early payment in return for a small discount. The supplier can quickly accept the offer it wishes, and the platform will notify the Council. Whilst there is no obligation on either side for any individual payment, this option for early payment can help boost cash flow for smaller firms at times they need it most.

Implementation of the new system is due to take place in the coming months.

Income management

The Council has completed the upgrade of its systems for receiving web-payments, which will enable the continued acceptance of Mastercard payments, which otherwise would not have been possible from February 2023.

Work is shortly due to commence upgrading the Council's system for receiving telephone payments to ensure that the arrangements are compliant with the requirements of the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCIDSS). PCIDSS is an information security standard designed to reduce payment card fraud by increasing security controls around the security of cardholder data.

Procurement Bill

The Procurement Bill is continuing its progression through Parliament, with its second reading having taken place in the House of Commons on 9 January 2023. The aim of the Procurement Bill is to repeal the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 together with several other procurement related pieces of legislation which all have their origins under European law and to replace these with a single regime governing the award of contracts by public authorities and utilities.

In terms of progress, the House of Commons Public Bill Committee has issued a call for evidence on the new regime for anyone with relevant expertise and experience or a special interest in the Procurement Bill to make submissions.

The Cabinet Office is also continuing to run 'Transforming Public Procurement' update webinars for interested parties to know more about the progress of the Bill and next steps.

It is anticipated that the new regime is unlikely to go live until the first quarter of 2024 at the earliest. At this stage it is uncertain as to what the impact of the changes will be on the Council's procurement arrangements. However, it is important to note that the new regulations will only apply to above threshold (i.e. higher value) procurement activity.

Insurance

One of the Council's former insurers, MMI, ceased writing new business in September 1992. Until May 2013, MMI continued to pay claims in full in the anticipation that a solvent run-off of the company would be achieved. As an alternative to liquidation the business of the company was wound up by means of a Scheme of Arrangement with its creditors. The Council is a scheme creditor and is therefore subject to the financial implications of the outcome of the run-off.

In order to meet its ongoing liabilities MMI imposed a 15% levy (set in January 2014) and an additional 10% levy (set in April 2016) on the members of the Scheme of Arrangement. As a result, the Council is self-insured to the extent of 25% of any claim payments relating to the period when MMI was its insurer.

MMI has recently published its accounts for the year ending 30 June 2021. Based on these accounts, insurance brokers are recommending that scheme creditors reserve for an additional 10% levy going forward to reflect the long term uncertainties. Potential future adverse claims trends is a key risk for further deterioration of MMI's financial position. Additionally, new types of latent claims may emerge in the coming years for which no provisions have so far been made. The Council has however already made appropriate financial provision should further increases in the levy be imposed. As such, no further action is required at present.

2.5 Revenues and Financial Management

2022/23 Quarter 2 Spending

For the financial year to 30 September 2022, overall Council operational net spending was £28.8m against a budget of £25.4m, resulting in an overspend position to date against budget of £3.4m. The forecast position for the year to 31 March 2023 was an estimated overspend of £7.6m.

Capital spending at 30 September 2022 totalled £11.6m, which is 103% of the planned spending of £11.3m at this stage. This represents 38% of the total Capital Programme of £31.2m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).

The updated financial forecast and picture of net spending to 31 December 2022 will be reported to Executive Board on 16 February 2023

Council Tax and Business Rate Collection

Council tax collection for the 3rd quarter of the year is 80.69%, down 0.56% on this point last year. Cash collection for the year to date is £60.3m, this includes £1.6m collected in relation to previous year debts.

Business rates collection for the second quarter of the year is 83.16%, up by 2.68% on this point last year. Cash collected for the year to date is £46.1m. The in-year collection rate has been helped by credits placed against accounts following awarding of 2021/22 rate reliefs funded by the Government Covid Additional Relief Fund.

Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24

On 19 December 2021, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), published the 2022/23 provisional local government finance settlement.

The settlement provided the Council with some additional funding over and above expectations set-out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, reported to Executive Board in November 2022.

Core Spending Power for Halton was £48.5m, an increase of £2.6m on 2022/23 figures. Although the amount is still less than received back in 2010/11, in real terms a decrease of £52.6m (28.8%), equivalent to £899.32 per dwelling.

Specific grants allocated to Halton included Social Care Grant of £11.6m (increase of £3.8m), Market Sustainability Grant of £1.5m (increase of £1.1m) and Services Grant of £1.4m (decrease of £1.1m). In addition a ring-fencing grant for Adult Social care titled ASC Discharge Fund was announced, value of £1.0m to Halton.

The settlement confirmed a cap of 3% be applied to council tax increases at which point a local referendum must be held and an ASC precept of 2%.

2.6 Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

The three services within the HR Service Centre (Resourcing & Recruitment, Payroll & Pensions and Employment Relations) continue to remain under significant pressure with additional demand persisting across all functional areas. Further to reports in the last quarter, the current service configuration is now under consideration as part of the emerging Transformation programme. In conjunction with structural changes in the new Chief Executive's Directorate, the HR Service Centre is set to become a stand-alone division within a new Chief Executive's Delivery Unit in the early part of 2023. This will provide for dedicated management and oversight, enabling a more focused approach to day-to-day management and service development.

Despite significant ongoing challenges in terms of volume, the service has continued to incrementally reduce the amount of outstanding recruitment, and has successfully processed several national pay awards into the payroll workflow (Teachers Pay, NJC staff, and Chief Officers). The Employment Relations function continues to support a number of restructures across the organisation, whilst continuing to balance a higher than average volume of HR casework. It is clear however that as the Transformation Programme commences and organisation begins to change, there is no capacity in this 'Business as Usual' area to support that change. A different resourcing model will be required to ensure timely HR support to change objectives and this is currently being considered.

The service has commenced planning for the recruitment exercise that will lead to the appointment of the Executive Director Environment & Regeneration. During Q4 this will form a search campaign and a comprehensive assessment and selection process delivered by the HR and Organisational Development Services, in conjunction with a commercial partner and North West Employers.

As COVID restrictions have been largely removed, Organisational Development activity has gradually reverted to its pre-pandemic delivery format. It is evident that this change is valued by all concerned. The Organisational Development (OD) Team, along with the Chief Executive, delivered a celebration event for the 12 employees that have successfully completed the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) level 3 qualification. The qualification focused on subject areas such as Understanding Leadership Behaviours and Solving Problems and Making Decisions. Feedback from employees has been extremely positive. This cohort of employees should now be encouraged to consider where their next career opportunity in the Council might be and be supported to progress as opportunities permit. A further cohort commenced in quarter 3 and progress will be reported as appropriate.

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) project regarding Race Equality Training has been launched within Halton with Library Services, Community Centres and the Health Improvement Team amongst the first teams to attend. The training is enhanced with a pre-course e-learning module and/or pre-reading material to suit different learning styles. The training comprises of;

- Recognise barriers preventing engagement with race equality including unconscious bias and privilege, and the positive actions you can take to contribute towards positive change
- Explore terminology and techniques to undertake effective conversations on the challenges of race equality as a staff team
- Be provided with support to develop cultural competency and embed race equality throughout their roles
- Discuss best practice approaches to respond to micro aggressions, discrimination and harassment using case studies

- Commit to practical changes to implement in practice.
- To understand the lived experience of Black, Asian and minority people in the region and the compound effect of living in an unequal society and its impact on quality of life

Further training will be offered to Service Managers and Elected Members during quarter 4 of this year.

Elected Members recently received Dementia Awareness Training from the Alzheimer's Society and further training will be organised throughout 2023-24 in line with the Dementia Friendly Halton Action Plan.

The OD Team supported the Family Hub Transformation Project, facilitating 4 focused sessions to map Halton processes against the statutory framework to ensure an effective and efficiency delivery plan.

2114 e-learning modules have been completed in the quarter, demonstrating that this is now mainstreamed and effective method for the delivery of a broad range of learning. Work continues to develop a Climate Change/Net Zero Module that will compliment Halton's Climate Change Action Plan.

During the quarter six new apprenticeship placements commenced in the Council (2 in Financial Management, 2 in Open Spaces, 1 in Logistics and 1 in Administration). This is a positive step following the impact of COVID and there having been no new apprentices hired in the last financial year. Linked to this, a further existing apprentice was appointed to a permanent role of Children & Families Early Years Worker during September following successful completion of the apprenticeship. This sustainable route to permanent employment has been the focus of the Council's work in the apprenticeship arena since the new government regime was introduced in 2017 and has been largely successful.

Aligned to the labour market conditions issue set out in the Emerging Issues section below, the Council's apprenticeship policy is being revised to reflect an evolved approach to hiring and training apprentices across a broader range of roles, using the budget against vacant posts to promote apprenticeships and the development of individuals to be equipped to apply for those vacant posts at the end of an apprenticeship. This will be developed further during 2023.

Within the service, work is ongoing around Traineeships with the aim that a small number of local young people who are care leavers or children in care will obtain a skill set that enables them to move on into apprenticeships within the Council. Progress will be reported in further quarters.

At the end of Q3, the Council's Partnership Officer left the Council to take up a post in a neighbouring authority. This provides an opportunity to re-focus the work that has been undertaken in that area over recent years, which has predominantly focused on the supporting of individuals within the scope of the Asylum Seeker and Refugee community, and more recently from Ukraine, as well as equalities related work in the Council. The activity is to be dismantled and placed into revised service models within the new Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, and the Community & Environment Department. This will take place during Q4 and will result in a more focused application of appropriate resources under new management arrangements.

Halton Borough Council, is one of more than 50 organisations from across the region – who have been awarded Aspiring status of the Fair Employment Charter, which encourages businesses to pay staff a Real Living Wage, clamp down on the use of zero hours contracts, provide mental health support, encourage flexible working and engage with trade unions

2.7 ICT and Administration

Key developments have been focused upon the development and deployment plan for the delivery of Microsoft 365, Microsoft Telephony and the review of the current Desktop Estate and Server Estate.

Microsoft 365 E5 combines best-in-class productivity apps with advanced security, compliance, voice, and analytical capabilities.

- Extend identity and threat protection with integrated and automated security to help stop the continuing and ever-present damaging world of Cyber Attacks.
- 365 brings together information protection and advanced compliance capabilities to protect and govern data while reducing risk.
- Teams steps up a level from what we currently see, linked to audio conferencing and calling capabilities within the cloud to enable integration with the full 365 suite of products but also includes links to the contact centre and collaborative tools allowing for a greater level of integrated working internally within HBC as well as with partners, residents and through mediums such as Ai and the web
- We now have the capability to benefit from Power BI capabilities that help you realise significant business value from our data with projects within Children's starting to develop the base for Data Warehousing and ultimately reporting within this area.

Microsoft Azure:

Considerable efforts have been undertaken to review the use of the authority's data centre facilities, with detailed costings and a review of space, location, power usage and hybrid cloud opportunity. The authority will endeavour to retain as much on-premises control of its server and desktop estates as possible. Allowing for the authority to determine the most cost-effective routes to systems deployment now and into the future.

Microsoft Azure brings with it a consumption model in terms of a negotiated pay as you go platform allowing the client to use as much or as little capacity as required and again this can be flexible but at a cost. The planning of such a platform is key to its affordability and potential benefit for the authority.

This platform brings with it a considerable array of web-based solutions and customer interaction opportunities, ranging from Ai through to interactive reporting and the development of add on systems to our CRM solution and existing application platforms. The only limitations will be the authority's imagination and ultimately funding given the associated costs that will need to be carefully managed moving forward as more technology is embraced within this environment.

Sickness Levels are well managed across the Support services department with low levels and zero levels within many departments over this period, staff are complying with the authorities wish for the levels of Hybrid working with time in the office productively used. For many within these service departments even throughout COVID staff remained within the offices full time as and when required due to role and service needs.

The Halton Cloud continues to support all 2250 internal/external desktop users connected into services at any one time from home, office, or externally with system uptime over this quarter being excellent, whilst accommodating a considerable number of changes and adaptations to the requirements profile of our user base over this extended period of the pandemic and beyond. The considerable rise in Agency workers has been dealt with effectively and the changes continue at approximately 25 new starters a week.

2.8 Legal and Democracy

The transformation programme has continued at pace and has been supported by Officers throughout the Department.

Significant legal support continues to be provided to Mersey Gateway and other major projects.

The Education and Social Care Team continues to be under pressure with caseloads, and a desire from the judiciary to get cases through the Court system more quickly regionally.

Unfortunately the lately appointed Taxi Licensing Enforcement Officer left the team after a very short time due to personal reasons.

2.9 Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

2.10 Stadium & Hospitality

October seen the redevelopment of an accessible toilet in the West Stand to a fully accessible toilet with changing area and hoists which now available for public use, this was following the successful award by the Changing Places Fund. The stadium was chosen as the strategic base for Operation Crossbow and supported Cheshire, Merseyside, and British Transport Police with the Operation. Operation Crossbow seen a taskforce of over 200 Police Officers and around 100 vehicles base themselves at the Stadium before heading out into the community as a show of force and to send a strong warning to anyone associated with or linked to organised crime.

The Halton and Warrington Business Fair returned to the stadium for the 15th year, showcasing businesses from across the LCR and Cheshire area.

In November the stadiums safety team supported Leisure Services Division in the safety management of the Halton Firework Display and ran a See Check and Notify (SCaN) Counter Terrorism training session, the training was delivered by Cheshire Police's Counter Terrorism Security Advisor and was attended by staff from across the Communities and Greenspace Division and the wider council.

The recent decarbonisation works were shortlisted for an award at the Heating & Ventilation UK News 2022 awards, with the project being awarded 2nd place. The category was Heat Pump Project of the Year 2022.

Widnes Primary Care Network and local NHS providers collaborated again to offer a drop in covid-19 booster jab and pop-up Phlebotomy clinic in the West Stand Sports Hall.

The Stadium supported HBC's Public Health team with the storage of over 500 winter warmer packs prior to being delivered to identified vulnerable residents. Stadium Staff also supported the storage prior to distribution of 350 child mental health creativity boxes supporting the Samaritans.

Across the period, the Stadiums function rooms were used to host a number of events ranging Foster Carers party, Mayoral Charity Fundraising events, Lets Go Stroke Club, Cheshire Cricket awards evening and a busy festive period which seen the Stadium organise a variety of options for customers with each event well attended and reaching a new customer base.

2.11 School Meals

School meals have continued to operate without any reduce service despite the high sickness levels and high staff turnover levels.

Food prices have risen with the last 12 months by up to 20% which has a negative effect on the forecasted outturn. As a result we have emailed all schools informing them of a proposed cost per meal increase. The proposal is to increase prices for FSM from £2.42 to £2.65 and for paid pupils from £2.50 to £2.70.

The service is not operating at full staffing capacity currently with still 10+ vacancies on the structure to fill.

2.12 Property Services (Operations)

St Patrick's Nursing Home Redevelopment

Design development works ongoing in respect of proposals to build a new 16 bed extension and refurbish remaining accommodation. Works planned to be carried out in 2 phases with an estimated works cost of £2.6m. Planning application submitted. Planned start on site April 2023

St Luke's Nursing Home Refurbishment

Design development works ongoing in respect of proposals to refurbish existing accommodation in 4 phases, estimated works cost of £1.1m, anticipated start on site in April 2023

Proposed New Leisure Centre Moor Lane

All approvals now in place. Mobilisation works commenced in December 2022, formal contract start on site date is 9th January 2023 with contractual completion date being 3rd February 2025.

Education maintenance programme 2022/23

The 2022/23 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council In March. The programme now consists of 13 separate projects with an estimated cost of circa £780k. 12 projects have been completed, the remaining project will be completed over the next couple of months working in conjunction with the schools so as to cause as little disruption as possible.

Corporate Maintenance programme 2022/23

The 2022/23 Corporate maintenance programme has been approved by the Asset Management Working Group. A number of projects have now been completed, others are on site or at the design development stage, all the budget is anticipated to have been spent by year end.

71 High Street Runcorn- Refurbishment

Works have now been completed and the building handed over and is ready for occupation by the tenants.

Camden Buildings, High Street- refurb to create digital/creative hub

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October and works are now progressing through to RIBA stage 4 design on 59/57. 69 is now going to be delivered as a separate project, and we are still in the process of obtaining No 63, so 63/65 is currently on hold, design works will recommence once we have obtained No 63..

Brookvale Rec- Proposed Refurbishment works

An initial feasibility study has been submitted, this is currently being updated following further consultation with the Sports Development team, the revised study is due to be provided by February.

Pickering Pastures- Proposed new pavilion building

The feasibility study that has been provided is being reviewed to allow for the costings to be updated. Funding options are being considered.

Cavendish School - 2 class extension

The project has been tendered and a preferred contractor is waiting to be appointed, however planning approval has yet to be obtained. Once planning approval is obtained the contractor will be appointed and work commenced on site.

The Brindley- Proposed extension

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October, following which design development is now progressing through RIBA stage 4. The preferred option has been agreed with a budget cost estimate of £5.6m, procurement options are currently being considered.

Runcorn Library redevelopment

Design development works ongoing to create an NHS Health & Education hub. The feasibility study has been completed and circulated for comment, budget cost £1.8m. Approval to proceed to RIBA stage 3 now obtained.

Elite House- Redevelopment

Approval to the Town Deal funding was obtained in October, there is also a bid in to the Combined Authority however for additional funding as the Town Deal funding is insufficient to carry out the desired scheme, the outcome of this as yet unknown. The RIBA stage 2 report has been issued by the architects for comment and feedback, discussions are ongoing and it is anticipated that this will move to RIBA stage 3 once the outcome of the additional funding is known.

Changing Places Facilities

Funding has been secured for 3 Changing Places facilities which are planned be in Victoria Park, Shopping City and the Stadium respectively. The works within the Stadium are now complete and the facility available for use. Planning approval has been obtained for the project in Victoria Park, tender documents are being prepared as such the project will soon go out on the Chest for prices. The project in Shopping City has stalled however as such we are looking at an alternative venue, that being Halton Lea Library.

Decarbonisation Projects

Following completion of the decarbonisation works at the stadium further feasibility studies have been commissioned in respect of carrying out further work at our buildings subject to funding. We are currently working with the NW Net Zero Hub with a view to submitting a Combined Authority bid to the Decarbonisation fund in 2023.

Wigg Island- Demolition of former Pavilion

The project has now been out to tender and a preferred contractor is in place, once all approvals have been obtained the works will progress on site. It is anticipated that the work will be fully complete by the end of the financial year.

3.0 Emerging Issues

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

3.2 Benefits

Household Support Fund Extension

In the Chancellor's Autumn 2022 statement it was announced that the Household Support Fund is to be further extended from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. The Government has given no indication of the amount of funding available for individual councils or any guidance as to how the funding can be spent.

Alternative Support for Household Energy Bills this Winter

The Government is already providing support to consumers with their energy costs this Winter. This support is mainly being delivered directly as a credit to electricity bills and as a reduction to the unit cost of gas and electricity. The Government believes there to be around one million households across the UK that will miss out on the above mentioned support as they do not directly contract with a domestic electricity supplier. This group of households will instead qualify via the Energy Bills Alternative Funding Scheme.

The Government is asking local authorities to act as the delivery bodies for the Alternative Funding Scheme. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will be arranging a delivery model through a single application form on Gov.UK, which should centralise as much of the data gathering and validation as possible. BEIS will then share applications with local authorities, whose primary role will be to verify applicants' addresses once they have passed through the application portal, and to transfer the relevant financial support to successful applicants. The amount of support will be £400 paid direct to an applicant's bank account.

BEIS are expecting to issue guidance to councils in mid-January 2023 and for the scheme to go live from the end of January 2023. No indication has been provided yet of the estimated numbers of households we may need to make payments to.

From the eligibility criteria suggested for the scheme, BEIS would expect most members of the following groups to be eligible:

- Care home residents (provided they in some way pay towards their care);
- Park home residents;
- Households in caravans and houseboats on fixed/registered sites;
- Social and private tenants who get their energy through a commercial supplier (e.g. a landlord);
- Heat network customers not already covered by main EBSS (private wire/CHP);
- Farmers in domestic farmhouses, as well as others in domestic residences with a commercial supply;
- Homes off the grid.

3.3 Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance

External review of Internal Audit

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that an external assessment of a local authority's internal audit function is carried out once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside of the organisation. External assessments can be in the form of a full external assessment, or a self-assessment with independent external validation.

The North West Chief Audit Executives' Group has established a 'peer-review' process that is managed and operated by the constituent authorities. This process addresses the requirement of external assessment through 'self-assessment with independent external validation'.

The five-yearly external assessment of the Council's internal audit service is due to be completed in the coming months. It will focus on audit activity from 2021/22 and 2022/23 and will involve interviews with key stakeholders. On conclusion of the review a report will be produced and presented to the Audit and Governance Board.

3.4 Revenues and Financial Management

Statement of Accounts 2020/21 and 2021/22

Draft financial accounts for the two years covering 2020/21 and 2021/22 have been subject to external audit review from the Council's external auditors (Grant Thornton) and their Audit Findings Reports presented to Audit & Governance Board. Unfortunately, a national accounting issue covering undepreciated costs for infrastructure assets has resulted in a delay in the external auditor signing off the accounts for both years.

CIPFA released a bulletin in January 2023 with a temporary proposal (to March 2025) to enable local authorities to finalise the accounting process. As a result it is expected that the accounts for 2020/21 and 2021/22 will be fully signed off over the coming months.

3.5 Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

Harsh labour market conditions continue and the challenges in the resourcing of many service areas continues. As reported in Q2, the service is progressing work around the re-engineering of the recruitment process, the setting up of specific recruitment campaigns for blocks of vacancies. In that vein, a campaign specific to Care Home recruitment will go live in early January 2023. Additional resources have been applied to the team to support recruitment work over the medium term. Sub-regional economic data continues to demonstrate that paid employment in the Liverpool City Region is at an all-time high.

Linked to the issue above, the use of agency workers continues to be high, however a significant reduction can only occur as the recruitment issues outlined above are resolved.

The Local Government sector pay claim for 2023/24 has been promoted by joint trade unions at a national level – the claim is 'inflation plus 2%'. This presents significant affordability challenges for the whole sector and is currently the subject of consultation between trade unions and their membership, as well as between regional employer organisations and local government employers.

A watching brief is being kept on employment relations issues across the sector. Teaching staff in some trade unions have been balloted on action related to pay awards and are set to strike. This inevitably causes disruption to all concerned. In practical terms it places significant additional workload on the Pay & Pensions team as it results in the processing of a number of payroll and pension contribution adjustments.

The retained EU law (revocation and reform) Bill was published on 22 September 2022. EU derived law will expire on 31 December 2023 unless by then the Government has decided to retain it (it can extend deadline to 31 December 2026), and at this stage it is unclear what this will mean for current UK HR legislation. This situation continues to be monitored and will be reported in future reports as appropriate.

3.6 ICT

The next quarter for the teams associated with the changes ahead should not be classed as emerging issues but the development of positive change for the wider authority.

As discussed above the development of the Microsoft platform deployment is a key development for all teams within the services from Admin and Customer Services as we implement considerable change and are now designing new ways of working allowing for integration with the new platform ahead of us currently within the design phase.

As discussed, the design phase of this deployment must consider the objectives of the authority moving forward and the new ways in which it needs to work to survive within these constantly restrictive yet costly economic times.

The platforms ahead will be designed to allow for process innovation, linking services with self help and self-service portals, this will allow for residents to register within these systems as well enabling faster turnaround of services together with accurate data links with our clients and partners.

These projects are not overnight developments but ones that will be linked to the base platform currently in design.

The authority has partnered with an external provider, one with considerable experience across the NHS and Local and Central Government agencies in aiding with the development of the Microsoft platforms.

The objective is to have the finalised deployment plans in place by May of this year ready for final costings to be negotiated and approved by the authority.

This will encompass new and innovative ways of working from changes to the data centres reducing power consumption, through to new more secure desktop environments and simpler ways of accessing the systems and services used by all every day.

The primary objective is to simplify and speed up access to services and systems for both officers and the public, this will complement the 3-year objectives of the transformation plans and will work closely with the management within this area to ensure the systems compliment the objectives moving forward.

3.7 Legal and Democracy

Legal support is being provided across the region for the setting up of the new Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership.

The recruitment process is underway for a new Taxi Licensing Enforcement Officer.

It is expected that pressures will continue to increase in Children's and Adults Social Care cases.

Major projects will continue to demand extensive involvement from the Legal team.

Officers will provide increasing support to the transformation programme

3.8 Community & Environment

None provided

3.9 Enterprise Community & Resources

3.10 Property Services (Operations)

Accommodation review/Agile working/return to the office

COVID-19 necessitated the need for home working which proved very successful. As all COVID measures have been removed and life returns to normal this shift in working arrangements has presented us with the opportunity to embrace more flexible working arrangements on a more permanent basis in the future.

In parallel with this a review of our office accommodation is currently being undertaken, a report has been produced which presents a number of options for how this can be more effectively used in the future to help generate revenue savings. A Member working group is to be set up to take this action forward.

Rising Construction Costs

Construction costs have been rising significantly in the recent past which is having an impact across all projects. Whilst all sectors in industry have been affected by inflation, the construction industry appears to have been hit particularly hard with certain sectors, such as steelwork production, seeing increases in costs of up to 100%. The future outlook at present is that tender prices are unlikely to fall in the short to medium term.

Carbon emission targets

Halton's Climate Change Action Plan has set a target for the Council's own carbon emissions to reach net zero by 2040 in line with the Liverpool City region. The first phase of feasibility studies in respect of decarbonising our buildings has been undertaken, and a second phase has now been commissioned which are currently being undertaken. We are currently working in conjunction with the NW Zero Carbon Hub with a view to submitting a Combined Authority bid in 2023 to the governments decarbonisation fund.

Programmes Office (formerly External Funding Team)

Programmes Office staff recruitment and development of new systems.

Cost of Living - funding bulletin produced monthly to support organisations looking for funding for energy efficiency measures, running costs etc; Working with our colleagues in Community Development and also the VCA to look at trends, key issues, share funding opportunities etc;

Other key pieces of work

- Delivering the Halton Investment Plan for UKSPF - £608,000 allocated for three strands of the programme – town centres; green, resilient, safe communities; culture, art, heritage. Now in Year 1 delivery.
- Developing monitoring systems and a Project Leads Manual for the Town Deal Programme
- Managing commissions for the Mid Mersey Park feasibility and for the Halton Destination Marketing Programme
- Continuing to develop the Funding Plan to support Halton Borough Council's Climate Action Plan

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

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

4.2 The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

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

5.0 Performance Overview

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

5.2 It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget.

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




Financial Management

Key Objectives / milestones


Ref	Objective
FS 01	Set the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Recommend Council Tax.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Report 2022-25 Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2021.		Medium term Financial Strategy reported to Executive Board 17 November 2022
Report 2022/23 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council - March 2022.		On target to report 23/24 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council 08 March 2023


Ref	Objective
FS 02	To effect financial prudence by assisting managers to control their budgets by monitoring spending and providing timely and accurate financial reports.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Provide monthly financial reports to budget holders within 8 days of month end.		Reports all issued on schedule to date.
Provide quarterly financial monitoring reports to Operational Directors for inclusion in Performance Monitoring Reports.		Quarter 3 reports have been finalised and will be shared with Operational Directors for inclusion in Performance Monitoring Reports..
Provide quarterly monitoring and forecasting reports on the overall budget to Executive Board.		Quarter 3 monitoring report on the overall budget will go to Executive Board on 16 February 2023.

Ref	Objective
FS 03	Provide for public accountability by reporting the Council's stewardship of public funds and its financial performance in the use of resources by preparing the statutory Statement of Accounts in accordance with the latest accounting standards.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Publish the Statement of Accounts following external audit and the Annual Governance Statement by 30th September 2021.		The draft accounts were published and shared with the External Auditor on 13 July 2022, ahead of the deadline of 31 July. The audit took longer than expected and Audit Findings Report was presented to Audit and Governance Board on 23 November 2022.

Ref	Objective
FS 04	Make best use of cash resources available to the Council and meet its statutory responsibility by setting, implementing and monitoring the Treasury Management Policy.



Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2021.		Treasury Management Policy reported to Council on 02 March 2022
Provide monitoring reports to Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.		Reported to Executive Board 17 November 2022.

Ref	Objective
FS 05	Ensure that the Capital Programme is affordable, prudent, and sustainable by setting and monitoring prudential borrowing indicators.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2021.		Prudential indicators reported to Council on 02 March 2022
Provide monitoring reports to the Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.		On track to report to Executive Board 17th November 2022

Key Performance Indicators




Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
FS LI 01	Receive an unqualified external audit opinion on the accounts	Yes	Awaited	N/A		N/A	Accounts not yet finalised pending sign off of treatment for infrastructure assets. Expected over coming months.
FS LI 02	Receive an unqualified VFM opinion from the Council's External Auditor	Yes	Awaited	N/A		N/A	Final VFM opinion expected to be reported to Audit and Governance Board March 2023.
FS LI 03	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected	94.14 %	94.25%	54.4			This is down by 0.56% compared with the same point last year. Adversely impacted by resource being allocated to the energy rebate scheme at the expense of undertaking on-going recovery action.
FS LI 04	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received	96.18 %	97.50%	61.5			Business rates collection for the second quarter of the year is 83.16%, up by 2.68% on this point last year. The in-year collection rate has been helped by credits placed against accounts following awarding of 2021/22 rate reliefs funded by the Government Covid Additional Relief Fund
FS LI 05	Average time for processing new claims (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction)	16.22	18	25.3			The Benefits Team is experiencing long term staff sickness absence and maternity leave during the current financial year, and this is having a significant impact on processing performance.
FS LI 06	Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances	4.82	8	12.5			The Benefits Team is experiencing long term staff sickness absence and maternity leave and this is having a significant impact on processing performance.



Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
FSLI 07	Proportion of all supplier invoices paid within 30 days (including disputed invoices)	92.6%	93.0%	90.6%			Invoice payment performance can vary over time due to a range of factors, some of which are uncontrollable. Performance at the end of quarter three has however improved and in December 94.25% of all invoices were paid within 30 days.

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Service



Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
PPPE 01	To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate training opportunities through the design and implementation of appropriate learning interventions, to include the development of bespoke Learning & Development offerings to individual service areas.



Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy June 2022		This is on target with all themes being given attention. The lag in some activity due to restrictions in 2020 and 2021 means that the strategy will likely be augmented and rolled forward at the end of 2022/23 to become the 2023 – 26 strategy.
Review and refresh annual training calendar September 2022.		Complete
Regular engagement with service managers to identify areas of challenge and develop appropriate bespoke solutions April, September, December 2022, and March 2023.		Ongoing and on target. Refer to Key Developments for further information.
Embed knowledge and skills gained from Senior Leadership and Management Development Programmes (MBA / MSc) December 2022.		On target


Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Complete delivery of in-house modular Leadership and Management development activity March 2023.		On target.
Monitor the embedding of knowledge and skills gained in-house modular Leadership and Management development activity. Ongoing and report in March 2023.		On target.

Ref	Objective
PPPE 02	Implement the Apprenticeship Policy to support the establishment of apprenticeships across the Council, and optimise return on the Apprenticeship Levy.




Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Establish 10 new apprentice placements within Council services, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2023.		On target. 6 recruited to – refer to Key Developments. Other opportunities being re-advertised.
Establish 20 new existing employee apprenticeships to enable up-skilling in a range of business areas, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2023.		On target

Ref	Objective
PPE 03	Optimise the use of the Agency Worker contract across Council services, to secure ongoing reductions in the incidence and cost of agency usage, and to ensure that correct and appropriate resourcing solutions are being deployed across Council services.




Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Review and consider most appropriate resourcing mix in collaboration with service management in areas of highest agency usage December 2023.		Work ongoing in this area and will form a work stream in the Council's Transformation programme.
Implement resourcing plans with service management in appropriate areas December 2023.		As above.














Ongoing monitoring of agency usage and spend April, September, December 2022, and March 2023.		In place. Currently high spend. Actions to be taken to step down. Refer to Emerging Issues above for more information.
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Ref	Objective
PPE 04	Work with high demand service areas to develop and implement effective recruitment programmes, optimising labour market engagement to attract high quality candidates.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Identify service areas with highest consistent recruitment demand, turnover, and low attraction rates September 2022.		A more programmed approach will be taken to this given the changing labour market conditions. Refer to Emerging Issues for more detail.
Implement project based recruitment plans with service management in appropriate areas December 2022.		A more programmed approach will be taken to this given the changing labour market conditions. Refer to Emerging Issues for more detail.
Corroborate out-turns of linked KPI's to assess effectiveness of approach to resourcing June, September, December 2022, and March 2023.		Market conditions making resourcing difficult across many areas, thus effectiveness of service may appear sub-optimal.

Ref	Objective
PPE 05	Develop and implement an organisation wide change programme – The Future Work Programme - to evaluate and introduce revised working practices following to meet the requirements of the changing labour market and employee expectation in the post-pandemic environment (to include use of accommodation, HR policy and practice, wellbeing support, application of technology)

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Identify programme priorities and develop accommodation review work stream (in conjunction with EEP Dept) June 2022.		Accommodation review work stream in progress.
Mobilise programme work stream groups and commence baselining and evaluation work. October 2022.		On target
Conduct evaluation and feasibility work to inform design of new policy and practice in Council workplaces March 2023.		Ongoing, but may not be completed by end of March 2023. Will report further in Q4.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
PPPE LI 08	% of training delegates attending as proportion of places reserved:	100	95	96			Face to face attendance settled to anticipated levels during the quarter. As COVID restrictions have been removed, delegates have displayed preferences for the value of face to face learning and development once more. As a result, no virtual programmes were delivered during the quarter as there was no business demand.
	Face to face	95	95	0			
	Virtual						
PPPE L109	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are: Women	64.2%	55%	62.8%			Slight downward movement on component indicator (a), which stood at 62.35% at same point last year. Fluctuation exists in (b) and (c), due to turnover. It should be noted that recruitment in to the top 5% of earners is not high volume, and as such scope for significant change is low.
	a) From BME communities	2.67%	2.0%	2.6%			Slight downward movement on component indicator (a), which stood at 62.35% at same point last year. Fluctuation exists in (b) and (c), due to turnover.
	b)						
	c) With a disability	1.25%	8.0%	0%			Fluctuation exists in (b) and (c), due to turnover.
PPPE LI 10	No of staff declaring that they meet the definition of disability within the Equality Act 2010 as a % of the total workforce.	1.25%	10.00 %	1.23%			It should be noted that recruitment in to the top 5% of earners is not high volume, and as such scope for significant change is low. Fluctuation exists due to turnover and the indicator outturn reflects self-declaration. The 10% target reflects the wider Halton community. Despite the mismatch, it is important that this indicator continues to be monitored.
PPPE LI 11	Minority Ethnic community staff as % of total workforce.	0.99%	1.00%	1.25%			Fluctuation exists due to turnover and outturn tends to hover around target level.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
PPPE LI 12	Average time to recruit (Applicant Tracking System reported figure)	19 Days	15 Days	16 Days	U		Stable outturn, particularly in context of consistent increased demand.

ICT and Administrative Support Services





Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
ICT 01	Constantly evaluate and improve the usability, resilience, control and flexibility of the Council's Data Communications Network, Hardware and Software Infrastructure.



Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Continued Enhancement of the virtualization platform to enhanced or new technologies - March 2023.		Enhancements to the Halton Cloud platform continues at pace with the integration of Vendor Horizon 8 cloud-based systems and services within our own platform. New solutions are also under consideration linked with Microsoft developments.
Further development of Cloud Services Platform - March 2023.		Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release and licensing restrictions to enhance functionality and the user experience
SharePoint and Records Management enhancements through the E5 licensing model - March 2023.		Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release and licensing restrictions to enhance functionality and the user experience, again considerable change is in front of us with the deployment of SharePoint Cloud and the benefits this will bring.
Continued development of Interactive Web Services, Enhancement and further SharePoint Integration - March 2023.		Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release to enhance functionality and the user experience – As above the developments discussed within the body of the document will bring considerable opportunity for enhancement in the future.
Further development of commercial ICT opportunity within desktop, hosting and DR provision - March 2023.		This will always remain a focus together with the development of existing client opportunity. Mersey Travel, LCR and Sefton together with the Cemeteries system deployed to a 3rd party. Other opportunities for the deployment of Agresso together with other systems are currently under discussion.
Continued compliance with Central Government and NCSC Security guidelines and compliance requirements – March 2023.		Changes and enhancements are managed on a daily basis as the ever-changing security landscape evolves and threats change on a daily basis – compliance with NCSC regulations and corporate and client needs remain a focus

		– with £150'000 funding recently gained to enhance the security compliance systems.
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Ref	Objective
ICT 02	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including Web services, records & document management, business process workflow, corporate desktop portal and GDPR process.





Milestone	Progress Q	Supporting Commentary
Continuing improvements, enhancements and commercial use of Cloud system - March 2023.		All of the authorities' internal and external clients now successfully utilise this solution – delivering HBC services to partners, clients and internal users. With M365 becoming the focus as we deliver the E5 licencing suite within the Microsoft cloud.
Continuing workflow implementation together with a centralised and online postage systems - March 2023.		Continuing to support the technology developments as well as administrative process across the authority. This will evolve and enhance as part of the technology developments ahead.
Improvement and enhancement of all web-based customer interfaces - March 2023.		This continues to be a primary focus with content and facilities evolving monthly, in line with the ICT development programme and business requirement. A review of the design solution has taken place with development tools constantly being assessed. Linked the SharePoint development strategy and links to the M365 suite currently in development.
Continued development of document management and distribution services - March 2023.		The Records Management Unit is central to the development of the multitude of projects associated with data governance, digitisation of paper records and the development of many services such as centralised post and print – with the Hybrid Mail project under development - this focus will remain.

Ref	Objective
ICT 03	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including cloud and web service solutions, records & document management enhancement, business process workflow, corporate desktop portal.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Continual development of the I Want Admin/Finance/HR Portals - March 2023 .		Through enhancements linked to the Records Management Unit and the proposed procedural evaluation of the service developments will evolve in line with business need, together with technical developments underway through our own in-house systems development team.
Develop and enhance operational Records management Unit Services - March 2023 .		This is a constantly evolving process, and one that is now attracting and taking advantage of commercial opportunity.
The continued development of corporate administrative and customer service procedural services and support solutions March 2023 .		This is a constantly evolving process for the teams supporting our client departments and teams through to the customer service deliverables within the contact centre and the increasing face to face requirements of our residents through the One Stop Shop's within Runcorn and Widnes.

Key Performance Indicators


Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ICT LI 01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.98	99.00	99			Remains in line with target and SLA, linked to Halton Cloud Data Centre configuration. A real achievement given the considerable levels of work undertaken over this period mainly out of hours.
ICT LI 02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	99.97	99.00	99			Remains in line with target and SLA. Inclusive of planned down time out of hours. Especially during these times of new working arrangements when connectivity to the centre is key.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ICT LI 03	School Support SLA: % of calls responded to within <u>agreed</u> target*:						Support remains at the same levels within this client environment, service agreements are due to be signed and a review of the service supply will be reviewed in line with the transformation process and corporate requirement.
ICT LI 03	Priority 1	100	85.00	100			Support remains at the same levels within this client environment, service agreements are due to be signed and a review of the service supply will be reviewed in line with the transformation process and corporate requirement. New procedures are in place, with the advent of a full VDi based workforce all desktop's can be replaced the same day – a process is in place for home workers to drop off and collect a new device again a same day service.
ICT LI 04	Priority 2	100	90.00	100			
	Priority 3	100	95.00	100			
	Priority 4	100	95.00	99			
	Average working days from delivery to completion of a new PC.	5 (Days)	5 (Days)	1			



Legal & Democracy

Key Objectives / milestones











Ref	Objective
LD 01	To ensure that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information and are kept informed of changing legislation and responsibilities.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Review constitution - May 2021.		The revised constitution was approved at Annual Council

Ref	Objective
LD 02	To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that provides Elected Members, as key decision makers, with the necessary information, support and training opportunities to fulfil their individual potential and management and governance role effectively.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting where desired.		All Members have been offered a MAP induction
To induct all new members by October 2021 .		All new Members have been inducted


Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 21 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (56 Total).	54 (100%)	54 (100%)	54 (100%)			All Members are offered a MAP. All newly elected Members completed an initial MAP in May 2022.
LD LI 02	Percentage of Members attending at least one organized Training Event.	51 (94%)	54 (100%)	34 (39%)			All Members are offered a hybrid development programme via in-house officer training and e-Learning via the L&D Portal. It is, of course, a matter of personal choice for Members
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	10 (Days)			The target has been met.
LD LI 04	Average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department (working days).	3 (Days)	3 (Days)	3 (Days)			The target has been met.
LD LI 05	% of Executive Board minutes published within 5 working days after the meeting.	100%	100%	100%			The target has been met.









Community & Environment

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CE 01	Increase the number of Pupils having a school lunch, to raise awareness and increase levels of healthy eating.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Deliver a promotion and educational campaign March 2023.		On Target






Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CE LI 01	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.	71.42 %	75%	75.20 %			On target.
CE LI 02	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.	56.29 %	65%	63.13 %			On target as this includes school leavers in year 11. This should realign
CE LI 03	Take up of school lunches (%) – primary schools.	57.81 %	60%	59.40 %			On target
CE LI 04	Take up of school lunches (%) – secondary schools.	50.10 %	55%	54.78 %			On target

Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP 03	Corporate

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Commence Construction of new Leisure Centre on site by 31st October 2022		Works commenced on site with the service diversion works on Moor Lane, site mobilisation has been taking place in December and the formal start on site is 9 th January 2023, completion being 3 rd February 2025.
Commence Construction of Extension to St Patrick's Nursing Home by 31st Dec 2022		The project has been delayed whilst the consultation takes place with families. Design works are continuing with a view to starting on Site in late Spring.
Deliver agreed programmed maintenance programme to Corporate Buildings by 31st March 2023.		Budget on track to be spent by year end
Deliver agreed programmed maintenance programme to schools by 31st March 2023.		12 out of 13 projects already delivered others to be completed prior to year end
Complete refurbishment of 71 High Street, Runcorn by 30th September 2022		Completed.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 03	Commercial and investment portfolio – rent receivable against the budget to monitor receipt of income of rents and service charges.	Investment £44,300 Commercial £574,916	Investment £53,467 Commercial £663,613	Investment £44,300 Commercial £450,916			A shortfall of income is predicted over the year of £116,000 to exclude the income from the lease of no 29 –31 Moor Lane Widnes.
EEP LI 04	Occupancy rates of commercial and investment portfolio.	100 % Investment 89% commercial	100 % Investment 90% commercial	100 % Investment 93% commercial			There are 7 vacant which will be on the market or vacant until negotiations conclude.
EEP LI 05	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	95%	96%	89%			It is too early to determine the position at year end. We currently have 5 more empty units than we did at year end 2022 as we have 3 less traders, this has picked up since the last quarter however. Traders have left due to difficult trading conditions, the car park charges have also had an impact.

7.0 Financial Statements

FINANCE DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2022**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	6,155	4,569	4,387	182	243
Premises	0	0	14	(14)	(14)
Insurances	894	722	811	(89)	(119)
Supplies & Services	450	410	460	(50)	(112)
Rent Allowances	35,500	22,802	22,820	(18)	(24)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	50	42	8	11
Discretionary Social Fund	106	106	139	(33)	(18)
Household Support Fund	1,890	1,890	1,890	0	0
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	187	187	0	0
Covid Isolation Scheme	0	0	-9	9	0
Concessionary Travel	1,898	1,065	736	329	439
LCR Levy	2,241	2,241	2,241	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	17	0	0	0	17
Bad Debt Provision	77	0	0	0	(78)
Total Expenditure	49,598	34,042	33,718	324	345
Income					
Clerical Error Recovery	-400	-117	-117	(0)	0
Rent Allowances	-34,900	-20,216	-19,912	(304)	(406)
Other Fees & Charges	-264	-197	-228	31	41
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-53	-74	21	28
Burdens Grant	-60	-67	-90	22	29
Dedicated Schools Grant	-111	0	0	(0)	0
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-280	-280	0	0
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-515	-386	-386	(0)	0
Universal Credits	-5	-5	-5	0	0
Council Tax Admin Grant	-204	-206	-211	5	7
Household Support Fund Grant	-1,890	-144	-144	(0)	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-501	-381	-396	15	20
Business Rates Admin Grant	-155	0	0	0	0
VEP Grant	-9	-9	-9	(0)	0
Council Tax Rebate Scheme Admin Grant	0	0	-79	79	79
Covid Isolation Grant Income	0	0	36	(36)	(29)
Schools SLAs	-278	-279	-280	2	3
LCR Reimbursement	-2,241	-2,241	-2,241	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-111	-29	-94	65	86
Internal Income	0	0	0	0	0
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-82	-56	-41	(15)	(20)
Transfer from Reserves	-387	-266	-343	76	101
Total Income	-42,483	-24,933	-24,892	(41)	(61)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,115	9,109	8,826	283	284
Recharges					
Premises Support	227	170	170	(0)	0
Central Support	2,518	1,888	1,888	(0)	0
Recharge Income	-5,753	-4,315	-4,315	(0)	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,008	-2,256	-2,256	(0)	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	4,107	6,853	6,570	283	284

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £0.283m below the budget profile at Q3, it is estimated the department will be £0.284m below the approved at financial year-end.

Employee costs are forecast to be under budget at year-end by £0.243m this is due to vacancies within Financial Management and Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance divisions. Delays on recruitment has been reflected in projections but these could change dependant on when posts are filled.

Insurance costs are currently projected to exceed the approved budget by £0.119m, resulting from a number of historic claims settled in the current year.

Concessionary travel costs are projected to be underspent against the annual budget by £0.439m. Passenger numbers are still significantly below the levels seen prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, although operators are currently being supported at the same rates. Strike action by employees of the largest operator over the summer months resulted in reduction in costs for the year.

Bad Debt provision relates to an estimate of possible non-return of Housing Benefits overpayments in this financial year.

Rent Allowance Income is showing a significant shortfall of £0.406m due to an increase in the costs of supported accommodation. 60% of these costs are funded from housing benefits, with the balance falling to the Council.

Reimbursements & Other grant Income is projected to overachieve by £0.086m due to procurement card income, Early Payment Scheme discounts received and insurance service reimbursements.

All savings applied to the 2022/23 budget will be achieved in full.

POLICY, PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY 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	2,234	1,658	1,583	75	99
Employees Training	123	123	134	(11)	(7)
Apprenticeship Levy	300	237	240	(3)	(16)
Supplies & Services	144	112	126	(14)	(19)
Transport Related Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Agency Related Expenditure	11	1	3	(2)	(3)
Other Expenditure	0	1	1	0	0
Capital Financing	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	2,812	2,132	2,087	45	54
Income					
Fees & Charges	-132	-116	-120	4	5
Reimbursements & Other Grants	0	-1	-4	3	4
Schools SLA	-448	-448	-451	3	4
Transfer from Reserves	-70	-57	-57	0	0
Total Income	-650	-622	-632	10	13
Net Operational Expenditure	2,162	1,510	1,455	55	67
Recharges					
Premises Support	72	54	54	0	0
Central Support	1,037	777	777	0	0
Recharge Income	-3,252	-2,439	-2,439	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,143	-1,608	-1,608	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	19	-98	-153	55	67

Comments on the above figures

At the close of the third quarter, Policy, Performance, People and Efficiency departmental net spend is under the budget profile to date by £0.055m, the forecast position through to the end of the year is for net spend to be £0.067m under the approved budget.

Employee's expenditure is forecast to be £0.099m under the annual budget. The majority of this is in relation to the budget for apprentices where the underspend for the year is forecast to be £0.125m.

All budget savings applied to 22-23 budget will be achieved.

ICT & ADMINISTRATION**Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2022**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employee	7,773	5,734	5,844	(110)	(146)
Supplies & Services Expenditure	1,012	669	661	8	10
Capital Finance	78	56	35	21	28
Computer Repairs & Software	1,258	1,237	1,213	24	33
Communication Costs	13	13	83	(70)	(71)
Premises Expenditure	99	80	100	(20)	(27)
Transport Expenditure	3	2	1	1	0
Agency Related Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	15	0	0	0	0
Other Expenditure	0	0	3	(3)	(3)
Total Expenditure	10,251	7,791	7,940	(149)	(176)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-624	-124	-258	134	179
Schools SLA Income	-565	-547	-500	(47)	(61)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	0	0	-6	6	7
Transfer From Reserves	-485	-364	-364	0	0
Total Income	-1,674	-1,035	-1,128	93	125
Net Operational Expenditure	8,577	6,756	6,812	(56)	(51)
Recharges					
Premises Support	389	292	292	0	0
Transport Support	19	17	17	0	0
Central Support	1,593	1,194	1,194	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-13,112	-9,835	-9,835	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-9,617	-8,332	-8,332	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-1,040	-1,576	-1,520	(56)	(51)

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms net spend is over the budget profile by £0.056m at the end of the third quarter and forecast to be above the approved budget by £0.051m at the end of the financial year.

Employee's costs are £0.110m over the approved budget at the end of Q3. Whilst there are some vacancies across the department these have not been held open sufficiently to achieve the departmental staff turnover budget of £0.529m. These targets are higher across the administration division following a saving proposal which was implemented in 2020/21.

SLA income is marginally below the budget target at Q3 and this trend is expected to continue towards the final outturn position.

Fees and charges income budget relates to external client income for traded services. This is for Agresso implementation and continued support and the income target is expected to be exceeded at the final outturn position.

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2022

Capital Expenditure	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
ICT Rolling Capital Programme	700	273	273	427
Total Capital Expenditure	700	123	123	577

Comments on the above figures.

It is expected that the full capital allocation will be spent at Outturn.

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES 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	1,942	1,552	1,712	(160)	(213)
Supplies & Services	322	198	201	(3)	(4)
Civic Catering & Functions	39	23	5	18	25
Legal Expenses	218	218	296	(78)	(104)
Transport Related Expenditure	10	10	12	(2)	(2)
Total Expenditure	2,531	2,001	2,226	(225)	(298)
Income					
Land Charges	-84	-60	-55	(5)	(7)
School SLA's	-85	-84	-82	(2)	(3)
Licence Income	-263	-185	-207	22	29
Government Grant	0	0	-21	21	21
Fees & Charges Income	-65	-61	-61	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-46	-39	-199	160	213
Total Income	-543	-429	-625	196	254
Net Operational Expenditure	1,988	1,572	1,601	(29)	(44)
Recharges					
Premises Support	58	44	44	0	0
Central Support Recharges	351	263	263	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-1,895	-1,421	-1,421	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,486	-1,114	-1,114	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	502	458	487	(29)	(44)

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms net spending is £0.029m above budget profile at the end of Q3, with the forecast outturn expected to be £0.044m above the annual budget.

Employee costs for the year are expected to be £0.213m due to the increased associated with paying for legal locum cover as a result of recruitment difficulties. It has been agreed these costs will be funded from reserves.

Legal expenses are projected to overspend against the annual budget by £0.104m. These projections are only an estimation, costs are dependent on complexity and number of cases so difficult to forecast accurately. It has been advised that increased case numbers and case complexity will mean increased barrister costs and the need to use outside legal services.

Land and license Income is dependent on demand for property searches and license applications, so variable and difficult to project.

All budget savings applied to 22-23 budget will be achieved.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2022****Comments on the above figures**

The net Department spend is £0.044m over the approved budget at the end of Quarter 3. The forecast outturn is likely to show an improvement on this and is estimated at £0.346m under the approved budget.

Net employee spend is below the budget to date by £0.801m, due to the number of vacancies within the department resulting from delays and difficulty in recruitment. This reflects vacancies within the school meals, leisure and open spaces services. Number of full time equivalent staff in the service is 425.

Premises costs are £0.039m over budget at the end of Quarter 3 with the forecast outturn estimated to be in the region of £0.100m over the approved budget. Costs for utilities across all sites are unclear for the final four months of the year given the increased cost of electricity and gas. Cost and usage will continue to be reviewed on a monthly basis and action taken to minimise where possible.

Spend on Supplies and Services is currently £0.051m over budget and spend on Hired Services is £0.122m over budget. This includes crematorium spend for the decommissioning of the temporary cremator plus equipment costs, including £8k/month for container hire.

The department has now received final invoices relating to 2021/22 waste disposal contracts. The indication is these costs are much lower than was forecast in finalising the 2021/22 accounts. The difference in actual cost to forecast is considered to be in the region of £0.500m but work is on-going to gain assurance over the final billed amount.

Charges for 2022/23 waste disposal contracts are calculated based on the average cost per tonne in the previous year. Further work will be undertaken in estimating costs for the full year to ensure accuracy of final estimated amounts.

Fees & Charges income is £0.043m under budget at the end of Quarter 3 and is not expected to hit budgeted targets. The cancellation of certain events, such as the Vintage Rally means that the associated income will not be realised. Shortfalls in income in the Leisure Centres and the Stadium plus a reduction in room hire at Community Centres and Libraries have also contributed under achieving income objectives.

Transport recharges are expected to be higher than budgeted due to fuel and other cost increases. This has resulted in an overspend against budget of £0.187m at the end of Quarter 3 with an estimated outturn overspend for 2022/23 of £0.250m.

Capital Projects as at 31 December 2022

Project Title	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	37	10	9	28
Halton Leisure Centre	3,296	1,200	1,359	1,937
Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment	70	38	71	-1
Stadium decarbonisation scheme	0	0	117	-117
Open Spaces Schemes	450	157	157	293
Children's Playground Equipment	80	5	3	77
Upton Improvements	13	0	0	13
Crow Wood Park Play Area	39	25	27	12
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	0	0	340
Runcorn Town Park	256	150	164	92
Widnes Crematorium, Replacement Cremator	200	200	242	-42
Spike Island / Wigg Island	60	5	1	59
Litter Bins	20	0	0	20
Totals	4,861	1,790	2,150	2,711

Comments on the above figures**Halton (Moor Lane) Leisure Centre**

The estimated cost of the new leisure centre has increased significantly due to the current levels of inflation, scarcity of materials etc. The Leisure Centre contract start date is 09/01/23 for a 108 week build. Spend to date of £2.25m includes all works associated with the PCSDA and CPO etc. Anticipated spend of a further £760k bringing the total spend to £3m by 31st March 2023.

Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment

The scheme is now complete. An invoice is due February for £32,605 for the practical completion. There is a slight overspend due to additional fence panel/gate request works.

Stadium Decarbonisation Scheme

Grant-funded project to reduce the DCBL Stadium's carbon footprint. This involved replacing the gas boilers with air source heat pumps and installing LED lighting and additional installation. The scheme was completed in March 2022 with retentions due April 2023.

Open Spaces

This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including Arley Drive/Halton Housing Trust and Fairfield History projects. Schemes on this code are progressing, although slightly behind the expenditure profile due to capacity issues.

Children's Playground Equipment

This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds. A contract has been let for the majority of this spend and it is expected to have most of the budget spent this year.

Crow Wood Park

The main contract for the new park building has ended. A small amount of work to the building is required plus additional landscape contract to complete the paths - this is ongoing with some work from Property services and Open Spaces team to complete.

Landfill Tax Credits Schemes

Currently used to support improvements for a rolling programme of existing playgrounds/open space schemes across the Borough. There are no projects currently identified and minimal spend if any against this is anticipated in 2022/23.

Runcorn Town Park

Project to renew park infrastructure. Project is ongoing with 2 contractors on site expect to meet expenditure by end of financial year. Possibly some carry forward will be needed to complete work in season and for contingency payments.

Widnes Crematorium replacement Cremator

Contract works on the new cremator are complete. Some of this overspend is as a result of the original budget of £200k being based on the quote from a company that later had to drop out of the process because they failed to meet the financial solvency requirements HBC needed. The company who could meet our financial requirements quote was an additional £31k. A further £10k overspend is as a result of repairs required to unforeseen damage to the original building slab under the old cremator when it was removed.

Wigg/Spike Island Recovery Works

The programme is slightly behind due to staff capacity issues. Waiting for a consultancy agreement to be put in place so the scheme can progress using external help.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employee Related Expenditure	4,898	4,210	4,103	107	143
Pay Award	195	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Maintenance	2,347	1,631	1,681	(50)	(67)
Premises	92	90	90	0	0
Energy & Water Costs	895	500	594	(94)	(126)
NNDR	549	549	633	(84)	(84)
Rents	177	141	141	0	0
Economic Regeneration Activities	37	13	0	13	17
Security	486	329	345	(16)	(22)
Supplies & Services	618	434	430	4	5
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,284	574	574	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	130	103	103	0	0
Capital Finance	30	30	30	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	190	187	187	0	0
Total Expenditure	11,928	8,791	8,911	(120)	(134)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-773	-386	-386	0	0
Rent - Commercial Properties	-837	-517	-431	(86)	(115)
Rent - Investment Properties	-53	-43	-43	0	0
Rent - Markets	-796	-604	-583	(21)	(21)
Government Grant	-803	-803	-803	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,206	-726	-726	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-381	-381	-362	(19)	(19)
Recharges to Capital	-243	-71	-71	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,883	-1,451	-1,576	125	125
Total Income	-6,975	-4,982	-4,981	(1)	(30)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,953	3,809	3,930	(121)	(164)
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,474	1,106	1,106	0	0
Transport Support	27	20	20	0	0
Central Support	2,082	1,562	1,562	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,258	-4,693	-4,693	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,671	-2,005	-2,005	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,282	1,804	1,925	(121)	(164)

Comments on the above figures

The Department recognises the significant financial challenges they face and will continue to face into the near future, particularly given the elevated levels of inflation for commodities including fuel, energy, materials, and increased wage demands. Budget holders actively manage their budgets and work closely with the Financial Management team to try and achieve a balanced budget.

To date the Department is reporting net spend to be over the approved budget by £0.121m. The longer term forecast through to the end of the year estimates net spend will be above the annual budget by £0.164m.

Across the Investment & Development Division several posts are currently vacant due to a restructure that has taken place. Temporary resources are in place where it has been possible to find the appropriate skill set required. It is envisaged that the vacancies will not be filled this financial year. The delay in recruitment of staff has improved the employee budget position this quarter. The 2022/23 pay award was agreed in October.

The impact of increased energy and fuel costs continue to be monitored during the year and it is anticipated that current budget provision will not be sufficient to meet rising costs and will therefore be met from Council reserves. Latest forecasts show an increase of 207% increase in Gas Costs and 64% electricity costs

The Asset Management Service is currently forecasting a budget pressure of £0.285m which includes reduced rental income. This figure is inclusive of empty property business rates costs of £0.084m, repairs and maintenance costs of £0.042m to ensure buildings are in a satisfactory state for future tenants.

Work is ongoing to fill vacant properties. There will be a monetary impact of any delays.

The savings put forward to provide additional office space for external agencies at Rutland House will not be achieved this budget year. This budget pressure will continue into financial year 2023/24. It is important that any future savings put forward can be delivered and will not create an added budget pressure.

Due to adverse trading conditions in the retail sector which have been worsened by inflation and increased utilities costs, the department is projecting to under achieve on market rental income targets this budget year. During the last few months, the occupancy rate has dropped to 92%. This may be linked to the introduction of customers having to pay for parking outside the market.

The School Cleaning Service Level Agreement (SLA) is not covering its costs this budget year due to the need to employ agency staff to cover sickness and leave and the pay award. A review of SLA charges has been undertaken ahead of the next budget year.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Capital Projects as of 31 December 2022

	2022-23 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
3MG	164	18	18	146
Murdishaw Redevelopment	31	2	2	29
Equality Act Improvement Works	200	53	53	147
Widnes Market Refurbishment	6	6	6	0
Broseley House	21	7	7	14
Solar Farm Extension	11	0	0	11
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2,117	2,075	2,075	42
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	36	0	0	36
Halton Lea TCF	388	353	353	35
Property Improvements	213	169	169	44
Astmoor Regeneration	14	14	14	0
Woodend - Former Unit 10 Catalyst Trade Park	500	79	79	421
Runcorn Station Building Development	110	60	60	50
St Paul Mews	500	500	515	(15)
Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment	2,000	1,346	1,346	654
Total	6,311	4,682	4,697	1,614

Comments

3MG - Planning approval was granted for HBC Field and the Council will complete the transaction on 28th Feb 2023. Discussions have taken place with LCR colleagues in relation to the Tax Site status of 3MG and Culina have been referred to LCRs tax specialist for enquiries about a Custom site.

Murdishaw - The partnership development continues, supporting onward in leasing the former boxing club and establishing a CIC. Alongside this, work is ongoing to develop the outdoor space at Murdishaw Community Centre.

Equality Act Budget- There are several access type schemes using the equality act budget this year so it is anticipated the budget will be fully spent at year end.

Widnes Market Refurbishment - All Capital works have now been completed and all retentions paid

Broseley House - All works are complete on site, the only outstanding payment is the retention monies.

Solar Farm Extension - It has now been operational for 2 years. No major issues have been identified. The system is performing in line with expectations in terms of energy produced and income.

Foundry Lane – Project Works now well underway. Remediation Works to Phase 1 complete, with housing construction to commence mid 2023. Statutory planning documentation relating to Phase 2 currently being drawn up, due for submission in 2022/23 Q4.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improvement Works – Majority of the refurbishment works completed; redecoration works to the meeting rooms to be carried out.

Halton Town Centre Fund - This LCR funded programme is now complete

Property Improvements- There are a number of projects against this code including reroofing the fitness suite at the Stadium, lift replacement at Kingsway Learning Centre, and reroofing 73 High Street. There will also likely be some roofing works done at the Municipal Building.

Astmoor Regeneration –Langtree formally appointed as JV Partner with project design/approval underway. Full Development Agreement currently being drawn up – delayed due to HM Land Registry errors needing to be addressed. Full phased Work Programme agreed in draft.

Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Trade Park - Refurbishment works have commenced on site due for completion prior to 31st March 2023. Likely expenditure circa £550,000




Runcorn Station Building Development - Architectural images of the station have been produced. Network Rail's Asset Manager has endorsed the options report, which is a key stage to progress the project. Project sponsor has been liaising with their Capital Delivery Team to discuss moving the project to the next stage and the requirements / resources needed from Network Rail to do that.

St Paul Mews - No further spend is likely until the last remaining tenant vacates the property then progress with the demolition work will continue.




8.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

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

Direction of Travel Indicator

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