



Executive Board

**Thursday, 15 January 2026 2.00 p.m.
The Boardroom, Municipal Building**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Ferguson'.

Interim Chief Executive

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

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	1 - 11
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
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.	
3. LEADER'S PORTFOLIO	
(A) URGENT DECISIONS	12 - 13
4. CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO	

Item	Page No
<p>(A) 2025/26 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2025</p> <p>5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO</p> <p>(A) SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2026/27 - KEY DECISION</p> <p>(B) SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2027/28 - KEY DECISION</p> <p>(C) SERVICES TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING</p> <p>6. ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO</p> <p>(A) ADDITIONAL HIGHWAY GRANT ALLOCATIONS</p> <p>(B) POLICY DOCUMENTS: LIVERPOOL CITY REGION LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY, TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT, HOUSE EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT, AND VEHICLE CROSSING GUIDANCE</p> <p>7. SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PART II</p> <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 RECOMMENDED 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> <p>8. EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO</p> <p>(A) DCBL STADIUM - PITCH REPLACEMENT - KEY DECISION</p>	<p>14 - 86</p> <p>87 - 90</p> <p>91 - 112</p> <p>113 - 117</p> <p>118 - 120</p> <p>121 - 126</p> <p>721 - 722</p> <p>723 - 724</p> <p>725 - 726</p> <p>727 - 728</p> <p>729 - 730</p> <p>731 - 732</p> <p>733 - 734</p> <p>735 - 736</p> <p>737 - 738</p> <p>739 - 740</p> <p>741 - 742</p> <p>743 - 744</p> <p>745 - 746</p> <p>747 - 748</p> <p>749 - 750</p> <p>751 - 752</p> <p>753 - 754</p> <p>755 - 756</p> <p>757 - 758</p> <p>759 - 760</p> <p>761 - 762</p> <p>763 - 764</p> <p>765 - 766</p> <p>767 - 768</p> <p>769 - 770</p> <p>771 - 772</p> <p>773 - 774</p> <p>775 - 776</p> <p>777 - 778</p> <p>779 - 780</p> <p>781 - 782</p> <p>783 - 784</p> <p>785 - 786</p> <p>787 - 788</p> <p>789 - 790</p> <p>791 - 792</p> <p>793 - 794</p> <p>795 - 796</p> <p>797 - 798</p> <p>799 - 800</p> <p>801 - 802</p> <p>803 - 804</p> <p>805 - 806</p> <p>807 - 808</p> <p>809 - 810</p> <p>811 - 812</p> <p>813 - 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Item	Page No

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 Thursday, 11 December 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: G. Cook, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, T. Gibbs, G. Ferguson, R. Rout, J. Hughes and D. O'Connor

Also in attendance: None

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

EXB69 MINUTES

Action

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB70 URGENT DECISION

The Board received a report from the Interim Chief Executive, which provided information on an urgent decision taken since the last meeting of the Board.

It was noted that the Council's Constitution gave authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director Finance and/or the Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.

One urgent decision had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.

RESOLVED: That the urgent decision taken since

the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB71 FINANCIAL RECOVERY, CHANGE AND INNOVATION RESOURCE APRIL 2026 ONWARDS - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Director of Transformation (Interim), that sought approval to establish and resource a dedicated Financial Recovery, Change and Innovation function for the Council from April 2026, following the conclusion of the current Transformation Programme and its associated funding on 31 March 2026. The proposal would ensure the Council had the capacity, capability and governance structures required to deliver the scale and pace of change necessary to achieve financial sustainability.

The Board noted that a Financial Recovery Plan was currently being developed with the aim of demonstrating how the Council could return to a sustainable budget position by 2030/31. To support the Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), it was proposed that a new Change and Innovation Unit (CIU) would be established from 1 April 2026. Given the tenure of the current contract arrangements and the rights accrued, appointments to the CIU would be on a permanent basis. Some flexible budget would also be retained to buy-in expertise on an as and when needed basis. It was noted that £2.5m had been included in the MTFS to fund a change programme for the period 2026/27 to 2028/29.

Reason for Decision

Agreement for funding to resource a Financial Recovery, Change and continuous Improvement function for the Council from April 2026 following the end of the Transformation Programme and its funding on 31 March 2026.

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

Implementation date

1 April 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the establishment of a Change and Innovation Unit (CIU) to support the Financial Recovery and Corporate Plan from 1

Chief Executive

April 2026.

EXB72 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which presented three applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, for consideration.

It was noted that under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was 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.

The report outlined details of three applications from organisations, in relation to their respective address. Appended to the report was the potential annual cost to the Council of granting the discretionary rate relief. On 25 February 2025, the Board approved the renewal from 1 April 2026, of existing discretionary rate relief awards, for a period of three years in order to provide certainty for the organisations. Historically, the Council had chosen to only support organisations who operated solely or mainly within the Borough with discretionary rate relief.

RESOLVED: That

Director of Finance

- 1) 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;
- 2) the application for 10% discretionary rate relief from the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations (Incorporated) in respect of 12 Runcorn Shopping Centre, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2BS with effect from 4 September 2025, be rejected;
- 3) the application for 10% discretionary rate relief from Widnes Gymnastics Academy in respect of Unit 10 Widnes Business Park, Foundry Lane with effect from 25 August 2025, be approved;
- 4) the application for 10% discretionary rate relief from Widnes Gymnastics Academy in respect of Unit 11 Widnes Business Park, Foundry Lane with effect from 25 August 2025, be approved.

EXB73 DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 2025 - 2026

The Board considered a report of the Director of HR and Corporate Affairs (Interim), on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the second quarter period to 30 September 2025, for Corporate and Inclusion, Health and Social Care and Children's Services.

The Board was advised that the Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from the relevant quarter for each Directorate and was aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's performance management arrangements and Executive Board had a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability. Performance Management would continue to be important in the demonstration of value for money and strengthening accountability.

RESOLVED: That the information contained in the reports be noted.

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB74 PRIDE IN PLACE, IMPACT FUND

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, that provided an update on the recently announced Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF) of £1.5m for Halton and the considerations around how to deploy the funding within the required timescales. The funding had to be used to achieve visible impacts by March 2027, and the guidelines outlined that local authorities would act as the accountable body for the PiPIF working with local stakeholders to identify and invest in themes that met local need. The report set out the three following overarching themes that the funds could be deployed on:

- Community spaces;
- Public spaces; and
- High street and town centre revitalisation.

RESOLVED: That the Board

1) acknowledge the £1.5 million allocation being made

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

available and note that the Chief Executive has signed the associated memorandum of understanding on behalf of the Council;

- 2) approves delegated authority to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration (in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Community Safety and Housing and Environmental Sustainability) to progress projects that meet the strategic objectives of the fund, with specific projects to be determined by Executive Board;
- 3) note the timeline for submission of key documents to MHCLG (first submission in February 2026) and that the Council will act as Accountable Body for the funding; and
- 4) approves delegated authority to the Director Economy Enterprise and Property (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services) to arrange for all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Director Legal and Democratic Services in relation to any necessary proposed project activities.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB75 CHILDRENS SERVICES COMMISSIONED CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services, that sought approval for a series of staged extensions via requests to various contractual waivers, in compliance with Procurement Standing Orders 1.14.4.3 and 1.14.4 iv seeking to waive parts 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders. The waivers were for several contracts identified in the report and overarching rationale was provided for each, alongside individual contractual considerations. The eighteen short term extensions would allow:

- a focused workplan to be spread more equitably across the financial year, resulting in contract end dates of April and October respectively and allow a dedicated focus on each contract;
- the allocated commissioning officers time and space to fully review each contract, allowing for more options to be considered, including the use of open and competitive tenders, or longer-term direct awards, based on quality audits of the outcomes

- achieved across the specification key performance indicators; and
- the Procurement Team time to plan the preferred options into their annual work schedules.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) approval be given to the Emotional Health and Wellbeing contract with Barnardo's being extended for 12 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.3 (non-emergency procedures – not exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive parts 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;
- 3) approval be given to the Advocacy and Independent Visitor (CRAIV) contract with NYAS being extended for 6 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.3 (non-emergency procedures – not exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive parts 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;
- 4) approval be given to the Personal Assistant Services contract with Positive Futures Consultancy being extended for 12 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.3 (non-emergency procedures – not exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;
- 5) approval be given to the Specialist Children's Domestic Abuse Service contract with The Children's Society being extended for 6 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.3 (non-emergency procedures – not exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;
- 6) approval be given to the Friendships Groups contract with VIBE being extended for 6 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.3 (non-emergency procedures – not exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;
- 7) approval be given to the Specialist Seating contract with Newlyn Healthcare being extended for 12

Executive Director
of Children's
Services

months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.3 (non-emergency procedures – not exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;

- 8) approval be given to the Supported Accommodation contract with P3 being extended for 12 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;
- 9) approval be given to the PAUSE and REACH Programmes contract with PAUSE Halton being extended for 12 months, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders; and
- 10) the re-commissioning of each service, via open competitive tender, or otherwise, at the extended contract end dates, be undertaken by the Children's Head of Commissioning and Quality Assurance in liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Children's.

ENVIRONMENT & URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB76 WASTE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board considered a report that provided an update on the continuing work in the development of the new Strategic Policy and Service Plan documents in respect of the Council's Waste Management Services. It was noted that since the last report to the Board on 11 September 2025, the following actions had taken place:

- work was being undertaken to draft a new Halton Waste Strategy document which would be presented to the Board in Spring 2026. The aims of the Strategy would be underpinned by a new Waste Policy which was also in development;
- an Environment Service Transformation Programme supported by the Transformation Delivery Unit was ongoing;
- workforce engagement: staff, management, Trade Unions and HR representatives had met and been fully engaged throughout the development of the Transformation programme;
- work was progressing to bring in additional staffing

resources to deliver effective communication and community engagement on the new services for Halton residents and the development of a Communications Plan; and

- an update on the new Food Waste Collection Service to be implemented to every household in 2026 was provided including staffing implications.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board endorse the current programme of work, as set out within the report, which is being undertaken to support the Council in meeting its Strategic aims and objectives with regards to the management of waste in Halton; and
- 2) a further report be presented to the Board in Spring 2026.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB77 CONNECT TO WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, that advised on the opportunity for the Council to participate in the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's delivery of the national Connect to Work programme and sought delegated authority to negotiate and execute related Grant Funding Agreements.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board approve the indicative £2,170,118 funding allocation from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for delivery of the Halton Connect to Work programme; and
- 2) authority be delegated to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Employment, Learning, Skills and Community, the Director Finance / Section 151 Officer and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to negotiate and execute Grant Funding Agreements for delivery of the Connect to Work programme.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EXB78 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.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB79 ACCOMMODATION REVIEW UPDATE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, on the continuing review of the Council's accommodation.

Reason for Decision

To enable notification to be given to the Telecommunications companies and allow for the Municipal Building to be demolished, and to allow for negotiations to be undertaken in respect of the possible future use of the site.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Alternative options were considered in the July Executive Board report.

Implementation date

December 2027.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board approve that arrangements be prepared to decommission and vacate the Municipal Building; and
- 2) the Municipal Building be demolished, subject to the necessary planning requirements being met, and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects to enter negotiations regarding the potential future use of the site.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ADULT AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB80 REVIEW OF TELEHEALTHCARE SERVICES - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Adult Services, that set out options following a review of the Telehealthcare Services.

Reason for Decision

The outcome of this report and decision is likely to result in savings and potential changes to the charging of the service.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Ceasing delivery of service would impact negatively on a vulnerable cohort of the Borough's population and likely result in more costly, crisis intervention being required.

Implementation date

The outcome from the report is to be implemented as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report;

Executive Director
of Adult Services

- 2) a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Board clarifying the points raised.

On behalf of the Council the Leader thanked Sue Wallace Bonner for her work and years of support and he wished her a happy and healthy retirement

MINUTES ISSUED: 16 December 2025

CALL-IN: 23 December 2025 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 23 December 2025.

Meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15 January 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Interim Chief Executive

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: Urgent Decisions

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To bring to the attention of Executive Board urgent decision/s taken since the last meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report is noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

- 3.3 The urgent decision/s taken since the last meeting of Executive Board:

Date Decision taken	Decision details
10 December 2025	Delegation of enforcement and investigatory powers granted to the Council by the Renters Rights Act 2025 to the Director of Public Health.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

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

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no climate change implications.

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

10.1 No background papers were used in the preparation of this report. Further information on the decision/s taken is available from the link in Paragraph 3.2.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15 January 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Finance

PORTFOLIO: Corporate Services

SUBJECT: 2025/26 Councilwide Spending as at 30 November 2025

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue net spend position as at 30 November 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;

- (i) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 4;**
- (ii) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to ensure the council wide forecast outturn overspend position for the year remains within budget.**
- (iii) 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.**
- (iv) Council be asked to approve the revisions to the capital programme set-out in paragraph 3.31 and incorporated within Appendix 5;**
- (v) The forecast position for High Needs set-out in Para 3.19 to 3.24 and Appendix 3, be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Revenue Spending

3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 30 November 2025 (period 8) and Appendix 2 provides detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms, net Council spending as at 30 November 2025 is £0.294m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimates that net spending will be over

budget by £1.281m if no further corrective action is taken. This is a much improved position from that reported at the end of September 2025 (period 6) where forecast spend for the year was estimated to be £4.672m over budget.

3.2 The improved position on the forecast outturn from that reported at the end of September 2025 can be linked across a number of areas, including:

- Adult Social Care Directorate – The forecast outturn position for Community Care is £0.683m at the end of November, compared to a forecast outturn of £2.315m from two months prior. The position has improved due to more flexible utilisation of the Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) through the capitalisation of qualifying staffing and equipment costs against the grant, which it is intended to continue for future years.
- Care Homes - The overspending forecast against the Council's in-house care homes has decreased by a further £0.218m as a result of a lower forecast of agency spend, stemming from the ongoing review of sickness absence. Overall the Adult Social Care forecast outturn position has improved by £1.723m.
- Children and Families Department – The outturn position for the Department has improved by £1.601m. Employee costs are forecast to be under budget profile by the end of financial year 2025/26 by £0.096m which is a reduction of £0.822m since last reported at 30 September 25. Residential care costs are forecast to be under budget profile by £0.513m which is a reduction of £0.571m since last reported on 30 September 25.
- Environment and Regeneration Directorate – The forecast outturn position for the Directorate has improved by £1.006m. This is largely as a result of revised forecasts of income generation within the Planning and Transportation department, related to planning fees and the number of approved utility permit applications.

3.3 Despite the reduction in forecast net costs for the year it remains vital the Council continue to limit expenditure through to the end of the financial year to achieve as a minimum, a balanced budget position. It should be remembered that in setting the current year budget the Council have planned to utilise £29.385m of Exceptional Financial Support.

3.4 As part of the action to ensure spend for the year remains within budget, recovery meetings have been put into action where directorate leads will provide action points on how they aim to keep net spend within the approved budget.

- 3.5 On 10 February 2025 Government issued a letter to the Council confirming it was minded to approve a capitalisation direction of a total not exceeding £52.8 million. The total is broken down by each financial year of the Council's request:
- £20.8 million in 2024-25.
 - £32 million in 2025-26.
- 3.6 Consistent with those councils that have previously sought Exceptional Financial Support, in order for Government to provide a final capitalisation direction, the council is required to undergo an external assurance review which will include, but will not be limited to, an assessment of the council's financial position and governance arrangements. There is uncertainty in when MHCLG will commission this review and therefore the Council has taken a proactive approach and commissioned CIPFA to support a review of the Council's financial resilience and financial management arrangements. The review is currently being undertaken on the same basis of the latest specification for such reviews required by MHCLG for councils requesting EFS.
- 3.7 Council approved the annual budget of £183.052m on 05 March 2025, in doing so they agreed to the use of EFS totalling £29.385m. As a minimum the Council must ensure that spend for the year remains within the approved budget to ensure the provisional capitalisation direction is not breached.
- 3.8 The cost of EFS is significant over the long term for the Council, for every £1m borrowing undertaken it is estimated will cost the Council approximately £100k over each of the next 20 years. It is imperative action is taken now to reduce the level of planned spend over the remainder of the year and that approved saving proposals are implemented with immediate effect.
- 3.9 Within the Corporate and Democracy table (included at Appendix B), current year costs relating to EFS have been included. It is forecast the cost of EFS interest will be £1.096m with repayment of the principal debt totalling £0.500m
- 3.10 The figures reflect a prudent yet realistic view of spend and income levels through to the end of the year. Work will continue to progress on updating the financial position as more information is made available.
- 3.11 In setting the 2025/26 budget Council approved significant levels of growth to ensure the budget was more relevant to the planned level of spend. Budget growth of £33.555m (22%) was added to the 2025/26 budget to bring the approved net budget to £183.052m.
- 3.12 There are continued demand pressures on the budget which are above growth levels provided in the 2025/26 budget, these are more notable against adults community care and home to school transport. Levels of demand covering children in care appear to be under control, although still

too high for an authority the size of Halton. Further information is provided within the report on the main budgetary pressure areas.

- 3.13 In setting the 2025/26 budget, inflation of 2% was provided for the pay award. The pay award has been agreed at 3.2%, therefore budgetary growth for the pay award is insufficient, the revised forecast of the additional cost of the 3.2% pay offer will add approximately £1.2m to the Council's running cost for the year. This additional cost is included within the reported forecast position for the year.
- 3.14 Another major factor in achieving a balanced budget position for the year is that all approved savings are fully achieved to the agreed levels. In total, savings of £7.225m were agreed for the current year, Appendix 4 provides detail on progress against the approved savings. As per Appendix 4, savings have been RAG rated to inform on progress, high level summary of this is provided below.

Department	On-course to be achieved	Uncertain or too early to say	Highly likely or certain will not be achieved
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care	100	125	1,655
Finance	0	100	90
Legal	6	0	0
Children & Family Services	0	1,900	22
Education, Inclusion and Provision	0	0	300
Community and Greenspaces	282	0	0
Economy, Enterprise and Property *	0	0	100
Planning & Transportation *	0	0	100
Public Health	45	0	0
Corporate	100	500	1900
Totals	533	2,125	4,667

*note alternative one-off savings have been identified for the current year.

- 3.15 The use and cost of agency staff continues to be one of the main contributing factors to the overspend position for the year. This is mostly evident within the Children & Families Department and the Council's in-house Care Homes. Initiatives and support from the Transformation Programme are ongoing to reduce reliance upon agency staff.

- 3.16 Analysis of agency spend for the year to date, together with comparative analysis of 2024/25 costs, is included in the table below.

	2025/26					2024/25
	As at 31 May 2025 £'000	As at 31 July 2025 £'000	As at 30 September 2025 £'000	As at 30 November 2025	Total 2025/26 To Date £'000	
Adult Social Care	955	1,687	805	573	4,020	6,035
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	130	145	146	118	539	810
Children & Family Services	574	739	594	564	2,471	5,220
Community & Greenspace	71	59	52	53	235	447
Corporate & Democracy	0	0	0	6	6	0
Economy, Enterprise & Property	60	77	86	72	295	417
Education, Inclusion & Provision	54	72	48	56	230	295
Finance	3	0	1	1	5	114
Legal & Democratic Services	63	59	43	37	202	881
Planning & Transportation	2	0	0	0	2	210
Public Health & Public Protection	0	0	0	0	0	22
Total	1,912	2,838	1,775	1,480	8,005	14,451

Revenue - Operational Spending

- 3.17 Operational net spending for the first eight months of the year is higher than the budget to date by £0.294m Based on current forecasts it is estimated net spend will be over budget for the year by £1.281m if no further corrective action is taken.
- 3.18 Within the overall budget forecast position for the period, the key budget pressure areas are as follows;

(i) Children and Families Department

The net departmental outturn position is estimated to be over budget profile at the end of financial year 2025/26 by £0.209m with the majority relating to Social Care Services. Since last reported at 30 September 25 there has been a reduction in forecast outturn for the department of £1.6m.

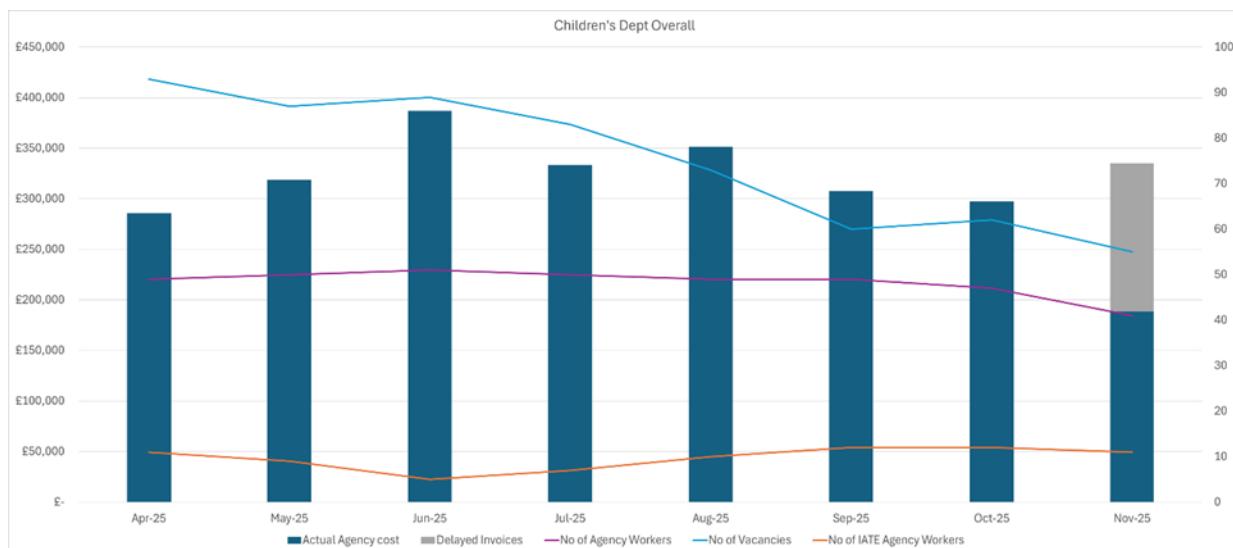
Employee costs are forecast to be under budget profile by the end of financial year 2025/26 by £0.096m which is a reduction of £0.822m since last reported at 30 September 25.

A large proportion of the reduction relates to the utilisation of a number of grants that are available to the service, this equates to £0.486m to 30 November 2025 and has supported the reduction in forecast overspend.

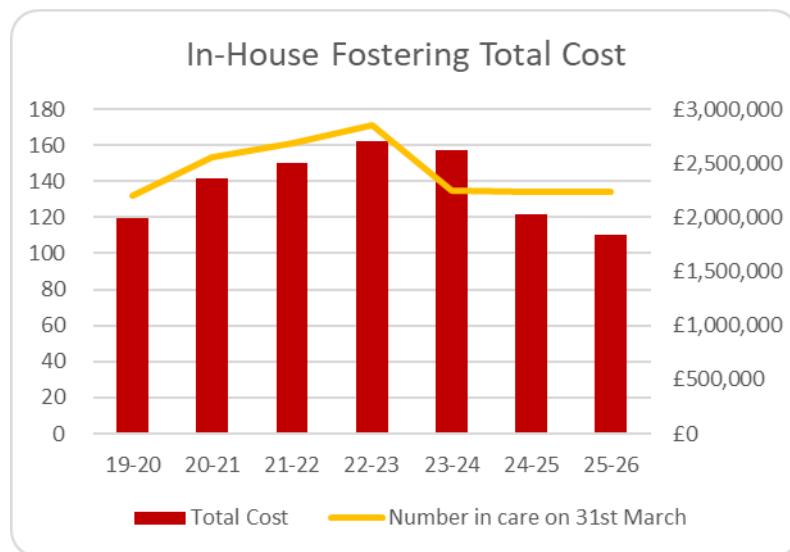
Since last reported on 30 September 25, a number of agency have converted to Council employment, with hopeful further planned conversions over the coming months. Forecasts will be updated as and when to reflect the changes in staffing.

The chart below demonstrates the following information, for the period April to November 2025:

- Agency costs
- The number of agency staff that the Council have received an invoice for within each month
- The number of vacancies across the Children and Families Department
- The number of staff that are currently in addition to the establishment (IATE)

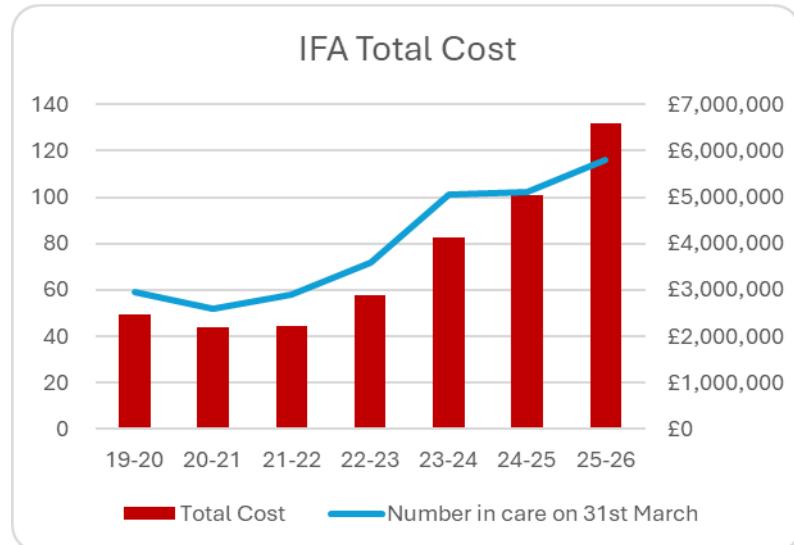


In-House fostering placements are estimated to be £0.548m under budget profile for financial year 2025/26.



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 Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA). Higher numbers of children placed within IFA provision and increased IFA rates has resulted in an estimated forecast overspend for the end of 2025/26 of £1.114m.

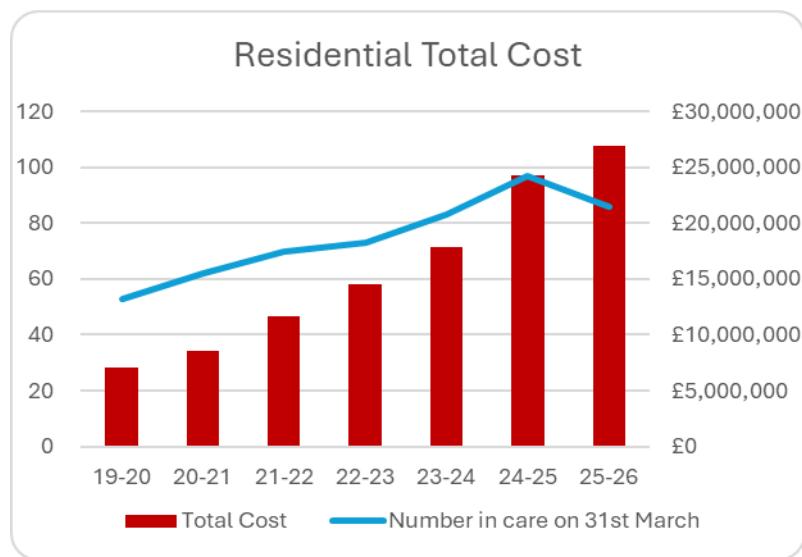


Out of Borough Residential Care continues to be a budget pressure for the Children and Families Department as the costs of residential care have continued to rise year on year. The numbers of young people in residential placements remains high and the cost of placements is rising significantly year-on-year.

Residential care costs are forecast to be under budget profile by £0.513m which is a reduction of £0.571m since last reported on 30 September 25.

A number of initiatives are taking place to help reduce residential spend, including a High Cost Placement Panel, Medium Cost Placement Panel and particular cohort focused projects. The panels have been created to ensure that an effective care plan is in place for all young people at the best available cost of placement this work is ongoing.

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 previous years.



(ii) Adult Social Care Directorate

Community Care

The net spend position for the community care budget at the end of November 2025 is currently £0.411m over the available budget and the year-end anticipated spend is forecast to be £0.683m over planned budget.

In September the expected year-end forecast was reduced from £2.627m to £2.315m due to the impact of the recovery plan. The forecast has since been reduced further to £0.683m by capitalising qualifying staffing and equipment costs against the Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) enabling revenue budget to be utilised against community care budget pressures. Additionally the pool budget has released £0.400m toward this budget's financial performance.

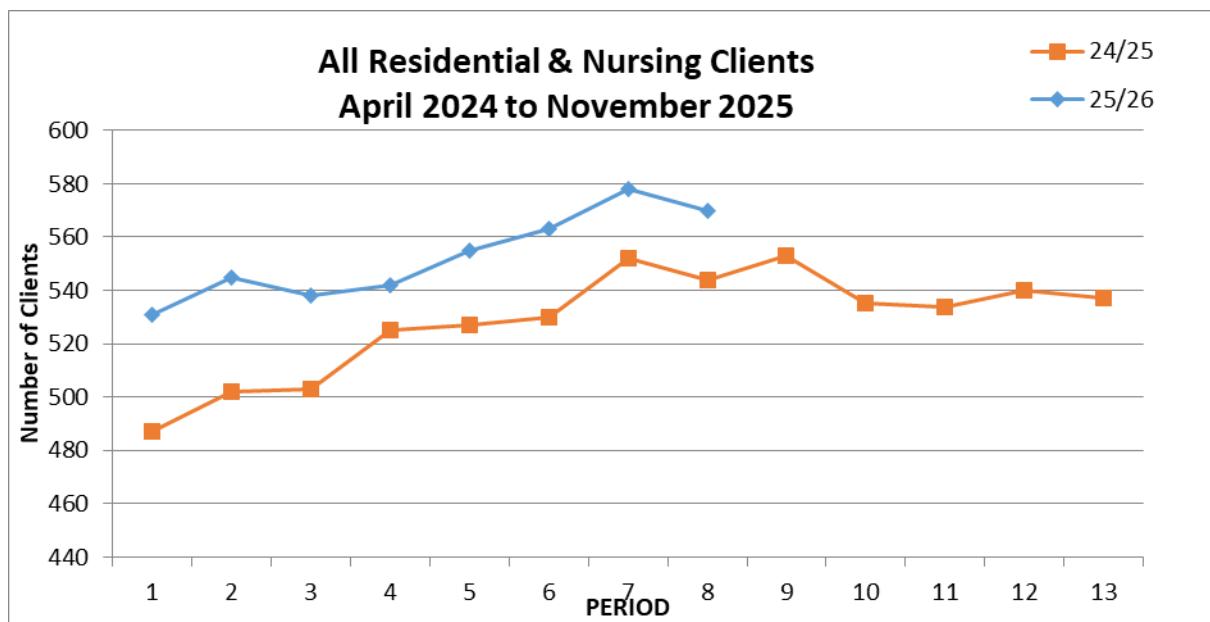
Recovery meetings continue and currently focus is on the following areas to try to reduce spend further:-

- Review 1 to 1 packages of care for appropriateness
- Identify and signpost new 15 minute packages of domiciliary care (medicine prompts) which should be commissioned and funded by health under the Care Act.
- Ensure assessments carried out on discharge from hospital are complete and appropriate
- Maximise internal care home capacity

Residential Care

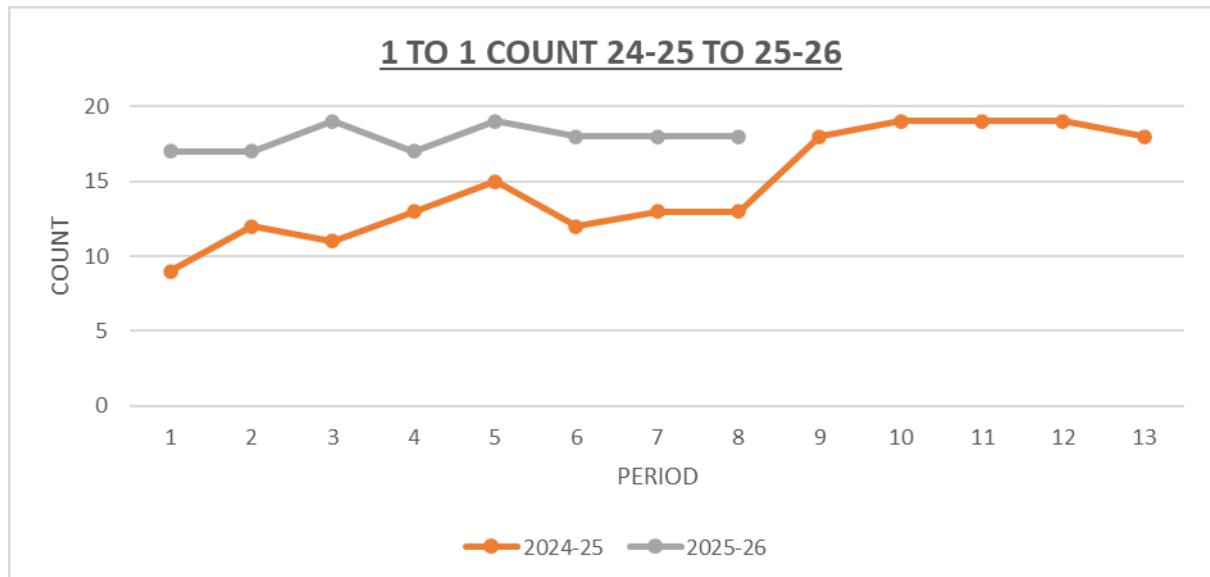
There are currently 570 residents in external residential/nursing care as at the end of November 2025. Compared to the 2024/25 average of 520 this is an increase of 9.6%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £949.76 compared to £850.24 at the end of 2024/25 an increase of 11.7%.

The graph below illustrates the demand for all residential and nursing placements.



Payments for 1 to 1 support continue to exert pressure on the budget. These are generally to mitigate the risk from falls particularly on discharge from hospital. The full year cost for 2024/25 was £837,882.

The graph below shows the count of service users receiving 1 to 1 care by period. Currently there are 18 compared to 13 at the same point last year. This is an increase of 38%. It is expected that these should reduce as packages continue to be reviewed, however commissioning of new packages with a 1:1 care element are resulting in numbers remaining high.

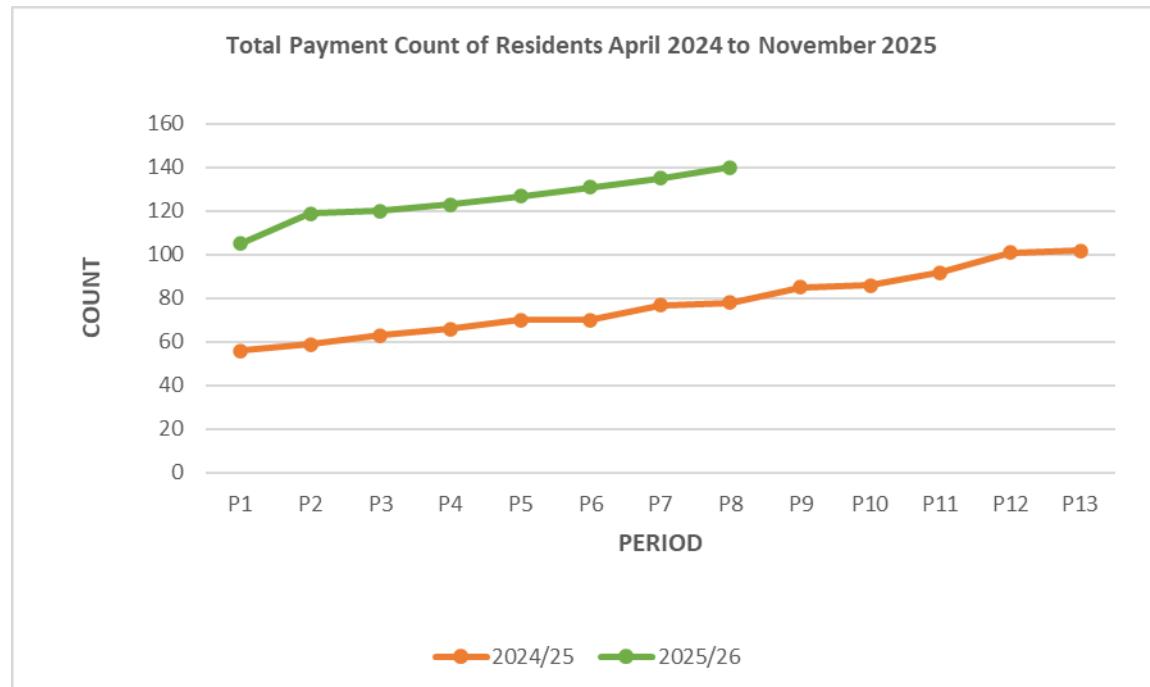


Additional Payments 2025/26

Additional payments to providers rose sharply throughout the last financial year, both in and out of the borough. These are where the care home charges an additional amount on top of the contracted bed rate. The cost of this for 2024/25 was £0.424m.

The graphs below illustrate the count and spend of service users with an additional payment by period.

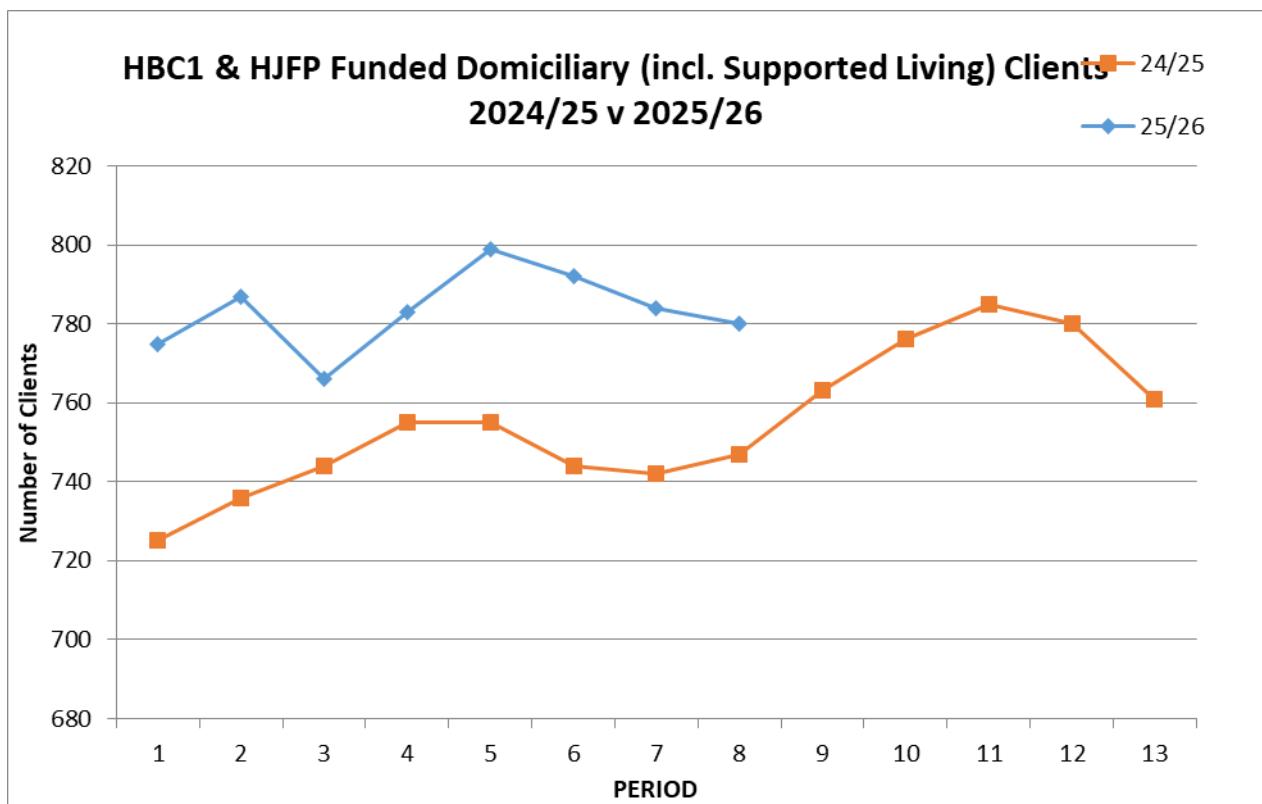
This clearly shows a steady increase in numbers and costs for 2025/26, the spend up to November is £0.405m. If numbers and costs remain the same, the forecast spend for the year will be approximately £0.696m.



Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

As at November there are 780 service users receiving a package of care at home, compared to the average in 2024/25 of 754, an increase of 3.4%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £537.15 compared with the average of £450.64 in 2024/25 an increase of 19.19%.

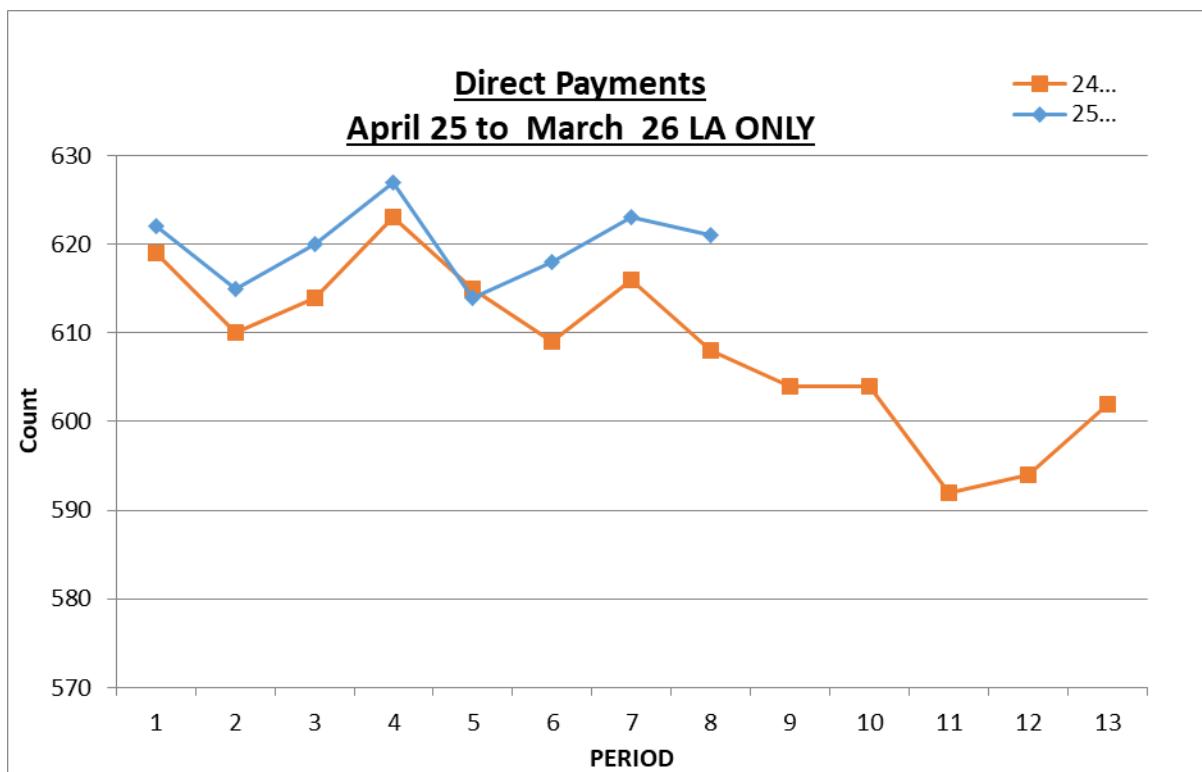
The graph below illustrates the demand for the service from April 2024 to November 2025.



Direct Payments

The average number of clients who received a Direct Payment (DP) in November was 621 compared with 622 in April, a small decrease. The average cost of a package of care has also decreased from £571.26 to £491.76, a reduction of 13.9%. The financial impact of this is a reduction in spend of approximately £200k per month.

The graph below shows movement throughout the year.



Care Homes

Spend for the first nine months of the 2025/26 Financial Year to 30 November is £0.084M above profile, with an estimated spend above budget for the year of £0.385M. This primarily relates to unbudgeted agency staffing costs, and a current shortfall against target of client finance and out of borough income.

Employee related expenditure is anticipated to be above budget at the end of financial year by £0.152M. Projections take into account agency spending patterns over the previous 3 financial years, but also with reference to the recent decrease in agency expenditure, this has dropped considerably from previously reported as a result of the ongoing review of sickness absence.

Income Targets include those for privately funded residents, out of borough placements, and reimbursements from the ICB in respect Of Continuing Health Care, Funded Nursing Care, and Joint Funded placements. Income across all headings is currently projected to be under-achieved by £0.131M for the full year.

Adult Social Care (excluding Care Homes and Community Care)

Net Department Expenditure is currently £0.609m over budget profile at the end of the sixth period of the financial year. Current expenditure projections indicate an overspend for the full financial year in the region of £0.768m.

Factors relating to the projected overspend include;

Unbudgeted agency costs in respect of covering vacant posts, particularly in terms of front line Care Management and Mental Health Team posts. However, there continues to be a reduction in agency use across these divisions due to filling of vacancies.

A projected £0.199m forecasted full-year spend above supplies and services budget relates to an increased volume of caseload with respect to Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DoLs) assessments. Spend to November 2025 was £0.132m, with a total spend for this financial year forecast at £0.217m. Demand for this service has increased significantly over the last few years, with this trend continuing throughout the current financial year.

Income as a whole is under the budgeted income target by £0.627m with a projected under achieved target at the end of the financial year being £0.668m. The main areas making up the under achievement of targeted income are Community Meals, Telehealthcare, Transport, Positive Behaviour Service and the Day Services Trading areas.

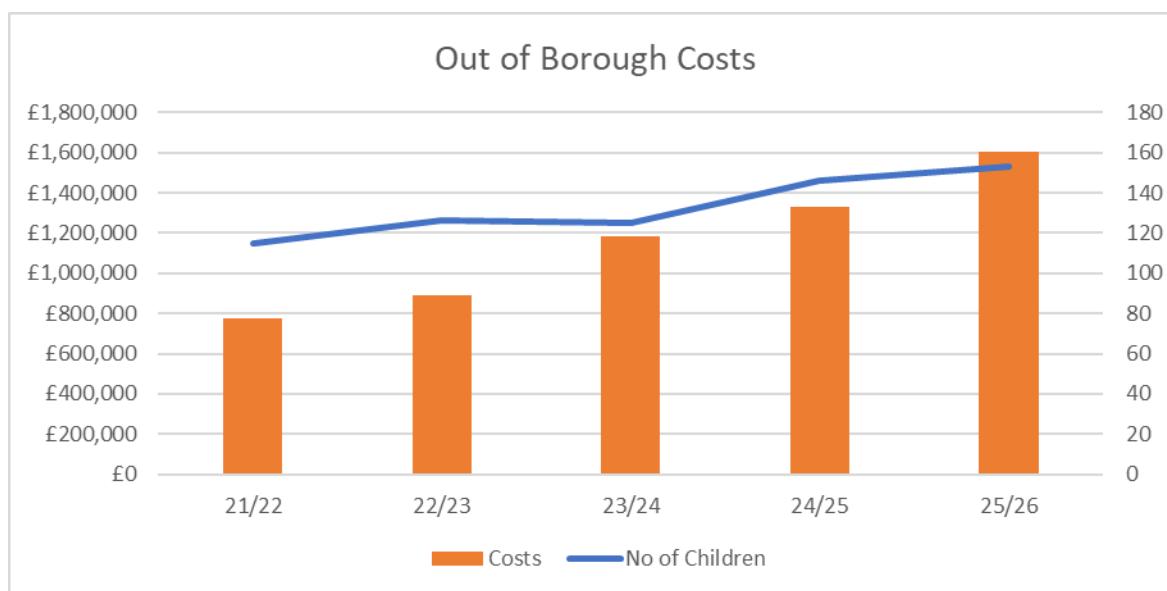
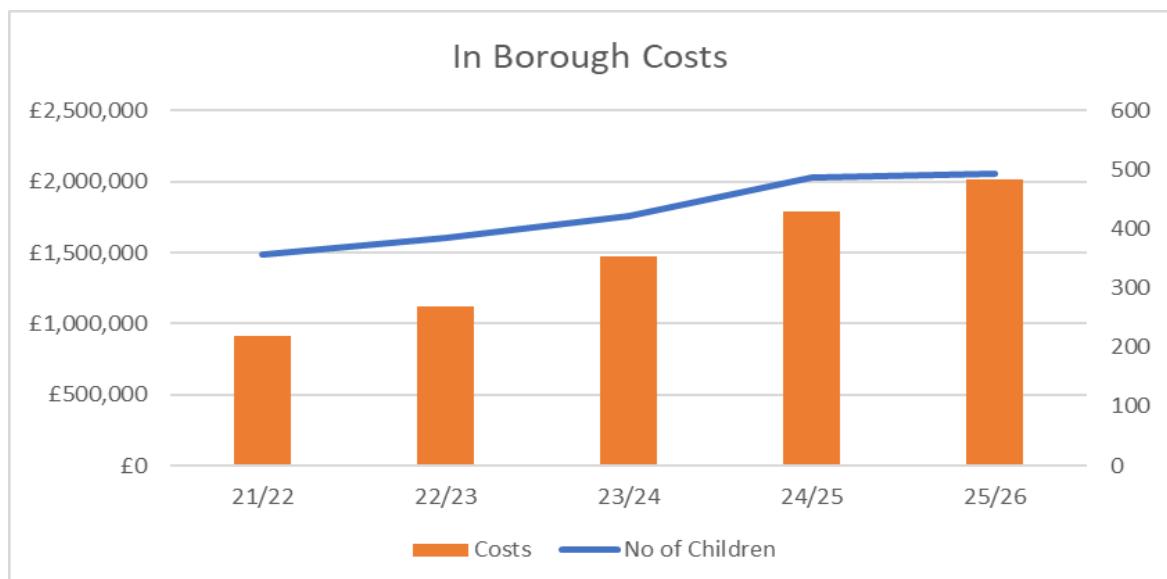
(iii) Education, Inclusion and Provision

Net departmental expenditure is £0.593m over budget at the end of November, based on available information. The forecast outturn for 2025/26 is currently an overspend against budget of £1.034m. The main variances are school transport, Inter Authority Income and schools SLA income.

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 current records show 647 service users, the majority of which attend schools within the Borough. The Out of Borough overspend has decreased compared to the previous year's overspend of £0.799m due to £0.712m added to the budget in 2025/26 for growth. The demand for the School Transport service has increased by roughly 7% since the last report, for both in and out of borough transport, although average cost per user has reduced by 6%. The graphs below show the number of SEN children using this service.

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



(iv) Planning and Transportation

As of 30th November 2025 it is forecast net spend will be £1.390m under the approved 2025/26 budget. This is a significant increase of the underspend of £0.364m forecasted at the end of September 2025. This is largely due to revised forecasts around staffing and income.

There are a large number of vacancies across the department that have not yet been filled. The Highways restructure has been taken out of the projections from the last report to now, as it is unlikely that it will be in place before March 26. This has resulted in a forecast staffing underspend of £0.487m

Overall, it is forecast income for the department will be £1.050m over the budgeted income target.

Planning income is an ever-moving area and unlike earlier reports it is now expected to be over its income target. Following on from the 2024/25 financial year there is a downturn in the number of applications being received so there is some reliance on receiving planning applications from housing developers. This forecast is based on the income that has been received so far, this financial year and what is likely to be achieved going forward. Building control income is projected to not achieve its income target as in previous years.

Fees and charges income is projected to overachieve its income target, but this is constantly in flux as it is fully dependent on the amount of permit applications etc that is received. It is anticipated that the high level of permit income that was seen in previous years will eventually drop off but for now has been consistent for the past 8 months, due to the large number of housing developers requiring permission to install utilities. There are a number of reasons for the current over achievement of permit income, including:

- The number of permits being received has been higher than usual due to several companies carrying out fibre roll outs and upgrades. This seems to be coming to an end and the number of permits relating to fibre are most likely to severely decrease for the remainder of the year.
- As a result of the increased amount of works, this also increases potential for FPNs, S74 charges and defect charges to be issued against permits. As the number of works decreases, so will the associated charges.
- There is higher than usual income associated to traffic management due to the amount of works taking place since April.
- There are more inspections now than in previous years, which has increased income.

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 3.19 As at 31 March 2025 the Council had a deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve of £14.469m. This is as an impact of the increasing demand and costs of High Needs.
- 3.20 The DSG deficit currently has no impact on the Council's General Fund as Government have in place an override which allows the Council to carry the deficit on its balance sheet. The override is due to end at 31 March 2028 at which point the accrued DSG deficit will have to be funded from Council resources. This is a significant pressure for a large number of local authorities with Government due to report on plans to mitigate the impact at 31 March 2028 and future funding of High Need demands.
- 3.21 Forecast 2025/26 costs for all anticipated demands on High Needs funding are estimated to be £42.508m, which is a substantial amount in excess of the budgeted High Needs allocation of £29.760m. After applying a 2%

across-the-board increase to High Needs funding rates, the Council began the financial year anticipating a DSG shortfall of £9.4m, the first 8 months of 2025-26 have seen that increase by £3.35m.

- 3.22 The projected overspend is in the main due to significant expansions in numbers and specifications of resource bases, increasing numbers and costs of high-cost specialist placements in or out of Borough, and increases in numbers and value of EHCP (Education & Health Care Plan) assessments.
- 3.23 There is a cost to the General Fund in managing the DSG deficit, this relates to the cashflow impact of a deficit position. The deficit position results in more borrowing costs for the Council which can not be allocated against DSG and therefore are coded against the General Fund. Interest costs in the current year are estimated at £0.891m
- 3.24 Appendix 3 provides detail on the High Needs 2025/26 forecast outturn position

Collection Fund

- 3.25 The council tax collection rate through to the end of November 2025 is 71.34% which is 0.09% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.

Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, and the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts. £1.992m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

- 3.26 Business rate collection through to the end of November 2025 is 75.01% which is 1.02% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.
£0.945m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

Review of Reserves

- 3.27 As at 30 November 2025 the Council's General Reserve is unchanged from the previous period at £5.149m, which represents 2.81% of the Council's 2025/26 net budget. This level of General Reserve is considered to be insufficient and provides little to cover unforeseen costs. Within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, growth to reserves will be included at a rate of £2m per year.
- 3.28 There is a regular review of earmarked reserves undertaken to determine whether they can be released in part or in full to assist with funding the Council's current financial challenges, recognising that this only provides one-year funding solutions.

Reserves Summary

- 3.29 A summary breakdown of the Council's reserves is presented in the table below, showing the balance of reserves as at 30 November 2025.

Summary of General and Earmarked Reserves	
Reserve	Reserve Value £m
Corporate:	
General Fund	5.149
Capital Reserve	0.398
Insurance Reserve	0.849
Specific Projects:	
Adult Social Care	0.711
Fleet Replacement	0.454
Highways Feasibility Costs	0.102
Local Development Framework	0.544
Community & Environment	0.542
Mersey Valley Golf Club	0.480
Mersey Gateway	33.542
CCLA Property Fund	0.263
Various Other	0.159
Grants:	
Building Schools for the Future	6.529
Public Health	1.147
Supporting Families Performance Payments	0.204
Children's & Education	1.257
Domestic Abuse	0.915
Enterprise & Employment	0.777
Food Waste Collection	0.237
Mersey Gateway Environmental Trust	0.492
Various Other	0.154
Total Earmarked Reserves	54.903

- 3.30 The above table shows the diminishing level of reserves available to assist with funding any future budget overspends and balancing future budgets. Only the £5.149m of the General Fund could now be used for these purposes, as all remaining reserves are committed for specific purposes.

Capital Spending

- 3.31 Council approved the 2025/26 Capital Programme on 5 March 2025. Since then the capital programme has been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes have developed. Appendix 5 brings all the separate elements together and report on the

Council's total planned capital programme expenditure. The schemes which have been revised within the programme are as follows:

- i. Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet
 - ii. Astmoor Masterplan
 - iii. Sci-tech Daresbury – CPO
 - iv. Runcorn Town Centre Management
 - v. Widnes Town Centre Framework
 - vi. East Runcorn Connectivity
 - vii. Mersey Gateway Crossings Board
- 3.32 Capital spending at 30 November 2025 totalled £28.258m, which represents 53% of the total Capital Programme of £53.064m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).
- 3.33 Capital receipts available to fund the programme are expected to be fully utilised by the end of the financial year. If planned use of receipts is to allocation there is risk to £0.375 of these costs falling on the General Fund position. Provision has been included within Corporate and Democracy to cover the event of this happening.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 As at 30 November 2025, net revenue spend is forecast to be £1.281m over the budget to date despite significant levels of growth being included within the budget.
- 4.2 Urgent corrective should be taken as soon as possible across all Council services to identify spend reductions and ensure that agreed savings are fully implemented in a timely manner.
- 4.3 Departments should ensure that all spending continues to be limited to what is absolutely essential throughout the remainder of the year, to ensure that the forecast outturn overspend is minimised as far as possible and future spending is brought in line with budget.

5.0 POLICY 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. The Council has internal controls and processes in place to ensure that spending remains in line with budget as far as possible.
- 7.2 A budget risk register of significant financial risks has been prepared and is included at Appendix 6.

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 30 November 2025

APPENDIX 1

Directorate / Department	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	November 2025 Forecast Outturn (o'spend) £'000
Adult Social Care	24,559	16,097	16,706	(609)	(768)
Care Homes`	8,077	5,664	5,748	(84)	(385)
Community Care	28,404	18,203	18,614	(411)	(683)
Complex Care Pool	13,249	3,667	3,128	539	303
Adults Directorate	74,289	43,631	44,196	(565)	(1,533)
Finance	5,662	4,318	3,984	334	432
Legal & Democratic Services	323	150	10	140	102
ICT & Support Services	269	170	125	45	68
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	1,157	577	616	(39)	(108)
Chief Executives Directorate	7,411	5,215	4,735	480	494
Children & Families	55,584	31,144	31,799	(655)	(209)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	12,142	7,978	8,571	(593)	(1,034)
Children's Directorate	67,726	39,122	40,370	(1,248)	(1,243)
Community & Greenspace	23,899	14,934	14,879	55	88
Economy, Enterprise & Property	2,523	1,758	1,726	32	127
Planning & Transportation	9,329	4,325	3,397	928	1,390
Environment & Regeneration Directorate	35,751	21,017	20,002	1,015	1,605
Corporate & Democracy	-4,025	-763	-774	11	(635)
Public Health Directorate	1,900	-1,779	-1,792	13	31
Total Operational Net Spend	183,052	106,443	106,737	(294)	(1,281)

Adult Social Care

APPENDIX 2

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	18,815	12,544	11,645	899	1,052
Agency- Covering Vacancies	0	0	1,180	(1,180)	(1,441)
Premises	498	353	327	26	67
Supplies & Services	698	628	768	(140)	(199)
Aids & Adaptations	37	24	28	(4)	2
Transport	341	227	239	(12)	(22)
Food & Drink Provisions	228	152	94	58	128
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,408	939	737	202	301
Emergency Duty Team	157	78	70	8	(20)
Transfer To Reserves	290	13	13	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,043	619	606	13	16
Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes					
Homelessness Prevention	548	397	275	122	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	167	111	106	5	0
Trailblazer	75	50	38	12	0
Total Expenditure	24,305	16,135	16,126	9	(116)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,044	-696	-447	(249)	(314)
Sales & Rents Income	-538	-407	-351	(56)	(53)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,203	-1,240	-937	(303)	(301)
Capital Salaries	-699	-640	-640	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-783	-746	-727	(19)	0
Total Income	-5,267	-3,729	-3,102	(627)	(668)
Net Operational Expenditure	19,038	12,406	13,024	(618)	(784)
Recharges					
Premises Support	789	526	526	0	0
Transport	792	528	519	9	16
Central Support	4,039	2,693	2,693	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-112	-56	-56	0	0
Net Total Recharges	5,521	3,691	3,682	9	16
Net Departmental Expenditure	24,559	16,097	16,706	(609)	(768)

Care Homes

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Madeline Mckenna					
Employees	783	521	464	57	85
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	69	(69)	(92)
Premises	90	51	49	2	9
Supplies & Services	25	14	16	(2)	1
Food Provision	51	29	36	(7)	(3)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-127	-79	-73	(6)	(11)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-34	-21	-21	0	0
Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure	788	515	540	(25)	(11)
Millbrow					
Employees	2,172	1,455	836	619	959
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	665	(665)	(1,177)
Premises	117	72	95	(23)	(33)
Supplies & Services	72	39	36	3	14
Food Provision	81	47	53	(6)	1
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-13	-4	0	(4)	(21)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-635	-375	-421	46	70
Total Millbrow Expenditure	1,794	1,234	1,264	(30)	(187)
St Luke's					
Employees	4,096	2,757	1,609	1,148	1,732
Agency - covering vacancies	62	62	1,101	(1,039)	(1,742)
Premises	156	94	127	(33)	(50)
Supplies & Services	68	39	53	(14)	(15)
Food Provision	128	64	84	(20)	(34)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-153	-82	-21	(61)	(24)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-1,497	-905	-895	(10)	(18)
Total St Luke's Expenditure	2,860	2,029	2,058	(29)	(151)
St Patrick's					
Employees	2,212	1,474	884	590	865
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	617	(617)	(918)
Premises	144	88	89	(1)	2
Supplies & Services	67	41	45	(4)	0
Food Provision	127	83	57	26	12
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-99	-61	-5	(56)	(93)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-866	-439	-409	(30)	(40)
Total St Patrick's Expenditure	1,585	1,186	1,278	(92)	(172)
Care Homes Divison Management					
Employees	322	215	123	92	136
Care Home Divison Management	322	215	123	92	136
Net Operational Expenditure	7,349	5,179	5,263	(84)	(385)
Recharges					
Premises Support	65	43	43	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	663	442	442	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	728	485	485	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,077	5,664	5,748	(84)	(385)

Community Care

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Residential & Nursing	21,977	12,809	12,885	(76)	(169)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	16,703	10,487	10,792	(305)	(488)
Direct Payments	15,665	10,528	10,608	(80)	(115)
Day Care	712	438	406	32	52
Total Expenditure	55,057	34,262	34,691	(429)	(720)
Income					
Residential & Nursing Income	-13,081	-7,610	-7,620	10	14
Community Care Income	-3,115	-1,747	-1,659	(88)	(140)
Direct Payments Income	-1,034	-540	-636	96	163
Income from other CCGs	-471	-230	-230	0	0
Market sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-1,864	-1,864	0	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-6,102	-4,068	-4,068	0	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-54	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-26,653	-16,059	-16,077	18	37
Net Operational Expenditure	28,404	18,203	18,614	(411)	(683)

Complex Care Pool

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Intermediate Care Services	6,425	3,736	3,461	275	414
Oakmeadow	2,040	1,315	1,284	31	46
Community Home Care First	1,838	610	198	412	617
Joint Equipment Store	880	367	367	0	0
Contracts & SLA's	3,330	-7	-7	0	0
Inglenook	137	80	62	18	27
HICafs	3,729	1,578	1,383	195	292
Carers Breaks	445	240	240	0	0
Carers centre	365	-15	-15	0	0
Residential Care	7,236	4,524	4,524	0	0
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,336	2,890	2,890	0	0
Pathway 3/Discharge Access	426	286	286	0	0
HBC Contracts	72	65	65	0	0
Healthy at Home	28	-28	-28	0	0
Capacity	30	21	13	8	12
Total Expenditure	31,317	15,662	14,723	939	1,408
Income					
BCF	-15,032	-10,022	-10,022	0	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-3,034	-1,973	-1,973	0	0
Oakmeadow Income	-2	0	0	0	(1)
Total Income	-18,068	-11,995	-11,995	0	(1)
ICB Contribution Share of Surplus	0	0	0	0	(704)
HBC Transfer to Community Care Budget	0	0	400	(400)	(400)
Net Operational Expenditure	13,249	3,667	3,128	539	303

Finance Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	7,461	4,935	4,764	171	257
Insurances	1,048	812	636	176	264
Supplies & Services	1,127	577	648	(71)	(107)
Rent Allowances	31,500	17,330	17,330	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,902	1,116	1,069	47	71
LCR Levy	1,902	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	223	0	0	0	(65)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	57	16	41	61
Discretionary Social Fund	106	68	1	67	101
Discretionary Housing Payments	279	145	145	0	0
Household Support Fund Expenditure	1,207	1,207	1,207	0	0
Total Expenditure	46,825	26,247	25,816	431	582
Income					
Fees & Charges	-361	-281	-316	35	53
Burdens Grant	-58	-55	-49	(6)	(9)
Dedicated Schools Grant	-150	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-670	-528	-528	0	0
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	1
Schools SLAs	-319	-309	-308	(1)	(1)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,902	0	0	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-300	-205	-166	(39)	(58)
Rent Allowances	-30,700	-16,500	-16,219	(281)	(421)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-60	-27	(33)	(50)
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-279	-93	-93	0	0
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-453	-302	-302	0	0
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	-7	-22	15	22
Universal Credits	-5	-3	-9	6	4
Household Support Fund Grant	-1,207	-360	-360	0	0
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-89	-44	-44	0	0
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-187	-180	-387	207	309
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-13	-13	0	0
Total Income	-36,934	-18,940	-18,843	(97)	(150)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,891	7,307	6,973	334	432
Recharges					
Premises Support	493	308	308	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,092	1,246	1,246	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,814	-4,543	-4,543	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-4,229	-2,989	-2,989	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	5,662	4,318	3,984	334	432

Legal Services

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	2,314	1,525	1,170	355	532
Agency Related Expenditure	79	79	202	(123)	(246)
Supplies & Services	181	151	136	15	32
Civic Catering & Functions	21	14	11	3	5
Legal Expenses	418	105	177	(72)	(144)
Transport Related Expenditure	8	3	3	0	0
Other Expenditure	1	1	2	(1)	(2)
Total Expenditure	3,022	1,878	1,701	177	177
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-75	-39	-21	(18)	(35)
School SLA's	-100	-88	-77	(11)	(23)
Licence Income	-386	-177	-169	(8)	(17)
Total Income	-561	-304	-267	(37)	(75)
Net Operational Expenditure	2,461	1,574	1,434	140	102
Recharges					
Premises Support	62	42	42	0	0
Transport Recharges	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	275	184	184	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-2,475	-1,650	-1,650	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,138	-1,424	-1,424	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	323	150	10	140	102

ICT & Support Services Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,899	3,873	3,736	137	205
Supplies & Services	1,063	807	736	71	107
Capital Finance	496	287	249	38	57
Computer Repairs & Software	1,724	1,966	1,987	(21)	(30)
Communication Costs	138	84	104	(20)	(31)
Premises	139	87	83	4	10
Transport	3	2	1	1	1
Other	4	1	4	(3)	(5)
Total Expenditure	9,466	7,107	6,900	207	314
Income					
Fees & Charges	-849	-255	-283	28	42
Schools SLA Income	-659	-561	-364	(197)	(295)
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-7	7	7
Total Income	-1,508	-816	-654	(162)	(246)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,958	6,291	6,246	45	68
Recharges					
Premises Support	373	249	249	0	0
Transport	22	15	15	0	0
Central Support	1,391	928	928	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-10,969	-7,313	-7,313	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-7,689	-6,121	-6,121	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	269	170	125	45	68

Chief Executives Delivery Unit

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,569	2,339	2,313	26	40
Employees Training	99	67	60	7	11
Apprenticeship Levy	330	176	215	(39)	(59)
Supplies & Services	412	341	384	(43)	(65)
Agency	3	3	3	0	0
Total Expenditure	4,413	2,926	2,975	-49	-73
Income					
Fees & Charges	-241	-176	-206	30	46
Schools SLA Income	-580	-550	-495	(55)	(81)
Total Income	-821	-726	-701	(25)	(35)
Net Operational Expenditure	3,592	2,200	2,274	(74)	(108)
Recharges					
Premises Support	157	105	105	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,008	672	672	0	0
Asset Rental Support	53	35	0	35	0
Recharge Income	-3,653	-2,435	-2,435	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,435	-1,623	-1,658	35	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,157	577	616	(39)	(108)

Children & Families

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	20,973	13,328	13,192	136	96
Other Premises	392	222	214	8	11
Supplies & Services	1,729	1,210	1,631	(421)	(522)
Transport	367	211	161	50	76
Direct Payments	1,220	803	708	95	141
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	232	119	119	0	0
Residential Care	27,751	15,759	15,933	(174)	513
Out of Borough Adoption	97	49	5	44	92
Out of Borough Fostering	5,605	3,047	3,772	(725)	(1,114)
In House Adoption	557	177	161	16	23
Special Guardianship Order	2,604	1,615	1,535	80	119
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,766	1,706	1,341	365	548
Lavender House Contract Costs	279	163	160	3	4
Home Support & Respite	496	385	316	69	103
Care Leavers	434	257	248	9	15
Family Support	81	44	15	29	41
Contracted services	3	2	2	0	0
Emergency Duty	184	33	33	0	0
Youth Offending Services	461	32	127	(95)	(143)
Total Expenditure	66,231	39,162	39,673	(511)	3
Income					
Fees & Charges	-49	-36	-27	(9)	(14)
Sales Income	-1	-1	-1	0	0
Rents	-82	-50	-50	0	0
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-512	-566	-423	(143)	(212)
Transfer from reserve	-16	8	-1	9	14
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-13,838	-9,960	-9,960	0	0
Total Income	-14,548	-10,605	-10,462	(143)	(212)
Net Operational Expenditure	51,683	28,557	29,211	(654)	(209)
Recharges					
Premises Support	736	490	490	0	0
Transport	10	6	7	(1)	0
Central Support Recharges	3,331	2,221	2,221	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-176	-130	-130	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,901	2,587	2,588	(1)	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	55,584	31,144	31,799	(655)	(209)

Education, Inclusion & Provision

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	8,796	5,550	5,321	229	310
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	131	(131)	(204)
Agency - in addition to establishment	66	72	85	(13)	6
Premises	15	9	1	8	2
Supplies & Services	3,281	1,799	1,819	(21)	(34)
Independent School Fees	10,155	7,805	7,805	0	0
Schools Contingency	430	168	168	0	0
Transport	43	27	42	(15)	(26)
Schools Transport	2,772	1,293	1,760	(466)	(777)
Early Years Payments including Pupil Premium	15,805	10,217	10,217	0	0
Commissioned Services	2,193	1,251	1,255	(4)	(7)
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,400	1,282	1,282	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	115	-21	19	(40)	(67)
Capital Finance	4,599	2,844	2,847	(2)	(4)
Total Expenditure	49,670	32,295	32,752	(456)	(800)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-338	-325	-349	24	41
Government Grant Income	-6,896	-4,193	-4,189	(4)	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-30,134	-20,088	-20,088	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-446	-366	-243	(124)	(206)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,767	-1,064	-1,061	(3)	(5)
Schools SLA Income	-538	-369	-334	(35)	(59)
Transfer From Reserves	-551	-134	-142	8	0
Total Income	-40,670	-26,540	-26,407	(133)	(229)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,000	5,756	6,345	(589)	(1,029)
Recharges					
Premises Support	405	270	270	0	0
Transport Support	773	654	658	(3)	(5)
Central Support	1,947	1,298	1,298	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,142	2,222	2,226	(3)	(5)
Net Departmental Expenditure	12,142	7,978	8,571	(593)	(1,034)

Community & Greenspaces

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	15,639	10,403	9,996	407	611
Agency - Covering vacancies	20	16	16	0	0
Agency - In addition to establishment	16	16	201	(185)	(272)
Premises	3,304	1,973	1,995	(22)	(32)
Supplies & Services	3,659	2,416	2,597	(181)	(272)
Transport	117	72	91	(19)	(28)
Extended Producer Responsibility	500	30	30	0	0
Other Agency Costs	454	287	275	12	17
Other Expenditure	187	102	99	3	4
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	2,867	2,906	(39)	(57)
Transfers to Reserves	1,091	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	32,108	18,182	18,206	(24)	(29)
Income					
Sales Income	-1,359	-931	-916	(15)	(23)
Fees & Charges Income	-6,300	-4,678	-4,806	128	192
Rental Income	-1,118	-632	-573	(59)	(88)
Government Grant Income	-5,210	-1,458	-1,458	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-871	-493	-493	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-216	-98	-199	101	152
Capital Salaries	-236	-76	-67	(9)	(14)
Transfers From Reserves	-619	-4	-4	0	0
Total Income	-15,952	-8,370	-8,516	146	219
Net Operational Expenditure	16,156	9,812	9,690	122	190
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,657	1,105	1,105	0	0
Transport Support	2,433	1,714	1,781	(67)	(102)
Central Support	4,297	2,865	2,865	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-843	-562	-562	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,743	5,122	5,189	(67)	(102)
Net Departmental Expenditure	23,899	14,934	14,879	55	88

Economy, Enterprise & Property

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,915	3,314	3,134	180	250
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	206	(206)	(270)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,700	1,262	1,262	0	0
Premises	174	136	137	(1)	(2)
Energy & Water Costs	1,075	560	506	54	80
NNDR	647	647	676	(29)	(29)
Rents	157	118	117	1	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	3	3	8	(5)	0
Security	508	257	256	1	3
Supplies & Services	578	317	317	0	(1)
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,040	485	485	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	72	35	35	0	0
Capital Finance	22	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	9,891	7,134	7,139	(5)	32
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-398	-272	-308	36	89
Rent - Commercial Properties	-929	-572	-571	(1)	4
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-26	-25	(1)	(1)
Government Grant	-1,118	-1,119	-1,119	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-203	-172	-172	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-55	-55	-58	3	3
Recharges to Capital	-367	-158	-158	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-564	-535	-535	0	0
Total Income	-3,672	-2,909	-2,946	37	95
Net Operational Expenditure	6,219	4,225	4,193	32	127
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,738	1,826	1,826	0	0
Transport	26	17	17	0	0
Central Support	2,878	1,918	1,918	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-9,342	-6,228	-6,228	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,696	-2,467	-2,467	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,523	1,758	1,726	32	127

Planning & Transportation Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,957	3,961	3,570	391	587
Efficiency Savings	-100	-66	0	(66)	(100)
Premises	188	122	100	22	34
Hired & Contracted Services	415	98	103	(5)	(8)
Supplies & Services	142	203	350	(147)	(220)
Street Lighting	1,643	479	527	(48)	(72)
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,803	781	1,142	(361)	(542)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Works	812	574	153	421	632
Fleet Transport	1,467	921	927	(6)	(10)
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	14	9	4	5	8
Bus Support	506	587	587	0	0
Agency Related Expenditure	8	6	141	(135)	(202)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	31	0	0
NRA Levy	75	74	74	0	1
LCR Levy	1,553	1,164	1,164	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	359	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	14,873	8,944	8,873	71	108
Income					
Sales & Rents Income	-97	-72	-64	(8)	(12)
Planning Fees	-798	-534	-750	216	324
Building Control Fees	-251	-167	-131	(36)	(55)
Other Fees & Charges	-971	-634	-1,166	532	798
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-174	-160	-160	0	0
Government Grant Income	-57	-57	-57	0	0
Halton Hopper Income	-15	-10	-7	(3)	(5)
Recharge to Capital	-119	0	0	0	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,553	-1,164	-1,164	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-132	-157	-157	0	0
Total Income	-4,167	-2,955	-3,656	701	1,050
Net Operational Expenditure	10,706	5,989	5,217	772	1,158
Recharges					
Premises Recharges	739	493	493	0	0
Transport Recharges	808	517	517	0	(2)
Central Recharges	2,505	1,672	1,672	0	0
Asset Charges	918	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,347	-4,346	-4,502	156	234
Net Total Recharges	-1,377	-1,664	-1,820	156	232
Net Departmental Expenditure	9,329	4,325	3,397	928	1,390

Corporate & Democracy

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	432	275	316	(41)	(40)
Contracted Services	12	6	0	6	0
Supplies & Services	102	89	-79	168	42
Premises Expenditure	24	18	17	1	0
Transport Costs	1	0	40	(40)	0
Members Allowances	994	663	703	(40)	0
Contingency	674	447	0	447	670
Contribution to Reserves	300	300	263	37	(647)
Debt Management Expenses	20	13	63	(50)	(13)
Precepts & Levies	244	244	244	0	0
Interest Payable - Treasury Management	2,303	1,538	1,298	240	360
Interest Payable - Other	215	143	143	0	0
Capital Financing (Minimum Revenue Provision)	3,004	3,004	2,966	38	38
Cost of Exceptional Financial Support					
Interest Payable	1,225	817	731	86	129
Capital Financing (Minimum Revenue Provision)	500	500	500	0	0
Cost of Dedicated School Grant Deficit					
Interest Payable	725	483	594	(111)	(166)
Efficiency Savings:					
Purchase of Additional Leave	-100	-67	-114	47	165
Voluntary Severance Scheme	-200	-133	0	(133)	(200)
Apprenticeship First Model	-200	-133	-17	(116)	(174)
Agency Staff Reduction	-1,700	-1,133	0	(1,133)	(1,700)
Accelerate the Lease or Sale of Surplus Land	-100	-67	0	(67)	(100)
Review of Debt Management	-100	-67	0	(67)	(100)
Review Existing Contracts	-200	-134	0	(134)	(200)
Total Expenditure	8,175	6,806	7,668	(862)	(1,936)
Income					
Interest Receivable - Treasury Management	-3,045	-2,030	-2,914	884	1,270
Interest Receivable - Other	-19	-13	-13	0	57
Other Fees & Charges	-146	-91	-80	(11)	(26)
Grants & Reimbursements	-334	-223	-223	0	0
Government Grant Income	-6,272	-4,181	-4,181	0	0
Total Income	-9,816	-6,538	-7,411	873	1,301
Net Operational Expenditure	-1,641	268	257	11	(635)
Recharges					
Premises Support	22	15	15	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	898	632	632	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,304	-1,678	-1,678	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,384	-1,031	-1,031	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-4,025	-763	-774	11	(635)

Public Health

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,631	3,410	3,318	92	109
Other Premises	6	4	0	4	6
Supplies & Services	439	168	228	(60)	(90)
Contracts	6,918	3,910	4,075	(165)	0
SLA's	372	115	77	38	0
Transport	4	2	2	0	1
Transfer to Reserves	660	0	0	0	(150)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	20	2	2	0	0
Other Agency	24	24	24	0	0
Total Expenditure	14,074	7,635	7,726	(91)	(124)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-122	-57	-86	29	43
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-647	-737	-795	58	88
Transfer from Reserves	-428	-348	-357	9	13
Government Grant Income	-12,478	-9,285	-9,294	9	13
Total Income	-13,675	-10,427	-10,532	105	157
Net Operational Expenditure	399	-2,792	-2,806	14	33
Recharges					
Premises Support	209	139	139	0	0
Transport Support	24	16	17	(1)	(2)
Central Support	1,937	1,304	1,304	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-669	-446	-446	0	0
Net Total Recharges	1,501	1,013	1,014	(1)	(2)
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,900	-1,779	-1,792	13	31

High Needs 2025/26 Forecast Spend Position

Appendix 3

	Annual Budget £'000	Forecast Spend £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure			
High Needs Place Funding - Mainstream Units	1,432	2,047	(615)
High Needs Place Funding - Special Schools	4,946	7,365	(2,419)
High Needs Place Funding - PRU	996	1,089	(93)
Top-Up Funding - Maintained Mainstream Schools	2,728	4,512	(1,784)
Top-Up Funding - Maintained Special Schools	2,151	2,845	(694)
Top-Up Funding - Maintained PRU	1,743	1,739	4
Top-Up Funding - Maintained Academies, Free Schools and Colleges	2,029	3,383	(1,354)
Top-Up Funding - Academies Special	990	3,336	(2,346)
Top-Up Funding - Non-Maintained and Independent Providers	7,272	11,087	(3,815)
Top-Up Funding - Post 16 FE	2,796	2,167	629
SEN Support Services	2,280	2,234	46
Special Free School	331	579	(248)
Exclusions	0	59	(59)
Support for Inclusion	45	45	0
Therapies and Other Health Related Services	20	20	0
Total Expenditure	29,759	42,507	(12,748)

Progress Against Agreed Savings

APPENDIX 4

Adult Social Care

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Housing Solutions	474	Remodel the current service based on good practice evidence from other areas.	125	0	U	Currently Under Review
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.	100	0	✓	Achieved
Community Wardens/Telecare Service		Community Wardens/Telecare Service – a review will be undertaken of the various options available for the future delivery of these services, with support	0	280	X	Unlikely to be achieved – currently forecast overspend position. However, these services are currently being reviewed as part of the transformation programme.

		from the Transformation Delivery Unit.				
Care Management Community Care Budget		Community Care – continuation of the work being undertaken to review care provided through the Community Care budget, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.	0	1,000		Unlikely to be achieved to be achieved on a longer term basis. Interim measures in place to support the current year position includes use of surplus capital grants. While the current overspend is being reduced significantly, it is unlikely the required budget reduction will be achieved by year-end.
Various		Review of Service Delivery Options – reviews will be undertaken of the various service delivery options available for a number of areas including; Day Services, Halton Supported Housing Network, In-House Care Homes, Reablement Service and Oak Meadow.	0	375		Unlikely to be achieved by financial year-end.
Total ASC Directorate			225	1,655		

Finance

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Internal Audit	300	Restructure in light of potential retirements over the next two years within the Internal Audit Team.	50	0	X	It appears unlikely that the proposed £50k budget saving will be fully realised this year, if at all
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	0	X	Look to increase costs in 2026/27 but this is pending a Government consultation on council tax of which summons charges are being reviewed.
Debt Management		Debt Management – undertake a review of debt management policies and procedures, in order to implement a more robust approach to debt management and debt recovery, considering options such as seeking payment in advance wherever possible, to improve cashflow and reduce the risk of non-recovery.	0	100	U	Currently part of workstream being undertaken by the Transformation Programme.

Total Finance Department	90	100		
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Legal and Democratic Services

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Members		Deputy Mayor – cease provision of the Deputy Mayor's allowance, whilst retaining a nominated Deputy Mayor.	0	6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Achieved.
Total Legal and Democratic Services			0	6		

Children and Families Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
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.	22	0	x	With the implementation of the family hubs the review of windmill hill will no longer be viable. The centre is located in an area of deprivation and the role of the centre as a family hub is a priority in the children's social care review and supporting families at an earlier level, improving access to services for the most vulnerable and ensure a positive start for all children. These priorities fit with the council priorities
Children's Residential Care		Residential Placements – continuation of the work being undertaken to review residential placements, especially high cost placements, and identify opportunities to step-down placements or find alternatives, in	0	1,500	u	Whilst residential placement cost is currently forecast to be within budget, uncertainty continues on the saving being achieved given the risk of children entering into care during the remainder of the financial year.

	order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.					Residential placements were all reviewed in early 2024 with some reduction in costs established. As part of the longer term plan included in the sufficiency strategy, Halton has partnered with a not for profit organisation, Juno, who are awaiting registration from OFSTED - this approach is part of the LCR approach working with NFP organisations. In addition significant changes have been made to reduce the numbers of children coming into care. Mocking bird constellation is in place and evidenced support has resulted in appropriate transition so the need for residential is mitigated. A property has been identified for care leavers and further properties identified for additional semi-independent provisions. Juno will focus on their second home after July
Fostering	Independent Fostering Agencies and Out of Borough Fostering – continuation of the work being undertaken to review placements, to increase use of In-Borough foster carers wherever possible and thereby reduce costs, in	0	200	u	Recruitment campaign has been launched to attract in house foster carers so Council reliance on IFA's is reduced. Unfortunately there is a national shortage of foster carers and as a result the reliance on IFA's continues	

		order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.				
Legal Costs		Court Costs – implementation of measures in conjunction with Legal Services, to reduce the backlog and ongoing number of Children's cases going to court, thereby reducing the timescales involved and cost of court proceedings, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.	0	200	u	Progress has been made on reducing the cost of court with success in reducing the number of applications, the reduction in timeliness of proceedings, further work is currently underway to reduce the number of C2 applications to court. PLO process is proving effective for some families in diverting away from legal proceedings and safely maintaining children with parents, further exploration is taking place on the use of in house psychologists to undertake assessments in the court arena to further reduce court costs
Total Children & Families Department			22	1,900		

Education, Inclusion and Provision Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Home to School Transport		Home to School Transport – undertake consultation with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.	0	300	X	The consultation with stakeholders and partners has taken place. The results have been analysed and recommendations put to Executive Board for possible policy changes which will not be implemented until Autumn 2026
Total EIP Department			0	300		

Community and Greenspace Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
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.	12	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School meals service has ceased and is reflected in the 25/26 budget.
Green Waste		Green Waste – increase green waste charges from £43 to £50 per annum, to bring Halton onto	0	100	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Green waste charges have been increased to £50.

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
		a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.				
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26
Total Community & Greenspace Dept			12	270		

Economy, Enterprise and Property Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Asset Management		Accelerate the lease or sale of surplus land, non-operational buildings, surplus space within building, etc. to either generate lease rentals or capital receipts to help fund capital schemes and thereby reduce future capital financing costs.	0	100	U	It is not expected this saving will materialise in the current year.
Total EEP Dept			0	100		

Policy, Planning and Transportation Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
Highways		LED Advertising Screens – install LED advertising screens at appropriate locations within the Borough in order to generate advertising revenue. The estimated annual income is the Council's share of advertising revenue net of capital financing costs for the installations.	0	100	X	It is not anticipated that this income will be achieved this financial year as the LED screens are no closer to being installed.
Total PPT Dept			0	100		

Public Health Directorate Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
Environmental Health		Pest Control – increase charges for pest control on the basis of benchmarking data, to bring Halton onto a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.	0	45	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charges Increased
Total Public Health Directorate			0	45		

Corporate and Democracy

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
Chief Executives Delivery Unit		Purchase of Additional Leave – development of a voluntary scheme to enable staff to purchase additional annual leave.	0	100	✓	Scheme has been agreed and implemented. Prudent forecast of saving against the scheme is estimated to be in the region of £0.265m
Chief Executives Delivery Unit		Voluntary Severance Scheme – development of a policy whereby staff may be offered voluntary severance in appropriate circumstances, but without creating a significant pension strain liability.	0	200	✗	Scheme to be designed and approved. Uncertainty to timing and sign-up to the scheme. Unlikely to be in place for this financial year.
Chief Executives Delivery Unit		Apprenticeships - implement an “Apprentice First” policy, with all appropriate vacant posts assessed initially to determine whether they might be suitable as an apprenticeship. This will	0	200	U	Scheme being developed, uncertainty to take up of the scheme.

	build longer term resilience into the organisation's workforce and provide short term cost savings by drawing down funding from the apprenticeship levy. The scheme will be co-ordinated by the newly appointed Apprenticeship Officer, funded and supported by the Transformation Delivery Unit.				It is currently forecasts savings of £0.026m will be achieved by financial year-end.
Council Wide	Agency Staff Reduction – continuation of the work being co-ordinated by the Transformation Delivery Unit to reduce the reliance upon agency workers across the Council, in particular within Adults and Children's Social Care. Target net savings of £1.7m for 2025/26, £1.3m for 2026/27 and £1.1m for 2027/28.	0	1,700	x	<p>There is evidence of reduced agency usage within the Children's directorate but targets have been built into directorate budget which duplicate what is included here.</p> <p>Uncertainty with regard to reductions across Adult Social Care.</p> <p>Highly unlikely the £1.7m saving will be achieved in the current financial year.</p>
Council Wide	Debt Management – undertake a review of debt management policies and procedures, in order to implement a more robust approach to debt management and debt recovery, considering options	0	100	u	Review of debt management particularly with Adult Social Care has commenced.

		such as seeking payment in advance wherever possible, to improve cashflow and reduce the risk of non-recovery.				
Council Wide		Review all existing contracts across the Council to re-consider their requirements and performance on the basis of outputs achieved.	0	200	u	Currently part of workstream being undertaken by the Transformation Programme.
Total Corporate & Democracy			0	2,400		

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>
✓	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.
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.
x	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025

APPENDIX 5

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000
Childrens Directorate							
Capital Repairs	882.1	882.1	700	700	754.0	128.1	0.0
Asbestos Management	10.0	10.0	0.5	6	10.0	0.0	0.0
Schools Access Initiative	37.7	37.7	34	34	41.0	-3.3	0.0
Basic Need Projects	600.8	600.8	0	0	100.0	500.8	0.0
Small Capital Works	173.0	173.0	98	105	170.0	3.0	0.0
SEND capital allocation	1,871.2	1,871.2	202	675	1,275.0	596.2	45.0
SEND capital unallocated	1,775.5	1,775.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,775.5	0.0
SCA unallocated	129.3	129.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	129.3	0.0
Family Hubs & Start for Life	63.0	63.0	11.0	11.0	63	0.0	65.0
Childcare Expansion	314.8	314.8	18	18	314.8	0.0	0.0
AMP Data	25.0	25.0	23	24	25.0	0.0	0.0
Childrens Directorate Total	5,882.4	5,882.4	1,086.6	1,573.1	2,752.8	3,129.6	110.0

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Adults Directorate							
Grants - Disabled Facilities	2,200.0	2,000.0	999.0	1,400.0	2,000.0	0.0	700.0
Stair Lifts	400.0	650.0	355.0	450.0	650.0	0.0	700.0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	300.0	250.0	187.0	220.0	250.0	0.0	300.0
Madeline McKenna Residential Home	300.0	200.0	43.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Millbrow Care Home	200.0	200.0	54.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
St Lukes	50.0	200.0	115.0	150.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
St Patricks	200.0	200.0	63.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Care Home Refurbishment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Telehealthcare Digital Switchover	135.0	135.0	0.0	0.0	135.0	0.0	0.0
Oakmeadow and Peelhouse Network Improvements	40.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Lane Specialist Housing	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	0.0	0.0
Adults Directorate Total	4,075.0	4,125.0	2,066.0	2,770.0	4,125.0	0.0	1,700.0
Public Health							
New database for Public Protection Regulatory Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
Public Health Directorate Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000
Environment & Regeneration Directorate							
Stadium Minor Works	22.1	22.1	24.6	24.6	24.6	-2.5	30.0
Halton Leisure Centre	99.7	99.7	92.5	94.0	95.0	4.7	0.0
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	52.5	60.5	65.0	2.8	65.0
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	770.0	650.9	700.0	770.0	0.0	600.0
Runcorn Town Park	450.6	450.6	10.2	60.0	125.0	325.6	280.0
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,841.6	250.0	173.4	180.0	250.0	0.0	1,591.6
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	469.2	450.0	301.2	360.0	450.0	0.0	19.2
Cemetery Infrastructure work	469.1	469.1	10.5	207.0	410.0	59.1	683.0
Stadium Public Address System	810.0	346.0	34.9	286.0	346.0	0.0	379.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0
Replacement Cremator	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Stadium Steelwork Repairs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	600.0
Brindley Lighting	0.0	200.0	0.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Homeless Accommodation Refurbishment	0.0	52.0	49.3	51.0	52.0	0.0	948.0
CCTV Infrastructure Works	0.0	105.0	1.2	50.0	105.0	0.0	395.0
Equality Act Improvement Works	303.5	303.5	17.7	150.0	303.5	0.0	300.0
Foundary Lane Residential Area	3,520.9	3,520.9	1,229.3	1,850.0	3,520.9	0.0	0.0
Property Improvements	231.1	231.1	121.7	153.6	231.1	0.0	200.0
Town Deal	21,823.1	13,210.2	6,294.6	9,550.0	13,210.2	0.0	8,612.9
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	101.2	101.2	0.0	55.0	101.2	0.0	0.0
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	82.0	82.0	4.2	35.0	82.0	0.0	0.0

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000
Changing Places	17.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	17.0	0.0	0.0
Kingsway Centre Demolition	708.0	708.0	438.3	488.0	538.0	170.0	0.0
Port of Weston	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,200.0
Astmoor Masterplan	81.6	902.6	902.6	902.6	902.6	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury - CPO	3,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,000.0
Warm Homes Plan	0.0	587.6	0.0	0.0	587.6	0.0	587.6
Runcorn Town Centre Management	0.0	822.0	524.6	650.0	822.0	0.0	0.0
Widnes Town Centre Framework	0.0	200.0	53.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Bridge and Highway Maintenance	839.2	839.2	181.2	510.2	839.2	0.0	0.0
Runcorn Busway	90.0	90.0	35.9	63.0	90.0	0.0	0.0
ATF3 Murdishaw to Whitehouse	757.0	757.0	538.3	647.7	757.0	0.0	0.0
ATF4 - Widnes Town Centre Accessibility	114.5	114.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	114.5	0.0
A56 Reconstruction	943.7	943.7	95.0	519.4	943.7	0.0	0.0
LCWIP phase 2 Daresbury	3,862	100	30.9	57.7	84.5	15.5	0.0
Pot Hole Funding	968	968	243.8	605.9	968.0	0.4	0.0
CRSTS	4,405	4,405	2,709.9	3,557.5	4,405.0	0.0	0.0
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	1,025.1	1,025.1	0.0	100.0	200.0	825.1	1,025.1
Street Lighting - Upgrades	728.4	728.4	0.0	50.0	50.0	678.4	528.4
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	14,442.2	6,283.7	10,363.0	14,442.2	0.0	0.0
Risk Management	712.9	120.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	97.0	120.0
Widnes Loops	0.0	0.0	65.1	65.1	65.1	-65.1	0.0
Fleet Replacements	4,482.0	2,500.0	1,070.1	1,785.0	2,500.0	0.0	4,482.0
Early Land Acquisition Mersey Gateway	210.0	80.0	49.4	73.0	80.0	0.0	80.0
Mersey Gateway Crossings Board	60.0	-226.7	-226.7	-226.7	-226.7	0.0	60.0
Environment & Regeneration Directorate Total	62,333.3	50,900.2	22,086.8	34,300.9	48,674.7	2,225.5	26,826.7

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Chief Executives Directorate							
IT Rolling Programme	805.6	1,305.6	1,022.0	1,245.1	1,245.1	60.5	1,200.0
Halton Smart Microgrid	10,870.0	1,000.0	0.0	0.0	1,000.0	0.0	9,870.0
Transformation Programme	1,538.0	2,465.7	1,557.1	1,928.9	2,195.6	270.1	
Accelerated Growth	0.0	650.7	440.0	546.9	643.9	6.8	
Chief Executives Directorate Total	13,213.6	5,422.0	3,019.1	3,720.9	5,084.6	337.4	11,070.0
Grand Total	85,504.4	66,329.6	28,258.5	42,364.9	60,637.1	5,692.5	39,906.7

2025/26 Budget Risk Register as at 30 November 2025

Appendix 6

Risk No	Risk Identified	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk with Control Measures Implemented			Responsible Person	Timescale for Review	Progress Comments	Date Updated
						Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score				
1	Pay costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay award • Staff Turnover Saving Target • Agency, casuals and overtime • National Living Wage • Pension Costs 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget based upon individual staff members/vacancies • Budget monitoring • Contingency • Balances • Medium Term Forecast • Engage with Cheshire Pension Scheme and pension actuary • Market supplement paid in multiple service areas • Employer of Choice Initiative • Connect to Halton – Review of Scheme 	3	3	9	ED/SB/ Directors	Monthly	<p>2025/26 budget includes pay growth at forecast 2% pay award. Pay offer agreed at 3.2%, backdated pay actioned in August 2025. Actual cost of the pay award higher at £1.214m than £1m figure previously estimated.</p> <p>Agency costs and usage remain high although clear evidence of reduction in numbers.</p> <p>Market Supplements being paid across increasing</p>	30/11/25

										number of services. Connect to Halton scheme went live September 2024, agency and casual appointments to be covered by the scheme.		
2	Redundancy and Early Retirements	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits Tracking Process • Future savings to take into account cost of redundancy and early retirements. • Seek Government approval to use capital receipts to fund transformation costs. • Develop policy for voluntary severance scheme 	2	3	6	ED/SB	Quarterly	<p>Tracker created to monitor redundancy costs in current year.</p> <p>Look to capitalise redundancy costs where possible where evidence exists it creates a longer term saving.</p> <p>£0.200m saving included in 25/26 budget for savings from voluntary severance scheme. Scheme unlikely to go live in current financial year.</p>	30/11/25

3	Savings not achieved	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget monitoring • Contingency • Rigorous process in approving savings. • Review of savings at departmental and directorate level • Monthly budget monitoring • Medium Term Financial Forecast • RAG monitoring of savings included in bi-monthly monitoring reports. • Transformation saving targets reported monthly through Transformation Programme Board. 	4	3	12	RR/ED/SB/Directors	Monthly	<p>Savings for 2025/26 have been written into Directorate budgets.</p> <p>Budget savings monitored closely and if necessary offsetting savings sought.</p> <p>Transformation Programme Board meet on monthly basis to discuss progress against programme.</p>	30/11/25
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4	Price inflation	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prudent budget provision • Latest forecast information used eg. utilities • Budget monitoring • Contingency • Balances • CPI/RPI monitoring • MTFS 	3	3	9	ED/SB	Monthly	<p>CPI for November 2025 is 3.2% and RPI is 3.8%. Both running higher than inflation included in 2025.26 budget.</p> <p>Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast inflation is to remain above 3% for the remainder of 2025 and drop to 2.5% in 2026 and then hit the Government target of 2% in 2027.</p>	30/11/25
5	Review of LG Finance	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPs • SIGOMA / LG Futures • Liverpool City Region & Merseyside Treasurers Group • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Member of business rate retention pilot region 	4	4	9	ED/SB/NS/M W/MG	Weekly/ Monthly	<p>Business rate retention 100% scheme to continue over three year period 2026/27 to 2028/29.</p> <p>Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement issued 17 December 2025. Funding behind modelled levels</p>	30/11/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue with DCLG • Responding to reviews and consultations 					from Fair Funding consultation (Summer 2025) and LG Finance policy Statement (Nov 25). Government have redirected funding towards greater levels of funding for temporary accommodation needs.		
6	Treasury Management • Borrowing • Investment	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management Strategy • Link Asset Services advice 	1	3	3	ED/SB/MG	Daily / Quarterly	BoE base rate reduced to 3.75%. Impact of Exceptional Financial Support request to be	30/11/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management planning and monitoring • Attendance at Networking and Benchmarking Groups • Officer and Member Training 						assessed with regards to timing of future borrowing.	
7	Demand led budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in Care • Out of borough fostering • Community Care • High Needs 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget monitoring • Contingency • Balances • Review service demand • Directorate recovery groups • Monthly budget monitoring • Children Improvement Plan Investment Funding 	4	4	16	ED/SB/NS/MW	Monthly	<p>Numbers of children in care and with protection plans reviewed on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Community care costs and numbers on increase, reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>Investment in Children Services following OFSTED inspection to be monitored with regard to control and reduction of future costs.</p>	30/11/25

8	Mersey Gateway Costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs • Toll Income • Funding • Accounting treatment 	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring with Crossing Board • Capital reserve • Government Grant • Liquidity Fund 	2	1	2	ED/SB/MG	Quarterly	Arrangements in place to monitor spend and availability of liquidity fund.	30/11/25
9	Council Tax Collection	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council tax monitoring on monthly basis • Review of Collection Rate • Collection Fund Balance • Provision for bad debts • Review recovery procedures • Benchmarking 	3	2	6	ED/PG/SB/P D/BH/MG	Monthly	<p>Council tax collection rate through to the end of November 2025 is 71.34% which is 0.09% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, and the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts. £1.992m has so far been collected this</p>	30/11/25

										year in relation to previous years' debt.		
10	Business Rates Retention Scheme	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and monitoring of latest business rates income to baseline and estimate for year. Prudent allowance for losses in collection Prudent provision set aside for losses from valuation appeals Regular monitoring of annual yield and baseline / budget position Benchmarking Groups Review recovery procedures 	3	1	3	ED/SB/LB/MG	Monthly	<p>Business rate collection through to the end of November 2025 is 75.01% which is 1.02% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>£0.945m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.</p>	30/11/25
11	Income recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty to economy following cost of living and high inflation 	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate charging policy Budget monitoring Contingency Balances 	3	1	3	ED/MM/SB	Monthly	<p>Income shortfalls identified and cause of increased concern in certain areas are being closely monitored.</p>	30/11/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income benchmarking 					Additional posts created within Adult Social Care Directorate, responsible for improving the overall collection of social care debt.		
12	Capital Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs Funding Key Major Projects Clawback of Grant Availability and timing of capital receipts Cashflow Contractors 	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Management Regular monitoring Detailed financial analysis of new schemes to ensure they are affordable Targets monitored to minimise clawback of grant. Contractor due diligence Dialogue with Government departments. 	3	2	6	Project Managers/ED /SB/LH	Quarterly	<p>Capital receipts have been over committed therefore new capital schemes need to bring own funding.</p>	30/11/25
13	Academy Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of transfer upon Council budget 	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early identification of school decisions DfE Regulations 	1	3	3	ED/SB/NS	Monthly	<p>Consideration given in MTFS for loss of funding.</p>	30/11/25

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of income to Council Services 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prudent consideration of financial transactions to facilitate transfer Services continue to be offered to academies Transfer Protocol 						
14	Reserves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diminishing reserves, used to balance budget, fund overspend positions. 	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored on a bi-monthly basis, reported to Management Team and Exec Board Benchmarking Financial Forecast Programme to replenish reserves. 	3	3	9	ED/SB	Quarterly	<p>Monitored and reported on a regular basis. Council reserves at historic low levels.</p> <p>Reserves will need to be replenished within future budgets</p>
15	Budget Balancing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has struggled to achieve a balanced budget position for a number of years. Forecast for current year is an overspend position of £19m. Reserves insufficient to balance current year budget. 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current year budgets monitored on a regular basis. Forward forecasting through to March 2029 reported on a prudent basis. Regular conversations with DHLUC re Council's financial position. 	4	4	16	ED/SB	Ongoing	<p>Council has received in-principle agreement to fund day to day costs through Exceptional Financial Support.</p> <p>EFS covers a total of £52.8m over two years, split: 24/25 - £20.8m</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has been given approval in-principle for Exceptional Financial Support (day to day costs funded through capital borrowings) for 2024/25 and 2025/26. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA to undertake a financial assurance review. • Transformation programme in place. • Financial Recovery Plan required to better inform how the Council will achieve future sustainable budgets. 					25/26 - £32.0m	Council utilised £10m of EFS in 24/25, below the approved amount.	Financial recovery plan to be put in place to limit Council exposure to EFS and repayment of borrowings to date.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15th January 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director – Children’s Services

PORTFOLIO: Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Schools Capital Programme – 2026/27

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the capital funding received by the Council from central government to support capital works and programmes within schools for the 2026/27 financial year.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) The position regarding schools capital funding from the Department for Education for 2026/27 is noted;
- 2) The proposals to be funded from the School Condition Capital Allocation are approved;
- 3) The capital allocations are put forward for inclusion in the Budget report to full Council.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Department for Education has not yet announced the School Condition Allocation (SCA) Capital Grant for 2026/27, but given the timescales for some of the proposed capital projects, there is a requirement to present this report. The allocation stated in this report is based on the 2025/26 allocation which was £1,076,826. The LA are currently unsure if the Department for Education will adopt the same methodology as last year, therefore for the purpose of planning the 2026/27 capital programme, the 2025/26 allocation figure has been used.
- 3.2 In the event of the 2026/27 allocation being reduced, or in the event that a school converts to academy status which impacts on funding received by the Council, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly. Similarly if the allocation is an increase on previous years, then where feasible, the intent would be to increase the scope of works undertaken for individual projects and/or progress projects that are in reserve.
- 3.3 Detailed in the table below is the indicative funding available to support capital projects across the school estate in Halton:

GOVERNMENT FUNDING		
School Condition Allocation – Funding provided by the DfE for Local Authority maintained schools i.e. community and voluntary controlled schools (INDICATIVE FIGURE BASED ON 2025/26)	Allocated to fund condition and suitability projects at Local Authority maintained schools.	£1,076,826

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The School Condition Allocation programme of works will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the school environment in community and voluntary controlled mainstream and special school provision through capital projects.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In March 2025 the Department for Education announced that the 2025/26 School Condition Allocation for Halton was £1,076,826. The 2026/27 allocation has not yet been announced. As in previous years (approved by the Executive Board), for the purpose of planning the capital programme for 2026/27, the 2025/26 allocation figure has been used. In the event that the allocation is reduced or should further schools convert to academy status, which will also reduce the amount of funding the Local Authority receives, the amount of funding available for elements of the capital programme will be reduced accordingly. Similarly if the allocation is an increase on previous years, then where feasible, the intent would be to increase the scope of works undertaken for individual projects and/or progress capital projects that are in reserve.
- 5.2 The table below details how the School Condition Allocation grant will be utilised.

Description	Estimated costs	Description
Asset Management - Computer Aided Design (CAD) Plans and Condition surveys	£25,000	CAD plans of school buildings are updated where improvement works/changes to accommodation have been carried out. The condition surveys are carried out on a 5 yearly cycle as a rolling programme and are essential for identifying condition issues and planning for future capital repair programmes.
Asbestos Management	£10,000	Annual update of asbestos surveys and undertaking of resulting remedial works.

Description	Estimated costs	Description
Accessibility projects	£30,000	Funding that schools can apply for to resolve accessibility issues within school buildings/around the school site.
Contingency	£91,826	Used for emergency and health and safety works that arise during the year.
Capital Repairs	£920,000	A rolling programme of capital works undertaken at community and voluntary controlled schools, determined by the Local Authority, based upon a priority of need in discussion with schools and colleagues in Halton Borough Council Property Services.
Total	£1,076,826	

For any works undertaken within the Capital Repairs Programme, schools are normally required to make a contribution from their own Devolved Formula Capital allocation.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
None
- 6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy
None
- 6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families
The School Condition Allocation Capital Programme will address condition and suitability issues within school buildings and will continue to help improve the learning environment for children and young people.
- 6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
None
- 6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future
The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by helping to produce more energy efficient buildings.
- 6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community
None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of the Capital Repairs Programme. Consultation with schools on their contribution to any proposed works will take place following full Council's consideration of the budget report in March 2026. If schools cannot or are not willing to contribute, any proposed projects will not be carried out in 2026/27 and will be deferred for future years.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 The Accessibility funding element from the School Condition Allocation (detailed in the table in 5.2 above) provides capital funding to improve the accessibility of mainstream and special schools for pupils with disabilities and the wider community. Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Capital Repairs Programme will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by helping to produce more energy efficient buildings.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

- 10.1 The Council is required to demonstrate appropriate identification of need against spend from the School Condition Allocation Grant
- 10.2 The works will help to provide schools with a suitable learning environment and manage the condition of the educational buildings the LA is responsible for.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 None

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

- 12.1 It is intended that all School Condition works will be completed by March 2027

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
SCA and DFC final allocation 2025-26 Department for Education 20/05/25 (which will be superseded by the 2026/27 document when received from the DfE).	Children's Services Directorate	Martin West

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	15 th January 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Children’s Services
PORTFOLIO:	Children and Young People
SUBJECT:	School Admission Arrangements 2027/28
WARDS:	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report fulfils the Local Authority’s statutory requirement to consult upon and then determine the admission arrangements to Halton’s community and voluntary controlled schools for whom the Local Authority is the Admission Authority, and to fulfil the statutory requirement to determine Coordinated Admission Schemes for admission to all primary and secondary schools in Halton including Academy, Free School and Voluntary Aided schools, for the September 2027 intake.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) The Board approves the attached Coordinated Scheme for Admission to Primary Schools – which also contains the Local Authority’s admissions criteria to community and voluntary controlled schools, and approves the Coordinated Scheme for Admission to Secondary Schools, both of which will apply to the September 2027 intake.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 On the 1st October 2025 Halton Local Authority commenced a statutorily required consultation on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2027 intake to Primary Schools (attached as Appendix 1) and Secondary Schools (attached as Appendix 2). The Primary Scheme also included the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools for whom the Local Authority is the admission authority. No amendments to the oversubscription criteria were suggested as the criteria work well and meet the requirements of the Department for Education’s School Admissions Code.
- 3.2 The full consultation was available on the Council’s website for parents and carers and any other interested party, and details of the consultation were issued to: all schools for sharing with parents, carers, staff and governing boards, Diocesan Authorities responsible for voluntary aided schools in Halton, all schools in Halton who are their own admission

authority (academies, free schools and voluntary aided schools), and to all neighbouring local authorities.

- 3.3 The consultation ran until 14th November 2025 and no changes were proposed to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools. All secondary schools in Halton are academies or voluntary aided meaning they are their own admission authority and responsible themselves for consulting and determining their own admissions criteria and their own Published Admission Number (PAN), and any proposed changes they wish to make must be consulted upon and determined in accordance with the statutory requirements regarding consultation and determination detailed in the Department for Education School Admissions Code 2021.
- 3.4 The consultation advised that there would be no individual response to any submissions made, but any relevant responses received would be shared with and considered by the Council's Executive Board. No responses were received to the consultation.
- 3.5 With regard to the purpose of the consultation that took place, all admission authorities – the Local Authority for community and voluntary controlled schools, and the Governing Boards/Trusts for academies, free school and voluntary aided schools, must ensure that the admission arrangements determined are fair, clear and objective, and fully comply with all statutory requirements. The arrangements proposed by the Council for admission to community and voluntary controlled schools for the 2027/28 academic year reflect those requirements.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Admissions Policy has been drawn up to maximize parental preference for Halton Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools. The oversubscription criteria detailed for community and voluntary controlled schools for whom the Local Authority is the admissions authority, reflect the criteria which are considered good practice and acceptable by the Department for Education.
- 4.2 With regard to the Coordinated Admissions Schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools, parents/carers are invited to express a preference (or preferences) for any school for the relevant age group, and must complete an application form (online or paper version) which allows them the opportunity to express those preferences. If the school of preference is undersubscribed then all applications will be successful. If the school is oversubscribed then the oversubscription criteria will be applied and places allocated in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Council applies the admissions criteria determined for community and voluntary controlled schools to applications for those schools, and the Admission Authority (Governing Board/Trust) for academy, free school and voluntary aided schools apply their criteria for admission and notify

the Local Authority of the outcome of those applications. The Local Authority then communicates those decisions to parents/carers on behalf of all schools on the relevant (statutory) notification date.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

The proposed admission arrangements generally support the attendance of local residents to local schools, which allows for pupils to walk to school (accompanied if necessary/appropriate) helping to improve their health and wellbeing and leading towards them ultimately being able to walk to school themselves where they are able to do so, thereby supporting their independence.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

None.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

Educational achievement is critical to the life chances of all children in the borough, and the school admission arrangements to community and voluntary controlled schools in Halton underpin the requirement to promote fair access to educational opportunity which in turn supports children, young people and their families.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

The proposed admission arrangements comply with statutory requirements for local authorities who are the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools, in ensuring that the admission arrangements to community and voluntary controlled schools are fair and do not disadvantage, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with disability or special educational needs.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

The School Admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools are aligned to the Council's School Transport policies which promote and support measures that encourage local communities to use environmentally sustainable forms of travel, especially walking, cycling, and public transport.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools are proposed to maximise parental preference to those schools. Any amendment to the current arrangements at this time may reduce parental preference and lead to an increased number of admission appeals, adversely affecting the intake at some schools. The coordinated schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools are proposed to ensure that the statutory requirement to have such schemes in place is met.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The proposed admission arrangements reflect any requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Effective school admission arrangements should assist in allowing children and young people to access local school provision through sustainable modes of transport, e.g. walking, cycling or using public transport.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

10.1 Local Authorities as the admission authority for community and voluntary schools are required to consult and then determine their admission arrangements annually, and are also required to determine coordinated schemes for primary and secondary admission rounds that apply to all schools.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

11.1 None.

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

12.1 The implementation date is September 2026 which is when the timetabled process for the September 2027 intake to schools commences.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Department for Education School Admissions Code 2021	Children's Services Directorate	Martin West



HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY PROPOSED SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2027/28 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into reception class in infant and primary schools for the 2027 academic year.
- 2.0** Halton Local Authority is consulting on this Co-ordinated Primary Scheme detailed below which will apply to all those schools detailed on pages 8 and 9 of this document. Halton Borough Council (as the Local Authority - LA) is the Admission Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools, and the Governing Body of each voluntary aided or academy school is the admission authority for the school.
- 3.0** Parents/carers **must** complete their home LA's preference form, therefore if a non-Halton resident is seeking admission to a Halton school, (or vice-versa) they must complete their own authority's form which will then be forwarded to the relevant authority and LAs will then share any cross border applications for consideration.
- 4.0** Halton residents will be required to complete a Halton preference form and will be given the opportunity to express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 primary schools regardless of which authority the school is in. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the School Admissions Code. This form will be available on-line and parents are encouraged to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions.
- 5.0** Where a Voluntary Aided School requires supporting information e.g. asking for a reference from a priest or other religious minister for a faith school, or details of baptism etc parents may be required to complete a supplementary form and VA schools **must** inform parents of their requirements within their school's published admission arrangements.
- 6.0** Admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided and academy schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code. In Halton, as

statutorily required, an Equal Preference Scheme is operated. Within the equal preference scheme all preferences are considered equally against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place the maintaining LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the relevant oversubscription criteria.

- 7.0** Admission authorities **must** provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday and parents are allowed to request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. In Halton this already happens. Parents can request their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age and admission authorities **must** accommodate these requests where it appears to be in the best interest of the child.
- 7.1** As recommended in the DfE School Admissions Code the LA will allow parents/carers to defer their child's entry to school until the child is of compulsory school age, providing the parent applies and is offered the place within the normal admissions timetable, and the place is taken up within the same academic year.
- 7.2** In addition, the LA, as detailed within the Department for Education Guidance document "Admission of summer born children: advice for local authorities and school admission authorities" (updated April 2023) will ensure that flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school in the September following their fourth birthday. School admission authorities are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to, but are required to make a decision based on the circumstances of the case. In these cases the School may seek the professional views of Local Authority officers including the Special Educational Needs Assessment Team, the Education Welfare Service, and the Educational Psychology Service, together with any other agencies who are involved with the child/family.
- 7.3** It should be noted that if a child is presently attending a nursery class/early years setting they do not have an automatic right to transfer to the primary school to which the nursery/early years setting is attached (the only exception being The Grange School which is an all-through school). Parents/carers are required to indicate a preference for a primary school along with all other parents/carers. The same applies for children who already have siblings already at a particular school, parents/carers must complete a preference form along with all other parents.

8.0 APPLYING FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2027

- 8.1** Halton LA publishes online an “Admission to Primary School” booklet (a Composite Prospectus). A letter and information leaflet will be issued to all Halton Primary Schools and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, on line via the council’s website, and upon request from the Admissions Team. The booklet will be published online in **September 2026** and the on-line application system will be available at the same time.
- 8.2** The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order. All applications, whether made online or submitted in paper format (by request only) must be submitted by no later than **15th January 2027**. This closing date is a statutorily set closing date. The online application system will not be available after this date and late applications must be submitted on a paper copy of the preference form.
- 8.3** Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring local authorities but **must** complete their preferences on their home LA form.
- 8.4** The Admissions Team will load all preferences onto the database including those received from neighbouring LAs (inter-LA exchange to take place week commencing Monday 25th January 2027). Halton LA will then forward all application details, regardless of whether they are first, second and third preferences to all Voluntary Aided schools and Academies where admission is being sought, at latest by Friday 5th February 2027. The Admissions Committee of those governing bodies **must** meet and place in ranked order against their criteria the details of all pupils applying to their school. Governing bodies must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admissions criteria, and **must** then notify the Admissions Team by Monday 1st March 2027 all pupils’ details in ranked order against their criteria.
- 8.5** The LA will then undertake a final data exchange with neighbouring LAs to ensure that all children have an allocated school by Friday 19th March 2027.
- 8.6** When all preferences have been considered and allocations finalised, Halton residents will be able to view their allocated school place online on **Friday 16th April 2027**, together with details of the appeal process if applicable. Letters advising of the allocated school place will be posted to parents submitting a paper copy of the preference form on this date. Parents/carers will be required to decline any offer of the school place within 10 school days. If the LA does not hear from the parent/carer then it is assumed the place has been accepted.

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8.7 Parents will have until Tuesday 18th May 2027 to lodge any appeals with the LA.

9.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

9.1 If a Halton community or voluntary controlled school becomes oversubscribed, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Looked after children and children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order), and children who appear to the Local Authority as the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (IAPLAC);
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children **living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year;**
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school measured using the LA's Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address point system which measures a straight line distance from the unique address point of the child's permanent address to the unique address point of the school in metres.

For admission to community and voluntary controlled schools the following notes apply:

- a) Children who have an Education, Health & Care Plan will be allocated a place at the school named in the Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). Where a child with an EHCP is allocated a place this will reduce the number of remaining places available to allocate within the above oversubscription criteria. All placements of children with an EHCP will be determined by the SEND Team and parents of children with an EHCP should discuss this with their child's SEND Coordinator, as an application does not need to be made.
- b) If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria 1-3, places will be allocated on distance grounds as described within the distance criteria (3) above. In the instance of a tie regarding distance for the last place to be offered (to two decimal places in metres), a place will be offered using the electronic admission system's random allocation function.
- c) Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated.

Appendix 1

d) The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent home address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility the LA will use the address where the child lives for the majority of the week, e.g. where the child wakes up between Monday and Thursday. Details should be provided to enable the Local Authority to determine which address will be used for admission purposes. If sufficient evidence has been provided then this address will be used for assigning a criterion to the application. Where there is dispute or equal nights are slept, the address provided for claiming child tax credits or equivalent will be applied to the admission application. In such circumstances, documentary evidence must be provided. It may also be necessary for the Council to carry out checks that the address given is genuine and parents may be requested to produce further documentary evidence of the child's address.

The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

e) Where applications are received from families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants, school places will be allocated to children in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a return date with full address details and providing they would meet the criteria when they return to the UK.

f) If none of the parent's preferences can be met, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school, with places available, to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

9.2 THE GRANGE ALL THROUGH SCHOOL

The Grange is a designated all through school, therefore children enrolled in the nursery at the closing date will automatically transfer from the nursery to infants, infants to juniors, and juniors to secondary within The Grange. Following the transfer of those children from the nursery to reception class the remaining places will be allocated in accordance with the school's admissions criteria. If a child is enrolled to the nursery after the primary closing date, and allocations have been made and the school is full, the child will be placed on the waiting list.

10.0 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools received after the closing date will not be considered until after the main allocation of places has taken place for all those applications received on time. If an application

is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) of preference are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the school's waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeals process are given in paragraph 15 below. If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school or academy the school will advise how this will be dealt with. Late applications **must** be made on a paper copy of the preference form which can be obtained from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team. The online application system is not available after the deadline for application, **15th January 2027**.

11.0 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to request and complete another preference form. The on-line facility will not be available after the closing date. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list as detailed in paragraph 14 below. It should be noted that the online application process will cease on the closing date, so parents/carers will need to request and complete a paper copy of the application form.

12.0 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house **after the closing date of 15th January 2027 and before** 11th February 2027, parents must notify the LA. The LA may require documentary evidence to confirm this change of address. For changes made on or after 12th February 2027, the address used for the initial allocation of places will be the permanent place of residence provided in the application before this date. A new address may be submitted for purposes of waiting list position if required and documentary evidence will be necessary to confirm this change of address.

13.0 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

Halton LA and the admission authorities of schools in the LA, reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

14.0 WAITING LISTS

The LA will maintain waiting lists for oversubscribed community and voluntary controlled primary schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term (**31st December 2027**), at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the

Appendix 1

place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received up to the end of the Autumn Term will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as an in-year admission and the in-year application process will be applied.

15.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided trust or academy schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. Appeals will be conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. The decisions of independent appeals panels are legally binding on all parties.

Regulations made under Section 1 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 limit the size of an infant class (in which the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7 during the school year) to 30 pupils per school teacher. Parents will have a right of appeal but an appeal panel can only uphold this appeal if it is satisfied that:

- a) It finds that the admission of additional children would **not** breach the infant class size limit; or
- b) It finds that the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or were not correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c) It decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

The decisions of independent appeals panels are legally binding on all parties.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal.

16.0 SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

The LA as commissioner of school places is continually reviewing and monitoring the number of places available against projected pupil numbers and updates head teachers accordingly. It is possible that occasionally, there may be certain geographical areas within the borough where demand for places is higher than the actual number of places available, and the LA will, in discussion with the school, give consideration to admitting above a school's Published Admission Number (PAN). Admitting above a school's PAN will only be agreed between the school and the LA where it is confirmed that to do so will not affect the school in the longer term and will not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring schools and providing it does not breach infant class size legislation.

The figure in brackets denotes the school's proposed Published Admission Number for 2027 but may alter as a result of any school reorganisation. Please note that schools for whom the LA are not the admission authority may still be in the process of determining their 2027 PAN and these figures may change as a result of consultation.

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

All Saints Upton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
Astmoor Primary (25)
Beechwood Primary (20)
Brookvale Primary (30) – A reduction from the previous PAN of 40
Castleview Primary (20)
Fairfield Primary (90)
Farnworth C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (60)
Gorsewood Primary (30)
Hale C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
Halebank C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (15)
Hillview Primary (30)
Lunts Heath Primary (60)
Moore Primary (30)
Moorfield Primary (30)
Murdishaw West Community Primary (30)
Oakfield Community Primary (40)
Pewithall Primary (30)
The Brow Community Primary (25)
Victoria Road Primary (30)
Westfield Primary (25)
Weston Primary (30)
Windmill Hill Primary (25)
Woodside Primary (20)

ALL THROUGH ACADEMY SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

The Grange (60)

VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

Runcorn All Saints' CE Aided Primary (20)

CATHOLIC:

Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary (30)

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary (30)

St Basil's Catholic Primary (30)

St Bede's Catholic Infant (75)

St Bede's Catholic Junior (75)

St Clement's Catholic Primary (30)

St Edward's Catholic Primary (20)

St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary & Nursery (30)

St John Fisher Catholic Primary (30)

St Martin's Catholic Primary School (30)

St Michael's Catholic Primary (30)

The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary (20) – Have indicated they intend to consult on a reduction to a PAN of 15

ACADEMY SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

Bridgewater Park Academy (30)

Daresbury Primary (30)

Ditton Primary (30)

Hallwood Park Primary (15)

Halton Lodge Primary (30)

Kingsway Primary Academy (30)

Palace Fields Primary Academy (30)

St Augustine's Catholic Academy (25)

St Berteline's CE Aided Primary (30) (Due to transfer to academy status 1st October 2025)

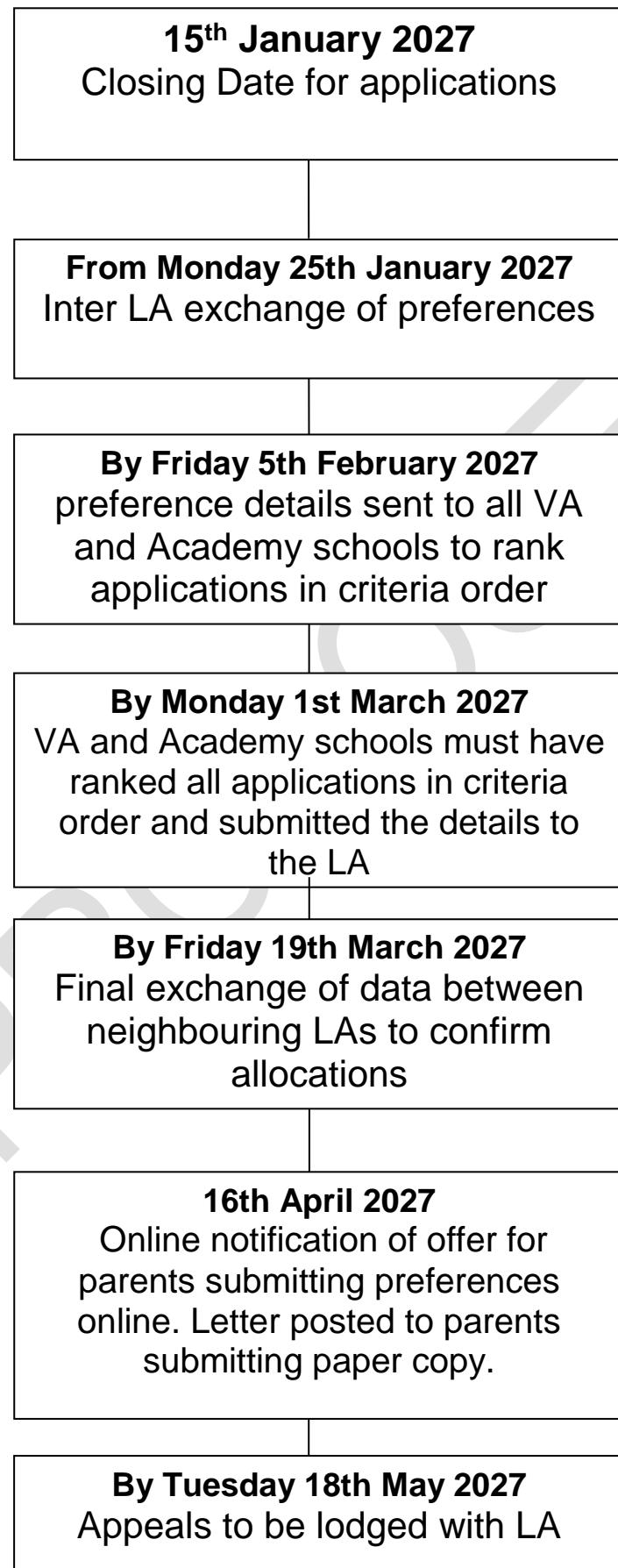
St Mary's CE Aided Primary (35)

St Michael's with St Thomas C E Primary (30)

Weston Point Primary (20)

Widnes Academy – (20)

TIMETABLE FOR SEPTEMBER 2027 PRIMARY ADMISSIONS





**HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY
PROPOSED SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF
ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SECONDARY
SCHOOLS – 2027/28 ACADEMIC YEAR**

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into year 7 at secondary schools in September 2027.
- 2.0** Halton Local Authority is consulting on the admission arrangements and statutorily required secondary co-ordinated scheme detailed below which will apply to all secondary schools in the authority's area for the September 2027 intake.
- 3.0** The Scheme will apply to the following schools in the table below. The table also details the proposed Published Admission Number (PAN) for each school, and the type (category) of school:

School	PAN	Type
The Grange	180	Academy
Saints Peter and Paul Catholic High	280	Voluntary Aided
Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic and Church of England Academy	120	Academy
Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	180	Academy
Ormiston Chadwick Academy	190	Academy
The Heath School	240	Academy
Wade Deacon High School	350	Academy
Sandymoor Ormiston Academy	150	Academy

It should be noted that at the time of writing some schools may be in the process of determining their PAN for 2027, providing they have consulted/are consulting in accordance with the statutory requirements of the DfE School Admissions Code.

Each Academy School has a Trust who is responsible for determining the admission arrangements for its school. The Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided Schools are the admission authorities for these schools.

Appendix 2

Academy Trusts and Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided Schools are required to undertake their own consultation regarding admission arrangements.

- 4.0 From September 2026 Halton residents will be given the opportunity to complete a common preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 secondary schools using this form for a school place in September 2027. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DfE School Admissions Code. This form will be available on-line and parents/carers are required to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Parents/carers should only complete one application form and preferences may include Halton schools and schools maintained by other LAs. Paper forms are available by request only.
- 5.0 Admission authorities i.e. governing bodies for voluntary aided and academy schools **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code. All admission authorities must operate an Equal Preference Scheme. Within an equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered, if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place, the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place, parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

6.0 APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2027

- 6.1 Halton LA publishes online an "Admission to Secondary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). A letter and information leaflet will be issued to all year 6 pupils attending Halton Primary Schools and Halton resident pupils who attend schools in other LAs, advising parents of the online booklet and application process, and will be available at the Halton Direct Link Offices, on line via the Council's website, and from the Admissions Team. The booklet will be published online at the start of the Autumn Term, **September 2026**, and the on-line application system will be available at the same time.
- 6.2 The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order (regardless of which LA the school preferences are for). Applications from Halton resident parents, either on-line submissions or hard copy (by request only), must be returned no later than **31st October 2026**.

Appendix 2

- 6.3** Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring LAs but **must** complete their preferences on the Halton form. Halton LA will work with its neighbouring authorities: Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley, and St Helen's, together with any other admission authority where a parent has applied for a school place.
- 6.4** On-Line Admissions: LAs are required to have a facility for parents to apply on-line for a secondary school place. This facility is in place for Halton residents via Halton Borough Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk/schooladmissions. This is the preferred method of application. Residents who cannot apply online may request a paper copy of the preference form from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team.
- 6.5** Halton LA will record all preferences on the admissions database, including those received from neighbouring LAs whose children are seeking a place at a Halton School and will forward, week beginning 9th November 2026, details of all first, second, and third preferences for admission to aided schools and academies, for consideration in accordance with their published admission criteria.
- 6.6** The governing bodies of voluntary aided schools and academies should note that they must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admission criteria and **must** place in ranked order, against their criteria, the details of all pupils applying to their school, and must return the ranked list to the Admissions Team by Friday 4th December 2026.
- 6.7** When all preferences have been considered and allocations finalised, Halton residents will be able to view their allocated school place online on Monday 1st March 2027, together with details of the appeal process if applicable. Letters advising of the allocated school place will be posted to parents submitting a paper copy of the preference form on this date. Parents/carers who applied online will also receive an email confirming the allocated place.
- 6.8** If none of the parent's preferences can be met, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school, with places available, to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect the parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

7.0 EARLY AGE TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Children of exceptional ability and maturity can be considered for transfer to secondary schools one year earlier than normal. It is the responsibility of the Head teachers of primary/junior schools to put

forward the names of any pupils whom they consider are physically, intellectually, and emotionally suitable to benefit from such a transfer, and who might be educationally disadvantaged by remaining in the primary sector for a further year. However, as a first step, head teachers will discuss possible candidates with parents, the school's link adviser, and the Educational Psychologist. Parents who consider that early transfer might benefit their child should discuss this with the head teacher.

8.0 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at schools within Halton Local Authority received after the closing date will not be considered until after the main allocation of places has taken place for all those applications received on time. If an application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) of preference are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the school's waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeals process are given in paragraph 14 below.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school the school will advise how this will be dealt with. Late applications **must** be made on a paper copy of the preference form which can be obtained from any of the Halton Direct Link Offices or directly from the School Admissions Team. The online application system is not available after the deadline for application, **31st October 2026**.

9.0 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list. It should be noted that the online application process will cease on the closing date, so parents/carers will need to request and complete a paper copy of the application form.

10.0 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 31st October 2026 and before 14th January 2027, parents must notify the LA. The LA may require documentary evidence to confirm this change of address. For changes made after 14th January 2027, the address used for the initial allocation of places will be the permanent place of residence provided in the application before this date. A new address may be submitted for purposes of waiting list position if required and documentary evidence will be necessary to confirm this change of address.

11.0 CHILDREN WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE PLAN (EHCP)

Children who have an Education, Health & Care Plan will be allocated a place at the school named in the Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). Where a child with an EHCP is allocated a place this will reduce the number of remaining places available to allocate within the advertised oversubscription criteria and PAN. All placements of children with an EHCP will be determined by the SEND Team and parents of children with an EHCP should discuss this with their child's SEND Coordinator, as an application does not need to be made.

12.0 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

The admission authority of any school in Halton LA reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

13.0 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for all oversubscribed secondary schools. The Local Authority, who are responsible for coordinating admissions, will maintain the waiting lists for oversubscribed schools and, if a place becomes available, will liaise with the relevant schools before reallocating any available place. Secondary schools must not reallocate any places, this is the responsibility of the Local Authority for the secondary transfer process. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria for the relevant school. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received up to the end of the Autumn Term (**31st December 2027**) will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as an in-year admission and the in-year admission process will be applied.

14.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel. Appeals will be conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. The decisions of independent appeals panels are legally binding on all parties.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools, Trust and Academy schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal. The deadline to submit an appeal will be Wednesday 31st March 2027.

15.0 SCHOOLS WITH SIXTH FORMS

Each school with a sixth form **must** include in its consultation paper the arrangements they propose to use to allocate places in Year 12. It is not intended that the LA will co-ordinate admissions to sixth form, therefore applications must be sent to the relevant admission authority (i.e. the school) for consideration. Parents and children above compulsory school age have the right to make separate applications for more than one school.

Each school **must** set an admission number for its sixth form, and should say in its published information what the anticipated sixth form capacity will be. However, the published admission number **must** only relate to those being admitted to the school for the first time and should be based on an estimate of the minimum number of external candidates likely to be admitted. It is not necessary for children already in the school to apply formally for places in year 12, but the admission arrangements **must** give details of any entry requirements. Children in care **must** be given the highest priority within the criteria, schools **must not** interview children or their families for entry to year 12, although meetings can be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements. Entry **must not** be dependent on attendance, behaviour record, or perceptions of attitude or motivation. Where the admission authority has not admitted up to its PAN it cannot refuse to admit applicants who have met the minimum entry. Any other applicant refused must be given the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

TIMETABLE FOR SEPTEMBER 2027 SECONDARY ADMISSIONS

SEPTEMBER 2026 – APPLICATION PROCESS COMMENCES

31ST OCTOBER 2026 CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

WEEK COMMENCING 9TH NOVEMBER 2026 LA PROVIDES DETAILS OF ALL 1ST 2ND AND 3RD PREFERENCES TO VA AND ACADEMY SCHOOLS

BETWEEN 9TH NOVEMBER AND 4TH DECEMBER 2026 ADMISSION COMMITTEES OF OWN AUTHORITY SCHOOLS MUST MEET TO CONSIDER ALL APPLICATIONS (IF APPLICABLE)

NO LATER THAN 4TH DECEMBER 2026 OWN AUTHORITY SCHOOLS MUST HAVE RANKED ALL APPLICATIONS IN CRITERIA ORDER & SUBMITTED THIS LIST TO THE LA, FOLLOWING WHICH INTER-LA EXCHANGE OF DATA WILL ALSO OCCUR

PARENTS/CARERS HAVE UNTIL 14TH JANUARY 2027 TO UPDATE ADDRESS FOR APPLICATION AND PROVIDE SUITABLE EVIDENCE THAT CHILD IS RESIDING AT THAT ADDRESS BY THIS DATE

1ST MARCH 2027 ONLINE NOTIFICATION OF OFFER MADE TO PARENTS APPLYING ONLINE. LETTER POSTED TO PARENTS SUBMITTING A PAPER COPY OF THE PREFERENCE FORM

31ST MARCH 2027 - DEADLINE TO SUBMIT AN APPEAL TO ENSURE IT IS HEARD WITHIN THE ADMISSION AUTHORITY'S TIMEFRAME FOR APPEALS

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	15 th January 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director of Children's Services
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	Services to encourage young people to participate in education, employment and training
WARDS:	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 Request for Waiver of Standing Orders:

A request for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders is sought to allow the continuation of a contract with Career Connect to deliver, on behalf of the Council, the Provision of Services to Encourage, Enable and assist Young People to participate in Education, Employment and Training, for a period of four years from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2030

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) Approval is granted to the recommendation that the contract with Career Connect should be extended for a further four years without going through a Procurement process, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders, as advised by Procurement Team.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Local authorities have a duty to make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan, support that will encourage, enable and assist them to participate in education or training. This is a duty under Section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- 3.2 In addition, the Education and Skills Act 2008 placed two 'Raising the Participation Age' related duties on local authorities regarding 16- and 17-year-olds:
 - 3.2.1 Local authorities must promote the effective participation in education and training of 16- and 17-year-olds in their area with a view to

ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training. A key element of this is identifying the young people in their area who are covered by the duty to participate and encouraging them to find a suitable education or training place.

- 3.2.2 Local authorities must make arrangements – i.e. maintain a tracking system - to identify 16- and 17-year-olds who are not participating in education or training. Putting in place robust arrangements to identify young people who are not engaged in education or training or who have left provision enables local authorities to offer support as soon as possible.
- 3.3 Since April 2014 the 16+ Education to Employment Team (previously known as the 14-19 Team) within Halton Borough Council have implemented the Halton Participation Strategy to meet the above duties. The revised approach to this area of work, brought about by the Halton Participation Strategy, brought a large element of the work in house and achieved financial and resource efficiencies in doing so.
- 3.4 The Halton Participation Strategy has also reduced the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training or whose activity is not known to the Council. In April 2014 the reported figure for Halton was 9.2%. The published annual average for Halton in 2024/25 is 6%.
- 3.5 An element within the Halton Participation Strategy is the commissioning of a specialist service to encourage, enable and assist young people to participation in education and training through the provision of information, advice and guidance by appropriately trained advisers.
- 3.6 The commissioning of a service to provide information, advice and guidance to young people has been carried out on three occasions since the Halton Participation Strategy was introduced, in 2014, 2018 and 2022. On all three occasions the contract was awarded to Career Connect as the most able to deliver to the scale and the requirements of the contract.
- 3.7 Since the initial contract in April 2014, and through all subsequent contracts, Career Connect have performed well against agreed outcomes and supported Halton to meet its statutory duties. The Career Connect team work well with the 16+ Education to Employment Team and demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness to situations as they arise.
- 3.8 Because of the amount of time Career Connect have been in Halton the company's leadership team, team leaders and staff know the borough, and its individual and distinct wards, well. Staff have a good understanding of the provision, services and support available to young

people. Staff have good working relationships with teams in the Council and Post 16 providers in the area.

- 3.9 Career Connect is a large company holding contracts with eight local authorities in the Northwest, five justice service contracts, is the main provider of school commissioned careers services in the Liverpool City Region and deliverer of Advice and Guidance professional qualifications from Level 2 - Level 6. This brings a wealth of experience and good practice to the work they do in Halton.
- 3.10 Whilst there are other small companies delivering careers advice and guidance within the region, none are comparative in breadth and experience to Career Connect.
- 3.11 Career Connect were awarded Career provider of the year at the UK Career Development Awards 2025 in recognition of their experience and success.
- 3.12 The current contract with Career Connect came into effect from 1st April 2022 for a period of one year with an option to extend for a further three 12-month periods. The options to extend has been taken and the current contract will end on 31st March 2026.
- 3.13 The 16+ Education to Employment Team Leader has been working with the Council's Procurement team since June 2025 to discuss procuring a service from 1st April 2026. Due to changes to procurement regulations under the Procurement Act 2023 the size of the Career Connect contract falls below the Light Touch Regime threshold that requires a full procurement exercise. Procurement Regulations would allow for a contract to be awarded directly to Career Connect. This approach has been endorsed by the Council's Procurement team.
- 3.14 The annual contract amount is £100,000. The planned contract length is four years. This is in line with previous contract periods and to give stability to the staff team and work. There is no expected change to the statutory duties of the local authority within this period. The total contract value across the four years would be £400,000. This is well below the threshold of £552,950 excluding VAT that requires a full procurement exercise.
- 3.15 Given the value-added benefits gained from working with Career Connect, and the changes to procurement regulations, the Executive Director for Children's Services seeks Executive Board approval to continue the contract with Career Connect from April 2026 – March 2030.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Securing a service to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education is an essential element of the Council's work to meet its statutory duties.
- 4.2 The method of Procurement complies with both The Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's Procurement Standing Orders, as advised by the Council's Procurement team.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 To make most effective use of public funds the staffing resource from the Procurement team and 16+ Education to Employment Team can be best utilised by allowing Halton to continue the contract with Career Connect for a further four years.
- 5.2 The Council's Finance team have confirmed the budget is in place to award this contract.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
Supporting young people to participate in Post 16 education or training allows them to continue their journey to gain the skills and abilities needed for long term employment. Employment is a route to independence and choices as an adult.
- 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
The Halton Participation Strategy supports key priorities in encouraging young people to access learning or training that will lead to longer term, more sustainable employment options.
- 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
Supporting young people to participate in Post 16 education or training and continue into employment is integral to ensuring they reach their full potential.
- 6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
Social and economic factors show Halton young people to be at higher risk of NEET. These risk factors can be mitigated against with the right level of support to participate in Post 16 education or training.
- 6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**
None
- 6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Opportunities associated with the proposed actions are:

7.1.1 Seamless transition into next contract and continued support during the 2025/26 academic year for young people.

7.1.2 Stability to current commissioned service staffing.

7.2 The risks associated with not taking the proposed actions are:

7.2.1 Impact on capacity for the Procurement Team and 16+ Education to Employment Team to manage a procurement exercise.

7.2.2 Unlikely to be able to procure a service by 1st April 2026.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

None

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15th January 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Urban Renewal

SUBJECT: Additional Highway Grant allocations

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report seeks Executive Board approval to accept capital funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority in compliance with Standing Orders

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1. the Board approves the Director Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal be delegated to accept the Grant Funding Agreement and enable timely delivery of the agreements; and**
- 2. the Director Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal be delegated to deal with any matters relating to procurement and operation of these agreements.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In addition to previous capital funding arrangements through the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA), Halton has now received a grant of £190,000 as part of Active Travel Fund 5. We have also received notification of an imminent Active Travel Fund 6 Grant which has been rebranded Consolidated Active Travel Fund (CATF). Internally, Combined Authority approvals on the allocation of the CATF Liverpool City Region wide funding are ongoing but are currently expected to allocate £577,000 to Halton. Finally, we have been allocated £564,556.12 for Pre-Development Work of the Transport Pipeline projects that are due to be constructed with the future funding from the Transport for City Regions Capital allocation to the City Region. We are currently awaiting the final Grant Funding Agreement for this.

- 3.2 The ATF5 funding is to be invested in three schemes, £100,000 towards North Albert Road pedestrian improvements, £50,000 for Detailed Design works for the Runcorn High Street Phase 2 detailed design and £40,000 for maintenance works / amendments identified by Active Travel England when they audited the Active Travel Route along Runcorn busway. Funding is due to be spent by March 2027.
- 3.3 CATF is to be invested in the construction of the East Runcorn Connectivity Active Travel Schemes prioritised at their interface with the Runcorn High Street scheme itself paid for by the allocation to Runcorn from the Local Government Town's Fund.
- 3.4 The LCRCA have requested we seek Grant acceptance for the CATF in advance to ensure funding expenditure can start as soon as possible in the new financial year. Funding is due to be spent by Summer 2027.
- 3.5 The Pre Development Funding is to be invested in three broad schemes, £50,000 in the options appraisal for the potential A558 improvements, £515,000 for the three Runcorn Active Travel schemes to have detailed design development completed including the Runcorn Old Town/Shopping City route and Runcorn East/Red Brow Lane. All works completed with this Fund are to be completed or committed by 31st March 2026. The Grant Funding Agreement is expected imminently from the CA and has been seen by Officers at Draft status.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Approval will comply with Standing Orders and enable compliance with the Council Procurement Standing Orders for the future works.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The work to be covered entirely by these Capital grant funding agreements have no requirement for HBC match funding.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

Well maintained Highways ensure that the public can travel quickly and easily on the Highway network. The construction of cycleways enables a health choice for the public when determining travel options not only for commuting but leisure.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

Workforce accessibility to jobs and amenities supports the local economy.

- 6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
None identified.
- 6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
Well maintained Highways ensure that the public can travel quickly and easily on the Highway network. Cycle routes give those on low incomes viable safe and commodious options to travel for work.
- 6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**
Active travel in all its forms supports a greener future by reducing mechanised transport miles and their carbon footprint.
- 6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**
None identified.
- 7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**
- 7.1 Approval as requested enables the quickest start to expenditure of these Grants once funding is received. Failure to approve would mean no expenditure and hence completion of works funded by these funding streams.
- 8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**
- 8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.
- 9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1 Highway funding is generally to be invested to likely utilise materials which have high carbon values, such as bituminous and concrete products. However, the service aims to use lower carbon materials, if possible, such as warm mix asphalt rather than hot mix which reduces carbon emissions. Similarly proprietary materials are used where they are suitable which overall as a process have been independently evaluated as carbon neutral.
- 10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**
- Funding letter for Active Travel Fund Grant Award 5
Draft GFA for Pre Development Funding

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	15 th January 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
SUBJECT:	Policy Documents: Liverpool City Region Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document, House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document, and Vehicle Crossing Guidance
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report seeks approval from the Board to support the adoption of the following Documents:

- Liverpool City Region Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Associated Technical Guidance:

- Vehicle Crossing Guidance (VCG)

Documents can be accessed using the following link:

[Background Documents](#)

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

1. the report be noted;
2. the Board approves the Strategies for adoption; and
3. Authority is delegated to the Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal and Climate Change and Housing to amend the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) if required.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is an evidence-based, locally led, spatial strategy designed to provide a joined-up, regional approach to nature recovery. The strategy follows the same boundary as that of the Liverpool City Region (LCR), which comprises Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. The document

identifies and maps opportunities for habitat enhancement, restoration and creation, where the biggest benefit will be felt to both nature and people at a localised level.

- 3.2 Halton Borough Council have been liaising with the partner authorities across the Liverpool City Region on the drafting of this document. However, The LCR Combined Authority (LCRCA) was appointed by Defra as the Responsible Authority for the LCR LNRS and led the preparation of the strategy, with support from Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, Merseyside BioBank and Liverpool John Moores University.
- 3.3 The LCRCA is hoping for full approval from their Combined Authority meeting on the 6th March 2025.
- 3.4 The Local Plan for Halton currently comprises of the adopted Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (2022) and the Joint Waste Plan (2013). The statutory Local Development Plan is the set of Local Plans (also known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that together form the statutory basis for determining whether or not planning permission should be granted.
- 3.5 Supplementary Planning Documents add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on issues such as Transport and Accessibility or House Extensions. The production of such documents must meet the legal and procedural requirements but once adopted, SPDs are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
- 3.6 The Transport and Accessibility SPD has clear links to policy, notably Policy CS(R)15 Sustainable Transport, although there are a number of other policies in the DALP which support this SPD, notably CS(R)7 Infrastructure Provision, CS(R)18 High Quality Design, CS(R)21 Green Infrastructure, C1 Transport Network and Accessibility and C2 Parking Standards and Appendix D Parking Standards.
- 3.7 The House Extension SPD also has clear links to policy, Policy RD3: Dwelling Alterations, Extensions, Conversions and Replacement Dwellings. In addition to Policy RD3, the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan contains other policies that are relevant to this SPD which, amongst others, include: CS(R)18 – High Quality Design, CS(R)19 – Sustainable development and climate change, RD3 – Dwelling alterations, Extensions, Conversions and Replacement Dwellings, RD5 – Primarily Residential Areas, GR1 - Design of development, GR2 – Amenity and C2 – Parking Standards.
- 3.8 The Vehicle Crossing Guidance (VCG) has been brought to Members before at Policy and Performance Board 25/11/2009 and

Executive Board on 04/11/2010. The VCG was Revised to Policy and Performance Board on 13/11/19 and Executive Board on 30/07/2020. Since it was last brought to Executive Board, the Vehicle Crossing Guidance has increased its parking sizes slightly in line with national policy. Therefore, this is reflected in the revised document.

- 3.9 The Vehicle Crossing Guidance has clear links to policy, predominantly C2 Parking Standards and Appendix D Parking Standards. Other policies in the DALP also support this guidance such as RD3 Dwelling Alterations, Extensions, Conversions and Replacement Dwellings and C1 Transport Network and Accessibility.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Planning applications should normally be determined in accordance with the Development Plan. "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise." [Section 38(6): Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004]
- 4.2 The Local Plan is a statutory development plan of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community, under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Local Plan is designed to provide broad and strategic policies. SPDs provide detailed guidance on the implementation of policies outlined in the Local Plan. This helps ensure that policy intentions are clear.
- 4.3 Given the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and emerging Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) the Planning Policy team are preparing to adopt these SPDs to provide more guidance to internal and external stakeholders on the topic issues in question.
- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Nature Recovery Strategies are mentioned in regard to protecting the green belt, however, does not go into much detail. Protecting biodiversity and nature is mentioned heavily in the NPPF.
- 4.5 DALP does not mention LNRS, however we do have policies which looks to support and complement the LNRS. The LNRS is also part of the evidence base documents which will inform the review of the Local Plan.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The adoption of the above documents have no direct financial implications for the Council.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

The LNRS supports health and wellbeing by providing green infrastructure and offering outdoor spaces for people to visit promoting healthy lifestyles. Overall, the provision of green spaces provides green lungs assisting with the overall air quality within the borough.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD support active travel which enables healthy lifestyles. House Extension SPD protects health and amenity for the householder and neighbouring properties. Vehicle Crossing Guidance ensures sufficient highway safety and wellbeing.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

The LNRS promotes growth by providing places where people want to live and supports business by providing green investment opportunities.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD ensure it is well-connected to support the local economy. The House Extension SPD provides more technical information, which will make the development process more efficient and assist the Local Economy.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The LNRS supports attractive and healthy places to live. It identifies sustainable locations, to benefit current and future generations.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD promotes healthy lifestyles for young people and families.

House Extensions SPD ensure householders still have access to amenity spaces which includes gardens and lighting, vital for the health and well-being of families.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

The LNRS supports inclusive access to green spaces across the Liverpool City Region. Residents will have access to identified green spaces within Halton and the LCR within their local community.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD supports Inclusive Mobility ensuring access for all, wherever possible.

The House Extension SPD provides consideration to those with disabilities and / or the elderly to allow greater independence to remain in their own homes for longer.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

The LNRS looks to secure and protect identified areas of environmental and biodiversity assets within the borough.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD supports green/sustainable modes of transport.

The House Extension SPD promotes energy efficiency standards and water / energy efficient guidance, supported by the Environment Agency.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

The LNRS identifies local habitats within Halton, ensuring the boroughs environmental assets are protected and enhanced where possible.

The House Extension SPD helps preserve the character of Halton.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD aims to create a well-connected sustainable borough for its residents and visitors.

7.0 Risk Analysis

7.1 Supplementary Planning Documents provide up-to-date relevant information in support of the Local Plan and assists developers by providing clarity on topic area's therefore reducing the risk of a non-determination.

7.2 No risks are identified for the any of the above documents.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Building stronger communities through good planning and community engagement is key to the delivery of the Local Plan. The Council is committed to equality regardless of age, sex, caring responsibility, race, religion, marital status, maternity issues, gender reassignment, socio economic need, sexuality or disability and these commitments are reflected in the Local Plan as far as is relevant. If necessary, Planning Policy documents are subject to Equality Impact Assessments during their production to ensure compliance.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 All of the above documents support the Council's commitment to protecting against climate change.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)	Municipal Building, Widnes	Rebecca Taylor
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2025)	Municipal Building, Widnes	Rebecca Taylor
National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	Municipal Building, Widnes	Rebecca Taylor
Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP 2022)	Municipal Building, Widnes	Rebecca Taylor
Waste Local Plan (2013)	Municipal Building, Widnes	Rebecca Taylor

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

Document is Restricted