

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 10 July 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Young, M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke and R. Rout

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB14 PLAN FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND, RUNCORN

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the Plan for Neighbourhoods (PfN) funding programme.

In the 2024 Spring budget the then Government announced Phase 2 of their Long-Term Plan for Towns programme which identified Runcorn as one of the 20 additional towns across the country which would benefit from an allocation of £19.5m to invest over a 10-year period in local priorities.

It was reported that in March 2025, the Long-Term Plan for Towns was renamed Plan for Neighbourhoods by the new Government and the timeline for commencing delivery was pushed back to April 2026. The intention remained that the £19.5m funding over a 10-year period

would deliver a range of interventions. A full list of Sub-Interventions was provided at Appendix 1, Terms of Reference as Appendix 2 and a List of Organisations represented on the Board as Appendix 3.

The report outlined the development timeline of a Regeneration Plan which must be submitted to the Ministry - Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by 28 November 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) acknowledge the new name of the Board – Runcorn Town Neighbourhood Board as directed by MHCLG/central Government;
- 2) note the updated Terms of Reference to reflect the change of name and requirements of the new Plan for Neighbourhoods directive;
- 3) note the updated list of interventions (funding themes); and
- 4) note the timeline for submission of key documents to MHCLG and for delivery.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB15 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025

The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as at 31 May 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

Director of
Finance

A summary of spending against the Council's revenue budget as at 31 May 2025 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net revenue spending as at 31 May 2025 was £1.1m over budget.

The report also detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 May 2025. Other than the General Fund reserve of £5.149m, there were no further reserves available to help fund future budgets.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Executive Directors continue to implement the

approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 3;

- 2) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the council wide forecast outturn overspend position; and
- 3) 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.

**CORPORATE SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT
LEARNING AND SKILLS AND COMMUNITY
PORTFOLIOS**

EXB16 HEALTH AND LEISURE IN HALTON

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that requested the Board to consider the relationship between increasing the cost of the local authority leisure facilities to residents and the potential impact on health inequalities in the borough. The Board was also asked to consider if it wished to subsidise leisure activities for certain groups in the borough. Options for how this could be implemented were outlined in the report together with a request from Halton Walking Football Club.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

As health is the number one priority for Halton it was proposed that a temporary subsidy be put in place as stated in the report to allow existing groups to continue to be active but with the following recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) as being active is a key factor to promoting health and wellbeing in the borough the full subsidy amount should be allocated by contribution from Public Health;
- 2) to ensure fairness and consistency all groups who meet the criteria as set out in the report will receive a standardised 50 per cent discount; and
- 3) the Portfolio Holder for Employment Learning, Skills and Community Portfolio Holder be regularly updated on the status of discussions with the groups in receipt of the subsidy and the nature of support being

provided by Sports Development. This ensures transparency and accountability whilst tracking progress toward the goal of enabling groups to become self-sustaining.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB17 HIGHWAY STRUCTURES MAJOR MAINTENANCE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to proceed with the procurement of major maintenance works to key structures on the Runcorn Busway (Shopping City North Viaduct) under the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme using the SCAPE Framework.

Director -
Planning and
Transportation

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the Director Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to be delegated to deal with any matters relating to the procurement and delivery of the scheme to refurbish the Shopping City Busway Viaduct (North) and associated structures.

EXB18 PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES FOR CAPITAL FUNDED HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to proceed with the procurement services for the delivery of capital funded highway improvements across the Borough. The current contract was due to expire on 5 August 2026.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

RESOLVED: That the Board approve a procurement process to secure a delivery contractor for capital funded highway improvement works.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB19 HOME-BASED RESPITE CARE SERVICE IN HALTON - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adults, that sought approval for a Non-Emergency Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (iv) of part 3 Procurement Standing Orders, to allow the granting of an extension to the current contract in place for the provision of the Home-Based Respite Care Service in

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Halton, to be delivered by Care at Home Group Limited for a further 2-year period from 19 October 2025 to 18 October 2027.

Reason(s) for Decision

Approval of the extension to the current contract to Care at Home Group Limited for a 2-year period would support continuity of care for a vulnerable client cohort and allow for sufficient time to undertake a new procurement process for the service.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Allow the Home-Based Respite Service to cease.

Implementation Date

The 2-year extension to the contract would take effect from 19 October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve a Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (iv) of part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, for the contract extension for the provision of the Home Based Respite Care Service in Halton delivered by Care at Home Group Limited for the period from 19 October 2025 to 18 October 2027.

EXB20 REPORT BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive, which notified Members that the Local Government Ombudsman had issued a report against the Council following an investigation of a homelessness case. A copy of the report was attached.

RESOLVED: That the report and the actions taken to address the issues raised by the Ombudsman be noted.

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO

EXB21 PROPERTY POOL PLUS POLICY AMENDMENTS AND FUTURE DELIVERY OPTIONS - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Adults, that sought approval for the implementation of several changes to the Property Pool Plus Housing Allocations Scheme. The report set out details of

Executive Director
of Adult Services

the three significant changes, and a number of minor policy changes to the Scheme.

The Scheme was currently jointly administered across the five Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral. Halton Housing had maintained the housing register and allocations contract for many years.

It was noted that the contract was due to cease in March 2026 and it was now necessary to consider the future validity of the administration of the Scheme.

Reason(s) for Decision

To ensure that the Allocations Policy is in line with current legislation case law, good practice, and meets local priorities it is necessary to periodically update and review the current iteration. The existing scheme has been in operation since January 2024.

The changes being proposed fall into three categories: three significant changes to assist the participating local authorities to respond more effectively to the demand on for social housing, minor policy changes that will impact a relatively small number of applicants; minor changes to improve clarity.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The option to continue to operate the current scheme policy without change has been considered but discounted due to the need for the Council to improve its ability to meet housing need in the area and to respond to the increased demand on homelessness services and associated temporary accommodation pressures.

Implementation Date

The Property Pool Plus Housing Allocations Scheme is a jointly administered scheme across the five Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral. Each Local Authority will seek approval from their respective Management Boards, with a view that the policy will be implemented July/August 2025.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) the Board approve the proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Scheme Policy (Property Pool

Plus); and

- 3) the relevant Policy and Performance Boards be requested to review Property Pool Plus Housing Allocation Scheme during the current year.

EXB22 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

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

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB23 TRANSPORT OPERATOR'S LICENCE

- a. **The Board considered a report that provided information on the requirements pertaining to the Council's Transport Operators Licence and the preparation for the renewal of the Licence in December**

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

2026.

b.

- c. **RESOLVED: That the Board approve the recommendations contained within Appendix 1 of the report.**

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO

EXB24 KINGSWAY QUARTER REDEVELOPMENT, WIDNES - KEY DECISION

The Board received an update report on the proposed redevelopment of the Kingsway Quarter, Widnes and options to progress the project.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Reason(s) for Decision

The development will be significant in terms of its positive effects on communities in and around Widnes Town Centre.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Alternative Options are outlined in sections 3.11 -3.14 of the report.

Implementation Date

1 October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the current position and agree to option 4 as outlined in section 3.14 of the report. Officers are instructed to undertake further work to ascertain the respective merits and constraints associated with progressing this option;**
- 2) agree that the appointment of a development partner for the site is delegated to the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Major Projects (Deputy Leader) and Housing and Environmental Sustainability;**
- 3) authorise the Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in

consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services; and

- 4) receive further progress reports which will be provided to the Executive Board, as required.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB25 ACCOMMODATION REVIEW UPDATE REPORT - KEY DECISION

The Board received an update on the review of the Council's accommodation and requested that Members advise on their preferred option and approach.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Reason(s) for Decision

To promote and deliver an effective use of the Council's accommodation.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

An options assessment is contained in the report.

Implementation Date

1 October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the current position with the accommodation review;
- 2) agree the preferred option, (option 1b); and
- 3) progress discussions with relevant stakeholders as outlined in sections 3.24 of the report.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB26 COMMUNITY MEALS : REVIEW AND FUTURE OPTIONS - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Adults, that sought approval to cease the provision of the Halton Community Meals Service during the financial year 2025/26.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision impacts on all wards and communities within the borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A range of alternative options for meals provision will be considered for current recipients of Community Meals on an individual basis during 2025/26.

Implementation Date

It is proposed that the Community Meals service will cease on or before 31 March 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves cessation of the provision of the Halton Community Meals service during the financial year 2025/2026, as per 3.11, 3.12 and 3.13 of this report.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB27 PUBLIC SURVEILLANCE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval for capital investment to upgrade the Council's CCTV and public surveillance infrastructure.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Council be asked to approve inclusion in the capital programme, a scheme of works and £500k investment to address CCTV infrastructure, software and hardware as outlined in the body of the report; and
- 2) authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services to prepare tender documents to procure this work.

MINUTES ISSUED: 18 July 2025

CALL-IN: 25 July 2025 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 25 July 2025.

Meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.