Public Document Pack

Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board

Wednesday, 12 November 2025 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Interim Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Bill Woolfall (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Valerie Hill	Labour
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Kath Loftus	Labour
Councillor Tony McDermott	Labour
Councillor Stef Nelson	Labour
Councillor Louise Nolan	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Gareth Stockton	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

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

The next meeting of the Board is on Wednesday, 11 February 2026

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

Part I

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2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS) Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 10 September 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair), V. Hill, Hutchinson, K. Loftus, McDermott, Nelson, L. Nolan, C. Plumpton Walsh and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Stockton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, L. Crampten, T. Gibbs, F. Harris, K. Horne, J. Parry and R. Taylor

Also in attendance: Councillors Thompson, Philbin, Jones and S. Hill in accordance with Standing Order Number 33.

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EUR12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2025 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

EUR13 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

EUR14 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Environment and Urban Renewal Portfolio, taken from the Executive Board meetings held since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix one for information.

It was noted that a report went to the Executive Board on 12 June 2025 regarding the cemetery infrastructure works and a range of environmental work at the three of the Council's cemeteries. However, Members reported that they had received negative feedback from members of the public, in particular to the long grass. These comments would be passed to relevant officers.

EUR15 PRESENTATION OF THE WIDNES TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

The Board received a presentation which provided an overview of the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework.

The presentation also outlined the objectives and spatial strategies to make the town centre more sustainable, cohesive and diverse. Consultation had taken place across the board, including Members, stakeholders, landowners and members of the public with a particular focus on youth engagement.

The Board was also provided with an update on progress so far.

Following Members discussion and questions, the following additional information was provided:

- Although in the very early stages, officers confirmed that they had spoken to the owners of Green Oaks to ask if they had any plans or aspirations for their site. They had also looked at how other towns had improved their market areas and the lessons that had been learned;

- Councillor Wainwright questioned if there was any intention of moving the market but he was not keen to make any plans on it becoming a food market. It was confirmed that further consultation would be carried out at a later stage where consideration would be given to the market;

- One of the concerns from the consultation was that the town centre was fragmented and needed to be more joined up, particularly to the Waterfront. Officers confirmed that this had been addressed in the framework, however, it was a very ambitious goal and it would require a lot of funding; and

- The Council had successfully won a bid from the INEOS Environment Fund for £50k which would be used to support environmental improvements in Widnes Town Centre. Although such improvements would be a short-term fix, it was hoped that the public would start to see some positive improvements quickly. This work was being led by Open Spaces and further information would be provided to Board Members via email.

It was agreed that:

- copies of the presentation slides would be circulated to the Board for information and if they had any further questions, officers would respond accordingly;
- a site visit for Board Members would be arranged in 12 months time; and
- a further progress report would be presented in June 2026.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the presentation and the Framework are noted.

Executive Director Environment & Regeneration

EUR16 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT – HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT 2024-25

The Board received the annual Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR) for Housing and Employment 2024-25. Local Planning Authorities were required to publish information on an annual basis that demonstrated progress with Local Plan preparation, reported any activity relating to the duty to co-operate, any information which related to indicators in the Plan and any policies which were not being implemented.

The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) set out housing supply and location priorities for the Borough. The adopted Plan stated that there would be an additional 8,050 net homes provided between 2014 and 2037; an average rate of 350 dwellings per annum. The housing report showed that during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, 387 net houses had been completed, 87 of which were affordable housing. There was also 164 units currently under construction.

The DALP also stated that over the lifetime of the Local Plan (2014-2037), the Council would provide approximately 180 ha of land for employment purposes. During 2024/25 there had been 24.84 ha gross employment land completions, 22.12 ha (net) of employment land completed within a key urban regeneration area and 11% of completions were on Brownfield sites.

Members of the Board received copies of two infographic handouts which listed the key statistics from both the Housing and Employment Annual Monitoring Reports for 2024/25.

The following additional information was provided in response to Members questions/comments:

- Processing of planning applications was very market driven i.e. if people were buying, developers would build and when not, the market slowed down;
- Since the DALP was published, the figure for net homes had increased and the Council had granted over 1,000 applications in Widnes alone;
- Brownfield sites were difficult/expensive to build on and therefore not always attractive to developers; one third of the Borough was still Green Belt;
- There was no rationale of splitting new builds between Widnes and Runcorn; it was dependent on where developers wanted to build;
- Build on Brownfield sites went through peaks and troughs and was dependent on various factors including land being available; and
- It was noted that a lot of the new build sites in Halton largely consisted of 4-5 bedroom properties. However, affordable housing had to be included on all new sites and Halton’s housing stock was predominantly Council Tax bands A and B. Whilst there was a commitment to address the housing crisis it was also important to encourage people to either stay living in the Borough or attract people to come and live here.

Following discussions, it was agreed that at the meeting in February 2026, the Board would receive a presentation detailing the Brownfield, Greenfield and Greyfield sites in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the draft AMR’s so that the documents can be made publicly available and published on the Council’s website.

Executive Director Environment & Regeneration

EUR17 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2025/26

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 1 of 2025/26.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2025/26 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to the Board as detailed below:

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services; and
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services.

The reports detailed progress against service objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 1 performance management report be received and noted.

EUR18 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 10 July 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 May 2025, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast. The report also described the reasons for key variances from budget.

The Executive Board had requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information, to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

It was noted that the net Council spending a at 31 May 2025 was £1.073m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year was estimated that net spending would be over budget by £6.185m if no corrective action was taken.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as at 31 May 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.43 p.m.

Agenda Item 3

REPORT TO:	Environment & Regeneration Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	12 November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Public Question Time
WARD(S)	Boroughwide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).

1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That any questions received be dealt with.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

(i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.

(ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.

(iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.

(iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.

(v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-

- Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
- Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
- Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

(vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.

(vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.

(viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.

(ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

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

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

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None identified.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None identified.

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

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

None identified.

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

None identified.

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

None identified.

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

None identified.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None identified.

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

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Agenda Item 4

REPORT TO:	Environment & Regeneration Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	12 November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Executive Board Minutes
WARD(S)	Boroughwide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The Minutes relating to the relevant Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.**

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

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**

None.

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

None.

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

None.

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

None.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

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

None.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None.

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 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Environment & Regeneration Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2025

EXB41	**REVIEW OF THE MERSEYSIDE AND HALTON JOINT WASTE LOCAL PLAN**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the review of the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (JWLP). The JWLP set the framework for waste related planning.

It was noted that the 2025 JWLP document reviewed the original 2013 policies to understand whether they were fit for purpose and in line with Local and National Policy. The report concluded that most of the policies in the plan remained fit for purpose. A copy of the review of the JWLP was attached as an Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the review and accepts the outcome of the review of the Joint Waste Local Plan.

EXB42	**WASTE MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, that provided an update on a number of matters in relation to the Council's Waste Management Services, including options to help meet legislative requirements, proposed contractual arrangements for the processing of collected recyclable materials, proposed recycling collection methodologies and potential financial implications where known at this stage.

RESOLVED: That the Board

1) endorse that the Council provides to the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority, as outlined commitment for Halton to be included in their procurement of new Waste Management and Recycling Contract arrangements that are to be introduced from 2029;

2) approve that, following the introduction of food waste collections in 2026, Halton's collected food waste is managed by the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority under the terms of the Waste Management and Recycling Contract;

3) approve that the Council collects 'Additional Materials' for recycling as part of household kerbside collections from 2026, at temporary additional cost, until the new Merseyside Recycling the Waste Authority Waste Management and Recycling contract is in place;

4) endorse that the Council retains a co-mingled recycling collection system from 2026 onwards (subject to a TEEP Assessment being carried out);

5) approve that the Council introduces the additional resources required to deliver a comprehensive, local waste communications and education campaign, and also approves the required expenditure to do so; and

6) delegated authority be given to the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Environment and Urban Renewal Portfolio Holder, to take any decisions as may be necessary as part of Halton's inclusion in the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authorities re-procurement exercise of the Waste Management and Recycling Contract.

EXB43	**ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - REMOVAL OF PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE FROM USE CLASS C3 (DWELLING HOUSES) TO C4 (HMOS) - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval to remove the permitted development rights for the change of use from Use Class C3 (dwelling houses) to C4 (HMOs). The report advised that Local Planning Authorities had the power, in exceptional circumstances, to withdraw permitted development rights through the making of an Article 4 direction. This meant that deemed planning permission would not be granted automatically and an application needed to be made to the Council. It did not prohibit development but enabled the Council to have some control over the proposed development and to apply its own policies.

The report set out the type of Article 4 directions, the proposed local areas where it was required, together with evidence and justification, the procedure and the timescales involved to obtain Article 4 direction.

RESOLVED: That

1) the making of an immediate Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the change of use from Use Class C3 (dwelling houses) to C4 (HMOs) as set out at Appendix 4 be approved;

2) the required notifications as set out in the report and the publication of a public notice as shown in Appendix C be authorised;

3) following notification and consultation, the matter is brought back to the Board to consider any consultation responses and make a decision on whether to confirm the immediate Article 4 Direction;

4) authority is delegated to the Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Sustainability to amend the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to include the making of the article 4 direction; and

5) it was noted that this proposal is a key decision which has not been included on the Council's Forward Plan and the procedure set down in Rule 16 of the Access to information Procedure Rules of the Constitution have been followed.

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12 November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment and Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Mersey Gateway Project
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an overview of the Mersey Gateway Project in relation to achievement of the Seven Strategic Objectives and an update as at the eighth anniversary of the opening of the Mersey Gateway Bridge in October 2017.

1.2 A presentation at the meeting will be provide further details on the achieved objectives.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Mersey Gateway Bridge (MGB) opened to traffic on the 14th October 2017 and on the eighth anniversary almost 190m crossings had been made on the bridges since opening. The Council established the project with the intention of it delivering the following seven strategic objectives:

1. To relieve the congested SJB, thereby removing the constraint on local and regional development and better provide for local transport needs:
2. To apply minimum toll charges to both MGB and SJB consistent with the amount required to satisfy affordability constraints:
3. To improve accessibility in order to maximise local development and regional economic growth opportunities:
4. To improve local air quality and enhance the general urban environment:
5. To improve public transport links across the river
6. To encourage the increased use of cycling and walking:
7. To restore effective network resilience for road transport across the river Mersey.

3.2 All of these objectives have now been achieved, and the presentation will provide further details on these achievements.

3.3 The project has delivered major transport improvements, such as:

- Reductions in some journey times of up to 15 minutes in peak periods.
- Increase in journey time reliability, less congestion; and
- A major strategic new transport route linking the Liverpool City Region and the North West to the rest of the country.

3.4 The MGB has also delivered an 80% reduction in traffic using the SJB, freeing it up for use as a local bridge. This in turn has delivered social benefits to communities in and around Halton including:

- Improvements to public transport facilities.
- Improvements to walking and cycling facilities; and
- Improved health as a result of reduced air pollution

3.5 Achievements made through the Mersey Gateway Environmental Trust have included creating and managing new wildlife habitats like saltmarsh and reedbeds, removing over 3.2 tonnes of plastic from the estuary, and conducting environmental monitoring to assess bird populations.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Providing that the Council continues to operate the project within the obligations outlined in the DfT Funding Letter 2016, then there are no negative financial implications as the Project costs are met from project revenue and DfT grants.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

There are no direct implications for the Council's priorities.

- Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
- Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy
- Supporting Children, Young People and Families
- Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
- Working Towards a Greener Future
- Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The controls and processes of the Mersey Gateway Crossings

Board' (MGCB) who provide regular financial reporting to Central Government and Council will mitigate as far as possible any future risk of financial unsustainability developing.

7.2 A project risk register covering financial, contractual, operational and other risks is maintained by MGCB.

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 1972

'None under the meaning of the Act.'

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12th November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment and Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Annual Road Traffic Collision and Casualty Report
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To report on the latest road safety statistics released by the Department for Transport through the publication of the 2024 Comprehensive Annual Report.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

1)The overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton over the past decade be noted.

2)The 2026/27 strategy of road safety schemes, road safety education, training, and publicity be endorsed.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The latest figures (2024) for Halton show a welcome substantial fall in overall casualty numbers, following marginal annual increases post-Covid. This 16% reduction in overall casualty numbers compares very favourably with the national picture, where there has been a 4% decrease in casualties of all severities over the previous 12 months. The DfT indicates that traffic flows away from motorways have almost returned to pre-pandemic levels and using 96 census points in the Borough, indications are that traffic levels have increased marginally in the previous year, making the fall in road casualty numbers even more striking. Halton has outperformed the national picture for casualty reductions across all categories. A summary of the data is as follows:

- Local Authorities are still awaiting promised road casualty reduction targets from central Government, but Halton easily achieved its last performance targets, as set by the Department for Transport (a KSI reduction of 40% by 2020 (based on a 2005-09 base average) was the target outcome).

- There were 123 road traffic collisions involving personal injury within Halton, 35 fewer than the year before. These incidents resulted in 163 casualties, a 16% decrease on the 2023 figures, and an impressive 35% below 2019, when traffic levels were directly comparable.

- The figures in this report are once again adjusted to take into account a historic under-reporting of road traffic collisions and casualties and are more representative of the true picture. They also allow a more uniform reporting of casualty numbers over time and between different Police Constabularies and Local Authorities.

- A total of 38 KSI (killed or seriously injured) represents a decrease on the previous year, continuing the long-term downward trend.

- All KSI casualties were deemed serious with no reported fatalities on our roads (the first time in over a decade)

- A total of 3 children were seriously injured (CKSI) which represents a substantial decrease as compared to 6 in 2023.

- There was a significant decrease in the number of people of all ages being slightly injured (SLI), with casualty numbers down to 127 (from 156 in 2023).

- Encouragingly, casualty numbers for vulnerable road user groups (pedestrians and cyclists) have shown decrease this year and the 5-year rolling average shows a consistent decline.

- A total of 17 collisions occurred on Mersey Gateway controlled roads, resulting in 26 casualties, a marginal decrease on 2023's figures (20 collisions, 28 casualties), and once again below pre-pandemic levels (23 collisions, 28 casualties in 2019).

3.2 Appendix A sets out the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in 2024, together with comparisons of figures for previous years. Halton's performance in relation to neighbouring Local Authorities is also presented.

3.3 Of those killed or seriously injured, the numbers of adult casualties remained static, whilst child casualty numbers halved. However, due to the low numbers recorded annually in Halton, these numbers do fluctuate from year to year. A 5-year rolling average for casualty numbers is a more effective way to judge relative performance, and encouragingly Adult KSI numbers continued its decline (from an average of 36 to 34), with Child KSIs remained static, although at a historically low level.

3.4 **National Position**

Nationally, road casualties (all categories) decreased by 4% in 2024,

as set out in the Department for Transport 2024 Comprehensive Annual Report on Road Casualties available via:
[Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2024 - GOV.UK]

3.5 The Department for Transport (DfT) advises that since 1979, there has been a general downward trend in the number of people killed and seriously injured on roads in Great Britain with a flatter trend in the decade since 2010. The numbers slightly injured show a more linear decrease and to take into consideration continued changes in traffic levels the DfT advises that the rate per billion vehicle miles is the preferred metric to gauge the relative safety of roads.
In the previous decade Halton's casualty rate has decreased substantially and is now significantly below both the national and regional average (previously Halton's casualty rate was well above the national average), making Halton one of the better performing Local Authorities.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The work on casualty reductions is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in the Liverpool City Region's Transport Plan for Growth and Halton's Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 – 2025). Halton continues to participate in the Merseyside and Cheshire Road Safety Partnerships to share best practice and collaborate beyond administrative boundaries.

4.2 After almost a decade of turbulence in traffic conditions in Halton, caused by the major reconfiguration of the local highway network associated with the building of the Mersey Gateway Bridge, together with the impact of the Covid pandemic, the past two years have seen an almost steady state in terms of traffic flows within the Borough. This has allowed a better focus for road safety engineering interventions in our highway network.
With regards vulnerable road users, walking and cycling levels remain relatively static, although encouragingly there has been a noticeable modal shift towards walking post-pandemic. In recent years special attention has been given to small scale schemes that improve our pedestrian infrastructure, especially near schools, as well as new active travel routes linking employment areas to further encourage walking and cycling. Collaborative working with external agencies continues to offer an effective use of resources, and the ongoing decline in casualty numbers, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, is testament to this.

4.3 **Halton 2024/25 Programme Update**
This programme reviews the work carried out in the previous 12 months and covers road traffic collision reduction schemes, road safety education, training, and publicity, as well as our engagement with Cheshire Police to target effective enforcement action. Halton's

Traffic Management and Road Safety Team comprises four members of staff operating at 3.2 FTE (full time equivalent) and who also manage the School Crossing Patrol Service.

4.4 **Gyratory Red Light Camera**

Following a few teething issues, both pre- and post-installation, and in conjunction with the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, a red light / speed on green camera was installed at A557 Watkinson Way, a site with the highest density of collisions in the Borough and the first camera of this type in the Borough. Early signs indicate that since the camera has become operational road safety here has slightly improved. In the 15 months since the camera was installed and started working there has been just one recorded injury collision on the southbound carriageway of the A557 Watkinson Way, a section of road that usually averages 1.8 to 2 injury collisions per year.

4.5 In addition to this new device Halton Borough Council also maintains the small network of fixed speed cameras on behalf of the Cheshire Road Safety Group.

4.6 **"Smiley" SiDs**

These speed indicative devices / signs remain ever popular with Halton residents. In addition to encouraging lower speeds, they also record the approach speeds of every vehicle. This information is shared with Cheshire Police when a particular speed problem is identified. The Team currently manages twenty-two of these devices around the Borough, many of them purchased by Area Forums and Parish Councils. A grant from the Police Crime Commissioner allowed us to purchase an additional mobile device which we can deploy anywhere in the Borough, in response to concerns from Members and residents regarding traffic speeds.

We also operate a number of digital signs that flash either a speed limit roundel or road safety messages, should an approaching vehicle be travelling at excessive speed. Most of these signs are located at sites with a history of road traffic accidents and have helped reduce their collision rates since installation.

4.7 **Mobile Speed Camera Sites**

Working closely with Cheshire Police and the Cheshire Road Safety Group the Team is engaged in the maintenance and improvement of existing mobile speed camera sites as well as investigating and commissioning possible new locations for speed enforcement. Last year we were able to commission two new mobile camera sites and upgrade an existing one at the request of Cheshire Police. Effective enforcement action encourages safer driver behaviour.

4.8 **Collision Sites**

Using STATS19 collision data supplied by Cheshire Police, the Team identified junctions and lengths of road where collision density

is higher than expected. Once again, due to budgetary constraints, and a general lack of real collision 'hot spots' in recent years, it has been necessary to engage in multiple small-scale accident remedial schemes, rather than larger scale works we had undertaken previously. Many of these schemes were centred around schools or on routes to schools, as well as parks and recreation grounds.
We are also examining collision histories for particular roads over longer periods than the usual previous 5 years to better identify trends or issues.

4.9 **Safer Active Travel**
In support of various policy objectives (tackling climate change, improving health and wellbeing; improving air quality; options to lower the cost of living) Halton has been undertaking a number of large-scale cycling / walking initiatives to link residential areas with employment areas. These schemes have been funded via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. A number of improvement works that complement the Active Travel Strategy have included new pedestrian crossings, refuge islands, new lengths of high-friction anti-skid surfacing at controlled crossing points, and ensured uncontrolled crossings remain free from parked vehicles using physical features, including bollards, and lengths of pedestrian guard railing.

4.10 The Traffic Management team supported these schemes by introducing reduced speed limits and Prohibition of Driving TROs at several sites where new cycleways were being introduced, as well as delivering the signage strategy for these new cycleways. The Team continues to undertake road safety audits (RSAs) on many of the Borough's major schemes, to ensure that the safety of all road users is a priority.

4.11 **Education**
The Road Safety Team has engaged with children and adults of all ages to deliver training and education:

- The 'Show You Care, Park Elsewhere' scheme to reduce congestion and promote road safety outside schools was delivered at reported hotspots.
- Junior Safety Officers scheme was offered to all primary schools in the Borough. Their role is to promote safety messages to help keep everyone safe. They deliver various messages around road safety, personal safety, cyber safety, water safety to name a few. They do this by reading out bulletins in assemblies, displaying info on a notice board and running competitions across the school. They also promote safety campaigns such as encouraging no parking on zig zags around their schools.
- 2010 school children in Halton have had some form of cycle training in the previous academic year via the Bikeability

scheme.

- Eight Learn to Ride sessions were held during Easter and Summer holidays, delivered by Halton's Road Safety Team and Bikeability Instructors. A total of 360 children learnt a valuable life skill, helping deliver a Healthy Halton and promoting sustainable travel methods for commuting to schools.
- 'Stepping Out' pedestrian crossing training for Year 3 pupils has been provided at almost every school.
- The Team has undertaken drink / drug driving campaigns with you adults in local colleges.
- In-car safety training for the very young and their parents and carers has been undertaken at numerous pre-schools and nurseries
- The School Crossing Patrol Service remains extremely popular with parents and children and every day out Patrols help almost 3000 children cross the road every day.
- Community family fun days at community and children centres have proved massively popular, with additional dates being added due to demand.
- Road safety training has been provided to refugees and asylum seekers in the Borough.

4.12 **Halton 2025/26 Strategy**

- It is proposed to concentrate on interventions that enhance the safety of pedestrians and pedal cyclists (who still account for a third of all KSIs). This activity also supports a number of policy objectives, including encouraging modal shift.
- Powered two-wheelers also account for a disproportionate number of road casualties in the Borough, and our Road Safety Team now attends Biker Night meetings in Widnes where they engage with 90 riders and promoting safer riding.
- Collision analysis will be undertaken at sites with higher than expected collision histories. Work is then carried out at locations where improvements can be made, for example, the installation of refuge islands, improved cycleway signage and installed physical features to clear obstructive parking from pedestrian crossing points.
- Accident remedial measures and engineering measures to enhance safety at schools and routes to schools to continue to be prioritised.
- Extending mobile safety camera sites with Cheshire Police. Data from Smiley SiDs provides an indication of priority roads and we continue to explore new mobile camera sites with Cheshire Police at locations where speeding is an identifiable issue.
- Some of the Smiley SiDs and speed activated signs coming to the end of their effective lives and a programme of repair or replacement is underway.

- Education, training and publicity. The ETP programme will continue as highlighted under the current programme set out above.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no direct financial implication resulting from the publication of these latest figures.

5.2 Funding for road safety initiatives is now derived from a number of sources. Since 2011 ‘ring-fenced’ grants for road safety have been removed. Consequentially this means that the road safety programme must be strictly prioritised.

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

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
Any reduction in road casualties’ releases health resources to be focused on other areas of health care.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
Improving road safety can encourage people to access opportunities for work, especially via sustainable / active travel means.

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
By helping to create a safer environment, road safety casualty reduction work assists in the safeguarding of children and young people and in the achievement of accessible services.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
There is a link between deprivation and road traffic collisions and improving road safety will improve the quality of life, especially those who are most vulnerable.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**
There are benefits to the environment through encouraging active travel choices.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**
A safe and sustainable road system improves both the communities they serve and the wider environment. The work of the Traffic Management and Road Safety Team ensures that the highways infrastructure is as safe as possible for all road users.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The 2024 DfT statistics indicate that Halton is performing well in term of road safety and collision reduction. However, a reduction in dedicated road safety resources can impact negatively on road safety and associated road collision statistics.

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 Improving road safety can help tackle climate change by encouraging walking and cycling by making it safer to travel in low- and no-carbon ways, thereby reducing the number of cars on the road.

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

None under the meaning of the act.

Appendix A

Halton 2024 Traffic Collisions Review

In 2024 Halton saw a significant reduction in collision and casualty numbers as traffic has risen and has finally reached pre-pandemic levels. The previous 12 months saw a sharp fall in the number of collisions, a small decrease in those seriously injured and a substantial in those slightly injured.

Given the recent fluctuations in traffic levels pre- and post-pandemic, the Department for Transport advises that the casualty rate per billion vehicles miles is the best metric to gauge the relative safety of a highway network. Ten years ago, Halton's casualty rate was approximately 15% above the average nationally and regionally, now we around 20% below these figures.

All accidents reported to Cheshire Police, and which occurred within the adopted highway in Halton involving at least one motor vehicle, horse rider or cyclist, and where at least one person was injured, are included in this Review. Collisions that occur on private land (or driveways) and car parks or do not result in personal injuries also excluded.

As for the previous year, the figures in this report for injured casualties are based on adjusting figures reported by the Police to take account of a historic under-reporting of road traffic collisions. These adjusted figures can reliably be used to compare trends over time across the country.

The Department for Transport has engaged with all Police Constabularies to ensure a uniform approach to STATS19 information gathering and in addition, changes to injury severity assessments have been made. Collisions are now more readily classified as 'severe' under these new rules. Historical data has also been re-examined and now the DfT is able to provide 10 years' worth of directly comparable data for every Police Force and Local Authority.

Year	Collisions	All casualties	Adult Deaths / Serious Injuries (adjusted) (AKSIs)	Child Deaths / Serious Injuries (CKSIs)	Slight Injuries All Ages (SLI)
2013	267	347	57	3	307
2014	279	376	68	4	325
2015	224	304	47	2	272
2016	257	353	61	6	308
2017	241	303	43	4	275
2018	194	230	42	6	202
2019	190	249	46	2	208
2020	149	181	32	4	159
2021	148	176	28	2	158
2022	157	188	39	3	146

2023	158	195	35	6	156
2024	123	163	35	3	127

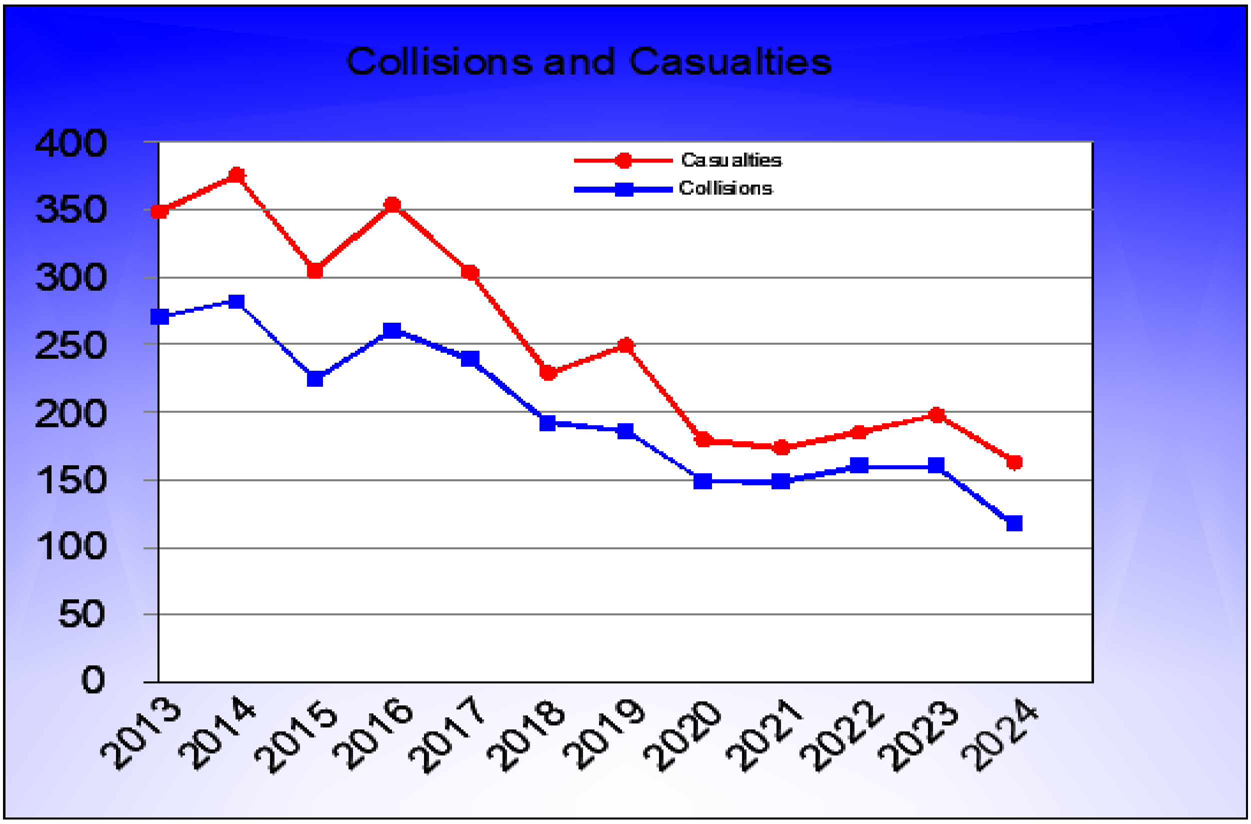


Figure 1 – Collisions and casualties (all categories) 2013 – 2024

Killed and Seriously Injured, All Ages (KSI)

2024 saw a decrease in the number of all-age casualties killed or seriously injured (KSI) in Halton, from 41 in 2023 to 38 in 2024. There were no reported fatalities on Halton's roads, something not seen for over a decade.

Halton, in comparison with other Authorities within the Cheshire Constabulary area and Liverpool City Region was one of the top performing Local Authorities when comparing figures from both last year and over a longer period. In the past year only Knowsley MBC has performed better in reducing road casualty numbers and looking back to average figures a decade ago Halton has seen greater reductions than any other Local Authority within the Merseyside / Cheshire region.

Given the small numbers involved and their inherent volatility, it is more advantageous to use a rolling average, taken over a number of years. Despite plateauing in recent years, with last year's fall in numbers the five-year rolling average has declined again (down to 37.4 from 39.4). However, influencing factors such as the new Mersey Gateway Bridge and associated road system being outside Council control; reductions in budgets and the focus on small scale marginal gains; and continued changes to the Police serious injury reporting system have meant that opportunities to drive significant improvements are increasingly limited.

This year's fall in KSI numbers (all ages) was somewhat unexpected, given the rise in traffic levels, and it will be interesting to see if the historic downward shift in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads can be maintained.

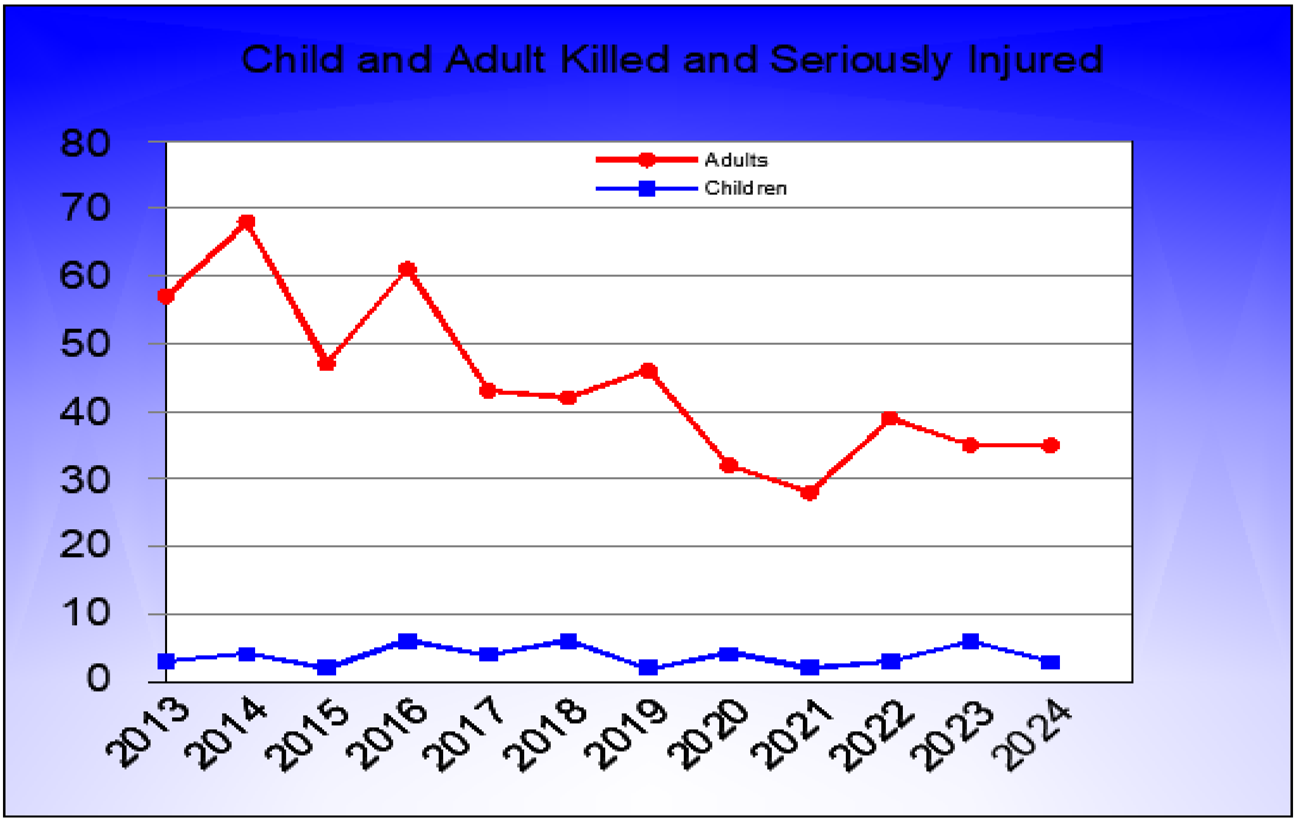


Figure 2 – Killed and Seriously Injured (Adults and Children) 2013 – 2024

Children (u16s) Killed and Seriously Injured (CKSI)

In 2024, 3 children were seriously injured in Halton, a 50% reduction in comparison with 2023. Due to the numbers being so low, this annual total is traditionally very prone to variations, year on year. The five-year rolling CSKI average has remained static at around 3.5, an historically low number.

It will be interesting to see if these unprecedented low casualty numbers can continue but given the random nature of road traffic collisions it is difficult to envisage them completely disappearing.

Slight, All-Age Casualties (SLI)

In 2023 there was a marked decrease in people of all ages slightly injured in Halton, down to 127 from last year's 156. Comparison with pre-pandemic levels makes better reading, with Slight, All-Age Casualties showing a 39% reduction on the 2019 figures.

Then number of collisions on the Borough's roads also decreased significantly and are probably at their lowest level since the start of mass-car ownership. The number has more than halved in the past 10 years and is testament to the work Halton Borough Council engages in to constantly improve both the highway network and the behaviour and standards of those who use it.

For almost three decades (1983-2010), the UK Government set ambitious casualty reduction targets. These targets were seen as “fundamental” to the substantial reductions in death and injury that followed.

However, in 2010, policy changed, and explicit targets were abandoned. Instead in 2011 the Coalition Government introduced a strategy for Road Safety that set out an advisory outcomes framework designed to help Local Government, local organisations and citizens to monitor progress towards improving road safety and decreasing the number of fatalities and seriously injured casualties.

The framework included six key indicators relating to road deaths. These were intended to measure the key outcomes of the strategy, but in Halton, given the low number of fatalities, and the consequent fluctuations, it was proposed to use KSI rates instead. The Government appeared to have abandoned any semblance of road casualty reduction targets by the late 2010s but nevertheless Halton met its 2020 casualty reduction targets with ease.

Since then, the Department for Transport have not advised Local Authorities outside of Greater London of any new targets or strategies to reduce casualty numbers on our roads and although the new Government promised explicit casualty reduction targets, these are yet to appear.

A detailed look at Halton’s casualty numbers in comparison with neighbouring Local Authorities shows just how much we have achieved in recent years:

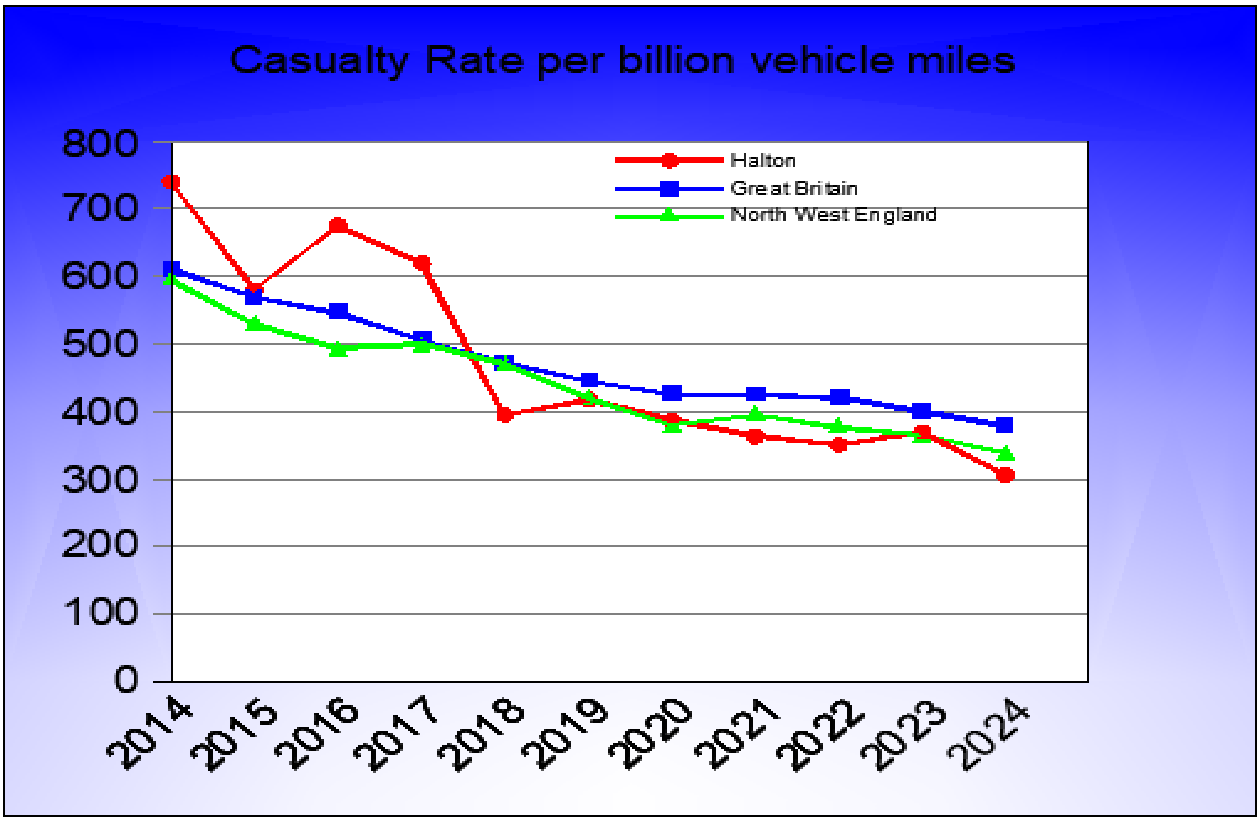
All casualties	2015-2019 average	2022	2023	2024	2024 change over 2023	2023 change over 2015 – 2019 average
Cheshire East	980	821	718	743	+3%	-24%
Cheshire West & Chester	931	707	645	628	-3%	-33%
Halton	**288**	**188**	**195**	**163**	**-16%**	**-43%**
Knowsley	329	295	273	226	-17%	-31%
Liverpool	1323	1193	1119	1013	-9%	-23%
Manchester	1168	868	807	892	+11%	-24%
St Helens	355	290	299	292	-2%	-18%
Warrington	589	382	398	340	-15%	-42%
GB	170,464	135,280	132,977	128,272	-4%	-25%

With regards those killed or seriously injured, the situation is similar, as there was a small decrease in KSIs (all ages) for 2024, as compared with the year previously and Halton emerged as one of the better performing Local Authorities.

It will be interesting to see if the long-term downward trend can be maintained in Halton (the 5 year rolling average continues to fall) or whether, without new investment in road safety, casualty numbers will inevitably rise. It is understood that in the current economic climate Local Authorities, Police Forces and Safety Camera Partnerships operate under severe financial constraints, lacking the resources to engage in new, large-scale casualty reduction strategies. Nevertheless, the reduction in the number of those seriously injured on our roads should be recognised as good news, given the cost, both financially and emotionally, these collisions incur.

KSI (adjusted)	2015-2019 average	2022	2023	2024	2024 change over 2023	2024 change over 2015 – 2019 average
Cheshire East	195	191	170	189	+11%	-3%
Cheshire West & Chester	156	141	148	159	+7%	+2%
Halton	**45**	**38**	**41**	**38**	**-7%**	**-16%**
Knowsley	61	70	59	60	+2%	-2%
Liverpool	281	262	292	243	-17%	-14%
Manchester	235	184	194	266	+37%	+13%
St Helens	78	62	82	81	-1%	+4%
Warrington	88	65	90	79	-12%	-10%
GB	31,625	29,700	29,711	29,467	-1%	-7%

In recent years, and with the advent of new technologies, the Department for Transport has ramped up its traffic data collection system and as such is no advising that the road casualty rate per billion vehicle miles is the most accurate way the determine the relative safety of a Local Authority's highway network.
Whilst there is still much work to do, Halton's casualty rate continues to fall and is now well below both the national and regional average. It should also be noted that our roads have fewer casualties per billion vehicle miles than all the other Local Authorities within the Cheshire Constabulary area. Within the Liverpool City Region only Knowsley MBC have a statistically safer road network.



When engaging in a casualty reduction programme it is vital to know who is involved and the causes behind these collisions. These, and other long-term trends should also be examined to inform decisions and better enable us to target resources.

Casualty numbers (all severities) by road user type								
Year	**Pedestrian**	**Pedal Cyclist**	**Motorcyclist**	**Car Occupant**	**Bus Occupant**	**Van Occupant**	**HGV Occupant**	**Other Veh Occupant**
2013	43	26	31	235	3	7	0	2
2014	34	51	41	229	4	14	3	0
2015	45	24	29	185	3	8	7	3
2016	43	39	36	181	36	14	1	3
2017	41	37	28	175	14	7	1	0
2018	32	37	20	126	3	9	3	0
2019	36	21	25	155	3	4	4	1
2020	26	35	21	91	1	5	2	0
2021	17	26	19	102	1	5	4	2
2022	22	29	24	101	0	8	0	4
2023	20	23	20	114	4	7	6	1
2024	19	11	17	109	0	1	1	5

It is positive that the three most vulnerable road user types (pedestrians, cyclists and powered two-wheelers) all saw a decline in casualty numbers last year.

In recent years Local Authorities have been actively encouraged to increase the number of people walking and cycling, through the construction of new pedestrian and cycle-only routes, re-allocation of road space and other initiatives to boost ‘active travel’.

Walking is currently the only mode of transport where average trips per person are above 2019 levels and it is very satisfying to see a significant reduction in pedestrian casualties, both medium and long-term. Indeed, KSI figures for pedestrians are currently half the number they were in 2019 and is testament to the number of pedestrian-focused engineering measures and road safety initiatives Halton Borough Council has engaged with, in recent years. Indeed, last year our Road Safety team delivered ‘Stepping Out’ pedestrian training to Year 3 children at almost every primary school in the Borough.

There has been a welcome fall in the casualty numbers for cycling. The ongoing construction of new, strategic traffic-free cycle routes in the Borough will have contributed to these figures subsiding and the safer environment these route offers may encourage more people to switch to more sustainable modes of transport. To encourage cycling and good practice, Halton Borough Council delivered cycle training to over 2000 children in Halton, and cycle safety talks and independent travel training was provided to Years 5 & 6 children.

Over the past four decades all the collision data we receive from Cheshire Police was via the STATS19 recording system. The data the Police provided gave almost 100 possible causation factors as well as information regarding casualty types, weather, road conditions etc. This information was vital to properly direct a road casualty reduction programme although it was disappointing that too often Cheshire Police did not provide causation factor details to Local Authorities, only the Department for Transport.

In recent months the Department for Transport has massively changed the way the STATS19 system collects and processes data. Causation factors have been removed and replaced with road safety factors (RSF), designed to focus on recording factors related to areas where action can be taken to improve road safety, and to reduce the list of potential factors, with a new set of codes. In addition, the previous severity definitions (fatal, serious, slight) and been replaced with seven new categories and disappointingly it appears that much of the collision analysis software Local Authorities (including Halton) use are yet to be properly reconfigured to cope with the new data.

Since the Covid19 pandemic there has been a noticeable shift in traffic patterns, with less acute peak hours but more traffic on roads during traditional daytime off-peak periods. Changes in work and shopping patterns (more people working from home and the rise in shopping delivered to home) may account for some of this, but it is also clear that traffic associated with the 'school run' continues to grow, bringing its own related road safety issues.

Engineering measures designed to enhance safety around schools continue to be a priority and our Road Safety team continue to engage with schools and Police on a weekly basis to encourage safer behaviour from all road users and discourage inconsiderate parking, which often negatively impacts road safety.

In addition, our brilliantly run and ever popular School Crossing Patrol service continues to provide children with safe places to cross. Last year almost 3000 children in the Borough crossed the road each day with the help of our Patrols.

Despite austerity budgets for the last decade or so, the casualty rate has substantially decreased and despite continuing budgetary constraints the safety of our roads continues to improve. Lack of resources mean a scaling back of engineering interventions but in recent years a greater number of small-scale engineering schemes have been devised to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. Add to that the sterling work of our Road Safety team in their education, training and publicity programmes, together with a greater engagement with Cheshire Police in targeted enforcement campaigns, there is no reason why further gains cannot be made in ensuring the safest road network possible.

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12th November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Director of Public Health
PORTFOLIO:	Environment and Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Pest Control – Update on fees and charges
WARD(S)	Borough Wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide members with an update on the pest control service following the implementation of a charge for rat treatments in April 2025.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: that Members endorse the proposal to continue with the current means tested charges for rat treatments. This includes the provision of free treatments for residents in receipt of council tax reduction benefit.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Following a report to the Board in February 2025 members resolved to endorse the proposal to introduce a new fee that recovers the full cost of rat treatments on domestic properties. However the Board requested that the original proposal be amended to ensure that free treatments were provided to residents in receipt of council tax reduction benefit. This proposal was ultimately agreed by Council as part of the budget setting process for 25/26. However, the Board requested that an update be provided to the November meeting to assess the impact of the new charge.

3.2 Until April 2025 the provision of rat treatments had been free for all residential properties. Prior to the introduction of a fee the council received around 2500 requests for rat treatments a year. The February 2025 PPB report stated that it was difficult to forecast demand, but the experience of other local authorities suggested there would be significant reduction in demand once a fee was introduced. Based on an assumption that demand would fall by 50% it was estimated a charge would realise income of around £50,000 a year based on a fee of £38 + VAT (£46.60).

3.3 The table below sets out the number of rat treatments carried out between 1st April and 30th September 2025 compared with the same period last year. The 2025 figures are further broken down into jobs that were charged and jobs that were carried out for free.

Table 1 Rat Treatments April to September 2024 and 2025.

April – September 2024 Total	**1337**
April – Sept 2025 Chargeable	240
April – Sept 2025 Free	173
April – September 2025 Total	**453**

3.4 It can be seen from the table above that there has been a considerable reduction in the number of treatments carried out. This is also considerably lower than the 50% reduction in requests anticipated. Based on the £38 + VAT fee, income from rat treatments for the first half of the year will be £9,120. Assuming a similar rate of jobs and income over the next 6 months the income from chargeable rat treatments is likely to be in the region of £18,000 to £20,000 per year. This is considerably below the £50,000 anticipated in the February 2025 report. The service will therefore not achieve the income targets set for 25/26.

3.5 However, on a more positive note, the potential negative impacts of implementing a charge that were set out in the February 2025 report have not materialised. These included an increase in rat activity and an increase in enforcement cases for the Environmental Protection team. This is likely to be due to some of the mitigation measures the service has put in place. These measures include undertaking a comprehensive sewer baiting programme to treat rats in sewers. Also, where it safe to do so, the service carries out rat treatments in public areas and council land where there are reports of rat activity.

3.6 A small number of complaints have been received from customers who had noticed rats on and around their property but did not want to pay for their own treatment. In these cases, those areas were included in the sewer baiting or area treatment programmes.

3.7 A comprehensive advice and information booklet for customers was produced which provided advice and guidance on reducing pest activity and set out the service that customers could expect to receive. This included information on booking any revisits that were included in the fee. To date the service has not received any complaints about the standard of service received.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Although there has been a considerable reduction in service requests since the charge was introduced there has so far been no significant negative consequences as a result of this change. Therefore, it is proposed to retain the charge. The fee has been set to recover the costs of the council providing individual treatments. Setting the fee at this level ensures the service remains accessible for as many households as possible.

4.2 Providing a free service to those in receipt of council tax reduction benefit ensures that low-income households are not adversely impacted by the new charge. Therefore, it is also proposed to retain the free service for benefit recipients.

4.3 The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 places a duty on local authorities to control rats on council land. Maintaining rat treatments in public areas and council land along with the sewer baiting programme ensures the council continues to fulfil its statutory obligations.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Due to the demand for chargeable services being significantly less than projected the service will not achieve the additional income targets set. The service also charges for the treatment of other pest species such as wasps and ants. The overall income target for 25/26 for all chargeable pest control work is £74,860. Projected income for the full year is £45,407. Therefore, there will be a shortfall in income of £29,353. This will represent an overspend on the pest control budget for 25/26.

5.2 Restoring the free service and removing the charge will only worsen this overspend position. To mitigate the current projected overspend other services within the Public Protection Regulatory Services Division will either need to increase income or reduce spending accordingly.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
Rats are a public health pest and are known to carry a number of infectious diseases. Controlling rat activity in and around buildings is essential to protect public health. In addition to providing chargeable rat treatments the service will continue to treat rats on council owned land and carry out a sewer baiting programme.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
None

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
None

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
The fee has been set to only recover the full cost of providing the treatment to ensure the service remains accessible to as many households as possible. The provision of free rat treatments to

those in receipt of council tax reduction benefit ensures the service remains accessible to low-income households.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**
None

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**
None

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The mitigation measures implemented by the service and the implementation of a means tested element have ensured that there have been no significant negative impacts associated with the charge. Therefore there is no significant risk associated with retaining the charge.

7.2 However, demand and income have been lower than anticipated resulting in a potential over spend on the pest control budget which will need to be managed within the wider departmental budget.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The retention of free treatments ensures the service remains accessible to low-income households.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

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

‘None under the meaning of the Act.’

Agenda Item 5d

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12th November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment and Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Environmental Fund Update
WARD(S)	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Board on the expenditure of the Environmental Fund.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 The Board notes the wide range of projects that have benefitted from the fund, as set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Planning permission for the Runcorn Energy from Waste (EfW) Plant was granted in September 2008. The Plant is subject to a legal agreement entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3.2 The legal agreement contains a provision that the owner of the Plant agrees to pay the Council an annual lump sum payment for every tonne of fuel received and processed. The legal agreement states:

"*that the lump sum payments shall be used by the Council to fund environmental matters as may be specified from time to time by the Council within the Borough of Halton for the benefit of its residents generally and which may include measures to improve public transport, highway network improvements, travel plan monitoring, waste recycling and wider community improvements such as landscaping and nature conservation measures."*

3.3 The fund has been in operation since 2015, and over that period has generated £7,936,270.74.

3.4 A number of projects have been funded and implemented, as set out in Appendix 1. These provide a number of interventions, for example improvements to open space, (Town Park in Runcorn and Runcorn

Hill). These projects not only provide visual improvements and open up access, including walking and cycling routes, but also have wider health benefits, encouraging people to use their local spaces more. Other projects include supporting the regeneration of Runcorn Station Quarter and Runcorn Town Centre.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The fund seeks to advance the Council's environmental priorities.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It adds considerable value by acting as matched financing for external funding bids.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
Projects fund a variety of initiatives to support health, wellbeing and the outdoors.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy
Projects such as the café at Pickerings Pasture will lead to employment opportunities.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families
Funding outdoor space schemes will help bring families together in play and social life.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
Not directly applicable.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future
Projects such as The Runcorn Station Quarter Enterprise Hub is funding solar panels as part of the regeneration of the building.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community
The fund allows for money to be spent on improving the lives of Halton residents in a number of ways, as listed in Appendix 1.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no legal or financial risks that arise from the subject of this report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the subject of this report.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Funding solar panels: match funding for the renewable community energy fund and undergoing a survey to monitor the air quality in Halton are examples of funded projects tackling climate change.

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

‘None under the meaning of the Act.’

INEOS Energey From Waste Projects	Grants Agreed	Drawndown
Runcorn Hill Park - works to refurbish features inc Boating Lake etc	£135,537.00	£135,537.00
Dukesfield Garages - provision of skips etc for clearance of fly tipping	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
Community Payback - funding of supervision team	£193,746.00	£149,651.00
Weston Point Library - temporary closure	£5,510.19	£5,510.19
Runcorn Town Centre Community Garden - maintain / improve garden area	£24,000.00	£24,000.00
Runcorn Hill Park - creation of trail walking / running track	£7,239.60	£7,239.60
Air quality monitoring	£32,600.00	£32,600.00
Runcorn Locks Restoration - funding of feasibility survey	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Wood Lane Pond - improvement of public open spaces facilities	£17,279.33	£17,279.33
Runcorn Town Hall Park - install traditional fencing to improve security	£118,159.28	£118,159.28
Runcorn Hill Park / Highlands Road - improvements to park boundary	£56,043.40	£56,043.40
Beechwood - provision of new children's playground	£37,327.16	£37,327.16
Town Park - car park improvements to improve visitor access	£130,000.00	£130,000.00
Renewable Energy - installation of solar farm at former St Michael's golf course	£250,000.00	£250,000.00
Weston Point Laybay - permanent closure	£6,416.46	£6,416.46
Town Park Team - funding for on site environmental maintenance team	£350,000.00	£350,000.00
Major Routeways - funding of two person team for litter / maintenance	£300,000.00	£240,000.00
Prescot Road Playing Fields - boundary and car park improvements	£136,816.00	£136,816.00
Canal Links SJB to Daresbury - walking / cycling route along Bridgewater Canal	£40,000.00	£40,000.00
Runcorn Station to Heath Business Park - walking / cycling route	£20,000.00	£20,000.00
Victoria Park Glasshouse - restoration of Victorial style structure	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Sewer Destructor - restoration and information boards	£1,218.60	£1,218.60
Environmental Contingency Fund - funding for small works eg graffitti removal	£17,090.00	£2,090.00
Halton Lodge Play Area - improvements to play area / equipment	£12,500.00	£12,500.00
Widnes SUD - reconstruction of Victoria Park Cycle Path	£205,652.54	£205,652.54
War Memorials - conservation works to memorials in Hale, Runcorn and Widnes	£48,958.00	£48,958.00
Hale Lighthouse Access - improved access for disabled / pedestrian / equestrian users	£15,474.00	£13,873.75
Runcorn Station Piazza design fees and initial works	£25,155.00	£25,155.00
Runcorn Hill Park Bowling Green - improved pedestrian access and amenity	£52,507.00	£51,654.25
Barrows Green Widnes - improvements to site infrastructure / access etc	£187,899.00	£154,630.65
Runcorn Hill Park footbridge installation of replacement footbridge	£21,266.00	£21,266.00
Town Park Southern Park improvements to path infrastructure and landscaping	£209,000.00	£209,000.00
Rooftop Garden and Community Kitchen Garden at Halton Lea (Shopping City)	£6,867.00	£6,867.00
Madeline McKenna Home	£15,165.00	£15,165.00
Runcorn Cemetary Seafarers and Covid	£198,818.64	£128,299.57
St Michael's GC Wildlife Garden	£97,000.00	£97,000.00
Brindley Green	£3,995.00	£3,995.00
Arley Drive Pitches	£80,669.00	£75,958.46
Town Park Palacefields Avenue	£330,735.00	£330,735.00
Westfield Pre School AQM	£21,400.00	£21,400.00
CCTV Cameras	£50,000.00	£0.00
Halton Micro Grid Project	£60,000.00	£0.00
Upton Rocks Park Access	£91,904.50	£0.00
Wilmere Lane Mary Twigg Walk	£35,000.00	£0.00
Halton Air Quality	£40,649.00	£40,649.00
Hale Park Dog Exercise Area	£28,306.50	£28,306.50
Waterfront Promenade to TC Green Link Runcorn	£17,500.00	£17,500.00
Sankey Canal Enhancement	£500,000.00	£185,296.23
Litter Bin Replacement	£75,000.00	£0.00
Halton Big Forest	£120,000.00	£20,000.00
Responding to Ash die back	£70,000.00	£0.00
Veterans Environmental Campaign	£120,000.00	£0.00
Mary Twigg Peace Walk Wilmere Lane	£78,940.00	£0.00
HMO Research Project	£40,000.00	£25,000.00
Town Park Holt Lane to Palacefield Improvement	£525,285.00	£13,130.98
Pickerings Pasture - MRP for Café	£612,500.00	£0.00
Neighbourhood Patrol Officers	£149,730.00	£0.00
	£6,089,359.20	**£3,574,380.95**
FUNDS RECEIVED		
From Ineos March 15	£154,027.35	
From Ineos May 16	£510,092.82	
From Ineos May 17	£616,258.56	
From Ineos May 18	£757,884.26	
From Ineos June 19	£703,306.87	
From Ineos May 20	£730,170.90	
From Ineos July 21	£753,589.06	
From Ineos June 22	£809,790.72	
From Ineos June 23	£889,349.46	
From Ineos	£985,449.76	
	£6,909,919.76	

also updated drawdowns to match Agresso and reconciliation sheets

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	12th November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment and Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Progress of the Planning Policy Team's Local Development Scheme (LDS)
WARD(S)	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report seeks to notify the board of the progress of the following projects:

- Transport and Accessibility SPD
- Social Value in Planning SPD
- House Extensions SPD
- Call for Sites Exercise

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

1. **the report is noted.**
2. **Officers proceed with necessary consultation to endorse Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 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.

3.2 Government instructed all Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to publish and submit an up-to-date LDS, as part of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) changes in December 2024. There is a statutory requirement for all LPAs to produce an annual LDS. The purpose of an LDS is to inform the reader of the programme of work that is being undertaken to meet NPPF framework, whilst maintaining and monitoring Halton's Local Plan to ensure it is meeting national and local objectives. In the 2024/25 LDS it was outlined that the Planning Policy team would prepare the

Transport and Accessibility, House Extension and Social Value in Planning SPDs. This is an update on the progress of these documents.

3.3 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 House Extensions or Transport. Social Value in Planning provides the opportunity for Developers to create training/work opportunities in the Construction Industry. They 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.

3.4 The Planning Policy team would like to take the House Extension and Transport and Accessibility SPDs out for a short consultation in Mid-November, the Social Value in Planning SPD will follow the same process in the early New Year, with a consultation statement summarising any responses as part of the final documentation. The Planning Policy team plan to bring these SPDs to the Executive Board early in the new year for adoption.

3.5 The Call for Sites exercise provides the Council with information on the level and nature of interest in developing land in Halton and helps the Council to understand potentially available sites for future development. It is part of the routine maintenance of the Local Plan and does not constitute a new Local Plan. It is a process of gathering information and helps the Council understand any potentially available sites for future development.

3.6 The Council has chosen to extend the period of time where we invite landowners, developers and site promoters to submit to the Council land which they want to develop. The exercise will now run until the 5th December, instead of terminating on the 24th October. This is due to a request from a large landowner to extend the deadline so they can submit a site(s) to the Council.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Local Plan is a plan for the future development 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, with Supplementary Planning Documents providing any further information that may be required.

4.2 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]

4.3 Given the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and emerging Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) having an up-to-date Local Plan is important to ensure the Council has control over decision-making. The Planning Policy team have prepared these SPDs to provide more guidance to internal and external stakeholders on the topic issues in question.

4.4 Furthermore, as part of the routine maintenance of the Local Plan the Council is to keep an up-to-date register of the level and nature of interest in developing land in the borough. This will then inform the future review of the Local Plan's policies and allocations.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The adoption of the Social Value in Planning, Transport and Accessibility and House Extension SPDs have no direct financial implications for the Council. The Call for Sites exercise also has 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 Transport and Accessibility SPD supports active travel which enables healthy lifestyles. House Extension SPD protects health and amenity for the householder and neighbouring properties. The Social Value in Planning SPD also creates opportunities to develop skills and knowledge leading to employment opportunities.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

The Transport and Accessibility SPD helps ensure is well-connected to support the local economy. The House Extension SPD will provide more technical information, which will make the development process smoother and give back to the Local Economy. Social Value in Planning SPD reinvesting in the local communities through skills and training opportunities.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The Transport and Accessibility SPD helps promote healthy lifestyles for young people and families. Social Value in planning works with local education and further educations to create learning and apprenticeship opportunities. House Extensions SPD ensure householders still have access to amenity spaces like gardens and lighting, vital for the development of young children.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
Social Value in Planning in SPD creates opportunities for more disadvantaged members of the community to engage in learning and employment. The Transport and Accessibility SPD is supported by Inclusive Mobility which supports people with accessibility issues. The House Extension SPD will ensure protects health and amenity for the householder and neighbouring properties.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future
The House Extension SPD ensures extensions meets energy efficiency standards. The Transport and Accessibility SPD encourages also sustainable modes of travel to help reduce carbon emissions. The Social Value in Planning SPD enables local residents to learn the importance of energy efficiency in the construction industry

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community
The community feel that they have a voice in how Halton is developed by participating in the opportunities offered in the Social Value in Planning SPD. The House Extension SPD helps preserve the character of Halton. The Transport and Accessibility SPD aims to help create a well-connected sustainable community.

The Call for Sites exercise is part of the routine maintenance of the Local Plan, which includes policies that addresses the six Council priorities above.

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. The Call for Sites exercise helps identify potential future development land, which is then assessed against a national criteria to ascertain its suitability to be considered in the future for development. By ensuring there is enough suitable developable land as per National Planning Policy Guidance will ensure unsuitable development for the borough is not permitted.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Building stronger communities through community engagement and good planning is a key aspect of the Local Plan. The Council is already 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. Planning Policy documents are subjected to Equality Impact Assessments during their production to ensure compliance.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications of the SPDs or the Call for Sites exercise.

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 (2025)	Municipal Building, Widnes	Rebecca Taylor

Agenda Item 6a

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance
DATE:	12th November 2025
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment & Regeneration
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Reports for Quarter 2 of 2025/26
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the second quarter period to 30th September 2025.

1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2025-26 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:

- Development and Investment Services
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services

1.3 The report details progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Policy & Performance Board:**

1) Receive the second quarterly performance management report.

2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and

3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

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

6.1 All Key Performance Indicators relate directly to the following Council's priorities:

- Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
- Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy
- Supporting Children, Young People and Families
- Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
- Working Towards a Greener Future
- Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

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

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

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

None under the meaning of the Act

Environment & Regeneration Performance Monitoring Report - Quarter 2

Directorate:	Environment & Regeneration
Departments:	**Community & Environment, Planning & Transportation, Economy, Enterprise & Property Services**
Period:	Quarter 2- 1st July – 30th September 2025

1.0 Introduction

This quarterly performance monitoring report covers the **Environment & Regeneration Directorate's** second quarter period up to 30th September 2025.
It describes key developments and progress against 'key' milestones and performance indicators for the service in line with the Corporate plan.

2.0 Data Quality Statement

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

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

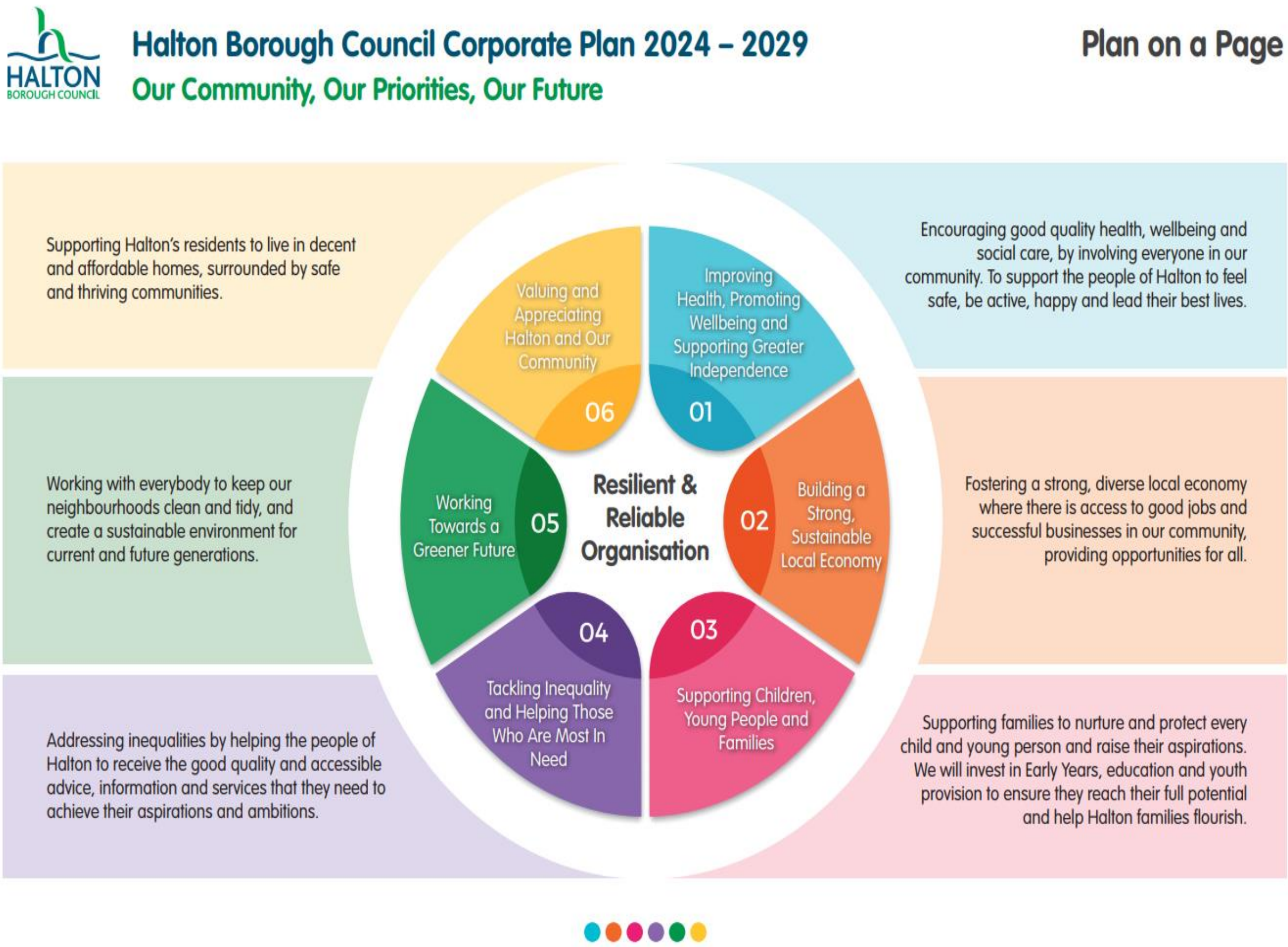
3.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Progress Against Objectives / Milestones

Appendix 2: Explanation of Symbols

Appendix 3: Progress Against Performance Indicators

Appendix 4: Financial Statement



Appendix 1: Progress Against Objectives / Milestones

Corporate Priority	Priority 2 – Building a strong sustainable local economy. **Regeneration**
ERD 01	**Deliver key regeneration programmes and work with partners to increase social and financial investment.**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Deliver Widnes Town Centre UKSPF funded by March 2026.		Spend has started slowing in Q2, we are expecting most of the spend to be in Q4. New Street art project – First round selection completed, round 2 underway to select winning commission. Music Trail – in house work continues and external contract in place.

		Enhancement Study – team appointed and work has started. Widnes Road Public Realm – new street furniture selected.
The following Runcorn Town Deal funded projects to be completed or in contract by March 2026 – Creative and Digital Skills Centre, Health and Education Hub, Unlock Runcorn, Rutland Street, Connectivity Project, Enterprise Centre.	U	Health and Education Hub is due to complete later this year with commissioning to follow. Creative and Digital Skills Centre 57 59 due to complete March 26 Creative and Digital Skills Centre 63 65 not yet in contract Unlock Runcorn not yet in contract Rutland Street planning due for submission by March 26 Connectivity not yet in contract Enterprise centre not yet in contract Deadline for spend has been extended to March 2027 by Government
Submit Runcorn Regeneration plan by December 2025 following further guidance from government being signed off by Runcorn Neighbourhood Board, Stakeholders and Executive Board.	✓	Work is ongoing, a paper is going to Executive Board in October and the Board is on track to approve and submit The Regeneration Plan by the deadline.

Corporate Priority	Priority 2 – Building a strong sustainable local economy **Regeneration**
ERD 02	**Support development & growth at Sci-tech Daresbury**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Assist JV to secure £9.5m funding from the CA by July 2025 for Project Violet Phase 2 and commence delivery by March 2026	✓	The CA Investment Panel approved the Full Business Case for the Lab Building, and the grant funding agreement is currently being drafted. The Strategic Outline Case for the second building has also been approved and will now proceed to a Full Business Case.
Make the CPO to bring forward circa 30 acres of future development land by January 2026	U	Documentation for the CPO is being progressed.

Corporate Priority	Priority Six – Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community **Regeneration**
ERD 03	**Providing new homes that meet Halton's needs.**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Undertake public consultation on Draft Borough wide Housing Strategy by August 2025	✗	On Target. The Council are currently working with SPP Partners on submitting sites for inclusion within the Liverpool City Region Housing Pipeline. This work commenced in June 2025 and should conclude in November 2025. Sites will align with the approved Liverpool City Region SPP Business Plan.
Agree Housing Delivery Plan for Halton with SPP partners by March 2026.	✓	On Target. The Council are currently working with SPP Partners on submitting sites for inclusion within the Liverpool City Region Housing Pipeline. This work commenced in June 2025 and should conclude in November 2025. Sites will align with the approved Liverpool City Region SPP Business Plan.
Sign Development Agreement with Halton Housing Trust for Runcorn Waterfront Development by December 2025	✓	On Target.
Complete Phase 1 Housing delivery of 63 houses (30 shared ownership and 33 for social rent) at Foundry Lane by November 2026.	✓	On Target. Handover of first completed homes anticipated in May 2026, followed by all homes completed by November 2026.

Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy **Business Investment & Growth**
ERD 04	**To provide support to all Halton's businesses and encourage start-ups.**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Deliver key sector network events (including Green, Logistics and Advance Manufacturing) and workshops to create an environment for businesses to come together to collaborate and create Growth. Target to engage 160 unique businesses 25/26	✓ ✓	Delivered 2 Green Growth and 2 Logistics networks 2025/26. To date 58 unique businesses have engaged in these events. Looking ahead, a series of business support workshops and drop-in sessions are scheduled to run from October 25 through to March 26.

		Additionally, planning is underway for an Economic Forum, which is scheduled to take place in January 2026.
Provide specialist business support to 20 Halton Businesses by March 2026		Diagnostics have been undertaken for 21 Business's (1/4/2025-30/9/2025) and one-to-one specialist business support has been referred to 21 businesses, 3 of these have been fully completed and 18 are currently ongoing. There has been a total of 95 new enquires (1/4/2025-30/9/2025) for business support under the UKSPF programme. Under the previous UKSPF Programme 2023-2025, 67 companies were supported in total, with 24 supported in Q4 of 24/25.
Provide a series of workshops to support 10 business start ups by March 2026		There are currently 32 enquiries for start-up support and initial advice has been provided to 32 individuals. In depth support has been provided resulting in 5 start up to date with future workshops planned. Under the previous UKSPF programme, 15 business start-ups were supported following a series of workshops.
The business Investment and growth team will identify and account mange the 50 local priority companies ensuring that they meet each of the businesses on one occasion during the financial year to provide relevant signposting and support		Work is ongoing to identify the top 50 companies through a number of metrics. The team continue to key account manage and meet with local businesses.

Corporate Priority	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence **Programmes Office**
ERD 05	**Maximise new external funding opportunities and effectively manage and monitor existing funding programmes**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Deliver 4 training sessions to internal and external partners during 25/26 to upskill colleagues in bid-writing and monitoring. Target is to upskill 20 people throughout the year.		The Programmes Office suite of 4 training courses was delivered to internal and external partners in April/May 25 with 15 people attending them; the Training Programme will be repeated in October and November 25 and

		bespoke sessions for whole organisations are also being offered.
Complete and maintain a Regeneration Pipeline Tracker and liaise with CA colleagues to ensure Halton's key projects are profiled. Moving 10 projects through the discover stage each year.		Regeneration Pipeline tracker established – being used to pilot Phase 1 of the new Project Management System. Phase I has been reviewed and agreed changes being implemented. Programmes Office has begun to set up meetings with relevant CA colleagues in order to co-ordinate pipelines across housing, regen, transport etc.
Support 6 grant funding submissions per quarter – 3 internal and 3 external and monitor the success rate.		8 bids submitted in Qtr. 2 worth £1,080,500
Submit successful (no clawback) bi-annual claims to Government for the Town Deal Programme and quarterly to the CA for UK Shared Prosperity Programme.		Successful Town Deal performance report submitted May 2025; no issues or clawback from MHCLG; no claim required Nov 2025 – next claim due May 26. Successful UKSPF claims submitted end June 2025; current Qtr. claims with internal audit and CA for consideration.

Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy **Visitor Economy**
ERD 06	**To commission and deliver a Place-making Strategy for the borough to incorporate Visitor Economy, Inward Investment and Regeneration opportunities to highlight Halton as a great place to live, work, invest, study and visit.**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Commission the production of Place-Making Strategy by December 2025 following a workshop with key stakeholders and approval from Executive Board by March 2026		Place Strategy commissioned Sept 2025; inception meeting held and monthly review meetings diarised. Final strategy due March 26.
Deliver the Destination Halton Marketing programme, including Visit Halton and Marketing Halton to March 2026 with 3 campaigns throughout the year with key themes.		*Home Grown in Halton* campaign delivered in July/August showcasing food/drink offer in Halton; second campaign *Look Up Halton* in Sept-Oct delivered as part of Heritage Open Days 25 showcasing Halton's architecture; third campaign being developed for Jan-Mar 26. Seasonal blogs completed for Spring, Summer, Autumn.

Secure £300k in external funding by March 2026 to support the delivery of Culture26, including an Arts Council bid and an NLHF bid themed on Lewis Carroll.		Bid to be submitted to ACE Place Partnership programme for £120k and bid to NLHF for £220k - both to be submitted in October 25. Match funding being sought from various sources.

Corporate Priority	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. **Property Services**
ERD 10	**Reduce Carbon Emissions from the Council's Property Portfolio**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Deliver the solar connection to the Leisure Centre by March 2026	U	The tender documentation for the project will be going out for pricing within the next few weeks. The procurement process inclusive of the tender evaluation will likely mean that the project won't be completed by 31st March, however it is hoped the scheme will be on site by then.
Carry out decarbonisation measures on a minimum of 2 buildings to produce carbon emission reductions to contribute towards 1.5% by March 2026	U	The decarbonisation works at Picow Farm Depot have been tendered and a preferred contractor has been appointed. A design meeting has been held with the contractor, and they are now tasked with refining the design to meet our specific needs. The current programme for Picow is that works will be complete by 31st March 2026. The decarbonisation works at Runcorn Town Hall and Kingsway Learning Centre are currently out to tender in conjunction with other buildings within the City Region. These projects will be delivered later in 2026/27.

Corporate Priority	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community **Planning & Development**
ERD 11	**Create and maintain statutory plans, generated through community consultation, that guide decisions on future development proposals and address the needs and opportunities of the area**

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Delivery of the DALP during the plan period (2037)		Ongoing data collection indicates that the DALP is meeting most of policy requirements however a full analysis cannot be made until March/April 2026
Publication of the LCR LTP4 in 2025		The LTP4 (LCR) is due to go out to public consultation in Q3, I would assume the Document will be published towards the end of Q4.

Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. **Planning & Development**
ERD 12	**Providing new homes that meet Halton's needs**

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Number of homes granted planning permission		Between 1 July 25 –30 Sept 6 planning applications were approved; most of these applications were for change of use.
Number of annual completions of market and affordable homes		The Housing AMR states the number of Net homes built in 24/25 was 387.

Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. **Planning & Development**
ERD 13	**Provide an efficient Planning service that supports business investment in Halton**

Milestone:	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
60% major determined within 13 weeks (or agreed extension)		100% 4 applications determined within agreed extension of time
70% minor application determined in 8 weeks (or agreed extension)		100% 14 applications determined within agreed extension of time

70% other application determined in 8 weeks (or agreed extension)		100% 62 applications determined within agreed extension of time
30 number of applications per development management (DM) officer.		Average of 25 per officer

Corporate Priority	Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. **Logistics**
ERD 14	**Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Review roll-out of bus franchising in neighbouring boroughs.	U	Ongoing discussions taking place with the Combined Authority to clarify Halton's involvement with the LCR franchising model.
Undertake preparations for franchising Halton's network including route design, identifying a timetable and frequencies.	U	As above.

Corporate Priority	Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. **Logistics**
ERD 15	**Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Within available budgets, ensure all areas of Halton have access to a bus service		All areas of Halton are covered by a minimum of 1 bus service per hour.
Monitor the punctuality of bus services *Baseline 96%* *Target 97%*		95% - 2% increase in bus service punctuality from previous quarter. Closure of Halton Lea North Bus Station necessitating major diversion has impacted services, alterations to timetables has lessened the impact. Ongoing liaison with operators.

Monitor the cost of bus fares in Halton		£2.00 flat fare across the LCR.

Corporate Priority	Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. **Logistics**
ERD 16	**Maintain Corporate Fleet Availability**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Provision of transport arrangements as requested by Council services: • Refuse collection vehicle fleet availability • Daily delivery of community meals • Service users transported – children • Service users transported - adults		100%, including two spare vehicles 6,932 meals delivered, numbers are decreasing due to cessation of the service. Transport on in-house fleet (passenger journeys): Adults 7052, Children 8057. Q1 figures were not recorded, these were Adults 6801 trips, Children 10329 trips.

Corporate Priority	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. **Logistics**
ERD 17	**Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon.**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Monitor uptake of travel training and report.		16 referrals during the reporting period with 13 individuals (81.25%) taking up the travel training offer, this has increased from the previous quarter. 41 individuals have taken part in weekly classroom-based sessions, 24 have taken part in weekly outdoor practical group sessions, this has increased from the previous quarter. 15 individuals have taken part in 1-2-1 ITT sessions in the same time period.

Corporate Priority	Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future **Highways**
ERD 18	**Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon**

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Identify a pipeline of infrastructure schemes according to need / policy drivers		Current pipeline of schemes identified historically and funding via CRSTS1 is available and secured. Work has started on following 5 year Capital Programme April 2027- March 2032 known as TCR.
Securing funding for infrastructure schemes in the pipeline		5 year Capital Programme April 2027- March 2032 known as TCR - work has started on outline pipeline programme over Summer 2025 including movement through funding gateway process. Work is ongoing securing funding from Active Travel England etc. to progress design development work and deliver smaller on-site active travel schemes (e.g. North Albert Road, Runcorn High St)

Corporate Priority	Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future **Highways**
ERD 19	**Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon**

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Secure funding for highway maintenance to protect the asset		None in the period.
Update and monitor a highway asset management plan		Ongoing
Deliver highway improvement and maintenance schemes	U	Following the retirement of one of our long standing highways inspectors we have managed to attract 9 applicants for the role and are currently working through the shortlisting process. Adverts to recruit 2 Senior engineers

		close in mid-October. Alternative methods of schemes delivery are currently being discussed. Major refurbishment works to the northern busway viaduct at Runcorn Shopping City commenced on site in September. The expected duration of the works is 6 months.

Corporate Priority	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence **Traffic**
ERD 20	**Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon**

Milestone	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Programme of education relating to road safety		Parking Campaigns for 2 consecutive weeks outside Moore, Moorfield, Pewithall, Westfield Warrington Road Nursery – in September a 4 week parking campaign with police presence outside the Grange. Vulnerable user's road safety day with Fire Service at Costa Runcorn. Fire Station Open Day Impairment / Drug Drive. Junior Safety Officer Launch Night 80 year 5 pupils Power Two Wheeler campaign – attended Biker Night Monday 22nd Sept engaged with 90 riders and handed out half price Bikesafe Vouchers with Fire & Police Annual Refresher Training Road Safety Day at Warburtons educating drivers Planning for the Cheshire wide (CRSG) Darker Nights campaign – Halton is the Lead Launch planned for 27 Oct in Victoria Park, key target audience pedestrians – young people but engaging with all and a message to parents to ensure their children are following "Be Bright, Be Seen" A media campaign is underway with the Communications Team and paid adverts have been devised with LA's and partners contributing.
Safety cameras and speed indication devices		One new SiD has been supplied using PCC funds and is operational at a new site. Two SiDs have been repaired – Bluetooth issues with one, solar panel problems with the other. All fixed camera sites still being operated by CRSG are

		functioning and red-light camera at Watkinson Way is working well.
Analysis of collision sites	✓	Collision analysis complete, a number of sites selected for accident remedial works
Road safety audits for new schemes	U ⟺	None in the period.

Corporate Priority	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future **Environment Services**
ERD 27	**Provide a clean, safe, and attractive environment**

No comparable data for 23/24 LAMS inspections across parks and public open spaces were introduced in June 2024 after testing completed in Q1.

Milestone:	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Environmental standards to be measured using the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Land Audit Management System (LAMS) system scoring. Ensure that inspections of sites across the Council's Parks and Public Open Spaces are carried out bi-monthly throughout the year with results uploaded to APSE for benchmarking purposes. Quarterly target 120 inspections	✓ ⟺	144 inspections completed in Q2:- July = 53 August = 46 September = 45 97.22% graded as A/B acceptable, this is comparable with the recorded A/B standards in Q1 (97%)

Corporate Priority	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future **Environment Services**
ERD 28	**Provide clean, safe and attractive Cemeteries**

No comparable data for 23/24 LAMS inspections across parks and public open spaces were introduced in June 2024 after testing completed in Q1.

Milestone:	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Environmental Standards to be measured using the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Land Audit Management System (LAMS) system scoring Ensure that inspections across the Council's four Cemeteries are carried out bi-monthly throughout	U ⇩	43 inspections were carried out in Q2 Quarter July = 23 Aug = 10 Sept = 10

the year with results uploaded to APSE for benchmarking purposes. Quarterly target 50 cemetery inspections.		Target not met due to staff absence experienced during two months of the quarter period. 88.37% graded as A/B (acceptable) which is below the A/B standards recorded in Q1 (95%)

Corporate Priority	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future **Environment Services**
ERD 29	**Safety within Parks and Open Spaces**

Milestone:	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
Ensure the safety of play equipment on Council managed sites across the borough by carrying out regular inspections and carrying out any remedial works required. Target to carry out 1,000 inspections quarterly.	✓ ↑	The Council is responsible for 42 playgrounds, 37 MUGGAS and 5 boulders, which are inspected weekly. **1,128** safety inspections on all play areas were carried out in Q2, an increase of 65 inspections compared to Q1. Following the inspections, it was identified that **100** interventions were required to carry out safety, repair or improvement works. This is an increase from the 52 interventions required in Q1. The cost of interventions was **£1,540** (parts and materials only – does not include staff costs). *NB direction of travel n/a as uncontrollable impacts from inspections*

Corporate Priority	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future **Environment Services**
ERD 30	**Increase the Council's recycling rate and reduce the amount of waste produced per household**

Milestone:	**Progress Q2**	**Supporting Commentary**
600kgs of waste produced per household per year.	U	**Q2 (308.31kgs)**

		Waste production is subject to seasonal variation. This is an estimated figure, but it does show that household waste levels per household are lower than those in Q2 in the previous year (314.07 kgs) but higher than the estimate in Q1 (155kgs).
To achieve the national 44.4% average of waste recycled		**Q2 (38.5%)** This is an estimated figure, but it does show that recycling levels are marginally lower than in Q2 in the previous year (38.7%) and lower than Q1 (39.6%) In terms of the target to achieve the national recycling rate average, it is unlikely that this will be met in 2025/26. However, the Council's plans for both service redesign, the introduction of planned new recycling services, together with enhanced communication and behaviour change initiatives, will help the Council work towards improving recycling performance and the future achievement of this target.
To reduce the levels of waste contamination in blue recycling bins.		**2,523.32** tonnes of material collected in blue bins in Q2; this compares to 2,474.23 tonnes in Q1 **737.78** tonnes of contamination (non-target material) in Q2; this compares to 758.10 tonnes in Q1 **29%** of contamination in blue bins in Q2; this compares to 31% in Q1 **£73,844.86** costs to dispose of contaminated material in Q2**;** this compares to £75,877.91 in Q1 Whilst this is an improved picture the aspiration for the direction of travel is to significantly improve recycling rates and reduced contamination. *NB This is a new indicator, and Members will be provided with quarterly updates on progress with helping to reduce contamination levels.*
Implementation of weekly food waste collections to all households in Halton from April 2026. Target Milestones: 1. Procurement of fleet and receptacles Q1 25/26.		Orders placed for the delivery of food waste vehicle fleet and caddies.

2. Household collection timetable designed Q3 25/26. 3. Resident communication and engagement framework mobilised by Q3 25/26.		Work to begin designing new food waste collection rounds commenced in Q1 and is on-going.

4.0 Financial Statements

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Operational Budget at 30 Sept 25

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,864	2,456	2,331	125	251
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	172	(172)	(259)
Repairs & Mainenance	1,687	877	877	0	0
Premises	174	136	137	(1)	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	1,043	393	346	47	93
NNDR	647	647	635	12	12
Rents	157	80	79	1	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	43	8	8	0	0
Security	508	82	84	(2)	(4)
Supplies & Services	516	261	261	0	0
Supplies & Services - Grant	772	272	272	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	72	29	29	0	0
Total Expenditure	**9,483**	**5,241**	**5,231**	**10**	**93**
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-407	-203	-239	36	72
Rent - Commercial Properties	-906	-352	-351	(1)	(1)
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-19	-18	(1)	(1)
Government Grant	-854	-705	-705	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-149	-149	-149	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-55	-48	-48	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-260	-47	-47	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-574	-522	-522	0	0
Total Income	**-3,243**	**-2,045**	**-2,079**	**34**	**70**
Net Operational Expenditure	**6,240**	**3,196**	**3,152**	**44**	**163**
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,738	1,369	1,369	0	0
Transport	26	13	13	0	0
Central Support	2,878	1,439	1,439	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-9,342	-4,671	-4,671	0	0
Net Total Recharges	**-3,696**	**-1,850**	**-1,850**	**0**	**0**
Net Departmental Expenditure	**2,544**	**1,346**	**1,302**	**44**	**163**

Comments on the above figures

Finance maintains regular communication with the department to monitor and analyse expenditure, helping to identify potential savings that can support both current and future priorities. In today's climate of tight budgets, achieving these efficiencies is more important than ever.

The latest report indicates that the department is projected to be under budget by £0.163 million at year-end. This improved forecast is largely due to increased income from fees and charges, following the reconciliation of service charge invoices, as well as a review of repairs and maintenance spending throughout the year.

Supporting Information

Maximising grant funding remains a key priority, supported by diligent account monitoring and careful planning. Specific projects have been identified, with staff time allocated to ensure delivery aligns with funding objectives. Compliance with grant conditions is maintained at every stage, and this focused approach will continue throughout the year.

Maintaining a fully staffed team is essential to fulfilling statutory and contractual obligations and driving forward the borough's regeneration agenda. Despite the introduction of a market supplement, recruitment for key roles, particularly surveyors, recruitment continues to be challenging due to a limited pool of qualified candidates. On a positive note, the successful appointment of Project Managers marks a significant step forward and is expected to reduce reliance on agency staff, helping to manage costs more effectively. Agency staffing costs are currently projected at £0.259 million for this financial year. These roles are critical to the delivery of regeneration activity. Without them, there is a risk of project delays, which could impact future revenue from business rates and council tax. Where possible, staffing costs are recovered through capital budgets and external funding streams.

The financial impact of vacant properties across the borough continues to present a significant budgetary challenge. In addition to the loss of rental income while these properties remain unoccupied, further costs are incurred for utilities, repairs, and ongoing maintenance. As of the end of July, total costs stood at £0.136 million, rising to £0.154 million over the past two months. To help reduce these expenses, it is essential to accelerate leasing activity or explore interim uses, such as short-term rentals or community-based initiatives, that could generate income and offset costs. However, several properties are currently in poor condition and will require refurbishment before they can be considered for letting.

Despite a notable rise in energy costs over recent years, the department is currently forecasting a year-end underspend of £0.093 million. However, this projection may be reduced if energy usage increases, particularly as more staff return to the office or if demand rises due to seasonal temperature fluctuations.

The Repairs and Maintenance programme is subject to ongoing review to ensure expenditure remains within the allocated budget. It is projected that costs will be contained within budget for the remainder of the financial year. Regular monitoring will continue to ensure early identification of any emerging pressures, allowing for timely intervention and mitigation where possible

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in March 25.

Capital Budget at 30 Sept 25

	205/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Actual Spend to 30 Sept 2025	Cumulative Forecast 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	£000	£000
Equality Act Improvement Works	303.5	303.5	0.0	150.0	236.0	303.5	0.0	300.0
Foundary Lane Residential Area	3,520.9	3,520.9	878.0	1,020.9	1,200.0	3,520.9	0.0	0.0
Property Improvements	231.1	231.1	111.2	133.2	153.6	231.1	0.0	200.0
Town Deal	21,823.1	18,949.5	4,986.3	8,663.1	11,300.7	13,210.2	5,739.3	2,873.6
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	101.2	101.2	0.0	20.0	55.0	102.2	-1.0	0.0
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	82.0	82.0	4.2	33.3	56.4	82.0	0.0	0.0
Changing Places	17.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.0	0.0	0.0
Kingsway Centre Demolition	708.0	708.0	293.0	438.0	488.0	538.0	170.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	2,200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,200.0	0.0	0.0
Astmoor Masterplan	81.6	81.6	0.0	0.0	30.0	81.6	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury - CPO	3,000.0	3,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,000.0	0.0	0.0
Warm Homes Plan	0.0	587.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	587.6	0.0	0.0
Total Economy, Enterprise & Property	**32,068.4**	**29,782.4**	**6,272.7**	**10,458.5**	**13,519.7**	**23,874.1**	**5,908.3**	**3,373.6**

Comments on above figures

Foundry Lane

The development at Foundry Lane continues to progress at pace, with several key milestones achieved over the past two months. On-site operations remain well-coordinated and steady, keeping firmly on track to deliver this exciting new housing scheme.

All remaining homes scheduled for completion by 26 November.

To maintain momentum, outline planning permission has now been submitted for Phase 2, ensuring the next stage of development can move forward without delay.

Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet

The LCR CA have approved the full business case for the lab building and the grant funding agreement is currently being drafted. The second building which was initially expected to be office space is currently being reviewed as a potential second lab construction, with an outline business case being prepared for the CA. The current programme anticipates tendering the project and contract award in late 2025 and construction commencing in July 2026.

Property Improvements

Various works undertaken as and when required, works ongoing, the budget will be spent at year end

Changing Places

Works complete, all retention monies to be paid.

Town Deal

All Town Deal funded projects are progressing at different stages of work.

The Brindley extension started on site August 2024. Estimated date for completion is April 2026. RIBA stage 4 of the Brindley Green has started following submission of the planning application.

The youth centre -part of the Creative and Digital Skill centre - started September 2024, with the new build now well advanced with interior work now taking place. The roof of the wintergarden is now in place. Completion is expected March 2026.

The Health Hub started work on site April 2025, after the library vacated to temporary location. The construction work is expected to be completed November 2025 followed by commissioning by the NHS. The Runcorn Street art was delivered in May 2025. A celebration event was held 26 July. This project is completed

The construction of the Temple Hall started March 2025, with foundation complete. All steelwork is up, and block walls erected, with outer skin of brick work progressing well. Practical completion is expected by the end of 2025.

The construction of two canal trip boats has been ordered at a boatyard in Liverpool, with one boat having been launched in Runcorn on the canal 26 July.

The over 55s apartment block Mercia House is under construction at High Street has now all doors and windows in, and external brickwork is well advanced. Legacie are preparing for the external landscaping.

HBC has entered into a pre-construction service agreement with F Parkinsons through a design and build route for the Enterprise Facility.

Design work progresses on the remaining projects.

Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition

The demolition works are now complete.

UKSPF

New reduced allocation for 25/26 which is for town centre improvements.

Sci-tech Daresbury Project – CPO

The JV continues to develop the required documentation to make the CPO in order to secure land for the delivery of the Sci-Tech Daresbury masterplan. It is anticipated that the CPO process will run during 2026 with funds only required at the conclusion of that project or shortly after. The majority of spend is potentially in 26-27 at the earliest

ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT
APPENDIX A

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.

COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE
Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	15,451	7,788	7,486	302	603
Agency - Covering vacancies	20	12	12	0	0
Agency - In addition to establishment	16	16	199	(183)	(274)
Premises	3,304	1,562	1,609	(47)	(93)
Supplies & Services	3,659	1,514	1,639	(125)	(249)
Transport	117	66	83	(17)	(33)
Extended Producer Responsibility	500	0	0	0	0
Other Agency Costs	454	209	228	(19)	(39)
Other Expenditure	187	13	13	0	0
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	1,125	1,133	(8)	(16)
Transfers to Reserves	1,091	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	**31,920**	**12,305**	**12,402**	**(97)**	**(101)**
Income					
Sales Income	-1,359	-687	-691	4	8
Fees & Charges Income	-6,300	-3,622	-3,709	87	174
Rental Income	-1,118	-465	-428	(37)	(73)
Government Grant Income	-5,210	-1,319	-1,319	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-871	-371	-371	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-216	-39	-129	90	179
Capital Salaries	-236	-15	0	(15)	(31)
Transfers From Reserves	-619	-4	-4	0	0
Total Income	**-15,952**	**-6,522**	**-6,651**	**129**	**257**
Net Operational Expenditure	**15,968**	**5,783**	**5,751**	**32**	**156**
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,657	829	829	0	0
Transport Support	2,433	1,270	1,312	(42)	(84)
Central Support	4,297	2,148	2,148	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-843	-422	-422	0	0
Net Total Recharges	**7,743**	**3,825**	**3,867**	**(42)**	**(84)**
Net Departmental Expenditure	**23,711**	**9,608**	**9,618**	**(10)**	**72**

Comments on the above figures

Net spend against the Community and Greenspaces department has seen an improvement to the net outturn position since the previous report at 31st July 2025. The forecasted outturn is now expected to fall £0.72m under the approved budget profile (in comparison to £0.123m overspend previously forecasted). Employee spend continues to be an area providing underspend for the department into the new financial year, forecast spend being £0.603m under the approved budget profile. There continue to be vacancies held for restructures taking place contributing to the underspend. However, as a result of this, in order to facilitate the very visible services provided to the residents of Halton, both Agency and Supplies & Services expenditure is forecasted to be (£0.274m and £0.249 respectively) above the approved 2025/26 budget.

Estimated spend on premises costs is forecast to be £0.093m over budget in 2025/26. The Stadium utility costs are notably higher than the available budget and will continue to be a budget pressure this year. There is more focus on internal services that can be provided (See £0.179m forecast overachieved Internal Fees Income), and should this continue it can be utilised to offset the premises costs in subsequent financial years.

Supplies and Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.249m which is a budget pressure throughout the Department, and is primarily caused by inflationary cost increases of key goods and services over recent years. There is a risk if the Council were to contain these costs within the budget profile there would be a reduction in the service provided.

Historically, Waste Disposal Contracts had contributed to an underspend for the department, however, due to the rise in costs last year, expenditure is now likely to fall close to the approved budget profile. It is worth noting, as the size of the contracts are very large, small percentage changes to the invoices can have significant impacts on the outturn position of the department, and with invoices being received several periods after the costs are incurred, the outturn position may change throughout the year. Within 2025/26 there has been a budget line created for the Extender Producer Responsibility Scheme, this funding has been provided to manage packaging waste. In order to facilitate the scheme and ensure compliance, £0.500m has been forecasted to be utilised within the financial year, should there be any budget underutilised by 31st March 2026 this will require carrying forward into the 2026/27 financial year.

Income for the Community and Greenspaces Department is on track to be higher than the approved budget by £0.257m. The aforementioned internal fee focus by the Stadium is contributing to this as well as increasing usage of internal room hire across the buildings within the Department. The benefit of this income staying within the council rather than going to external suppliers is offset by some other income targets being unachievable. The main contributor to the overachievement however is with Halton Leisure Centre, income is remaining consistently high and forecasts have been adjusted as such to reflect this. In comparison to last financial year, the outturn income figure is expected to rise by approximately 99%.

There also continues to be pressures with the Brindley as the extension works are underway, income did fall within the previous financial year, and is currently forecast to do the same this year. Once the works are completed the income is likely to rise again, however, this will require close monitoring as the utility expenditure will also increase with the larger site.

APPROVED BUDGET SAVINGS COMMUNITY AND GREENSPACES 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	✓	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 a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.	0	100	✓	Green waste charges have been increased to £50.
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170	✓	Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26
Total Community & Greenspace Dept			**12**	**270**		

Capital

Scheme Detail	205/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Actual Spend to 30 Sept 2025	Cumulative Forecast 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	£000	£000
Stadium Minor Works	22.1	22.1	24.6	24.6	24.6	24.6	-2.5	30.0
Halton Leisure Centre	99.7	99.7	89.3	86.8	88.8	90.8	8.9	0.0
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	50.5	60.5	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	0.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	770.0	564.5	600.0	650.0	770.0	0.0	600.0
Runcorn Town Park	450.6	450.6	0.0	0.0	60.0	125.0	325.6	280.0
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,841.6	250.0	152.5	170.0	180.0	250.0	0.0	1,591.6
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	469.2	450.0	110.3	175.0	300.0	450.0	0.0	19.2
Cemetery Infrastructure work	469.1	469.1	0.0	89.0	207.0	410.0	59.1	683.0
Stadium Public Address System	810.0	346.0	34.9	176.0	286.0	346.0	0.0	379.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0
Replacement Cremator	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Stadium Steelwork Repairs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	600.0
Brindley Lighting	0.0	200.0	0.0	100.0	150.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Grangeway Court Refurbishment	0.0	52.0	8.0	10.0	16.0	52.0	0.0	948.0
CCTV Infrastructure Works	0.0	105.0	1.2	5.0	50.0	105.0	0.0	395.0
Total Community & Greenspaces	**5,215.2**	**3,327.3**	**1,035.8**	**1,496.9**	**2,072.9**	**2,933.4**	**393.9**	**5,630.8**

There were some delays to capital projects starting within the last financial year due to staffing issues. These are likely to be completed within the 2025/26 capital scheme. In regards to the cemetery infrastructure work there is potential to receive grant/external funding rather than rely solely on borrowing. The *replacement cremator* line is in relation to a cremator installed last year, however the contractors are requiring some additional works required to get it fully commissioned and proper emissions testing to be carried out. Management are currently reviewing options, where possible this will be funded from underspend from other schemes.

Planning, Provision and Transportation Department

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	6,070	2,865	2,669	196	392
Efficiency Savings	-100	-50	0	(50)	(100)
Premises	188	95	78	17	33
Hired & Contracted Services	415	79	76	3	7
Supplies & Services	135	82	229	(147)	(295)
Street Lighting	1,643	42	180	(138)	(275)
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,803	397	603	(206)	(412)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Worl	812	316	0	316	633
Fleet Transport	1,467	700	700	0	(1)
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	14	2	4	(2)	(3)
Bus Support	506	366	366	0	0
Agency Related Expenditure	8	0	0	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	31	0	0
NRA Levy	75	74	74	0	0
LCR Levy	1,553	776	776	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	359	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	**14,979**	**5,775**	**5,786**	**(11)**	**(21)**
Income					
Sales & Rents Income	-97	-49	-29	(20)	(40)
Planning Fees	-798	-557	-554	(3)	(5)
Building Control Fees	-251	-125	-105	(20)	(40)
Other Fees & Charges	-971	-626	-754	128	257
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-174	-75	-75	0	0
Government Grant Income	-50	-50	-50	0	0
Halton Hopper Income	-15	-8	-5	(3)	(6)
Recharge to Capital	-305	0	0	0	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,553	-776	-776	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-132	-134	-134	0	0
Total Income	**-4,346**	**-2,400**	**-2,482**	**82**	**166**
Net Operational Expenditure	**10,633**	**3,375**	**3,304**	**71**	**145**
Recharges					
Premises Recharges	739	370	370	0	0
Transport Recharges	808	388	379	9	18
Central Recharges	2,505	1,255	1,255	0	0
Asset Charges	918	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,347	-3,249	-3,350	101	201
Net Total Recharges	**-1,377**	**-1,236**	**-1,346**	**110**	**219**
Net Departmental Expenditure	**9,256**	**2,139**	**1,958**	**181**	**364**

Comments on the above figures

Financial Position

As at 30th September 2025 it is forecast net spend for the year will be £0.364m under the approved 2025/26 budget.

Supporting Information

As in previous years budget holders are working closely with the Finance Officers to ensure a balanced budget is achieved. Wherever possible, capital expenditure is being prioritised to relieve pressure on the revenue budgets.

The projected figures in this report are very much subject to change as there is currently a major departmental staffing restructure in progress. It is anticipated that vacant posts will be filled from January onwards, but this is not certain. The previous period 4 report had this included from December. Figures will change in further reports depending on recruitment processes.

Efficiency savings for PPT are not expected to be met and more information is provided about this further down the report.

Supplies and services and contracted services are projected to be over budget as in previous years due to there being no budget for software licences, and maintenance of computer systems, yet these are a requirement for the department to carry out its day-to-day tasks.

The street lighting expenditure is projected to come in over budget. Various actions have been taken to decrease the amount of power being used such as lights being turned off 12am – 6am on some routes and around 98% of HBC owned street lighting stock of around 20,500 columns have been upgraded to LED. There is just some of the non-standard equipment left to upgrade. However, this has been offset a small amount by new developments that have become adopted and therefore added to the energy bill. This is being monitored as a budget pressure with managers.

Highways maintenance budgets are now projected to come in under budget. Capital funding is being utilised where appropriate. The report is again broken down into routine and reactive schemes and programmed works so the various areas can be looked at in more detail. Since the period 2 report it has been agreed that all expenditure against programmed works will cease, and alternative funding will be sourced if possible. This will in turn net off the projected overspend against routine and reactive works.

Planning income is again projected to be under achieved although is now looking better than in the period 4 report. Following on from the 2024/25 financial year there is a downturn in the number of applications being received. Although, Government increased planning fee rates towards the end of 2023/24 this has not offset the lack of large development agreements there has been in previous years. 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 follow the same path.

Fees and charges income is projected to overachieve its income target, but this is an ever-changing area 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 6 months.

Transport income recharges will be over on its income target, but these are offset by overspends in the other departments.

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Savings that were put forward for 2025/26 can be seen in Appendix A at the end of this report.

Risks/Opportunities

Across the whole department inflation has significantly driven costs up and every division is bearing the cost of this. The Highways / Traffic and Logistics divisions are seeing the largest impact of this when purchasing materials / fuel / parts for vehicles etc.

Capital Budget as at 30 September 2025

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 September 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Bridge and Highway Maintenance	839.2	839.2	167.0	419.6	629.4	839.2	0.0
Runcorn Busway	90.0	90.0	75.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	0.0
ATF3 Murdishaw to Whitehouse	757.0	757.0	465.0	757.0	757.0	757.0	0.0
ATF4 - Widnes Town Centre Accessibility	114.5	114.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
A56 Reconstruction	943.7	943.7	95.0	314.5	629.0	943.7	0.0
LCWIP phase 2 Daresbury	3,862	3,862	30.0	84.5	84.5	84.5	0.0
Pot Hole Funding	968	968	162.0	502.0	735.0	968.0	0.0
CRSTS	4,405	4,405	712.0	2,378.0	3,391.5	4,405.0	0.0
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	1,025.1	1,025.1	0.0	100.0	150.0	200.0	1,025.1
Street Lighting - Upgrades	728.4	728.4	0.0	50.0	75.0	100.0	528.4
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	5,851.7	5,327.0	5,851.8	5,851.8	5,851.8	5,851.7
Risk Management	712.9	120.0	23.0	53.0	83.0	103.0	729.9
Widnes Loops	0.0	0.0	65.0	65.0	65.0	65.0	0.0
Fleet Replacements	4,482.0	2,500.0	1,048.0	1,357.0	1,928.5	2,500.0	1,982.0
Total Policy, Planning & Transportation	**24,779.8**	**22,204.9**	**8,169.0**	**12,022.4**	**14,469.7**	**16,907.2**	**10,117.1**

Comments on the above capital figures

The East Runcorn Connectivity (ERC) scheme is on track and additional funding from LCR has been secured. It is projected that this scheme will finish late Q4 25/26 or early Q1 26/27.

The A56 project is in support of the new junction completion for the Redrow development which overlaps with the ERC scheme mentioned above. Progress has been slow on this scheme for various reasons and expenditure will increase into Q3 25/26.

LCWIP Phase 2 (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) Runcorn to Daresbury is currently underway on Long Benton Way. A change request has been accepted by LCR as expenditure is not projected to reach the original budget of £5.7m.

Appendix 2: Explanation of symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

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

Direction of Travel Indicator

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