



**Executive Board**

**Thursday, 12 June 2025 2.00 p.m.  
The Boardroom, Municipal Building**

S. Young

**Chief Executive**

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

**PART 1**

Item	Page No
<b>1. MINUTES</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b>  Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
<b>3. DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO</b>  <b>(A) WIDNES TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK – CREATION OF WIDNES TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC BOARD</b>	<b>3 - 10</b>

*Please contact Gill Ferguson 0151 511 8059 or  
gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.  
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 10 July 2025*

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<b>8. SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</b>	
<b>PART II</b>	
<p>In this case the Board has a discretion to exclude the press and public and, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it is <b>RECOMMENDED</b> that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.</p>	
<b>9. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO</b>	
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*In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.*

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Tuesday, 13 May 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Ball, Dennett, Harris, T. McInerney, P. Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Lloyd Jones and Nelson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Osborne, M. Reaney and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>EXB127 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>EXB128 APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to appoint Councillor Wharton as the Leader and Councillor Thompson as the Deputy Leader of the Council for the 2025/26 Municipal Year</p>	Chief Executive
<p>EXB129 APPOINTMENT OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR AND APPOINTMENT OF HEALTH PPB CO-OPTEE</p> <p>The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive, regarding appointments to the Council's Boards, Committees and Scrutiny Co-ordinator post, and the re-appointment of a non-voting co-optee to the Health Policy and Performance Board, for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.</p> <p>A list of Committee and Board memberships was tabled at the meeting.</p>	



RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to make the following appointments:

Chief Executive

- 1) to the Council's Boards, Committees and Scrutiny Co-ordinator post, for the 2025/26 Municipal Year; and
- 2) Mr David Wilson - Healthwatch Halton, be re-appointed as non voting Co-optee to the Health Policy and Performance Board, for the 2025/26 Municipal Year

*Meeting ended at 2.05 p.m.*

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Executive Board
<b>DATE:</b>	12 June 2025
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Deputy Leader
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework – Creation of Widnes Strategic Board
<b>WARD(S)</b>	All Widnes

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members for approval, the structure for the Widnes Strategic Board.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board**

- 1. approves the structure of the Widnes Strategic Board and delegated authority be given to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects to finalise its members; and**
- 2. approves the draft Terms of Reference appendix 1 and delegated authority be given to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects to update and adapt the Terms of Reference as the projects contained within the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework evolve.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework and its supporting documents were presented to and endorsed by the Executive Board on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025.
- 3.2 One of the recommendations agreed on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 was ‘to move towards establishing a Widnes Strategic Board comprising relevant public and private sector partners, to have direct oversight of the delivery of projects.’

3.3 The structure before the Board today is the result of the approval of that recommendation.

3.4 The purpose of the Widnes Strategic Board is to:

- Provide advice, insight, and challenge to Halton Borough Council on the regeneration and development of Widnes town centre.
- Represent the interests of local residents, businesses, and community organisations.
- Support the delivery of the Widnes Regeneration Framework and related projects.
- Champion Widnes town centre and promote civic pride.

3.5 The Widnes Strategic Board will consist of up to 15 members drawn from the local community.

3.6 The table below demonstrates the demographic of members to join the Board. It is anticipated that some members of the Widnes Strategic Board may be able to represent more than one of the categories listed below in order to keep the Board to a maximum of 15 members.

	<b>Target background</b>
1	Halton Council (Portfolio Nominees) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Major Projects</li> <li>- Housing &amp; Environmental Sustainability.</li> <li>- Community Safety</li> </ul>
2	Business Sector Employers
3	Strategic Housing
4	Business Development and Support
5	MP for Widnes and Halewood
6	Voluntary and Community Sector
7	Cultural and Creative Industries
8	Education & Learning Sector
9	Health and Social Care (e.g. NHS Trust, local GP)
10	Policing
11	Tourism and Hospitality Sector
12	Leisure Sector

3.7 The Board will be supported by Regeneration Officers and occasionally officers from other departments as and when necessary. The Council's Programme Management Office will manage the administration and servicing of the Board.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Framework aligns with existing local and national policy objectives, supporting economic growth, sustainability, and community well-being. Its implementation may require updates to

planning policies, investment strategies, and partnership agreements to ensure effective delivery.

4.2 Consideration will also need to be given to how the Framework interacts with emerging policies, including those related to housing, transport and environmental sustainability.

4.3 Ensuring alignment with the Local Plan and broader strategic priorities will be essential to securing funding and stakeholder support.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with setting up a Board beyond minor expenses for refreshments at quarterly meetings.

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

### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

Possible positive implications depending on what developments and programmes are implemented.

### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

Potential for job creation and inward investment.

### **6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

Possible positive implications depending on what developments and programmes are implemented.

### **6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

Possible positive implications depending on what developments and programmes are implemented.

### **6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

Any development that comes forward through the Framework will be built to environmentally friendly building regulation standards and biodiversity net gain.

### **6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The future projects can help create assets and public realm for local people to enjoy.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Each project the Board discusses within the Framework will be subject to individual risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential challenges.

7.2 Bringing together people with different views and priorities is important, but it can also lead to disagreements. If these differences are not managed well, it could lead to delays in decision-making or difficulty in agreeing on actions. This could slow down progress or cause frustration among board members. Clear and agreed terms of reference will mitigate this risk.

7.3 If people in the wider community feel the Board is not making a real difference, or if they think decisions are being made behind closed doors, trust could be lost. Similarly, if the board's advice is not acted on, members may lose interest or feel that their time is being wasted. This could lead to the board being seen as ineffective. Regular review, feedback and improvement would help to mitigate this risk and keep the Board effective and inclusive over time.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Establishing a Widnes Strategic Board has the potential to advance equality and improve inclusion by actively involving a wide range of voices in shaping the future of the town centre.

8.2 All significant projects will be subject to their own Equality Impact Assessment at conception and design stage.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Consideration of the impacts of climate change, including reducing the carbon footprint, mitigation and adaptation will be required. At the Town Centre level, this would include such considerations such as reduced private transport use, provision of local renewable energy sources, alternative heating sources, Electric Vehicle charging points, appropriate building design, innovative construction methods, shading and planting. The Framework can have a role to reduce the Town Centre's impact on the climate as well as promoting good practices for residents and businesses.

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

- Draft Terms of Reference
- Map of area

**DRAFT****Widnes Strategic Board – Terms of Reference****Purpose**

The purpose of the Widnes Strategic Board is to:

- Establish Widnes Town Centre as a unique destination for everyone.
- Provide advice, insight, and challenge to Halton Borough Council on the regeneration and development of Widnes town centre.
- Represent the interests of local residents, businesses, and community organisations.
- Support the delivery of the Widnes Regeneration Framework and related projects.
- Champion Widnes town centre and promote civic pride.

**We shall deliver this by: -**

- Establishing a more family friendly destination based on its historic character.
- Offering what the big shopping mall and supermarkets cannot by providing for the day-to-day shopping needs of its immediate catchment area as well as a wider focus for local independent niche retailers and service providers.

We want to sustain and future-proof our existing town centre offer, whilst developing new markets, uses and businesses in a safe, accessible and attractive environment.

**Terms of Reference**

The Board's role is advisory. It will:

1. Ensure there is a platform for open discussion of important issues for the town.
2. Provide regular opportunities for local people to give their views and ideas on how we can be successful in what we want to achieve.
3. Provide a forum to enable local people and representatives from local partners to work together and champion ideas which will help to deliver what we want to achieve.
4. Identify current and emerging issues for the town centre.
5. Develop an action plan to develop the town centre offer, subject to further approval.
6. Monitor progress in activities over their delivery period.
7. Scan the horizon for further opportunities.

**Membership**

The Board comprises representatives of the local community with a genuine commitment to taking forward the shared aspirations, the basis of which came from a consultation event held in October 2024 and informed the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework.

Any additional/changes in members shall be proposed to a meeting of the Board and must be approved by the majority of existing members for acceptance.

	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Name</b>
1	Halton Council (Portfolio Nominees)	TBA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major Projects</li> <li>• Housing &amp; Environmental Sustainability</li> </ul> Community Safety	
2	Business Sector Employers	TBA
3	Strategic Housing	TBA
4	Business Development and Support	TBA
5	MP for Widnes and Halewood	
6	Voluntary and Community Sector	TBA
7	Cultural and Creative Industries	TBA
8	Education & Learning Sector	TBA
9	Health and Social Care Sector (e.g. NHS Trust, local GP)	TBA
10	Policing	TBA
11	Tourism and Hospitality Sector	TBA
12	Leisure Sector	TBA

## Conduct and Values

### MEETINGS

- Members should make themselves aware of meeting dates and times that take place on a regular basis.
- Where possible, members should apologise for non-attendance in advance of meetings.
- Members should, wherever possible, give advance notice of any items they may wish to raise as an agenda item.
- During the meetings members may be assertive in an attempt to put their view across but this should never be in an aggressive manner and should not denigrate or insult anyone in the process. All debates should be conducted through the Chair and only one person should speak at a time.
- All mobile phones should be switched off during the meeting.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

- Information made available during the meetings, especially that of a sensitive or personal nature, shall be treated in the strictest confidence and shall not be disclosed to any person except with the permission, in writing, of the person concerned.

### PERSONAL ISSUES

- Members should not bring up personal issues at meetings unless to describe an event or circumstance. Meetings should not be used to resolve personal problems.

### DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- Members who are aware there is a conflict of interest should take the opportunity at the start of any meeting to make known that there is a possible conflict. This will help to ensure transparency and avoid any accusations of impropriety.

### DURATION

- Duration of Board Membership will be for a period of 24 months initially, with options for extension with the agreement of the Board and the Local Authority. The Board will aim to work until at least 30 March 2028.

### **Advisors to the Board**

In addition to core members of the Board, there will be a number of standing advisory bodies who are well placed to support the Board's work.

Representatives of these bodies may be invited to join meetings where the subject matter will benefit from their input or where there is a clear shared interest.

### **Governance**

The Board will be chaired by a named representative from members, chosen by the members each March for the period of a year. The first of which will be elected at the start of the inaugural meeting. The chair may hold office continuously for a maximum of three years, subject to confirmation by the members each March.

There will be no other titled posts or roles, but temporary duties and responsibilities can be assigned - with the agreement of the member - in order to expedite the delivery of an action agreed by the Board.

Administrative support will be provided by Halton Borough Council, including the co-ordination of meetings, preparation of agendas and drafting of minutes.





**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Operational Director - Finance

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider three applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That**

- (i) Discretionary rate relief for any new applications received during 2025/26, be awarded at the rates approved on 25 February 2025 for the renewal of existing awards, as outlined in paragraph 3.5;**
- (ii) The application for discretionary rate relief from the Cathie Stankevitch Foundation in respect of Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024, be approved at 10%;**
- (iii) The application for discretionary rate relief from The Autism Wellbeing Project in respect of Suite A8, The Business Hub, Simms Cross, Widnes Road, Widnes with effect from 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025, be approved at 75%;**
- (iv) The application for discretionary relief from The Autism Wellbeing Project in respect of Suite B2, The Business Hub, Simms Cross, Widnes Road, Widnes with effect from 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025, be approved at 75%.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council is able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. This relief had previously only been available to organisations that were a registered charity, a community amateur sports club or a not-for-profit organisation.

- 3.2 From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 the Council became responsible for meeting the full cost of all mandatory and discretionary relief granted, as part of the Liverpool City Region 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot Scheme.
- 3.3 Three applications for discretionary rate relief have been received as outlined below.
- 3.4 Currently, where discretionary rate relief has been granted it has been awarded until 31 March 2026, in order to provide organisations with some degree of certainty.
- 3.5 On 25 February 2025 the Board approved the renewal from 1 April 2026 of existing discretionary rate relief awards for registered charities, community amateur sports clubs (CASC) and not-for-profit organisations. It was also agreed given the Council's financial challenges, to reduce the rate percentages awarded to 10% (charities), 10% (CASCs) and 75% (not-for-profits). It is therefore proposed that the same reduced percentages be applied for any new discretionary rate relief applications during 2025/26.

**Cathie Stankevitch Foundation**

**Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes, WA8 8GU**

- 3.6 The Cathie Stankevitch Foundation is a registered charity that delivers community projects and initiatives to alleviate the disadvantages and remove the barriers for social inclusion. The Foundation supports disadvantaged families by providing furniture and household items. The Foundation promotes social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of the people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society. They may be socially excluded as a result of one or more of the following factors: unemployment, financial hardship, youth or old age, ill physical or mental health, poor educational skills or skills attainment and housing that does not meet basic habitable standards. The main purposes of the organisation are to:
  - a) work to alleviate the impact that poverty has upon children and young people;
  - b) provide inclusion opportunities for those who find themselves excluded from society due to poverty and deprivation and
  - c) give disadvantaged people a purpose through learning interventions and create opportunities for people to grow their skills.
- 3.7 The organisation operates at 20 and 25 Albert Square, Widnes, both of which are subject to mandatory rate relief and discretionary top up relief. They previously also occupied Unit 2, Ditton Court , Foundry Lane, Widnes but moved out on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023.

- 3.8 The latest application for discretionary rate relief relates to Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes which the organisation took over from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 as a donation warehouse for storage of furniture and household items.
- 3.9 As a registered charity, the annual cost to the Council of awarding 10% discretionary rate relief would be £474 as detailed in the Appendix.

**The Autism Wellbeing Project**  
**1st Floor, Suite A8, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, WA8 6AX**

- 3.10 The organisation supports autistic adults in the local community by providing inclusive services such as wellbeing workshops, free peer support groups, therapy, independence support and providing meaningful work to autistic adults. It is a non-profit organisation, and all their efforts are focused on enhancing the quality of life, independence, and inclusion of the people we support. The Autism Wellbeing Project is based in Widnes and provides free face to face activities for autistic adults in the local area, provides training for local organisations to ensure the wider community becomes more autism informed and provides employment opportunities for neurodivergent individuals.
- 3.11 The application for discretionary rate relief relates to the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Suite A8, Grenfell House, Widnes Road which the organisation uses as a group room to provide cooking classes, social meetings, training and additional group activities for autistic adults.
- 3.12 The annual cost to the Council of awarding 75% discretionary rate relief as a not-for-profit organisation is £1,497 as detailed in the Appendix.

**The Autism Wellbeing Project**  
**Suite B2, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, WA8 6AX**

- 3.13 The organisation supports autistic adults in the local community by providing inclusive services such as wellbeing workshops, free peer support groups, therapy, independence support and providing meaningful work to autistic adults. It is a non-profit organisation, and all their efforts are focused on enhancing the quality of life, independence, and inclusion of the people we support. The Autism Wellbeing Project is based in Widnes and provides free face to face activities for autistic adults in the local area, provides training for local organisations to ensure the wider community becomes more autism informed and provides employment opportunities for neurodivergent individuals.

- 3.14 The application for discretionary rate relief relates to Suite B2, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, which is used as an office and for providing therapy/mentoring support.
- 3.15 The annual cost to the Council of awarding 75% discretionary rate relief as a not-for-profit organisation is £2,657 as detailed in the Appendix.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Board is required by the regulations to consider each application on its own merit. Any recommendations provided are given for guidance only, are consistent with Council policy and, wherever possible, previous decisions.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The appendices present the potential costs to the Council of granting rate relief.

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

##### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.**

The Autism Wellbeing Project supports independence for autistic adults

##### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

There are no implications.

##### **6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families.**

The Cathie Stankevitch Foundation provides furniture and household items to disadvantaged families and works to alleviate the impact that poverty has upon children and young people

##### **6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need.**

The Cathie Stankevitch Foundation provides furniture and household items to disadvantaged families and delivers community projects to help the disadvantaged and socially excluded

##### **6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

There are no implications.

##### **6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The Autism Wellbeing Project provides training for local organisations to ensure the wider community becomes more autism informed and provides employment opportunities for neurodivergent individuals. Cathie Stankevitch Foundation delivers community projects to help the disadvantaged and socially excluded

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks associated with the proposed action.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The applicants offer their services to all sections of the community, without any prejudice.

**9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none.

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

10.1 There are none under the meaning of the Act.

APPENDIX I - 2025/26 CHARGES							
Ratepayer	Address	Annual Rates Liability 2025/26  £	Mandatory Rate Relief Awarded	Annual Cost of Mandatory Relief to HBC 2025/26  £	Discretionary Rate Relief Awarded	Annual Cost of 10% Disc. Rate Relief to HBC 2025/26  £	Annual Cost of Mandatory & Disc. Relief for 2025/26  £
Cathie Stankevitch Foundation	Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 8GU	4,740.50	80%	3,792.40	10%	474.05	4,266.45
Ratepayer	Address	Rates Liability 2025/26  £	Mandatory Rate Relief Awarded	Cost of Mandatory Relief to HBC 2025/26  £	Discretionary Rate Relief Awarded	Cost of 90% Disc. Rate Relief to HBC 2025/26 £	Cost of Mandatory & Disc. Relief for 2025/26  £
The Autism Wellbeing Project	1st Flr, Suite A8, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, Widnes, WA8 6AX	1,996.00	N/A	N/A	75%	1,497.00	1,497.00
The Autism Wellbeing Project	Suite B2, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, Widnes, WA8 6AX	3,542.90	N/A	N/A	75%	2,657.18	2,657.18

APPENDIX 2 - 2024/25 CHARGES							
Ratepayer	Address	Rates Liability 01.07.24-31.03.25 £	Mandatory Rate Relief Awarded	Annual Cost of Mandatory Relief to HBC 01.07.24-31.03.25 £	Discretionary Rate Relief Awarded	Cost of 10% Disc. Rate Relief to HBC 01.07.24-31.03.25 £	Actual Cost of Mandatory & Disc. Relief for 01.07.24-31.03.25 £
Cathie Stankevitch Foundation	Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 8GU	3,028.57	80%	2,422.86	10%	302.86	2,725.72
Ratepayer	Address	Rates Liability 14.03.25-31.03.25 £	Mandatory Rate Relief Awarded	Cost of Mandatory Relief to HBC 14.03.25-31.03.25 £	Discretionary Rate Relief Awarded	Cost of 75% Disc. Rate Relief to HBC 14.03.25-31.03.25 £	Cost of Mandatory & Disc. Relief for 14.03.25-31.03.25 £
The Autism Wellbeing Project	1st Flr, Suite A8, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, Widnes, WA8 6AX	98.43	N/A	N/A	75%	73.82	73.82
The Autism Wellbeing Project	Suite B2, Grenfell House, Widnes Road, Widnes, WA8 6AX	174.72	N/A	N/A	75%	131.04	131.04



**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Directorate Performance Overview Reports for Quarter 4 2024 - 2025

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Council's performance for the final quarter period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.  
The reports detail progress against key objectives / milestones and performance targets, and describes factors affecting each of the Directorates.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) Executive Board note the information contained in the reports**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 It is essential that the Council maintains a planning and performance framework that allows the identification and on-going monitoring of key activities and performance measures that meet organisational needs. Performance management will also continue to be important in our demonstration of value for money and outward accountability.
- 3.2 The Directorate Performance Overview Reports provide a strategic summary of the key issues arising from performance in the relevant quarter for each Directorate and being aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Executive Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

- 3.3 Information for each of the Council's Directorates, including the implementation of high-risk mitigation measures, is contained within the following appendices:

Appendix 1 – Enterprise, Community and Resources Directorate

Appendix 2 – Children and Young People Directorate

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council's Performance Management Framework will continue to form a key part of the Council's policy framework.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 These reports would also be available to support future scrutiny arrangements of services by Members and Inspection regimes for Ofsted and Adult Social Care.

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

- 6.1 Existing and future performance frameworks at both local and national level are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities.
- 6.2 The provision of Directorate Overview Reports to Executive Board, that include progress in relation to objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will support organisational improvement and accountability.

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The Council performance management framework allows the authority to both align its activities to the delivery of organisational and partnership priorities and provide appropriate information to all relevant stakeholders in accordance with the "transparency agenda".

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

- 8.1 There are no specific equality and diversity issues relating to this report.

#### **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Not applicable

#### **10 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTIONS 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

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

**Directorate Performance Overview Report Quarter 4**

**Directorate:** Children's Services

**Departments:** Children Social Care and Early Help, Education

**Period:** Quarter 4 - 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**1.0 Introduction**

This quarterly monitoring report covers the **Children's Services Directorate's** fourth quarter period up to 31 March 2025.

It describes commentary and progress against 'key' milestones for the service in line with the Halton children and young people's plan.

**2.0 Data Quality Statement**

The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data.

Where data has been estimated, it has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use, this has been clearly annotated.

**3.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Progress Against Objectives / Milestones

Appendix 2: Explanation of Symbols





Appendix 3: Progress Against Performance Indicators

Appendix 4: Financial Statement



**Appendix 1: Progress Against Objectives / Milestones**











<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P1</b>	<b>Safely reduce the number of children needing to be looked after by the Local Authority and improve safeguarding.</b>


Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P1.1	Increase in the number of families accessing support through the Family Hub on a quarterly basis (Source – Early Help)		There has been an increase of 9% in attendances at the family hubs since Q3 from 11,176 to 12,444. There have been 129 individual sessions delivered in Q4. Work continues to ensure all partners, children and families in the borough fully understand the support on offer and where families can go for help to their local family hub. Family hub link workers will strengthen this partnership with schools, early years settings and health services in the borough. Since we launched family hub online services this has widened our offer and accessibility of resources this has been really successful and since launching in July over 19,000 users have registered, 36, 000 pages have been accessed the most popular pages accessed are timetable, SEND, Babies and start for life information. Halton was recently invited to share the work we have started of father inclusive practice and baby showers at a recent ADCS good practice forum.
P1.2	Increase the number of successful Public Law Outline/Pre-proceedings outcomes i.e. prevent Children entering care (Source - Rebecca Gamble - Andy Jones)		Pre-proceedings concluded for 30 cyp. Care proceedings were initiated for six children, the remaining 24 were successfully stepped down. Demonstrating 80% were diverted away from court proceedings, indicating that during this period, the pre-proceedings phase was significantly more likely to achieve successful diversion than to progress to care proceedings –contributing to a reduction entrants into care.
P1.3	Decrease the number of Children in Care (CIC) on a quarterly basis (Source – Children in Care)		369 in Care at end of Q4 2024/25 (provisional) shows a reduction on previous quarter. (376 Q3 2024/25) (374 Q2 2024/25)
P1.4	Increase the number of partner led Multi Agency Plans (MAPS) (Source – Early Help)		External MAPs have seen an increase each month January 46 February 64 March 73 however this is a slight increase since last quarter. Work has been completed with schools by the locality manager to offer help and support on MAPs. The process has followed a you said we listened approach however more work is needed to support schools. There also needs to be more challenge at the front door when referrals are received which the diversion workers will help with this. The health role in iCART is now more proactive supporting health visitors to take the lead professional role, this is early days. There has been further training for schools on eclipse and MAP training. The director for CSC and EH has also attended head teachers briefings to strengthen the strategic relationship.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P2</b>	<b>Improve the stability of care placements.</b>

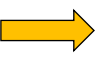

Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P2.1	Reduce the number of Children in Care (CIC) who moved between placements (Source – Children in Care)	<b>Refer Comment</b>	<b>Q4 2024/25, 11% Placement moves (provisional). Shows and increase of placement moves compared to previous quarter, to be considered that some moves may be a positive move.</b> Q3 2024/25, 9%. Q2 2024/25, 10%. Q1 2024/25, 12%.
P2.2	Reduce the number of Children in Care who are/were placed in out of Borough in residential care (Source – Children in Care)		<b>Q4 2024/25, 14% of residential placements were in borough (provisional). Same as previous quarter.</b> Q3 2024/25, 14%. Q2 2024/25, 16%. Q1 2024/25, 17%. Plans are in place to re-establish our in-area provision for Children in Care and Care Leavers throughout 25/26 to manage expectations. The sufficiency strategy and action is being overseen by the re-established sufficiency board.
P2.3	Reduce the costs of out of borough residential placement placements (Source – Children in Care)		The Resource Panel and High-Cost Placement Panel consistently feed into both the Sufficiency Board and the Financial Accountability Board. The High-Cost Placement Panel has generated cost reductions of over £1 million in stepped down packages of care and support across all age ranges, and setting types. The Sufficiency Strategy has been ratified across the Local Authority and will build dedicated capacity for Halton Children in

			Halton Settings and reduce the need for expensive out of borough placements, across residential and supported accommodation provisions.
P2.4	Reduce the number of Children in Care (CIC) who are placed in independent fostering agencies (Source – Children in Care)		<b>Q4 2024/25 103 children placed in Independent Fostering Agencies (provisional). Very slight increase.</b> Q3 2024/25, 100 children. Q2 2024/25, 94 children. Q1 2024/25, 94 children. Sufficiency Board will be looking at this area.
P2.5	Reduce the costs of out of borough independent foster placements (Source – Children in Care)		As above (P2.4)
P2.6	Increase the number of Halton Foster Carers and kinship carers (Source – Children in Care)		<b>Q4 2024/25, 15% of all Children in Care are with a Kinship Carer (provisional).</b> Q3 2024/25, 18%. Q2 2024/25, 17%. Q1 2024/25, 16%. <b>Q4 2024/25, 65% of Halton's Children in Care are with Foster Carers (provisional). Shows an increase on previous quarter.</b> Q3 2024/25, 63%. Q2 2024/25 and Q1 2024/25, 63%.
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need		
<b>CYP P3</b>	<b>Improve SEND provision</b>		
Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P3.1	Increase the % of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter) (Source – SEND)		Rate at 91.3% at end of Q4. SEN2 period covers January to December, not academic year, but this is a marked improvement on Q3 position of 58.1%. Performance tends to drop off by the end of the collection period (Dec), so Q4 is likely to be the most positive data. National comparator data available in June 2025.
P3.2	Increase the % of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) Annual reviews that are carried out within 12 months (Source – SEND)		Rate at 52.9% by end of Q4, down from 60.8% end of Q3. There are several reasons for this, including staff sickness, prioritizing transition plans, paperwork not being returned by schools on time and a significant increase in the number of schools requesting a change of placement. Agency staff have been employed recently, and the hope is that this will start to head back up.
P3.3	Decrease the proportion of children subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) placed in independent and out of borough provisions (Source – Placements and Commissioning)		Work continues to decrease the proportion of children placed in non-maintained and independent special schools (NMISS). This includes the development of an Alternative Provision Strategy, which includes a process to identify and quality assure Alternative Provision providers, and Team around the School meetings continue alongside the roll out of activities linked to the Delivering Better Value programme such as the Thrive Approach which is moving into year 2.  At the end of quarter 4 a small increase finds that 136 children and young people are placed in 36 NMISS settings; 35 children are attending NMISS at 3 schools within the Borough while the remaining 101 children are placed in NMISS out of Borough. There are currently 21 open placement searches for NMISS.  Numbers in NMISS represents 7.8% of the CYPs with EHCPs in the Borough down from 7.9% in December 2024. Although, there is a slight drop in terms of the percentage of all CYPs with EHCP in the Borough, the number of the CYPs placed in INMSS continue to rise.
P3.4	Decrease the spending on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for Special Educational Needs and Disability Children (SEND) (Source – SEND)		The development of strategies to support a decrease in spending within the independent schools is being seen with the development of Halton's SEND Sufficiency Strategy, Education Strategy and Alternative Provision Strategy. Work continues to implement the Thrive Approach which is a tool used by schools across the borough to support improvements in attendance, attainment and behavior and after an initial roll-out of training and CPD across schools, the Borough is now moving into an implementation phase. The roll-out of School Resource Bases has increased the variety of provisions available in the borough. The Borough works collaboratively with NW Regional colleagues to consider and negotiate non-maintained and independent school fee uplift applications.
P3.5	Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) – Increase the number of assessments done within four weeks of referral receipt (unless assessment to be undertaken within setting/school) (Source – Placements and Commissioning)		The LA and the Integrated Care Board continue to work with the provider to improve across all aspects of the service, and the service has been realigned in terms of their priorities. Improvements have been made across staffing levels and concentrated work has been undertaken in special schools and resource bases. The LA has commissioned additional







P3.6	Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) – Increase the number where treatment commenced within 12 weeks of referral receipt (Source – Placements and Commissioning)		resources in five independent providers to support Education Health Care Plans-related work with children with speech, language and communication difficulties and ASD need. With these providers once the requirement for intervention has been identified treatment is commencing within 12 weeks.
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P4</b>	<b>Increase number of children attending schools graded good or outstanding and improve attainment outcomes at all Key Stages.</b>

Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P4.1	Increase the % of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter) (Source – Early Years)		Halton State-funded Nursery Schools maintain 100% 99% of all Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) were Outstanding or Met.
P4.2	Increase the % of schools and settings with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary Schools</li> <li>Secondary</li> </ul> (Source - Schools)		By end of Q4 2024/25, all local authority maintained (community and voluntary controlled) schools were judged as good or outstanding across the range of inspection categories, with all primary schools inspected under the new inspection framework receiving good or outstanding in all categories since September 2024.  Following inspections of The Heath School and Blessed Carlo Acutis, performance of secondary schools in Halton has improved greatly, with just one school (Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy) with categories judged as requires improvement (3) in its most recent inspection in May 2023. Special schools continue to maintain a 100% good or outstanding judgments record across all categories.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P5</b>	<b>Improve pastoral and behaviour support and reduce the need for children to be excluded.</b>








Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary																																				
P5.1	Reduce the number of incidents of School Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter) (Source – Education Welfare)		No of incidents of school suspensions cumulative to end of March is 1211 but there has been a reduction in numbers compared to the last quarter.  Suspensions result in missed learning so impact on a child’s attendance and can impact on academic achievement. Schools have the opportunity to bring to Team around the School (TAS) any children where they are struggling to manage behaviour concerns. TAS is a multi-agency group of professionals including health, early help, education psychologists, SEND and Education Welfare to provide advice and strategies to school to address behaviour concerns.																																				
P5.2	Reduce the number of children subject to School suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter) (Source – Education Welfare)		The number of children subject to a school suspension is 604 from September 24 to end March 25. However there is a reduction in Q4 from Q3 with 231 this quarter compared to 373 last quarter.																																				
P5.3	Reduce the number of permanent exclusions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter) (Source – Education Welfare)		Number of permanent exclusions from September 2024 to end of March 25 = 42 (1 post 16 child) 17 of which are as a result of drug and alcohol use compared to 3 overall last year. However numbers of permanent exclusions have decreased since last quarter <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td colspan="5">Sept 24 – end March 25</td></tr><tr><td>Overall</td><td colspan="5">42</td></tr><tr><td>D&amp;A</td><td colspan="5">17</td></tr><tr><td>By Key Stage</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Overall</td><td>0</td><td>4</td><td>15</td><td>22</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Of those D&amp;A</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>0</td></tr></table>		Sept 24 – end March 25					Overall	42					D&A	17					By Key Stage	1	2	3	4	5	Overall	0	4	15	22	1	Of those D&A	0	0	8	9	0
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P5.4	Increase the % of early Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) reviews for SEND Children subject to school exclusion (Source – SEND)		No child with an EHCP was permanently excluded in Q4, a decrease from one exclusion in Q3. Throughout the 2024/25 academic year, only one child with an EHCP has been permanently excluded, cumulative to the end of Q4.																																				

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P6</b>	<b>Improve attendance at school, college and in Early Years settings including sufficiency of places.</b>




Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary																				
P6.1	Child Care Expansion roll out - Increase the number of eligible working parents who access child care support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From April 2024, eligible working parents of 2-year-olds who access 15 hours childcare support.</li> <li>From September 2024, eligible working parents of children from the age of nine months to 3-year-olds who access 15 hours childcare support (Source – Early Years)</li> </ul>		<b>508</b> 2-Year-Old of working parents accessed funded hours. <b>541</b> Under 2s of working parents accessed funding hours. Figures from January headcount 2025. Numbers refer to children accessing any funded hours for working parents, up to and including the maximum 15-hour entitlement. Under 2s eligibility began in September 2024. 2-Year-Old eligibility began in April 2024, the number of 2 years old accessing funded hours for working parents was 503.																				
P6.2	Increase number of eligible children for the vulnerable 2- year-old funding accessing Early Years (EY) provision  (internally collected termly information – may not match to published data from census) (Source – Early Years)		<b>329</b> 2-Year-Old eligible for the vulnerable 2-Year-Old funding accessed funded hours. Figures from January headcount 2025headcount. 77% attending Good or above Early Years providers. A decline nationally in up take of 2-year-old disadvantaged funding. Percentage higher than LAIT data. There has been a change in the way uptake is calculated using headcount and DWP list, alongside a change in how we are placing 2-year-olds. This is a more accurate calculation and would explain the drop in percentage.																				
P6.3	Increase the % taking up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds. (Source – Early Years)		1634 -3 & 4-year-old children accessed Early Years Entitlement. 88.1% take up 1634 (on January 2025 headcount) out of 1855 (on Primary Care Trust GP registrations list October 2024) are accessing - 3 & 4-Year-Old Early Entitlement for 3 & 4 Year olds in Halton.																				
P6.4	Increased attendance at schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Primary</li> <li>b) Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)</li> <li>c) Secondary</li> <li>d) Special</li> </ul> Source – Education Welfare)	 	By the end of Q4 2024/25: - Primary rate at 94.7%, equal to end Q3 2024/25 - PRU rate at 48%, down from 49.2% end of Q3 2024/25 - Secondary rate at 90.5%, down from 91.1% end of Q3 2024/25 - Special rate at 88.3%, down from 90.2% end of Q3 2024/25 That said, with the exception of pupils at PRU, all attendance rates have improved from the same period last year across primary, secondary and special sectors.																				
P6.5	Reduce the number of children who are Electively Home Educated (EHE) including those open to Children in Need or Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children in need (CIN)</li> <li>b) Children subject to a child protection plan (CP)</li> <li>c) Children with special educational needs or disability (SEND)</li> </ul> (Source – Education Welfare)		Figures have been rising during Q4 2024/25 (283) <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Jan</th><th>Feb</th><th>Mar</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EHE</td><td>265</td><td>269</td><td>283</td></tr> <tr> <td>a)</td><td>5</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr> <td>b)</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>c)</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Jan	Feb	Mar	EHE	265	269	283	a)	5	8	9	b)	2	2	2	c)	12	13	14
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P6.6	Reduce the number of children who are missing education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children in need (CIN)</li> <li>b) Children subject to a child protection plan (CP)</li> <li>c) Children with special educational needs or disability (SEND)</li> </ul> (Source – Education Welfare)		0 children confirmed as missing education.  Children on the tracking list who currently do not have a school named on the data management system is 28 which is significantly less than the previous quarter. The Children Missing Education officer works closely with other LAs to track and support children back into education.																				
P6.7	Reduce the number of children Not in Receipt of Full-time education (NIROFTI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children in need (CIN)</li> <li>b) Children subject to a child protection plan (CP)</li> <li>c) Children with special educational needs or disability (SEND)</li> </ul> (Source – Education Welfare)		Number of children accessing a part time timetable as at 31/03/25 is 74 with over half of these children identified as having SEND. This is a significant reduction on the last quarter data of 114. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) CIN - 12</li> <li>b) CPP - 7</li> <li>c) SEND - 38</li> </ul> A part time timetable is put in place with the agreement of parent and school for a short time period to support a child who may be struggling for a number of reasons to access a full time offer at that time. This enables school to work with parents, the child and other professionals to support the child and address the barriers to attendance that were identified. A PTT cannot be used for behaviour reasons.																				
P6.8	Reduce the number of children accessing alternative provision (Bridge School) or educated other than at school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children in need (CIN)</li> <li>b) Children subject to a child protection plan (CP)</li> <li>c) Children with special educational needs or disability (SEND)</li> </ul> (Source – SEND)		There were 38 children receiving tuition arranged by the local authority under S19 in quarter 4. Numbers of children being referred to the LA as unable to attend school due to health needs particularly mental health is increasing. A significant proportion (79%) of this cohort are those with SEND either an EHCP, SEN Support or undergoing statutory assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 2 - CIN</li> <li>b) 0 - CPP</li> </ul>																				



			c) c) Of the 38 EHCP – 13 SEN Support – 10 Undergoing Stat Assessment – 7
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need		
<b>CYP P07</b>	<b>Improve professional practice including the quality of children and families social work.</b>		

Milestone		Progress Q4	Data and any supporting commentary																																																												
P7.1	Increase the number of audits grades as good in the sub section ‘Identifying & Responding to Need, Abuse & Thresholds’ (Source – Safeguarding Unit)		During Q4 2024/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>82% Early Help were graded ‘good’</li><li>21% of Help and Protect were graded ‘good’</li></ul>																																																												
P7.2	Increase the number of audits grades as good in the sub section ‘Providing Effective Help’ (Source – Safeguarding Unit)		During Q4 2024/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>82% in Early Help were graded ‘good’</li><li>24%Help &amp; Protect were graded ‘good’</li><li>6% Children in Care were graded ‘good’</li><li>36% Care Leavers were graded ‘good’</li></ul>																																																												
P7.3	Increase the number of children who benefit from management oversight and supervision graded ‘good’ through the audit sub section ‘Making Good Decisions & Management Oversight’. (Source – Safeguarding Unit)		During Q4 2024/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>82% Early Help were graded ‘good’</li><li>9%Help &amp; Protect were graded ‘good’</li><li>0% Children in Care were graded ‘good’</li></ul> 36% Care Leavers were graded ‘good’																																																												
P7.4	Increase the number of children’s casefiles receiving an overall grade of ‘Good’ through the audit process (Source – Safeguarding Unit)		<table><tr><th>Grade</th><th colspan="2">Early Help</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>Q3</td><td>Q4</td></tr><tr><td>Good</td><td>75%</td><td>80%</td></tr><tr><td>RI</td><td>25%</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>IA</td><td>0%</td><td></td></tr></table> <table><tr><th>Grade</th><th colspan="2">Help &amp;protect</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>Q3</td><td>Q4</td></tr><tr><td>Good</td><td>9%</td><td>14%</td></tr><tr><td>RI</td><td>48%</td><td>48%</td></tr><tr><td>IA</td><td>43%</td><td>38%</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th>Grade</th><th>CIC</th><th>CIC</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>Q3</td><td>Q4</td></tr><tr><td>Good</td><td>18%</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>RI</td><td>64%</td><td>93%</td></tr><tr><td>IA</td><td>18%</td><td>7%</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th>Grade</th><th colspan="2">Care Leavers</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>Q3</td><td>Q4</td></tr><tr><td>Good</td><td>18%</td><td>43%</td></tr><tr><td>RI</td><td>82%</td><td>57%</td></tr><tr><td>IA</td><td>0%</td><td>0%</td></tr></table>	Grade	Early Help			Q3	Q4	Good	75%	80%	RI	25%	20%	IA	0%		Grade	Help &protect			Q3	Q4	Good	9%	14%	RI	48%	48%	IA	43%	38%	Grade	CIC	CIC		Q3	Q4	Good	18%	0%	RI	64%	93%	IA	18%	7%	Grade	Care Leavers			Q3	Q4	Good	18%	43%	RI	82%	57%	IA	0%	0%
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P7.5	Increase the number of social workers accessing training through the Social Work Academy (Source – Social Work Academy)		Social Work academy have continued to offered training to support the improvement plan and improvements in the service. This continues to be well received.																																																												
P7.6	Increasing the number of permanent staff (Source – Katherine Appleton)		Permanent staffing is increased and continues to increase through recruitment and training programmes.																																																												
P7.7	Reduce the number of agency workers and associated costs. (Source – Katherine Appleton)		Agency staffing has reduced to 36%																																																												



<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P8</b>	<b>Reducing Child obesity</b>



Milestone		Progress Q4	Data and any supporting commentary
P8.1	Increase % breast feeding and initiation and maintenance at 6 – 8 weeks (Source – Health)		Target is an annual increase of 0.5% at 6-8 weeks. Published Q4 data is not yet available, but preliminary data indicates a further increase of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks up 1% from Q3. This gives an average increase of 8% for breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks across 2024/25, compared to 2023/24.
P8.2	Maintain/increase the number of schools engaging in the Healthy Schools Programme which includes whole School approaches to tackling obesity. (Source – Health)		We are on track to engage 100% of primary schools again this year. Final remaining sign-up visits to be scheduled in by early June. Four schools have also engaged with the Food Active Pledge for Healthy and Active Futures, which is an evidence-informed framework for the prevention and reduction of obesity through a whole-school approach, targeted at schools in IMD 1&2. A further four schools will be recruited in Q1 and Q2 of 2025-26.
P8.3	Increase the number of parents of children age under 5 accessing the 'HENRY' Programme (Source – Health)		14 referrals this quarter. 11 commenced on the programme, with nine completing. Halton annual data from HENRY indicates that those completing HENRY showed increases in family lifestyle score, parenting confidence, parenting efficacy, emotional wellbeing, healthy eating score, consumption of fruit and veg and water, reduction in energy-dense snacks and sugary drinks, increased physical activity and reduced screen time. Ambition to increase referrals to enable more frequent courses.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P9</b>	<b>Improve access to positive opportunities.</b>



Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P9.1	Increase the number of care leavers accessing the Care leavers group (Source – Inclusion & Participation)		We have now sourced a new hub space in Liverpool which has extended the number accessing support. The hub runs each week with the relevant Personal advisors available. What's app group is being developed, and future care leaver forum meetings will be held here this has increased numbers currently 12 of the Liverpool cohort that previously did not have access due to location. Numbers will continue to grow, and launch is set for early June to advertise the group and service in this area.
P9.2	Increase the engagement for Children in Need, Children in Care and Care Leavers via Barnardo's contract (Source – Placements and Commissioning)		Barnardo's continue to be an active part of the EHWPB Board and continue to manage a waiting list, however this is being proactively progressed within the resources available. The contract has been renewed and very productive meetings with Barnardo's and other providers of emotional health and wellbeing services have been held to map out the mental health landscape, with a view to formally collaborating with the Integrated Care Board to scope a cohesive system-wide approach. This is due to culminate in a workshop (14/05/25) to formalise the pathways and routes through our system. This will include transition and step down to Pure Insight, which will allow for more flexible throughput.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P10</b>	<b>Improve Mental Health provision.</b>

Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P10.1	Increase the numbers of Primary and Secondary school educators being trained as 'Thrive' Licensed Practitioners. (Source – SEND)		In summary to date 79% of schools have engaged regarding the project. We do not foresee any great further rise in the %. Induction trainings for Halton staff have now been delivered. Training for Educational Psychologist team, Early Years Foundation Stage Team and Specialist teachers team, has taken place, so that they can support schools through their work.
P10.2	Increase the number of strengths and difficulties questionnaires completed for Children in Care and Care Leavers (Source – Children in Care / Health)	Refer comment	This is an annual indicator and collected after the 903 Annual Return for children in care 12 months at the end of the reporting year.
P10.3	Increase the number of health assessment (initial and review) for Children in Care (Source – Children in Care Health)	Refer comment	This is an annual indicator and collected after the 903 Annual Return for children in care 12 months at the end of the reporting year.
P10.4	Reduce the number of children who are accessing education under Section 19 (Source – Education Welfare)		There is now a process in place for Section 19 applications to be considered. A Section 19 Inclusion panel has been established; legal support is part of this. A range of recommendations have been put in place for children following the panel meetings including short term tuition (2 weeks) whilst a school is supported to develop a suitable plan.
P10.5	Reduce the % waiting time for Children in Care (CIC) to access Mental Health provision (Source – Children in Care / Health)	Refer comment	There is an identified escalation process in place for children in Care accessing CAMHS is required. Emotional wellbeing panel takes place monthly, and Halton CAMHS attend to review any referrals.
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need		
<b>CYP P11</b>	<b>Strengthen the voice of children and young people.</b>		

Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P11.1	Increase the number of 'good' gradings within Children Social Care casefile audits for the child's voice and how it informs their plans (Source – Safeguarding Unit)		During Q4 2024/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% in Early Help were graded 'good'</li> <li>33% Help &amp; Protect were graded 'good'</li> <li>0% Children in Care were graded 'good'</li> <li>36% Care Leavers were graded 'good'</li> </ul>
P11.2	Increase the number of children and young people involved with the Children in Care Council (Source – Inclusion & Participation)		Halton have additional children attending the face-time sessions which has increased our numbers by a further 4 children. We are aiming for summer activity sessions open to all children in care to promote further the work we do and the group as a whole. Across social media, community media groups, in person and 1-2-1 meetings we have now a strong 17 children and young people having an input on challenges, policy, planning and the hire of future staff. We expect this number to grow even further by Q1 2025/26.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 1 – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority 3 – Supporting Children, Young People and Families Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are in most need
<b>CYP P12</b>	<b>Improve pathways into meaningful employment with training and both Further and Higher Education</b>

Milestone		Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
P12.1	Reduce the percentage of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training or whose activities are not known to the council (Source – 14-19 Team)		Q4 2024/25 = 6.2% which is identical to Q4 2023/24. The rate is remaining steady compared to last year, therefore the target to reduce the figure has not been achieved for 2024/25.
P12.2	Increase the number of good quality pathway plans as identified through the audit process for Care Leavers (Source – Care Leavers Service/Audit)		There is pathway plan training being rolled out in July 2025. A Pathway Plan reviewing officer has been created in the structure, their role is to drive up the quality of pathway plans and scrutinise the delivery of plans. The successful candidate takes up the post end of May 2025.

Appendix 3: Progress Against Performance Indicators

	STRATEGIC ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
A	Develop and embed Family Hubs and extend their provision to include 19 to 25 age range with additional needs					
B	Wraparound Care Programme - Submitted a supply and demand analysis to the DfE, recruit a Wraparound care coordinator to lead on expanding the project.					
C	Pause Project - secure further funding from partners for 3-5 years submit funding bud					
D	Utilise the grant of £1m from Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme.					
E	Implement redevised structure for children in need service.					
F	SEND - Commission a specialist equipment provider to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND in Halton schools/settings.					
G	SEND - 'Tell it once' framework co-produced and launched.					
H	SEND - Complete a multi-agency joined up review of current ICT systems and processes understanding current ICT platforms used for information storing and sharing and how they interlink.					
I	Halton Alternative Provision Strategy and Alternative Provision offer co-produced with all system partners.					
J	Review the Neglect Strategy.					
K	Develop a Section 19 Policy and establish an Education Inclusion Panel to determine when the LA Section 19 duty applies and education offer.					
L	Halton Priority education Action Area Plan, £1.8M allocated across 3 years to tackle attendance and attainment.	Whats gone on in the quarter towards achieving that, what the update, i.e, meeting and outcome or decision making				
M	Deliver new statutory duties under the DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance.'					
N	Submit a bid to the DfE for new post 16 provision in Halton					
O	Support the Right to succeed agenda - Halton Lea Cradle to Career 2024-26 for the design, delivery and reporting of a youth offer.					
P	Establish 'The Food Active Healthy and Active Futures Pledge', a whole school approach to tackling obesity.					
Q	National Child Measurement Programme (data provided annually)					

Appendix 4: Financial Statements



EIP outturn 2024.25  
Final v2.docx



CFS 2024.25 Outturn  
Final V2.docx

Progress Symbols are used in the following manner

	Performance indicator
	Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u> .
	Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.
	Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

## Directorate Overview Report – Chief Executive's Directorate Quarter 4

Reporting Period: 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> March

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the final quarter of 2024/25 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
- Finance
  - Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
  - ICT Infrastructure
  - Legal and Democracy
  - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
  - Property Services
- 1.3 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 5 of this report.

### 1.4 Corporate Priorities



**Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029**  
**Our Community, Our Priorities, Our Future**

**Plan on a Page**



## 2.0 High Priority Equality Actions

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

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


## 3.0 Performance Overview

- 3.1** Key Performance Indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.
- 3.2** It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget.
- 3.3** Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

## Finance

### Key Objectives / milestones


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>FS01</b>	<b>Higher proportion of council tax income due for the year to be collected compared to the previous year</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the in-year collection rate will be compared to the same point of the previous year		<p>Council tax collection for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 is 93.98% which is 0.17% up on the 2023/24 collection rate.</p> <p>The figure of 93.98% is the highest collection rate % since 2021/22 and is the first year since 2013/14 (when council tax reduction scheme was introduced), that the collection rate</p>




		<p>for the current year is an improvement on the previous year.</p> <p>Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts. £2.615m (14.85%) has been collected in relation to previous year debt. This is an improvement of £0.332m compared to prior year debt collected in 2023/24</p> <p>No comparable 2024/25 council tax collection information has yet been published to compare the Council's in-year performance against.</p> <p>For 2023/24 the Council's in-year council tax collection rate was 93.78% which compares to the national collection rate of 95.9%. Council tax collection rates are impacted by deprivation, where it is evidenced the higher the deprivation the lower the collection rate. Despite this Halton outperforms a number of unitary and met authorities who have a lower deprivation ranking.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>FS02</b>	<b>Higher proportion of business rates income due for the year to be collected compared to previous year</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
On a quarterly basis, the in-year collection rate will be compared to the same point of the previous year		<p>Business rate collection for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 is 98.74% which is 2.05% higher than the collection rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>£2.257m has been collected in relation to previous year debt.</p> <p>No national comparable 2024/25 business rate collection information</p>


		<p>has yet been published to compare the Council's performance against.</p> <p>As at 31 December 2024 the collection rate for Halton (84.53%) was the highest recorded collection across north west authorities.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 4 - Tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need
<b>FS 03</b>	<b>Reducing the average time for processing new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims by 1 day, compared to the previous year, to an average of 21.65 days.</b>


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary																				
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the target		<p>Q4 2023-24 22.65 days Q4 2024-25 18.97 days Q3 2024-25 18.94 days Q2 2024-25 19.58 days Q1 2024-25 20.83 days</p> <p>Processing new claims performance has improved by over 3.5 days compared to Q4 last year, and the main reason for this is Benefits staff doing regular overtime to maintain good performance.</p> <p>Q3 2024-25 New claims processing figures for a number of the Greater Manchester Councils</p> <table><tr><th>Council</th><th>Processing days</th></tr><tr><td>Halton</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>Blackpool</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Bolton</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>Cheshire East</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Salford</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td>Stockport</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Tameside</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>Warrington</td><td>34</td></tr><tr><td>Wigan</td><td>12</td></tr></table>	Council	Processing days	Halton	19	Blackpool	11	Bolton	28	Cheshire East	21	Salford	30	Stockport	14	Tameside	22	Warrington	34	Wigan	12
Council	Processing days																					
Halton	19																					
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Cheshire East	21																					
Salford	30																					
Stockport	14																					
Tameside	22																					
Warrington	34																					
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need
<b>FS 04</b>	<b>Reducing the average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction by 1 day, compared to the previous year, to an average of 8.55 days.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary																				
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the target		<p>Q4 2023-24 9.23 days Q4 2024-25 9.16 days Q3 2024-25 12.19 days Q2 2024-25 15.62 days Q1 2024-25 13.70 days</p> <p>Processing changes in circumstances has improved marginally compared to Q4 last year. To maintain this level of performance has involved staff working regular overtime.</p> <p>Q3 2024-25 Changes in circumstances processing figures for a number of Greater Manchester Councils (latest figures available).</p> <table><tr><th>Council</th><th>Processing days</th></tr><tr><td>Halton</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Blackpool</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Bolton</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>Cheshire East</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Salford</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Stockport</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Tameside</td><td>23</td></tr><tr><td>Warrington</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>Wigan</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	Council	Processing days	Halton	9	Blackpool	6	Bolton	12	Cheshire East	2	Salford	3	Stockport	11	Tameside	23	Warrington	7	Wigan	3
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Salford	3																					
Stockport	11																					
Tameside	23																					
Warrington	7																					
Wigan	3																					

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two - Building a strong, sustainable, local economy
<b>FS 05</b>	<b>Ensuring 90% of all suppliers' invoices are paid within 30 days, including those which are disputed invoices.</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
On a quarterly basis, the proportion of suppliers' invoices paid within 30 days will be assessed		92.10% of the Council's supplier invoices for the 2024/25 financial year were paid within 30 days. The performance figure includes disputed invoices. The comparative performance figure for 2023/24 was 90.39%


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>FS 06</b>	<b>Higher proportion of historic sundry debt to be collected compared to the same point the previous year</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
On a quarterly basis, the collection rate for the total outstanding historic debt (balance as at the previous year-end) will be compared to the same point the previous year		Total outstanding historic debt stood at £17,460,981 as at 31 March 2024. By 31 March 2025, 68.43% of this debt had been collected.  The collection rate for historic debt was 64.92% at the same point last year.  The total amount written off during 2024/25 was £272,956. This was largely due to a recent review of the debts with Legal Services, which identified a number of debts over seven years old which could not be recovered.


**Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit**

**Key Objectives / milestones**


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>CXDU 01</b>	<b>Reduction in Sickness absence across the Council - Review and amend policy to focus on attendance, train and empower managers to apply procedure timely.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
24/25 -12.5 FTE days average lost		3.03 Q1 3.69 Q2 3.68 Q3 3.79 Q4  14.19 days for 2024/2025

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>CXDU 02</b>	<b>Promote increased stability of the workforce across the organisation - Improve the Employer value proposition of HBC to Attract and retain talent and become an Employer of choice.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Improve the Employer value proposition of HBC to Attract and retain talent and become an Employer of choice. 24/25 – turnover 13% stability 88%		Q4 - Turnover 19.28%  Stability 85.74% Turnover: 442 leavers / 2293 employees * 100 = <b>19.28%</b>  Workforce Stability: 2057 employees 12m in post / 2399 employees * 100 = <b>85.74%</b>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>CXDU 03</b>	<b>Reduce flexible workforce (agency) spend and deployment across the organisation</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
24/25 – 11m		Q1 - £3,397,163.09 Q2 - £3,988,737.08 Q3 - £3,880,592.64 Q4 - 3,449,278.64


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>CXDU 04</b>	<b>To increase the number of post filled 1<sup>st</sup> time</b> <b>To reduce the proportion of vacancies required advertisement</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
<b>To reduce the proportion of vacancies required advertisement</b> 24/25 – 13.5%		Q1 – 14% Q2 – 6% - significant decrease from Q1 of readvertisements Q3 – 7% - Slight increase from quarter 2 however still over target Q4 – <b>9%</b>
<b>To increase the number of post filled 1<sup>st</sup> time</b> 24/25 – 80%		Q1 – 90% Q2 – 94% - increase from Q1 Q3 - 93% - Slight increase from quarter 2 Q4 - <b>75%</b>

ICT


### Key Objectives / milestones

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>ICT 01</b>	<b>LD1 Average availability of the Council's M365 Systems 24/7 - 365.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
2023 saw the delivery of the initial Microsoft M365 E5 platform – 2024 continues to deliver updates with key technical partners.		<p>The delivery of M365 has been a colossal undertaking, delivering a step change in the way the authority delivers technology to the end user. This undertaking has also crossed over the Customer Journey Transformation project delivering positive change to the end user experience linked to this change over to the Microsoft cloud. This programmes Phase 1 objective is the full transformation from legacy telephony and contact centre systems to modern, integrated communication and data infrastructure.</p> <p>It includes decommissioning outdated hardware, implementing new cloud-based contact centre solutions, building a secure on-premise and hybrid data Lakehouse, and delivering a business intelligence platform that supports the Halton operational and strategic goals.</p> <p>These huge programmes of work will offer new and innovative platform technologies for the wider organisation to build upon this is not just a technical project set but a platform for the authority to innovate with process change and digital first strategies.</p> <p>The delivery of the new Telephony solution will not only link to Ai driven technologies but will link</p>


		<p>directly with the new CRM solution currently under development. Again, the new CRM solution will bring with it Ai technologies and developments such as citizen portals and a greater level of integrated services at the front end through the authority's web site and social media presences.</p> <p>As noted within the previous quarter the centralisation of the authority's data assets is again a major project that will allow the delivery of accurate live reporting as well as form the base for Ai into the future.</p> <p>Ai is a complex beast and not something the authority can afford to buy off the shelf not only because of the cost in monetary terms but the cost of accuracy and the delivery needs of the authority many will be impatient to implement pockets of Ai but the HBC technical strategy is clear our objective is to containerise specific Ai deliveries and deliver the Knowledge based systems first then moving onto the more complex capabilities of generative Ai.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	
<b>ICT 02</b>	<b>LD2 Security Incidents across each reporting quarter</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
The software packages and monitoring solutions will be in place by the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2024. Work is underway with Emergency planning in terms of communicating the implication of loss and the need for business based resilience plans.		We will be talking about ERP over the coming months – Enterprise Resource Planning. As above we discussed the centralisation of data in order to deliver a standardised reporting platform allowing live data to be reported against in some cases improving the authority's accuracy and future planning efforts.


		<p>Added to this we will be replacing the ageing HR and Pay platforms and linking them to a new cloud-based Finance system this will be the same finance solution we have successfully hosted in partnership with the Liverpool City Region, Mersey Travel and Sefton MBC.</p> <p>This platform will form the new ERP base supported by the data project over the next 12 months. This needs to be noted that this project is a considerably complex and time-consuming effort and will be reported against over the coming quarters and into the next financial year.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>ICT 03</b>	<b>LD3 Number of resolved customer contacts – Contact Centre</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
On a quarterly basis, the delivered process and the number of contacts will be reported with an objective of delivering contact through all digital means, reducing wait times and improving resolution at 1 <sup>st</sup> contact for those services that will allow.		<p>33'004 individual call contacts across Quarter 3</p> <p>For over 15 years, the council has relied upon an on-premise Skype for Business Telephony System supported by a contact centre solution that is now struggling with linking into the new technology platforms in the cloud both have more than served a purpose. The IT and Customer Service teams have operated and delivered high volume services through these technologies within the bounds of the austerity restrictions.</p>

		<p>Now, due to prolonged underinvestment and technical obsolescence, these systems are now failing and causing significant operational disruption.</p> <p>With this new phase of investment through the transformation programme and the increased IT capital programme, the Customer Journey and IT teams have embarked on a program to replace these outdated systems with the recently chosen contact centre telephony solution, that will be integrated with the Microsoft 365 Teams solution, also the IVR, to be linked to an interactive Ai driven bot to enhance customer service and one that will potentially deployed for internal services.</p> <p>This transition is part of a broader program of technology development linked to the use of business analysis skills aimed at aligning technological solutions with business goals.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 4 - Tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need
<b>ICT 04</b>	<b>LD4 Number of resolved contacts – One Stop Shop's</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
The partnerships within the shop's continue to increase at a pace and a programme of work linked to the Transformation programme owned by the department. This is currently under development to increase the levels of		31'722 individual face to face interactions across Quarter 4 The Customer Journey transformation strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to enhancing the full customer journey.




<p>services available and looking to partner with key external agencies.</p>		<p>By using personalised web portals, chatbots, mobile technologies, social media integration, and the latest AI and chat technologies. The goal is to seamlessly link the authority's contact centre and shops with these technologies, improving both face-to-face and digital customer experiences while ensuring accessibility for all, including those with limited access to technology. This strategy will also integrate with existing CRM and Office 365 technologies to improve internal and external client interactions from contact to resolution. Digital poverty remains an issue within Halton as it does in many areas across the Northwest new ways of interacting with this client base will be part of the customer journey programme, but the shops remain an essential aspect of the front door into the council for many.</p> <p>This programme of work will also be linked to a newly agreed partnership with NHS led Halton Health Hubs – discussions continue to evaluate the options for a presence within the new Runcorn Old Town hub and also to offer an NHS presence within the HBC locations. The management within this area are discussing options to increase the number of council services within the locations bringing services into the community on a face-to-face basis. Digital poverty and low digital skills make sure not all interactions can be digital.</p>
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<u>Legal &amp; Democracy</u>
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**Key Objectives / milestones**


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>LD 01</b>	<b>To ensure that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information and are kept informed of changing legislation and responsibilities</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Revised Constitution to be approved by Annual Council each May		Revised Constitution will be submitted to Council for approval in May.


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>LD 02</b>	<b>To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that provides Elected Members, as key decision makers, with the necessary information, support and training opportunities to fulfil their individual potential and management and governance role effectively</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Inductions to be completed by June following election and offer of MAPs to be monitored on a quarterly basis		No induction necessary as no election. No MAPs completed in Q4, Jan – March 2025. A new Member Development Plan has been drafted and is awaiting approval from the Member Development Group to be sent out to all Members.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>LD 03</b>	<b>Ensure that prosecutions are carried out expeditiously by monitoring average time taken to issue from receipt of full instructions. The target is within 10 working days.</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the target		All prosecutions have been issued under 10 working days from receipt of full instructions







<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
<b>LD 04</b>	Ensure that care cases are carried out expeditiously by monitoring average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department. The target is within 3 working days


<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
<p>On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the target:</p> <p>Adults – 1 issued</p> <p>Children's – 13 cases issued</p>		<p>For adult work, it's not care proceedings, it is a welfare application in the court of protection. Once all finalised papers are received the target is to file applications within 5 working days. The target time is longer because there are not admin' resources and one full time solicitor in the team.</p> <p>Care cases have reduced in line with the plan to reduce the number of care issues being issues.</p>

<b><u>Catering Stadium &amp; Registration Services</u></b>
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**Key Objectives / milestones**

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community <b>The DCBL Stadium</b>
<b>ERD 39</b>	<b>Provide affordable space for business, community, cultural and recreational activities to take place.</b>

	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Meeting space occupancy levels %	 	<p>Meeting space occupancy in Q4 is <b>54%</b> which shows an increase of <b>35.25%</b> from the same period in the previous operating year of <b>18.75%</b>.</p> <p>During Q4 occupancy in the Stadium's suites for conferences and functions was <b>51.5%</b> compared to <b>48.80%</b> in the same period last operating year representing a <b>4.40%</b> increase.</p>
Sports hall occupancy levels %	 	<p>Sports hall occupancy has increased in the Q4 period to <b>61.5 %</b> in comparison to <b>30.7%</b> in Q4 2024.</p>
4g pitch occupancy levels %	 	<p>The facility is well used which is demonstrated in the occupancy data showing a <b>75.8%</b> take up of available slots, this represents an increase on the same quarter in 2024 which was <b>69.7%</b></p>

Customer satisfaction % of 4/5 star reviews.		<p><b>97%</b> of returns rated the stadium in terms of 'Quality of Venue' between 4 and 5 stars.</p> <p><b>94%</b> of returns rated the stadium in terms of 'Quality of Catering' between 4 and 5 stars.</p> <p><b>97%</b> of returns said they would likely or very likely use the stadium again.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. <b>Registrars</b>
<b>ERD 40</b>	<b>Provide accessible and efficient Registration Service to Halton residents.</b>

<b>Milestone: Quarterly updates on progress and annual performance data statistics to be reported to the relevant PPB</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Births (or declarations) within 5 working days of request	 	100% achievement, national benchmark is 95%. Appointment availability monitored to ensure births registered within required timeframe.
Deaths (or declarations) within 2 working days of request	 	99.05% achievement, national benchmark is 95%. Appointment availability monitored to ensure deaths registered with required timeframe
Waiting times - % of customers seen early, on time or within 10 minutes of their appointment time.	 	98.56% achieved, national benchmark is 90%




Property Services

**Key Objectives / milestones**

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. <b>Property Services</b>
<b>ERD 11</b>	<b>Rationalise the Council's main office accommodation to deliver revenue savings.</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Exec Board approval to vacate the Municipal Building and progress with associated works – June 24.		Whilst formal approval to vacate the Municipal Building has not been obtained, Members are in general supportive of the proposal to reduce accommodation and costs. We are currently looking at an alternative option for creating a 'Head Office' for Widnes, an outline feasibility is planned to be delivered in early May. Once this is completed further discussions will take place with Members to seek agreement on a way forward.
Agreement to revised officer to desk ratio – September 24		The agreement to the reduced officer to desk ratio is tied into the accommodation strategy so will be included in a report in due course once Members have agreed on the most appropriate option.
Complete options appraisal for Widnes office to present to members by March 25		See above
Agreed approach to provision of HBC staff accommodation by March 25		See above

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. <b>Property Services</b>
<b>ERD 12</b>	<b>Reduce Carbon Emissions from the Council's Property Portfolio</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Deliver the leisure centre by Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2025.		The leisure centre was delivered slightly ahead of programme and opened to the public on February 10th
Commence works on site at St Pat's & St Luke's by December 2024.		The scope of works has been reduced due to budget pressures, and we are now working on a reduced scheme. An application for grant was unsuccessful which has impacted on the available budget.
Ensure year on year reduction in carbon emissions from the Council's property portfolio. Baseline at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023 - 6096 tonnes. target 3% after year 1, 5% reduction after year 3.		Emissions from Council buildings at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024 were 5593 tonnes, an 8.2% reduction from the previous year.

## 4.0 Financial Statements

### Finance Department

#### Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	6,969	6,846	123
Insurances	975	958	17
Supplies & Services	410	564	(154)
Rent Allowances	35,500	35,500	0
Concessionary Travel	1,748	1,872	(124)
LCR Levy	1,748	1,748	0
Transfer to Reserves	0	37	(37)
Bad Debt Provision	77	-7	84
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	49	21
Discretionary Social Fund	106	12	94
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	275	25
Household Support Fund Expenditure	2,475	2,475	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>50,378</b>	<b>50,329</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-335	-348	13
Burdens Grant	-60	-91	31
Dedicated schools Grant	-144	-144	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-581	-664	83
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	-157	0
Schools SLAs	-312	-307	(5)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,748	-1,748	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-400	-198	(202)
Rent Allowances	-34,700	-33,909	(791)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-63	(7)
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-277	(23)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-498	-489	(9)
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	-12	12
Universal Credits	-5	0	(5)
Household Support Fund Grant	-2,475	-2,523	48
VEP Grant	0	-7	7
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-87	-92	5
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-185	-495	310
Transfer from Reserves	0	-172	172
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-42,057</b>	<b>-41,696</b>	<b>(361)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>8,321</b>	<b>8,633</b>	<b>(312)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	377	377	0
Transport Support	0	0	0
Central Support	2,365	2,365	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,031	-6,031	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-3,289</b>	<b>-3,289</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>5,032</b>	<b>5,344</b>	<b>(312)</b>



**Comments on the above figures**

The Finance outturn shows net spend being £0.312m above the approved budget for Finance Department. The change from previous month 10 position (forecast £0.095m underspend) is due to the adverse Rent Allowances net effect of £0.791m.

Concessionary Travel had previously forecast an underspend of £0.006m but due to adjusted tariffs being applied and backdated charges incurred the final overspend is £0.124m in year.




There has been a reduction of insurance premiums through negotiating better terms/changing providers. Public liability claimant damages have significantly reduced from previous years however motor liability claims have increased and along with movement in insurance provision meant a reduction from the underspend position reported at month 10 from £0.209m to £0.017m

Despite an increase in budget in 2024/25, Rent Allowances continue to be an area of concern, due to the increased costs of supported accommodation the expenditure cost is higher than the income received from DWP. This should ideally net to zero, however, Housing Benefit will only support up to a nominal figure for non-registered providers after which, 60% will come from housing benefits and the remaining 40% is up to the Council to support.

Supplies and services net spend is £0.154m above budget, £0.137m is due to the Business Rates team engaging with Inform CPI Ltd (Analyse Local) who specialise in identifying new business rate premises that have not been included within the rating list. Whilst there is no budget for this expenditure, the exercise has generated a net yield for the year of £1.089m in additional business rates income. Annually the net increase in billed business rates as a result of the exercise will be in excess of £0.5m.

Reimbursement & Grant Income has significantly increased due to receiving unbudgeted income of £0.200m from Natwest purchase card rebates and an anticipated increased in procurement card income.

**Approved 2024/25 Savings****FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

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
<b>Total Finance Department</b>				<b>65</b>	<b>90</b>		

**Chief Executive's Delivery Unit****Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2025**

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	3,304	3,398	(94)
Employees Training	99	69	30
Apprenticeship Levy	300	326	(26)
Supplies & Services	391	340	51
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,094</b>	<b>4,133</b>	<b>(39)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-223	-211	(12)
Schools SLA Income	-565	-529	(36)
Transfer from Reserves	0	-5	5
Reimbursements & Grant Income	0	-5	5
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-788</b>	<b>-750</b>	<b>(38)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>3,306</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>(77)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	174	174	0
Transport	0	0	0
Central Support	1,209	1,209	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,573	-3,573	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,190</b>	<b>-2,190</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>(77)</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

As at 31 March 2025 the net spend position for the department is £0.077m over the approved budget for the year.

Forecasted salary costs have increased since the last reporting period as costs initially identified under the Transformation programme have had to be realigned back to the service.

The School SLA Income has reduced as some schools have become academies and are not buying back Council services. This shortfall in income is currently being offset by an underspend against supplies and services.

**Capital Programme 2024/25**

	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025	Allocation remaining
	£000	£000	£000
Transformation Programme	3,740.0	3,202.1	537.9
<b>Chief Executives Delivery Unit Total</b>	<b>3,740.0</b>	<b>3,202.1</b>	<b>537.9</b>

**ICT and Administration Department****Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2025**

	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>	<b>Actual Spend £'000</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend) £'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	5,596	5,285	311
Supplies & Services	921	1,174	(253)
Capital Finance	100	43	57
Computer Repairs & Software	1,576	1,483	92
Communication Costs	13	175	(162)
Premises	159	137	23
Transport	3	2	1
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>8,367</b>	<b>8,298</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-1,056	-1,167	111
Schools SLA Income	-646	-571	(75)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	0	-30	30
Transfer from Reserves	0	-148	148
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-1,703</b>	<b>-1,916</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,664</b>	<b>6,383</b>	<b>282</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	603	603	0
Transport Support	19	19	0
Central Support	2,380	2,380	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	1,494	0
Support Costs Income	-11,222	-11,222	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-6,726</b>	<b>-6,726</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-62</b>	<b>-343</b>	<b>282</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

At the end of the 2024/25 financial year net spend for the ICT and Administration Department will be under the approved budget by £0.282m

In previous years, a significant budget pressure for the department has been the administrative staff. Now that the service has been disaggregated the burden is no longer pooled within the department but across the Council.

The main pressures faced by the ICT and Administration Department is now in relation to the IT infrastructure, with the move to Microsoft 365, staff have been able to utilise much more efficient hardware. However, the software utilised by the new hardware is at a premium and will be a continuous pressure and the Council will need to react to as prices fluctuate.

There was a significant favourable shift from previous quarter due to proportionate invoice timing adjustments to reflect the in year expenditure, £0.442m against Computer Repairs & Software and also £0.167m for Supplies and Services

With a number of agency staff across the Council, ICT and Administrative Services are recharging licence costs for non HBC staff to their respective departments as the costs are not held within the initial contracts with suppliers such as Microsoft, this should help budget holders more readily see the impact agency staff are having on the Council's finances as there is not just the direct fees to be considered, there is strain on a number of other services and existing contracts which do come at additional costs.

There has been a substantial increase in postage costs £0.176m as well as communication costs £0.162m for BT & Vodafone quarterly bundle charges

There has been a increase in income due to Cyber Assessment Framework payments which had not been foreseen. Income will be expected to reduce in the forthcoming finance years by the decommissioning of Youth Justice System ICT service provided.

The transfer of reserves of £0.148m income was the Cyber Support Fund which will not be rolled forward.

#### **Capital Expenditure**

	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025	Allocation remaining
	£000	£000	£000
IT Rolling Programme	1,026.9	921.6	105.3
<b>ICT Total</b>	<b>1,026.9</b>	<b>921.6</b>	<b>105.3</b>

**Legal and Democratic Services Department****Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2025**

	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Actual Spend</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	1,557	1,542	15
Agency Related Expenditure	0	881	(881)
Supplies & Services	364	323	41
Civic Catering & Functions	23	18	5
Legal Expenses	218	493	(275)
Transport Related Expenditure	11	5	6
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,173</b>	<b>3,262</b>	<b>(1,089)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
School SLA's	-98	-77	(21)
Licence Income	-301	-296	(5)
Government Grant	-67	-67	0
Reimbursement & Other Grants	-115	-115	0
Fees & Charges Income	-74	-45	(29)
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-27	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-682</b>	<b>-627</b>	<b>(55)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>1,491</b>	<b>2,635</b>	<b>(1,144)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	53	53	0
Transport Recharges	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	275	275	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	0	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-2,391	-2,391	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,063</b>	<b>-2,063</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-572</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>(1,144)</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

As at 31 March 2025 the departmental net spend is £1.144m over the approved budget for the year. Employee costs for the year are expected to marginally be below the approved budget (including staff payments for recent elections). This is a result of the number of vacancies that exist within the department but due to the demand on the service, agency staff are required to maintain the service.


The main area of concern for the department is the volume of agency costs resulting from hard to fill vacant posts. These costs totalled £0.881m at the end of the financial year.

Within the forecast £0.275m overspend against budget of legal expenses, there is an estimated £0.357m costs relating to the contracting of barristers, most of which again, are due to the limited number of staff available to clear an increasing caseload.

**Approved 2024/25 Savings**

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

**LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

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			Budget adjusted <u>inline</u> with the savings in the ICT department
<b>Total Legal Services Department</b>				<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>		

**COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE****Revenue Budget as at 31st March 2025**

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	16,534	15,726	808
Agency - covering vacancies	0	191	(191)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	256	(256)
Premises	3,443	3,367	76
Supplies & Services	1,452	1,710	(258)
Hired & Contracted Services	1,636	1,617	19
Book Fund	128	134	(6)
Food Provisions	388	416	(28)
School Meals Food	1,107	1,236	(129)
Transport	117	121	(4)
Other Agency Costs	460	486	(26)
Other Expenditure	41	63	(22)
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,072	7,190	(118)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	64	30	34
Grants to Norton Priory	174	174	0
Transfer to reserves	1,357	1,357	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>33,973</b>	<b>34,074</b>	<b>(101)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Sales Income	-1,389	-1,353	(36)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,771	-5,633	(138)
Rental Income	-235	-280	45
Markets Income	-910	-847	(63)
Government Grant Income	-2,034	-2,034	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,053	-1,053	0
School SLA Income	-553	-553	0
School Meals Income	-2,622	-2,622	0
Internal Fees Income	-322	-434	112
Capital Salaries	-173	-92	(81)
Transfers From Reserves	-421	-925	504
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-15,483</b>	<b>-15,826</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>18,490</b>	<b>18,248</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	1,675	1,675	0
Transport	2,257	2,295	(38)
Central Support	3,592	3,592	0
Asset Rental Support	2,845	2,845	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-843	-843	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>9,526</b>	<b>9,564</b>	<b>(38)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>28,016</b>	<b>27,812</b>	<b>204</b>



**Comments on the above figures**

The net Departmental Expenditure has fallen £0.204m under budget at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The position is £0.614m lower than forecast at month 10 and is due to several factors detailed below.

The largest shift from month 10 is in regards to Waste Disposal Contracts, which has seen a drop from a forecasted £0.284m underspend against the budget profile to £0.118m overspend. The invoices for these contracts are typically received very late after expenditure has been incurred so it can be difficult to forecast and within recent years the performance has been well within the budget. However, costs have risen by at least 25% which is producing a significant budget pressure due to the monetary value of the contracts. There is central government initiative to incorporate food waste recycling into all waste provisions across the country, there is scope to drive down these costs in subsequent financial years as when sorted at source, the processing costs are reduced. There is potential for reconciliation adjustments to be received in 2025/26 which may result in the annual cost being closer to the budget, but at this stage, the costs have risen above the approved budget.

Fees and Charges has also seen a significant change from that reported in Month 10. The change from £0.183m overachieved to £0.138m underachieved is due to a larger than expected portion of the funds received within the 2024/25 period relating to subsequent financial years.

Transfers From Reserves has also seen an increase as more funds were identified for utilisation against community and library services, releasing £0.505m of funds in comparison to the £0.202m in Month 10. Work will be carried out in 2025/26 to continue to identify opportunities such as this to help alleviate revenue budget pressures.

The largest contributor to the underspend continued to be spend on employees within the department, seeing £0.808m under the approved budget profile by the end of the financial year. There have been several restructures taking place across the Department in this financial year, in order to facilitate these, a number of vacancies have been held vacant whilst waiting for the new structure to be implemented. These will continue to be held into the 2025/26 financial year. Offsetting this however, is agency spend within the Department which reached £0.447m for the 2024/25 financial year. As the Department offers a number of front-line services, including waste collections, in order to continue operations in the event of staff sickness, there is a reliance on agency to reduce the impact on residents within the borough.

Spend on premises costs is £0.076m under budget in 2024/25, a slightly improved position from month 10. Halton Leisure Centre is now open, and this facility will have lower building costs as there is little requirement for repairs and maintenance in comparison to the previous site. The premises costs of Kingsway Leisure Centre were a significant budget pressure for the department so the Council should start to see the benefits of increased revenue, and lower maintenance costs with the newer site. This has been built into the approved budget for 2025/26 so it is unlikely that there will be an underspend within the next financial year.

Supplies and services is showing an overspend of £0.258m which is a budget pressure throughout the Department, and is primarily caused by inflationary cost increases of key goods and services over recent years, if the Council were to contain these costs within the budget profile there would be a reduction in the service provided.

The overall budget underspend of £0.205m for the department is largely contained to this financial year and not expected to continue into 2025/26. The budget for 2024/25 was set including a full year for the Kingsway Leisure Centre and School Meals service, next year does not include these, so the Council is likely to see expenditure and income more in line with the approved budget profile, there may be some temporary relief from vacancies as restructures are underway, and where possible, opportunities to identify available reserves will continue. However, due to the size of the waste disposal contracts, should there be any further increases even by a small percentage, any identified savings will be quickly offset.

### **Budget Savings**

#### **COMMUNITY AND GREENSPACES DEPARTMENT**

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		✓ Phase 1 of the restructure is underway with subsequent phases to occur within the next financial year.
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 complete.
<b>Total Community &amp; Environment Department</b>				<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>		

**Capital**

	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025	Allocation remaining
	£000	£000	£000
Stadium Minor Works	30.0	37.8	(7.8)
Halton Leisure Centre	8,997.0	8,897.3	99.7
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	48.0	19.8
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	340.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	0.0	13.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	0.0	12.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	591.7	8.3
Runcorn Town Park	468.6	18.1	450.5
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,933.5	90.9	1,842.6
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	503.0	33.8	469.2
Replacement Cremator Widnes	308.0	325.9	(17.9)
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0
<b>Community and Greenspaces Departmental Total</b>	<b>13,292.9</b>	<b>10,063.5</b>	<b>3,229.4</b>

Halton Leisure Centre is now open so the costs will begin to wind up for this project, there will be some slippage into next financial year for any remedial works but the majority of work on the site is complete. Due to staffing issues several projects have had delayed starts so allocations will need to be carried through to the next financial year.

The overspend position against Stadium Minor Works and Replacement Cremator will be funded from the 2025/26 allocation being brought forward from 2024/25.

**ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT****Revenue Operational Budget at 31 March 25**

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	5,264	4,778	486
Agency - covering vacancies	0	417	(417)
Repairs & Mainenance	1,746	1,831	(85)
Premises	167	160	7
Energy & Water Costs	1,258	1,132	126
NNDR	687	666	21
Rents	173	166	7
Economic Regeneration Activities	17	-4	21
Security	544	588	(44)
Supplies & Services	477	570	(93)
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,270	1,270	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	159	154	5
Capital Finance	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	1,177	1,231	(54)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,939</b>	<b>12,959</b>	<b>(20)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges Income	-1,065	-1,175	110
Rent - Commercial Properties	-872	-900	28
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-38	0
Government Grant	-2,652	-2,661	9
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-330	-387	57
Schools SLA Income	-221	-212	(9)
Recharges to Capital	-383	-383	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,170	-1,170	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6,731</b>	<b>-6,926</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,208</b>	<b>6,033</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	2,074	2,074	0
Transport Support	28	28	0
Central Support	1,947	1,947	0
Asset Rental Support	1,154	1,154	0
Recharge Income	-7,927	-7,927	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,724</b>	<b>-2,724</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>3,484</b>	<b>3,309</b>	<b>175</b>

## **Comments on the above figures**

Finance communicates with the department on a regular basis to manage and analyse spending, identifying potential savings that could support current and future priorities. In an era of constrained budgets, achieving these goals is essential. The final outturn position shows the department is £0.175m under the annual approved budget.

## **Supporting Information**

The department consists of 139fte, of which 69fte are externally funded, with a staff turnover savings target of £0.126m.

Through diligent account monitoring, the success of utilising grant and external funding to alleviate pressure on the core budget is evident in employee expenses. Specific projects have been identified, and staff time has been allocated accordingly. Ensuring at all times that the department is compliant with the grant conditions.

To fulfil statutory and contractual obligations and support the borough's regeneration, maintaining a complete staff is essential. However, the challenge of filling surveyor and project manager roles, even with a market supplement, has resulted in a lack of suitable candidates. Consequently, the engagement of agency personnel has been necessary, at a cost of £0.417m this financial year. Without these personnel, the borough's regeneration efforts would be hindered, potentially leading to a loss of business rates and council tax.

The recruitment of agency staff has increased commercial rental income by enabling the completion of pending rent reviews. All units at The Hive are now tenanted, although a rent-free period was provided to secure lease completions, resulting in a £0.020m shortfall. The budget should be balanced for the financial year 25/26, providing there is no increase in inflation.

A reconciliation of service charges at Rutland House and the relocation of Connect to Halton to the Municipal Building have increased the fees and charges income. As a result, the department had an overachievement of income by £0.110m for the year.

A recent exercise was conducted to determine the costs associated with empty properties within the Borough. Consequently a new cost centre was established to monitor these expenses. In addition to the loss of rental income whilst the properties remain vacant, the Council also incur additional costs for utilities, repairs, and maintenance. As of the end of the financial year, the total costs related to these properties amount to £0.230m. To reduce the expenses actions need to be taken to accelerate the leasing or explore temporary uses for properties, such as short-term rentals or community projects, which will generate some income and reduce costs. Some properties are in poor condition and require refurbishment before any letting could be considered.

The Department highlighted the necessity of expert advice to advance regeneration projects. Additionally, the change in Government highlighted the need for an up-to-date Housing Strategy for the Borough. Following a meeting with the Director of Economy, Enterprise, and Property, it was decided to use the Department's reserves to cover these one-off costs. Seeking external advice will assist with future grant funding requests from the LCR and Government, and enable the department to fulfil its obligations regarding the borough's regeneration strategy.

Whilst there has been a significant increase in energy costs over the last few years, it is anticipated that costs this financial year will be £0.152m lower than in 2023/24, representing a decrease of over 11%. The department spend is £0.126m under budget for 24/25.

Due to a delay in securing a new security contract, the current provider has been granted a one-year extension. At the end of 24/25 costs are £0.044m over budget. It has been agreed that departments will manage their own security budgets for 25/26 which will allow for tighter control of spend.

The Repairs and Maintenance program is under continuous review to ensure it stays within budget. This financial year is particularly challenging because the 2024/25 budget did not include an inflation adjustment and was further reduced by 10%. An exercise was conducted with the service to distinguish between capital and revenue expenditures, and the budgets have been adjusted accordingly. Despite these adjustments, revenue expenditure was £0.085m over the approved budget for the year.



Similar to previous years, the school cleaning service's level agreement (SLA) is not meeting its financial targets due to the employment of agency for covering absences and leave, as well as the anticipated pay award. This service will no longer be offered from April 2025.

#### **Approved 2024/25 Savings**

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

### **ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**

#### **APPENDIX A**

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		The restructure can now take place following the retirement of a member of staff. The full saving will not be made until financial year 25/26
<b>Total Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property Department</b>				<b>152</b>	<b>0</b>		

**Capital Budget at 31 March 25**

	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025	Allocation remaining
	£000	£000	£000
3MG	134.5	0.0	134.5
Sandymoor Open Spaces Improvements	0.0	2.9	(2.9)
Murdishaw redevelopment	21.2	21.9	(0.7)
Equality Act Improvement Works	93.2	89.7	3.5
Foundary Lane Residential Area	1,240.0	494.1	745.9
Town Deal	11,552.9	3,160.1	8,392.8
Property Improvements	460.5	627.4	(166.9)
Runcorn Station Quarter	76.0	76.0	(0.0)
Waterloo Building	75.0	4.5	70.5
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	178.2	236.7	(58.5)
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	268.7	186.7	82.0
Changing Places	24.1	7.0	17.1
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	0.0	0.0	0.0
Port of Weston	20.0	3.0	17.0
Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition	750.0	41.2	708.8
<b>Economy, Enterprise and Property Total</b>	<b>28,187.2</b>	<b>15,014.7</b>	<b>13,172.5</b>

**Comments on above figures****3MG**

3MG is in its final stages for development with HBC Field being finalised this year and developments for Liberty Park and the Mound not presently forthcoming.

**Foundry Lane**

Resolving some of the site and financial issues remains the main focus of the work of this project in the quarter resulting in minimal expenditure with a view to being back on track in the next quarter. Work has now commenced on site.

**Murdishaw**

The allocation has been brought forward to continue work to improve the amenity at Murdishaw Community Centre as part of the wider community project. Work has been completed to provide allotment space and further work is due to be undertaken to provide secure and accessible spaces, enhancing the allotment offer.

The improvements are part of the wider Murdishaw community regeneration scheme which has supported the delivery of the Tea Tree community café, improvements to bungalows on the estate and environmental improvements.

**Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet**

Project Violet is currently being reviewed and a full business case is in development. As a result of increased costs, the development appraisal is being reviewed and the funding requirements being reviewed. The programme anticipates a procurement exercise in the next quarter and the revised delivery programme proposes a 26 month build with construction commencing in August 2025 and completion in Q4 2026.

**Waterloo Building** All works complete, site now sold.

**Equality Improvement Works** All budget has been spent, £200k allocated to The Brindley.

**Property Improvement**

The budget has been adjusted to accommodate two new unforeseen projects: replacing the platform lift at Kids Planet and fully refurbishing the public lift at Halton Lea.

**Changing Places**

Works all complete, grant money fully spent, some retention monies left to pay circa £5k.

**Runcorn Station Quarter**

The Runcorn Station Development Project will formally be passed over to the CA Rail team as a Merseytravel project from 30th September.

A final invoice is estimated to be submitted during quarter 3 2024 period for Network Rail Project Management fees.

This is estimated to be no more than £10k. Once this has been paid and claimed, the CA Investment Team will formally end Halton's GFA. Halton's role will continue as strategic partner and actively be involved in the design process.

**Town Deal**

Although at different stages work is progressing with all Town Deal funded projects. The Brindley started on site mid-August and the next phase of the Creative and Digital Skill centre started on site in September. The Health Hub design work is completed and the next stage is to tender the work. Design work progresses on the remaining projects.

**Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development**

A contractor for the demolition works was appointed in March 2024, with Planning Consent gained in May 2024. Following a period of services disconnections and liaison with Halton Housing (who's adjoining building Church Mansions is connected to Churchill Hall), the demolition works commenced in mid-July 2024. The main demolition works are now completed, with practical completion anticipated in mid-Oct 2024. This will bring to a close the Council capital element of the project. The Council continues to work on developing residential proposals for the site in partnership with Halton Housing, community consultation is anticipated in Winter 2024.

**Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition**

The demolition works are underway, following relocation of the Leisure Centre and period of decommissioning of the building.

**Port of Weston**

A outline business case has been developed and finalised which demonstrates the viability of the Port of Weston as a business location with a mixture of uses including high-barn warehousing and a business park. Within the quarter a full business case was starting to be commissioned with a view to carrying out a green book assessment to secure the funding for site purchase and development.

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund**




Work has commenced at The Brindley. The allocation for the education room will be reflected in the forecast. The allocations for the High Street solar panels and Church Street works are projected for the end of the financial year.







## 5.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

### Progress Symbols

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

### Direction of Travel Indicator

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

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12 June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director of Finance

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** 2024/25 Spending as at 31 March 2025

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

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue and capital net spending position for the 2024/25 financial year.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- (i) The Council's 2024/25 outturn position as presented in the report be noted;**
- (ii) Directorates take all possible steps to manage spending in line with budget during 2025/26;**
- (iii) Priority is given to the acceleration of the Council's Transformation Programme, to ensure it is sufficiently developed to deliver the savings required to meet the medium-term financial gap and help the Council replenish its reserves.**
- (iv) This report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **Revenue Spending**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the Council's revenue budget for 2024/25 and Appendix 2 provides detailed figures for each individual Department.
- 3.2 In overall terms, net Council spending as at 31 March 2025 is £16.073m over budget. This is an improvement from the forecast outturn position of £18.906m reported at the end of January 2025. Whilst an improved position, given the scale of the budgetary overspend the Council will need to access the exceptional financial support provisionally approved by the

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 24 February 2025.

- 3.3 Para 3.19 includes information on the balance of reserves held by the Council as at 31 March 2025. Reserves of £6.137m have been held for transformation purposes and to contribute towards future budget deficiencies. It is proposed £6.073m of this offsets the budget overspend leaving a balance of £10m which will be funded through borrowings via Exceptional Financial Support (EFS). The Council are required to repay borrowings for EFS over a 20 year period, resulting in an additional cost to the Council of £0.5m in each of the next 20 years. In addition the interest cost associated with the borrowings are estimated to cost £0.450m per year over the same period. Exact interest costs will be determined annually as part of the treasury management function.
- 3.3 Future EFS borrowings are expected over the next 3-4 years until the Council is in a position to contain net spend within the approved budget. Accelerating saving proposals and work within the Transformation Programme will go some way towards achieving. The Council will also lobby Government as part of the Fair Funding Review (proposed to take place summer 2025) to ensure Halton receives grant settlement reflective of increasing demand for services within the borough.
- 3.4 The table below summarises changes (by directorate) between the forecast outturn reported at 31 January 2025 and the actual outturn position at 31 March 2025.

	Forecast Outturn Variance 31 January 2024	Actual Outturn Variance to 31 March 2025	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adults Directorate	-4,964	-4,480	484
Chief Executives Directorate	-1,692	-1,205	487
Children Services Directorate	-11,327	-9,688	1,639
Environment & Regeneration Directorate	1,271	659	-612
Public Health Directorate	78	98	20
Corporate & Democracy	-2,272	-1,457	815
<b>Total Variance</b>	<b>-18,906</b>	<b>-16,073</b>	<b>2,833</b>

- 3.5 The main areas which have contributed towards the improvement in the outturn position are:
- Community Care – Capitalisation of £1.3m of revenue costs through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). This is considered to be a one-off due to limited DFG funds held.

- Children and Families – Reduction in the budget overspend from £10.087m reported at Month 10 to the final outturn overspend of £8.434m.
- Business Rate Relief Grant – Following closure of the Collection Fund and reporting of the final position to Government, £1.2m of additional relief funding has been identified.

- 3.6 Further detail on significant departmental variances is included within the report at Para 3.13
- 3.7 The outturn position shows overspend positions across the majority of departments with the exceptions of Public Health and the Environment and Regeneration Directorate departments.
- 3.8 The largest pressure on the Council's budget continues to be within the Children & Families Department and the Adults Directorate. Against Children & Families operational net spend for the year was £6.132m (15.5%) above 2023/24 actual spend. Against the Adults Directorate net operational spend for the year is £4.873m (9.0%) higher than 2023/24 actual spend.
- 3.9 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 most 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.
- 3.10 Analysis of agency spend for the year, together with comparative analysis of 2023/24 costs, is included in the table below. There is an increase in agency costs over the year of £0.198m or 1.4%, which is below the rate of pay inflation suggesting a steady tightening and control of agency usage.

	2024/25					2023/24 Total £'000
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Adult Social Care	1,341	1,656	1,210	1,828	6,035	5,927
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	132	179	239	260	810	0
Children & Family Services	1,283	1,432	1,321	1,184	5,220	6,157
Community & Greenspace	116	129	104	98	447	336
Economy, Enterprise & Property	86	105	110	116	417	343
Education, Inclusion & Provision	99	78	53	65	295	393
Finance	14	42	31	27	114	56
Legal & Democratic Services	253	274	212	142	881	814
Planning & Transportation	94	85	19	12	210	206
Public Health & Public Protection	11	10	1	0	22	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,429</b>	<b>3,990</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>3,732</b>	<b>14,451</b>	<b>14,253</b>

- 3.11 Inflation as at April 2025 is running at 3.5% for CPI, up from 2.6% in March largely driven by increases in utility prices. Rates continue to be above the Government target of 2% with a forecast increase in CPI of up to 3.7% during 2025 before heading back towards the Government 2% target during 2026.
- 3.12 The pay award, high inflation rates, increasing service demands and use of agency staff, continue to have a serious negative impact upon the

Council's financial position. As such there continues to be a real urgency for all departments to reduce spending and to implement any proposed efficiency savings as soon as possible.

### **Revenue - Operational Spending**

3.13 Within the overall budget position for the year, the key variances are as follows;

(i) **Children and Families Department**

Staffing

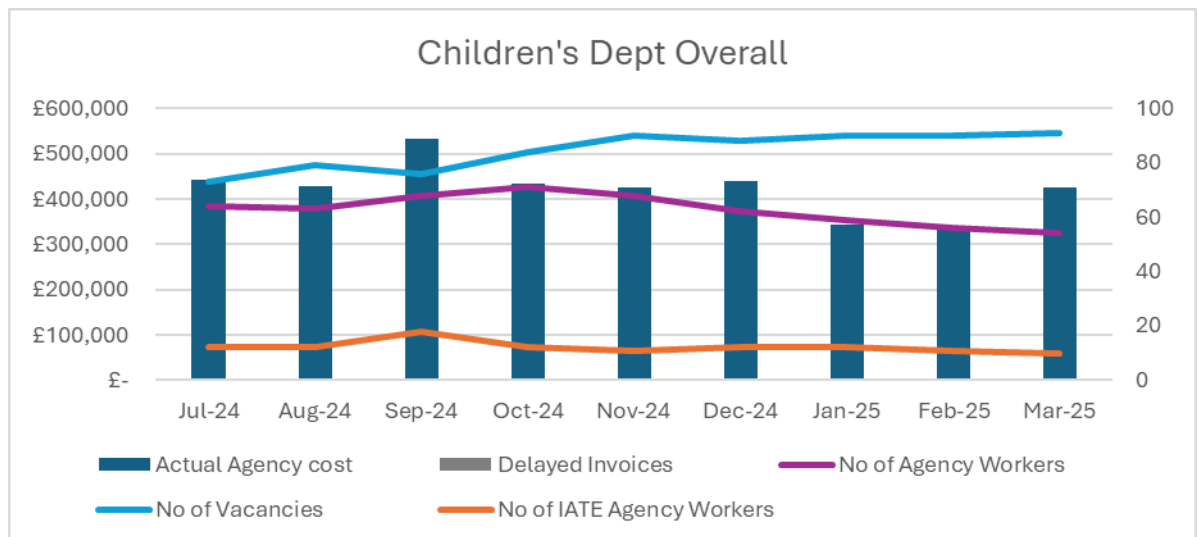
The net departmental expenditure is over budget at the end of the financial year by £8.433m with the majority of this relating to Social Care Services.

Significant investment as part of the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan has helped to reduce the overspend position as well as reductions in agency and placement costs.

Employee costs are over budget at the end of financial year 2024/25 by £1.450m, which is a reduction of £0.544m since last reported.

The reduction mainly relates to an agreed investment within children's services which has resulted in the establishment of new roles across the department. Agency staff that were previously in addition to the establishment (IATE) are no longer considered as IATE. Additional in-year budget of £0.714m (funded from contingency) has been provided for some of the newly established posts which has helped reduce the overspend position.

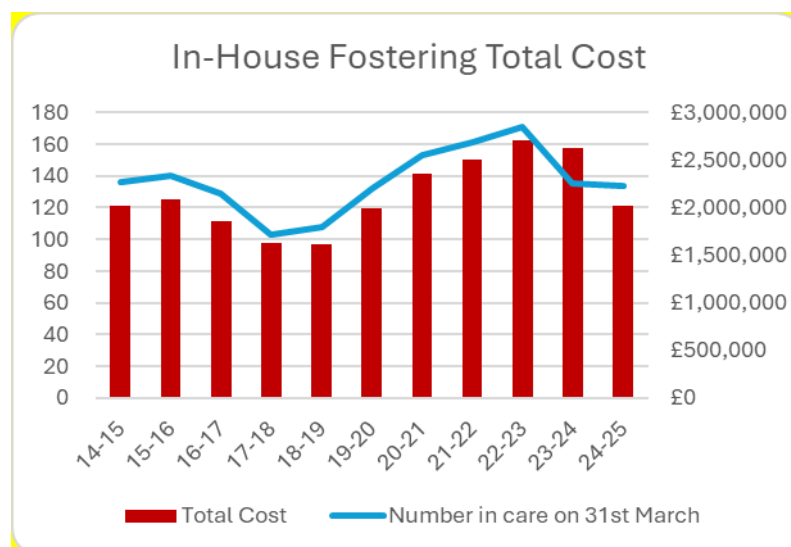
The chart below presents agency costs from July 2024 to March 2025 based upon the period that was worked, the number of agency members of staff for which invoices have been received within each period, the number of vacancies across the department, and the number of staff that are currently in addition to the establishment (IATE).



### Fostering

Inhouse fostering placements are £0.487m under budget for the year. Inhouse fostering budgets were increased to support the budget pressure in this area.

Demand and costs for in-house fostering are shown below.

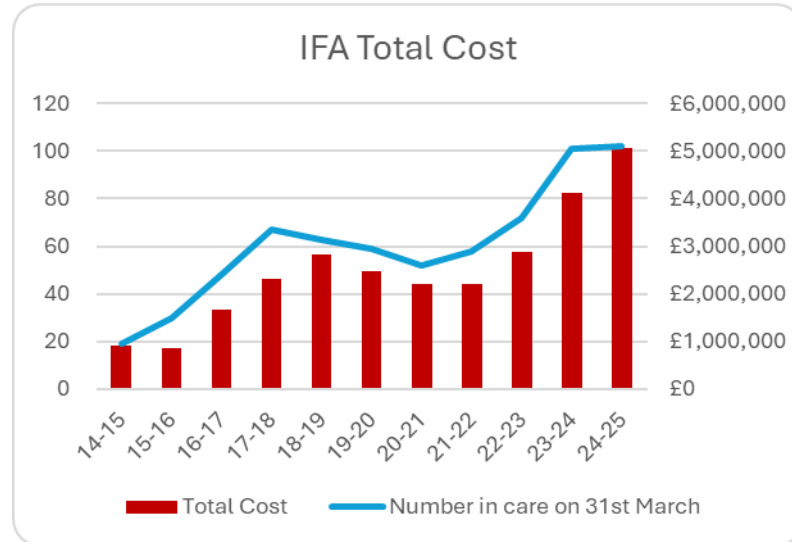


Work continues to recruit and retain Halton's In-house foster carers, along with training to develop carers enabling them to accommodate more specialist placements. This therefore means that costs could increase. However, the ability to accommodate young people within in-house provision provides a substantial saving in comparison to Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) or residential 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 overspend for the end of 2024/25 of £0.803m.

Demand and costs for IFAs are shown below



### 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. The numbers of young people in residential placements remains high and the cost of placements is rising significantly year-on year.

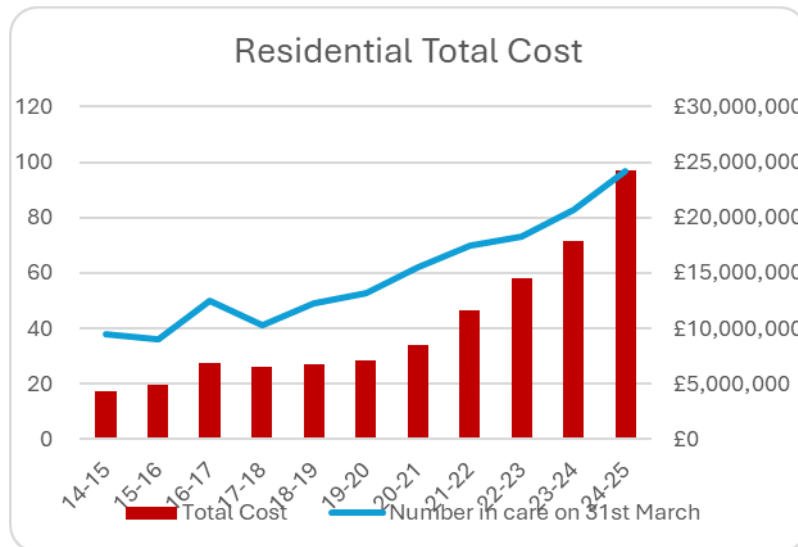
Provision	Weekly Costs	31-Mar-25		31-Jan-25	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£1000 - £3000	6	838,280	4	488,662
Residential	£3001 - £5000	32	5,779,924	27	5,108,252
Residential	£5001 - £7000	20	5,478,530	26	6,737,694
Residential	£7001 - £15982	18	9,323,003	16	9,452,930
Secure	£6397 - £8137	1	53,295		
Leaving Care	£443 - £7175	11	2,058,824	11	2,134,843
Parent & Child	£2000 - £5500	9	717,242	7	774,025
<b>Total:</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>24,249,098</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>24,696,405</b>

Overall cost of packages are increasing due to the complexity of support the young people require as well as standard package cost increases. This is a national issue and market factors such as low supply and high demand have resulted in the costs of residential care packages rising significantly over the last year, meaning that the level of spend is unsustainable at the current rate.

A number of initiatives are taking place to try and address the issue including a High Cost Placement Panel where high cost packages

are individually scrutinised to ensure the placement is right for the young person and at the best available cost for the placement.

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 for previous years and are funded by Home Office grant.



## (ii) Adult Social Care Directorate

### Community Care

At the end of the 2024/25 financial year expenditure on Community Care services before year-end adjustments was overspent against budget by £4.371m. This is an increase of £0.844m from the previous position reported at the end of January 2025.

In helping to mitigate the overall net spend against the department, a number of adjustments have been made at year-end, including:

- Salary and supplies costs of £1.320m being capitalised and charged to available Disabled Facilities Grant funding (DFG). This is considered to be a one-off gain and unlikely to be achieved in future years due to diminishing levels of DFG funding.
- A contribution of £0.300m from the underspend achieved on the Pooled budget. The overall Pooled budget surplus is shared equally with the ICB.

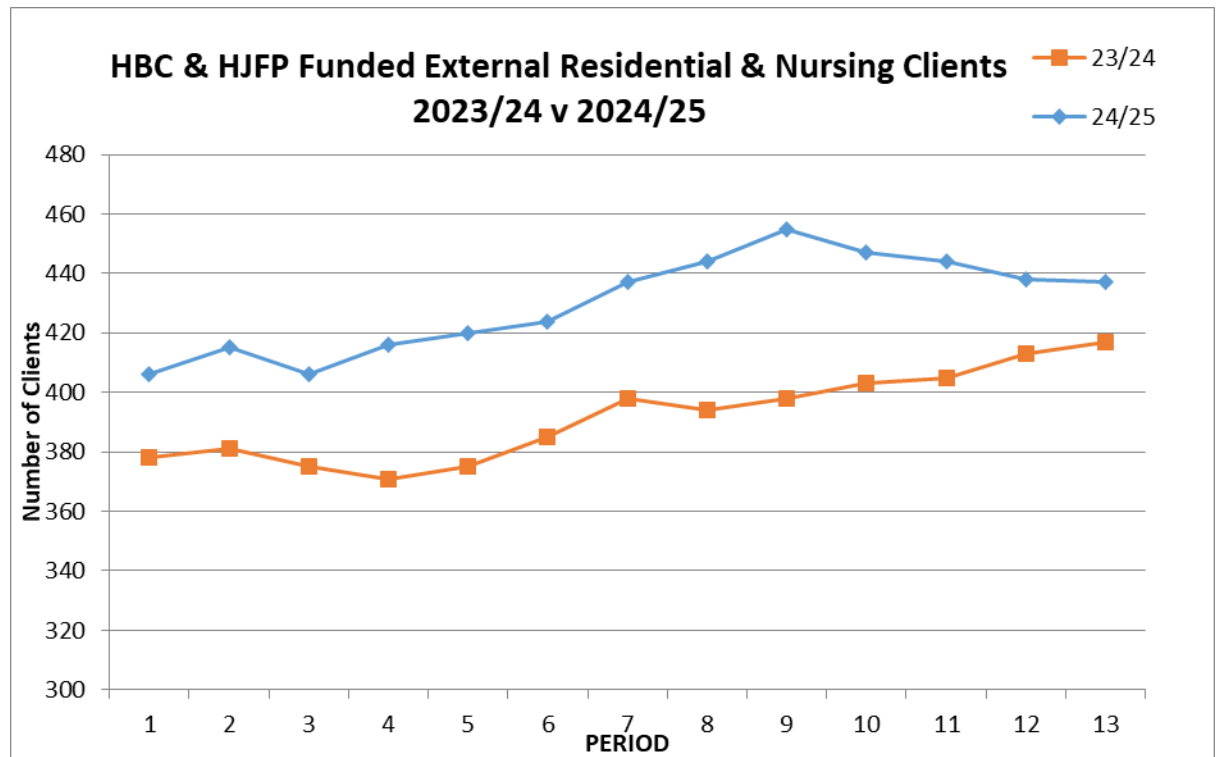
### **Residential & Nursing Care**

There are currently 437 residents in permanent external residential/nursing care placements as at the end of March 2025 compared to 406 in April 24, an increase of 7.6%. Compared to the



2023/24 average of 391 this is an increase of 11.8%. The average cost of a package of care in the current year, has increased from £866.47 to £915.08 an increase of 5.6% over last year. Supplementary invoice payments amounted to £1.2m for the year, as outlined below.

The graph below illustrates the demand for permanent placements.



Providers are increasingly requesting supplementary payments for 1 to 1 support, especially on discharge from hospital. This is generally to mitigate the risk from falls. The full year cost is £0.838m with £0.219m spent in the final 3 months. This is exerting additional pressure on the budget.

Additional payments to care homes are rising, both in and out of the borough. This is where the care home charges an additional amount on top of the contracted bed rate. There does not appear to be any consistency in these extra charges even within the same care home.

The risk, if the Council don't pay these extra charges, could be that care homes do not accept service users. This could result in even more people being placed out of borough at even higher rates.

The cost of this for 2024/25 is £0.424m. £0.131m of this occurred in the final 3 months. The average additional payment was £112.48 per week with the lowest being £12.50 week and the highest £748 per week.

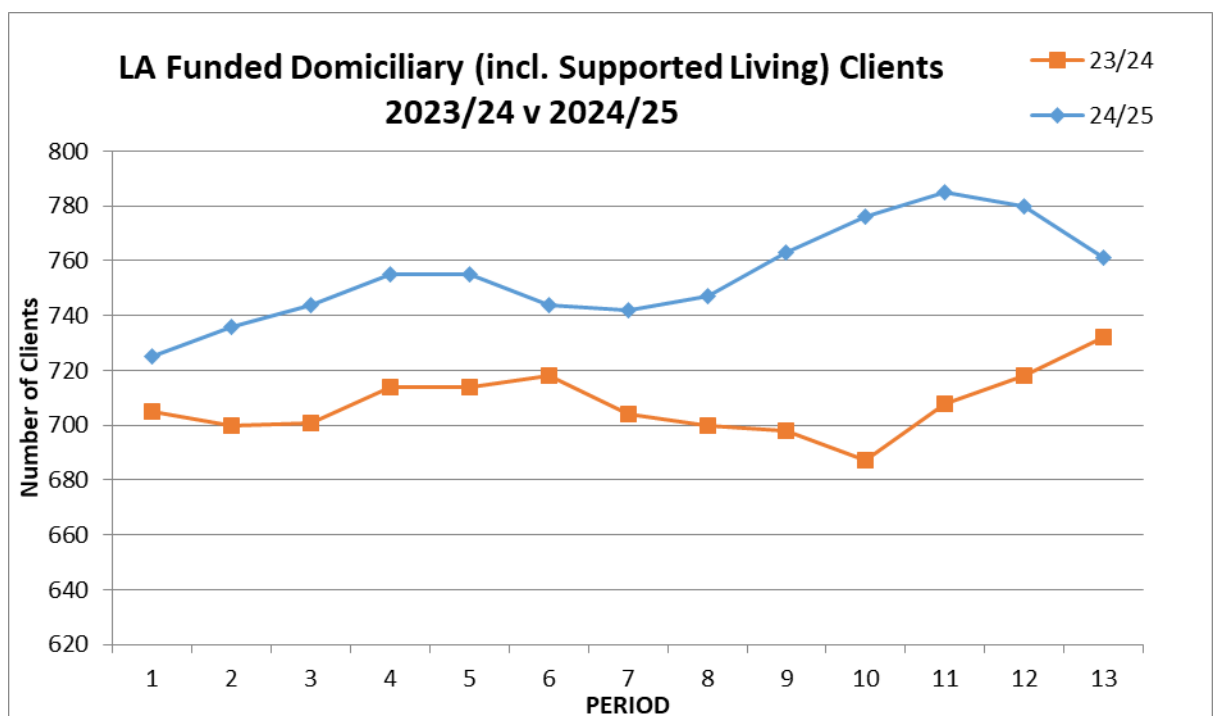
## Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

There are currently 781 service users receiving a package of care at home compared to 776 in January an increase of 4 (0.6%). However, the average number of service users during 2023/24 was 707, so there has been an increase of 10.4% demonstrating that demand for the service has increased this financial year.

The average cost of a package of care has increased since January by 5.24% from £475.14 to £500.04.

The average cost over the full financial year has increased from £425.47 to £500.04, an increase of 17.52%. This suggests packages are more complex.

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



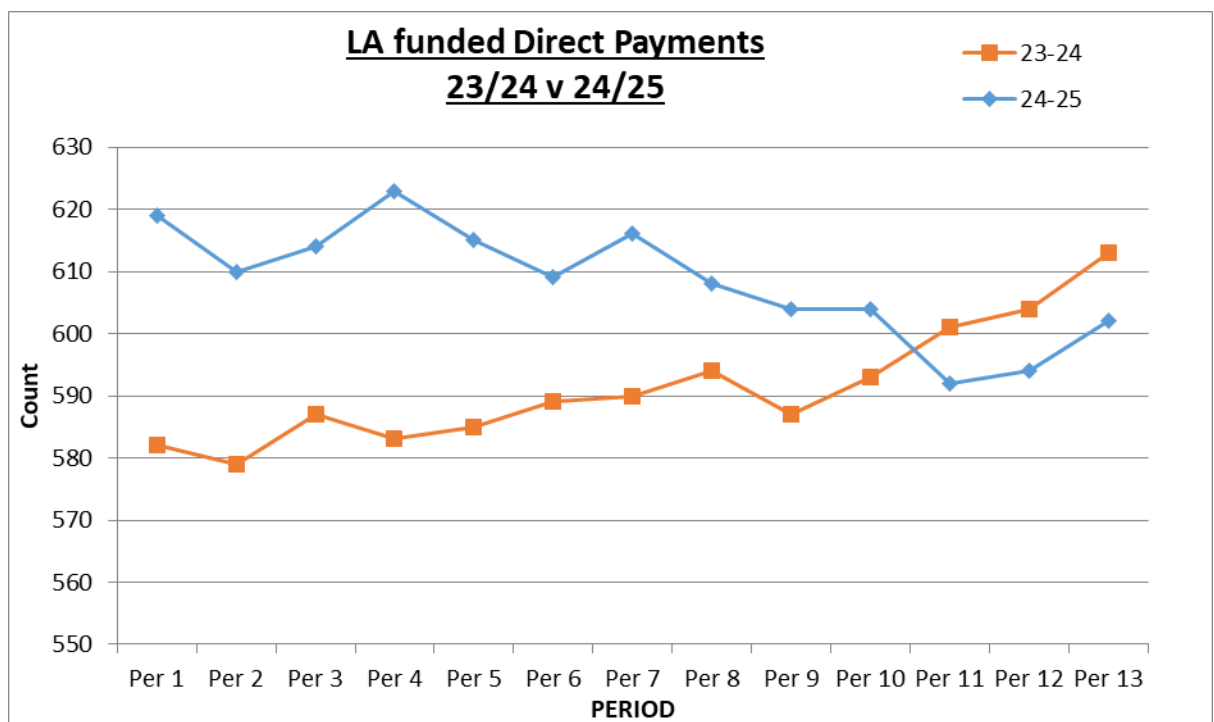
## Direct Payments

The average number of clients who received a Direct Payment (DP) in 2024/25 was 608 compared with 591 in 2023/24, an increase of 2.8%.

The average cost of a package of care in 2024/25 was £486.65 compared with £488.68 in 2023/24, a decrease of 0.4%.

An amount of £1.6m has been recovered from service users following audits to seek assurance the DP is spent in line with their care and support needs.

The graph below shows movement throughout the year.



### **Care Homes**

The net departmental expenditure across the division is over budget for 2024-25 financial year by £1.283m, largely as a result of staffing costs.

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 the financial year total agency spend across the care homes reached £3.815m, the cost of this has partially been offset by staff vacancies.

Recruitment of staff is a continued pressure across the care homes. There remains a high number of staff vacancies.

The 2024-25 pay award offer of £1,290 was accepted, and included in the November pay award with backpay to April 2024. This resulted in an over budget spend of £0.188m across the Care Home Division for the full financial year.

### **(iii) Community and Greenspaces**

The net Departmental Expenditure has fallen to £0.204m under budget at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The position is £0.614m lower than forecast at month 10 and is due to several factors detailed below.

The largest shift from month 10 is in regards to Waste Disposal Contracts, which has seen a drop from a forecasted £0.284m underspend against the budget profile to £0.118m overspend. The invoices for these contracts are typically received very late after expenditure has been incurred so it can be difficult to forecast, fortunately within recent years the performance has been well within the budget. However, costs have risen by at least 25% during 2024/25 which is producing a significant budget pressure due to the monetary value of the contracts.

Fees and Charges has also seen a significant change from that reported in Month 10. The change from £0.183m overachieved against income target to £0.138m underachieved is due to a larger than expected portion of the funds received within the 2024/25 period relating to subsequent financial years.

Transfers From Reserves has also seen an increase as more funds were identified for utilisation against community and library services, releasing £0.505m of funds in comparison to the £0.202m in Month 10. Work will be carried out in 2025/26 to continue to identify opportunities such as this to help alleviate revenue budget pressures.

The largest contributor to the underspend continued to be spend on employees within the department, being £0.808m under the approved budget profile by the end of the financial year. There have been several restructures taking place across the Department in this financial year, in order to facilitate these, a number of vacancies have been held vacant whilst waiting for the new structure to be implemented. These will continue to be held into the 2025/26 financial year. Offsetting this however, is agency spend within the Department which reached £0.447m for the 2024/25 financial year. As the Department offers a number of front-line services, including waste collections, in order to continue operations in the event of staff sickness, there is a reliance on agency to reduce the impact on residents within the borough.

**(iv) Education, Inclusion and Provision**

Net departmental expenditure is £1.254m over budget at the end of 2024/25. Throughout the year it had been forecast to be over budget by approximately £1.240m at year end. The main variances being school transport and staffing.

Employee expenditure, including agency staff, is £0.359m over budget at year end. There are a number of vacant positions across

the department some of which are filled by agency staff, at a cost of £0.271m for the year.

The employee overspend is largely due to two services, Psychology and SEN Assessment, posts were previously funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The Department for Education have advised that these costs cannot be DSG funded because they do not meet the grant conditions. Therefore this cost has fallen upon the Council's budget at a cost of £0.860m.

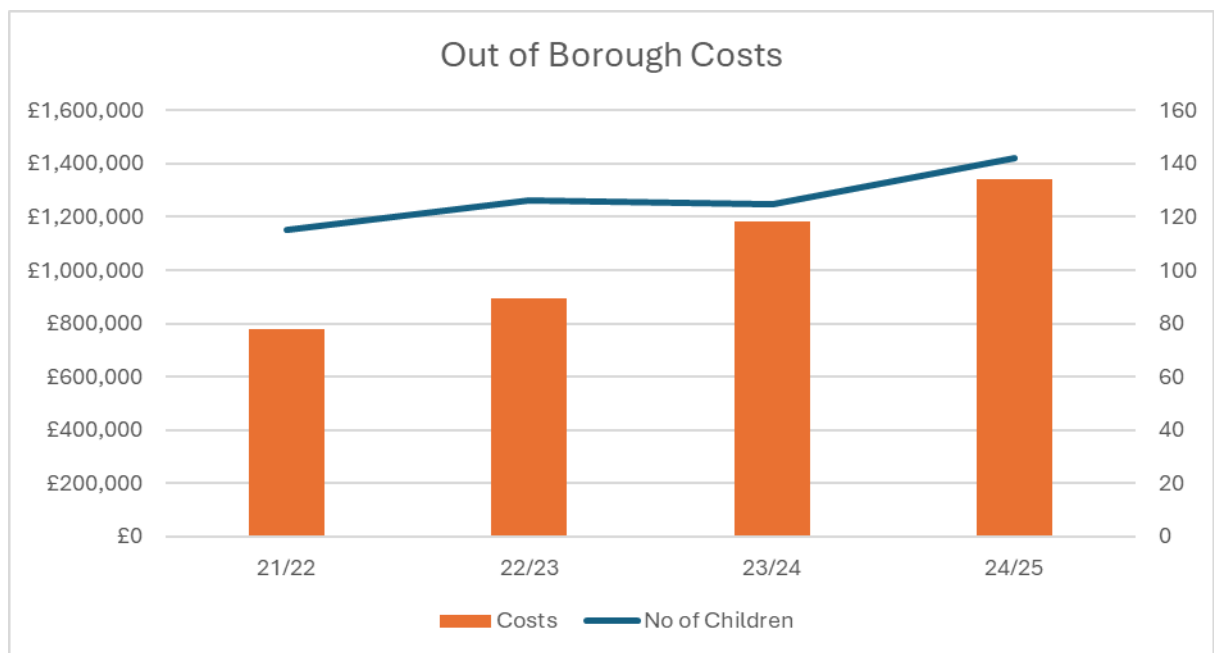
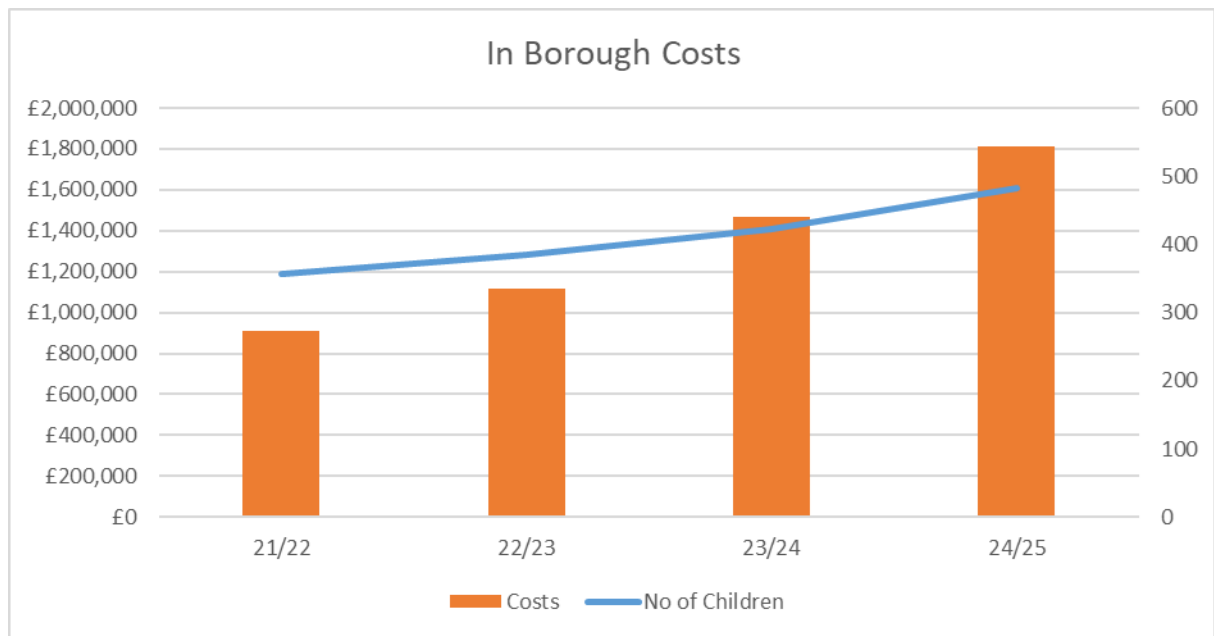
Schools Transport is the main budgetary demand pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. This is split into two main areas of SEN pupils attending In Borough and out of Borough Schools.

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

2024-25					
Area	Number of Users	Budget £000	Spend £000	Variance £000	Average Cost per User
In Borough	486	1826	1789	37	£3,728.22
Out of Borough	146	530	1329	(799)	£9,200.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>2356</b>	<b>3118</b>	<b>(762)</b>	

As at 31 March 2025 there were 632 service users, 8 more than previously reported in January 2025. The majority of which attend schools within the Borough, 486 compared to 146 out of the Borough. The out of Borough overspend is £0.799m at the end of the financial year. The demand for the School Transport service is increasing in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough.

The graphs below show the trend in the number of SEN children using this service and the associated costs.



#### (v) Legal and Democratic Services

As at 31 March 2025 the departmental net spend is £1.144m over the approved budget for the year.

Employee costs (excl agency) for the year are marginally below the approved budget (including staff payments for recent elections). This is a result of the number of vacancies that exist within the department but due to the demand on the service, agency staff are required to maintain the service. The main area of concern for the department is the volume of agency costs resulting from hard to fill vacant posts. These costs totalled £0.881m at the end of the financial year.

Within the £0.275m overspend against budget of legal expenses, there is an estimated £0.357m costs relating to the contracting of barristers, most of which again, are due to the limited number of staff available to clear an increasing caseload.

(vi) **Corporate and Democracy**

As at the end of March 2025 the net spend on corporate and democracy activities was £1.457m above the approved budget for the year.

The main area which drove the budgetary overspend position was the £4m target against the Transformation Programme, from which savings for the year were minimal.

Helping to mitigate against the above was a number of one-off grants received for which no budget had been allocated. The largest of which was £1.225m of business rate relief grants which were not identified until the end of the financial year when the Collection Fund position was fully reconciled and reported to Government.

**Collection Fund**

- 3.14 Council tax collection for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 is 93.98% which is 0.17% up on the 2023/24 collection rate.
- 3.15 The figure of 93.98% is the highest collection rate % since 2021/22 and is the first year since 2013/14 (when council tax reduction scheme was introduced), that the collection rate for the current year is an improvement on the previous year.
- 3.16 Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts. £2.615m (14.85%) has been collected in relation to previous year debt. This is an improvement of £0.332m compared to prior year debt collected in 2023/24
- 3.17 Business rate collection for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 is 98.74% which is 2.05% higher than the collection rate at the same point last year.
- 3.18 £2.257m has been collected in relation to previous year debt.

**Review of Reserves**

- 3.19 As at 31 March 2025 the Council's General Reserve is unchanged from the previous year at £5.147m, which represents 3.44% of the Council's 2024/25 net budget. This is considered to be a minimum balance level.
- 3.20 A review of earmarked reserves has been undertaken and depending upon their purpose and level of commitment, it has been determined 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**

- 3.21 A summary breakdown of Council reserves is presented in the table below, this shows the remaining position after funding £6.179m of the 2024/25 overspend.

<b>Summary of General and Earmarked Reserves</b>	
<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Reserve Value £m</b>
<b>Corporate:</b>	
General Fund	5.149
Capital Reserve	0.499
Insurance Reserve	0.849
<b>Specific Projects:</b>	
Adult Social Care	0.787
Fleet Replacement	0.454
Highways Feasibility Costs	0.231
Local Development Framework	0.544
Community & Environment	0.546
Mersey Valley Golf Club	0.483
Various Other	0.336
<b>Grants:</b>	
Mersey Gateway	27.222
Building Schools for the Future	6.529
Public Health	1.504
Supporting Families	0.204
Children's & Education	1.367
Domestic Abuse	0.915
Community & Environment	0.237
Enterprise & Employment	0.584
Various Other	1.474
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>49.914</b>

- 3.22 Other than the General Fund reserve of £5.149m there are no further reserves available to help fund future budgets. The remaining reserves are held as part of grant funded works or for other specific projects.

### **Capital Spending**

- 3.23 Capital spending at 31st March 2025 totalled £46.517m, which is 91.7% of the planned spending of £50.748m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years). Appendix 3 presents details of spending against all capital schemes.



- 3.24 There are a number of capital schemes where spend for the year exceeds the revised budget as reported to Executive Board on 13 March 2025. Narrative has been provided on how additional costs above budget will be funded, in the majority of cases this will be from external grant funding or bringing forward capital allocations from 2025.26

### Outstanding Sundry Debts

- 3.25 A review of aged debt outstanding as at March 2025, shows a decrease from March 2024 in overdue sundry debts of £0.877m or 5.0%. The total balance outstanding and currently overdue is £16.573m.
- 3.26 The greatest concern in terms of outstanding debt is with the Adult Social Care Directorate, there has been a slight increase in debt, as at 31 March 2025 the amount outstanding was £12.686m, an increase of £0.458m. In March 2024 Management Team agreed to the creation of two new permanent Community Care Worker posts to concentrate on collection of old debt and prompt recovery of new debt. The creation of a third post has recently been approved. Despite this the scale of debt within this area remains a significant concern.
- 3.27 The table below summarises debt at March 25 compared to March 24 and also shows the bad debt provision the Council has had to prudently set aside to account for any future write off of debt.

Department	Outstanding Debt March 2025 £'000	Outstanding Debt March 2024 £'000	Increase (Decrease) in Debt £'000	Bad Debt Provision March 2025 £'000
Adult Social Care	12,686	12,228	458	2,873
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	15	13	2	9
Children & Family Services	309	1,016	(707)	46
Community & Greenspace	1,216	1,324	(108)	307
Economy, Enterprise & Property	594	1,116	(522)	81
Education, Inclusion & Provision	355	296	59	28
Finance Department	673	676	(3)	66
ICT & Support Services	83	180	(97)	38
Legal & Democratic Services	70	75	(5)	68
Planning & Transportation	516	441	75	93
Public Health & Public Protection	56	85	(29)	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,573</b>	<b>17,450</b>	<b>(877)</b>	<b>3,612</b>

- 3.28 It should be noted that the profile of aged debt is a snapshot taken at a point in time and there is constant work being undertaken to recover outstanding debt.
- 3.29 Higher debt levels result in missed opportunities for the Council given the high level of return the Council can currently obtain on cash investments. For every £1m of debt, the Council is missing the opportunity to generate around £45,000 per annum in interest income. Therefore, it is essential that

additional work is undertaken to analyse the debt in more detail to enable more prompt recovery action to be taken.

### **Approved Savings**

- 3.30 On 02 February 2023, Council approved savings proposals 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.

## **4.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The £16.073m overspend for the year is a major concern for the Council. It is clear the Council cannot continue on the same course as it has over the last 7 years where overspends against budget have increased year on year. Prompt action and an urgent reset and implementation of the Council's Transformation Programme is essential to start bringing net spend under control.
- 4.2 The 2025/26 budget has been increased significantly to reflect the increased spend against those high pressure areas, including children's social care, community care and schools transport. Growth has also been included for inflation, demand growth and increasing complexities of care.
- 4.3 Departmental budget managers must ensure that any spend should be limited to essential items only. Departments should ensure that all spending continues to be restricted and tightly controlled throughout the financial year.
- 4.4 The use of agency staff should be a last resort and only used where there is a vacant post within the permanent establishment to mitigate against the additional cost.
- 4.5 A report on the 2025/26 budget monitoring position as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 along with an initial outturn forecast, will be presented at the earliest opportunity to enable any further corrective action to be taken as a matter of urgency.

## **5.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

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

- 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
- 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
- 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

**6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

**6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

**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 above.

**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.

**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 March 2025

## APPENDIX 1

Directorate / Department	Annual Budget £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
Adult Social Care	22,059	22,605	(546)
Care Homes	10,372	11,655	(1,283)
Community Care	18,072	20,723	(2,651)
Complex Care Pool	10,066	10,066	0
<b>Adults Directorate</b>	<b>60,569</b>	<b>65,049</b>	<b>(4,480)</b>
Finance	5,032	5,344	(312)
Legal & Democratic Services	-572	572	(1,144)
ICT & Support Services	1,498	1,217	282
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	1,162	1,193	(31)
<b>Chief Executives Directorate</b>	<b>7,120</b>	<b>8,326</b>	<b>(1,205)</b>
Children & Families	39,266	47,700	(8,434)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	10,124	11,378	(1,254)
<b>Childrens Directorate</b>	<b>49,390</b>	<b>59,078</b>	<b>(9,688)</b>
Community & Greenspace	28,016	27,812	204
Economy, Enterprise & Property	3,484	3,309	175
Planning & Transportation	17,829	17,549	280
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate</b>	<b>49,329</b>	<b>48,670</b>	<b>659</b>
<b>Corporate &amp; Democracy</b>	<b>-26,234</b>	<b>-24,777</b>	<b>(1,457)</b>
<b>Mersey Gateway</b>	<b>8,030</b>	<b>8,030</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Public Health Directorate</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Total Operational Net Spend</b>	<b>149,496</b>	<b>157,539</b>	<b>(16,073)</b>



## Adult Social Care

## APPENDIX 2

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	17,409	16,377	1,032
Agency- Covering Vacancies	0	1,173	(1,173)
Premises	492	501	(9)
Supplies & Services	1,120	1,352	(232)
Aids & Adaptations	37	43	(6)
Transport	242	437	(195)
Food & Drink Provisions	213	197	16
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,385	1,153	232
Emergency Duty Team	115	104	11
Transfer To Reserves	-75	-75	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,090	1,149	(59)
<u>Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes</u>			
Homelessness Prevention	563	554	9
Rough Sleepers Initiative	137	135	2
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>22,728</b>	<b>23,100</b>	<b>(372)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-921	-938	17
Sales & Rents Income	-480	-495	15
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-1,933	-1,964	31
Capital Salaries	-1,115	-1,115	0
Transfer from Reserves	-49	-49	0
Housing Schemes Income	-995	-994	(1)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-5,493</b>	<b>-5,555</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>17,235</b>	<b>17,545</b>	<b>(310)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	529	529	0
Transport Support	582	818	(236)
Central Support	3,465	3,465	0
Asset Rental Support	360	360	0
Recharge Income	-112	-112	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>4,824</b>	<b>5,060</b>	<b>(236)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>22,059</b>	<b>22,605</b>	<b>(546)</b>

## Adult In-House Care Homes

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
<b><u>Madeline Mckenna</u></b>			
Employees	698	674	24
Agency - covering vacancies	0	112	(112)
Other Premises	101	104	(3)
Supplies & Services	20	30	(10)
Food Provison	48	49	(1)
<b>Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>(102)</b>
<b><u>Millbrow</u></b>			
Employees	2,057	1,244	813
Agency - covering vacancies	3	1,071	(1,068)
Other Premises	129	169	(40)
Supplies & Services	61	104	(43)
Food Provison	78	80	(2)
<b>Total Millbrow Expenditure</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>(340)</b>
<b><u>St Luke's</u></b>			
Employees	2,884	2,158	726
Agency - covering vacancies	551	1,653	(1,102)
Other Premises	172	273	(101)
Supplies & Services	59	156	(97)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-325	-318	(7)
Private Client Income 1:1	-81	-81	0
Food Provison	120	143	(23)
<b>Total St Luke's Expenditure</b>	<b>3,380</b>	<b>3,984</b>	<b>(604)</b>
<b><u>St Patrick's</u></b>			
Employees	1,839	1,217	622
Agency - covering vacancies	91	1,067	(976)
Other Premises	157	156	1
Supplies & Services	63	12	51
Food Provison	122	114	8
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-45	-45	0
<b>Total St Patrick's Expenditure</b>	<b>2,227</b>	<b>2,521</b>	<b>(294)</b>
<b><u>Care Homes Divison Management</u></b>			
Employees	305	244	61
Supplies & Services		4	(4)
<b>Care Home Divison Management</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>9,107</b>	<b>10,390</b>	<b>(1,283)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	264	264	0
Transport Support	0	0	0
Central Support	683	683	0
Asset Rental Support	318	318	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>10,372</b>	<b>11,655</b>	<b>(1,283)</b>

## Community Care

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Residential & Nursing	14,942	18,415	(3,473)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	13,332	14,436	(1,104)
Direct Payments	14,291	14,194	97
Day Care	648	617	31
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>43,213</b>	<b>47,662</b>	<b>(4,449)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Residential & Nursing Income	-13,794	-13,836	42
Community Care Income	-2,670	-2,715	45
Direct Payments Income	-1,154	-1,157	3
Income from other CCGs	-587	-587	0
Market sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-2,796	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-5,167	-5,167	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-67	-55	(12)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-26,235</b>	<b>-26,313</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure before year end adjustments</b>	<b>16,978</b>	<b>21,349</b>	<b>(4,371)</b>
<b>Additional Non-Recurrent Funding Identified</b>			
Capitalised salaries (DFG)	994	0	994
Capitalised equipment (DFG)	0	-326	326
Pool budget contribution	0	-300	300
ASC contribution	100	0	100
<b>Total additional Non-Recurrent Funding</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>-626</b>	<b>1,720</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure after adjustments</b>	<b>18,072</b>	<b>20,723</b>	<b>(2,651)</b>



**Complex Care Pool**

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Intermediate Care Services	5,298	5,393	(95)
Oakmeadow	1,936	1,941	(5)
Community Home Care First	2,088	1,807	281
Joint Equipment Store	535	564	(29)
Development Fund	27	0	27
Contracts & SLA's	3,247	3,243	4
Inglenook	134	108	26
HICafs	3,703	3,373	330
Carers Breaks	554	455	99
Carers centre	357	357	0
Residential Care	6,952	7,552	(600)
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,227	4,227	0
Pathway 3/Discharge Access	391	416	(25)
HBC Contracts	72	78	(6)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>29,521</b>	<b>29,514</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Income</b>			
BCF	-13,484	-13,484	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-2,959	-2,959	0
Oakmeadow Income	-19	-13	(6)
ASC Discharge Grant Income	-1,631	-1,631	0
ICB Discharge Grant Income	-1,282	-1,282	0
Other Income	-80	-80	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-19,455</b>	<b>-19,449</b>	<b>(6)</b>
ICB Contribution Share of Surplus		1	(1)
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>10,066</b>	<b>10,066</b>	<b>0</b>

## Finance Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	6,969	6,846	123
Insurances	975	958	17
Supplies & Services	410	564	(154)
Rent Allowances	35,500	35,500	0
Concessionary Travel	1,748	1,872	(124)
LCR Levy	1,748	1,748	0
Transfer to Reserves	0	37	(37)
Bad Debt Provision	77	-7	84
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	49	21
Discretionary Social Fund	106	12	94
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	275	25
Household Support Fund Expenditure	2,475	2,475	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>50,378</b>	<b>50,329</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-335	-348	13
Burdens Grant	-60	-91	31
Dedicated schools Grant	-144	-144	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-581	-664	83
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	-157	0
Schools SLAs	-312	-307	(5)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,748	-1,748	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-400	-198	(202)
Rent Allowances	-34,700	-33,909	(791)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-63	(7)
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-277	(23)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-498	-489	(9)
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	-12	12
Universal Credits	-5	0	(5)
Household Support Fund Grant	-2,475	-2,523	48
VEP Grant	0	-7	7
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-87	-92	5
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-185	-495	310
Transfer from Reserves	0	-172	172
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-42,057</b>	<b>-41,696</b>	<b>(361)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>8,321</b>	<b>8,633</b>	<b>(312)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	377	377	0
Transport Support	0	0	0
Central Support	2,365	2,365	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,031	-6,031	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-3,289</b>	<b>-3,289</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>5,032</b>	<b>5,344</b>	<b>(312)</b>

## Legal &amp; Democratic Services Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	1,557	1,542	15
Agency Related Expenditure	0	881	(881)
Supplies & Services	364	323	41
Civic Catering & Functions	23	18	5
Legal Expenses	218	493	(275)
Transport Related Expenditure	11	5	6
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,173</b>	<b>3,262</b>	<b>(1,089)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
School SLA's	-98	-77	(21)
Licence Income	-301	-296	(5)
Government Grant	-67	-67	0
Reimbursement & Other Grants	-115	-115	0
Fees & Charges Income	-74	-45	(29)
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-27	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-682</b>	<b>-627</b>	<b>(55)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>1,491</b>	<b>2,635</b>	<b>(1,144)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	53	53	0
Transport Recharges	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	275	275	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	0	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-2,391	-2,391	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,063</b>	<b>-2,063</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-572</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>(1,144)</b>

## ICT &amp; Support Services Department

	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>	<b>Actual Spend £'000</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend) £'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	5,596	5,285	311
Supplies & Services	921	1,174	(253)
Capital Finance	100	43	57
Computer Repairs & Software	1,576	1,483	92
Communication Costs	13	175	(162)
Premises	159	137	23
Transport	3	2	1
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>8,367</b>	<b>8,298</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-1,056	-1,167	111
Schools SLA Income	-646	-571	(75)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	0	-30	30
Transfer from Reserves	0	-148	148
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-1,703</b>	<b>-1,916</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,664</b>	<b>6,383</b>	<b>282</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	550	550	0
Transport Support	19	19	0
Central Support	2,380	2,380	0
Asset Rental Support	716	716	0
Support Costs Income	-8,831	-8,831	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-5,166</b>	<b>-5,166</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,217</b>	<b>282</b>

## Chief Executives Delivery Unit

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	3,350	3,398	(48)
Employees Training	99	69	30
Apprenticeship Levy	300	326	(26)
Supplies & Services	391	340	51
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>4,133</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-223	-211	(12)
Schools SLA Income	-565	-529	(36)
Transfer from Reserves	0	-5	5
Reimbursements & Grant Income	0	-5	5
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-788</b>	<b>-750</b>	<b>(38)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>3,352</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>(31)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	174	174	0
Transport	0	0	0
Central Support	1,209	1,209	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,573	-3,573	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,190</b>	<b>-2,190</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,162</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>(31)</b>

## Children &amp; Families Department

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	16,311	17,761	(1,450)
Other Premises	430	390	40
Supplies & Services	2,907	3,496	(589)
Transport	360	312	48
Direct Payments	1,097	1,074	23
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	224	209	15
Residential Care	19,594	25,550	(5,956)
Out of Borough Adoption	96	0	96
Out of Borough Fostering	4,408	5,211	(803)
In House Adoption	548	505	43
Special Guardianship Order	2,510	2,520	(10)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,788	2,301	487
Lavender House Contract Costs	234	219	15
Home Support & Respite	478	347	131
Care Leavers	290	472	(182)
Family Support	53	50	3
Contracted services	3	4	(1)
Emergency Duty	132	175	(43)
Youth Offending Services	321	335	(14)
Transfer to Reserves	149	149	0
Finance Costing	2	2	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>52,935</b>	<b>61,082</b>	<b>(8,147)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-54	-34	(20)
Sales Income	-4	-2	(2)
Rents	-97	-97	0
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-1,092	-914	(178)
Transfer from reserve	-214	-214	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	-50	0
Government Grants	-14,150	-14,064	(86)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-15,661</b>	<b>-15,375</b>	<b>(286)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>37,274</b>	<b>45,707</b>	<b>(8,433)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	669	669	0
Transport	16	17	(1)
Central Support Recharges	2,274	2,274	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0
Internal Recharge Income	-967	-967	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>1,992</b>	<b>1,993</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>39,266</b>	<b>47,700</b>	<b>(8,434)</b>

## Education, Inclusion &amp; Provision Department

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	7,449	7,592	(143)
Agency - covering vacancies	0	271	(271)
Agency - addition to establishment	86	25	61
Premises	14	11	3
Supplies & Services	3,793	3,854	(61)
Independent School Fees	10,410	10,410	0
Schools Contingency	441	441	0
Transport	43	60	(17)
Schools Transport	2,356	3,118	(762)
Early Years Payments	12,320	12,320	0
Early Years Pupil Premium	257	257	0
Commissioned Services	1,918	2,116	(198)
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,415	1,415	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	112	176	(64)
Capital Financing	3,200	3,033	167
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>43,814</b>	<b>45,099</b>	<b>(1,285)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges Income	-440	-451	11
Government Grant Income	-8,442	-8,442	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-27,114	-26,963	(151)
Inter Authority Income	-274	-274	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,717	-1,718	1
Schools SLA Income	-518	-478	(40)
Transfers from Reserves	-176	-596	420
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-38,681</b>	<b>-38,922</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>5,133</b>	<b>6,177</b>	<b>(1,044)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	344	344	0
Transport Support	528	738	(210)
Central Support	1,605	1,605	0
Asset Rental Support	2,514	2,514	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>4,991</b>	<b>5,201</b>	<b>(210)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>10,124</b>	<b>11,378</b>	<b>(1,254)</b>

## Community &amp; Greenspaces Department

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	16,534	15,726	808
Agency - covering vacancies	0	191	(191)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	256	(256)
Premises	3,443	3,367	76
Supplies & Services	1,452	1,710	(258)
Hired & Contracted Services	1,636	1,617	19
Book Fund	128	134	(6)
Food Provisions	388	416	(28)
School Meals Food	1,107	1,236	(129)
Transport	117	121	(4)
Other Agency Costs	460	486	(26)
Other Expenditure	41	63	(22)
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,072	7,190	(118)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	64	30	34
Grants to Norton Priory	174	174	0
Transfer to reserves	1,357	1,357	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>33,973</b>	<b>34,074</b>	<b>(101)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Sales Income	-1,389	-1,353	(36)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,771	-5,633	(138)
Rental Income	-235	-280	45
Markets Income	-910	-847	(63)
Government Grant Income	-2,034	-2,034	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,053	-1,053	0
School SLA Income	-553	-553	0
School Meals Income	-2,622	-2,622	0
Internal Fees Income	-322	-434	112
Capital Salaries	-173	-92	(81)
Transfers From Reserves	-421	-925	504
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-15,483</b>	<b>-15,826</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>18,490</b>	<b>18,248</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	1,675	1,675	0
Transport	2,257	2,295	(38)
Central Support	3,592	3,592	0
Asset Rental Support	2,845	2,845	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-843	-843	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>9,526</b>	<b>9,564</b>	<b>(38)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>28,016</b>	<b>27,812</b>	<b>204</b>



## Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property Department

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	5,264	4,778	486
Agency - covering vacancies	0	417	(417)
Repairs & Mainenance	1,746	1,831	(85)
Premises	167	160	7
Energy & Water Costs	1,258	1,132	126
NNDR	687	666	21
Rents	173	166	7
Economic Regeneration Activities	17	-4	21
Security	544	588	(44)
Supplies & Services	477	570	(93)
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,270	1,270	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	159	154	5
Capital Finance	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	1,177	1,231	(54)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,939</b>	<b>12,959</b>	<b>(20)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges Income	-1,065	-1,175	110
Rent - Commercial Properties	-872	-900	28
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-38	0
Government Grant	-2,652	-2,661	9
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-330	-387	57
Schools SLA Income	-221	-212	(9)
Recharges to Capital	-383	-383	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,170	-1,170	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6,731</b>	<b>-6,926</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,208</b>	<b>6,033</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	2,074	2,074	0
Transport Support	28	28	0
Central Support	1,947	1,947	0
Asset Rental Support	1,154	1,154	0
Recharge Income	-7,927	-7,927	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,724</b>	<b>-2,724</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>3,484</b>	<b>3,309</b>	<b>175</b>

## Planning &amp; Transportation Department

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	6,156	5,796	360
Agency - covering vacancies	110	53	57
Agency - in addition to establishment	24	2	22
Efficiency savings	-150	0	(150)
Premises	193	152	41
Hired & Contracted Services	94	239	(145)
Planning Appeal Decision	0	300	(300)
Supplies & Services	187	416	(229)
Street Lighting	1,678	1,933	(255)
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,772	2,146	(374)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Works	1,775	1,431	344
Fleet Transport	1,455	1,451	4
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	24	18	6
Bus Support	498	498	0
Agency Related Expenditure	8	71	(63)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	0
NRA Levy	74	73	1
LCR Levy	1,649	1,649	0
Contribution to Reserves	539	539	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>16,117</b>	<b>16,798</b>	<b>(681)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Sales & Rent Income	-97	-183	86
Planning Fees	-826	-568	(258)
Building Control Fees	-245	-213	(32)
Other Fees & Charges	-908	-1,615	707
Grants & Reimbursements	-253	-253	0
Government Grant Income	-360	-360	0
Halton Hopper Income	-24	-9	(15)
Recharge to Capital	-878	-846	(32)
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,649	-1,649	0
Contribution from Reserves	-1,036	-1,036	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6,276</b>	<b>-6,732</b>	<b>456</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>9,841</b>	<b>10,066</b>	<b>(225)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Recharges	560	560	0
Transport Recharges	749	774	(25)
Asset Charges	10,274	10,274	0
Central Recharges	1,534	1,534	0
Transport Recharge Income	-4,238	-4,768	530
Central Recharge Income	-891	-891	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>7,988</b>	<b>7,483</b>	<b>505</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>17,829</b>	<b>17,549</b>	<b>280</b>

## Corporate &amp; Democracy

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	412	352	60
Contracted Services	39	32	7
Supplies & Services	119	137	(18)
Premises Expenditure	5	7	(2)
Transport Costs	1	7	(6)
Members Allowances	983	988	(5)
Interest Payable - Treasury Management	1,341	2,217	(876)
Interest Payable - Other	1,535	1,553	(18)
Bank Charges	132	245	(113)
Audit Fees	348	457	(109)
Contingency	350	0	350
Capital Financing	3,037	2,953	84
Debt Management Expenses	20	41	(21)
Precepts & Levies	240	229	11
Transformation Efficiency Savings	-4,000	0	(4,000)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,562</b>	<b>9,218</b>	<b>(4,656)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Interest Receivable - Treasury Management	-3,618	-4,827	1,209
Interest Receivable - Other	-549	-667	118
Other Fees & Charges	-158	-111	(47)
Grants - NNDR Relief	0	-1,225	1,225
Grants & Reimbursements	-255	-591	336
Government Grant Income	-377	-735	358
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-4,957</b>	<b>-8,156</b>	<b>3,199</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>-395</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>(1,457)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	21	21	0
Transport	0	0	0
Central Support	1,066	1,066	0
Asset Rental Support	159	159	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-27,085	-27,085	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-25,839</b>	<b>-25,839</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-26,234</b>	<b>-24,777</b>	<b>(1,457)</b>

## Public Health

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	4,799	4,796	3
Other Premises	6	0	6
Supplies & Services	354	287	67
Contracts & SLA's	7,741	7,704	37
Transport	4	2	1
Transfer to Reserves	1,281	1,281	0
Other Agency	24	24	(0)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>14,208</b>	<b>14,095</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-148	-147	(0)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-714	-714	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,714	-1,714	0
Government Grant Income	-12,231	-12,231	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-14,807</b>	<b>-14,806</b>	<b>(0)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>-598</b>	<b>-711</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	150	150	(0)
Transport Support	22	24	(3)
Central Support	2,387	2,399	(12)
Asset Rental Support			0
Recharge Income	-669	-669	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>1,890</b>	<b>1,904</b>	<b>(15)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>98</b>



Capital Programme as at 31 March 2025

Appendix 3

	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025 £000	Allocation remaining £000	Comment on Overspend against Allocation
<b>Childrens Directorate</b>				
Capital Repairs	749.0	741.2	7.8	
Basic Need Projects	0.0	0.0	0.0	
SEND capital allocation	1,529.2	1,532.2	(3.0)	Funded from External Grant
Family Hubs & Start for Life	110.4	112.8	(2.4)	Funded from External Grant
Asbestos Management	0.0	2.9	(2.9)	Funded from External Grant
Asset Management	0.0	23.6	(23.6)	Funded from External Grant
Small Capital Works - Schools	0.0	54.9	(54.9)	Funded from External Grant
Access Initiative	0.0	22.6	(22.6)	Funded from External Grant
Grange BSF	0.0	49.3	(49.3)	
<b>Childrens Directorate Total</b>	<b>2,388.6</b>	<b>2,539.5</b>	<b>(150.9)</b>	
<b>Adults Directorate</b>				
Halton Carers Centre Refurbishment	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Grants - Disabled Facilities	1,050.0	2,461.8	(1,411.8)	Funded from External Grant
Stair Lifts	250.0	304.2	(54.2)	Funded from External Grant
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	250.0	317.9	(67.9)	Funded from External Grant
Telehealthcare Digital Switchover	135.0	60.0	75.0	
Oakmeadow & Peelhouse Network Improvements	40.0	0.0	40.0	
Madeline McKenna Refurbishment	120.0	90.8	29.2	
Millbrow Refurbishment	50.0	54.9	(4.9)	Funded from External Grant
St Lukes Care Home	120.0	159.8	(39.8)	Funded from External Grant
St Patricks Care Home	150.0	120.8	29.2	
<b>Adults Directorate Total</b>	<b>2,165.0</b>	<b>3,570.2</b>	<b>(1,405.2)</b>	

# Capital Programme as at 31 March 2025 continued

	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025 £000	Allocation remaining £000	Comment on Overspend against Allocation
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate</b>				
Stadium Minor Works	30.0	37.8	(7.8)	
Halton Leisure Centre	8,997.0	8,897.3	99.7	
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	48.0	19.8	
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	340.0	
Upton Improvements	13.0	0.0	13.0	
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	0.0	12.0	
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	591.7	8.3	
Runcorn Town Park	468.6	18.1	450.5	
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,933.5	90.9	1,842.6	
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	503.0	33.8	469.2	
Replacement Cremator Widnes	308.0	325.9	(17.9)	Allocation brought forward from 2025/26
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	
3MG	134.5	0.0	134.5	
Sandymoor Open Spaces Improvements	0.0	2.9	(2.9)	Funded from Balance Sheet
Murdishaw redevelopment	21.2	21.9	(0.7)	Funded from Prudential Borrowing
Equality Act Improvement Works	93.2	89.7	3.5	
Foundary Lane Residential Area	1,240.0	494.1	745.9	
Town Deal	11,552.9	3,160.1	8,392.8	
Property Improvements	460.5	627.4	(166.9)	Funded from External Contributions
Runcorn Station Quarter	76.0	76.0	(0.0)	
Waterloo Building	75.0	4.5	70.5	
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	178.2	236.7	(58.5)	Funded from External Grant
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	268.7	186.7	82.0	
Changing Places	24.1	7.0	17.1	
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Port of Weston	20.0	3.0	17.0	
Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition	750.0	41.2	708.8	
Bridge and Highway Maintenance	2,265.6	1,024.6	1,241.0	
Runcorn Busway	0.0	934.6	(934.6)	Funded from External Grant
ATF3 Murdishaw to Whitehouse	3,000.0	1,632.0	1,368.0	
ATF4 Widnes Town Centre Accessibility	114.5	0.0	114.5	
A56 Reconstruction (Delph Lane)	943.7	362.7	581.0	

Capital Programme as at 31 March 2025 continued







	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025	Allocation remaining	Comment on Overspend against Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	
Dukesfield ATL (Waterloo Bridge)	0.0	1.1	(1.1)	Funded from External Grant
LCWIP Phase 2 Daresbury	3,861.7	733.6	3,128.1	
Additional Pothole Funding	429.1	0.0	429.1	
CRSTS	5,288.6	6,380.8	(1,092.2)	Funded from External Grant
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	250.0	200.5	49.5	
Street Lighting - Upgrades	100.0	241.0	(141.0)	Allocation brought forward from 2025/26
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	7,147.1	(1,295.4)	Funded from External Grant
Risk Management	50.0	4.9	45.1	
Fleet Replacements	2,500.0	1,868.7	631.3	
Early Land Acquisition Mersey Gateway	212.4	259.4	(47.0)	Allocation brought forward from 2025/26
Mersey Gateway Crossings Board	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Mersey Gateway Handback Land	60.1	67.3	(7.2)	Allocation brought forward from 2025/26
Widnes Loops	0.0	13.9	(13.9)	Funded from External Grant
Challenge Fund Part 1	0.0	6.2	(6.2)	Funded from External Grant
S106 DEW	0.0	18.3	(18.3)	Funded from External Grant
A56 Redbrow Lane	0.0	57.1	(57.1)	Funded from External Grant
Leiria Way Loop	0.0	123.1	(123.1)	Funded from External Grant
SJB to Shopping City	0.0	39.3	(39.3)	Funded from External Grant
Measures to Assist Buses	0.0	22.7	(22.7)	Funded from External Grant
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate Total</b>	<b>53,114.6</b>	<b>36,153.6</b>	<b>17,248.7</b>	
<b>Chief Executives Directorate</b>				
IT Rolling Programme	1,026.9	921.6	105.3	
Halton Smart Microgrid	1,000.0	130.4	869.6	
Transformation Programme	3,740.0	3,202.1	537.9	
<b>Chief Executives Directorate Total</b>	<b>5,766.9</b>	<b>4,254.2</b>	<b>1,512.7</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>63,435.1</b>	<b>46,517.5</b>	<b>17,205.3</b>	









## 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
			Review the Integrated Care Board contribution for Adults, to ensure the full recovery of related costs.	150	0		Increased contribution from ICB not agreed.

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		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		Contribution of £0.400m received from 2024.25 Pool Budget. One-off contribution only. Uncertainty if this will be achieved in 2025.26
<b>Total Adult Social Care Department</b>				<b>1,837</b>	<b>1,225</b>		




## 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
<b>Total Finance Department</b>				<b>65</b>	<b>90</b>		




## 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			Budget adjusted inline with the savings in the ICT department
<b>Total Legal Services Department</b>				<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>		



## 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
<b>Total Children &amp; Families Department</b>				<b>138</b>	<b>22</b>		

## 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		To be reviewed.
<b>Total Education, Inclusion and Provision Department</b>				<b>280</b>	<b>0</b>		


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.
<b>Total Community &amp; Greenspace Department</b>				<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>		



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	U	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	U	The restructure can now take place following the retirement of a member of staff. The full saving will not be made until financial year 25/26
<b>Total Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property Department</b>				<b>152</b>	<b>0</b>		

## 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		Not currently viable, therefore no income will be generated in the current year as the traffic enforcement will not be carried out.
<b>Total Policy, Planning &amp; Transportation Department</b>				<b>150</b>	<b>0</b>		





**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director of Adult Social Care

**PORTFOLIO:** Health and Wellbeing

**SUBJECT:** Homelessness Contracts: Waiver to Extend Current Contract Terms

**WARD(S)** Borough Wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval from Executive Board for two Non-Emergency Waivers in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 is sought to allow the continuation of contracts with the incumbent Providers until new procurement processes have been undertaken and completed. This will ensure business continuity.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

**RECOMMENDED: That**

- 1) the report be noted; and**
- 2) the Board approve a Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 v of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, to grant extensions to the current Homeless contracts as per sections 3.8 and 3.9 of this report.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 On 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Executive Board granted approval to Adult Social Care to commence a new Tender procedure for the supply of a Domiciliary Care Service in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.3.5.
- 3.2 On 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and following the successful Tender procedure, Executive Board granted approval to award contracts to successful providers in relation to the Domiciliary Care Service.
- 3.3 Due to the significant level of interest received during the Domiciliary Care Service procurement process, the procurement process took longer than anticipated to complete. As a result, no new procurement processes could commence until the Domiciliary Care Service procurement process had fully completed.

3.4 It should be noted that following discussions with the Procurement Division, a reprioritisation exercise was undertaken in respect to waivers/contracts which were due to end during 2025 which took into consideration the extended work required to support the new Domiciliary Care contract. As such a number of extensions via waivers will be sought to stagger the procurement activity that will be required.

3.5 Waivers are hereby sought in relation to two Homeless services that are due to end in 2025.

- Single Homeless Supported Accommodation Service
- Homeless Families Supported Accommodation Service

3.6 In order for the two new procurement processes to be undertaken, Executive Board is asked to approve a Non-emergency waiver Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 to allow a 12-month extension to the contract term for each service. This will allow sufficient time for the procurement processes for each service to be undertaken.

3.7 The current contract ends dates are as follows;

Single Homeless Supported Accommodation Service contract end date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Homeless Families Supported Accommodation Service contract end date: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025.

3.8 Executive Board is asked to approve a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 v of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, to extend the contract end dates by 12 months, as follows;

Single Homeless Supported Accommodation Service contract end date: **30th April 2026.**

Homeless Families Supported Accommodation Service contract end date: **1<sup>st</sup> August 2026.**

3.9 Executive Board is asked to approve a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 v of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, to extend each contract end date by 12 months will ensure business continuity whilst the Council undertakes the new procurement processes for each service.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The recommendations for the approval of two Non-emergency waivers of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 to allow

new procurement processes to commence are consistent with the Public Contract Regulations (PCR 2015), Council policy and the previous decision taken by Executive Board to commence a new Tender procedure for Domiciliary Care.

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The estimated value of the 12-month contract extension period for each service is circa:

Single Homeless Supported Accommodation Service - £584,915

Homeless Families Supported Accommodation Service – £172,984

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

**6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The provision of Homelessness Services will contribute to improving the Health and Wellbeing of Halton Residents.

**6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The provision of Homelessness Services will contribute to the employment of Halton Residents.

**6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None.

**6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

The provision of Homelessness Services will contribute to tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need.

**6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

The provision of the Homelessness Services will operate on minimal use of transport.

**6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The provision of Homelessness Services will support people to feel safe and engage within their local communities.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Approval by Executive Board to proceed with the contract extensions will ensure appropriate action is taken to ensure

continuity of the Homeless Service Provision across Halton until new procurement processes have completed.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues. Homelessness Services are fully accessible to all eligible Halton residents who have been assessed by Adult Social Care as having a need for Homelessness Services

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Adult Social Care is committed to reducing its environmental footprint and sustainability. These services require minimal transport use.

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

Executive Board Report, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024 'Preliminary Procurement Notification – Proposed Tender of a Domiciliary Care Service'.

Executive Board Report, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 'Domiciliary Care Service Tender: Recommendations for Contract Award'.



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Executive Board
<b>DATE:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Environment and Urban Renewal
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Cemetery Infrastructure Works
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members with details of essential work required to be undertaken to refurbish aging infrastructure and update the grounds with a range of environmental enhancements at three of the Council's cemeteries.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- 1) Members approve the proposals set out within the report.**
- 2) Members approve that Council be asked to include £1.971m within the Council's Capital Programme, over 4 years, to fund the proposed works as set out within the report.**
- 3) Delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director Environment & Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration, to prepare and approve all necessary documents, contracts and funding arrangements required to complete proposed works.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Council is responsible for four cemeteries within the Borough. This report concentrates on the three older sites being: Widnes Cemetery (Birchfield Road), Runcorn Cemetery and Halton Cemetery, which date back to 1898, 1860 and 1800 respectively. All are now closed to new burials. These sites are now in a transition phase from fully active working burial grounds to sites that continue to provide the opportunity for residents and others to visit for contemplation and reflection for passed loved ones. The three sites also have the potential to provide general amenity/park use and significant environmental additions: for wildlife and habitat creation as well as increased tree canopy as part of the Big Halton Forest project. The sites can also be considered as an important element for contributing towards Halton's response to climate change.

- 3.2 The sites were originally designed and laid out according to the era that they were developed in but are now outdated and do not meet with modern demands. Pathways and carriageways are in severe need of resurfacing and entrances and boundaries require attention to brickwork, masonry and metalwork to ensure they remain in safe order and important heritage features are preserved. Members are advised that the deteriorating infrastructure and water runoff/flooding issues are the cause of enquiries from Councillors and complaints/negative comments. The number of enquiries, complaints and comments are difficult to quantify as the majority are relayed verbally to Cemetery Team staff through telephone and on-site conversations with members of the public and Funeral Directors. Carrying out the improvements will also reduce the risk of potential future insurance claims from members of the public - There have been 2 claims made against the Council in the last 12 months.
- 3.3 The proposal is to undertake extensive works to address the declining infrastructure by rationalising elements and concentrating renewal on the primary routes and important features within the sites. Where possible, this will involve reducing hard surfacing, thereby reducing surface water runoff and creating additional green space for habitat creation and tree planting. In some places, this will include a change from vehicle to pedestrian only access routes, to reduce future wear and tear on pathways. The total cost for the works, including all fees, contingency sums and inflation is £1.9m. A full breakdown of costs is set out in section 5 of the report.
- 3.4 Images to show issues and problems associated with the aging infrastructure, along with opportunities for repair and enhancement, are shown in appendix 1. The proposed masterplans to illustrate how the sites will be adapted and improved to ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose and add further benefits for the community into the future, are shown in appendix 2.
- 3.5 It is recognised that any works undertaken in the cemeteries should be delivered in a sensitive way and proposals have been developed that allow for a phased approach to gradually deliver changes with minimal disruption caused at any one time. A phased approach of spreading the work over four years will also spread the cost of the work over a number of financial years. However, this will increase costs by separating works contracts and increasing preliminary and contractor 'on costs'.
- 3.6 The primary benefits of the proposal will include:
- The rationalisation of path and circulation systems; reducing wear and tear and improving the visitor experience.
  - Improvements to surface water drainage; reducing instances of flooding to graves and pathways.
  - Additional tree planting.
  - Porous surfacing to parking bays.

- Interpretation information to celebrate important local people buried in the cemetery sites.
- Information about nature and habitats that can be found in the cemeteries that will be complemented by the works.

3.7 The project will also include community engagement, building on the establishment of groups such as the Friends of Widnes Cemetery and encouraging further 'friends of' groups in Runcorn. Volunteers will also be able to directly contribute to improvement works.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Policy HE2 Heritage Assets & Historic Environment, the cemeteries are non-designated heritage assets and hold significant value and cultural importance for Halton residents. Improvements will safeguard and promote this heritage for future generations.

4.2 The proposals are in accordance with policy CS21/HE4 - Green Infrastructure, supporting the delivery of programmes and strategies to protect, enhance and expand green infrastructure across the Borough including adaptations for climate change.

4.3 The proposals are in accordance with Environmental legislation, which places a duty on local authorities to look for ways to support nature recovery and promote habitat creation. There is potential for sections of older cemeteries to provide Bio-diversity Net Gain (BNG) credits.

4.4 Policy HE5 Trees & Landscaping, the cemetery improvements will include additional softworks increasing the amenity value as well as providing an opportunity for tree planting, which will also contribute to The Big Halton Forest project.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 In the last 12 months, £142k has been spent on filling potholes, repairs to boundaries and repairing old drainage systems. This repair work, whilst fixing immediate issues, are generally reactive to address a problem or safety concern and do not fully address the underlying issue of failing infrastructure across the cemeteries in the long term.

5.2 The breakdown of infrastructure repair costs is set out below:

1	Access Rationalisation of Roads, Path and Related Hard Surfaces	£839,991
2	Public Realm and Furniture Infrastructure Enhancements	£113,874
3	Drainage and Surface Water Enhancements	£426,773
4	Security, Site Boundary and Entrance Improvements	£65,514
5	Bio Diversity and Nature Enhancements	£42,110

6	Soft Landscaping Enhancements	£233,316
7	Additional Memorial Vault Provision	£145,928
8	Site Investigation and Survey Works	£9,000
9	Inflation over 4-year programme	£93,825
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,970,331</b>

- 5.3 It is proposed that the improvement works are spread over a 4-year period as shown below:

Year 1	£469,127
Year 2	£683,048
Year 3	£607,988
Year 4	£210,168

- 5.4 In order to facilitate the works, it is proposed that the total costs above are built into the Council's Capital Programme. In the first instance, this would be funded through prudential borrowing. However, due to the nature of the works, there will be opportunities to seek out external funding. Where possible, external funding will be utilised as a priority to reduce the borrowed sum.

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

### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The proposals will provide enhanced green spaces that can be visited and enjoyed by all residents.

### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None identified.

### **6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None identified.

### **6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None identified.

### **6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

As per section 9 below, the proposals will have a positive impact on the Council's actions towards delivering climate change improvements.

### **6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The proposals will provide safer infrastructure and enhanced, well maintained green spaces, that encourage increased general usage by Halton residents helping increase natural surveillance.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The cemeteries' aging infrastructure is a growing concern, with a number of complaints and claims for slips/trips and damage from potholes (as referenced in para 3.2). Not following this programme of works could result in an increasing number of complaints and claims resulting in compensation and could cause considerable damage to the Council's reputation.
- 7.2 Whilst undertaking alteration/improvement works in such a sensitive landscape will present a very particular set of issues, the proposals will be carefully tailored to ensure minimum impact to families attending graves and will result in considerable overall improvements to the sites and enhanced visitor experience.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 None

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The planned proposals to reduce hard surfaces, manage surface water on site, increase habitat areas and tree canopy are all important elements towards delivering climate change improvements. Work will be undertaken to survey and record increases in species as part of the project.
- 9.2 Proposals will include reuse of materials, to limit waste and reduce vehicle movements required to complete the works.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

# CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

## HALTON CEMETERIES -IMAGE BOOKLET

### APPENDIX No 1



# CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

## WIDNES CREMATORIUM AND CEMETERY

### INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES



Excessive carriageway width with large expanses of bitmac surfacing has proved both expensive to maintain but also an issue in ever increasing heavy rain and cloudbursts with high amounts of surface water run off.



Derelict hard surfacing does not allow filtration and is unsightly so will be removed and replaced with green infrastructure.



No formal parking and delineation of bays results in ad hoc parking causing potential safety issues for cemetery users.



Wide pedestrian footpaths limit filtration during flood events and lead to conflict with pedestrians, vehicles and parked cars.



Occurance of potholes is common across wide expanses of bitmac and both proving expensive to repair and deal with resulting claims from trips and damage to vehicles.



Damage with enroachment by vehicular traffic of grave plots.



Flooding during heavy rain and cloudbursts is an ongoing issues in the cemetery with limited capacity to deal with the amount off surface water runoff from large expanses of hard surfaces.



# CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

## WIDNES CREMATORIUM AND CEMETERY

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT



Green Infrastructure Enhancement



Permeable Paving to store surface water and slow runoff.



Sustainable Drainage Opportunity



Biodiversity enhancement making space for Nature to thrive for the community in Widnes and Halton



Opportunity for community Arts and Sculptures



Provision of Interpretation panels for nature, heritage and art trails.

## RUNCORN CEMETERY

### INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES



Excessive areas of redundant hard standing proves both expensive to maintain but also an issue in ever increasing heavy rain and cloudbursts with high amounts of surface water run off.



Failing old sections of pedestrian paths need to be repaired to avoid claims so rationalisation of path surfacing and hardstanding will reduce this ongoing burden.

Old failing watering points are becoming a problem with expensive leaks and need to be replaced.



# CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

## RUNCORN CEMETERY

### INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES (CONTINUED)



Remove redundant sections of highway to increase biodiversity and slow surface water.



Replace paving slabs to reduce ongoing maintenance liability and trip hazards.



Additional green infrasture required to screen existing compound and increase biodiversity.



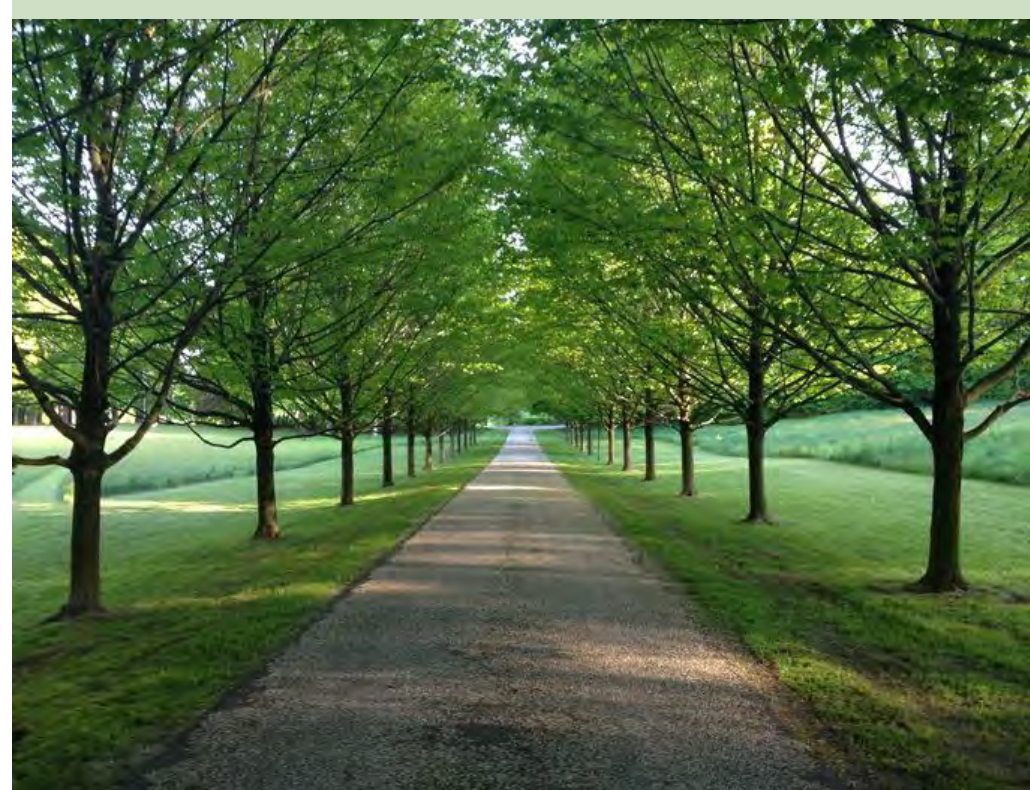
Lack of biodivesity around the cemetery boundary in places provides enhancement opportunities.



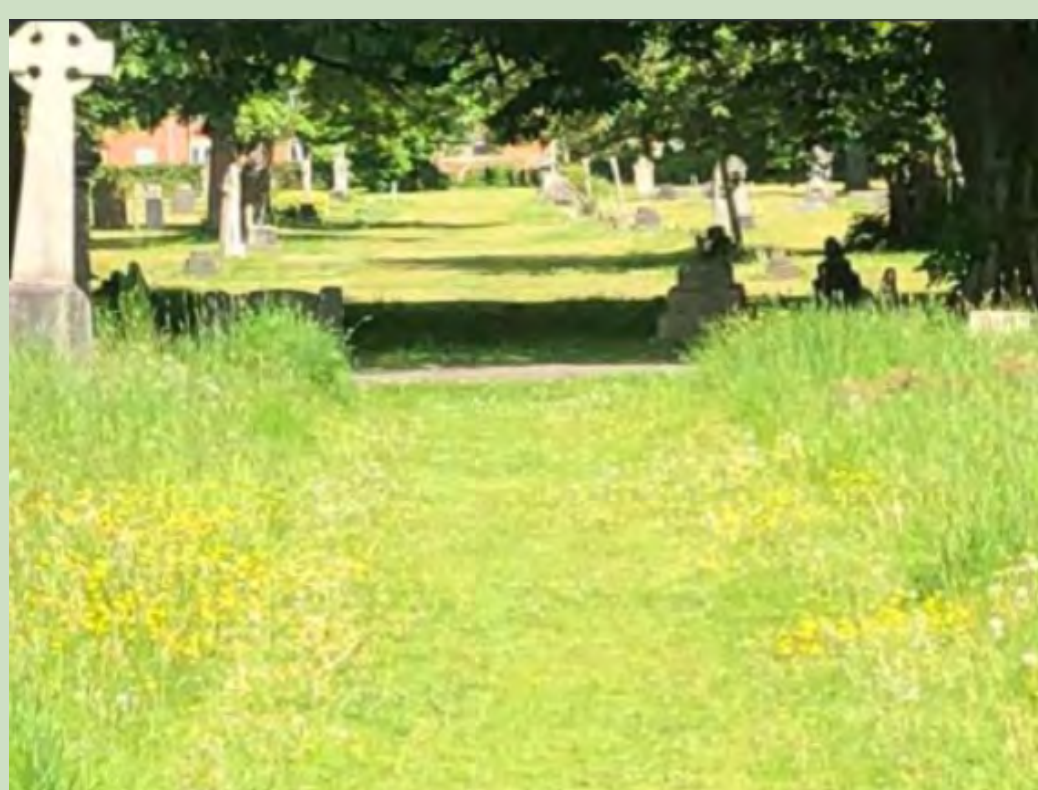
Flooding during heavy rain and cloudbursts is an ongoing issues in the cemetery around some grave plots and requires solutions to slow or direct surface water run off.



### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT



Green Infrastructure Enhancement



In agreed areas cut grass only for access paths and path edges to increase biodiversity and slow surafce water.



Permeable Paving Opportunity.



Reduce number of memorial seats by combining plaques on seats at key locations.



Biodiversity enhanacement making space for Nature to thrive for the community in Runcorn and Halton



Opportunity for heritage and nature walks with interpretation.



Provision of Interpretation panels



# CEMETERY INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

## HALTON CEMETERY

### INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES



The existing paving slabs forming pedestrian paths are uneven and have become a trip liability, providing an ongoing maintenance issue.



Existing Boundary walls and railings need repaired in places



Existing Cemetery railings need painted



Cemetery retaining walls need to be monitored for any movement.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT



Opportunity to replace paving slabs with permeable surfacing



Community Involvement to paint railings



Biodiversity enhancements making space for nature



### APPENDIX No 2









Notes:

- Existing tree cover
- Approximate grave locations subject to topographical survey
- Grave plot zones
- Mown grass areas - High frequency
- Mown grass areas - Low frequency
- Proposed bulb and wildflower areas
- Proposed tree planting
- Woodland edge shrub and tree planting to enhance bio-diversity
- Ornamental shrub planting
- Existing Hedge planting
- Existing vehicular tarmac roads
- New Road kept to match existing
- Proposed vehicular traffic movement
- Existing pedestrian paths to be retained with remedial works.
- Permeable hard surfaces paths
- Resin bound gravel surface
- Existing Bin Stores
- Memorial seat locations
- Proposed bollards restricting vehicular traffic
- Existing watering points
- Existing CCTV points to be reviewed
- Approximate area contaminated with 300mm cover, no burials or tree planting
- COVID 19 Tribute
- Cross of Sacrifice
- Seafarers Memorial
- Memorial Garden
- Vault Garden
- Cemetery Service Compound
- Future Ash Interment Area



REVISIONS



ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION  
Wesley Route  
Executive Director  
Environment  
Penny Farm Road  
Runcorn  
WA9 4DS

Runcom Cemetery  
(Including new section)

Proposed Masterplan  
Draft for Discussion

Scale: NTS  
Drawn by: Jan 25  
MP  
Date: Jan 25  
Checked by:  
Plan No:  
Rev:

L-368\_RC\_MP\_v1



**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12th June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director for Children's Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People & Families

**SUBJECT:** New Co-Opted Member of the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

**WARD(S)** Borough Wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the intention to Co-Opt a new independent member of the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board to provide assurance and challenge utilising subject matter expertise.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED: The Executive Board recommends to the Council the following appointment:**

**Stuart Smith OBE be Co-Opted to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board for a period of 12 months, to be reviewed at the end of that period.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Following a review of the Council's Children's Services arrangements by a Commissioner from the Department for Education in late 2024 / early 2025, the Council received a recommendation that an Independent Member be co-opted onto the Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board.
- 3.2 This report sets out the Council's response to that recommendation, proposing that Stuart Smith OBE, an experienced ex Director of Children's Services and current DfE Advisor is co-opted to the Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board as soon as is practical, as a non-statutory co-optee.
- 3.3 The Council's Constitution sets out that Co-optees shall be nominated by the relevant Policy and Performance Board and their appointment subject to approval by the Executive Board and Full Council. This report seeks that approval.
- 3.4 It is noted that on the appointment of a Co-optee, the length of service of each Co-optee shall be specified and may only be

extended with Council approval. The period of Co-option is proposed to be 12months.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no implications to current Council policies.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

As per the Councils Allowance scheme allows for:

*“Any co-optees, as permitted by the Council’s constitution, shall be entitled to claim Travel and Subsistence and Child Care and Dependent Carer’s Allowances on the same basis as any Member of the Council”*

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

##### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

Whilst there is no direct impact on the policy this does support the improvement journey and strengthen oversight to delivery and quality of service delivery.

##### **6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are several risks that follow this decision, however, due to the nature of the risk they are being mitigated purely through the fact that this report is ensuring due process is being followed in the co-

opting of the independent person to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

- a) Not co-opting to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board does not follow the advice of the Commissioner Report and risks further scrutiny and or intervention.
- b) By not following due process and constitutional rules the service faces political and or legal challenge in co-opting to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

8.2 Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

8.3 This role reinforces the oversight and scrutiny of the directorate in delivering against these duties.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

There is no direct impact on climate change.

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

'None under the meaning of the Act.'



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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