

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



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

15 October 2024

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

You are hereby summoned to attend an Ordinary Meeting of the Halton Borough Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall on Wednesday, 23 October 2024 commencing at 6.30 p.m. for the purpose of considering and passing such resolution(s) as may be deemed necessary or desirable in respect of the matters mentioned in the Agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S. Young'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'S' and a distinct 'Y'.

Chief Executive

-AGENDA-

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1.	COUNCIL MINUTES	SEE MINUTE BOOK
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
3.	THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
4.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
5.	LEADER'S REPORT	
6.	URGENT DECISIONS	1 - 2
7.	MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD	SEE MINUTE BOOK
	a) 11 July 2024	
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8.	MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD	SEE MINUTE BOOK
9.	QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8	
10.	MATTERS REQUIRING A DECISION OF THE COUNCIL	
	a) 2024/25 to 2026/27 Capital Programme - EXB17	3 - 8
	RECOMMENDED: That Council be recommended to approve the updated capital programme for 2024-27, including forecast spend and funding, as set out in Table 1 and Table 2.	
	b) Kingsway Quarter, Widnes Town Centre - Key Decision - EXB18	9 - 16
	RECOMMENDED: That the Board	
	1) recommend Council adjust the Capital Programme for the sum of £750,000.00 to enable demolition of Kingsway Leisure Centre and associated preparation works to aid formal land disposal;	
	2) endorse the vision for Kingsway Quarter site for residential led development, as set out in para 3.6 of the report and in accordance with the wider Widnes Town Centre Strategy;	

- 3) approves delegated authority to Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property, in consultation with Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, for site marketing and disposal; and
 - 4) authorises the Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.
- c) Replacement Cremator Widnes Crematorium - Key Decision – EXB22

RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) delegated authority be granted to Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to procure a replacement cremator and associated installation, service and maintenance contract; and
- 2) Council be recommended to include £308,000, in the 2024/25 Capital Programme for the scheme, as outlined in section 5.0 of the report.

- d) 2024/25 Spending as at 31 July 2024 and Medium Term Financial Forecast - EXB25

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RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to only absolutely essential items;
- 2) Executive Directors continue the urgent action to identify areas where spending could be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year, or additional funding secured;
- 3) Council be requested to approve the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.21; and
- 4) the updated Medium Term Financial Forecast included at Appendix 5 is noted.

- e) Youth Justice Plan - EXB27

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RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the 2024-27 Youth Justice Plan be recommended for approval by the next full Council; and
- 2) authority be delegated to the Executive Director – Children’s Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families, to approve and submit an annual refresh of the Youth Justice Plan in 2025 prior to formal approval by Council next year.

- f) Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements - Cheshire & Merseyside - HEA15 **141 - 154**

RECOMMENDED: That the Board

- 1) notes the report and Appendix; and
- 2) endorses the revised Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements and recommends it to Council for approval.

11. MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD **SEE MINUTE BOOK**

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

12. COMMITTEE MINUTES **SEE MINUTE BOOK**

- a) Development Management
- b) Regulatory Sub Committee
- c) Taxi Licensing Sub Committee

13. NOTICE OF MOTION - DEFINING OUR COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE TO AUGUSTS DISTURBANCES **155 - 156**

14. NOTICE OF MOTION - CHANGES TO THE WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE AND PROTECTING PENSIONERS FROM FUEL POVERTY

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REPORT TO:	Council
DATE:	23 October 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Chief Executive
PORTFOLIO:	Leader
SUBJECT:	Urgent Decisions
WARDS:	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To bring to the attention of Council urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report is noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution gives authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions which are required before the next formal meeting of Executive Board/Council.

These must be made in consultation with the Leader of the Council where practicable, and with the Director – Finance and/or Director – Legal and Democratic Services where necessary. They must also be reported for information to the next practically available meeting of the Board.

- 3.2 More information on each can be found on the Council's website here:

<http://councillors.halton.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?bcr=1>

- 3.3 The urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of Council:

Date Decision taken	Decision details
30 August	2 X Resourcing Officers
30 August	Job Family Approach to Pay
30 August	Improvement Co-ordinator
5 September	2 x Eclipse Systems Analysis
5 September	CS Programme Communications Officer

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are none other than the constitutional requirement to report urgent decisions for information.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 The report is for information, and there are no risk issues arising from it.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 None.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

None

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

8.1 No background papers were used in the preparation of this report. Further information on the decisions taken is available from the link in Paragraph 3.2.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	11 July 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Finance Director
PORTFOLIO:	Corporate Resources
SUBJECT:	2024/25 to 2026/27 Capital Programme
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Council approved the capital programme for 2024/25 on 6 March 2024. Since then new capital grant allocations have been received and slippage to capital projects for 2023/24 has been rolled forward to 2024/25. The purpose of this report is to bring all the separate elements together and report on the Council's total planned capital programme expenditure and associated funding over the next three years.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That Council be recommended to approve the updated capital programme for 2024-27, including forecast spend and funding, as set out in Table 1 and Table 2;

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The 2024/27 Capital Strategy Statement was approved by Council on 6 March 2024. It provides a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It summarised the expected capital spend over the medium term and the sources of funding available.

3.2 At the time of writing the Capital Strategy Statement estimates of capital allocations at that time were known to be subject to variations. This report updates the latest position, which includes confirmed and indicative capital grant allocations for 2024/25 and future years.

3.3 The capital programme is subject to regular review and monitoring reports are presented on a quarterly basis. Information is presented to show the actual spend incurred to date and how this compares to the capital allocation for the year. A forecast is provided to indicate if the capital programme will be utilised in full during the year or if there is any expected slippage to capital schemes.

Planned Capital Programme Expenditure

- 3.4 Table 1 below presents the planned Capital Programme for 2024/25 onwards based on current information for approved schemes, funding available and slippage of scheme expenditure from 2023/24. The capital programme is subject to continuous change as new resources and projects are identified, and will be updated throughout the year as revisions are approved by Council.

Table 1 - Planned Capital Programme Expenditure 2024/25 to 2026/27

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	Total £'000
Childrens Directorate				
Schools Capital Repairs	749.0	-	-	749.0
Basic Need Projects	600.8	-	-	600.8
SEND Capital Allocation	3,355.2	-	-	3,355.2
SCA Unallocated	255.6	-	-	255.6
Childcare Expansion	314.8	-	-	314.8
Family Hubs & Start for Life	53.2	-	-	53.2
Childrens Directorate Total	5,328.6	-	-	5,328.6
Adults Directorate				
Halton Carers Centre	199.0	-	-	199.0
Disabled Facilities Grant	600.0	600.0	600.0	1,800.0
Stairlifts	270.0	270.0	270.0	810.0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	270.0	270.0	270.0	810.0
St Patricks Care Home	1,200.0	-	-	1,200.0
Adults Directorate Total	2,539.0	1,140.0	1,140.0	4,819.0
Environment & Regeneration Directorate				
Stadium Minor Works	30.0	30.0	30.0	90.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	600.0	600.0	1,800.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	-	-	13.0
Halton Leisure Centre	8,997.0	-	-	8,997.0
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	65.0	65.0	197.8
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	340.0	340.0	1,020.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	-	-	12.0
Runcorn Town Park	468.6	280.0	280.0	1,028.6
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,933.5	-	-	1,933.5
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	503.0	-	-	503.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	20.0	60.0
3MG	134.5	-	-	134.5
Murdishaw Redevelopment	21.2	-	-	21.2
Equality Act Improvement Works	293.2	300.0	300.0	893.2
Foundary Lane Residential Area	1,160.0	-	-	1,160.0
Runcorn Town Centre Mgmt	76.6	-	-	76.6

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	Total £'000
Runcorn Station Enterprise Hub	11.4	-	-	11.4
Property Improvements	185.2	200.0	200.0	585.2
Unlock Runcorn	2,882.0	250.0	-	3,132.0
Brindley Development	2,825.8	1,497.6	-	4,323.4
Runcorn Town Centre – Creative & Digital	2,563.7	442.7	-	3,006.4
Town Centre New Homes	63.1	-	-	63.1
Health & Education Hub	22.2	-	-	22.2
High St Connectivity	1,175.1	1,462.5	-	2,637.6
Runcorn Station Quarter	484.7	-	-	484.7
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	51.9	-	-	51.9
Runcorn Waterfront Development	268.7	-	-	268.7
Changing Places	24.1	-	-	24.1
Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	-	-	2,200.0
CRSTS funded Schemes	5,288.6	-	-	5,288.6
CRSTS SJB Lighting	530.8	-	-	530.8
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	1,025.6	200.0	200.0	1,425.6
Street Lighting - Upgrades	969.4	-	-	969.4
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	5,851.7	5,851.7	17,555.0
Risk Management	597.8	120.0	120.0	837.8
Fleet Replacements	4,927.4	1,423.3	-	6,350.7
Mersey Gateway Land Acquisition	212.4	-	-	212.4
Environment & Regeneration Directorate Total	46,831.9	13,082.8	8,006.7	67,921.4
Chief Executives Directorate				
IT Rolling Programme	1,026.9	700.0	700.0	2,426.9
Halton Smart Micro Grid	11,000.0	-	-	11,000.0
Transformation Programme	3,740.0	1,000.0	-	4,740.0
Chief Executives Directorate Total	15,766.9	1,700.0	700.0	18,166.9
Total Capital Programme	70,466.4	15,922.8	9,846.7	96,235.9

- 3.5 The Council receives one principal source of funding from Government, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). This is received from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA), as the co-ordinating body. This replaces the previous two principal sources of formula based capital funding from Government to improve local transport conditions, namely Integrated Transport Block (ITB) used to fund small

transport improvements and Highways Maintenance Block (HM) used to maintain the highway, associated structures and covering works such as resurfacing, bridge maintenance and street lighting.

Funding the Programme

- 3.6 Table 2 below summarises how the capital programme will be funded.

Table 2 Capital Programme Funding 2024/25 to 2026/27

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	Total £'000
Specific & General Grants	31,608.4	10,644.5	6,991.7	49,244.6
External Contributions	3,342.3	1,186.0	1,186.0	5,714.3
Borrowing	30,975.8	2,692.3	1,669.0	35,337.1
Revenue Contributions	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	4,540.0	1,400.0	-	5,940.0
Total Funding	70,466.4	15,922.9	9,846.7	96,236.0

- 3.7 The Council will continue to seek and secure further additional external resources to reduce on-going revenue implications and enhance the capital programme. For example, through Section 106 agreements.
- 3.8 Borrowings undertaken to support the capital programme are undertaken in line with the Prudential Code and Council's Treasury Management Strategy. This ensures that external borrowings are affordable and within prudent and sustainable levels. Borrowings to fund the capital programme over the three years will be repayable in future years from either Government grant, forecast capital receipts or funded from future revenue streams.
- 3.9 Prudential borrowing remains an option to fund future capital schemes, but the financing costs as a result of the borrowing will need to be found from savings within the revenue budget.

Capital Receipts

- 3.10 Available capital receipts are used to fund the capital programme. Sales from the disposal of surplus land and buildings may only be used to fund capital expenditure. These funds cannot be used to fund revenue expenditure, with the exception of up to 4% of the proceeds of the sale of capital assets being allowable to fund the revenue cost of disposing of an asset.
- 3.11 Estimates of capital receipts over the medium term are based on forecast land and building sales.

- 3.12 Table 3 below shows the expected balance of capital receipts over the next three years. The Council attempts to maintain a minimum value of £3m of retained receipts towards funding the capital programme.

Table 3 Capital Receipts

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Balance B/F	4,980.6	3,440.6	5,040.6
In-Year Anticipated Receipts	3,000.00	2,000.0	1,000.0
Receipts Utilised	-4,540.0	-1,400	-
Balance C/F	3,440.6	4,040.6	5,040.6

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The financial implications are as set out within the report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

6.3 A Healthy Halton

6.4 A Safer Halton

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

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

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 There is a risk that slippage to the capital programme, could result in increases to the cost of delivering schemes. Additional revenue costs could be incurred if the schemes are not delivered in time.
- 7.2 Many grants which fund capital expenditure come with conditions to how funding can be used and outcome targets for when the asset is brought into use. Deviation against these conditions may result in requests for clawback to the funding from approving bodies.

- 7.3 The capital programme is heavily funded from prudential borrowing; of total capital expenditure, £35m or 40% will come from future and existing borrowings. Risks exist in schemes funded from prudential borrowing. It is important to recognise on undertaking borrowing that a clear plan exists which identifies how the principal and interest will be re-paid on the borrowing end date.
- 7.4 There is a cashflow risk to capital schemes funded from future capital receipts, the cost to the Council of the short to medium term cashflow impact needs to be recognised at the start of each scheme.
- 7.5 Regular monitoring and reporting of spending against the capital programme will seek to mitigate the above risks.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Schemes within the capital programme will have climate change implications, these will be reported and presented at the time the specific scheme is approved by Council.

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

- 9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	11 July 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment & Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Deputy Leader/Climate Change
SUBJECT:	Kingsway Quarter, Widnes Town Centre
WARD(S)	Central and West Bank

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek agreement to progress delivery of Kingsway Quarter development. This includes capital funding to undertake the demolition of Kingsway Leisure Centre, following its relocation to the new Halton Leisure Centre in 2025.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

The Board:

- 1) **Recommend Council adjust the Capital Programme for the sum of £750,000.00 to enable demolition of Kingsway Leisure Centre and associated preparation works to aid formal land disposal;**
- 2) **Endorse the vision for Kingsway Quarter site for residential led development, as set out at para 3.6 and in accordance with the wider Widnes Town Centre Strategy;**
- 3) **Approves delegated responsibility to Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, for site marketing and disposal; and**
- 4) **Authorises the Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on the 7th December 2023, Executive Board endorsed a new Vision and Objectives for Widnes Town Centre and agreed to a number of next steps to progress implementation. This included the preparation of a Masterplan with a focus on the agreed priority development sites and establishment of Widnes Town Centre Panel to guide regeneration proposals.

- 3.2 The Kingsway Quarter was identified as a priority development. With reference to the redline plan at Appendix A, this 2.4 hectare (5.9 acre) site is located at the southern edge of Widnes Town Centre. It comprises three land parcels:
- Site of the former Widnes Police Station and Magistrates Court;
 - Site of former Broseley House;
 - Site of Kingsway Leisure Centre.
- 3.3 Since the decision by the Ministry of Justice to close the Magistrates Courts in 2011, the Council has taken a strategic and proactive approach to assemble the Kingsway Quarter site, remove eyesore buildings and prepare the whole site for redevelopment. This included working in partnership with Cheshire Police on the relocation of Widnes Police Station to more fit for purpose premises on Gerrad Street.
- 3.4 The opening of the new Halton Leisure Centre at Moor Lane in Spring 2025 means the Kingsway Leisure Centre will be vacated and the site redundant. This unlocks the final parcel of land required to enable disposal of Kingsway Quarter for comprehensive redevelopment. The only remaining encumbrance on the land disposal being the need to demolish the leisure centre building following its relocation.
- 3.5 To get a better understanding of the design and development options for the Kingsway Quarter site, Architects have been commissioned to undertake a feasibility study and engage with Planning and Highways. A series of technical survey and viability appraisals are also being undertaken. This pre-development work has been jointly funded by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority in recognition of the importance of bringing forward residential led development on brownfield land. Pre-development design feasibility will be used to inform site marketing and disposal and prepare a 'Development Framework' to help de-risk and accelerate the planning process for developers.
- 3.6 Whilst design feasibility is still on-going, a vision for the Kingsway Quarter is emerging:

Kingsway Quarter presents a unique opportunity to make a significant contribution to regenerating and revitalising Widnes Town Centre. Through delivering a high quality residential led development that makes a positive first impression on a prominent site at the southern threshold into the town centre.

The site can introduce a contemporary residential offer, promote more sustainable urban living and increase footfall and activity into the Town Centre. The size and location of the site presents an opportunity to meet a need for more older-persons and family housing. Bringing these different housing requirements together into a single new neighbourhood can seek a place which exceeds minimum requirements and through built environment and shared public space design recognise the growing importance of promoting intergenerational connections.

Where the design of a place can help relieve isolation, bring people together in community activities to exchange life skills and experiences and to improve general health and wellbeing, as evidenced by research by bodies including Care England and Intergenerational England.

- 3.7 As one of the first town centre priority development sites coming forward it can provide the catalyst for further investment and change. Alongside the opening of the new Halton Leisure Centre on Moor Lane, it can support the renewal attractiveness of the wider Kingsway Quarter and Southern Widnes area.
- 3.8 The Kingsway Quarter is a prominent site. It provides an important pedestrian route between Riverside College and the town centre through the site. Once vacated, it is important that the Leisure Centre is promptly demolished so that it does not become an empty building liability and drain on the resources of the Council or our blue light partners. To enable demolition work to be programmed for Spring 2025, agreement is sought that Executive Board recommend Council adjust the Capital Programme to enable demolition of Kingsway Leisure Centre and associated works. The financial implications for this recommendation are set out in section 5.
- 3.9 With demolition works programmed, the land disposal process can be progressed in parallel. To help expedite the site's redevelopment, it is recommended that Executive Board approves delegated responsibility to Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Housing Strategy/Development, for site marketing and disposal on the basis of residential led development. This will include a soft market exercise to test a range of developers appetite to realise the development vision and requirements.
- 3.10 Following the land disposal process, and once a preferred developer has been appointed, community consultation will be undertaken prior to submission of any formal planning application by the developer.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The delivery of the Kingsway Quarter will make a positive contribution to use Council (land) resources to realise the Corporate Plan. It will support Priority Six: Valuing and appreciating Halton and our community by supporting Halton's residents to live in decent and affordable homes, surrounded by safe and thriving communities.
- 4.2 The inclusion of older people accommodation as part of the wider vision for the site to create an intergenerational neighbourhood, contributes to Priority One: Improving health, promoting wellbeing and supporting greater independence. The Council's social care commissioning team will be involved in shaping the precise type/offer of any older people accommodation (such as extra care / supported living) to ensure it meets identified need and has a net positive effect on social care budgets.
- 4.3 As a brownfield site, development of the Kingsway Quarter will support realising Halton's Spatial Strategy as set out in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP). The site lies within 'South Widnes' one of the five Key Urban Regeneration Areas where the majority of new development in the borough is expected to be located.
- 4.4 The DALP exempts brownfields sites from providing an affordable housing requirement. Given the vision for the Kingsway Quarter, it can help meet the need for affordable local housing and the Council will seek to bring forward the site in accordance with this policy and (subject to viability) provide 25% affordable housing.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council's Capital Strategy require new Capital Programme schemes to provide the following information:

5.2 (i) Gross cost of the scheme before any external contributions, reimbursements, or capital grants and estimated cash

An independent estimate for the demolition of Kingsway and associated works has been obtained. Adjusting for inflation and incorporating capital design and project management fees, and site disposal costs, a total gross capital budget cost of £750,00.000 is required.

5.3 (ii) Estimated cashflows over the life of the scheme

Spend is anticipated over three financial years 2024/25 – 2026/27. The majority of capital expenditure is anticipated within financial year 2025/26, when the main demolition works will be undertaken.

5.4 (iii) Expected revenue expenditure consequences of the scheme and how these will be funded

This capital project will lead to the disposal of Council assets (land), and it is not anticipated will generate any direct revenue expenditure consequences for the Council. The construction of new homes on the site will generate additional Council Tax income for the Council, it is too early to estimate what that income will be.

5.5 (iv) Details of any specific funding attributable to the scheme such as from capital grants, external contributions and other reimbursements

Capital funding for this project is anticipated to be met from a combination of external capital grant and capital land receipt.

In February 2024, the Council submitted a grant funding bid to the HM Government for the eligible expenditure for the capital demolition works. This bid to the One Public Estate (OPE) Brownfield Land Release Fund was for £517,500.00. The bid was prepared in partnership with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. Formal support for the bid included the Member of Parliament and Riverside College. The project had a strong Benefits Cost Ratio (BCR), which the HM Government use to evaluate grant applications. A grant funding decision is expected in Summer 2024, however it is not clear at this stage if the election will delay any announcement.

In addition to any external grant secured the land disposal is also anticipated to generate a capital land receipt. This is supported by preliminary viability appraisals, though will be subject to market conditions and any abnormal costs.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Kingsway Quarter will include good quality housing to enable children, young people and families to thrive.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Riverside College are intended to be a key partner in this project, sitting across the road from the site. The College (and its students) will not only benefit from a safer and more attractive link to the town centre they will also be integral to achieving its social value outcomes through embedded construction skills and apprenticeship/training requirements within the land disposal.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The vision for a new intergenerational neighbourhood seeks to integrate health and wellbeing outcomes within the DNA of the scheme design. This includes accommodation for older people and desire to tackle social isolation and promote a sense of community.

6.4 A Safer Halton

By seeking to increase footfall and activity within Widnes Town Centre and bringing back into productive use vacant land to increase natural surveillance.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The Kingsway Quarter will contribute to the regeneration of Widnes Town Centre and will utilise vacant brownfield land to deliver more homes.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Capital Project risks, such as project overrun and inflationary pressures will be managed by the Council's Property Capital Project Team. Financial risks associated with the capital project will be managed as part of the Council's overall treasury and risk management activity.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are none.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The site is in Widnes Town Centre and will support a housing offer which gives residents choice to live more environmentally friendly and sustainable lives. The Kingsway Quarter is brought forward to contribute to the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (2022-2027). In the Homes and Regeneration Theme, the following action is identified:

H2 - Develop a strategy to accelerate delivery of Net Zero new build homes within the Borough ahead of UK Government targets and introduction of new Future Homes Standards, including use of Council land to deliver a demonstration project.

9.2 Within the Action Plan Update three candidate sites for potential inclusion of a net zero demonstration project are identified: Rutland Street, Runcorn Old Town, Priory Meadow, Castlefields and Kingsway, Widnes. In implementing policy H2, the following requirements, subject to viability, will be sought within the Development Framework and site disposal: "A minimum of 10% of housing units will be built to the "Net Zero Carbon – Operational Energy Standard". This is nationally recognised best practice standard and is defined by the Good Homes Alliance and UK Green Building Council.

9.3 As the first planned net zero housing demonstration project in Widnes, opportunities for local engagement with the community, schools and specifically Riverside College will be sought as part of the delivery of the scheme.

9.4 One opportunity for realising the net zero carbon commitments for Kingsway Quarter is connecting the development into the Council's Smart Micro Grid.

The Council is currently undertaking a technical study for upgrading and extending the micro grid into a Smart Energy Network. Initial advice from the consultants undertaking this study is that it would be feasible to connect the Kingsway Quarter development into the micro grid. The inclusion of older persons' development would be beneficial, as this accommodation could be a single electrical connection and 'off-taker'.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

The demolition work will result in significant expenditure by the Council.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

For the demolition and site clearance to proceed as soon as the site is vacated, to ensure that the risk of ASB is minimised, HBC need to start commissioning work now. A key requirement is a bat survey which can only be carried out at specific times of the year when bats are active between May and September but ideally completed by end of August. Any delay risks ASB in the building following its decommissioning and ultimately a delay in the site being offered to market.

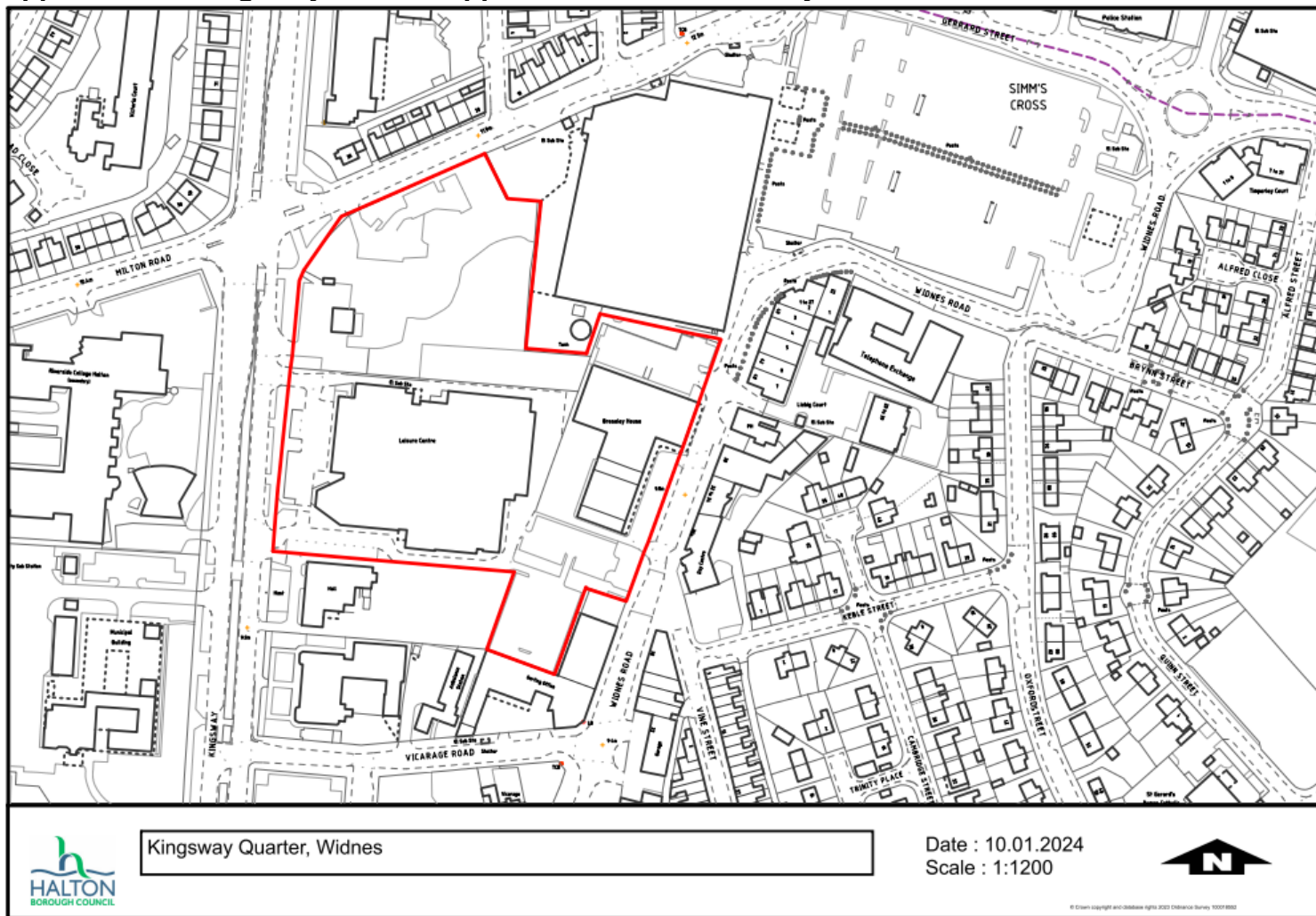
12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The bat survey work needs to be commissioned mid-july to ensure timescales are met.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Executive Board Report 19 September 2019, Leisure Centre at Moor Lane	Council Website	Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property
Executive Board Report 7 December 2023, Widnes Town Centre Vision	Council Website	Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property

Appendix A – Kingsway Quarter Approximate Site Boundary



REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	12 September 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Finance Director
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	2024/25 Spending as at 31 July 2024 and Medium Term Financial Forecast
WARD(S):	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue net spend position as at 31 July 2024 together with a 2024/25 forecast outturn position. Report also includes an update on the Council's medium term financial forecast over the four years to 2028/29.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;

- (i) All spending is limited to only absolutely essential items;**
- (ii) Executive Directors continue the urgent action to identify areas where spending can be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year, or additional funding secured;**
- (iii) Council be requested to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.21.**
- (iv) The updated Medium Term Financial Forecast included at Appendix 5 is noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Revenue Spending

- 3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 July 2024 and Appendix 2 provides detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms, net Council spending as at 31 July 2024 is £6.561m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimates that net spending will be over budget by £19.777m if no corrective action is taken.
- 3.2 The forecast outturn overspend is reduced from the amount of £20.353m reported to Management Team at the end of May 2024. The position has

largely been reduced by a revised estimate of interest receivable, due to cash balances being higher than estimated for the first half of the financial year.

- 3.3 The forecast position is of great concern and action to reduce net spend must be taken immediately. Without action being taken the Council will not be in a position to provide a balanced budget by financial year-end.
- 3.4 Available reserves to the Council (General and Earmarked) is £11.581m. This level is well below that required to help provide a balanced budget position.
- 3.5 The figures reflect a prudent yet realistic view of spend and income levels through to the end of the year. Work will continue to progress on updating the financial position as more information is made available. Included within the forecast position is an estimate to allow for the 2024/25 pay deal based on latest available information. There is a risk that the overspend will increase further if the agreed pay deal is above the current offer.
- 3.6 DHLUC officers have been made aware of the Council's financial position and will continue to be updated. Discussions have also been undertaken with the LGA who have agreed to carry out a financial assurance review for the Council which is likely to cover a number of areas including robustness of the medium term financial strategy, reserves and demand pressures.
- 3.7 The largest pressure on the budget continues to be within the Children & Families Department, net spend for the year is forecast to be £8.771m (21.5%) above 2023/24 actual spend. There continue to be significant increases in the forecasts relating to salary (agency) costs and children in care.
- 3.8 The use and cost of agency staff continues to be one of the main contributing factors to the overspend position for the year. This is mostly evident within the Children & Families Department and the Care Homes Division. Initiatives and support from the Transformation Programme are ongoing to reduce reliance upon agency staff.
- 3.9 Analysis of agency spend for the year, together with comparative analysis of 2023/24 costs, is included in the table below.

	2024/25					2023/24
	April £'000	May £'000	June £'000	July £'000	Total £'000	Total £'000
Adult Social Care	349	558	434	602	1,943	5,927
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	36	55	41	51	183	0
Children & Family Services	331	525	427	550	1,833	6,157
Community & Greenspace	17	53	46	56	172	336
Economy, Enterprise & Property	35	21	30	35	121	343
Education, Inclusion & Provision	20	37	42	35	134	393
Finance	0	12	2	0	14	56
Legal & Democratic Services	59	108	86	99	352	814
Planning & Transportation	32	39	23	24	118	206
Public Health & Public Protection	3	4	4	3	14	21
Total	882	1,412	1,135	1,455	4,884	14,253

3.10 Within the approved budget for the year is a £4m target against the Transformation Programme. To date budget savings of £0.126m have been identified against this target. In addition, the Transformation Delivery Unit (TDU) have identified some reductions in mitigating and controlling costs although these will not lead to an overall reduction in the budgeted target.

3.11 The forecast overspend is significantly above that which has been recorded in recent years. Whilst the current year net budget for the Council has increased by £7.7m (5.45%), this is well below the forecast increase in costs, currently estimated as an increase of £21.868m (14.8%).

Revenue - Operational Spending

3.12 Operational net spending for the first two months of the year is higher than the budget to date by £6.561m Based on current forecasts it is estimated net spend will be over budget for the year by £19.777m if no further corrective action is taken.

3.13

Within the overall budget forecast position for the quarter, the key budget variances are as follows;

(i) Children and Families Department

Employee Expenditure

Employee costs are over budget profile at the end of financial year 2024/25 by £3.391m. There continues to be heavy reliance on agency staff to fill vacancies across the structure, including Social Worker and Practice Lead positions. This along with 11 agency staff recruited in addition to the current staffing structure is the cause for the overspend.

The current number of agency staff within the department is 63. Within the last month there have been a number of requests approved for further agency support. If all requests are filled the number of agency staff will likely increase to 72 in future months.

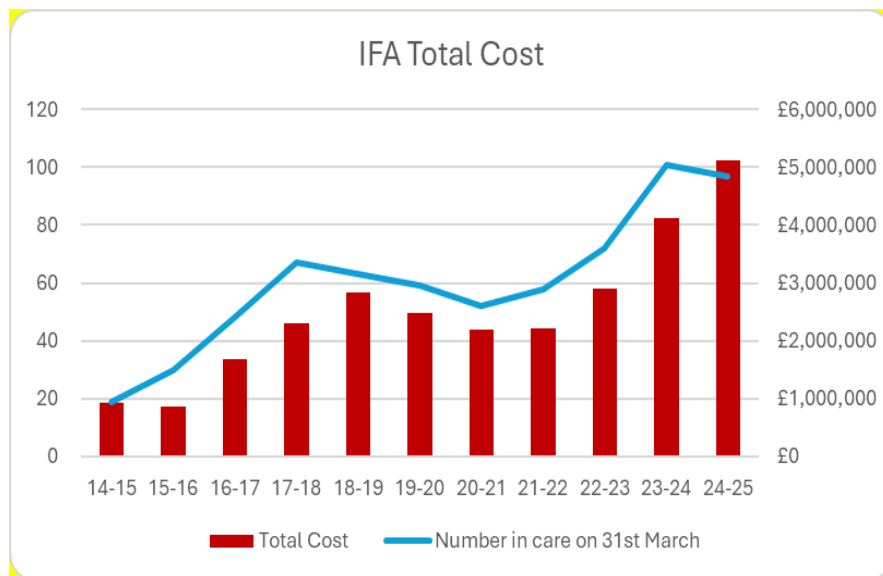
Various workstreams are in place to target the difficulties in recruitment, including a recruitment working group, Social Work Academy and a local offer for employees offering recruitment and retention bonuses for those working in Children’s Social Care.

Agency spend forecast across the department is expected to remain high for financial year 2024/25, at 31 July 2024 agency spend was £1.833m

Foster Care

Increasing numbers of children in care and insufficient in-house fostering provision has meant increased reliance on IFA. Higher numbers of children placed within IFA provision and increased IFA rates has resulted in an estimated forecast for the end of £0.869m over budget. This has reduced by £0.377m since 31 May 24.

A number of IFA placements have become unstable which has resulted in children being moved to more expensive residential accommodation.



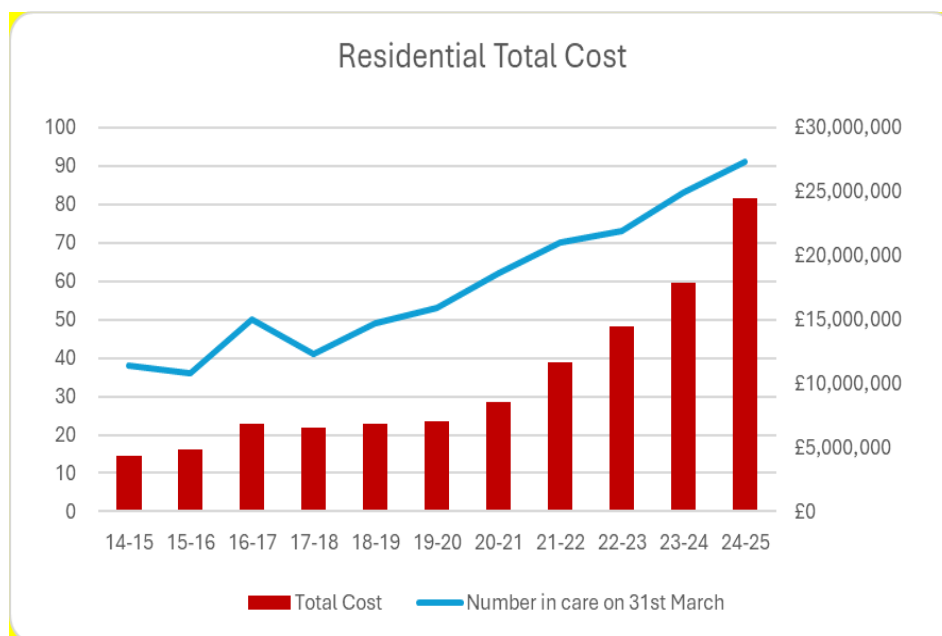
Residential Care

Out of Borough Residential Care continues to be the main budget pressure for the Children and Families Department as the costs of residential care have continued to rise year on year.

Provision	Weekly Costs	31-Jul-24		31 May 2024	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£2000 - £3000	2	197,563	2	207,486.86
Residential	£3001 - £4000	14	2,576,320	14	2,397,335.01
Residential	£4001 - £5000	12	2,707,103	10	2,373,330.18
Residential	£5001 - £15000	38	15,556,103	35	14,767,645.72
Secure	£6397 - £8137				
Leaving Care	£443 - £7175	19	2,742,900	19	2,680,340.56
Parent & Child	£2000 - £5500	6	663,491	8	1,003,592.01
Total:		91	24,443,479	88	23,429,730.34

At the end of financial year 24/25 the estimated overspend is £6.626m over budget for residential placements. The number of children since last reported has also increased. Overall cost of packages are increasing due to the complexity of support the young people require as well as standard package cost increases.

The graph below illustrates the rising costs of Residential Care, for consistency this does not include the costs of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as these costs were not included in previous years.



(ii) **Adult Social Care Directorate**

Community Care

From the information available and estimates for inflation and demographic increases, suggest an overspend of circa £2.1m for Community Care services at 31st March 2025.

The pressures on the budget continue from the previous financial year and are analysed in more detail below:

Residential & Nursing Care

There are currently 416 residents in permanent external residential/nursing care as at the end of July 2024 compared to the 2023/24 average of 390 this is an increase of 6.6%.

The current average cost of a package has increased from £789 (2023/24 average) to £887 an increase of 12.4%.

Extra 1 to 1 hours in external care homes cost £15,396 per week and the forecast to year end is currently circa £0.694m. Last year 2023/24, the cost of 1-1 care was £0.255m, therefore a forecast increase of £0.439m year on year.

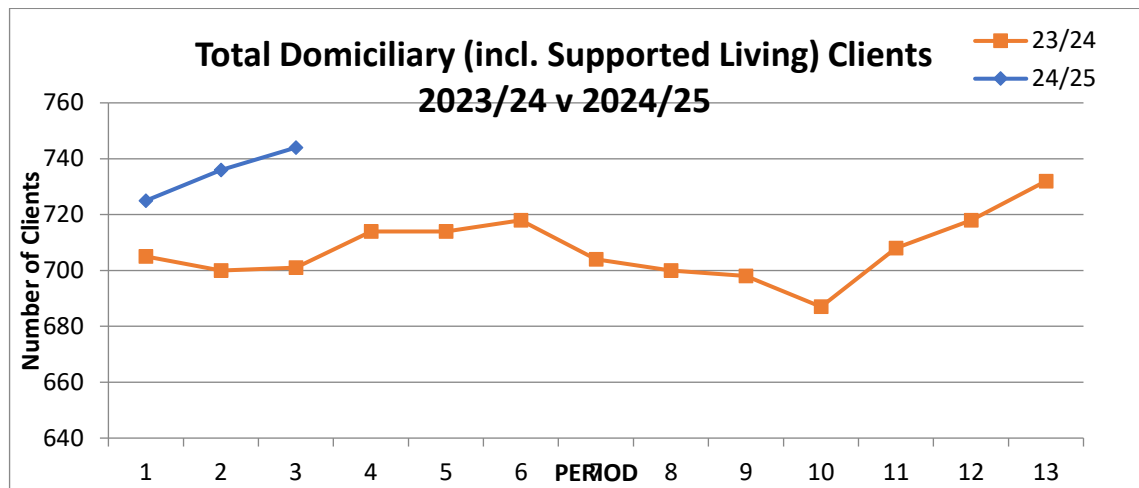
The table below shows the number of permanent external packages over £1,000 per week.

Weekly Cost £	No of Permanent PoCs			
	PERIOD 1	PERIOD 2	PERIOD 3	PERIOD 4
1000-1999	52	53	53	53
2000-2999	18	18	16	17
3000-3999	5	5	5	5
4000-4999	7	8	8	8
5000-5999	3	2	2	2
6000-6999	1	2	1	2
7000-7999		1	1	1
>10,000	1	1	1	1
Total	87	90	87	89

Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

Count and spend for this service group is only available up to the end of June 2024. There are 744 service users receiving a package of care at home compared to the 2023/24 average of 707, an increase of 5.2%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £494.96 compared to the 2023/24 average of £409.19.

The graph below illustrates the demand for the service from April 2023 to date.



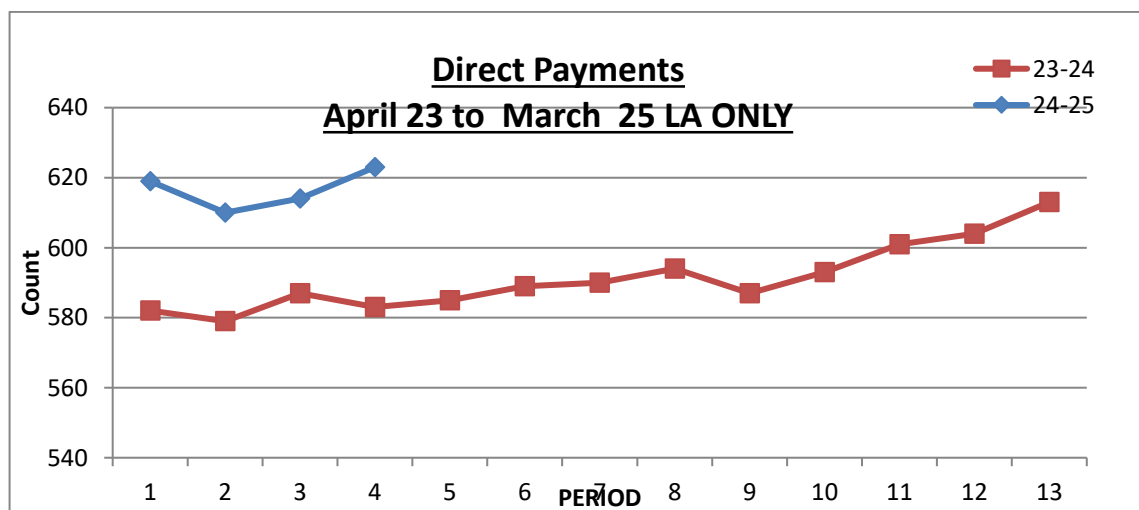
Direct Payments

623 clients received a Direct Payment (DP) in July compared to the 23/24 average of 591, an increase of 5.4%

The average cost of a package of care is currently £508.43. an increase of 4.1% on last year’s average of £488.39.

There are currently 161 service users receiving a DP to pay care providers that have an hourly rate higher than the Councils domiciliary contracted rate of £21.18. This is exerting additional pressure on the budget. This budget has for many years experienced great pressure and costs will continue to exceed budget with demand at current levels.

The forecast position for Direct Payments assumes an amount of £1.4m will be recovered from users following an audit to seek assurance the DP is spent in line with care and support needs.



Care Homes

Expenditure across the 4 Council run care homes is forecast to be £1.290m above budget at 31 March 2025. This is a reduction from the overspend position of £1.767m forecast at the end of May 2024. The position is largely as a result of the pressures relating to staff recruitment.

Employee related expenditure is over budget profile at the end of July 2024 by £0.180m with the year-end outturn position forecast to be £1.168m over budget.

It has been assumed within the outturn forecast that the pay award offer of £1,290 will be accepted. This has been included within the forecasted outturn position. The additional cost to the Care Home division over and above the budget set aside for the pay award will be £0.188m.

Recruitment of staff is a continued pressure across the care homes. There remains a high number of staff vacancies and therefore a proactive rolling recruitment exercise is ongoing.

Due to pressures with recruitment and retention in the sector, heavy reliance is being placed on overtime and expensive agency staff to support the care homes. At the end of July 2024 total agency spend across the care homes reached £1.076m, the cost of this has partially been offset by staff vacancies.

(iii) Education, Inclusion and Provision

Schools Transport is the main budget pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. This is split into two main areas of SEN pupils attending In Borough and out of Borough Schools.

The table below illustrates the split between the two areas, and how each areas spend compares to the budget.

2024-25 as at Jun-24					
Area	No Users	Budget £000	Projected Spend £000	Variance £000	Average Cost per User
In Borough	448	1,826	1,692	135	£3,777
Out of Borough	126	434	1,258	(824)	£9,983
Total	574	2,261	2,950	(689)	

A further pressure on the departmental budget for the year relates to Psychology and SEN Assessment services provided to schools.

For a number of years these costs have been funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The Department for Education have recently advised that these costs cannot be DSG funded as they are outside of scope in meeting the grant conditions. It is therefore currently assumed this cost will fall upon the Council's budget at a cost of £0.860m, until at such time other sources of funding are found.

Collection Fund

- 3.14 Council tax collection for the year to 31 July 2024 is 36.23%, down 0.12% on this point last year. Cash collection for the year to date is £30.2m, this includes £1.0m (5.8%) collected in relation to previous year debt.
- 3.15 Business rates collection for the year to 31 July 2024 is 41.59%, up 2.26% on this point last year. Cash collection for the year is £29.4m, this includes £1.0m (12.4%) collected in relation to previous year debt.

Review of Reserves

- 3.16 As at 31 July 2024 the Council's General Reserve is unchanged from the previous year at £5.149m, which represents 3.44% of the Council's 2024/25 net budget. This is considered to be a minimum balance level.
- 3.17 There is a regular review of earmarked reserves undertaken to determine whether they can be released in part or in full to assist with funding the Council's current financial challenges, recognising that this only provides one-year solutions.

Reserves Summary

- 3.18 A summary breakdown of Council reserves is presented in the table below, this shows the balance of reserves as at 31 July 2024.

Summary of General and Earmarked Reserves	
Reserve	Reserve Value £m
Corporate:	
General Fund	5.149
Transformation Fund	6.432
Capital Reserve	0.499
Insurance Reserve	1.000
Specific Projects:	0
Adult Social Care	0.569
Fleet Replacement	0.328
Highways Feasibility Costs	0.964
Local Development Framework	0.494
Community & Environment	0.253
Mersey Valley Golf Club	0.483

Mersey Gateway	27.560
Various Other	0.668
Grants:	0
Building Schools for the Future	6.529
Public Health	1.881
Supporting Families Performance Payments	0.534
Children's & Education	0.741
Domestic Abuse	1.186
Enterprise & Employment	0.851
Various Other	0.767
	0
Total Earmarked Reserves	56.888

3.19 Held within the Transformation Reserve is £6.432m, set aside to provide funding for providing future balanced budgets and a range of potential spending commitments in future years associated with delivering the Transformation Programme.

3.20 The above table shows the diminishing level of reserves available to assist with funding any future budget overspends and balancing future budgets. Only the £11.581m of the General Fund and Transformation Reserve could now be used for these purposes, as all remaining reserves are committed for specific purposes. It is therefore essential over the coming year that councilwide spending is brought in line with budget and the Transformation Programme delivers the required budget savings.

Capital Spending

3.21 Council approved the 2024/25 Capital Programme on 6 March 2024. Since then the capital programme has been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes have developed. Appendix 3 brings all the separate elements together and report on the Council's total planned capital programme expenditure over the next three years. The schemes which have been revised within the programme (and the reasons for doing so) are as follows:

- i. Halton Carers Centre Refurbishment – Scheme not going ahead in current financial year so removed from 2024/25 programme.
- ii. Adult Social Care Schemes – Reallocation of Disabled Facilities Grant within Adult Social Care Schemes
- iii. Equality Act Improvement Works/Town Deal – Transfer of allocation to the Brindley Capital Scheme within the Town Deal
- iv. Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development - Slippage of allocation into 25/26

- v. Highways Schemes – Revised allocations due to 23/24 carry forwards being brought into 24/25 as schemes still progressing.
- 3.22 Capital spending at 30 June 2024 totalled £8.2m, which represents 12.5% of the total Capital Programme of £65.7m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).

Approved Savings

- 3.23 On 02 February 2023, Council approved saving measures against the budget for the three year period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. Appendix 4 lists those savings covering 2024/25 and 2025/26, together with RAG rated information on progress to date with developing and implementing the target savings.

Medium Term Financial Forecast

- 3.24 Attached at Appendix 5 is an update to the Council's medium term financial forecast. It covers the 4 year period from 2025/26 to 2028/29.
- 3.25 It presents the forecast position on a prudent basis, identifying a budget gap of £62.478m over the four year period. Further information is provided in the Appendix in terms of how the funding gap has been calculated.
- 3.26 The forecast position is provided before the implementation of savings against the Transformation Programme. In February 2023 Council had agreed a target of £20m against the Transformation Programme. It is clear that this target is insufficient to help provide a future balanced budget especially in light of lack of available reserves.
- 3.27 The forecast position is constantly being updated as further information comes to light regarding available funding, demand pressures, inflation and level of the current year overspend.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 As at 31 July 2024, net revenue spend is forecast to be £19.777m over the budget to date.
- 4.2 It is clear Council reserves alone are insufficient to meet this pressure. Urgent corrective should be taken as soon as possible across all Council services to identify spend reductions.
- 4.3 Departments should ensure that all spending continues to be limited to what is absolutely essential throughout the remainder of the year, to ensure that the forecast outturn overspend is minimised as far as possible and future spending is brought in line with budget.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

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

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

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

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

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

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

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

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

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

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

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

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

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

7.2 A budget risk register of significant financial risks is maintained and has been updated.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None

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

10.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act

Summary of Revenue Spending to 31 July 2024

APPENDIX 1

Directorate / Department	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	July 2024 Forecast Outturn (o'spend) £'000	May 2024 Forecast Outturn (o'spend) £'000
Adult Social Care	22,648	7,266	7,247	19	0	0
Care Homes`	10,081	3,395	3,614	(219)	(1,290)	(1,767)
Community Care	16,424	6,799	7,516	(717)	(2,128)	(2,141)
Complex Care Pool	10,704	-447	-489	42	128	48
Adults Directorate	59,857	17,013	17,888	(875)	(3,290)	(3,860)
Finance	5,031	2,492	2,328	164	(219)	(114)
Legal & Democratic Services	-618	-244	186	(430)	(858)	(678)
ICT & Support Services	2,278	943	1,104	(161)	(89)	(78)
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	1,170	6	4	2	6	(1)
Chief Executives Directorate	7,861	3,197	3,622	(425)	(1,160)	(871)
Children & Families	38,193	10,110	14,198	(4,088)	(11,617)	(11,472)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	9,771	8,662	9,249	(587)	(1,676)	(1,612)
Childrens Directorate	47,964	18,772	23,447	(4,675)	(13,293)	(13,084)
Community & Greenspace	25,531	2,426	2,475	(49)	324	311
Economy, Enterprise & Property	2,259	521	527	(6)	25	(1)
Planning & Transportation	8,405	1,250	1,204	46	(53)	(58)
Environment & Regeneration Directorate	36,195	4,197	4,206	(9)	296	252
Corporate & Democracy	-3,842	-1,820	-1,176	(644)	(2,373)	(2,912)
Public Health Directorate	1,461	-2,580	-2,647	67	43	122
Total Operational Net Spend	149,496	38,779	45,340	(6,561)	(19,777)	(20,353)

Adult Social Care

APPENDIX 2

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	17,478	5,809	5,446	363	1,070
Agency- Covering Vacancies	4	1	347	(346)	(1,040)
Premises	481	238	241	(3)	0
Supplies & Services	486	170	166	4	0
Aids & Adaptations	37	12	9	3	0
Transport	242	81	97	(16)	(35)
Food Provision	214	71	56	15	10
Agency	672	224	229	(5)	(5)
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,385	461	458	3	10
Emergency Duty Team	115	0	0	0	0
Transfer To Reserves	282	0	0	0	0
Capital Financing	44	0	0	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	387	86	77	9	0
<u>Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes</u>					
Homelessness Prevention	369	139	139	0	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	167	55	54	1	0
Total Expenditure	22,363	7,347	7,319	28	10
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,063	-354	-342	(12)	(30)
Sales & Rents Income	-420	-199	-206	7	20
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,051	-534	-529	(5)	0
Capital Salaries	-121	-30	-30	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-536	-345	-346	1	0
Total Income	-4,191	-1,462	-1,453	(9)	(10)
Net Operational Expenditure	18,172	5,885	5,866	19	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	529	176	176	0	0
Transport Support	581	87	87	0	0
Central Support	3,465	1,155	1,155	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-112	-37	-37	0	0
Net Total Recharges	4,476	1,381	1,381	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	22,648	7,266	7,247	19	0

Care Homes

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
<u>Madeline Mckenna</u>					
Employees	698	233	206	27	37
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	35	(35)	(109)
Other Premises	101	21	25	(4)	(11)
Supplies & Services	20	7	7	0	(1)
Food Provison	48	16	17	(1)	(3)
Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure	867	277	290	(13)	(87)
<u>Millbrow</u>					
Employees	2,056	685	417	268	656
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	309	(309)	(947)
Other Premises	129	34	47	(13)	(44)
Supplies & Services	61	30	38	(8)	(23)
Food Provison	78	23	26	(3)	0
Total Millbrow Expenditure	2,324	772	837	(65)	(358)
<u>St Luke's</u>					
Employees	2,884	961	669	292	673
Agency - covering vacancies	119	119	438	(319)	(997)
Other Premises	172	48	65	(17)	(57)
Supplies & Services	59	17	29	(12)	(18)
Food Provison	132	36	42	(6)	(20)
Total St Luke's Expenditure	3,366	1,181	1,243	(62)	(419)
<u>St Patrick's</u>					
Employees	1,839	613	399	214	504
Agency - covering vacancies	33	33	351	(318)	(985)
Other Premises	157	38	45	(7)	(22)
Supplies & Services	64	19	14	5	14
Food Provison	122	25	23	2	5
Total St Patrick's Expenditure	2,215	728	832	(104)	(484)
<u>Care Homes Divison Management</u>					
Employees	362	121	94	27	60
Supplies & Services	0	0	2	(2)	(2)
Care Home Divison Management	362	121	96	25	58
Net Operational Expenditure	9,134	3,079	3,298	(219)	(1,290)
Recharges					
Premises Support	264	88	88	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	683	228	228	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	947	316	316	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	10,081	3,395	3,614	(219)	(1,290)

Community Care

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Residential & Nursing	14,434	4,882	4,961	(79)	(260)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	13,587	2,900	2,985	(85)	(276)
Direct Payments	12,629	5,430	5,922	(492)	(1,602)
Day Care	405	57	119	(62)	(9)
Total Expenditure	41,055	13,269	13,987	(718)	(2,147)
Income					
Residential & Nursing Income	-13,182	-2,917	-2,927	10	33
Community Care Income	-2,270	-599	-596	(3)	(1)
Direct Payments Income	-1,014	-266	-260	(6)	(2)
Income from other CCGs	-135	-34	-34	0	0
Market Sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-932	-932	0	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-5,167	-1,722	-1,722	0	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-67	0	0	0	(11)
Other Income	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-24,631	-6,470	-6,471	1	19
Net Operational Expenditure	16,424	6,799	7,516	(717)	(2,128)

Complex Care Pool

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Intermediate Care Services	5,293	1,415	1,461	(46)	(136)
Oakmeadow	1,818	559	629	(70)	(209)
Community Home Care First	2,111	613	500	113	340
Joint Equipment Store	871	276	276	0	0
Development Fund	583	0	0	0	0
Contracts & SLA's	3,243	77	77	0	0
Inglenook	127	23	8	15	45
HICafs	3,620	848	813	35	105
Carers Breaks	474	138	100	38	115
Carers centre	371	0	0	0	0
Residential Care	7,234	1,825	1,825	0	0
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,227	1,057	1,057	0	0
Total Expenditure	29,972	6,831	6,746	85	260
Income					
BCF	-13,484	-4,495	-4,495	0	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-2,865	-955	-955	0	0
Oakmeadow Income	-6	-2	0	(2)	(4)
ASC Discharge Grant Income	-1,631	-544	-544	0	0
ICB Discharge Grant Income	-1,282	-1,282	-1,282	0	0
Total Income	-19,268	-7,278	-7,276	(2)	(4)
ICB Contribution Share of Surplus			41	(41)	(128)
Net Operational Expenditure	10,704	-447	-489	42	128

Finance Department

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	6,945	2,315	2,197	118	100
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	22	(22)	(124)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	0	0	0	0
Insurances	986	295	296	(1)	(5)
Supplies & Services	410	253	291	(38)	(117)
Rent Allowances	35,500	10,622	10,622	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,748	0	2	(2)	(127)
LCR Levy	1,748	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	77	0	0	0	(145)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	23	17	6	(1)
Discretionary Social Fund	106	35	0	35	90
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	100	70	30	94
Household Support Fund Expenditure	2,480	763	763	0	0
Total Expenditure	50,370	14,406	14,280	126	(235)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-335	-87	-96	9	28
Burdens Grant	-60	-60	-78	18	18
Dedicated schools Grant	-144	-4	0	(4)	(13)
Council Tax Liability Order	-581	-341	-366	25	76
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	0
Schools SLAs	-312	-312	-307	(5)	(7)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,748	0	0	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-400	-153	-157	4	14
Rent Allowances	-34,700	-8,726	-8,685	(41)	(123)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-23	-25	2	1
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-100	-93	(7)	(21)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-498	-166	-163	(3)	(9)
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	0	-12	12	12
Universal Credits	-5	-2	0	(2)	(5)
Household Support Fund Grant	-2,480	-729	-729	0	0
VEP Grant	0	0	-5	5	5
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-87	-79	-85	6	(20)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-151	-28	-47	19	53
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	0	0	7
Total Income	-42,028	-10,810	-10,848	38	16
Net Operational Expenditure	8,342	3,596	3,432	164	(219)
Recharges					
Premises Support	377	126	126	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,365	788	788	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,053	-2,018	-2,018	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,311	-1,104	-1,104	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	5,031	2,492	2,328	164	(219)

Legal Services

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	1,511	683	674	9	28
Agency Related Expenditure	0	0	353	(353)	(632)
Supplies & Services	368	155	261	(106)	(4)
Civic Catering & Functions	23	8	2	6	12
Legal Expenses	218	19	19	0	(278)
Transport Related Expenditure	11	4	0	4	7
Other Expenditure	0	0	3	(3)	(3)
Total Expenditure	2,131	869	1,312	(443)	(870)
Income					
Land Charges	0	0	-29	29	85
School SLA's	-98	-84	-77	(7)	(20)
Licence Income	-301	-100	-79	(21)	(46)
Government Grant	-42	-42	-42	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grants	-171	-171	-171	0	0
Fees & Charges Income	-74	-29	-14	(15)	(34)
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-27	27	27
Total Income	-686	-426	-439	13	12
Net Operational Expenditure	1,445	443	873	(430)	(858)
Recharges					
Premises Support	53	18	18	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	275	92	92	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-2,391	-797	-797	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,063	-687	-687	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-618	-244	186	(430)	(858)

ICT & Support Services Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,596	1,922	1,817	105	318
Supplies & Services	921	464	610	(146)	(437)
Capital Finance	100	33	4	29	62
Computer Repairs & Software	1,724	1,576	1,674	(98)	(268)
Communication Costs	13	0	41	(41)	(142)
Premises	159	61	59	2	7
Transport	3	1	0	1	1
Total Expenditure	8,516	4,057	4,205	(148)	(459)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,056	-489	-489	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-646	-502	-483	(19)	(59)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	0	-13	-20	7	(19)
Transfer from Reserves	-148	-148	-148	0	448
Total Income	-1,850	-1,152	-1,140	(12)	370
Net Operational Expenditure	6,666	2,905	3,065	(160)	(89)
Recharges					
Premises Support	550	183	183	0	0
Transport Support	19	6	7	(1)	0
Central Support	2,380	793	793	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
Support Costs Income	-8,831	-2,944	-2,944	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-4,388	-1,962	-1,961	(1)	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,278	943	1,104	(161)	(89)

Chief Executives Delivery Unit

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,283	1,094	1,061	33	110
Employees Training	117	53	40	13	39
Apprenticeship Levy	300	68	105	(37)	(113)
Supplies & Services	395	67	77	(10)	(30)
Total Expenditure	4,095	1,282	1,283	-1	6
Income					
Fees & Charges	-223	-29	-35	6	17
Schools SLA Income	-565	-517	-509	(8)	(22)
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-5	5	5
Total Income	-788	-546	-549	3	0
Net Operational Expenditure	3,307	736	734	2	6
Recharges					
Premises Support	174	58	58	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,209	403	403	0	0
Asset Rental Support	53	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,573	-1,191	-1,191	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,137	-730	-730	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,170	6	4	2	6

Children & Families

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	14,845	4,290	5,455	(1,165)	(3,391)
Other Premises	414	113	121	(8)	(25)
Supplies & Services	1,718	554	747	(193)	(580)
Transport	360	89	88	1	5
Direct Payments	1,097	451	487	(36)	(177)
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	224	56	56	0	0
Residential Care	17,570	4,105	6,600	(2,495)	(6,626)
Out of Borough Adoption	96	32	0	32	96
Out of Borough Fostering	4,253	1,018	1,306	(288)	(869)
In House Adoption	548	54	31	23	68
Special Guardianship Order	2,510	672	695	(23)	(68)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,739	790	704	86	259
Lavender House Contract Costs	234	60	55	5	15
Home Support & Respite	340	103	85	18	55
Care Leavers	235	110	117	(7)	(23)
Family Support	53	11	19	(8)	(22)
Contracted services	3	1	1	0	0
Early Years	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency Duty	132	0	0	0	(68)
Youth Offending Services	321	10	10	0	(140)
Total Expenditure	47,692	12,519	16,577	(4,058)	(11,491)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-33	-29	-25	(4)	(14)
Sales Income	-4	-1	0	(1)	(3)
Rents	-80	-16	-16	0	1
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-533	-97	-86	(11)	(34)
Transfer from reserve	-5	-5	-5	0	10
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-10,358	-2,783	-2,769	(14)	(86)
Total Income	-11,063	-2,931	-2,901	(30)	(126)
Net Operational Expenditure	36,629	9,588	13,676	(4,088)	(11,617)
Recharges					
Premises Support	398	133	133	0	0
Transport	16	6	6	0	0
Central Support	2,274	758	758	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-1,124	-375	-375	0	0
Net Total Recharges	1,564	522	522	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	38,193	10,110	14,198	(4,088)	(11,617)

Education, Inclusion & Provision

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	7,351	2,112	2,319	(206)	(698)
Agency - covering vacancies	72	24	122	(98)	(217)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	0	14	(14)	(14)
Premises	23	12	11	1	3
Supplies & Services	2,643	1,355	1,330	25	84
Independent School Fees	8,413	2,160	2,160	0	0
School Contingency	181	130	130	0	0
Transport	43	12	14	(2)	(10)
School Transport	2,336	519	728	(209)	(634)
Nursery Education Payments	6,193	2,065	2,065	0	0
Pupil Premium Grant	131	44	44	0	0
Commissioned Services	1,943	466	466	0	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	903	331	331	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	3,098	1,033	1,054	(21)	(60)
Capital Finance	4,442	1,402	1,402	0	1
Total Expenditure	37,772	11,666	12,189	(523)	(1,544)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-265	-189	-212	23	56
Government Grant Income	-5,859	-2,619	-2,619	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-21,432	0	0	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-489	-204	-157	(47)	(123)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,916	-547	-552	5	13
Schools SLA Income	-454	-275	-280	5	14
Transfer from Reserves	-78	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-30,493	-3,835	-3,820	(15)	(40)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,279	7,831	8,369	(538)	(1,584)
Recharges					
Premises Support	344	115	115	(0)	0
Transport Support	528	176	230	(54)	(92)
Central Support	1,603	535	535	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	6	0	6	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	2,492	831	880	(49)	(92)
Net Departmental Expenditure	9,771	8,662	9,249	(587)	(1,676)

Community & Greenspaces

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	17,358	3,700	3,457	243	1,146
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	66	(66)	(262)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	0	50	(50)	(101)
Premises	3,521	1,070	1,089	(19)	(71)
Supplies & Services	1,585	380	401	(21)	(80)
Hired & Contracted Services	510	83	83	0	0
Book Fund	128	53	53	0	0
Food Provision	388	115	108	7	36
School Meals Food	2,083	320	332	(12)	(42)
Transport	117	10	11	(1)	(9)
Agency Costs	441	100	148	(48)	(94)
Other Expenditure	0	0	41	(41)	(50)
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,002	0	0	0	255
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	64	16	12	4	35
Grant to Norton Priory	172	29	87	(58)	0
Total Expenditure	33,369	5,876	5,938	(62)	763
Income					
Sales Income	-1,373	-422	-422	0	(118)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,470	-1,952	-1,942	(10)	(50)
Rental Income	-235	-39	-71	32	26
Markets Income	-910	-152	-208	56	(79)
Government Grant Income	-643	-482	-482	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-703	-467	-467	0	0
School SLA Income	-1,313	-219	-250	31	(10)
School Meals Income	-3,598	-600	-562	(38)	(213)
Internal Fees Income	-286	-48	-15	(33)	61
Capital Salaries	-173	-29	-14	(15)	(5)
Transfers from Reserves	-14	-14	-14	0	0
Total Income	-14,718	-4,424	-4,447	23	(388)
Net Operational Expenditure	18,651	1,452	1,491	(39)	375
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,675	279	279	0	0
Transport	2,257	204	214	(10)	(51)
Central Support	3,592	599	599	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	33	33	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-843	-141	-141	0	0
Net Total Recharges	6,880	974	984	(10)	(51)
Net Departmental Expenditure	25,531	2,426	2,475	(49)	324

Economy, Enterprise & Property

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	4,342	1,812	1,709	103	308
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	102	(102)	(305)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Maintenance	1,689	700	741	(41)	(117)
Premises	146	119	119	0	0
Energy & Water Costs	1,221	281	267	14	62
NNDR	659	633	623	10	10
Rents	163	0	0	0	0
Economic Regeneration Activities	21	0	0	0	0
Security	544	173	172	1	4
Supplies & Services	482	119	106	13	40
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,074	169	169	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	67	44	44	0	0
Capital Finance	0		0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	165	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	10,573	4,050	4,052	(2)	2
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-721	-346	-361	15	46
Rent - Commercial Properties	-871	-196	-196	0	0
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-14	-14	0	0
Government Grant	-1,531	-753	-753	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-306	-172	-170	(2)	(6)
Schools SLA Income	-234	-209	-192	(17)	(17)
Recharges to Capital	-348	-163	-163	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-393	-384	-384	0	0
Total Income	-4,442	-2,237	-2,233	(4)	23
Net Operational Expenditure	6,131	1,813	1,819	(6)	25
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,074	691	691	0	0
Transport	30	10	10	0	0
Central Support	1,947	649	649	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-7,927	-2,642	-2,642	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,872	-1,292	-1,292	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,259	521	527	(6)	25

Planning & Transportation Department

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,409	1,621	1,571	50	151
Agency - covering vacancies	110	37	55	(18)	(54)
Agency - in addition to establishment	24	7	23	(16)	(48)
Efficiency Savings	-250	0	0	0	(150)
Premises	193	89	73	16	47
Hired & Contracted Services	59	0	37	(37)	(158)
Supplies & Services	144	155	197	(42)	(126)
Street Lighting	1,617	92	92	0	0
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,772	269	294	(25)	(74)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Works	989	155	89	66	199
Fleet Transport	1,455	449	424	25	75
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	23	17	14	3	9
Bus Support	498	252	252	0	0
Capital Financing	0	0	0	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	31	0	0
NRA Levy	74	0	0	0	2
LCR Levy	1,059	265	265	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	359	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	13,566	3,439	3,417	22	(127)
Income					
Sales & Rents Income	-96	-60	-59	(1)	(2)
Planning Fees	-826	-310	-216	(94)	(282)
Building Control Fees	-246	-83	-68	(15)	(44)
Other Fees & Charges	-908	-351	-414	63	189
Grants & Reimbursements	-153	-52	-52	0	0
Government Grant Income	-111	-111	-111	0	0
Halton Hopper Income	-24	-4	-1	(3)	(9)
Recharge to Capital	-129	-36	-36	0	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,059	-265	-265	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-174	-174	-174	0	0
Total Income	-3,726	-1,446	-1,396	(50)	(148)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,840	1,993	2,021	(28)	(275)
Recharges					
Premises Support	560	187	187	0	0
Transport	749	272	289	(17)	(52)
Central Support	1,534	511	511	0	0
Asset Rental Support	851	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-5,129	-1,713	-1,804	91	274
Net Total Recharges	-1,435	-743	-817	74	222
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,405	1,250	1,204	46	(53)

Corporate & Democracy

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	412	137	114	23	0
Contracted Services	39	12	43	(31)	0
Supplies & Services	119	49	142	(93)	0
Premises Expenditure	5	5	7	(2)	0
Transport Costs	1	0	55	(55)	0
Members Allowances	983	328	316	12	0
Interest Payable - Treasury Management	988	366	488	(122)	(366)
Interest Payable - Other	357	119	72	47	(100)
Bank Charges	132	44	88	(44)	0
Audit Fees	348	87	-188	275	0
Contingency	1,052	351	0	351	1,052
Capital Financing	2,409	2	2	0	0
Debt Management Expenses	20	7	0	7	0
Precepts & Levies	240	40	35	5	(30)
Transformation Efficiency Savings	-4,000	-1,333	0	(1,333)	(3,874)
Total Expenditure	3,106	214	1,174	-960	-3,318
Income					
Interest Receivable - Treasury Management	-4,152	-1,384	-1,685	301	903
Interest Receivable - Other	-19	-6	-6	0	0
Other Fees & Charges	-158	-49	-1	(49)	0
Grants & Reimbursements	-255	-85	-85	0	0
Government Grant Income	-377	-126	-189	63	42
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-4,960	-1,650	-1,966	316	945
Net Operational Expenditure	-1,854	-1,437	-793	(644)	(2,373)
Recharges					
Premises Support	21	7	7	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,016	355	355	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,026	-746	-746	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,988	-384	-384	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-3,842	-1,820	-1,176	(644)	(2,373)

Public Health

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,243	1,436	1,410	26	7
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	13	(13)	0
Premises	6	0	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	368	163	118	45	40
Contracts & SLA's	7,993	1,797	1,774	23	2
Transport	4	1	0	1	0
Transfer to Reserves	19	19	19	0	0
Other Agency	24	24	24	0	0
Total Expenditure	13,657	3,440	3,358	82	49
Income					
Fees & Charges	-83	-49	-35	(14)	(4)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-252	-281	-282	1	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,714	-65	-65	0	0
Capital Salaries	-13	-13	-13	0	0
Government Grant Income	-12,193	-6,297	-6,297	0	0
Total Income	-14,255	-6,705	-6,692	(13)	(4)
Net Operational Expenditure	-598	-3,265	-3,334	69	45
Recharges					
Premises Support	148	49	49	0	0
Transport Support	22	7	9	(2)	(2)
Central Support	2,389	796	796	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-500	-167	-167	0	0
Net Total Recharges	2,059	685	687	(2)	(2)
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,461	-2,580	-2,647	67	43

Capital Programme as at 31 July 2024

Appendix 3

Scheme Detail	2024/25 Original Allocation	2024/25 Revised Allocation	24/25 Q1 Spend	24/25 Q2 Spend	24/25 Q3 Spend	24/25 Q4 Spend	24/25 Total Spend	24/25 Allocation remaining
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Childrens Directorate								
Capital Repairs	749.0	749.0	151.0				151.0	598.0
Basic Need Projects	600.8	600.8	0.0				0.0	600.8
SEND capital allocation	3,355.2	3,355.2	178.0				178.0	3,177.2
SCA unallocated	255.6	255.6	0.0				0.0	255.6
Family Hubs & Start for Life	53.2	53.2	1.3				1.3	51.9
Childcare Expansion	314.8	314.8	0.0				0.0	314.8
Directorate Total	5,328.6	5,328.6	330.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	330.3	4,998.3
Adults Directorate								
Halton Carers Centre Refurbishment	199.0	0.0	0.0				0.0	0.0
Grants - Disabled Facilities	600.0	1,050.0	353.0				353.0	697.0
Stair Lifts	270.0	200.0	66.0				66.0	134.0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	270.0	150.0	53.0				53.0	97.0
Telehealthcare Digital Switchover	0.0	135.0	60.0				60.0	75.0
Millbrow Refurbishment	0.0	100.0	26.0				26.0	74.0
Madeline McKenna Refurbishment	0.0	50.0	9.0				9.0	41.0
St Lukes Care Home	0.0	50.0	10.0				10.0	40.0
St Patricks Care Home	1,200.0	50.0	14.0				14.0	36.0
Directorate Total	2,539.0	1,785.0	591.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	591.0	1,194.0

Capital Programme as at 31 July 2024 Continued

Scheme Detail	2024/25 Original Allocation £000	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	24/25 Q1 Spend £000	24/25 Q2 Spend £000	24/25 Q3 Spend £000	24/25 Q4 Spend £000	24/25 Total Spend £000	24/25 Allocation remaining £000
Environment & Regeneration Directorate								
Stadium Minor Works	30.0	30.0	7.9				7.9	22.1
Halton Leisure Centre	8,997.0	8,997.0	2,030.0				2,030.0	6,967.0
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	1.0				1.0	66.8
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	340.0	0.0				0.0	340.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0				0.0	13.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0				0.0	12.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	600.0	130.0				130.0	470.0
Runcorn Town Park	468.6	468.6	0.0				0.0	468.6
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,933.5	1,933.5	2.4				2.4	1,931.1
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	503.0	503.0	0.0				0.0	503.0
Replacement Cremator Widnes	308.0	308.0	0.0				0.0	308.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0				0.0	20.0
3MG	134.5	134.5	0.0				0.0	134.5
Murdishaw redevelopment	21.2	21.2	5.4				5.4	15.8
Equality Act Improvement Works	293.2	93.2	8.7				8.7	84.5
Foundary Lane Residential Area	1160.0	1160.0	1.8				1.8	1,158.2
Town Deal	11352.9	11552.9	174.9				174.9	11,378.0
Property Improvements	360.2	360.2	4.3				4.3	355.9
Runcorn Station Quarter	484.7	484.7	0.0				0.0	484.7
Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Industrial Estate	0.0	0.0	1.2				1.2	-1.2
Waterloo Building	0.0	0.0	46.0				46.0	-46.0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	178.2	178.2	0.0				0.0	178.2
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	484.7	268.7	8.6				8.6	260.1







Capital Programme as at 31 July 2024 Continued





Scheme Detail	2024/25 Original Allocation £000	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	24/25 Q1 Spend £000	24/25 Q2 Spend £000	24/25 Q3 Spend £000	24/25 Q4 Spend £000	24/25 Total Spend £000	24/25 Allocation remaining £000
Changing Places	24.1	24.1	2.5				2.5	21.6
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2200.0	2200.0	0.0				0.0	2,200.0
Bridge and Highway Maintenance	0.0	2,265.6	281.0				281.0	1,984.6
Runcorn Busway	0.0	0.0	227.0				227.0	-227.0
ATF3 Murdishaw to Whitehouse	0.0	3,000.0	175.0				175.0	2,825.0
ATF4 Widnes Town Centre Accessibility	0.0	114.5	0.0				0.0	114.5
A56 Reconstruction (Delph Lane)	0.0	943.7	351.0				351.0	592.7
Dukesfield ATL (Waterloo Bridge)	0.0	0.0	1.0				1.0	-1.0
LCWIP Phase 2 Daresbury	0.0	3,861.7	629.0				629.0	3,232.7
Additional Pothole Funding	0.0	429.1	0.0				0.0	429.1
CRSTS	5,819.4	5,288.6	1,656.0				1,656.0	3,632.6
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	1,025.6	1,025.6	0.0				0.0	1,025.6
Street Lighting - Upgrades	969.4	969.4	0.0				0.0	969.4
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	5,851.7	453.0				453.0	5,398.7
Risk Management	597.8	597.8	5.0				5.0	592.8
Fleet Replacements	4,927.4	4,927.4	1,082.0				1,082.0	3,845.4
Early Land Acquisition Mersey Gateway	212.4	212.4	0.0				0.0	212.4
Directorate Total	49,390.3	59,258.1	7,284.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	7,284.7	51,973.4
Chief Executives Directorate								
IT Rolling Programme	1,026.9	1,026.9	27.7				27.7	999.2
Halton Smart Microgrid	11,000.0	11,000.0	0.0				0.0	11,000.0
Transformation Programme	3,740.0	3,740.0	0.0				0.0	3,740.0
Directorate Total	15,766.9	15,766.9	27.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.7	15,739.2
Total Capital Programme 24/25	73,024.8	82,138.6	8,233.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	8,233.7	73,904.9

Progress Against Agreed Savings

Appendix 4

Adult Social Care




	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
ASC1	Housing Solutions	474	Remodel the current service based on good practice evidence from other areas.	0	125		Anticipated to be achieved, currently under review.
ASC2	Telehealthcare	680	Explore alternative funding streams such as Health funding or Disabled Facilities Grants.	170	0		Currently Under Review
			Increase charges / review income.	170	0		Charges were increased by 40% w.e.f. April 2024, so this should be achieved
			Cease the key safe installation service.	15	0		Service still being provided
ASC17/18	Quality Assurance Team	395	Review the activities of the Quality Assurance Team, given there are fewer providers for domiciliary care and the transfer of four care homes into the Council.	0	0		Saving implemented
			Merge the service with the Safeguarding Unit.	50	0		

ASC16	Shared Lives (Adult Placement Service)	115	Engage with an external agency currently operating Shared Lives to take over the running of this service. It is anticipated that this would provide an improved service.	58	0		Service currently still provided in-house, although a balanced budget will be attained for 2024/25 as a result of current temporary savings, and work is ongoing to ensure the 2025/6 structure can achieve the permanent savings target
ASC19	Voluntary Sector Support	N/A	Review the support provided by Adult Social Care and all other Council Departments, to voluntary sector organisations. This would include assisting them to secure alternative funding in order to reduce their dependence upon Council funding. A target saving phased over two years has been estimated.	200	100		Anticipated to be achieved
ASC4	Positive Behaviour Support Service	349	Increase income generated in order to ensure full cost recovery, through increased service contract charges to other councils.	100	0		Contracts being re-costed on renewal, saving anticipated to be achieved
				150	0		ICB funding not secured, although a balanced budget will be attained for 2024/25 as a result of current temporary savings, and work is ongoing to ensure the 2025/6 structure can

			Review the Integrated Care Board contribution for Adults, to ensure the full recovery of related costs.				achieve the permanent savings target
ASC15	Learning Disability Nursing Team	424	Cease provision of this service. The service is a Health related function rather than Adult Social Care, but this is a historical arrangement. The Integrated Care Board would need to consider how they want to provide this function.	424	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Costs now recharged to the ICB
ASC14	Care Management Community Care Budget	18,982	Attract £500k investment from the pooled budget (BCF) from 2024/25. Undertake work in years 1 and 2 to reduce reliance upon contracted services from 2025/26. Services are currently in the process of being redesigned on a “Strengths Based Approach” ie. focused upon prevention.	500	1,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Position currently being reviewed.

Total Adult Social Care Department	1,837	1,225		
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Finance

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
F9	Internal Audit	300	Restructure in light of potential retirements over the next two years within the Internal Audit Team.	0	50		No official changes made yet
F13	Discretionary Support Scheme	221	Review the roles, procedures and structure of the team.	25	0		On track
F17	Council Tax	84	Increase the charges applied when a court summons is issued by 30% (£23), to achieve full cost recovery over the three year period.	40	40		On track
Total Finance Department				65	90		

Legal and Democratic Services

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
L4	Marketing, Design and Communications	45	Review the frequency of production of Inside Halton, as part of the wider consideration of the Council's communications strategy required for the Transformation Programme	15		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Budget adjusted inline with the savings in the ICT department
Total Legal Services Department				15	0		

Children and Families



Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
C1	Ditton and Warrington Road Daycare Centres	52	Closure of Ditton and Warrington Road daycare centres, given the significant on-going net losses at both centres. Sufficient alternative provision exists nearby, as well as in the adjoining nursery schools.	26	0		Early Years has now closed and budget for 24/25 has been removed
C2	Children's Centres	1,293	Review the operation of Windmill Hill Children's Centre, where there is the potential to save on premises and staffing costs.	0	22		This is subject to further review as external factors are changing the original review parameters. Potential alternative funding also to be reviewed.
C3	Children with Disabilities and Inglefield	858	Explore the potential for selling Inglefield and then purchase two bungalows within the community to provide a more appropriate setting.	112	0		Amount was removed at budget setting as will not be achieved
Total Policy, Planning & Transportation Department				138	22		

Education, Inclusion and Provision


Ref	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
EIP1	Education Psychology Service	339	There is excess demand from schools for the Education Psychology Service. The service is valued and there is opportunity to expand our offer and generate additional income.	52	0	✓	
EIP2	SEN Assessment Team	82	Consideration will be given to funding the full service costs from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.	80	0	✗	DSG funding removed as does not comply with grant conditions.
EIP5	Commissioning	148	Review with Health colleagues how the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Carers could instead be provided by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as they are commissioned by the Integrated Care Board.	148	0	u	To be reviewed.
Total Education, Inclusion and Provision Department				280	0		

Community and Greenspace

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
COMM3	Sport & Recreation	471	Restructuring the roles and responsibilities of the Sports Development Team	36	0		✓ Restructure is currently underway
COMM5	Stadium & Catering Services – School Meals	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over £200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.	0	12		✓ The cessation of the service is underway with the majority of schools ending their contracts by the end of the calendar year.
Total Community & Environment Department				36	12		

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
EEP4	Cleaning Services – Council Buildings	580	Review cleaning arrangements, with a focus on only emptying bins and cleaning toilets daily.	100	0		A review of the cleaning service is underway with some positions removed from the structure. The full savings will not be achieved until the accommodation review is complete.
EEP2	Caretaking & Security Services	641	A review and restructuring of caretaking arrangements.	52	0		Following advice from HR the restructure will not take place until the final quarter of the year.
Total Economy, Enterprise & Property Department				152	0		

Policy, Planning and Transportation

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
PPT6	Traffic	N/A	Consider introducing civil traffic enforcement for traffic violations. Employ private sector civil enforcement officers to issue fines and generate income. It would take 12 months to apply for powers from the DFT and put the scheme in place. The Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board will consider this via a Topic Group.	150	0		Scheme has not gone ahead. Therefore no income will be generated as the traffic enforcement will not be carried out.
Total Policy, Planning & Transportation Department				150	0		

Symbol

Objective



Indicates that the objective is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.



Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.



Indicates that it is highly likely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.

Medium Term Financial Forecast

Appendix 5

1.1 Below table provides an updated on the Council's four year medium term financial forecast from 2025/26 to 2027/28.

	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Forecast	2027/28 Forecast	2028/29 Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Tax Growth	3,726	2,734	2,843	2,958
Business Rate Growth	-333	1,607	1,640	1,672
General Government Grant Growth	-500	80	82	84
Increase in Council Funding	2,892	4,422	4,565	4,714
Additional Cost Pressures:				
Contingency	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Capital Programme	1,070	319	1,375	1,000
Pay & Price Inflation	4,807	5,164	5,639	5,814
Reverse 10% Supplies and Services Budgets	0	1,546	0	0
2024/25 Overspending Position	17,569	0	0	0
Increase in Service Demand	4,045	3,963	4,255	4,570
Childrens Improvement Programme	4,200	0	0	0
Cost Pressures - Other	916	131	118	119
Replenish Reserves	2,000	0	0	0
Business Rate Retention Reserve	0	4,332	0	0
Reduction in Grant	252	0	0	0
Total Cost Pressures	35,859	17,455	13,387	13,502
Agreed Savings February 2023	-1,349	0	0	0
2024/25 Savings Unachieved	217			
Funding Gap before Transformation Savings	-31,835	-13,033	-8,822	-8,788

1.2 The latest forecast shows a budget gap of £62.478m over the period to 2028/29. This position excludes Transformation targets, which in light of the budget gap need to be reviewed.

1.3 The forecast includes a number of estimates around pay and price increases, demand impact, grant income and changes to funding from council tax and business rates. The assumptions around those estimates are detailed below.

- The council tax base is inclusive of a 1% increase on the current year base plus increases around the change in council tax premium (for empty properties changing from 2 years to 1 year from April 2025) and a 100% premium being applied on second properties. The 2025/26 council tax base will be reported to Executive Board in November 2024.
- The increase to Council Tax being 4.99% in 2025/26 and 2.99% in the following years. The forecast increase being based on latest Office of Budget Responsibility Forecasts (OBR). Certainty around the referendum

cap on council tax increases for future years is not expected to be known until the autumn months at the earliest.

- Forecast in increase to income from business rates is set to 2% in each of the years of the forecast period. This position is continually being reviewed in light of any new hereditaments being added to the rating list and the impact of appeals against ratings. The business rate position for 2025/26 excludes any in-year surplus funds, valued at £2.472m in 2024/25.
- General Government grant income has been uplifted at 2% in each year of the forecast period. This will be updated as more information is known, which is expected to be on publication of the Government's Autumn Spending Review at the earliest.

1.4 Cost Pressures – Capital Programme

- Costs of the capital programme have been updated based on the latest capital programme. This includes the cost of principal loan repayments taken against the new leisure centre.
- A reduction in Council held cash reserves and forecast lower interest rates will have a cost impact on the interest receivable over the period, this cost has been built into the forecast.

1.5 Cost Pressures – Pay and Price Inflation.

- Reported CPI for July 2024 is 2.2% and longer term forecasts are for inflation to remain at around 2% over the reported period.
- Pay has been included at 2% for each year of the forecast. 2024/25 pay budgets were inflated by 4%, there is a risk to that being insufficient given ongoing pay negotiations.
- Price budgets will remain cash limited over the period of the forecast with the exception of contracts where inflation will cover the required increase. Largely this will be limited to growth of 2% with the exception of care contracts.
- Inflation against care contracts has been uplifted by 4% for 2025/26 and 2% for the following years. Inflation of 4% is linked to increase expectations to the 2025/26 National Minimum Wage increase, based on latest available information from the Low Pay Commission.
- Income inflation is fixed at 2% for each year of the forecast.

1.6 Reverse 10% Supplies & Services Cuts

- In setting the 2024/25 budget Council agreed to a 10% cut across property and highway maintenance budgets and general supplies and services. These cuts to budget are reversed in 2026/27, at a cost of £1.546m.

1.7 Cost Pressures – 2024/25 Contingency

- Contingency has been included at £1m for 2025/26 and £2m for later years.

1.8 Cost Pressures – 2024/25 Overspending Position

- Included within the forecast is the budget required to bring 2024/25 overspending departments to a balanced budget position (before inflation and demand growth), including:
 - Care Homes - £1.290m
 - Community Care - £2.128m
 - Legal - £0.858m
 - Children & Families - £11.617m
 - EIP - £1.676m
 - Note the above include budget to cover the current cost of agency staff and staffing for posts in addition to establishment. The Council have historically never budgeted for such costs.

1.9 Cost Pressures – Demand

- There are a number of ways in which the impact of service demand over a future period is considered. This can be based on local knowledge, wider impact across the North West, demographic changes or historical information. This forecast has built demand growth based on historical information, which is the most prudent approach given the uncertainty and high cost increases the Council has experienced over the past number of years. This includes:
 - Children's Social Care – Increase for demand and care complexity of 9.7% included in each year of the forecast. At a cost of £1.809m in 2025/26.
 - Adult Social Care – Increase in demand and care complexity of 4.9% included in each year of the forecast. At a cost of £1.886m in 2025/26.
 - SEN School Transport – Increase in demand of 11.2% in 2025/26 at a cost of £0.350m.

1.10 Cost Pressures – Children's Improvement Programme

- There is expectancy following the recent Ofsted inspection of an increase in costs being required for Children Services to support the improvement programme. Resources required are still being finalised but the 2025/26 forecast includes an amount of £4.2m to cover this.
- The above amount will lead to improvements and the potential reduction in costs for children in care. No reduction forecast has yet been included in the forecast, this will be updated as more certainty is known on the potential for cost reduction and over what period.

1.11 Cost Pressures – Other

- Included within the 2025.26 forecast is an amount of £1.133m to include growth across a number of services. This includes loss of income against the Youth Justice Service as the role of providing central services moves

to Cheshire West; £0.128 to fund the IT managed detection response system and a number of other smaller projects.

1.12 Replenish Reserves

- The drawdown against Council reserves over the past number of years has left the Council with an insufficient amount to cover uncertainty moving forward. The General Reserve position is £5.1m which is an absolute minimum. The forecast includes growth to reserves of £2m in each year of the forecast.

1.13 Rates Retention Reserve – Liverpool City Region Pilot

- The Council currently operate a pilot across the City Region where 99% of business rates are retained. This replaces the normal threshold of 50% of rates being retained. To allow for the growth in income the Council forgoes receipt of Revenue Support Grant and Improved Better Care Fund Grant. It is currently estimated the authority are in a betterment position as a result of the pilot by approximately £4.332m. No confirmation has been given to the pilot being extended post March 2026 and therefore the forecast assumes this funding is lost from 2026/27.

1.14 Funding Changes

- In the absence of available information, the forecast largely assumes specific Government Grants to remain at existing levels. The exception to this is a loss of £0.252m against the Services Support Grant which is expected to end in March 2025.

1.15 Savings Agreed February 2023

- In February 2023 Council agreed savings over a period of three years, 2025/26 includes an amount of £1.349m.
- Included is an amount of £0.217m for savings in 2024/25 which are unlikely to be achieved.

1.16 Transformation

- The above table excludes targets against the Transformation Programme, Council agreed to a target of £20m in February 2023, it is clear this amount is now insufficient to achieve a balanced budget position. Targets against the programme need to be revised based on the medium term funding gap.

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REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	12 September 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director of Children's Services
PORTFOLIO:	Children and Young People
SUBJECT:	Youth Justice Plan 2024-27
WARD(S)	All

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual Youth Justice Plan relating to their provision of youth justice services (YJS). Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth justice partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement a youth justice plan, setting out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate and how they are performing against a range of national measures.
- 1.2 Halton have a shared service arrangement for Youth Justice with the other three Local Authorities in the sub-region and as such the Governance arrangements for Youth Justice are overseen by a pan Cheshire Management Board. The Youth Justice Service have drafted a three-year strategic plan 2024-27 in partnership with Cheshire Police and other statutory partners and it was approved by the Youth Justice Management Board on the 27th of June.
- 1.3 This report briefs the Executive Board on the content of the 2024-27 Youth Justice Plan for Cheshire and seeks formal sign off at full council on 23rd October 2024 in compliance with Youth Justice Board Guidance (Ministry of Justice) and Regulation 4 of the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'.
- 1.4 There is provision within the national guidance for the Chair of the Youth Justice Management Board to be given delegated authority to approve the Youth Justice Plan on behalf of the local authority and for formal sign-off to then be sought retrospectively from Full Council. Given the timelines and complexity of doing this across four areas this has been the approach agreed by all four Local Authorities previously, and is recommended for the annual refresh of the Youth Justice Plan again next year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Board

- 1) recommends the 2024-27 Youth Justice Plan for approval by the next full council; and**
- 2) gives delegates authority to the Director of Children Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families, to approve and submit an annual refresh of the Youth Justice Plan in 2025 prior to formal approval by Council next year.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Cheshire sub-region is a large complex area and the Youth Justice partnership between and across the four local authorities provides a powerful base to meet the various complexities and challenges faced by the county's children, families, and victims.

3.2 Despite the scale, Cheshire Youth Justice Service is a comparatively small organisation comprising fewer than 75 WTE staff, including seconded workers plus approximately thirty active volunteers. The human resource arrangements for the entire workforce currently involve eleven different employing organisations including police, probation, three different NHS Trusts and two independent providers (of speech and language therapists and substance misuse specialists). In April 2024 Halton Council and the other three local authorities approved the transition to a simpler fully hosted model for the Youth Justice Service which will see Cheshire West Council acting as 'lead authority' on behalf of the pan Cheshire partnership with effect from April 2025. However, the statutory responsibility for provision of Youth Justice Service (at place) remains with each of the four local authorities. Therefore an annual refresh of the three-year Youth Justice Strategic Plan will still be presented formally for approval at Cabinet and then full council in 2025 and beyond.

3.3 The national body responsible for inspecting Youth Justice Services are His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMiP) with national oversight provided by the Youth Justice Board (YJB – a quasi-autonomous governing body within the Ministry of Justice). Both HMiP and the national YJB recognise Cheshire YJS as being of a high standard. The former rated Cheshire YJS as 'Good' in the most recent 2021 full joint inspection (Governance and leadership were rated as 'Outstanding') and the latter affording pathfinder status for Cheshire's successful youth diversion programme.

- 3.4 The Youth Justice Plan has been produced in accordance with national Youth Justice Board guidance and follows their prescribed template to include: foreword from the Chair of the Management Board, Vision and Strategy, Governance, Leadership and partnership arrangements, Board development, Progress on previous years, Resources and services, Performance against National key performance indicators, Priorities, information on Children from groups which are over-represented, Prevention, Diversion, Education, Restorative approaches and victims, Serious violence and exploitation, Detention in police custody, Remands, Use of custody, Standards for children in the justice system, Workforce Development, Evidence-based practice and innovation, Service Development, Challenges, risks and issues.
- 3.5 Performance figures show that Cheshire YJS continue to achieve good levels of performance against the three main performance indicators: First Time Entrants to the criminal justice system (FTEs), Custody rates and re-offending (all detailed within the YJ Plan).
- 3.6 In 2023-24 there were only twenty-three Halton first time entrants to the justice system and only two Halton children sentenced to custody. Rates of Serious Youth Violence in Cheshire in 2023-24 were well below the national average at 2.7 offences per 10,000 children compared to a regional average of 4.7 and national average of 5.5. There is a lot more data and information detailed within the YJ Plan.
- 3.7 The priorities for Youth Justice across the sub region are described fully in the YJ Plan but include; 1) Further developing participation and relationship based practice to facilitate a culture of collaboration where children, volunteers and community groups are enabled to promote pro-social identity and desistance from crime 2) Ensuring the YJS support offer to victims is compliant with the new duty to collaborate responsibilities outlined in the Victim and Prisoners Act and 3) Design of a new comprehensive performance reporting and quality assurance framework, ensuring the service is data driven and makes full use of the management information system to drive practice and improve outcomes for children, families, and victims.
- 3.8 The Youth Justice Service have consulted with children, young people, parents, carers, and wider stakeholders in the development of the plan.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no policy implications, production and publication of a

Youth Justice Plan is a statutory requirement on all councils.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Halton is one of several statutory financial stakeholders of the Youth Justice service and delivering the service on a shared basis with three other local authorities achieves considerable economy of scale thereby spending significantly less on youth justice than most councils. Halton Councils exact cash contribution for 2024-25 will be confirmed following confirmation of the annual pay award for staff but would be £330,228 (assuming an annual pay award settlement of a 4% increase on last year). The national Youth Justice Board is the single largest financial contributor to Cheshire Youth Justice Service with an annual grant of just over £1.2m.

5.2 Cabinet provided approval in March 2024 for the Youth Justice Service to move to a fully hosted model with Cheshire West Council hosting the service on behalf of all four local authorities and this will take effect from April 2025.

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

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.** The Youth Justice Service works collaboratively with both the Integrated Care Board and health providers to support children to get the right help for what are often quite complex needs and avoid unnecessary criminalisation where possible. Children in the justice system are disproportionately impacted by health inequalities and the multi-disciplinary youth justice service includes access to mental health service and speech and language support.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy.** The service supports young people and encourages them to be part of the local economy, reach their full potential and get the best start in life which aligns with these council priorities.

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families.** As above and the service supports children services and police to safeguard children from exploitation

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need.** Children in and on the cusp of the justice system are among the most vulnerable in Halton. The Youth Justice Service is a multi-disciplinary service that works in a child first, trauma informed and relational way to support this marginalised cohort of children and support them to desist from crime and enjoy a safe transition into adulthood.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future.** Not applicable

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community.** The Youth Justice Service promotes community participation through restorative justice and reparation. Enabling children who have offended to contribute positively in their community while also ensuring any risk they present to vulnerable people in the community is assessed and managed.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 No risks identified. Publication of a Youth Justice Plan is required by legislation outlined above

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The strategic plan outlines areas of disproportionality within the cohort of children who are drawn into the criminal justice system and planned activity to have a positive impact on addressing this.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 No specific or relevant implications.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

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Youth Justice Services

Cheshire East, Cheshire West,
Halton and Warrington

Strategic plan 2024-27



Head of Service: Tom Dooks

Chair of the Management Board: Helen Brackenbury

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List of abbreviations

AYM	Association of Youth Offending Team Managers
CJB	Criminal Justice Board
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CJI	Centre for Justice Innovation
ETE	Education Training and Employment
FTE	First Time Entrant
GRT	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
HNA	Health Needs Assessment
HMCTS	HM Courts and Tribunal service
HMIP	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ICB	Integrated Care Board
LGA	Local Government Association
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
JTAI	Joint Thematic Area Inspection
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NS	National Standards
OCG	Organised Crime Group
OPCC	Office of the Police Crime Commissioner
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence
PNC	Police National Computer
SVS	Serious Violence Strategy
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
VRU	Violence Reduction Unit
YJAF	Youth Justice Application Framework
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YJS	Youth Justice Services (Cheshire)

Foreword

Cheshire has some unique opportunities and challenges, being one of only two youth justice services to operate over multiple local authorities' footprints and an entire policing constabulary area. This 3-year plan sets out a journey and commitment for a service that will be "child first" and evidence-based in its principles, recognising the traumatic impact of children's offending on victims - most of whom are other vulnerable children.

The last 12 months have seen an extended transition to embed a new leadership team following the retirement of a long-standing Head of Service and some significant infrastructure changes. This plan includes a proposal to simplify the operational arrangements by moving to a new fully hosted model for the service - with Cheshire West and Chester Council becoming the lead authority on behalf of the sub-regional partnership.

The murder of Brianna Ghey by two 15-year-olds in Warrington last year was shocking for everyone both in its brutality and pre-meditation. Intense media attention surrounded the trial and sentencing but the bravery and compassion shown by Brianna's mother, Esther Ghey has been inspirational. Youth Justice Services (YJS) is contributing to an independent learning review commissioned by Warrington Children's Safeguarding Partnership due to be published in summer 2024.

While offences such as these by children are incredibly rare in Cheshire, there is an increasing complexity and seriousness to some children's behaviour. Professionals sometimes have a difficult task in building trusted relationships with children to try and help keep them and those around them safe and move forward positively in their lives. Helping some children achieve an identity shift, to desist from offending and see a brighter future is not easy. It requires empathy, compassion and persistence – characteristics we in Cheshire are proud to have in such a skilled, dedicated, multi-disciplinary workforce.

The YJS Management Board is committed to delivering this plan and will oversee its progress, ensuring an annual refresh is produced and published through local channels.

Helen Brackenbury
Chair of YJS Management Board

Executive summary

It is evident from national research and two recently commissioned local needs analyses¹, that children entering the Youth Justice System experience multiple adversities and trauma. Early childhood exposure to violence, abuse, neglect, poverty, school exclusion and poor health among justice-involved-children are all disproportionate to the general 10-17 population. This understanding has influenced the strategic direction of travel for Youth Justice Services (YJS) across Cheshire. The priorities and content included in this plan will align with those relating to children and young people from across the four Cheshire places and with the public health approach to violence prevention as articulated in the Serious Violence Strategy² for the county. There has been a significant decrease in the overall number of children entering the justice system over several years, and the historically low levels have been sustained across Cheshire despite the backdrop of the cost-of-living crisis and other societal pressures. Some regions with similar reductions have witnessed an upturn in the last couple of years, so we are proud to see the sustained impact of our pan-Cheshire youth diversion model. We will work with the police to ensure national developments such as the new child gravity matrix for children is incorporated into the decision-making process for out-of-court disposals.

The previous Head of Service retired in the summer of 2023, with a long-standing Senior Manager appointed through an internal promotion. A new and very experienced Senior Manager was subsequently recruited externally and joined the service in February 2024, bringing new insight and fresh perspectives, so the right balance of continuity and change is assured. This is an exciting time for Cheshire and an opportunity to build on existing performance and partnership working, while modernising the service and embracing the latest national and international evidence on youth justice.

Some change has been forced on the service by financial inflationary pressures particularly in relation to the provision of ICT, but some of it is informed by what the latest research, evidence and data tells us about children, the offences they commit and the most effective ways of helping steer them away from crime.

This plan will outline a new “three pillars” vision for the service (Figure 1) which is rooted in the latest evidence and research on what works. But the new leadership team will also be implementing some modest service re-design intended

¹ [Public Health research institute HNA of Cheshire YJ service users July 2023](#)

² [Cheshire Serious Violence Strategy](#)

to retain the economies of scale and equity of service at a sub-regional level, while aligning more effectively with local place-based services for children, victims and caregivers.

YJS has a very good regional and national reputation for delivering positive outcomes for children, victims and caregivers and, in common with all youth justice services across England and Wales, will be reporting against 10 new key performance indicators (KPIs) in addition to the three main outcome measures First Time Entrants (FTE) to the justice system, reoffending and the use of custody.

In 2024-2025, Cheshire YJS will enter a period of substantial infrastructure and organisational change. The current shared service arrangements for youth justice delivery have evolved across the sub-region over two decades and have been through several iterations as Cheshire County Council separated into two unitary authorities and youth justice teams merged incrementally. A comprehensive review of governance arrangements undertaken in 2021, commented on the historical legacy arrangements of a service that had evolved over time with a complicated mix of cash and ‘in-kind’ contributions. One authority provides the ICT for YJS, another holds the accounts and all four employ the staff, and as local authorities have updated their own ICT systems and security compliance has tightened (and licensing costs increased) it has revealed a degree of organisational fragility.

Consequently, a sub-regional review into the governance arrangements, structure, and future sustainability of YJS as a pan-cheshire partnership, recommended the service should be ‘fully hosted’ by one local authority. This proposal was agreed by all statutory partners and formerly approved by all four councils in the spring of 2024 and will necessitate multiple workstreams to land the significant infrastructure change needed for a smooth transition by the end of this fiscal year. Cheshire’s Youth Justice Plan for 2024-2027 is written against the backdrop of this major organisational change so maintaining service continuity, while in transition to a hosted model is flagged in Section 3 as the principal risk for the partnership.

Service development priorities for the next 12 months include reviewing the pathway and joint decision-making process for out of court disposals, ensuring our offer to victims is fully aligned with the new Victims’ Bill, developing participation and designing a new performance management framework, which incorporates the 10 new national KPIs.

Vision

The vision for youth justice across Cheshire is:

‘To be a national leader in Youth Justice, where children and victims are at the heart of everything we do and where children are supported to achieve a positive, offence-free journey into adulthood.’

We will continue to value diversity, challenge social inequality and listen to children while developing trusted relationships that take their views into account. We understand the wider causes of offending behaviour are often rooted in trauma and social inequality, so trauma-informed practice and systemic ideas are at the heart of how we work. We will work in a restorative way and strive to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children. The YJS will work with partners on diverting children away from the formal Criminal Justice System (CJS) and will seek to detain a minimal number of children in custody, believing they are best supported to make changes in their lives whilst in the community, for all but the most serious of offences.

The latest research and evidence say services working with children who cause harm to others should adhere to Child First principles³ and be Trauma-Informed and Relationship-Based in the way they are configured and delivered. Cheshire has taken these tenets and adopted them as our three pillars (Figure 1) to inform the Youth Justice strategy from point of arrest, right through to the resettlement of children following release from custody.

Mission

Supporting children, young people and parents and carers to make positive changes through working collaboratively;

- Promoting safer communities and reducing the likelihood of reoffending and harm caused – by tackling the root causes of children’s offending.
- Listening and responding to the voice of the victim and empowering them to become involved.
- Connecting with children, helping them to understand the impact of their behaviour and achieve improved outcomes.

³ Child First recognises that children have different needs and vulnerabilities to adults and should not be treated in the same way

Regional and local context

The Cheshire footprint covered by YJS comprises the four unitary local authorities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington (Figure 2). Each local authority area has a Children's Safeguarding and Community Safety Partnership and Cheshire is divided into three Probation delivery units (North, West and East) and has nine local policing units. The workforce of Cheshire YJS has staff employed by Warrington, Cheshire West and Cheshire East Councils and seconded workers from Halton Borough Council, Cheshire Constabulary, the Probation Service, three different NHS Trusts and two private providers. The service also has support in a variety of different roles from over 50 volunteers. This provides a strong partnership base to meet the various complexities and challenges faced by the county's children, caregivers and victims. An organisational structure chart of staff is shown in Appendix A along with ethnicity and gender and whole time equivalent and contract details (Appendix B).

Around 250,000 Cheshire residents are below the age of 18 with 101,077 aged 10-17. Across the four local authorities, there are over 1,000 cared for children. The large geographical area of 905 square miles does present some logistical challenges for the service, which has offices in Crewe, Winsford and Widnes. Staff work on a hybrid basis with additional virtual working areas in Macclesfield, Warrington, Chester, Runcorn, and Ellesmere Port. The children we work with tend to live in these larger more urban locations.

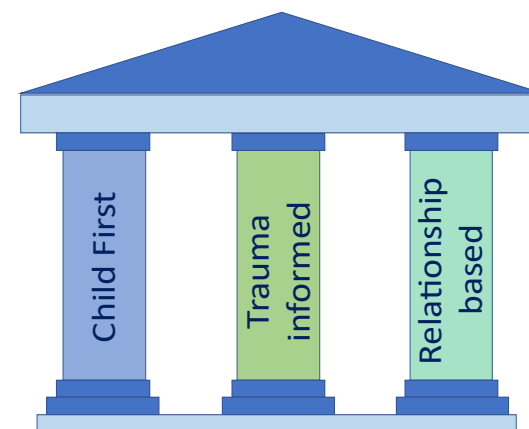


Figure 1. Cheshire YJS Three Pillars Strategic Vision

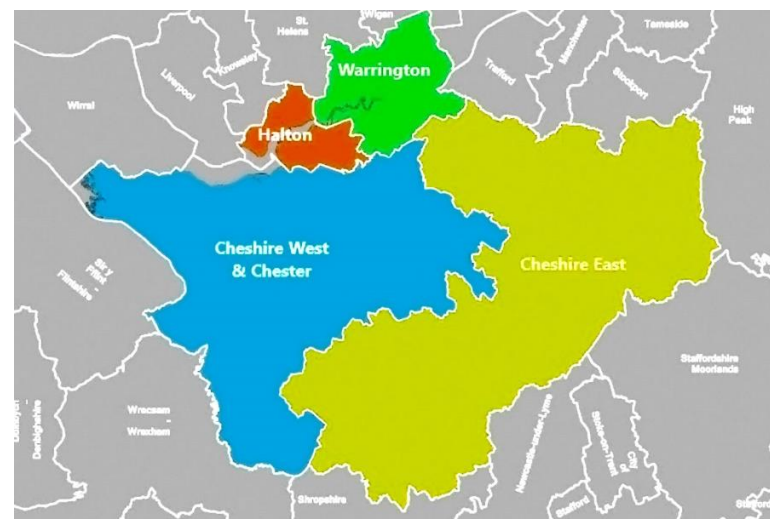


Figure 2. Cheshire and surrounding local authorities

Cheshire can be viewed as an affluent and rural county with pockets of urban deprivation. There is a marked difference in terms of local authority ranking of socio-economic indices and out of 317, Halton is ranked 23, Cheshire West 175, Warrington 183, and Cheshire East 228. Halton also has eight 'Left Behind' neighbourhoods with Cheshire East and Warrington having one each. Although highly diverse in terms of age, the county is not as diverse compared to other areas of England, with around 95% of residents identifying as 'White British'. The Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) community also has a presence in some areas. The region shares borders with 15 other local authority areas (Figure 2) and has excellent road and rail links to the three closest cities of Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. Although these provide improved economic and lifestyle experiences, they also enable organised criminal activity such as County Lines and other forms of child exploitation. Cheshire Police have implemented a model for tackling County Lines and although the number fluctuates throughout the year, the average number identified has become more consistent, reducing from 44 in 2022-2023 to 38 in 2024 (range 32-63 and 22-68 respectively).

The place-based graphics presented in figure 3 show contextual demographic data provided by local authorities, Public Health England and from the internal YJS case management system. The information is presented for context only and comparisons between areas should be treated with caution because the data is not exactly like for like. The number of '*children with harmful sexual behaviour*' refers to the number of children resident in that local authority area who received specialist Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) assessment and intervention from YJS following a conviction or out of court disposal for a sexual offence.

The volume of children in the justice system fluctuates between local authority areas but is broadly what would be expected based on population size relative to social deprivation. Cheshire East and Cheshire West have the largest populations and Halton the smallest, but levels of social deprivation are significantly higher in Halton. Local authority contributions to the service are made according to a percentage funding formula, calculated following a comprehensive zero-based review exercise into service demand and activity.

Youth Justice Services Plan 2024-2027

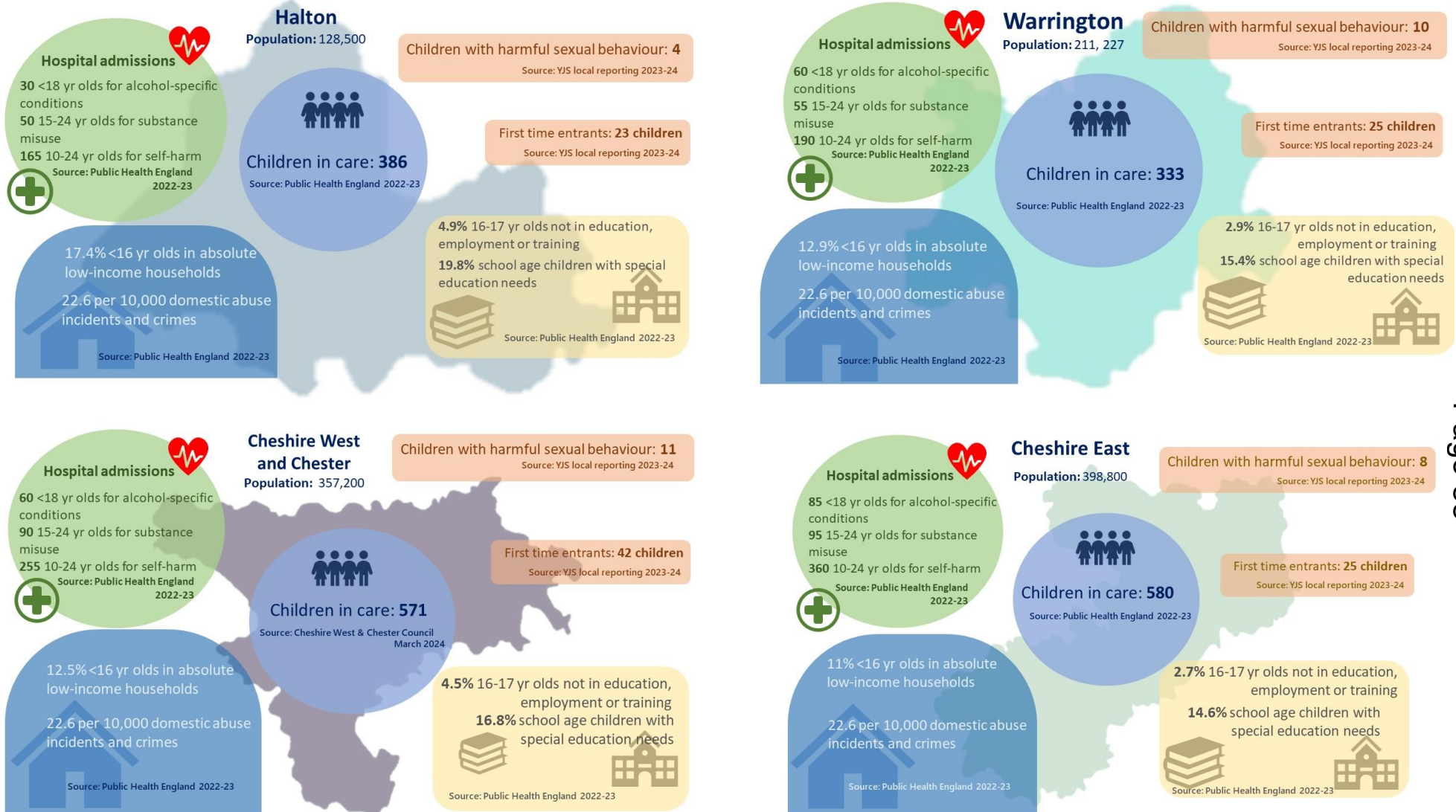
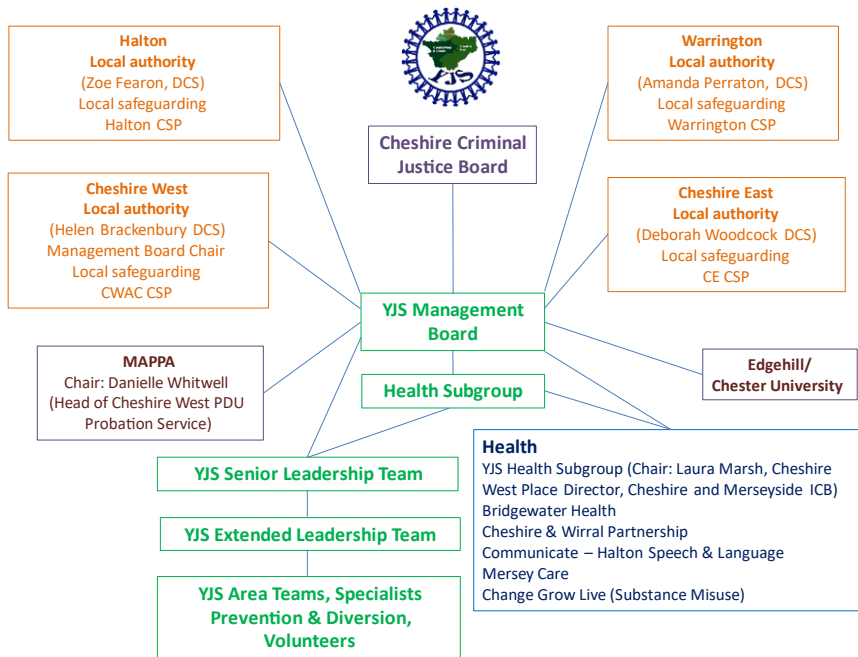


Figure 3. Figure place-based demographics for Halton, Warrington, Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East



DCS Director of Children’s Services. CSP Children’s Safeguarding Partnership, PDU Probation Delivery Unit, ICB Integrated Care Board

Figure 4. Sub-regional Youth Justice System Strategic Partnership

Cheshire YJS is also a core member of the four Children Safeguarding Partnerships, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), and well linked to the Cheshire Integrated Offender Management model. These links have been enhanced by the adoption of a more youth justice-focussed role for the police officers, as recommended by the last HMIP inspection of Cheshire. YJS now has three police officers fully seconded and embedded within the service. A review will take place in 2024-2025, in partnership with Cheshire Constabulary to ensure the role of our seconded officers is in line with recently revised national guidance.

Cheshire does not have a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) so as a sub-region, it does lack some of the investment, infrastructure and collaborative commissioning at scale brought by a VRU to urban metropolitan areas. Cheshire YJS

Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

A strength of Cheshire YJS is the strategic and professional links it has with colleagues at a sub-regional level in the public, private, academic, and voluntary sectors (Figure 4). The YJS Head of Service is a core member of both the pan-Cheshire Criminal Justice Board (CJB) and Serious Violence Duty Partnership Board with senior youth justice management representation at the other CJB sub-groups (Reducing Reoffending, Disproportionality and Victims).

YJS is well placed to influence strategy and decisions at scale despite working in a complex governance landscape comprising four children’s safeguarding partnerships, four community safety partnerships and a plethora of other place-based and subregional strategic groups, where Cheshire YJS has a duty (or need) to cooperate.

is an example of how strong governance and leadership can oversee the delivery of an effective multi-agency / multi-disciplinary service across local authority boundaries. However, the intention to move to a single local authority hosted model reflects the need to simplify the operating environment, solve some of the organisational challenges and improve efficiency, enabling the YJS, to focus more time on delivering a quality service.

Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Exploitation often feature in the lives of justice-involved children and these are the priority thematic areas for all four safeguarding children partnerships. This plan specifically refers to the youth justice system but the strategic vision to improve outcomes for children, victims and communities across Cheshire is shared by the wider pan-Cheshire partnership. Timelines for approval at full council are complicated given the sub-regional arrangement. However, there is commitment from the four Directors of Children's Services to take this Youth Justice Plan (with an annual update) through their respective council governance channels.

Board membership and leadership

The Management Board Chair usually rotates every 2 years, across the four local authorities. Cheshire West and Chester Council's Director of Children's Services took over from Halton in 2022 and was due to handover the chairing to Warrington in April 2024. However, the Chair agreed to stay on to lead the Transitions Board overseeing the multiple project workstreams necessary to transition YJS to Cheshire West and Chester Council as a hosted service.

Board membership is fully constituted with membership at a sufficiently senior level from all statutory partners, supplemented by other key members including a leading academic advisor, an independent safeguarding advisor and a magistrate. Job descriptions and induction processes are in place for new Board members but the over-arching legal partnership agreement, which constitutes the service as a sub-regional arrangement, is due for review and will form one workstream of the Board overseeing transition to the hosted model. The Youth Justice partnership (Board) will utilise the children's committee of Cheshire and Mersey Integrated Care Board (ICB) to highlight service achievements and risks. The Director of Children's Services in Warrington bridges the Youth Justice Management Board and the children's committee of the ICB. Notwithstanding the financial pressures on the ICB, we will be signaling that cash contributions from health to YJS across Cheshire have not increased in line with inflation for several years, so a new funding formula to ensure equitable flow from Cheshire and Merseyside ICB to Place is required.

The YJS Management Health Sub-Group was established as the only explicitly sub-group of the Board because of the complexity of Health commissioning and provider arrangements across the sub-region. The Chair of the Health Sub-Group also acts as Management Board representative for health, while also ensuring connectivity to Place Directors and Cheshire and Merseyside ICB.

The subgroup commissioned the Public Health Research Institute at Liverpool John Moores University to undertake a comprehensive Health Needs Analysis (HNA). Published in 2023⁴, the HNA was based on in-depth analysis of 70% of the children Cheshire YJS worked with in 2022. To date, it is one of the most comprehensive and statistically valid studies into the presenting health needs (sometimes undiagnosed, and frequently unmet) of children in/on cusp of the justice system anywhere in the UK. In early 2024, the terms of reference of the health subgroup were reviewed and with the help of public health representation, the group will pivot towards informing the commissioning of services further upstream (at the place level). Since 2017, the Chair of the Health Sub-group has been a long-standing former Chief Clinical Officer and in June 2024, he will hand over this role to the Cheshire West and Chester Director of Place.

Given the multi-authority constitution elected members are not on the Youth Justice Management Board, but to raise their awareness of the service, we held a bespoke open day for them in February 2024. This was an opportunity for elected members to learn more about the child first, trauma-informed and relational way our staff, from different professional disciplines, work together across authorities to support children, caregivers and victims. The event was very positively received by elected members, and YJS staff also welcomed the opportunity to share real examples of how they make a positive difference to the lives of some of the county's most vulnerable people.

This 3-year strategic plan (and subsequent annual updates) will progress through formal local channels for scrutiny, oversight and formal sign off by all four councils in accordance with the legislative requirement after it has been approved by the sub-regional management board. This process will remain in place even after the service has transitioned to a fully

⁴ [Cheshire Youth Justice Services Health Needs Assessment Summary July 2023](#)

hosted model because each authority will retain the statutory requirement for provision, scrutiny and oversight of youth justice delivery in their area.

Under a new senior leadership team in 2024-2025, YJS has undertaken some re-design to mirror the area delivery units of policing and probation and to align more effectively with place-based services for children, caregivers and victims (see Section 10.3 Service Development).

1. Update on 2023-2024

1.1 Progress on priorities in previous plan

Priority 2023-2024	Progress, what have the outcomes/outputs been?
<p>Ensure transitional arrangements are in place following change of Head of Service in summer 2023</p>	<p>The long-standing Senior Manager in YJS was swiftly appointed to take over as Head of Service. This provided a degree of continuity but meant there was only one youth justice strategic manager covering four place-based partnerships until the replacement Senior Manager came into post in February 2024. YJS in Cheshire now has two very experienced senior leaders who will endeavour to build on the current strengths and reputation of the service to become outstanding.</p>
<p>Ensure the findings of the HNA are considered by relevant strategic partners to improve access to services for children in and at risk of entering the youth justice system</p>	<p>The completion of the HNA was a major undertaking and represents one of the most comprehensive (validated) analyses of the wider health needs of justice-involved-children undertaken anywhere in the UK in recent years.</p> <p>The Head of Service has presented findings at Health and Wellbeing Boards and several other partnership forums across the sub-region. Data and analysis from the HNA were provided to Crest Consultancy for their collation of a Strategic Needs Assessment to inform the Serious Violence Strategy (SVS) for Cheshire.</p> <p>A newly commissioned provider for Liaison and Diversion (Midland Partnership Foundation Trust [MPFT]) now covers the whole of Cheshire and there is improved provision, communication and a more effective pathway in place following productive meetings between YJS and MPFT.</p> <p>Issues are still being worked through with senior commissioners and Cheshire Wirral Partnership Trust around the dedicated speech and language therapy offer to justice-involved-children across Cheshire East and Cheshire West footprints, which is currently insufficient to meet the volume/demand revealed by the HNA. The Head of Service has written a paper to be tabled at Cheshire and Merseyside’s Integrated Care Board in summer 2024, outlining regional funding discrepancies and requesting a review of cash contributions to youth justice services across the Cheshire and Merseyside region.</p>
<p>Explore with an aspiration to move to a single host</p>	<p>A report providing the rationale and clear business case, with costings to deliver YJS as a fully hosted model, was completed in December 2023. This report was presented to corporate</p>

<p>arrangement to reduce inefficiency, inequity of employment and clarify partnership responsibilities, whilst also improving local Place based delivery and reporting models</p>	<p>leadership teams across Cheshire with approval to proceed given by cabinets (committee for Cheshire East Council) in spring 2024.</p> <p>This major infrastructure and organisational change project will be overseen by a Transitions Board, chaired by Cheshire West and Chester Council’s Director for Children and Families. Multiple workstreams will be established, a priority for the YJS partnership for 2024-2025 with a go-live date of April 2025.</p>
<p>Child-first, trauma-informed and relationship-based practice will continue to be embedded as routine</p>	<p>The new Head of Service has articulated Child First, Trauma-Informed and Relationship-Based Practice as the three key pillars upon which the service will continue to develop. The new Senior Manager launched the revised ‘area-based’ service design for 2024-2025.</p> <p>Cheshire YJS have further developed social prescribing through partnerships with the Canal and River Trust (fishing as mindfulness), Rage Fitness (Health and Wellbeing Centre) and other bespoke psychosocial therapeutic activities for children. The Local Government Association (LGA) and Youth Justice Board (YJB) have cited Cheshire’s social prescribing approach as an exemplar of innovative best practice.</p> <p>In 2023, the service rolled out Schwartz⁵ rounds to provide a safe reflective space for staff across all teams and levels (front line practitioners, back-office staff and managers) to share their experiences, thoughts and feelings on topics of their choice. This is an important but sometimes overlooked aspect of Trauma-Informed Service Development because staff can experience trauma vicariously. The Schwartz rounds in Cheshire are facilitated by specially trained in-house therapeutic practitioners and have been well received by staff who have attended them. Schwartz rounds will continue to run quarterly in 2024-2025 and beyond.</p>
<p>Embed Turnaround project with an expanding Prevention and Diversion Service to work with more children on the cusp of the youth justice system</p>	<p>Turnaround was embedded within the Prevention and Diversion Team with a c£300k Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Grant. This was used to recruit additional front-line practitioners and build reporting and management capacity to ensure the fulfilment of grant requirements. This opened pathways to work with children referred because of concerns over anti-social behaviour.</p>

⁵ [Schwartz Rounds](#)

	<p>By the end of March 2024, 135 children in Cheshire had been supported through the Turnaround project. Eighty-six of whom have successfully completed the programme, with the remaining 49 continuing to receive YJS support.</p> <p>The MOJ have confirmed Turnaround funding will end in March 2025 so YJS will ensure transition planning is in place prior to Q4. This will ensure children are supported into accessing alternative programmes of intervention, including newly commissioned delivery providers Remedi and Queensberry Alternative Provision.</p>
<p>Continue to develop anti-exploitation strategies in partnership with the Police, local authorities, and other partners such as health and education</p>	<p>Cheshire YJS is an active and influential participant in both pan-Cheshire and place-based partnership groups focusing on tackling criminal exploitation. Team Managers and local ‘exploitation champions’ attend contextual safeguarding operational meetings and share intelligence and contribute to ‘mapping’ meetings to help local responses. Exploitation of vulnerable children in/on the cusp of the justice system remains a high concern/high priority for the wider partnership and earlier targeted intervention and support for children to get ‘upstream’ was included in the Cheshire SVS.</p> <p>The YJS leadership team will continue to use our data and insights (e.g. from HNA) to inform and influence the wider partnership. A good example of this is YJS data being instrumental in influencing the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to use Serious Violence Duty funding to commission the Voluntary Community Sector to provide targeted support. Services are now in place to help children identified by education, early help, and social care as being ‘at risk’ of exclusion and exploitation, if left unsupported.</p> <p>Organised criminality is dynamic to emerging markets and opportunities and there were some concerning reports from Merseyside that county lines had evolved to become international. A few Merseyside children were trafficked to distribute drugs for a Dubai-based (but Merseyside linked) organised crime group (OCG). Given the proximity and known lines from Merseyside into Cheshire, the YJS Head of Service raised this at the Youth Justice Management Board and at local Serious Organised Crime Strategic groups. At the start of 2024, Cheshire YJS also participated in Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) benchmarking exercises with partners.</p>

<p>Disproportionality review to be completed in line with the Cheshire CJB subgroup methodology</p>	<p>A response to the Lammy report was undertaken by the Disproportionality Sub-group to Cheshire CJB. YJS contributed data and insight to this work (see Section 7.1) and remains a member of the sub-group, which has renewed terms of reference under a new chair.</p>
<p>Explore potential of an early safeguarding diagnostic tool with CACI</p>	<p>This was explored as a tri-partite “Knowledge Transfer Partnership” with Edge Hill University and CACI (YJS software supplier) and an initial grant application to undertake the research and development necessary was made to Innovate UK. It subsequently transpired however YJS would become liable for two-thirds of the cost of employing research associates and because there was no cash in the budget and no obvious return on investment for the children we work with, it was ruled as unviable. CACI are a private organisation and are exploring other avenues for developing predictive analytics that may deliver them a commercial return on investment.</p>

Some other notable achievements in 2023-2024 include: -

- YJS were ‘early adopters’ of the new national Prevention and Diversion assessment tool, with Cheshire contributing to the development of a quality assurance tool at national level with the YJB.
- Our social prescribing model has been cited by the LGA, YJB and NHS England as innovative practice for supporting children and young people in or on the cusp of the justice system.
- Several children embraced an opportunity to visit Chester University to work alongside graphics students and professionals in the co-design of a new youth justice planning template (see Section 4). An example of the kind of child first, participatory practice and co-design the service will be developing over the next 3 years.
- Cheshire YJS helped to facilitate some ‘art therapy’ with a cared for child who was struggling with being under a deprivation of liberty order and her painting won a Koestler arts award (see Section 8).

2. Performance over the previous year

Performance against nationally measured targets continues to be strong. Since rolling out the Divert scheme in 2017 across all Cheshire local authorities, we have seen fewer children entering the CJS.

Total volume and rates per 100,000 are significantly below regional and national averages and Section 11.4 contains a longer-term trend of FTE data, disaggregated by local authority. Figure 5 shows initial sharp reductions in FTE with the low base level being sustained again in 2023 (NB the lowest level of FTE in 2021 was due to the impact of covid/lockdowns).

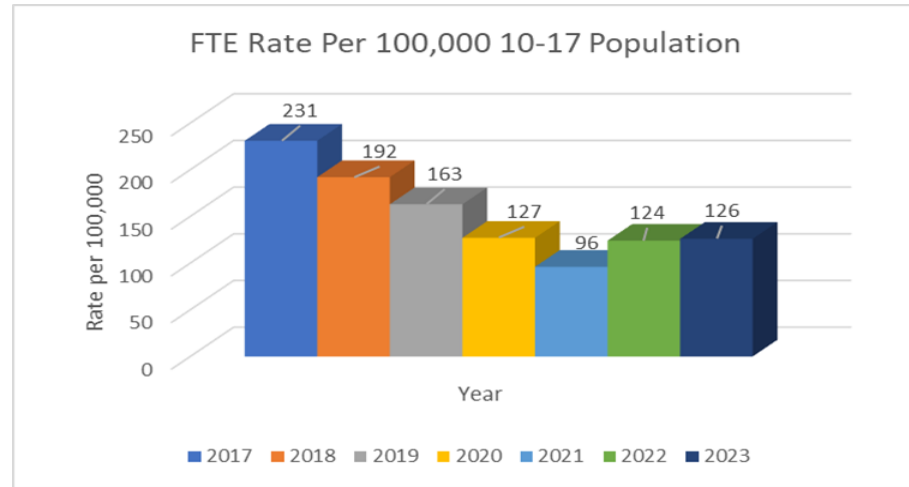


Figure 5. FTEs to the justice system in Cheshire

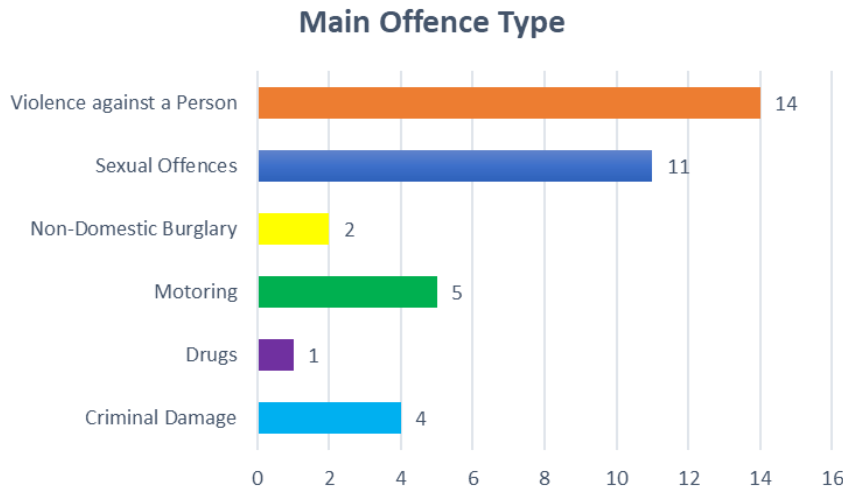


Figure 6. FTE offences in 2023

Figure 6 shows violent or sexual offences represent the bulk of those committed by children entering the justice system for the first time. This is what we would expect and is compatible with ‘Child First’ youth justice principles and an effective youth diversion scheme that ensures children are dealt with according to risk and need.

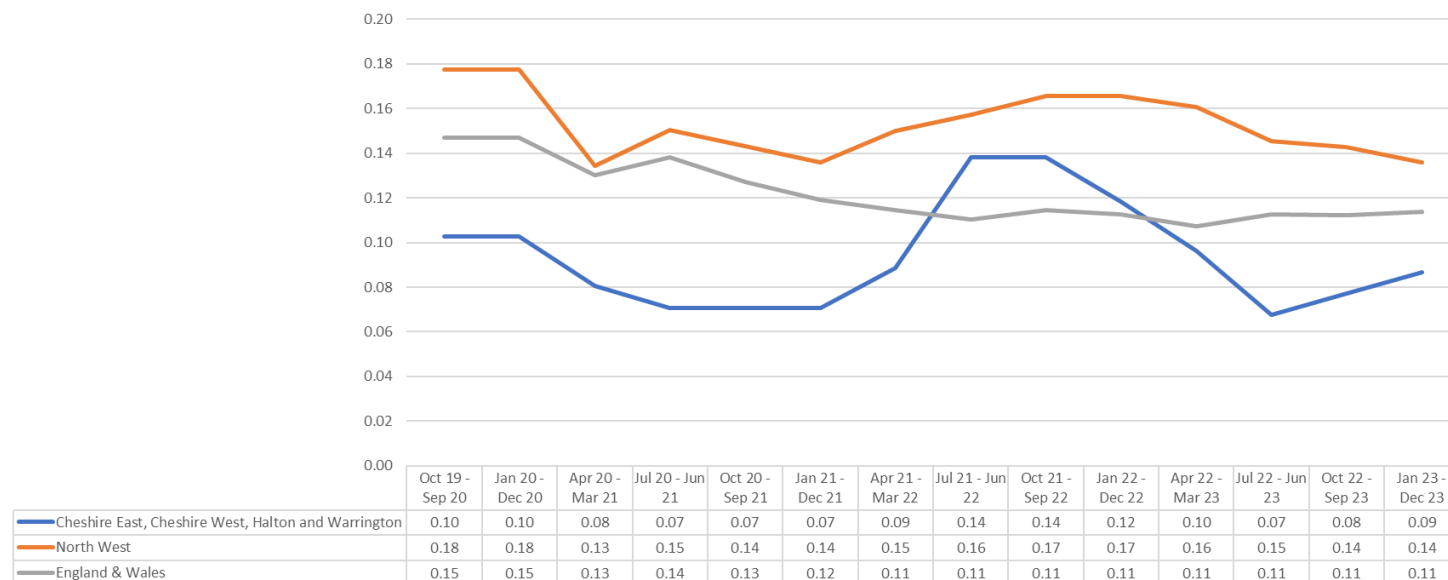


Figure 7. Custody Rate per 1,000 for Cheshire 10-17-Year-olds with regional and national comparisons

Source: National Youth Justice Application Framework (YJAF)

Cheshire also has consistently low numbers of children remanded and sentenced to custody (see Sections 11.9 and 11.10 for 2023-2024 place-based detail). Fewer than five children across the whole of Cheshire have been sentenced to custody in any quarterly period going right back to Q2 of 2019.

It is rare for there to be more than 10 children from the four places in Cheshire combined, serving custodial sentences at any one time. While reoffending rates of those children in the system are slightly higher than regional averages, this is attributable to the fact children sentenced by the courts tend to be those with whom we have already exhausted all diversionary options. They are the children who are often more entrenched in criminality and exploitation so require more intensive intervention and support.

We are also seeing consistently reliable results for those children subjected to out of court disposals, in terms of successful completions and reoffending rates, with fewer than one in 10 children diverted away from formal sanctions going on to reoffend.

As a service, we are committed to focusing our efforts on reducing reoffending by our children. However, as we continue to prevent children entering the system and, running parallel have relatively few children in custody, we recognise re-offending rates are understandably our area of greatest challenge. Figure 8 below provides the latest published re-offending data, taken from the Police National Computer (PNC). However, whilst this serves to give us a national picture, it is important to recognise the following limitations of this PNC data:-

- The re-offending of adults who we no longer work with or have been never known to us
- The re-offending of children from outside areas who have offended in Cheshire but are not or have never been open to Cheshire YJS
- PNC re-offending data is published 2-years behind the current quarter.

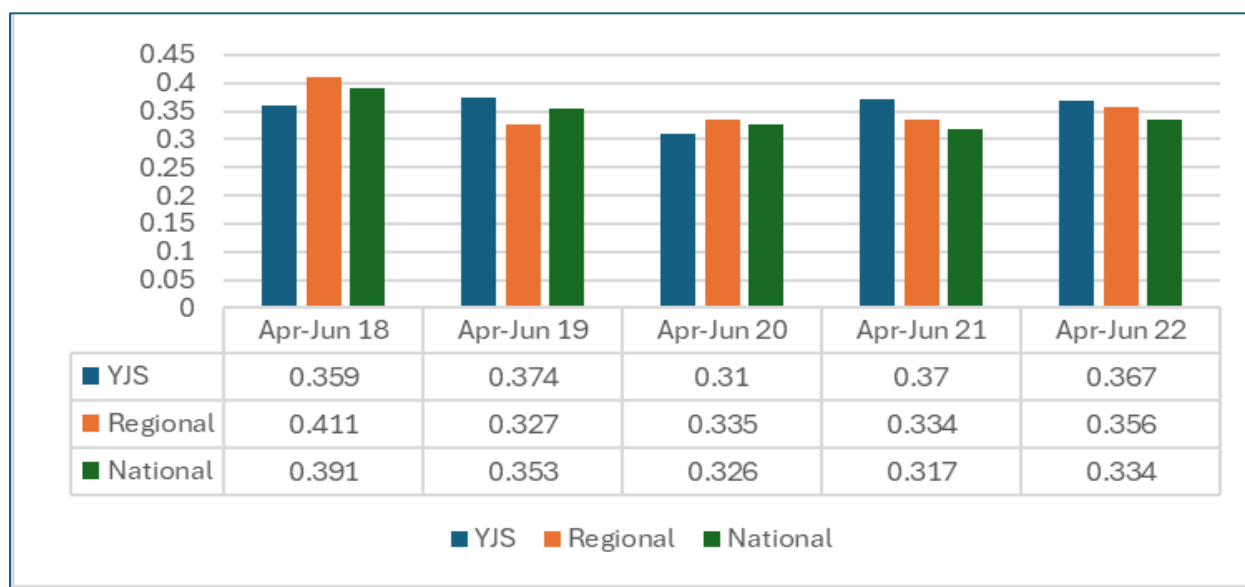


Figure 8. Binary reoffending data for YJS compared with regional and national rates 2018-2022
 Source: YJAF via PNC

Desistance from crime for children who experience significant adversity and trauma is not a linear journey. It requires long-term, trusted, relational support from professionals to try and help children achieve a shift toward a more positive self-identity. This is why the vision for the service is underpinned by the three key pillars of Child First, Trauma-Informed and Relational-Based Practice (Figure 1).

The KPI charts in Appendix A1 show performance against a range of other key performance metrics, introduced in 2023 by the national YJB, who have rated YJS as being in Performance Quadrant 2 (Satisfactory).

YJS will be developing a new comprehensive performance reporting and quality assurance framework in 2024 so the Management Board, partners and staff can all see the strengths and areas of challenge across the 10 KPIs. We will be data driven, making full use of the management information system to target our improvement activity in the areas where it is most needed.

2.1 National Standards Audit

Submission of a National Standards (NS) audit is a condition of the YJB national grant and the most recent NS audit was undertaken in October 2023, against NS2: Work in Courts. Cheshire YJS received positive feedback from the YJB Regional Oversight Manager on the quality of both the audit process and its findings.

This NS audit was a comprehensive quality assurance audit of the services delivered before, during and after children's appearances before the three magistrate courts and one crown court in Cheshire. Section A looked at Strategy, Section B on Reports and Section C on Process. Sections B and C involved a deep dive practice audit involving 20 cases.

There were nine areas in Section A 'Strategic performance' with four rated **Outstanding** and five rated as **Good**. Cheshire YJS enjoys a strong partnership with HM Court and Tribunal Service (HMCTS), Magistrates, Police and Crown Prosecution Service. The Head of Service is a member of Cheshire CJB and meets quarterly with youth bench magistrates who sit in Cheshire's three youth courts. A former chair of the Cheshire youth bench and a representative from HMCTS are also members of the Management Board.

For sections B (Reports) and C (Process), the audit revealed the overall quality of work was **Good** or **Outstanding**. One criterion required improvement and this related to the adequate referencing of the impact of the child's offence on their victim, by authors of pre-sentence reports. Improvement action is being addressed through local changes to case management guidance, emphasis on managerial oversight and explicitly evidencing the possible impact on victims (even where victim personal statements are unavailable).

A priority for 2024-2025 will be to review the victim contact and support offer ensuring the service remains fully compliant with the Victims' Code of Practice and the new Victims and Prisoners Act (see Section 11.6).

3. Risks and issues

The main risk to service delivery and the achievement of positive outcomes for children, victims and care givers, relates to the complexity of the pan-Cheshire shared service arrangements. A combination of escalating ICT costs due to national licensing and security compliance issues, as well as inefficiency that comes from having staff employed by authorities other than the one providing their ICT, has rendered the current arrangement unsustainable.

YJS staff currently must navigate four separate systems for corporate information such as finance and human resources. Lack of a sustainable ICT system will inhibit performance management, data collection and case recording and increase costs for each partner authority. In addition, the safety of children and the public could be compromised if these inefficiencies continue to impact on staff time. This results in less time spent with children and young people (and those harmed by children and young people).

The move to a hosted arrangement with Cheshire West and Chester Council as the lead authority, will mean a more productive and efficient organisation. This model will also provide financial transparency and the new legal memorandum of understanding will mitigate the risks associated with provision of ICT that is a cost Halton Borough Council can no longer absorb as a benefit in kind.

Not progressing to a fully hosted model (and agreeing a sustainable funding formula) will, over time, undermine the integrity of the YJS and compromise service delivery for our children, caregivers and victims.

All four councils have now confirmed their support for transitioning to a new hosted model, with each authority paying a management fee. The infrastructure work involved in transitioning the service will be significant and require multiple workstreams overseen by a Transitions Board.

As with any major organisational change and infrastructure project – particularly one involving decommissioning and transfer of ICT systems, there is a risk of service disruption, or the work not being completed within the intended timescale of this fiscal year. The Transitions Board, overseen by the Director for Children and Families in Cheshire West and Chester Council, will be responsible for agreeing any mitigation measures, should they be required.

4. Building on our strengths: Plan for 2024-2025

4.1 Child First

In Cheshire, we are committed to Child First principles. As mentioned earlier, these principles, along with Trauma-Informed and Relationship-Based Practice will inform all practice and development activity. We will continue to apply the principle of “*Would this be good enough for my child?*” and prioritise the best interests of children, recognise their needs, capacities, rights, and potential. As well as being child-focused, our work will be developmentally informed, acknowledge structural barriers and done with children rather than done to them.

YJS has made great strides in this direction of travel in the last couple of years but recognises there is more to do, particularly in relation to meaningful and active participation of children in the justice system.

This is why **Participation** is a strategic, operational and practice priority flowing from this Strategic plan.

The new Service Development Hub will be the engine room to drive forward participation across all areas of YJS. This will not be easy as children sentenced by the courts often feel they have no power and no voice and they have usually experienced significant trauma and adversity. Offending for many children is in part symptomatic of their own childhood abuse or neglect. YJS will hold a Service Development Day in July 2024, with **Participation** as the theme and have invited the leading children’s and social justice charity Peer Power to co-facilitate the session. Through the lived experience of their ‘peer leaders’, Peer Power will help YJS to better harness the power and potential of children and young people and be the catalyst for scaling up some of the co-produced (Child First) activity started in 2023-2024 and outlined below.

In summer 2023, a partnership project with a local community enterprise in Crewe ‘Recycle Cycles’, combined children gaining skills in bike maintenance with designing and painting a large outdoor container (Figure 9a). The inspiration for the design came from a child being encouraged to visualise his pathway toward a brighter future having participated in evening sessions on topics such as, healthy relationships and respect for women, substance misuse and self-esteem. A group of our children worked collaboratively with YJS staff and graphic design students at University of Chester to co-produce Figure 9b. This is now the cover of the planning document, *My Change Plan*, used with all YJS children.



Figure 9a. Original artwork created on a container by YJS children working with Recycle Cycles in Crewe

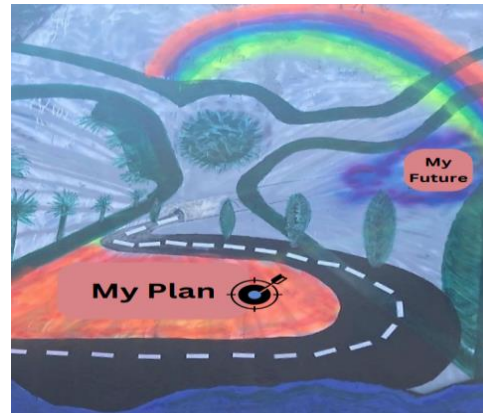


Figure 9b. Adapted artwork for *My Change Plan* made by YJS children in collaboration with YJS staff and graphic design students from University of Chester

The above artwork is one illustration of the kind of participatory practice Cheshire YJS will be seeking to build on over the coming years. It also exemplifies how we can take a strengths-based approach and co-produce with children. By knowing they have a voice in co-producing their own intervention plans, children will be more motivated to achieve the objectives and successfully complete their work with us.

Our relationship-based model also offers a way to improve the interactions children have with police officers. The Cheshire Youth Commission is facilitated by Leaders Unlocked, a social enterprise that delivers the Youth Commission peer-led model and exists to allow young people across the UK to have a stronger voice in their communities on issues that affect them. During October 2023 half term, YJS arranged two bespoke events with Cheshire Youth Commission enabling the voices of children with lived experience of the system, to be heard by the OPCC and other leaders and to inform policing in Cheshire. Five children open to YJS, participated in a bespoke workshop on relationships with the police. The workshops included interactive situational scenario activities, an animation film and quizzes to elicit rich feedback on justice-involved-children’s authentic lived experience.

“It was good to get listened to. I have not had the opportunity of this before in relation to my experiences with the Police. The person running the group seemed to be really interested.”
(Child)

Some children felt the Police should receive training around mental health issues, specifically neurodiversity and officers should have more awareness of how best to engage with neurodiverse children. (Cheshire HNA confirmed neurodivergent children are over-represented in the youth justice system). This was one of several recommendations made in the final report to the OPCC as part of the annual “Big Conversation” and YJS will facilitate a similar bespoke session with Leaders Unlocked later in 2024.

“I used to get regularly stopped and searched if I was stimming and under suspicion of drug use when I am actually just autistic.”
(Child)

“I just want to say a huge thank you to you and the team for giving us an opportunity to speak to the amazing young people you work with. They were my favourite sessions of this year”
(Project Manager, Leaders Unlocked)

Figure 10 shows a young person open to YJS helping a traffic officer wash his motorbike. This example of relationship-based practice was arranged by a Divert Worker who was aware of the young person’s interest in motorbikes.



Figure 10. Young person helps a traffic officer to wash his motorbike

5. Resources and services

The YJS operates as a complex shared service arrangement with pooled funding from four local authorities, statutory partners, Cheshire OPCC and the YJB core grant (see Appendix B Budget). Cheshire YJS will pool the YJB core grant with other funding to:

- Ensure we have a well-trained, supported and motivated team of staff, with the specialist skills to engage children, caregivers and victims;
- Continue to contribute towards funding our relationship-based practice model and further developing participatory work with children, care givers and victims;
- Continue to pool funding to develop social prescribing and other interventions with children to improve self-identity, health and wellbeing and reduce the likelihood of re-offending;
- Continue to develop diversionary and participatory interventions to divert children away from formal sanctions (supported by contributions from the OPCC);
- Ensure YJS can continue to provide robust, intensive supervision to children in the community to maintain public and judicial confidence and minimising the use of custody.

6. Board development

The YJS Management Board will continue to meet quarterly and receive reports from YJS and partners to facilitate scrutiny and discussion around key service delivery and performance areas. The Board's key purposes are:

- To determine strategic direction of YJS, ensuring all statutory partners are fully engaged.
- To oversee and monitor the operational work of YJS.
- To ensure YJS is adequately resourced to carry out its statutory function of preventing offending by children and young people.

The leadership, composition and role of the Management Board are critical to the effective delivery of local youth justice services and Cheshire has senior representation from all statutory partners. The YJS Management Board also has long standing representation from HMCTS, the Magistracy, children's safeguarding, and academia.

The main development area for 2024-2025 will be the overseeing of a parallel Transitions Board by the Chair of the YJS Management Board. This will ensure the smooth transition to the new hosted model with Cheshire West and Chester Council becoming lead authority on behalf of the partnership.

7. Workforce development

As a service, and in line with our three pillars vision, we are committed to learning and development. It is vital all staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge, are effective in their roles and equipped to deliver high-quality services to everyone they work with. We also place high value on relevant opportunities to promote personal growth and professional development.

As a pan-Cheshire partnership, we can maximise opportunities arising in each of the four Safeguarding Children Partnerships and local authority areas. In 2023-2024, in response to our HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) 2021 inspection report and updated case management guidance, we commissioned and facilitated a broad range of learning and development opportunities. Cheshire YJS were also privileged this year to inputs from leading academics, with international reputations, for research on working with children in the justice system. The table below summarises the main staff development events held, highlighting how we have drawn on expertise from many sources.

Our commitment to the workforce will continue into 2024-2025 and we will seek to further strengthen workforce development through:

- Development of a more centralised approach to identifying training needs across the service
- Developing an enhanced training monitoring system and connecting with Cheshire West Learning and Development Team as we move to a single hosted model.
- Revising the Training Plan to be highly relevant, achievable, and accessible to the whole workforce.
- Continued membership of the Youth Justice Legal Centre, which brings timely and specialist legal advice for professionals and managers and access to a range of in-person training events and remote learning.

Table 1. Summary of key work force development activities in 2023-2024

Title	Course Type	Overview
Relationship Based Practice by Jackie Dwayne Limerick University	Academic Guest Speaker	Youth justice in Ireland is in a fortunate position as on the back of the research from Limerick, they were awarded funding to 2027 to implement RBP (Relationship Based Practice). Our approach has no additional resources and will come via the new development hub to ensure a more centralised approach but still drawing on what is available in local areas. Once children have finished their time with YJS we will be able to signpost them to groups/activities they have been linked to as part of exit plan to help sustain desistance from crime while avoiding dependency on YJS
Presentation on the Lundy Model by Laura Lundy Queen’s University Belfast	Academic Guest Speaker	Presentation covering the aspects of the Lundy Model of Child Participation we have adopted within the work of the Service Development Hub (see Section 8).
Child Participation in Youth Justice Research Louise Forde Brunel Law School	Academic Guest Speaker	Whole service presentation on participation in youth justice from Louise Forde again to back up work on participation which will be the theme of the Service Development Day.
YJLC Gravity Matrix Training	Commissioned	Training from Youth Justice Legal Centre to Prevention and Diversion staff and police officers on the application of revised gravity matrix for youth out of court disposals
Case management guidance	In-house	Major internal briefings and training on application of revised case management guidance
Equality and Diversity training	Commissioned	Delivered by Wipers Youth social enterprise. Specifically tailored training for youth justice professionals to improve cultural competency and awareness of disproportionality in the justice system

Having considered the local data analysis and in support of service priorities, the following training is currently planned for 2024-2025:

- Specialist Harmful Sexual Behaviour (AIM3) to broaden the pool of trained practitioners
- Court Skills
- UNITAS courses: Youth Diversion; Child First Effective Practice; Professional Certificate in Effective Practice
- Equality and Diversity for all staff.

8. Evidence-based practice and innovation

YJS will continue to root all intervention and support with children on the evidence base, but Cheshire will also explore new and innovative ways of connecting with children who find it difficult to access mainstream services. Our approach was described recently by an NHS England lead as the best application of social prescribing in a justice context that she had come across. It was also cited by the LGA as one of their *'innovation in local government'* case studies⁶.

Social prescribing in YJS emerged from the recognition that justice-involved-children often arrive with previously unmet health needs and traditional/clinical models of care had failed to reach them. An example being the socially prescribing of fishing as a mindfulness activity in partnership with the Canal and River Trust's 'Let's Go Fishing' programme (Figure 11).



Figure 11. 'Let's Go Fishing' Programme at Winsford

⁶ [Cheshire: Using social prescribing to reduce reoffending among young people | Local Government Association](#)

Adopting a psychosocial therapeutic approach, health workers in YJS are socially prescribing creative and flexible activities to help children improve their health and wellbeing. This has proven particularly effective for males who have experienced intra and/or extra familial violence and are often in a state of hyper-vigilance or hyper-arousal. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is often ineffective with this increasingly large sub-set of our children, so the service has tailored the health offer to become far more psychosocial and adaptable to the needs (and interests) of the children we work with. Our health offer is also supportive towards addressing the impact of trauma.



The artwork in Figure 12 was created by a cared for child working with the YJS. “L” had experienced a lot of childhood trauma and was struggling with being in care under a deprivation of liberty for her own safety. She was being supported to make sense of her experiences through art therapy and discovered she had a real talent. YJS supported her to enter this piece for a Koestler arts award and it won a commendation award. On winning the award, she told her YJS worker it was the first certificate she had ever received in her life. This is a perfect illustration of the impact that child first, trauma-informed, and relational practice can have on children who have experienced complex trauma.

**Figure 12. ‘Day in the Life of a Deprivation of Liberty Order’
Koestler commendation award winning artwork 2023**

Cheshire YJS has a well-developed “*Research in Practice*” working group that was recognised by HMIP in 2021 as an exemplar of collaboration between academia and the youth justice sector. As mentioned above the group was able to secure several key researchers to speak to the service about their findings.

One such speaker was Professor Laura Lundy, a leading international authority on the meaningful participation of children and author of The Lundy Model (Figure 13). YJS will be adopting the Lundy Model as our frame of reference in developing Participation across all aspects of service delivery in 2024-2027.

The YJS is in a knowledge-transfer partnership arrangement with two local universities (Chester and Edge Hill University) and two senior lecturers in criminology, with a national profile for research on youth justice will co-chair the YJS Research group from 2024-2025. This collaboration will ensure Cheshire YJS retains a national reputation for evidence-based practice and stays at the leading edge of innovation in the sector.

Although YJS has been fortunate to have a number of key speakers talking to staff about the research behind participation, the Service Development Day in July 2024 will be the catalyst for the development of a participatory model across the service with Peer Power Youth facilitating the session.

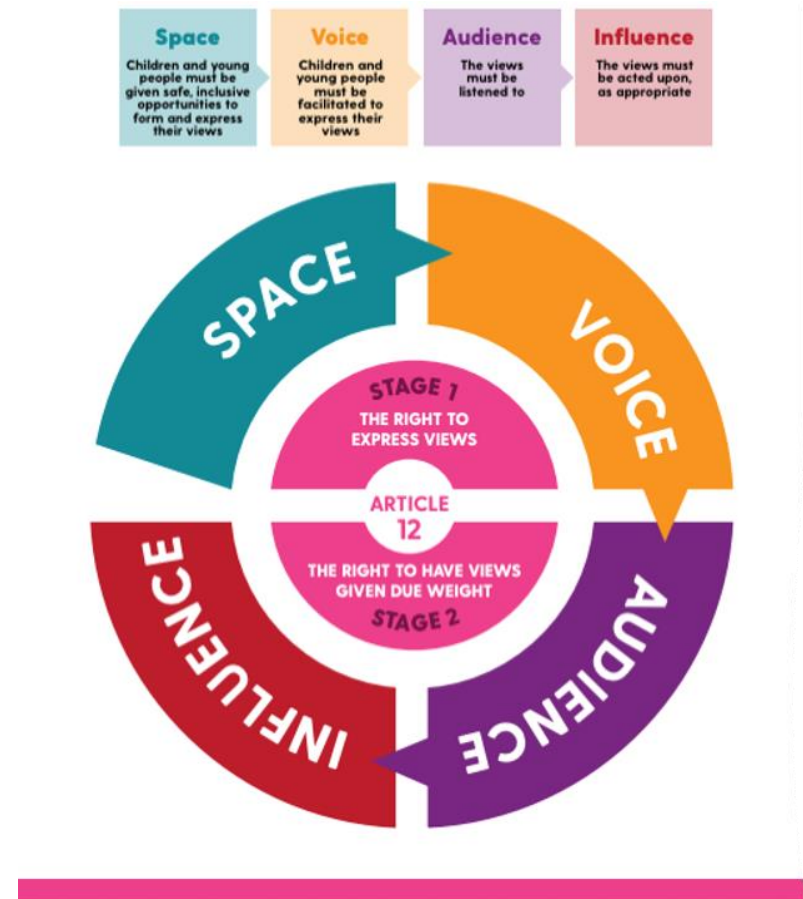


Figure 13. The Lundy Model of Child Participation

We have used previous service development days to launch Trauma-Informed Practice (2019) and Relationship-Based Practice (2022). The Service Development Hub will bring together a range of working groups focusing on various aspects of participation from involving children in staff recruitment to using technology to gain children’s views and ideas.

9. Evaluation

The HNA by the Public Health Research Institute at Liverpool John Moores University evaluated and validated the trauma-informed and relationship-based practice approach adopted by Cheshire YJS professionals. The passage below is taken directly from their full technical report, based on a statistically valid research sample of 70% of the children YJS were working with at the time:

“The (Cheshire YJS) offer now provides that key link into mental health, substance use and Speech Language Therapy support, through an equitable healthcare assessment available to all young people entering the YJS. This provided a key opportunity to assess and identify any unmet health needs in these three areas (and wider health and safeguarding needs), which may not have otherwise been identified, and for many was the first time they had access to such healthcare screening. This multi-agency approach not only allowed for quicker identification during the healthcare screening, but it also meant more timely specialist support for families who would have otherwise had long waiting lists to see specialists from CAMHS and SLT. This was identified as an effective way to open the door to this pathway of wider support, recognising that these health needs were associated to the offending behavior and need to be addressed to prevent further re-offendingThe Cheshire YJS model also provides an opportunity for multi-agency working, not only to provide that overarching multi-disciplinary offer for children and young people, but also in terms of how services work together across Cheshire....The HNA highlights the key work from YJS and wider services across Cheshire in support of families to reduce inequalities, improve wellbeing, and reduce offending. This required skilled, experienced staff working in a trauma-informed way, using a child-focused approach.”

10. Priorities for the coming year

Building on what we have achieved in the previous year, a service development plan outlining management activity will sit underneath this higher-level Strategic Youth Justice Plan and will be used to deliver against the new service development priorities for 2024-2025 summarised below:-

We will 'ramp-up' participation in creative ways right across the service and facilitate a culture of collaboration where children, volunteers and community groups are enabled to promote pro-social identity and desistance from crime. This will include co-production or co-design of plans, developing projects to support children to desist from crime and reduce harm to victims/communities.

We will develop a new comprehensive performance reporting and quality assurance framework, ensuring we are data driven and make full use of the management information system to drive practice development

We will refine our internal governance processes to ensure management and back-office functions help facilitate the delivery of high-quality services including enhanced training monitoring and a training needs assessment to inform the staff training plan

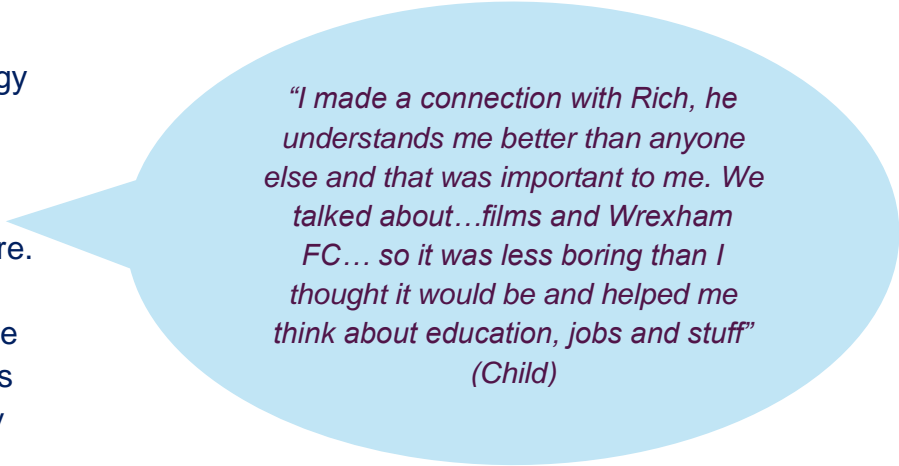
We will benchmark the YJS support offer to victims against the Victims Code of Practice, new Victims' Bill and HMiPs new inspection criteria (refining the role of Restorative Justice workers in YJS if required) identifying and progressing areas for development

In partnership with Cheshire Constabulary, we will review the current joint decision-making arrangements for the use of out of court disposals for our children. We will ensure they incorporate the Child Gravity Matrix and children are diverted to the appropriate service according to their level of risk and need

We will collaborate with partners to deliver against Priority 1 (Prevention) of Cheshire's 2024-2029 SVS by ensuring funding is targeted appropriately to support children at risk of involvement in SV

10.1 Standards for children

Cheshire YJS has developed a “conversational audit” methodology to undertake practice audits where managers visit or speak to children, caregivers and (where appropriate) victims too. This is now a ‘business as usual’ audit methodology for the service and has been adopted by some of our partners in children’s social care. Direct quotes from children, caregivers or partner agency professionals obtained through conversational audit are illustrative of the kind of trauma-informed, relational practice Cheshire YJS is striving to provide to the children we work with. This methodology will feature in this year’s audit on Victims and Restorative Justice. The new participatory model also aims to gather the views and ideas of the children we work with.



“I made a connection with Rich, he understands me better than anyone else and that was important to me. We talked about...films and Wrexham FC... so it was less boring than I thought it would be and helped me think about education, jobs and stuff”
(Child)

10.2 New performance framework

Striking the right balance between local place-based and pan-Cheshire performance reporting is a challenge for YJS and disaggregating Cheshire-wide data to place often renders the data invalid because the volumes are so low. But we will be developing a new performance management framework, using a mix of the recently introduced 10 national KPIs (Appendix A1) alongside better use of Child View (YJS case management system) so the Management Board and service really know our children.

10.3 Service development

It is critical for a sub-regional youth justice partnership to work closely with statutory agencies and community organisations at a local level, to properly support children in their own communities. To better facilitate this, YJS have implemented a modest service redesign for 2024-2025 to enable front-line professionals to work more closely and effectively with place-based partners. Figure 14 opposite shows how YJS will remain co-terminus with both police and probation footprints, while aligning closely to the four children’s services and community safety partnerships. The Staff Structure in Appendix A2 shows how our Teams align with place.

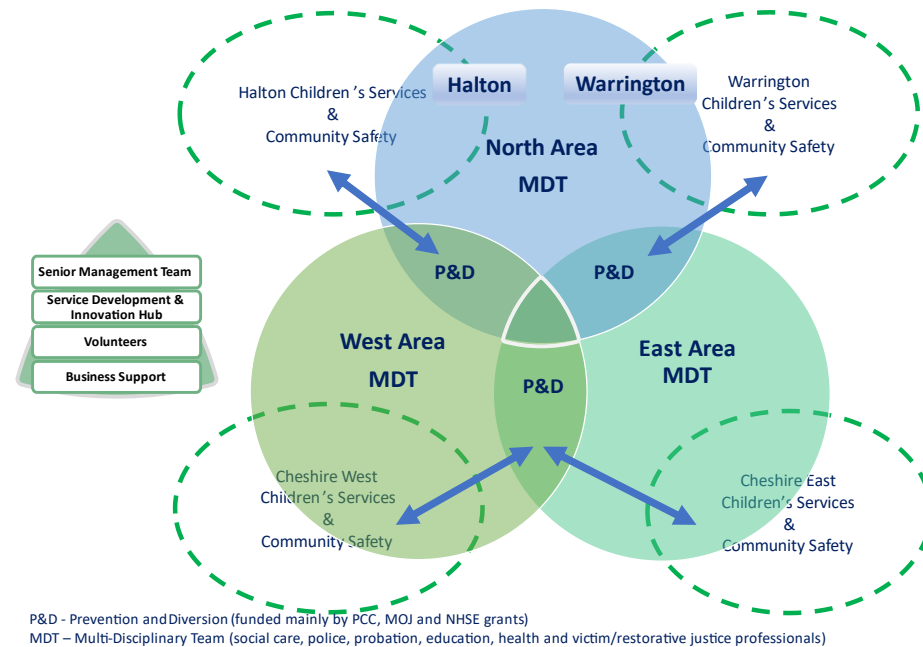


Figure 14. New Area-Based Service Design Model for YJS (from April 2024)

The service redesign aligns with the shift toward restorative and participatory approaches and the importance of supporting children to connect (or reconnect) with their local community. The new structure will empower front-line professionals and locality (area-based) operational managers to develop creative partnerships with the voluntary sector. By harnessing previously untapped human and social capital within communities (such as recruiting more local volunteers and establishing mutually beneficial partnerships with small local charities) we will be better able to help children, and some victims to move on positively beyond an offender (or victim) identity.

The new Service Development Hub will function as the central engine room for innovation within the service and the new leadership team will ensure quality of practice at a pan-Cheshire level, while empowering (through a distributed leadership model) creative area-based partnerships in the places where children, caregivers and victims live.

Cheshire YJS has also begun a review of our internal governance processes to ensure we are as productive as possible with a lean service spanning a large geography and complex network of partners. There are over 100 place-based and sub-regional partnership boards or groups and YJS needs to focus our human resource where it can have the greatest influence and improve outcomes for children in or at risk of entering into the justice system.

11. National priority areas

11.1 Children from groups which are over-represented

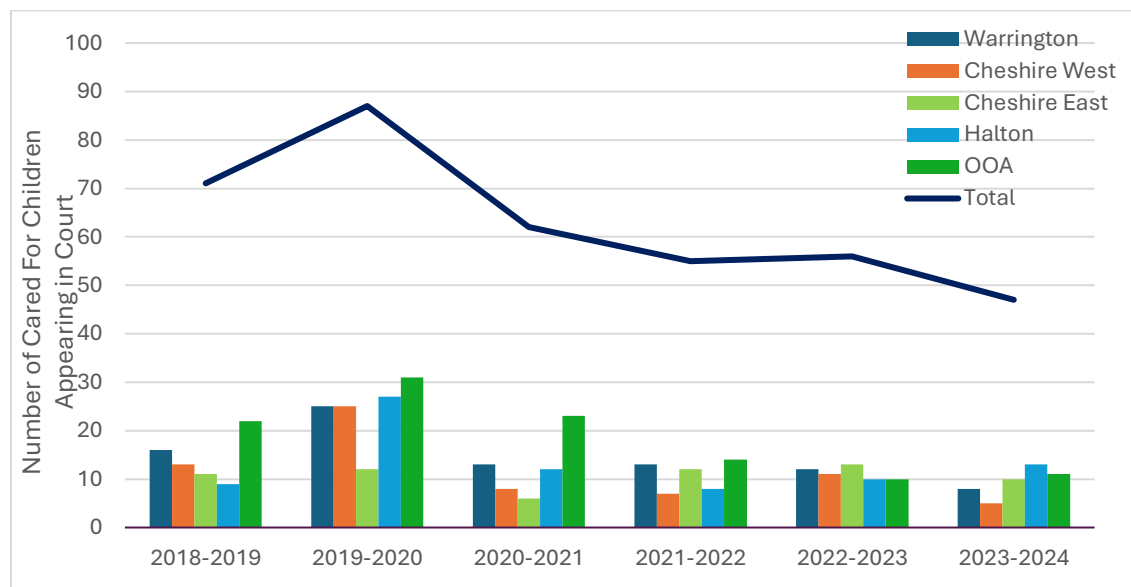


Figure 15. Number of cared for children appearing in Cheshire courts by local authority between April 2018-March 2024

The data above also includes children placed in Cheshire under the care of local authorities outside the county (out of area [OOA]) who receive the same diversionary options.

Sustained lower volumes since the protocol was produced in early 2020 is good evidence of what can be achieved through collective commitment at scale across YJS and Children's services.

A task and finish group are meeting to review the protocol in 2024-2025.

An over-represented group of children in the justice system are cared for children and care leavers. The YJS Management Board's response to data revealing disproportionality in this group was to agree a pan-Cheshire protocol. This aims to minimise the criminalisation of cared for children and care leavers and details a '3D' police and partnership response of *"Discretion, Delay and Diversion"*.

Since the protocol was launched, there has been a clear downward trend of cared for children appearing in court (Figure 15). This shows the impact from a high point in 2019.

The high prevalence of our children struggling with health or neurodevelopmental difficulties prompted the Health Sub-group of the YJS Management Board to commission the Public Health Research Institute at Liverpool John Moore University to look at the health needs of children open to YJS (see Management Board and Leadership).

The HNA revealed a stark over-representation of neurodiversity in our children which has been replicated elsewhere due to wider determinants of health. Public health consultants on the Health Sub-group have used this analysis in a place-based Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and SEND specific Strategic Needs Analysis. The HNA revealed there is a correlated trajectory for children who ‘camouflage’ their SEND through disruptive behavior, experience fixed-term or permanent exclusion and then enter the CJS some time thereafter. In 2024, the Head of Service for YJS will continue to raise awareness at local Health and Wellbeing Boards and be a strong advocate for improved upstream identification and support for children with SEND.

“Karen understands C’s SEND. The team have been really understanding and flexible around C’s appointments and Karen worked hard to earn his trust. She was approachable and down to earth, and I appreciate the work she is doing with my son”
(Caregiver).

The alarming racial disparities in the youth justice system nationally are not replicated in Cheshire. Figure 16 and Table 2 below show the most current data available (offences committed in the year ending March 2023 and drawing from 2021 census data). Comparing the youth offending population with Cheshire’s 10-17-year-old population as a whole reveals white children are very slightly overrepresented and ethnic minority groups slightly underrepresented.

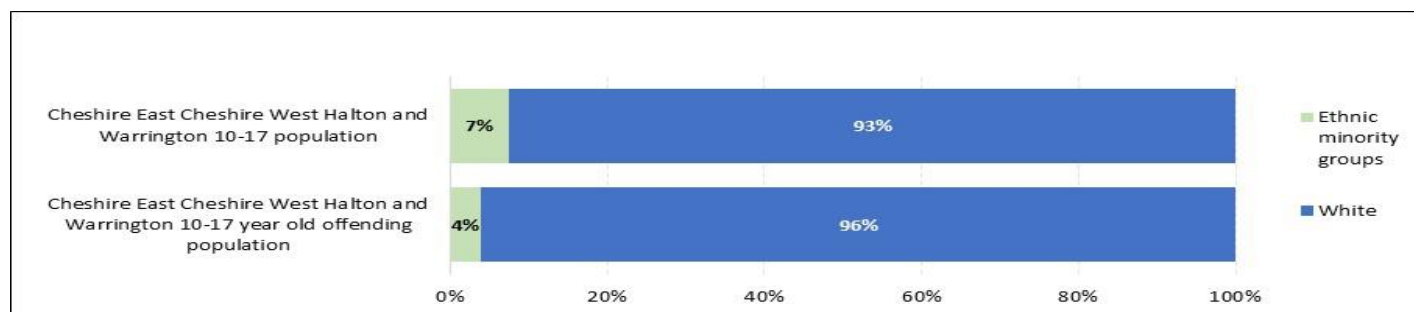


Figure 16. Ethnic minority groups vs white in the 10-17 population and offending population in Cheshire

Table 2. Ethnic minority groups vs white in the 10-17 population in Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington

Ethnic group	2022/23 Offending Population	Share of total ⁽¹⁾	2021 Census 10-17 pop'n by ethnic group	Share of total % ⁽²⁾	% Point Difference	Overrepresented, offending pop'n >10 & statistically significant
Asian	1	0%	2,563	3%	-2%	No
Black	2	1%	561	1%	0%	No
Mixed	6	3%	3,603	4%	-1%	No
Other	0	0%	796	1%	-1%	No
Ethnic minority groups ⁽³⁾	9	4%	7,523	7%	-3%	No
White	218	96%	93,563	93%	3%	Yes



One potential area of *‘invisible over-representation’* in Cheshire that YJS has raised with partners at the CJB’s Disproportionality Sub-group, relates to children (or adults) from GRT communities. Anecdotal (and student) research suggests children from these communities are sometimes recorded on police and other criminal justice databases as White British, White Irish or White European.

There is a GRT self-identity classification, but some individuals choose not to identify themselves because of a cultural mistrust of authorities. Therefore, CJS data on arrest, detention, and sentencing in respect of GRT children may not be accurate. The cultural competence of staff is the key aspect here and Cheshire YJS do have an in-service GRT ‘champion’ who is well linked with specialist advocacy and support services. We will ensure our data is as accurate as possible by hearing from the child about their identity.

11.2 Policing

The Chief Superintendent with the portfolio of protecting vulnerable people, sits on the Management Board and all four Children's Safeguarding Partnerships. This valuable connectivity provides useful constructive challenge and support, for example, renewed focus on detention of children overnight in police custody (Section 11.8). Cheshire Constabulary delivered on the recommendations made by HMIP to place fully seconded police officers into YJS and the three officers in Cheshire work well as part of the multi-disciplinary teams. They have participated in both police and YJS-led training and have improved both the flow and response to intelligence in respect of harm to or from children.

The National Police Chief's Council guidance on the role of police officers within youth justice was recently updated⁷ and YJS and Cheshire Constabulary will be reviewing the job descriptions of seconded officers to strengthen focus on victims and prevention and diversion activity. The level of police resources dedicated to (or aligned with) Cheshire YJS will be explored

so the partnership can collectively meet our joint responsibilities for diversion and out of court disposals.

Cheshire Constabulary continue to invest in their Complex-Youths scheme which has dedicated officers delivering targeted prevention and support work with children on the cusp of the justice system. This is a voluntary scheme closely aligned to place-based contextual safeguarding partnership arrangements, with children at risk of criminal exploitation often identified for support. YJS officers and place-based youth officers routinely share intelligence to help safeguard children and disrupt criminal groups.

11.3 Prevention

Unlike many single local authority youth justice teams, YJS is not part of a wider adolescent and family support service providing a broader prevention offer. The funding and delivery model spanning four authorities means we are more of a purist youth justice service that only works with children *after* they have been arrested for an offence. Prevention and targeted youth support forms part of each local authority's early help offer with some sub-regional services commissioned by Cheshire OPCC. YJS will seek to align our diversionary work to continue to divert **away from** formal criminal sanctions when it is safe and appropriate to do so and **into prevention** projects entirely outside the justice

⁷ [NPCC Guidance on Role of Police Officer in Youth Justice Services](#)

system . The principles of avoiding ‘net widening’ and the unintended consequences of ‘labelling’ or entrenching a criminal self-identity for a child are critically important and are evidenced principles underpinning this strategy and continue to apply across Cheshire.

11.4 Diversion

The Head of Service for YJS holds the national portfolio on Diversion for the Association of YOT Managers (AYM) and engages with ministers, national charities and think tanks such as Criminal Justice Innovation in roundtables on best diversionary practice. Cheshire will continue an evidence-based approach to diversion that avoids criminalising children for behaviors symptomatic of trauma, abuse, and unmet need. This not only provides better outcomes and improved prospects for children but because children diverted away from receiving formal sanctions are less likely to re-offend, it also results in fewer victims.

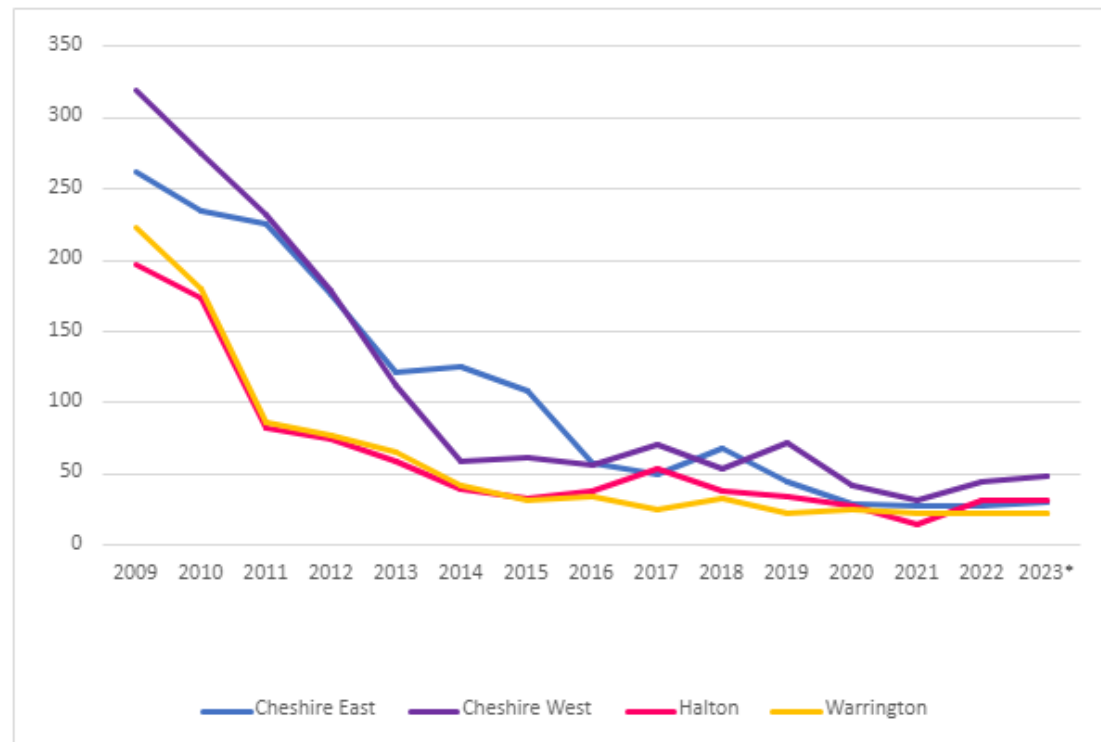


Figure 17. Trends in FTEs in Cheshire by local authority 2009-2023

Figure 17 shows significant reductions in FTEs since the incremental introduction of Divert across Cheshire. The current operating model began in Halton and Warrington in 2010, was introduced into Cheshire West in 2013 and Cheshire East in 2015. FTE numbers have remained low and stable below regional and national averages since 2016 when Cheshire

became a pan-Cheshire shared service, covering the entire policing footprint. This contrasts with many of our geographical and statistical 'Neighbours' that have begun to see an increase in FTEs in recent years.

The helpful 3-year grant investment from the MOJ (Turnaround Programme) will end in March 2025. This investment enabled YJS to get a little further upstream while also enabling us to support children and caregivers who needed longer or more intensive support. We will ensure individual children have transition plans in place where continued support beyond the end of the Turnaround programme is necessary. We will also work with the OPCC as part of the serious violence duty to ensure the new Voluntary and Community Sector providers (Remedi and Queensberry Alternative Provision) are targeting help and support to the right children, in the right ways, at the right time.

11.5 Education

Our HNA chimes with national research in showing a correlation between educational exclusion and subsequent entry to the CJS. Children who get excluded from school tend to be children who have experienced childhood trauma. There is a concerning trajectory (nationally not just in Cheshire) of early childhood exposure to violence and SEND being camouflaged as conduct issues leading to educational exclusion (for some children). Then a sub-set of these excluded children go on to use illicit drugs to self-medicate their trauma and criminal exploitation and criminality follows.

Audits and learning reviews across Cheshire also show the powerful protective effect education can have on children who have suffered childhood trauma. Positive self-identity and belonging are critical to helping children achieve desistance from offending, and the significant role education and training providers play in reducing risk through promoting pro-social identity cannot be overstated. Inclusive, trauma-informed-values-led-educational establishments not only manage risk well within their own environment, but also contribute hugely to reducing risk of harm in their communities.

Most children receiving YJS support are beyond school age, so the emphasis is more on helping them into post-16 training or employment, with flexible and bespoke support offers being most suitable for those children who have typically experienced considerable educational disruption. YJS has dedicated Education, Training and Employment (ETE) specialists for each of the four local authority areas to support children directly or indirectly by brokering tailored support in partnership with the respective local offer. As an inclusive-employment lead for post-16, the educational representative on the Board is a good advocate for justice-involved children and provides both challenge and support to managers in the service.

For a partnership that covers four local authorities, with over 100 high schools and post-16 colleges - the majority of which are academies - YJS and even Directors of Children’s Services have limited influence on admissions or exclusions. Promoting inclusion and supporting trauma-informed practice in educational settings is something Children’s Trusts have pushed and YJS will continue to advocate for the needs of children. The Head of Service will continue to provide data to inform local joint strategic need analyses and deliver presentations to forums of educational leaders. The KPI data in Appendix A1, shows the percentages of children who are in suitable education or training placements at the end of their intervention with YJS.

11.6 Restorative approaches and victims

Cheshire YJS will continue to work with victims and will deliver the full range of restorative support:

- **Restorative Justice Conferencing** – a structured meeting between the victim and the child
- **Direct Reparation** – repairing any damage caused by the child
- **Shuttle Mediation** – similar to the conferencing model but where both parties do not meet but have someone as the go-between
- **Letter of Apology/explanation** – child is supported to write to the victim
- **Indirect reparation** – work done within the community on placements.

*“Mark ensured my son’s issues were heard and a structure was put in place to ensure his safety”
(Caregiver of Victim)*

In 2023-2024, the YJS contacted and offered the above range of restorative approaches to 201 victims of youth crime. Assault is the most frequent offence type committed by children, but a quarter of all offences in 2023-2024 had no direct victim (e.g. drug and knife possession).

Sixteen direct restorative justice conferences between children and victims took place in 2023-2024. These meetings can be incredibly powerful and are handled sensitively by skilled professionals. We will continue to facilitate restorative meetings between children and their victims when it is appropriate to do so.

Cheshire YJS have a range of community partnership projects enabling children to contribute in practical ways to repair harm and develop a sense of pro-social identity. The photographs in Figure 18 show how a victim who did not want to

meet the children who assaulted him, asked if they could do something to improve the local park. This community reparation was arranged in partnership with the 'Friends of Winsford Town Park' community group.

Reviewing victim processes and ensuring the support offer from Cheshire YJS is in line with the new Victims and Prisoners Act is a priority for 2024-2025.



Figure 18. An example of where the victim suggested reparation by improving the local park

11.7 Serious violence, exploitation, and contextual safeguarding

This plan draws from and is closely aligned with the Cheshire SVS, which covers a 5-year period from 2024-2029, with annual reviews to reflect on progress against planned outcomes and update delivery plans against emerging trends.

YJS contributed data and insights to the production of a Strategic Needs Analysis (SNA), to inform the SVS and the Head of Service is a core member of the SV Duty Leadership Group. Cheshire has relatively low levels of SV so does not have the infrastructure of a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). Lifting an approach from a large metropolitan city would be unlikely to deliver the same successes here so we have had to think differently about our approach. The SNA highlighted Domestic Abuse and Youth Intervention as two clear priority areas for reducing SV in Cheshire and revealed the extent to which SV affects children and young people. Amongst all forms of SV explored, children under 18 appear prominent amongst the victim and offender cohorts for possession of weapon offences and knife crime incidents.

Understandably, public concern about SV increases when people witness or experience it themselves – or when tragic events such as the murder of Brianna Ghey bring considerable media attention to it. Fear of knife crime and serious youth violence are also amplified by social media, with children being exposed to violent content that can distort their perceptions of safety in public spaces. Table 3 below shows in 2023, 28 serious violent offences were committed in Cheshire by children (convicted by the courts). This is a decrease of 19 from 2022 and the rate of serious youth violence (per 10,000 children) was only 2.7 for Cheshire in 2023 (less than 2022 and below both regional and national averages).

Table 3. Serious violence offences committed by children in Cheshire compared regionally and nationally

	Year ending December 2023							
	2020		2021		2022		2023	
YJS region	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences
Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington	58	5.9	32	3.2	47	4.5	28	2.7
North West	409	6.0	291	4.1	302	4.2	341	4.7
East Midlands	220	4.9	207	4.6	193	4.2	194	4.1
Eastern	327	5.5	348	5.8	316	5.2	369	6.0
London	1,143	13.8	1,030	12.4	868	10.4	859	10.5
North East	65	2.7	32	1.3	88	3.6	114	4.6
South East	366	4.5	307	3.8	283	3.6	321	4.1
South West	151	3.0	102	2.0	143	2.8	170	3.3
Wales	73	2.6	60	2.1	64	2.2	94	3.2
West Midlands	451	7.8	315	5.4	386	6.5	352	5.8
Yorkshire	259	5.0	250	4.8	263	5.0	255	4.9
England and Wales	3,464	6.3	2,942	3.9	2,906	5.2	3,069	5.5

The data in Figure 19 relates to numbers of arrests for knife crime across Cheshire. It confirms that while the number of children arrested for carrying or using knives increased slightly in 2022, it reduced in 2023 and have remained at broadly low levels for the last 5 years. Apart from two profoundly serious events with tragic outcomes, Cheshire has not seen the significant and sustained increase in knife crime experienced elsewhere in the country.



Volumes of youth knife crime have dropped in the current financial year, following a brief peak in 2022/23

Figure 19. Overall trend of knives and bladed items 2019-March 2024
 Chart reproduced with permission from Cheshire Constabulary

The comprehensive needs analysis that informed the Cheshire SVS showed 73% of youth justice children had convictions for violent offences, but also revealed a similar proportion of these children had themselves experienced violent victimisation *prior* to the onset of their own offending. Violence breeds violence and needs to be ‘treated’ in a similar way to transmittable diseases, which is why the Cheshire SVS has adopted a public health approach.

Contextual safeguarding partnerships are established at place and the YJS is an integral partner of these arrangements in all four areas. Good partnership and intelligence sharing with police (including cross border with Merseyside in particular, which is the major 'exporter' of county lines into Cheshire) ensures the National Referral Mechanism is applied appropriately. There have been several cross-force-operational examples of sensitively managed police investigations to tackle organised crime and protect Cheshire children, who have been exploited to supply drugs for high tier Merseyside OCGs.

YJS managers will continue to contribute to the design and delivery of multi-agency, contextual safeguarding training at place, particularly in relation to child criminal exploitation. Specialist independent experts in county-lines such as St Giles Trust via the joint Cheshire and Merseyside consortium training group have been commissioned. YJS also participates in safeguarding audits, rapid reviews, and independently chaired learning reviews when necessary.

11.8 Detention in police custody

Figure 20 shows the numbers of children detained overnight are extremely low and equates to fewer than five children per month across the three custody suites. This is typically fewer than 4% of children arrested by Cheshire police each month.

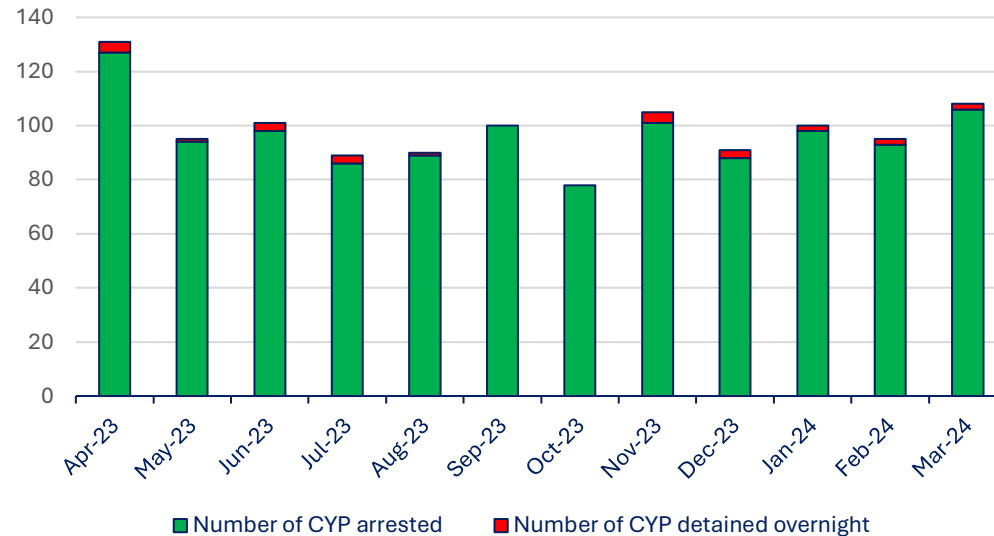


Figure 20. Numbers of children detained overnight in Cheshire compared to number of arrests from April 2023-March 2024

The low and unpredictable demand on local authorities for emergency Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) beds means they have not always been available when required, so occasionally children are detained in police custody as a last resort. Overnight detentions in custody will continue to be a standing agenda item for scrutiny at the YJS Management Board and as a partnership, we are taking decisive action. From 2024, Directors of Children’s Services will receive a notification every time a child from their area is detained overnight due to an alternative PACE bed not being available. The police representative on the YJS Management Board is also the senior accountable officer for police on all four children’s safeguarding partnerships and has formally raised the paucity of PACE beds at executive partnership Boards. Cheshire and Merseyside Commissioners will be exploring shared PACE beds as part of the Commissioning Workstreams for both Fostering and Residential as there is a lack of sufficiency in both areas. Consideration is being given to Residential and other Safe Spaces, but Foster Care is the preferred option. Whilst numbers of children detained

are low for each individual local authority, collectively a solution could be viable. This workstream is led by a commissioning manager in St Helens Council on behalf of the Cheshire and Merseyside local authority Directors of Children's Services.

11.9 Remands

There were only seven children in total across Cheshire remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation in 2023-2024 (Figure 21). All remands were for serious offences where a community alternative to remand was not viable. Four of the seven remanded were charged with murder or attempted murder and the remainder for section 18 wounding with intent and possession with intent to supply class A drugs. The child remanded for drug offences had an extensive history of offending and several periods in secure welfare placements previously. He had offended while remanded into local authority care and presented a significant risk of harm to other cared for children he had 'introduced' to organised crime.

Cheshire YJS retains the confidence of the courts by ensuring children are assessed promptly for robust packages of bail support as an alternative to remand. We have a proactive partnership with local children's social care and policing regarding remands into local authority care, but, as mentioned in Section 11.8, options are constrained by the paucity of safe, suitable accommodation where risk (to victim or wider public) and the child's own complex needs can be adequately managed. Placement sufficiency for local authorities is a national issue that the Association of Directors of Children's Services and others are very vocal on because accommodation for children facing serious criminal charges is an added complexity (and cost).

Through the current national framework for remands, the MOJ provides local authorities with a small financial contribution toward the costs of remands (Table 4). The allocation is based on historical bed night data*. A consultation on the funding of remands to youth detention accommodation was published in early 2024 and Cheshire YJS responded on behalf of the partnership, highlighting Cheshire’s low remand number. Table 4 shows the uncontrollable costs incurred by Cheshire local authorities (particularly for Warrington) due to CJS timescales. Local authorities have no control over length of time from initial charge through to conclusion of trial and a fundamental review and fairer funding formula for remands is required.

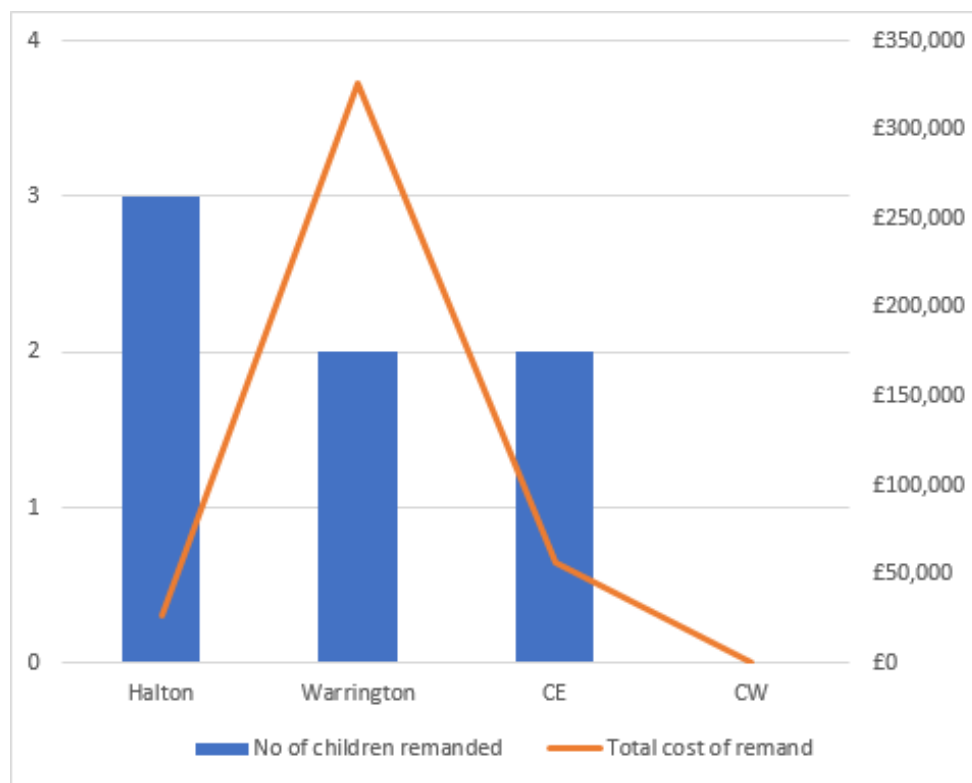


Figure 21. Number of children remanded in Cheshire 2023-2024

Table 4. Remand allocation from the MoJ for Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington 2023-2024

Local Authority RIC	2023/24 Budget*	2023/24 Actual Spend	2023/24 Remaining/Deficit
Cheshire East	£107,483	£56,088	£51,395
Cheshire West	£18,859	£0	£18,859
Halton	£0	£26,896	-£26,896
Warrington	£11,740	£326,230	-£314,490
Total for YJS	£138,082	£409,214	-£271,132

Table 5 shows the number of bed nights children were remanded into local authority accommodation as a direct alternative to custody (note this is only for those children who were charged with offences that met the secure remand criteria).

The MOJ has committed to producing a national concordat relating to youth remands and is encouraging local Youth Justice partnerships to sign up to it. When the concordat is published, the Head of Service will ensure it is tabled at the YJS Management Board for consideration.

Table 5. Number of bed nights by local authority 2023/2024

Remand to local authority accommodation	2023/24 Bed Nights
Cheshire East	14
Cheshire West	0
Halton	122
Warrington	0
Total Cheshire wide for YJS	136

11.10 Use of custody and constructive resettlement

The number of children in Cheshire who receive a custodial sentence is low, with typically fewer than 10 children across the whole of the county serving custodial sentences at any one time. Use of custody is rightly reserved for those children who have committed serious crimes, usually for serious violent or sexual offences.

Table 6 shows in 2023-2024, custodial sentences were imposed on nine children from Cheshire ranging from four months to 23 years. The 23-year sentence being imposed on the 16-year-old Warrington child sentenced for murder.

All children released from custody before reaching 18 have individual resettlement plans in line with the principles of constructive resettlement. The low number in Cheshire means we do not have a specialist resettlement team but our children do benefit from the continuity of multi-disciplinary support (YJS worker plus health and education professionals) that follows them from court, through their time in custody and after release.

Table 6. Number and duration of custodial sentences imposed on Cheshire children in 2023-2024

Local Authority	Young Offenders Institute	Detention Training Order	Section 250	Section 259
Cheshire East	0	4 Months	27 Months (2yrs 3m) 50 Months (4yrs 2m)	0
Cheshire West	30 Months (2yrs 6m)	0	40 Months (3yrs 3m)	0
Halton	0	8 Months 12 Months	0	0
Warrington	0	0	54 Months (4yrs 6m)	276 Months (23 yrs)
Total for YJS	30 Months (2yrs 6m) (1 child)	24 Months (3 children)	171 Months (14yrs 3m) (4 children)	276 Months (23 yrs) (1 child)

11.11 Working with families

Frontline practitioners are encouraged to adopt a whole family approach in their work. Where relevant and appropriate, practitioners work collaboratively with Early Help, Social Care and other locality-based services to ensure that caregivers have access to help and support where this is needed.



As a service, we are committed to promoting this approach within practice and will be reviewing opportunities to strengthen this area over the coming years.

Caregivers are also a key strand in our work to develop participation.

To have such a breakthrough is really empowering and showcases the benefits of joint working with the family!!
(Social Worker)

“I didn't know what to expect. I felt like we was going to be judged because of what's happened. But that's not what they've been about. Everybody has been fantastic. What's been a really awful experience personally for us, the help and support that's there and things that they've done has been amazing”

(Parent)

Sign off, submission and approval		
Helen Brackenbury Chair of YJS Board Director of Children's Social Care Cheshire West and Chester Council		27 June 2024
Tom Dooks YJS Head of Service		27 June 2024

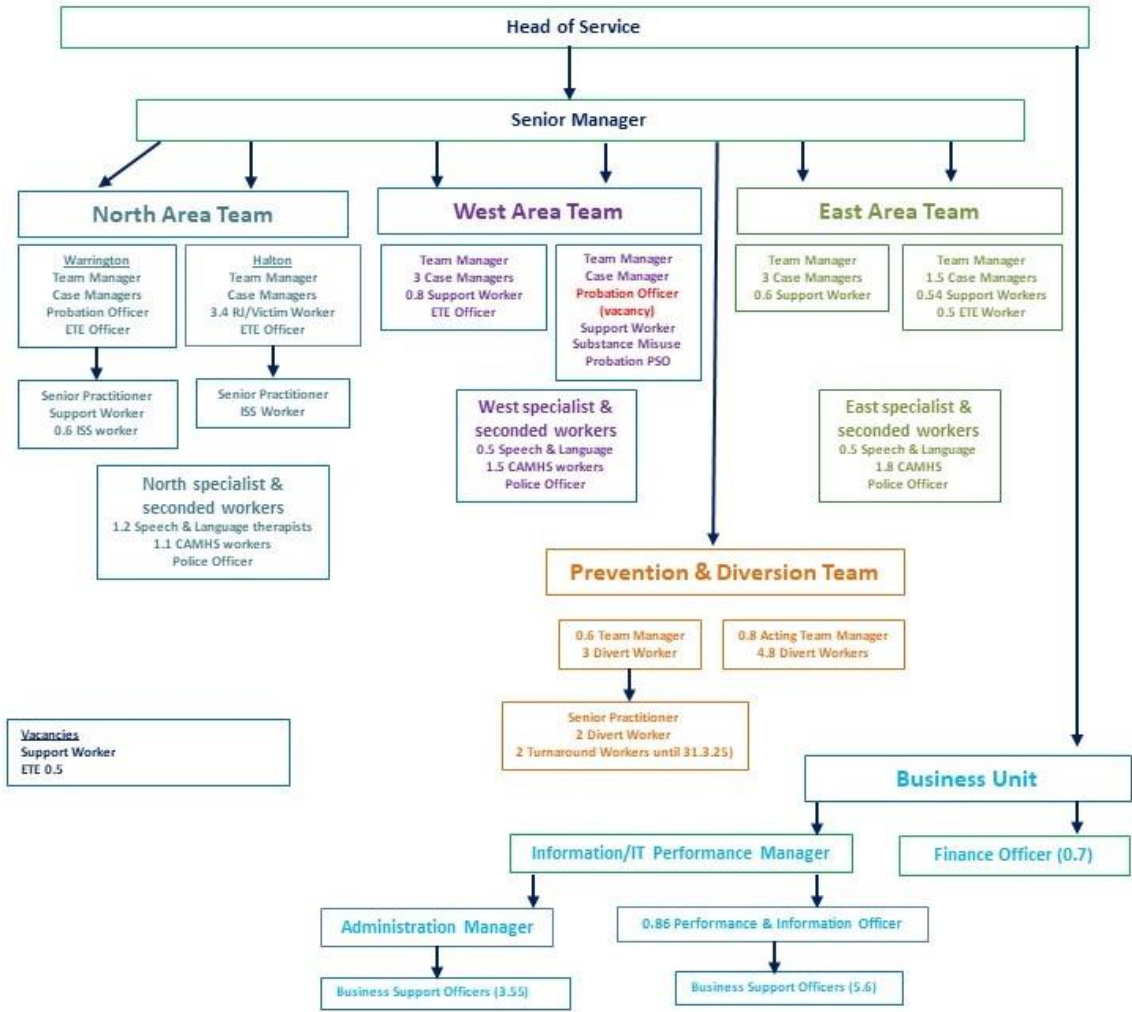
Appendices

Appendix A1: Key Performance Indicators (YJB data)

KPI	Explanation	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
KPI 1 – Accommodation	% of children in the community and being released from custody with suitable accommodation arrangements	100% (48/48)	100% (66/66)	98.9% (93/94)	100% (87/87)
KPI 2 – Education, Training & Employment	% of children in the community and being released from custody attending a suitable ETE arrangement	81.3% (39/48)	75.8% (50/66)	84% (79/74)	68.6% (67/87)
KPI 3 – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities /Additional Learning Needs	% of children who have an identified SEND need (or Additional Learning Need in Wales), are in suitable ETE and have a formal learning plan in place for the current academic year	100% (8/8)	90% (9/10)	92.9% (13/14)	78.6% (13/14)
KPI 4 – Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing	% of children in the community and being released from custody with a screened OR identified need for an intervention to improve mental health or emotional wellbeing; and of that the % of planned/offered interventions; of that % of children attending interventions.	81.2% (36/48) Screened 55.5% (20/36) Offered 65% (13/20) Attended	51.5% (34/60) Screened 67.6% (23/34) Offered 78.2% (18/23) Attended	48.9% (46/94) Screened 65.2% (30/46) Offered 70% (21/30) Attended	67.8% (59/87) Screened 72.8% (43/59) Offered 93% (40/43) Attended
KPI 5 – Substance misuse	% of children with a screened OR identified need for specialist treatment intervention to address substance misuse; and of that the % of children with planned or offered intervention/treatment; and of that the % number of children attending intervention/treatment.	16.6% (8/48) Screened 87.5% (7/8) Offered 100% (7/7) Attended	27.2% (18/66) Screened 77.7% (14/18) Offered 85.7% (12/14) Attended	43.1% (14/94) Screened 71.4% (10/14) Offered 100% (10/10) Attended	22.9% (20/87) Screened 75% (15/20) Offered 100% (15/15) Attended

KPI	Explanation	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
KPI 6 – Out of Court Disposals (OOCDS)	% of OOCDS disposal interventions that are completed/not completed.	91.7% (11/12)	90.6% (29/32)	98.2% (56/57)	95.8% (46/48)
KPI 7 – Management board attendance	Monitoring senior partner representation at management boards and monitoring if partners contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality.	5/5	2/5	3/5	5/5
KPI 8 – Wider services	% children who are currently on either an Early Help (EH) plan; on a child protection (CP) plan or classified as Child in need (CIN) or a looked after child (LAC).	31.3% (15/48)	57.6% (38/66)	48.9% (46/94)	50.6% (44/87)
KPI 9 – Serious youth violence	Proportion of children convicted for SYV on the YOT Children.	3.4% (7/206)	7.8% (16/205)	6% (11/182)	4.4% (8/181)
KPI 10 – Victims	Number of victims who consent to be contact by the YOT, and of those, the number of victims: engaged with about Restorative Justice opportunities; asked their view prior to OOCDS decision-making and planning for statutory court orders; provided information about the progress of the child's case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate services that support victims (when requested).	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Appendix A2. YJS Organisational Structure



Appendix B1: YJS Budget, Costs and Contributions

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board			*1,248,480	1,248,480
Local Authority	49,022	697,599	*1,651,138	2,397,759
Police	184,905			184,905
Police Crime Commissioner			217,928	217,928
Probation	144,638		15,500	160,138
Health	336,689		20,594	357,283
Other			2,500	2,500
Total	715,254	697,599	3,156,140	4,568,993

* Exact contributions may be subject to change

**Appendix B2: Staffing of the YJS by contract type;
No. of full-time equivalent staff**

Type of Contract	Strategic Manager	Operational Manager	Practitioner	Admin	TOTAL
Permanent	2	6.51	37.2	11.83	57.54
Fixed-term		0.8	3.54	1	5.34
Vacant			3		3
Seconded Probation			2		2
Seconded Police			3		3
Seconded Health (Substance Misuse)			0.2		0.2
Seconded Health (Mental Health)			3.9		3.9
Seconded Health (Speech/ language)			2.4		2.4
Total	2	7.31	55.24	12.83	77.38
Disabled (self-classified)	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix B3: Staffing of the YJS by sex and ethnicity; No. of individual people

Ethnicity	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Asian											0	0
Black						1					0	1
Mixed		1						2	1		2	2
White	1		1	7	5	38		14	9	35	16	94
Any other ethnic group											0	0
Not known											0	0
Total	1	1	1	7	5	39	0	16	10	35	18	97



REPORT TO:	Health Policy & Performance Board (HPPB)
DATE:	24 th September 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Director – Legal & Democratic Services
PORTFOLIO:	Health and Wellbeing
SUBJECT:	Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements – Cheshire & Merseyside
WARD(S):	Borough wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The report is to introduce proposed revisions to the Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements, which are in operation across Cheshire and Merseyside and to seek the endorsement of the Board to the revised arrangements and its referral to Council for approval.

2.0 **RECOMMENDED: That**

1) the report be noted; and

2) the Board endorses the revised Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements and recommends it to Council for approval.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Knowsley have led on a piece of work to review the Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements and have identified a number of proposed changes, which are being recommended for adoption by each constituent authority. The revised draft is attached as Appendix 1, with the proposed changes highlighted in yellow. They remove all references to the powers of referral to the Health Secretary and add some text on the ability to request a “call-in” by the Health Secretary. There is also amended text around the health scrutiny principles.

3.2 It is considered by officers that these changes are necessary and proportionate, and the revised arrangements are recommended for endorsement by the Board and referral to Council for approval.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The revised arrangements are considered to be fit for purpose and will assist the Council and partner authorities in upholding policies.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

The arrangements are considered to improve the previous version and will therefore better assist in upholding the priority.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

No specific implications.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

No specific implications.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

No specific implications.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

No specific implications.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

No specific implications.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no risks requiring control measures or a full risk assessment.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no specific implications arising from the report.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific implications arising from the report.

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

10.1 There are none within the meaning of the Act.

PROTOCOL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS IN CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This protocol has been developed as a framework for the operation of joint health scrutiny arrangements across the local authorities of Cheshire and Merseyside. It allows for:

- scrutiny of substantial developments and variations of the health service; and,
- discretionary scrutiny of local health services.

1.2 The protocol provides a framework for health scrutiny arrangements which operate on a joint basis only. Each constituent local authority should have its own local arrangements in place for carrying out health scrutiny activity individually.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The relevant legislation regarding health scrutiny is:

- Health and Social Care Act 2012,
- The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013; and
- The Health and Care Act 2022.

This is supplemented by relevant guidance:

- Local Authority Health Scrutiny (DHSC, updated 2024)
- Statutory guidance: “Reconfiguring NHS services – ministerial intervention powers” (DHSC, 2024).

2.2 In summary, the statutory framework authorises local authorities individually and collectively to:

- review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service; and,
- consider consultations by a relevant NHS commissioning body or provider of NHS-funded services on any proposal for a substantial development or variation to the health service in the local authority’s area.

2.3 Ultimately the regulations place a requirement on relevant scrutiny arrangements to reach a view on whether they are satisfied that any proposal that is deemed to be a substantial development or variation is in the interests of the health service in that area. In instances where a proposal impacts on the residents of one local authority area exclusively,

this responsibility lays with that authority's health scrutiny arrangements alone.

- 2.4 Where such proposals impact on more than one local authority area, each authority's health scrutiny arrangements must consider whether the proposals constitute a substantial development or variation or not. The regulations place a requirement on those local authorities that agree that a proposal is substantial to establish, in each instance, a joint overview and scrutiny committee for the purposes of considering it. This protocol deals with the proposed operation of such arrangements for the local authorities of Cheshire and Merseyside.
- 2.5 Whilst it is recognised that the previous power of a health scrutiny committee or joint health scrutiny committee to refer a service change proposal to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has been removed, such committees will now possess the ability to request formally that the Secretary of State "call-in" a service change proposal. The ability to "call-in" a proposal should only be used in exceptional circumstances where all efforts to resolve issues locally have been exhausted.

3. PURPOSE OF THE PROTOCOL

- 3.1 This protocol sets out the framework for the operation of joint scrutiny arrangements where:
- a) an NHS commissioning body or health service provider consults with more than one local authority on any proposal it has under consideration, for a substantial development/variation of the health service;
 - b) joint scrutiny activity is being carried out on a discretionary basis into the planning, provision and operation of the health service.
- 3.2 The protocol covers the local authorities of Cheshire and Merseyside including:
- Cheshire East Council
 - Cheshire West and Chester Council
 - Halton Borough Council
 - Knowsley Council
 - Liverpool City Council
 - St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
 - Sefton Council
 - Warrington Borough Council
 - Wirral Borough Council
- 3.3 Whilst this protocol deals with arrangements within the boundaries of Cheshire and Merseyside, it is recognised that there may be occasions

when consultations/discretionary activity may affect adjoining regions/ areas. Arrangements to deal with such circumstances would have to be determined and agreed separately, as and when appropriate.

4. PRINCIPLES FOR JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY

4.1 The fundamental principle underpinning joint health scrutiny will be co-operation and partnership with a mutual understanding of the following aims:

- To improve the health of local people and to tackle health inequalities (outcome-focussed);
- To ensure that scrutiny activity adopts an appropriate balance between a focus on future service delivery and a focus on responding to immediate concerns/ issues (balanced)
- To represent the views of local people and ensure that these views are identified and integrated into local health service plans, services and commissioning (inclusive);
- To scrutinise whether all parts of the community are able to access health services and whether the outcomes of health services are equally good for all sections of the community (evidence-informed); and,
- To work with NHS bodies and local health providers to ensure that their health services are planned and provided in the best interests of the communities they serve, taking into account any potential impact on health service staff (collaborative).

5. SUBSTANTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF /VARIATION TO SERVICES

5.1 Requirements to consult

5.1.1 All relevant NHS bodies and providers of NHS-funded services¹ are required to consult local authorities when they have a proposal for a substantial development or substantial variation to the health service.

5.1.2 A substantial development or variation is not defined in legislation. Guidance has suggested that the key feature is that it should involve a major impact on the services experienced by patients and/or future patients.

¹ This includes NHS England and any body commissioning services to the residents of Cheshire and Merseyside, plus providers such as NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trust and any other relevant provider of NHS funded services which provides health services to those residents, including public health.

- 5.1.3 Where a substantial development or variation impacts on the residents within one local authority area boundary, only the relevant local authority health scrutiny function shall be consulted on the proposal.
- 5.1.4 Where a proposal impacts on residents across more than one local authority boundary, the NHS body/health service provider is obliged to consult all those authorities whose residents are affected by the proposals in order to determine whether the proposal represents a substantial development or variation.
- 5.1.5 Those authorities that agree that any such proposal does constitute a substantial development or variation are obliged to form a joint health overview and scrutiny committee for the purpose of formal consultation by the proposer of the development or variation.
- 5.1.6 Whilst each local authority must decide individually whether a proposal represents a substantial development/variation, it is only the statutory joint health scrutiny committee which can formally comment on the proposals if more than one authority agrees that the proposed change is “substantial”.
- 5.1.7 Determining that a proposal is not a substantial development/variation removes the ability of an individual local authority to comment formally on the proposal.. Once such decisions are made, the ongoing obligation on the proposer to consult formally on a proposal relates only to those authorities that have deemed the proposed change to be “substantial” and this must be done through the vehicle of the joint committee. Furthermore the proposer will not be obliged to provide updates or report back on proposals to individual authorities that have not deemed them to be “substantial”.
- 5.1.8 For the avoidance of doubt, if only one authority amongst a number being consulted on a proposal deem it to be a substantial change, the ongoing process of consultation on the proposal between the proposer and the remaining authority falls outside the provisions of this protocol.

5.2 Process for considering proposals for a substantial development/variation

- 5.2.1 In consulting with the local authority in the first instance to determine whether the change is considered substantial, the relevant NHS commissioning body / provider of NHS-funded services is required to:
- Provide the proposed date by which it requires comments on the proposals
 - Provide the proposed date by which it intends to make a final decision as to whether to implement the proposal
 - Publish the dates specified above

- Inform the local authority if the dates change²

5.2.2 NHS commissioning bodies and local health service providers are not required to consult with local authorities where certain ‘emergency’ decisions have been taken. All exemptions to consult are set out within regulations.³

5.2.3 In considering whether a proposal is substantial, all local authorities are encouraged to consider the following criteria:

- *Changes in accessibility of services:* any proposal which involves the withdrawal or change of patient or diagnostic facilities for one or more speciality from the same location.
- *Impact on the wider community and other services:* This could include economic impact, transport, regeneration issues.
- *Patients affected:* changes may affect the whole population, or a small group. If changes affect a small group, the proposal may still be regarded as substantial, particularly if patients need to continue accessing that service for many years.
- *Methods of service delivery:* altering the way a service is delivered may be a substantial change, for example moving a particular service into community settings rather than being entirely hospital based.
- *Potential level of public interest:* proposals that are likely to generate a significant level of public interest in view of their likely impact.

5.2.4 These criteria will assist in ensuring that there is a consistent approach applied by each authority in making their respective decisions on whether a proposal is “substantial” or not. In making the decision, each authority will focus on how the proposals impacts on its own area/residents.

6. OPERATION OF A STATUTORY JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6.1 General

6.1.1 A joint health overview and scrutiny committee will be made up of each of the constituent local authorities that deem a proposal to be a substantial development or variation. This joint committee will be

² Section 23 of the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013

³ Section 24 *ibid*

formally consulted on the proposal and, in exceptional circumstances, formally request that the Secretary of State to “call-in” a proposal, where local consultation has failed to resolve significant outstanding issues.

6.1.2 A decision as to whether the proposal is deemed substantial shall be taken within a reasonable timeframe and in accordance with any deadline set by the lead local authority (see section 6.6), following consultation with the other participating authorities.

6.2 Powers

6.2.1 In dealing with substantial development/variations, any statutory joint health overview and scrutiny committee that is established can:

- require relevant NHS bodies and health service providers to provide information to and attend before meetings of the committee to answer questions
- make comments on the subject proposal by a date provided by the NHS body/local health service provider
- make reports and recommendations to relevant NHS bodies/local health providers
- require relevant NHS bodies/local health service providers to respond within a fixed timescale to reports or recommendations
- carry out further negotiations with the relevant NHS body where it is proposing not to agree to a substantial variation proposal.

6.2.2 A joint health overview and scrutiny committee has the ability to request the Secretary of State to “call-in” a service change proposal where it has not been possible to resolve significant outstanding issues during the course of local consultation. The ability to request the “call-in” of a proposal should only be exercised in exceptional circumstances where all possible efforts to resolve the matter locally have been exhausted, as outlined in 6.2.3 and 6.2.4 below.

6.2.3 Where a committee has made a recommendation to a NHS commissioning body/local health service provider regarding a proposal and the NHS body/provider disagrees with the recommendation, the local health service provider/NHS body is required to inform the joint committee and attempt to enter into negotiation to try and reach an agreement.

6.2.4 In any circumstance where a committee disagrees with a proposal for a substantial variation, there will be an expectation that negotiations will be entered into with the NHS commissioning body/local health service provider in order to attempt to reach agreement.

6.2.5 Where local authorities have agreed that the proposals represent substantial developments or variations to services and agreed to enter into joint arrangements, it is only the joint health overview and scrutiny committee which may exercise these powers.

6.2.5 An ad-hoc statutory joint health overview and scrutiny committee established under the terms of this protocol may only exercise the powers set out in 6.2.1 to 6.2.4 above in relation to the statutory consultation for which it was originally established. Its existence is time-limited to the course of the specified consultation and it may not otherwise carry out any other activity.

6.3 Membership

6.3.1 The participating local authorities must ensure that those Councillors nominated to a joint health overview and scrutiny committee produce a membership that reflects the overall political balance across the participating local authorities. However, political balance requirements for each joint committee established may be waived with the agreement of all participating local authorities, should time and respective approval processes permit.

6.3.2 A joint committee will be composed of Councillors from each of the participating authorities within Cheshire and Merseyside in the following ways:

- where 4 or more local authorities deem the proposed change to be substantial, each authority will nominate 2 elected members
- where 3 or less local authorities deem the proposed change to be substantial, then each participating authority will nominate 3 elected members.

(Note: In making their nominations, each participating authority will be asked to ensure that their representatives have the experience and expertise to contribute effectively to a health scrutiny process)

Local authorities who consider change to be 'substantial'	No' of elected members to be nominated from each authority
4 or more	2 members
3 or less	3 members

6.3.3 Each local authority will be obliged to nominate elected members through their own relevant internal processes and provide notification of those members to the lead local authority at the earliest opportunity.

6.3.4 To avoid inordinate delays in the establishment of a relevant joint committee, it is suggested that constituent authorities either arrange for delegated decision-making arrangements to be put in place to deal with such nominations at the earliest opportunity, or to nominate potential

representatives annually as part of annual meeting processes to cover all potential seat allocations.

6.5 Quorum

6.5.1 The quorum of the meetings of a joint committee shall be one third of the full membership of any Joint Committee, subject to the quorum being, in each instance, no less than 3.

6.5.2 There will be an expectation for there to be representation from each authority at a meeting of any joint committee established. The lead local authority will attempt to ensure that this representation is achieved.

6.6 Identifying a lead local authority

6.6.1 A lead local authority should be identified from one of the participating authorities to take the lead in terms of administering and organising a joint committee in relation to a specific proposal.

6.6.2 Selection of a lead authority should, where possible, be chosen by mutual agreement by the participating authorities and take into account both capacity to service a joint health scrutiny committee and available resources. The application of the following criteria should also guide determination of the lead authority:

- The local authority within whose area the service being changed is based; or
- The local authority within whose area the lead commissioner or provider leading the consultation is based.

6.6.3 Lead local authority support should include a specific contact point for communication regarding the administration of the joint committee. There will be an obligation on the key lead authority officer to liaise appropriately with officers from each participating authority to ensure the smooth running of the joint committee.

6.6.4 Each participating local authority will have the discretion to provide whatever support it may deem appropriate to their own representative(s) to allow them to make a full contribution to the work of a joint committee.

6.7 Nomination of Chair/ Vice-Chair

The chair/ vice-chair of the joint health overview and scrutiny committee will be nominated and agreed at the committee's first meeting.

6.8 Meetings of a Joint Committee

6.8.1 At the first meeting of any joint committee established to consider a proposal for a substantial development or variation, the committee will also consider and agree:

- The joint committee's terms of reference;
- The procedural rules for the operation of the joint committee;
- The process/ timeline for dealing formally with the consultation, including:
 - the number of sessions required to consider the proposal; and,
 - the date by which the joint committee aims to reach its final conclusion on the proposal – which should be in advance of the proposed date by which the NHS commissioning body/service provider intends to make its final decision on it.

6.8.2 All other meetings of the joint committee will be determined in line with the proposed approach for dealing with the consultation. Different approaches may be taken for each consultation and could include gathering evidence from:

- NHS commissioning bodies and local service providers;
- patients and the public;
- voluntary sector and community organisations; and
- NHS regulatory bodies.

6.9 Reports of a Joint Committee

6.9.1 A joint committee is entitled to produce a written report which may include recommendations. As a minimum, the report will include:

- An explanation of why the matter was reviewed or scrutinised.
- A summary of the evidence considered.
- A list of the participants involved in the review.
- An explanation of any recommendations on the matter reviewed or scrutinised.

The lead authority will be responsible for the drafting of a report for consideration by the joint committee.

6.9.2 Reports shall be agreed by the majority of members of a joint committee and submitted to the relevant NHS commissioning body/health service provider.

6.9.3 Where a member of a joint health scrutiny committee does not agree with the content of the committee's report, they may produce a report

setting out their findings and recommendations which will be attached as an appendix to the joint health scrutiny committee's main report.

7. DISCRETIONARY HEALTH SCRUTINY

- 7.1 More generally, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the 2013 Health Scrutiny Regulations provide for local authority health scrutiny arrangements to scrutinise the planning, provision and operation of health services.
- 7.2 In this respect, two or more local authorities may appoint a joint committee for the purposes of scrutinising the planning, provision and operation of health services which impact on a wider footprint than that of an individual authority's area.
- 7.3 Any such committee will have the power to:
- require relevant NHS commissioning bodies and health service providers to provide information to and attend before meetings of the committee to answer questions.
 - make reports and recommendations to relevant NHS commissioning bodies/local health providers.
 - require relevant NHS commissioning bodies/local health service providers to respond within a fixed timescale to reports or recommendations.
- 7.4 Ordinarily, a discretionary joint committee would not have the ability to request the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care "call-in" a service change proposal. However, please note section 8.3 below.
- 7.5 In establishing a joint committee for the purposes of discretionary joint scrutiny activity, the constituent local authorities should determine the committee's role and remit. This should include consideration as to whether the committee operates as a standing arrangement for the purposes of considering all of the planning, provision and operation of health services within a particular area or whether it is being established for the purposes of considering the operation of one particular health service with a view to making recommendations for its improvement. In the case of the latter, the committee must disband once its specific scrutiny activity is complete.
- 7.6 In administering any such committee, the proposed approach identified in sections 6.3 – 6.9 of this protocol should be followed, as appropriate.

8. SCRUTINY OF CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE INTERGRATED CARE SYSTEM

- 8.1 Further to this protocol and in particular section 7 above, the nine local authorities have agreed to establish a discretionary standing joint health scrutiny committee in response to the establishment of the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System.
- 8.2 A separate Joint Scrutiny Committee Arrangements document has been produced in line with the provisions of this protocol to outline how the standing joint committee will operate.
- 8.3 In summary, the “Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System Joint Health Scrutiny Committee” has the following responsibilities:
- To scrutinise the work of the Integrated Care System in relation to any matter regarding the planning, provision and operation of the health service at footprint level only; and
 - To consider the merits of any service change proposals that have been deemed to be a substantial variation in services by all nine authorities.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The local authorities of Cheshire and Merseyside have adopted this protocol as a means of governing the operation of joint health scrutiny arrangements both mandatory and discretionary. The protocol is intended to support effective consultation with NHS commissioning bodies or local health service providers on any proposal for a substantial development of or variation in health services. The protocol also supports the establishment of a joint health overview and scrutiny committee where discretionary health scrutiny activity is deemed appropriate.
- 9.2 The protocol will be reviewed regularly, and at least on an annual basis to ensure that it complies with all current legislation and any guidance published by the Department of Health and Social Care.

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NOTICE OF MOTION

To be submitted to the meeting of Full Council to be held on:

Wednesday 23rd October 2024

.....

in accordance with Standing Order Number 6.

	Name (in capitals)	Signature
Proposer:	MARTHA LLOYD JONES	Martha Lloyd Jones
Seconder:	EDWARD DOURLEY	E. Dourley

Motion Title: *Defining our community's response to August's disturbances*

Halton Council is proud that our City Region is defined by its fine history of supporting people in need of shelter or help with these groups have enriched our communities and worked alongside the existing community to build up our local economy and services.

With our fellow residents, we were appalled to hear of the terrible attacks in Southport on the three children, their friends and adults who bravely tried to defend them. Our thoughts remain with everyone affected and their families.

We are no less appalled at the cynical high-jacking of that tragedy as an excuse for attacks on police and emergency workers, malicious vandalism, arson and looting. We stand in support of our police and emergency workers who risked their lives to protect people and businesses and welcome the full force of the law being brought against those who use or encourage race hatred, violence and terror. The recent drunken and self-indulgent hooliganism was an attack on the law abiding 60+ million UK residents and businesses who will pay the bill in millions of pounds and the other crimes that the police should have been addressing.

Over the past half century, the people of Halton have overcome enormous social and economic challenges: the dismantling of our core industries, pharmaceuticals and Engineering; the cost of living crisis; austerity; the pandemic. As a community, we have met these challenges together.

To protect and strengthen our Halton Togetherness we resolve to:

- Continue to fight the adverse legacy of the social and economic challenges we have faced to secure a better life for all our residents.

- Write to the Prime Minister to support his government's stance on bringing immediate justice to those responsible for acts of violence and hatred and for greater promotion of accurate information on the role of migrants in society and regulation of social media to prevent its role in inciting such acts
- Stand with all our Communities against hatred and misinformation.
- Re-enforce our work on togetherness and social cohesion

(NB This motion must be submitted to the Chief Executive, c/o the Principal Committee Services Officer, at least seven clear working days prior to the date of the relevant Council meeting.


In accordance with SO6, if the subject matter of the motion comes within the province of any Panel, Board or Committee or Committees it shall without introductory speeches by the mover or seconder upon being moved and seconded stand referred without discussion to such Panel, Board or Committee or Committees, or to such other Panel, Board or Committee or Committees as the Council may determine, for consideration and report. However, the Mayor may, if s/he considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of business, allow the motion to be dealt with at the meeting at which it is brought forward.)

NOTICE OF MOTION

To be submitted to the meeting of Full Council to be held on:
Wednesday 23rd October 2024

.....

in accordance with **Standing Order Number 6.**

	Name (in capitals)	Signature
Proposer:	Cllr SIÂN DAVIDSON	
Seconder:	Cllr Margaret Ratcliffe	

Motion: Changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance and protecting pensioners from fuel poverty

1. This Council Notes

- 1.1** The Labour Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like Pension credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.
- 1.2** The estimated impact of this decision, which Age UK says will mean 2 million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it.
- 1.3** The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of Halton and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.
- 1.4** The criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.
- 1.5** The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

2. This Council believes:

- 2.1** That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.
- 2.2** While some pensioners currently in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment may not require it, 19,809 across Halton sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance.
- 2.3** The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and wellbeing of our poorest older residents.

- 2.4** The government's approach fails to consider the administrative barriers and stigma that prevent eligible pensioners from claiming Pension Credit, leaving many without the support they desperately need.

3. This Council resolves to:

- 3.1** Bring forward a Council-led local awareness campaign to alert those eligible of Pension Credit, which in some respects will help access to the Winter Fuel Payment for those most in need.
- 3.2** Requests that the Council Leader writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging a review of the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Payment and asking the government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those not claiming Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty.
- 3.3** Commit the Council to signing the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK and write to all members offering them the opportunity to sign the petition themselves.
- 3.4** Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in Halton are supported in claiming their entitlement.

(NB This motion must be submitted to the Chief Executive, c/o the Principal Committee Services Officer, at least seven clear working days prior to the date of the relevant Council meeting.

In accordance with SO6, if the subject matter of the motion comes within the province of any Panel, Board or Committee or Committees it shall without introductory speeches by the mover or seconder upon being moved and seconded stand referred without discussion to such Panel, Board or Committee or Committees, or to such other Panel, Board or Committee or Committees as the Council may determine, for consideration and report. However, the Mayor may, if s/he considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of business, allow the motion to be dealt with at the meeting at which it is brought forward.)

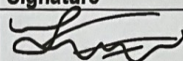
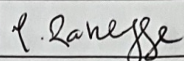
NOTICE OF MOTION

To be submitted to the meeting of Full Council to be held on:

Wednesday 23rd October 2024

.....

in accordance with Standing Order Number 6.

	Name (in capitals)	Signature
Proposer:	Cllr SIÂN DAVIDSON	
Seconder:	Cllr M RATAIFFE	

Motion: Changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance and protecting pensioners from fuel poverty

1. This Council Notes

- 1.1 The Labour Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like Pension credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.
- 1.2 The estimated impact of this decision, which Age UK says will mean 2 million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it.
- 1.3 The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of Halton and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.
- 1.4 The criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.
- 1.5 The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

2. This Council believes:

- 2.1 That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.
- 2.2 While some pensioners currently in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment may not require it, 19,809 across Halton sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance.
- 2.3 The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and wellbeing of our poorest older residents.

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