



**Corporate and Inclusion Policy and  
Performance Board**

**Tuesday, 3 June 2025 6.30 p.m.  
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**

S. Young

**Chief Executive**

**BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Chris Carlin	Labour
Councillor Sian Davidson	Reform UK
Councillor Rosie Leck	Labour
Councillor Geoffrey Logan	Labour
Councillor Tony McDermott	Labour
Councillor Katy McDonough	Labour
Councillor Angela McInerney	Labour
Councillor Chris Loftus	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour

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

***The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 2 September 2025***

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

**Part I**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. MINUTES</b>	<b>1 - 6</b>
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)</b>	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion and voting on the item.	
<b>3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b>	<b>7 - 9</b>
<b>4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES</b>	<b>10 - 19</b>
<b>5. ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25</b>	<b>20 - 25</b>
<b>6. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES</b>	
<b>(A) HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND – PROGRESS UPDATE</b>	<b>26 - 32</b>
<b>(B) CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT 1ST APRIL 2024 TO 31ST MARCH 2025</b>	<b>33 - 46</b>
<b>7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING</b>	
<b>(A) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2024/25</b>	<b>47 - 85</b>
<b>8. COUNCIL WIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025</b>	<b>86 - 146</b>
<b>9. SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</b>	

## PART II

In this case the Committee has a discretion to exclude the press and public and, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it is **RECOMMENDED** that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

### 10.EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION: STAFF UNPAID LEAVE

147 - 152

*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.*

**CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 21 January 2025 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), Davidson, V. Hill, Hutchinson, Leck, Logan, A. Lowe, N. Plumpton Walsh and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor McDonough

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, M. Reaney, S. Riley, J. Yates and K. Butler

Also in attendance: None

**ITEM DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

*Action*

**CS22 MINUTES**

The Minutes from the meeting held on 5 November 2024 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**CS23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

**CS24 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES**

The Board was presented with the minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio, which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of the Board.

**CS25 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES**

The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 26 September 2024.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes be noted.

CS26 ICT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Director of ICT and Support Services which provided an update on the department's programme of work.

The report outlined the different workstreams of the programme which included delivery of Microsoft365; Customer Journey Transformation; the Business Analysis Programme and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and details of each were described in the report. These were big projects but once completed they would bring many benefits, including cost savings.

Digital poverty was quite high in Halton and so the One Stop Shops remained an essential aspect of the front door into the Council for many, with increased footfall along with violent incidents and abuse experienced by staff. Approximately 428,00 cases were dealt with each year in the One Stop Shops.

Members were advised that the programme of work would also link to the partnership with NHS led Halton Health Hubs. Options were being explored to increase the number of Council services within the locations bringing services into the community on a face-to-face basis. Digital poverty meant that not all interactions could be digital.

Members of the Board scrutinised the report and the following additional information was provided in response to questions:

- with regards to AI, as owners of information, the Council would be responsible for any breach of data. However, a lot of AI was a base of knowledge and the type of AI the Council would hold would be kept onsite;
- there were in-house opportunities for AI, although it would be a big piece of work to analyse the data;
- it was suggested that digital poverty and those with literacy problems could be frustrated with new systems, however, it was noted that 80% of people contacted the Council via mobile phones and access would be tailored to mobile access.

The Board thanked officers for an interesting and reassuring report and appreciated that in-house talents would be used to move the Council forward.

RESOVLED: That the Board supports the ongoing programme of work.

## CS27 CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Assistant to the Chief Executive which provided an update on related activities aimed at reducing the Council's impact on the environment and CO2 emissions from Council activities.

Since it started to measure its carbon emissions in 2006/2007, overall emissions had reduced in the Council's operations from 26,338 tonnes of CO2 to 7,987 tonnes.

In 2017, the Government reset the baseline in the expectation that public bodies would reduce their carbon emissions by 50% by 2031. In 2017, the Council's baseline was 14,811 carbon tonnes and in 2023/24, it had managed to reduce its emissions to 7,987; a reduction of 53.9% in total and an annual reduction of 8.6%.

The report outlined a number key activities which had been completed or commenced during 2024 which included:

- Improvements to Council buildings, including solar power schemes and solar farms at different sites;
- Installation of Electric Vehicle Chargers;
- UKSPF funding;
- Procurement – published tenders to include environmental measures; and
- Continued awareness raising of climate change across the Council e.g. e-learning training courses for Officers and Members and establishment of a Climate Change Advisory Group.

Following discussions it was noted that:

- Feedback from a Liverpool City Region meeting which indicated that funding would continue across the region for the installation of further electric vehicle charging points;
- A query was raised about the electric vehicle charging point at Runcorn Town Hall which was located behind the locked gate and whether an additional one could be installed for public use; and
- It was confirmed that the cost of solar panels and installation totalled £2.27m.

RESOLVED: That the report and the ongoing work be noted.

Assistant to the Chief Executive

## CS28 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

The Board considered a report which provided a statistical analysis of the Corporate Complaints received during the 2023-24 financial year.

The report outlined the two stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints; a corporate complaints trend analysis from 2022-23; the nature of those complaints received; and outcomes. The data showed that the Council had received 83 corporate complaints, reduction from the 112 that had been received in the previous year. Given the challenges the Council had faced it was considered a fair outcome.

At present, the Council aimed to respond to complaints at stage 1 of the procedures within 10 working days and those at stage 2 within 28 working days. More complaints had been considered at stage 2 compared to the previous year but the response time had marginally dipped.

The report also provided a summary on complaints and queries that had been received by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) during 2023-24. It was noted that the Ombudsman had made 32 decisions during the year and upheld 4 complaints.

Members were advised that the complaints process would be reviewed in due course to identify any improvements that could be made and thereafter, an update report would be presented to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

## CS29 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2024

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 16 January 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30 November 2024, 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.

In response to the queries from Members of the Board, the following additional information was provided in response to questions:

- Page 51 – employers expenditure was the overall spending on employees and this was over budget. However, the current position was better than at the end of September 2024 and the main reduction had been in staffing within the Children's Directorate;
- Page 71 – Members queried the staffing costs in Legal Services and it was confirmed that this was due to a high number of Locums over the past few years and as a result of a huge increase in workload and difficulties in recruitment due to salaries. A report was presented to Council in December 2024 and there was a workstream within the Transformation which was due to be completed in February 2025. Members were advised that the Legal Department had struggled for the past few years with no changes to the structure or increase in budgets;
- Page 75 – Members queried what expenditure "agencies – addition to establishment" meant and it was confirmed that this was an additional post to the normal establishment structure, most likely due to a response from the Ofsted inspection. Temporary posts had been created in services which had been criticised and needed to improve;
- Members acknowledged that whilst the Council must be cost effective, services carried out both in Children's and Adult Services was about the care of human beings. Particularly in Children's Services, private companies were being allowed to charge Council's significant amounts money and take advantage of vulnerable situations; and
- Page 76 – Community and Greenspaces – Members asked if anyone was looking at how food provision was being spent in Community Centres and an example about how Murdishaw Community Centre was using a supplier from Blackpool rather than a local supplier was provided. There was also a query about how the new kitchen at the community centre had been tendered. Officers agreed to look into these queries and report back in due course.



RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as outlined in the report be noted.	Director of Finance
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*Meeting ended at 7.48 p.m.*

**REPORT TO:** Corporate and Inclusion Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 3 June 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.

**REPORT TO:** Corporate and Inclusion Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 3 June 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 Corporate Policy and Performance Board****EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2025**

<b>EXB71</b>	<b>24/25 SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2024</b>
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The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, advising of the Council's overall revenue and capital net spending position as at 30 November 2024, together with a forecast outturn position.

Appendix 1 presented a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 30 November 2024 and Appendix 2 provided detailed figures for each individual Department. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 30 November 2024, highlighting the schemes which had been revised.

It was reported that in overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend would be over the approved budget by £14.246m. The outturn forecast for the year estimates that net spending would be over budget by £20.757m if no corrective action is taken. It was clear that Council reserves alone would not be sufficient to fund this pressure. As a result the Council had applied to Government for Exceptional Financial Support.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) all spending continue to be limited to essential items only;
- 2) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the council/wide forecast outturn overspend position;
- 3) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved saving proposals for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 4;
- 4) the updated forecast outturn position be shared with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government in support of the Council's application for Exceptional Financial Support;
- 5) Council be asked to approve the revisions to the capital programme set-out in paragraph 3.22 and incorporated within Appendix 3; and
- 6) this report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2025**

<b>EXB85</b>	<b>BUDGET 2025/26 – KEY DECISION</b>
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The Board considered a report from the Director, Finance, which outlined a recommendation to Council in respect of the Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2025/26.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approved at the Executive Board meeting on 14 November 2024, had identified a funding gap of around £38.1m in 2025/26, £14.5m in 2026/27, £7.3m in 2027/28 and £9.3m in 2028/29. The Strategy had the following objectives:

- Deliver a balanced and sustainable budget;
- Prioritise spending towards the Council's priority areas;
- Avoid excessive Council Tax rises;
- Achieve significant cashable efficiency gains;
- Protect essential front line services and vulnerable members of the community; and
- Deliver improved procurement.

In terms of consultation, it was noted that the Council used various methods to listen to the views of the public, and Members own experiences through their Ward work was an important part of that process. Individual consultations were taking place in respect of specific budget proposals and equality impact assessments would be completed where necessary.

The Board received regular reports detailing spending in the current year against the budget. The latest report indicated that spending was forecast to be over budget in the current year by approximately £20.757m against a net budget of £149.496m.

The proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 totalled £183.052m; the departmental analysis of this was shown in Appendix B along with a breakdown of these changes in Appendix C. A total of £1.349m of savings were approved by Council on 1 February 2023. Further savings of £6.876m had been proposed for 2025/26 financial year and were detailed in Appendix G.

Table B in the report demonstrated the Council position where it is unable to present a balanced 2025/26 budget without seeking Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from Government. Receipts from Council Tax and Business Rates were insufficient to fund the forecast net spend for 2025/26. At its meeting on 4 December, Council approved that an application for EFS be made to Government. The submission included an ask for EFS for 2024/25 £20.8m and for 2025/26 £32m. Provisional approval for the EFS application was still awaited but it was expected to be received in late February 2025.

The Board was advised that the proposed budget incorporated the grant figures announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement. It included £0.181m for the



New Homes Bonus grant, an increase of £0.057m from 2024/25. The budget also included Better Care Funding of £8.614m which was unchanged from 2024/25. Additional funding for Adult's and Children's Social Care was announced as part of the provisional grant settlement. The 2025/26 grant allocation of £17.744m was inclusive of an additional allocation of £2.718m awarded for the forthcoming year. This funding would be included in the Council budget to help fund existing pressures within Social Care services. Table C in the report provided an updated position of grants announced at the settlement and how the allocation compared to 2024/25.

Further information was also provided on the budget outlook, Halton's Council Tax, Parish precepts, Police, Fire and Liverpool City Region (LCR) Mayor precepts, the Capital Programme, Prudential Code and School Budgets.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the Council's revenue budget, capital programme and council tax for 2025/26.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A number of alternative budget proposals have been considered by the Budget Working Group.

#### Implementation Date

5 March 2025.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended

- 1) to adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A, which includes setting the budget at £183.052m, the Council Tax requirement of £68.208m (before Parish, Police, Fire and LCR Combined Authority precepts) and the Band D Council Tax for Halton of £1,846.66;
- 2) to approve the capital programme set out in Appendix E;
- 3) to approve the use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out in Appendix H;
- 4) to approve the budget savings set out in Appendix G; and
- 5) to approve 100% Council Tax premium being applied to properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for a minimum period of 12 months.

<b>EXB86</b>	<b>TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2025/26</b>
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The Board received the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, (TMSS) which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy for 2025/26.

The TMSS was appended to the report and detailed the expected activities of the treasury function in the forthcoming financial year (2025/26). Its production and submission to Council was a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code.

The Local Government Act 2003 required the Council to have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years, to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Act therefore required the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy (AIS), which set out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. Government guidance notes stated that authorities could combine the TMSS and the AIS into one report, which the Council had done and was included in Section 4.

Members noted that the production of a Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement was required and a formal statement for approval was contained within the report at paragraph 2.3, with the full policy shown in Appendix A.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to adopt the policies, strategies, statements, prudential and treasury indicators outlined in the report.

<b>EXB87</b>	<b>CAPITAL STRATEGY 2025/26</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Director – Finance, on the Council's Capital Strategy for 2025/26.

It was reported that all councils were required to produce a Capital Strategy annually, the aim of which was to ensure that the Council understood the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

Members were advised that the Capital Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, included on the same agenda. This detailed the expected activities of the treasury management function and incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy for 2025/26. It was noted that the successful delivery of the Capital Strategy would assist the Council in planning and funding its capital expenditure over the next three years.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the 2025/26 Capital Strategy, as presented in the Appendix.

*N.B. Councillor Wharton and declared an Other Registrable Interest in the following item of business as he is a Treasurer of Hale Youth Club. Councillor Dennett declared an Other Registrable Interest in the following item of business as he is a Treasurer of Halton Play Council.*

<b>EXB88</b>	<b>DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF RENEWALS</b>
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The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, which advised that under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. The report requested consideration be given for the renewal of discretionary business rate relief for existing registered charities, not for profit organisations, and community amateur sports clubs, who continued to satisfy the appropriate criteria.

The report outlined details of proposed changes to discretionary rate relief for these organisations. The Council currently granted discretionary business rate relief to organisations for a three-year period, and it was recommended that this practice would continue in order to provide the organisations with certainty to assist with their financial planning.

The Council was required to provide the organisations with twelve months' notice of any changes to their discretionary rate relief. Therefore, if approved the renewals will apply from 1 April 2026.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) discretionary business rate relief of 10% be granted for those registered charities and CASC organisations currently in receipt of such relief, for the period of three years commencing 1 April 2026, as listed in the Appendix; and
- 2) discretionary business rate relief of 75% be granted for those not-for-profit organisations currently in receipt of such relief (with 60% relief for one organisation as indicated), for the period of three years commencing 1 April 2026, as listed in the Appendix.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH 2025**

<b>EXB99</b>	<b>REVIEW OF COUNCIL WIDE FEES AND CHARGES</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Director - Finance, on the review of the Council wide fees and charges for 2025/26 for services provided by the Council's Directorates.

The Board was advised that, as part of the budget preparations for 2025/26, a review of fees and charges had been carried out. The aim in setting fees and charges was to ensure that the Council fully recovered the cost incurred in providing the service, although this was dependent on a number of factors outside of the agreed charge. These were detailed in the report and noted as including demand, which could change year on year and be affected by weather, economy, regional and national events and demographics; competition, where there may be a strong competitive market; and a statutory element, where some charges were outside the control of the Council and there was no discretion to what could be charged.

Attached at Appendix A was the proposed schedule of statutory fees for 2025/26 and the chargeable rates for The Brindley Theatre and the Registrar's Service were attached at Appendix B and C respectively, for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The Board noted that the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board (PPB) had considered a proposal for the pest control fee for rat treatments on domestic properties. The PPB had endorsed the proposal to introduce a new fee that recovered the full cost of rat treatments on domestic properties, with the exception for those in receipt of benefits (subject to proof). It was agreed that this would be explored.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed fees and charges for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A and for 2026/27, as set out in Appendices B and C, be approved.

<b>EXB100</b>	<b>2024/25 SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025</b>
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The Board received a report from the Director - Finance, which advised on the Council's overall revenue and capital net spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with a forecast outturn position.

Appendix 1 presented a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 January 2025 and Appendix 2 provided detailed figures for each individual Department. It was reported that in overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend would be over the approved budget by £15.487m. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 January 2025, highlighting the schemes, which had been revised.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the councilwide forecast outturn overspend position;
- 2) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved savings proposals for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 4;
- 3) Council be asked to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.22 and incorporated within Appendix 3; and
- 4) This report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

<b>EXB101</b>	<b>PENSIONS DISCRETIONS STATEMENT 2025/26</b>
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The Board received the annual Pensions Discretions Statement for 2025-26 for Halton Borough Council.

The Council was required to publish a Pension Discretion Statement annually, to advise the discretions it intended to exercise under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – this was appended to the report.

It was reported that the Pensions Discretion Statement for 2025-26 was based upon the statement for 2024-25, which was approved by Executive Board in February 2024. It was noted that no new discretions had been added.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the Pensions Discretions Statement for 2025-26.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 APRIL 2025**

<b>EXB120</b>	<b>TAXI LICENSING MATTER</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Director Legal and Democratic Services, which outlined recommendations from the Regulatory Committee in relation to amendments to the Councils existing Hackney Carriage Stands Order. Details of the current taxi rank provisions, and the proposed amendments along with the consultation exercise undertaken with Halton Taxi Trade, Cheshire Police and members of the public were detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board approve proposals detailed in Appendix A of the Regulatory report (see Appendix 1) dated 12 March 2025 in respect of stands 11, 13, 17 and 19; and
- 2) the Director Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to fulfil all procedural requirements in accordance with Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and to make the taxi stands order accordingly.

<b>EXB121</b>	<b>ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION 2025</b>
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The Board received a report of the Director Legal and Democratic Services, which sought the approval of Council to a number of changes to the Constitution.

The revised version of the Constitution picked up the changes to the Council's working arrangements that had taken place during the year, as well as other changes which were intended to assist the Council to operate more effectively.

Members were referred to Appendix one where the proposed amendments were listed; these had been considered by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, in accordance with Article 16.02.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board recommends Council to approve the changes to the Constitution including the matters set out in Appendix one.

**REPORT TO:** Corporate and Inclusion Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 3 June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director - Legal & Democratic Services

**SUBJECT:** Annual Report 2024/25

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To receive the Annual Report of the Corporate and Inclusion Policy and Performance Board for 2024/25, to comment in respect of the same, and to make any changes considered appropriate.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be approved.**

**3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None at this stage

**4.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

None

**5.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

None

**6.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

None.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit	Municipal Building	M. Reaney



## **CORPORATE PPB ANNUAL REPORT**

Following 14 years of underfunding and austerity cuts from the Conservative government which has left the Council with a huge budget deficit, we are no longer able to maintain Current service levels and must make savings by reducing costs. A major burden is the high cost of employing agency staff to keep essential services running. To resolve this problem the Transformation team is embarking on a programme to improve the Council's appeal to potential employees to show we are a good place to work, with career opportunities and good working conditions, thereby encouraging staff to join and stay.

The Health and Safety team contribute to this by making sure staff are appropriately equipped and work in a safe environment.

It is of crucial importance that our financial services continue to operate efficiently in the collection of Council tax and business rates and the management of financial systems to reduce the cost and maintain service provision.

The benefits division is operating the Discretionary Support and Household Support schemes in an efficient manner to ensure all those residents that are entitled to these benefits receive them as well as operating the Housing Benefit and Localisation of Council Tax schemes.

The I.T Department is making as many services as possible accessible digitally for residents reducing the costs for them and improving the Council's efficiency and reducing costs. The One Stop shops continue to be available for those without access to the internet.

The Property Services Department are working to make sure accommodation space is effectively used to reduce unnecessary costs and provide a safe environment for staff to work in. Also, a strategy is being developed to decide accommodation arrangements for future needs. It is important to reduce energy costs so great effort is put in the installing LED lighting which also reduces the Carbon burden, and the new Leisure centre will use solar power and air source heat pumps to reduce energy costs. Widnes markets team despite difficult trading conditions in the retail sector continue to provide an interesting environment and economic shopping venue for residents. The DCBL stadium staff are working hard to



	<p>provide a venue for sporting events and the provision of a top class facility where weddings and family celebrations can be held.</p> <p>Working behind the scenes is the Legal Services Department who provide legal support to all off the council's operations. This is particularly important in dealing with Social Services matters which can be very complicated and the complexity of some major planning developments.</p> <p>I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Vice Chair Ged Philbin for his support throughout the year and his diligence in chairing the Appeals Panel, the members of the P.P.B for their hard work and commitment during the year, and my lead officer Mark Reaney and the member services team for supporting the board's work.</p> <p><b><i>Councillor Bob Gilligan – Chair, Corporate Policy &amp; Performance Board</i></b></p> <p><b>MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <p>During 2024/25, the Board comprised of eleven Councillors – R. Gilligan (Chair), G Philbin (Vice Chair), S Davidson, V Hill, N Hutchinson, R Leck, G Logan, A Lowe, K McDonough, N Plumptre-Walsh, and S Thornton.</p> <p>The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to Resources, HR and Training, ICT, Property, Democratic Services, Legal Services, Communications and Marketing, Stadium, Civic Catering, Procurement, and Corporate Complaints. The Board also has responsibility for monitoring the performance of the reporting departments which during the last year have been Legal and Democratic Services, Human Resources, Financial Services, ICT and Support Services and the Policy and Performance Division.</p> <p><b>REVIEW OF THE YEAR</b></p> <p>The full Board met four times during the year. Set out below are some of the main initiatives upon which it has worked during that time.</p> <p><b>SCHOOL MEALS SERVICE – CESSATION OF SERVICE</b></p> <p>At the September meeting, the Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration which provided</p>
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	<p>an update on the current status on the cessation of the schools meals service provided by the Council.</p> <p>In February 2023, the Council agreed to remove the provision of the schools meals service. Schools were allowed up to two financial years to either procure an alternative provider or opt to offer an in-house provision.</p> <p>The report outlined the support that had been offered to schools. An open day was held in April 2024, which allowed providers who had expressed an interest, an opportunity to showcase their services. Schools were invited to attend DfE training sessions to assist them with a catering procurement package. To date, several schools had engaged with the DfE.</p> <p>The Board was advised that to date, the Council's School Meals Service was still providing catering for 27 of the 47 schools. 14 schools had given notice to terminate their contract before 1 January 2025. 13 schools were still to confirm their new catering arrangements by 31 March 2025. Members of the Board would be provided with a list of these schools, for information.</p> <p>Of those schools that had progressed alternative arrangements, 15 school had chosen Orian Solutions, 5 had chosen Edsentials Catering Services and 2 had chosen Mellors Catering Solutions.</p> <p>Members were reassured that the School Meals Management Team would work with the 13 outstanding schools and contact them again early in the Autumn Term to establish their intentions. Any school that did not provide a transfer date by 1 October 2024 would be issued with a termination letter with effect from 31 March 2025.</p> <p>Following discussions and arising questions from Board Members, it was confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any school that did not make any necessary arrangements by the deadline, would have to employ in-house catering staff; and</li> <li>• Schools and their Governing Bodies were responsible for ensuring that school meals were provided for their pupils.</li> </ul> <p><b>WIDNES MARKET</b></p> <p>Also in September, the Board received a report from the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on Widnes Market, following the implementation of the Business Plan, which had been endorsed by the Board in November</p>
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2022. The report also informed the Board of a change in the management structure at the market, with effect from June 2024.

Members were reminded that the Business Plan identified the priorities and actions to be undertaken by the Market Management Team to ensure the market remained a successful trading environment for the future. It included five main themes and the report provided an update on how these had progressed.

Members also noted that with effect from June 2024, the management and responsibilities of Widnes Market had transferred to the Communities and Greenspace Department. It had previously sat within the Economy, Enterprise and Property Department.

The following information was provided following discussions and arising questions from Members:

- The market had seen a slight decline in footfall following the introduction of car parking charges;
- Although opportunities had been explored to hold an Artisan market, there had been little interest from companies; and
- Officers agreed to explore WiFi opportunities.

### **ICT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Board received a report at the January meeting from the Director of ICT and Support Services which provided an update on the department's programme of work.

The report outlined the different workstreams of the programme which included delivery of Microsoft365; Customer Journey Transformation; the Business Analysis Programme and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and details of each were described in the report. These were big projects but once completed they would bring many benefits, including cost savings.

Digital poverty was quite high in Halton and so the One Stop Shops remained an essential aspect of the front door into the Council for many, with increased footfall along with violent incidents and abuse experienced by staff. Approximately 428,000 cases were dealt with each year in the One Stop Shops.

Members were advised that the programme of work would also link to the partnership with NHS led Halton Health Hubs. Options were being explored to increase the number of Council services within the locations bringing services into the community on a face-to-face basis. Digital poverty meant that not all interactions could be digital.

Members of the Board scrutinised the report and the following additional information was provided in response to questions:

- with regards to AI, as owners of information, the Council would be responsible for any breach of data. However, a lot of AI was a base of knowledge and the type of AI the Council would hold would be kept onsite;
- there were in-house opportunities for AI, although it would be a big piece of work to analyse the data;
- it was suggested that digital poverty and those with literacy problems could be frustrated with new systems, however, it was noted that 80% of people contacted the Council via mobile phones and access would be tailored to mobile access.

### **COUNCIL WIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2024**

Also in January, the Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 16 January 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 30 November 2024, 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.

### **PERFORMANCE ISSUES DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR**

The Board considered in detail the performance of the reporting departments. Issues which were overseen during the year included:

- Accident statistics
- Market
- School catering and the operation of the Stadium

### **WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

During 2024/25, the Board retained the expanded Topic Group which oversaw the operation of the Council's Discretionary Support Scheme and included scrutiny of Universal Credit. In addition, a Topic Group also scrutinised the work of the Transformation Programme. The Board agreed that further topic groups would be established when the need arose.

**REPORT TO:** Corporate & Inclusion Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 3 June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director of Finance

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Household Support Fund – Progress Update

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

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the final position regarding delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and to report the spending plan for the Household Support Fund for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED That:**

- (i) **The final spend position regarding the Household Support Fund for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 shown in Appendix A, be noted;**
- (ii) **The spending plan for the Household Support Fund for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 shown in Appendix B, be noted.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **Household Support Fund (Tranche No.6)**

- 3.1 A report was presented to the Board on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 detailing the spending plan for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 for the Household Support Fund (6). This report provides an update setting out the final spend position for the six month period.
- 3.2 The final spend position for the Household Support Fund for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 is as follows:
- Vulnerable pensioner households, those entitled to Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction, have been awarded a payment of £130. This payment was made in November 2024, and 3,999 pensioner households received this award representing a total value of £519,870.
  - The Discretionary Support Scheme has paid out £51,052 which covered emergency support and community support.
  - Expenditure on free school meal vouchers for all eligible pupils during the school holidays was £353,532, which covered four weeks of school holidays.

- Public Health have spent £39,729 helping vulnerable residents who wouldn't otherwise have met the above criteria.
- Halton Citizens Advice Bureau have spent £69,989 on a range of support for vulnerable residents such as fuel vouchers, food vouchers, and kitchen equipment.
- Children's Services have spent £42,349 relating to Care Leavers.
- Public Health have assisted families with pre-school age children who are flagged on the income deprivation index affecting children, by providing food vouchers with a total value of £40,000.

Appendix A details the final spending position for the Household Support Fund (6) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### **Household Support Fund (Tranche No.7)**

- 3.3 On 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025 the Government issued guidance and announced the allocation of £2.3m, for the continuation of the Household Support Fund for a further twelve months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- 3.4 The Fund has operated since October 2021 in either six or twelve month tranches, however, this latest allocation covers a twelve month period. The Fund is intended to support vulnerable households with the pressures caused by the continuing cost of living crisis.
- 3.5 The Government guidance for this latest allocation of the Fund remains broadly unchanged, with a focus on vulnerable pensioner households, vulnerable households with children, and requiring that part of the funding must be distributed on the basis of an application process. However, the Council can still proactively target particular groups of households.
- 3.6 Discussions have been held with colleagues in Council Departments and Voluntary Sector Organisations, who previously supported the delivery of the Household Support Fund to residents.

### **Discretionary Support Scheme – Application Process**

- 3.7 In order to meet the requirement to operate part of the scheme on an application basis, it is proposed to allocate £100,000 of the funding to the Discretionary Support Scheme administered within the Benefits Division, which has an existing telephone application process.
- 3.8 The DWP guidance once again states that the Household Support Fund is intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners, and people with disabilities.

### **Free School Meal Vouchers**

- 3.9 In order to provide assistance to vulnerable households with children, it is proposed to once again allocate funding to low income families with children, by issuing free school meal vouchers of £12 per week during all the school holidays in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

- 3.10 It is estimated that the free school meals vouchers will cost approximately £1,170,000 in total. This will provide approximately 7,500 children with free school meal vouchers during all of the six holiday periods.

### **Pensioner Households on Council Tax Reduction**

- 3.11 To support vulnerable pensioner households, it is proposed that all pensioner households currently receiving council tax reduction (CTR) will be provided with a one-off award of £120.
- 3.12 It is estimated that 4,200 pensioner households on CTR will benefit from this award, at a total cost of £504,000.

### **Public Health and Care Leavers**

- 3.13 Public Health will be allocated £50,000 in order to target support to vulnerable households who may fall outside those areas covered by the rest of the Spending Plan. Details of how it is proposed to utilise this funding is being developed.
- 3.14 Public Health are also proposing to target support to families who have pre-school age children and are flagged on the Income Deprivation Index affecting children. In addition, families who have disabled pre-school age children will be targeted for support. It is proposed to allocate £50,000 to Public Health for this particular project.
- 3.15 Colleagues in Children's Services are proposing to continue to provide support for Care Leavers with the following areas: energy bill support, household packs to assist with keeping warm, saving energy and cooking, and emergency food and hygiene packs. It is proposed to allocate £60,000 to Children's Services to provide the above mentioned support.

### **Voluntary Sector Partners**

- 3.16 It is once again proposed to ask Voluntary Sector Partners to assist the Council with the delivery of HSF support to residents for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. Allocations are being made for the twelve month period, to Citizens Advice, Food Banks, Affordable Warmth etc. Each organisation will provide a detailed proposal of how it intends to utilise the funding, and throughout the year they will provide the Council with quarterly monitoring information for submission to the DWP.

### **Delivery Co-ordination, Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements**

- 3.17 The Benefits Division will once again co-ordinate use of the grant on behalf of the Council. In order to maximise the benefit of the grant funding for the Borough's residents and ensure it is fully utilised, discussions have been held with colleagues from across the Council and Voluntary Sector Partners. A proposed spending plan has been prepared as set out in the Appendix B, regarding how the grant funding might be utilised via a combination of Council Departments and Voluntary Sector Partners to deliver support to vulnerable households over the twelve month period.

- 3.18 The Spending Plan is intended to provide clarity of what actions are required of the relevant Council departments and Partner organisations, with lead officers being identified. It will also provide a basis for monitoring spending against the grant, with periodic submissions required to the DWP and to ensure it is fully utilised in accordance with the grant guidance by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.
- 3.19 If the grant is not fully spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 and/or is not spent in accordance with the grant guidance, it will be clawed back by the DWP. Initially, a balance of £24,101 remains unallocated as a contingency in case of overspends. Once the actual numbers and costs of items are known, the contingency will be re-allocated to provide additional support.
- 3.20 In order to commence delivery of the Household Support Fund, the Spending Plan requires the approval of the Executive Board. However given the urgent need to procure free school meal vouchers for the Easter school holidays, the Chief Executive has approved the plan using delegated urgency powers. Thereafter, it is proposed that regular monitoring reports will be presented to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.

#### **4.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

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

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

The delivery of support from the Household Support Fund is targeted towards the Borough's most vulnerable households, and has the potential to support a number of the Council's priorities.

#### **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 6.1 If the grant allocation from the Household Support Fund is not fully utilised in accordance with the DWP guidance by the deadline date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, any remaining grant funding will be clawed back by the DWP.



**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

**8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None.

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

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Household Support Fund 2025 Allocations	DCBL Stadium Lowerhouse Lane Widnes	Paul Garnett

## APPENDIX A

**Household Support Fund (Tranche No.6)**  
**Actual Spend for the Period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

<b>Total Grant Allocation</b>	£ 1,297,880
Less Administration Costs (5%)	64,894
<b>Available Grant Funding</b>	<b>1,232,986</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
<b>1. Vulnerable Households with children</b>	
Free school meal vouchers provided for 4 weeks.	353,532
<b>2. Vulnerable Pensioner Households</b>	
Paid £130 to 3,999 pensioner households in November 2024.	519,870
<b>3. Discretionary Support Scheme</b>	
Spend for period 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	51,052
<b>4. Public Health</b>	
Spend for period 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	39,729
<b>5. Public Health – pre-school age</b>	
Spend for period 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	40,000
<b>6. Care Leavers</b>	
Spend for period 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	42,349
<b>7. Other vulnerable households</b>	
Citizens Advice Bureau	69,989
Widnes Foodbank	10,000
Runcorn Foodbank	10,000
Holiday Activity Food programme	5,000
Affordable Warmth – Energy Projects Plus	5,491
Halton Voluntary Action	10,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,157,012</b>

## APPENDIX B

**Household Support Fund (Tranche No.7)**  
**Spending Plan 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

Total Grant Allocation	£ 2,287,475
Less Administration Costs (5%)	114,374
<b>Available Grant Funding</b>	<b>2,173,101</b>
<b>1. Vulnerable Households with Children</b>	1,170,000
Free school meal vouchers for school holidays: Easter holidays 7 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 (2 weeks) Half term 26 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 (1 week) Summer holidays 23 <sup>rd</sup> July – 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2025 (6 weeks) Autumn half term 27 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2025 (1 week) Christmas holidays 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2025 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan 2026 (2 weeks) Half term 16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2026 (1 week)  Based upon estimated 7,500 children entitled to FSM Paid for 13 weeks at £12 per voucher per week	
<b>2. Vulnerable Pensioner Households</b>	504,000
Based on 4,200 pensioner households receiving CTR/HB Award of £120 per pensioner	
<b>3. Discretionary Support Scheme</b>	100,000
Accessed by application	
<b>4. Public Health – Other Vulnerable Households</b>	50,000
Contact – Jayne Hardman	
<b>5. Public Health - Pre-school Age Children</b>	50,000
Contact - Matt Hancock	
<b>6. Care Leavers</b>	60,000
Contact – Emma Wright	
<b>7. Other Vulnerable Households</b>	
Halton Citizens Advice Bureau	125,000
Widnes Food Bank	20,000
Runcorn Food Bank	20,000
Holiday Activity Food programme	10,000
Affordable Warmth – Energy Projects Plus	20,000
Halton Voluntary Action	20,000
<b>8. Contingency</b>	24,101
<b>Total Allocated</b>	<b>2,173,101</b>

**REPORT TO:** Corporate & Inclusion Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 3 June 2025

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

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Corporate Accident / Incident Report 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To report on the performance of health safety management within the Authority for 1st April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- i) the report be received; and
- ii) the Board notes the contents of the report including the recommendations and actions for 2025/26.

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The health and safety report on the performance of health and safety management in relation to Key Performance Indicators for the current financial year is appended.

3.2 It highlights health and safety information.

3.3 The report includes information around the number of actual near misses, over 7 day and significant accidents.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The report assists in the delivery of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

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

The provision of a safe working environment and reduction in accidents is important in order to provide:

- A Healthy Halton;
- A Safer Halton; and
- Efficient and Effective Delivery of Services

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 Accidents which lead to lost time have financial implications for the authority (although these are always secondary to our concern for the well-being of staff and customers).

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

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.



**CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT**

**REPORT (PPB)**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

## Contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 General .....	3
1.2 H&S Management System .....	3
<b>2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Summary 2024/2025 .....	4
2.2 Recommendations 2025/26 .....	5
<b>3. INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Local/National Information .....	6
<b>4. LEAD INDICATORS (KPI's) .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 KPI 1 Risk Assessments .....	7
4.2 KPI 2 Near Misses .....	7
4.3 KPI 3 Lone Working Monitoring System .....	7
<b>5. REACTIVE INDICATORS (KPI's) .....</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1 KPI 4 Accidents .....	8 & 9
5.2 KPI 5 Violent Incidents .....	10 & 11
<b>6. Risk Assessment Position Statements .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 clearly places responsibility on those who create the risk to manage it. The new HSE Strategy “Protecting People and Places 2022 to 2032” allows for the HSE to adapt and respond to a changing landscape. It also allows it to continue to support the delivery of wider government priorities including the move towards net zero and improving the health of the nation.

The HSE now also has added responsibilities, such as becoming the appointed ‘Building Safety Regulator’ and also has an extended role in chemical regulation following Brexit.

It remains the same that the fundamental principle of health and safety law is that those who create risks are best placed to manage them. The expectations and evidence suggest that most workplaces have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage safety for themselves.

### 1.2 Health and Safety Management System

In order to demonstrate how Halton Borough Council as an employer is delivering the HSE Strategy, this report is to provide Management Team with details of health and safety performance in relation to Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Details of KPI’s are as follows:

#### **LEAD INDICATORS**

Proactive action taken and any outcomes

KPI

1. **Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems**  
Rationale – creating a safe working environment
2. **Number of Near Misses**  
Rationale – action taken to prevent further similar incidents and before injuries
3. **Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system**  
Rationale – demonstrating effective management of lone working risks

#### **REACTIVE [Lagging] INDICATORS**

Reactive action taken in response to accidents/incidents

4. **Number of Significant<sup>1</sup> and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents<sup>2</sup>**  
Rationale – identify accident/incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences
5. **Number of Violent Incidents**

<sup>1</sup> Accidents that either require more than basic first aid, incur time lost or arise from a failure in health and safety management

<sup>2</sup> Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, (RIDDOR) 2013, including Fatalities, Specified Injuries, Over 7-day Injuries, Reportable Occupational Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences



Rationale – identify incident trends and actions required to prevent similar Occurrences. Encourage all staff to report incidents to give a true picture and enable appropriate mitigations to be put in place.

National and Local Information together with performance gaps and incident trends form the basis for the Recommended Actions for 2024/25.

By responding positively to identify trends, the Authority can demonstrate compliance with the recommendations of the Health and Safety Executive's guidance HS (G) 65 "Management for Health and Safety".

## 2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1 Summary

As the authority moves forward a number of significant changes are being made in relation to how services are delivered and staff recruited. The relevant impact these changes do / have the potential to impact on health & safety together with wellbeing requirements are under constant monitoring.

The current 5 Directorates continues to allow a more detailed monitoring of incidents. The internal reorganisation of some services continues to have an impact on figures as staff have moved under new managers. It is anticipated that this should have a minimal impact overall but may have influence on local areas. This continues to be monitored.

Reportable and significant accidents for Halton Employees are currently at a total of 10 a rise of 1 across all directorates. However, Near Miss reports for HBC employee incidents have fallen 3 to 0. There is still a risk of under reporting, particularly Near Miss incidents and work is ongoing to ensure this is not happening.

In the last report 2 extra categories were added to the report (Threat of Violence and Sexual Harassment). Violent Incidents corporately are showing currently as 28 Verbal (a rise of 7), Physical 22 ( a fall of 13), Threats of violence 10 ( a fall of 9) and Sexual Harassment 1 (a fall of 5).

Schools have reported 6 Verbal ( a rise of 6), 33 Physical incidents (a rise of 10), 1 Threat of Violence ( a rise of 1), 0 incidents of Sexual Harassment ( No change).

Lone Working Contact Centre Monitoring update – In the previous report a replacement system was highlighted. This is now operational and the current uptake levels are recorded below . The new system is still in its infancy so data relating to usage etc is not yet available. This data will be included in subsequent reports.

Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system and are shown at point 7. The figures shown cover all directorates, with many being reviewed still. In addition, the risk assessment system has undergone changes after concerns over its ease of use were raised. As a result of focus groups, those suggestions have been implemented.

The HSE recently released their annual statistics which includes 138 workplace fatalities across the UK (Construction, Agriculture and Manufacturing are the top 3 workplace categories).

The HSE are continuing to conduct checks on school premises and have visited council buildings within the LCR to ensure correct management of asbestos that is required under

the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. In addition, the HSE have also launched an asbestos awareness campaign entitled "Asbestos and You".

Work on maintaining appropriate Bomb and Lockdown procedures in HBC buildings is continuing with a number of exercises planned, some of which have been conducted. Results have been passed to managers for consideration and action. In addition, staff have been reminded regarding the importance of maintaining both personal and building security via the corporate bulletin system.

The regulator for the incoming Martins Law legislation has been named as the security Industry Authority (SIA). The legislation is still awaited.

## 2.2 Recommendations 2025/26

The following recommendations are as a result of the accident analysis data for all of 2024-2025 from 1<sup>st</sup> April and will be actioned during the period 2025/26.

No.	KPI No.	ACTION	RATIONALE	RESPONSIBLE
1.	1	All managers and assessors to ensure risk assessments on the corporate risk assessment system across all areas are reviewed and up to date as per safety bulletin 2021 8.	Position statements, section 7 below.	All managers and assessors - ongoing
2.	3	All Managers to ensure preparation / training in relation to ACT and the enactment of Protect Duty	Ensuring safety of staff, public and anyone involved with council business	All managers - ongoing
3.	3	Ensure staff follow Safe Systems of Work (SSOW) to reduce likelihood of involvement in an accident.	Reduction of accidents, suffering and associated financial implications.	All managers - ongoing

## GENERAL ACTIONS

Action a series of Lockdown/Bomb Threat Exercises across main Council buildings in anticipation for introduction of Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill.	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
Review and update Health and Safety policies (Corporate & Schools) requiring timescale or legislation reviews	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
School Audit and Health check visit programme	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
Programme of departmental audits actioned and ongoing for all corporate areas	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team and Team Managers.
Action Fire / Bomb / Lockdown risk assessments / procedures council buildings. This has been achieved by a series of audits.	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team and team Managers

### 3. INFORMATION

#### 3.1 Local/National Information

Current Key figures for Great Britain (2023/24). Source: HSE.

- **1.7 million** working people suffering from a work-related illness, of which
  - **776,000** workers suffering work-related stress, depression or anxiety
  - **543,000** workers suffering from a work-related musculoskeletal disorder
- **2,257** mesothelioma deaths due to past asbestos exposures (2021)
- **138** workers killed in work-related accidents
- **604,000** working people sustained an injury at work according to the Labour Force Survey
- **61,663** injuries to employees reported under RIDDOR
- **33.7 million** working days lost due to work-related illness and workplace injury
- **£21.6 billion** estimated cost of injuries and ill health from current working conditions (2022/23)

The HSE continue to run a safety campaign entitled “Work Right”. It is primarily targeted at the various tradespersons (employees and managers) engaged in construction and associated activities. The current focus is called “Asbestos and You” which highlights the dangers and the procedures and management requirements when working in areas, suspected of containing asbestos e.g. older buildings. The HSE website now has an information area entitled Asbestos Essentials, where managers, workers and public can access the relevant information. The HSE have created electronic newsletters to enable associated staff to be kept up to date with any new developments.

Prior to schools closing for their summer break, the HSE announced that they would be undertaking spot checks at schools in relation to Asbestos management, to ensure compliance with Asbestos regulations. To date the Health & Safety Team have only been made aware of one High School previously being contacted with no visit taking place.

However, the HSE have now widened this campaign with at least one local authority within this area getting visits to corporate buildings. No at the time of compiling this report are in Halton.

The campaign is designed to ensure staff have awareness of asbestos and to ensure, where present, the material is being appropriately managed. The HSE has also re-iterated its advice on violence in the workplace. HBC has a number of strategies already in place which are reviewed on a regular basis.

#### Local:

Managers of workplace areas continue to be reminded of the need for safe areas and staff welfare (both physical and mental). HBC are currently running a number of mental health sessions which are open to staff.

Retraining of staff continues (e.g. Evac chair). In addition, updated online training packages have been launched on the enable system i.e. fire marshal training package has been included.

As an authority Halton Borough Council has for many years been working on implementing Bomb/Lockdown procedures and policies in all buildings and schools as well as actioning Bomb/Lockdown exercises in main buildings. The HBC Bomb/Lockdown policy was first produced in 2009. Work will be continuing to review and improve this process. In addition, staff have received reminders in relation to staff and building security via the corporate bulletin system. In addition, a number of training sessions for managers and decision maker sessions led by counter terrorism officers have taken place.

In addition, staff have had increased awareness of the ACT training package which is available online.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (AKA Martyn's Law) received royal ascent on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025. Current communications from Government indicate a 2 year settling in period will be applied and that the regulator has been confirmed as the Security Industry Authority (SIA). HBC has recently set up a working group and is currently scrutinizing the guidance to ensure HBC is compliant. Updates will be included in future reports.

#### 4. **LEAD INDICATORS**

##### 4.1 . Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems

4.1.1 An electronic risk assessment system, based on the Intranet, has been 'live' since September 2011.

- Actual number of assessments **completed** up to 01/04/25 is 1038

Adult Services Directorate – 190

Children's Services Directorate – 252

Chief Executive Directorate – 313

Environment & Regeneration Directorate – 313

Public Health - 63

**See section 7 for known position statements and comparisons.**

##### 4.2 Number of Near Misses (Corporate)

4.2.1 The number reported in the last 3 years are:

2022/2023

5

2023/2024

3

2024/2025

5

From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 there have been 5 near misses (HBC Employees) reported on the corporate accident/incident system.

##### 4.3 Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system

- 4.3.1 The upgraded Lone Working System is now operational. Usage data will be available later this year as it is too early to gain an accurate picture. The current distribution of users across the authority is shown below.

Directorate	Number of registered users as of 31.03.2025	Comments
Adult Services	111	
Children's Services	80	
Chief Executives	16	
Environment & Regeneration	22	
Public Health	28	
St Helens MBC – Emergency Duty Team	3	
Total	260	

## 5 REACTIVE ['Lagging'] INDICATORS

### 5.1 Number of Significant and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents

- 5.1.1 The number of significant accidents and RIDDOR reportable to the HSE for HBC employees in each Directorate excluding schools that took place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

Directorate	Specified Injury	> 7-Day	Significant
Adult Services Directorate	0	3	0
Chief Executive Directorate	0	1	0
Children's Services Directorate	2	0	0
Environment & Regeneration Directorate.	0	2	0
Public Health Directorate	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL 2024/2025</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL 2023/2024</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TOTAL 2022/2023 (Old Directorates).</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>

#### Main Categories (Including Non – Reportable)

	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
Slip, Trip, Fall	32	30	22
Man Han	17	17	10
Equipment	1	0	3

Other Categories 2024/25

Hit by moving or flying object – 9  
Hit something fixed or stationary – 4  
Sharps – 3  
Entrapment – 1  
Exposed to, or in contact with, harmful substance - 1

Please note the majority of accidents in the main and other categories resulted in minor injuries, not reportable or requiring further action.

**Days Lost**

- Total days lost due to workplace injury:

**Days Lost:**

2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
392	222	486 (+264)

- **NB** The total days lost is 486. It should be noted that one staff member is currently on 126 days and one who has since left had 161 days prior to leaving. Total from these two incidents = 287 days. Without them the total would have been 199 days.

## 5.2 Number of Violent Incidents

- Figures for instances of Threats of violence and where the behaviour would amount to any form of Sexual Harassment have again been included due to the positive response of their inclusion.
- PPPE – Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency.

### 5.2.1 From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

Directorate	Verbal	Physical	Threat of Violence	Sexual Harassment
Adults Services Directorate.	Adult Social Services – <b>14</b>  Commissioning & Complex Care - <b>1</b>	Adult Social Services – <b>2</b>  Commissioning & Complex Care - <b>12</b>	Adult Social Services – <b>2</b>  Commissioning & Complex Care - <b>0</b>	Adult Social Services – <b>1</b>  Commissioning & Complex Care - <b>0</b>
Chief Executives Directorate.	PPPE – <b>2</b>  ICT & Support - <b>7</b>	PPPE – <b>0</b>  ICT & Support - <b>1</b>	PPPE – <b>1</b>  ICT & Support- <b>3</b>	PPPE – <b>0</b>  ICT & Support - <b>0</b>
Children's Services Directorate.	Children's Services-HBC Schools – See Separate Schools Record  Children's Safeguarding Unit - <b>0</b>	Children's Services-HBC Schools – See Separate Schools Record  Children's Safeguarding Unit - <b>1</b>	Children's Services-HBC Schools – See Separate Schools Record  Children's Safeguarding Unit - <b>0</b>	Children's Services-HBC Schools – See Separate Schools Record  Children's Safeguarding Unit - <b>0</b>
Environment & Regeneration Directorate.	Economy, Enterprise & Property- <b>0</b>  Community & Greenspace – <b>4.</b>	Economy, Enterprise & Property- <b>0.</b>  Community & Greenspace – <b>4.</b>	Economy, Enterprise & Property- <b>3.</b>  Community & Greenspace – <b>1.</b>	Economy, Enterprise & Property- <b>0.</b>  Community & Greenspace – <b>0</b>
Public Health Directorate	Public Health – <b>0</b>	Public Health - <b>2</b>	Public Health - <b>0</b>	Public Health - <b>0</b>

Annual Totals	Verbal	Physical	Threat of Violence	Sexual Harassment
<b>TOTAL 2024/25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>TOTAL 2023/24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TOTAL 2022/23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL 2021/22</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### 5.2.2 Schools

Following the formation of the five directorates, instances of violence against HBC staff in schools is included within Children's Services Directorate – Children's Services HBC Schools calculations. Figures for staff employed by academies are not available. It should also be noted that some incidents are reported on the CPOMS system which the H&S team do not have access to.

<b>HBC - Schools</b>	<b>Verbal</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Threat of Violence</b>	<b>Sexual Harassment</b>
<b>TOTAL 2024/25</b>	6	33	1	0
<b>TOTAL 2023/24</b>	0	23	0	0
<b>TOTAL 2022/23</b>	1	16	-	-
<b>TOTAL 2021/22</b>	2	16	-	-
<b>TOTAL 2020/21</b>	4	11	-	-



## 6. Risk Assessment Position Statements

Previous:

Directorate	Expected	Completed	%
Adult Services	279	197	70.61
Chief Executives	418	337	80.62
Children's Services	362	212	58.56
Environment & Regeneration	313	231	73.80
Public Health	64	47	73.44
Total	1436	1024	71.30

Current:

Directorate	Expected	Completed	%
Adult Services	305	190	62.30
Chief Executives	424	313	73.82
Children's Services	471	252	53.30
Environment & Regeneration	336	220	65.48
Public Health	79	63	79.75
Total	1615	1038	64.27

Colin Hill  
Principal Health and Safety Advisor,  
HR Operations  
Chief Executives Directorate.  
8th April 2025.

**REPORT TO:** Corporate and Inclusion Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025

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

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Performance Management Reports for Quarter 4 of 2024/25

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

**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 final quarter period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2024-25 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:

- Finance
- Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
- ICT and Administrative Support
- Legal and Democracy
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
- Property Services

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 final quarter 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.

## Corporate Services – Chief Executive's Directorate Quarter 4

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

### 1.0 Introduction

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

### 1.4 Corporate Priorities



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

**Plan on a Page**



## 2.0 High Priority Equality Actions

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

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


## 3.0 Performance Overview

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

## Finance


### Key Objectives / milestones

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

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


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


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

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


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


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



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

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


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

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


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

**Key Objectives / milestones**


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

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

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

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

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

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


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

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

ICT


### Key Objectives / milestones

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

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


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

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


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

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

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

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


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


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

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


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

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

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

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







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


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

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

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

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

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

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




<u>Property Services</u>
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**Key Objectives / milestones**

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

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

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

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

## 4.0 Financial Statements

### Finance Department

#### Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2025

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

**Comments on the above figures**

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

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

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




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

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

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



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

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

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

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

**Comments on the above figures**

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

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

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

**Capital Programme 2024/25**

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

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

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

**Comments on the above figures**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Capital Expenditure**

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

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

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

**Comments on the above figures**

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


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

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

**Approved 2024/25 Savings**

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

**LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

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

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

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

**Comments on the above figures**

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

### **Budget Savings**

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

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
COMM3	Sport & Recreation	471	Restructuring the roles and responsibilities of the Sports Development Team	36	0		 Phase 1 of the restructure is underway with subsequent phases to occur within the next financial year.
COMM5	Stadium & Catering Services – School Meals	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over £200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.	0	12		 The cessation of the service is complete.
<b>Total Community &amp; Environment Department</b>				<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>		

**Capital**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Comments on the above figures**

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

## **Supporting Information**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

#### **APPENDIX A**

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

**Capital Budget at 31 March 25**

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

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

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

**Foundry Lane**

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

**Murdishaw**

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

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

**Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet**

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

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

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

**Property Improvement**

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

**Changing Places**

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

**Runcorn Station Quarter**

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

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

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

**Town Deal**

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

**Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development**

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

**Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition**

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

**Port of Weston**

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




**UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

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





## 5.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

### Progress Symbols

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

### Direction of Travel Indicator

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



**REPORT TO:** Corporate & Inclusion Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 3 June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Finance Director

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Council Wide Spending as at 31 January 2025

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

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- (i) **The Council's overall financial position as at 31 January 2025 as outlined in the Appendix, be noted.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 On 13 March 2025 the Executive Board received the report shown in the Appendix. This presented details of Councilwide revenue and capital spending by each Department as at 31 January 2025 along with forecasts to year-end, and outlines the reasons for key variances from budget.
- 3.2 Given the scale of the Council's current financial challenges, Executive Board requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information. This is to ensure that all Members have a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.
- 3.3 The report is presented to Executive Board every two months and the attached report covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 January 2025. It includes details of spending to date by each Department against both the revenue budget and capital programme.
- 3.4 Within the report Appendix 1 provides a Councilwide summary of revenue spending, while Appendix 2 presents details relating to each Department. The latest forecast of revenue spending to year-end compared to budget is also provided.
- 3.5 Appendix 3 presents spending to date against the Capital Programme. Appendix 4 indicates progress with implementation of previously approved budget savings for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

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

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

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

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

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

5.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

5.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

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

#### **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

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

6.2 A budget risk register of significant financial risks is maintained and is included at Appendix 5 of the attached report.

#### **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

#### **8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None

#### **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072**

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

**APPENDIX**

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 13 March 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Finance Director

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

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

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

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.2 To report the Council's overall revenue net spend position as at 31 January 2025 together with a 2024/25 forecast outturn position.

**3.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- (ii) **Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the councilwide forecast outturn overspend position;**
- (iii) **Executive Directors continue to implement the approved savings proposals for 2024/25 and 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 4;**
- (iv) **Council be asked to approve the revisions to the capital programme set-out in paragraph 3.22 and incorporated within Appendix 3;**
- (v) **This report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION****Revenue Spending**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 January 2025 and Appendix 2 provides detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms, net Council spending as at 31 January 2025 is £15.487m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimates that net spending will be over budget by £18.906m if no corrective action is taken.
- 3.2 The forecast outturn overspend has improved by £1.851m from the amount reported on 16 January 2025. Whilst the financial position for the year

remains deeply concerning the forecast outturn is a significant improvement. The improvement largely relates to reduced net spend estimates across Children Services. Further information regarding significant departmental variances is included within the report and departmental figures are included in Appendices 1 and 2.

- 3.3 Over the two month period since the last reported position, financial focus workshops led by the Chief Executive have taken place with each Directorate's senior leadership team on a monthly basis. These workshops are looking for urgent ways to reduce or stop spending, or generate income. The aim is that initiatives identified in these workshops will help reduce the overall forecast overspend position for the year.
- 3.4 Ordinarily, where net spend is exceeding available resources for the year, the Council would have used reserves to achieve a balanced position. Due to decreasing levels, the Council are not in a position to cover the forecast overspend for the year. Therefore, on 04 December 2024 Council approved an application to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS). The Government's EFS arrangement provides councils with exceptional permission to capitalise annual revenue costs and fund them from long term borrowing (over 20 years) from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLb). EFS provides permission to borrow and does not provide grant funding. On 20 February 2025 MHCLG confirmed the Deputy Prime Minister is minded to approve a capitalisation direction of a total not exceeding £52.8 million over the period 2024/25 and 2025/26. The position will only be confirmed following an external assurance review to be undertaken in the summer of 2025.
- 3.5 The Council's available useable reserves (general and earmarked) total £11.484m. This is well below that required to help provide a balanced budget position given the forecast outturn overspend. Further detail on reserves is provided at paragraph 3.19.
- 3.6 The forecast outturn figures reflect a prudent yet realistic view of spend and income levels through to the end of the year. Work will continue to update the financial position as more information becomes available. Included within the forecast position is the 2024/25 pay award which was paid in November 2024.
- 3.7 The largest pressure on the Council's budget continues to be within the Children & Families Department and the Adults Directorate. Against Children & Families net spend for the year is forecast to be £6.817m (16.2%) above 2023/24 actual spend. Against the Adults Directorate net spend for the year is forecast to be £4.557m (7.5%) higher than 2023/24 actual spend.
- 3.8 On 24 October 2024 the Board approved additional revenue funding of £4.2m per year, to help develop a programme around the stabilisation and redesign of Children's Social Care, following the Ofsted review. This investment is focused upon proactive early intervention and prevention systems. It is envisaged that this investment will help control and reduce

costs within Children's Social Care over the next few years, and these cost reductions will be built into future year budget targets.

- 3.9 The use and cost of agency staff continues to be one of the main contributing factors to the overspend position for the year. This is mostly evident within the Children & Families Department and the Council's in-house Care Homes. Initiatives and support from the Transformation Programme are ongoing to reduce reliance upon agency staff.
- 3.10 Analysis of agency spend for the year, together with comparative analysis of 2023/24 costs, is included in the table below. Note information for Q4 only includes data for one months, January.

	2024/25					2023/24
	Q1 £'000	Q2 £'000	Q3 £'000	Q4 to Date £'000	Total £'000	Total £'000
Adult Social Care	1,341	1,656	1,210	1,241	5,448	5,927
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	132	179	239	82	632	0
Children & Family Services	1,283	1,432	1,321	400	4,436	6,157
Community & Greenspace	116	129	104	33	382	336
Economy, Enterprise & Property	86	105	110	38	339	343
Education, Inclusion & Provision	99	78	53	14	244	393
Finance	14	42	31	8	95	56
Legal & Democratic Services	253	274	212	41	780	814
Planning & Transportation	94	85	19	3	201	206
Public Health & Public Protection	11	10	1	0	22	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,429</b>	<b>3,990</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>12,579</b>	<b>14,253</b>

- 3.11 Within the approved budget for the year is a £4m savings target against the Transformation Programme. To date budget savings of £0.129m have been identified against this target. In addition, the Transformation Delivery Unit (TDU) have identified cost reductions and cost avoidance measures, although these will not lead to an overall reduction in the budgeted target. Progress against transformation savings is reported monthly to the Transformation Programme Board.
- 3.12 The forecast overspend is significantly above that which has been recorded in recent years. Whilst the current year net budget for the Council has increased by £7.7m (5.45%), this is well below the forecast increase in net costs, currently estimated as an increase of £20.997m (14.1%).

### Revenue - Operational Spending

- 3.13 Operational net spending for the first ten months of the year is higher than the budget to date by £15.487m Based on current forecasts it is estimated net spend will be over budget for the year by £18.906m if no further corrective action is taken.
- 3.14 Within the overall budget forecast position for the quarter, the key budget variances are as follows;

(i) **Children and Families Department**

The overall estimated forecast overspend position at the end of 2024/25 has reduced by £1.616m since last reported at 30 November 2024.

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

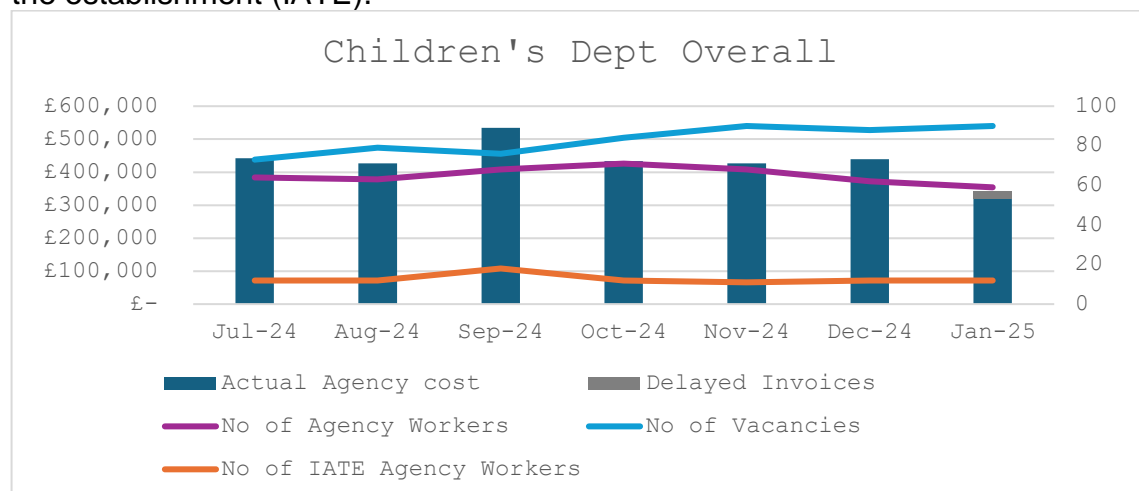
Although that there is a reduction in estimated forecast overspend across the Children's and Families department the overspend is still an area of serious concern and the issues remain the same. The difficulty in the recruitment of social workers and the subsequent extortionate agency costs, along with the spiralling costs of residential placements. This has been an ongoing problem for a number of years.

### Employee Expenditure

Employee costs are forecast to be over budget profile at the end of financial year 2024/25 by £1.994m this is a reduction of £0.624m based on information available at 31 January 2025.

The reduction mainly relates to an agreed investment within children's services which has resulted in the establishment of new roles across the department. Agency staff that were previously in addition to the establishment (IATE) are no longer considered as IATE. Additional in-year budget of £0.501m (funded from contingency) has been provided for some of the newly established posts which has helped reduce the overspend position.

The chart below demonstrates agency cost that cover the month of April to January based on the period that was worked, the number of agency members of staff that the Council have received an invoice for within each period, the number of vacancies across the department and the number of staff that are currently in addition to the establishment (IATE).

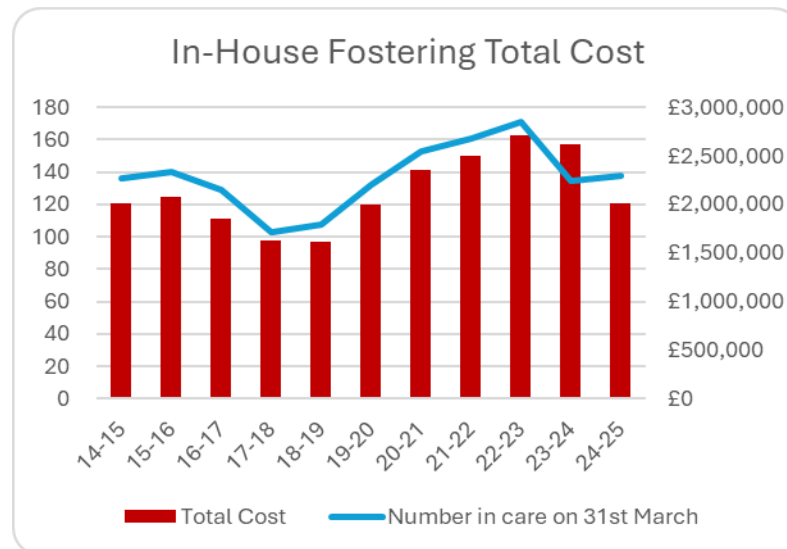


Various workstreams are in place to target the difficulties in recruitment, including a recruitment work group, social work academy and market supplements for applicable posts.

The chart above shows the level of agency has consistently reduced since October this is due to a number of agency converting to vacant positions and external recruitment which has resulted agency staff being stepped down.

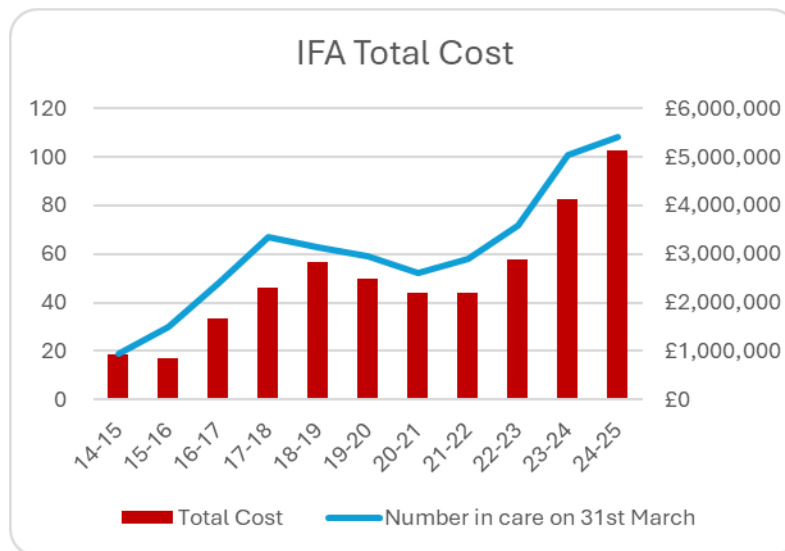
### Fostering

Inhouse fostering placements is estimated to be £0.348m under budget profile for financial year 2024/25. Inhouse fostering budgets were increased to support the budget pressure in this area.



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

Increasing numbers of children in care and insufficient in-house fostering provision has meant increased reliance on IFA. Higher numbers of children placed within IFA provision and increased IFA rates has resulted in an estimated forecast overspend for the end of 2024/25 as £0.886m.



### Residential Care

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

Provision	Weekly Costs	31-Jan-25		30-Nov-24	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£1000 - £3000	4	488,662	4	476,360
Residential	£3001 - £5000	27	5,108,252	25	4,956,870
Residential	£5001 - £7000	26	6,737,694	26	7,413,389
Residential	£7001 - £15982	16	9,452,930	17	9,291,964
Secure	£6397 - £8137				
Leaving Care	£443 - £7175	11	2,134,843	14	2,341,056
Parent & Child	£2000 - £5500	7	774,025	7	913,562
<b>Total:</b>		<b>91</b>	<b>24,696,405</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>25,393,201</b>

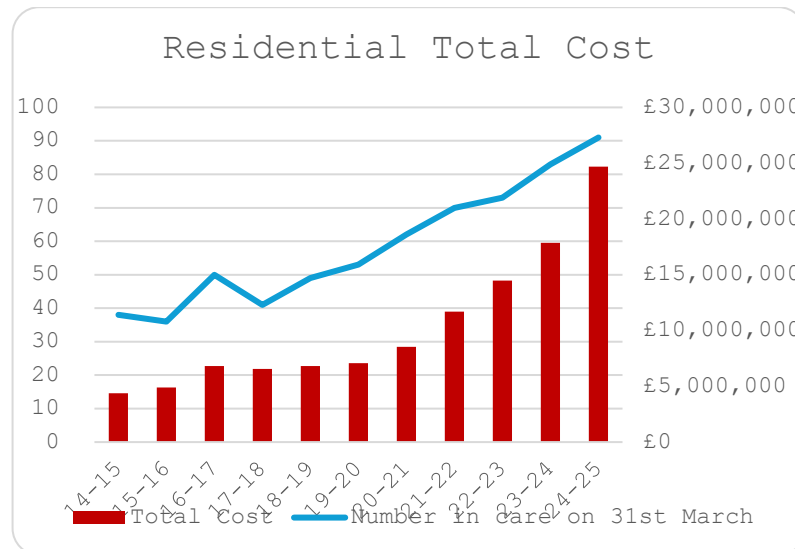
At the end of financial year 24/25 the estimated overspend is £6.410M over budget for residential placements this has reduced by £0.784m since last reported.

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

A number of initiatives are taking place to try and address the issue including a High Cost Placement Panel where high cost packages are individually scrutinized to ensure the placement is right for the young person and at the best available cost for the placement.



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



## (ii) **Adult Social Care Directorate**

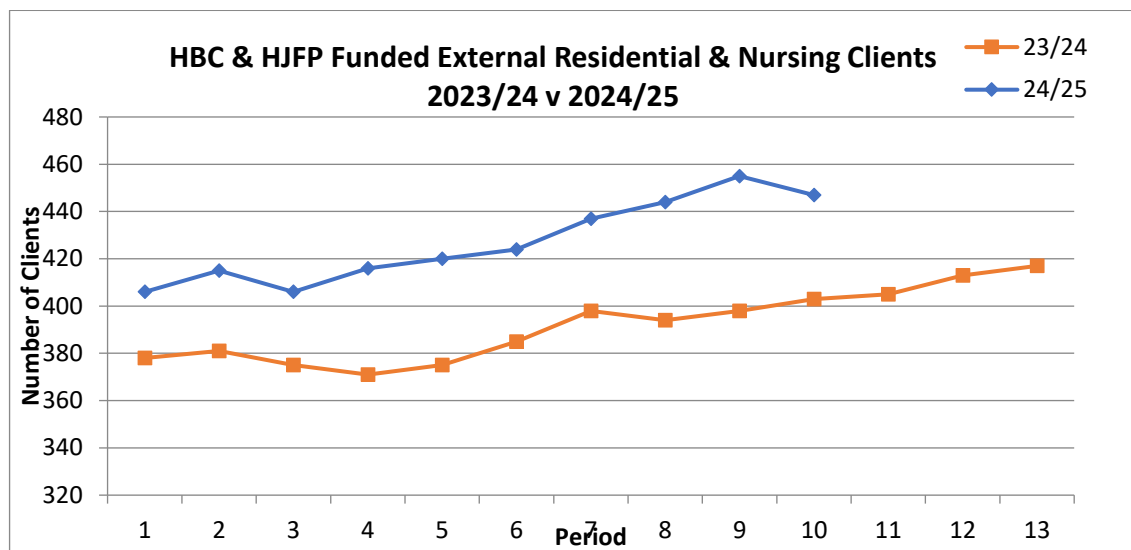
### Community Care

At the end of January 2025 expenditure on Community Care services is over budget profile by £2.679m. It is anticipated that at the end of the financial year it will be overspent by £3.527m. This is an increase of £0.585m from the previous position reported at the end of November 2024.

### Residential & Nursing Care

There are currently 447 residents in permanent external residential/nursing care as at the end of January 2025 compared to 444 in November, an increase of 0.6%. Compared to the 2023/24 average of 391 this is an increase of 14.3%. The average cost of a package of care in the current year for the same period has increased from £873.48 to £902.99 an increase of 3.3%. Based on this average cost, the 3 additional service users from November to January will cost approximately £0.032m to year end. In addition there is an increase in supplementary invoices during this period, amounting to £0.223m.

The graph below illustrates the demand for permanent placements.



Additional 1:1 hours in care homes currently cost the Council £0.023m per week. Spend to date is £0.596m for 30 individuals (27,432hrs), the forecast to year end is circa £0.803m.

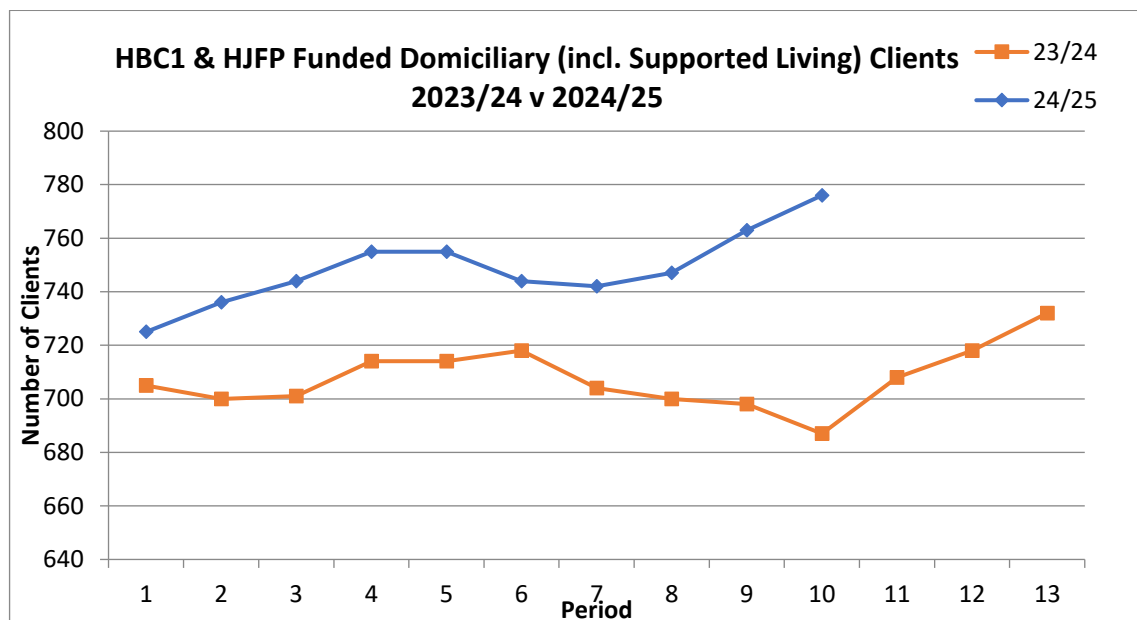
There are 76 care homes charging an additional payment over and above the contracted framework bed price. The current cost of additional payments is £0.012m per week, circa £0.610m per annum.

#### Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

There are currently 776 service users receiving a package of care at home compared to 747 in November, an increase of 29 (3.8%). However, the average number of service users during 2023/24 was 707, so there has been an increase of 9.8% demonstrating that demand for the service has increased this financial year.

The average cost of a package of care has increased by 5.3% from £450.89 to £475.14.

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

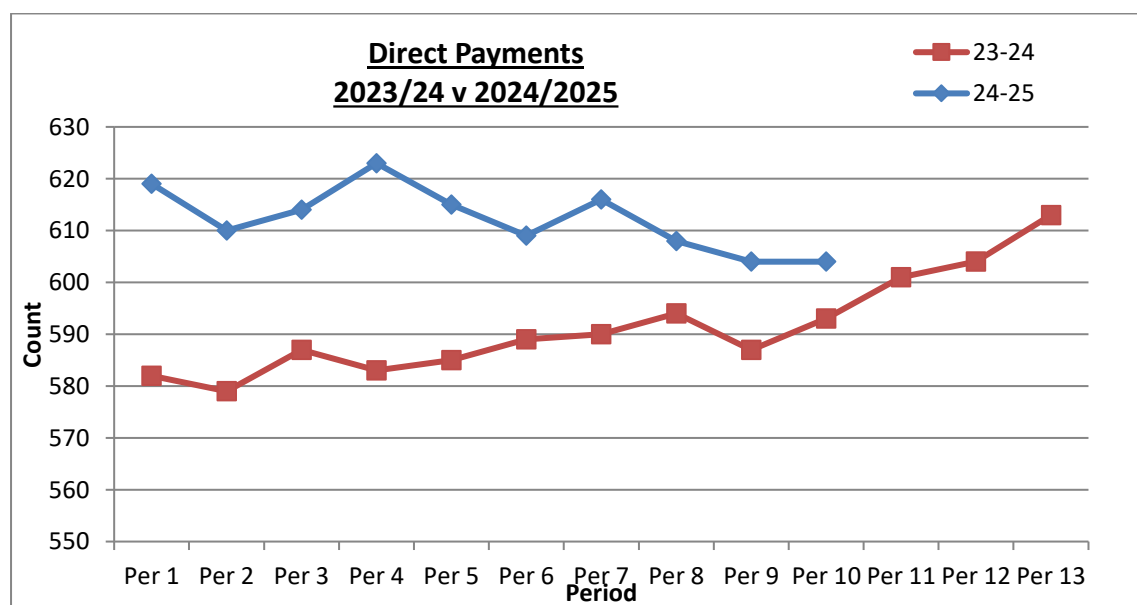


### Direct Payments

In January 604 clients received a Direct Payment (DP) compared with 608 in November, a decrease of 0.6%. However, the average number of DP's in 2023/24 was 591, therefore there has been an increase of 2.2% on last year's average.

The average cost of a package of care has decreased since November from £471.94 to £438.54 in January, a reduction of 7.1%.

The forecast position for Direct Payments assumes an amount of £1.6m will be recovered from service users following an audit to seek assurance the DP is spent in line with their care and support needs. Variations to the amount recovered will directly affect the forecast.



### **Care Homes**

The spend to 31 January 2025 across the Division is over budget profile by £1.020m. The forecast for the end of 2024/25 financial year is an estimated outturn position of £1.159m over budget. This is assuming the level of agency staffing continues at a similar rate and includes higher spend assumptions later in the financial year due to winter pressures surrounding staffing and utilities.

Recruitment of staff is a continued pressure across the care homes, where there remains a high number of staff vacancies. A proactive rolling recruitment exercise is ongoing, supported by HR.

Due to pressures with recruitment and retention in the sector, heavy reliance is being placed on overtime and expensive agency staff to support the care homes. At the end of January 2025 total agency spend across the care homes reached £3.034m, the cost of which has partially been offset by staff vacancies.

### **(iii) Education, Inclusion and Provision**

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

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

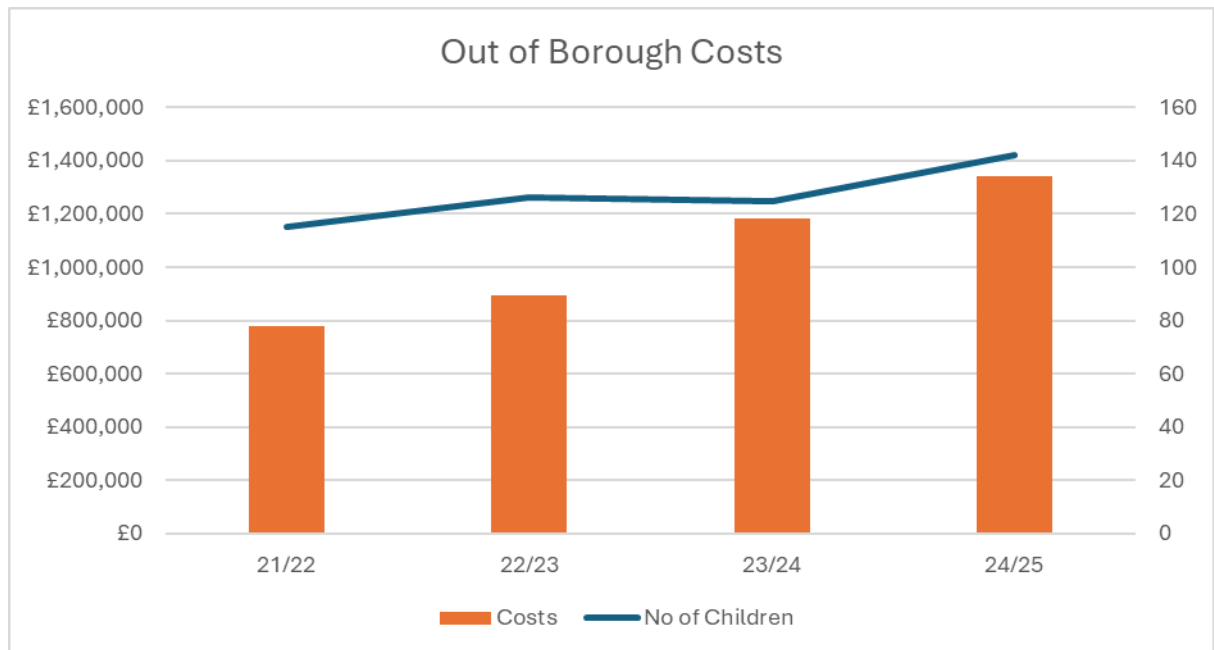
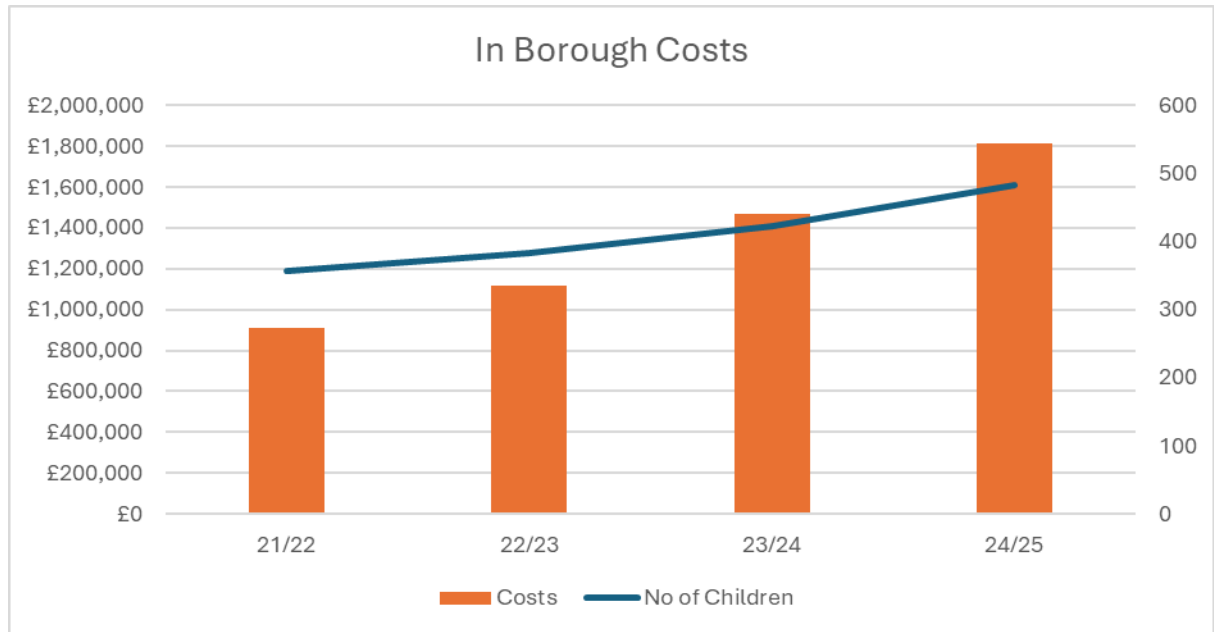
<b>2024-25 as at Jan-25</b>					
<b>Area</b>	<b>Number of Users</b>	<b>Budget £000</b>	<b>Projected Spend £000</b>	<b>Variance £000</b>	<b>Average Cost per User</b>
In Borough	482	1826	1812	14	£3,759.16
Out of Borough	142	491	1343	(852)	£9,459.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>2317</b>	<b>3155</b>	<b>(838)</b>	

The current records show 624 service users, the majority of which attend schools within the Borough. The Out of Borough overspend has increased from the previous reporting period from £0.797m to £0.852m.

During the current Academic year, it is anticipated that these figures will continue to rise, based upon historic information. The demand

for the School Transport Service continues to increase in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough.

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



A further pressure on the departmental budget for the year relates to Psychology and SEN Assessment services provided to schools. For a number of years these costs have been funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The Department for Education have recently advised that these costs cannot be DSG funded as they are outside of scope in meeting the grant conditions. It is therefore currently assumed this cost will fall upon the Council's

budget at a cost of £0.860m, until at such time other sources of funding are found.

Income figures have changed compared to previous reports due to a review of departmental earmarked reserves and £0.420m being released to the General Fund.

**(iv) ICT Department**

At the end of the 2024/25 financial year it is forecasted that the ICT and Administration Department will be over the approved budget profile by £0.596m.

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

**(v) Community and Greenspaces Department**

The net departmental expenditure is forecast to be £0.819m under budget at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. This is an improved position from the expected £0.616m forecasted at the end of November 2024.

The largest contributor to the underspend is in relation to spend on Employees, which is currently forecast to be £0.951m under the approved budget profile by the end of the financial year. There are several restructures taking place across the Department, therefore, in order to facilitate these a number of posts are currently being held vacant until the new structure is implemented. The most notable of these being the new structure being implemented when the new Halton Leisure Centre opens.

**Collection Fund**

- 3.15 The council tax collection rate through to the end of January 2025 is 89.01% which is 0.08% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.

Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, and the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts. £2.205m (12.52%) has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

- 3.16 Business rate collection through to the end of November 2024 is 92.70% which is 3.21% higher than the collection rate at the same point last year.

£2.057m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

## Review of Reserves

- 3.17 As at 31 January 2025 the Council's General Reserve is unchanged from the previous period at £5.149m, which represents 3.44% of the Council's 2024/25 net budget. This is considered to be a minimum level.
- 3.18 There is a regular review of earmarked reserves undertaken to determine whether they can be released in part or in full to assist with funding the Council's current financial challenges, recognising that this only provides one-year funding solutions.

## Reserves Summary

- 3.19 A summary breakdown of the Council's reserves is presented in the table below, showing the balance of reserves as at 31 January 2025.

<b>Summary of General and Earmarked Reserves</b>	
<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Reserve Value £m</b>
<b>Corporate:</b>	
General Fund	5.149
Transformation Fund	6.355
Capital Reserve	0.499
Insurance Reserve	1.000
<b>Specific Projects:</b>	
Adult Social Care	0.507
Fleet Replacement	0.454
Highways Feasibility Costs	0.102
Local Development Framework	0.494
Community & Environment	0.253
Mersey Valley Golf Club	0.483
Mersey Gateway	27.222
Various Other	0.554
<b>Grants:</b>	
Building Schools for the Future	6.529
Public Health	0.232
Supporting Families Performance Payments	0.114
Children's & Education	0.741
Domestic Abuse	1.186
Enterprise & Employment	0.112
Various Other	0.767
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>52.753</b>

- 3.20 Held within the Transformation Reserve is £6.355m, set aside to help fund future balanced budgets, fund overspends, and meet a range of potential spending commitments in future years associated with delivering the Transformation Programme.

- 3.21 The above table shows the diminishing level of reserves available to assist with funding any future budget overspends and balancing future budgets. Only the £11.484m of the General Fund and Transformation Reserve could now be used for these purposes, as all remaining reserves are committed for specific purposes. Use of these reserves will help contribute towards reducing the Council's overall forecast overspend position and mitigate against the level of Exceptional Financial Support required.

### **Capital Spending**

- 3.22 Council approved the 2024/25 Capital Programme on 6 March 2024. Since then the capital programme has been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes have developed. Included in the list below is a number of schemes which have been revised where profiles have been moved forward to 2025/26. Appendix 3 brings all the separate elements together and report on the Council's total planned capital programme expenditure over the next three years. The schemes which have been revised within the programme are as follows:

- I. Basic Need Projects
- II. SEND capital allocation
- III. SCA unallocated
- IV. Childcare Expansion
- V. Stair Lifts
- VI. Joint Funding RSL Adaptations
- VII. Madeline McKenna Refurbishment
- VIII. St Lukes Care Home
- IX. St Patricks Care Home
- X. Foundary Lane Residential Area
- XI. Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet
- XII. Port of Weston
- XIII. Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance
- XIV. Street Lighting – Upgrades
- XV. Risk Management
- XVI. Fleet Replacements
- XVII. Mersey Gateway Handback Land
- XVIII. Halton Smart Microgrid

- 3.23 Capital spending at 31 January 2025 totalled £33.9m, which represents 66.9% of the total revised Capital Programme of £50.7m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).

### **Approved Savings**

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

## **4.0 CONCLUSIONS**



- 4.1 As at 31 January 2025, net revenue spend is forecast to be £18.906m over the budget for the year.
- 4.2 It is clear that Council reserves alone will not be sufficient to fund this pressure. As a result of this position and future budget challenges, the Council has successfully applied to Government for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS).
- 4.3 Departments should continue to ensure that all spending continues to be restricted throughout the remainder of the year, to ensure that the forecast outturn overspend is minimised as far as possible and future spending is brought in line with budget. This will assist with minimising the ongoing cost of EFS borrowing.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

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

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

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

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 There are a number of financial risks within the budget. However, the Council has internal controls and processes in place to ensure that spending remains in line with budget as far as possible.
- 7.2 A budget risk register of significant financial risks has been prepared and is included at Appendix 5.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 None.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

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

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

## Summary of Revenue Spending to 31 January 2025

## APPENDIX 1

Directorate / Department	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	January 2025 Forecast Outturn (o'spend) £'000	November 2024 Forecast Outturn (o'spend) £'000
Adult Social Care	22,925	19,355	19,734	(379)	(467)	(456)
Care Homes`	9,989	8,332	9,352	(1,020)	(1,159)	(1,245)
Community Care	16,460	15,255	17,934	(2,679)	(3,527)	(2,951)
Complex Care Pool	10,706	5,191	4,843	348	189	234
<b>Adults Directorate</b>	<b>60,080</b>	<b>48,133</b>	<b>51,863</b>	<b>(3,730)</b>	<b>(4,964)</b>	<b>(4,418)</b>
Finance	5,030	5,143	4,958	185	95	(162)
Legal & Democratic Services	-621	-482	492	(974)	(1,101)	(1,137)
ICT & Support Services	2,278	981	1,475	(494)	(596)	(657)
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	1,169	845	924	(79)	(90)	(14)
<b>Chief Executives Directorate</b>	<b>7,856</b>	<b>6,487</b>	<b>7,849</b>	<b>(1,362)</b>	<b>(1,692)</b>	<b>(1,970)</b>
Children & Families	38,866	28,142	36,665	(8,523)	(10,087)	(11,702)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	9,771	6,924	7,932	(1,008)	(1,240)	(1,598)
<b>Children's Directorate</b>	<b>48,637</b>	<b>35,066</b>	<b>44,597</b>	<b>(9,531)</b>	<b>-11,327</b>	<b>(13,300)</b>
Community & Greenspace	25,369	18,364	17,865	499	819	616
Economy, Enterprise & Property	2,335	1,031	944	87	116	123
Planning & Transportation	8,405	5,519	5,026	493	336	528
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate</b>	<b>36,109</b>	<b>24,914</b>	<b>23,835</b>	<b>1,079</b>	<b>1,271</b>	<b>1,267</b>
Corporate & Democracy	-4,477	-4,657	-2,649	(2,008)	(2,272)	(2,418)
Public Health Directorate	1,291	-962	-1,032	70	82	82
<b>Total Operational Net Spend</b>	<b>149,496</b>	<b>108,981</b>	<b>124,463</b>	<b>(15,482)</b>	<b>(18,902)</b>	<b>(20,757)</b>



## Adult Social Care

## APPENDIX 2

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	17,595	14,633	13,695	938	1,127
Agency- Covering Vacancies	4	3	1,066	(1,063)	(1,275)
Premises	482	435	401	34	41
Supplies & Services	769	673	864	(191)	(229)
Aids & Adaptations	37	30	37	(7)	(9)
Transport	242	201	328	(127)	(149)
Food & Drink Provisions	214	178	166	12	14
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,385	1,154	979	175	210
Emergency Duty Team	115	36	36	0	0
Transfer To Reserves	210	0	0	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,090	910	906	4	6
<u>Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes</u>					
Homelessness Prevention	502	418	407	11	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	167	75	67	8	0
Trailblazer	72	43	43	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>22,884</b>	<b>18,789</b>	<b>18,995</b>	<b>(206)</b>	<b>(264)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-910	-754	-732	(22)	(27)
Sales & Rents Income	-480	-423	-456	33	39
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,058	-1,051	-1,072	21	25
Capital Salaries	-121	-91	-91	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-164	-164	-164	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-703	-661	-666	5	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-4,436</b>	<b>-3,144</b>	<b>-3,181</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>18,448</b>	<b>15,645</b>	<b>15,814</b>	<b>(169)</b>	<b>(227)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	529	441	441	0	0
Transport Support	582	475	685	(210)	(240)
Central Support	3,465	2,887	2,887	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-112	-93	-93	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>4,477</b>	<b>3,710</b>	<b>3,920</b>	<b>(210)</b>	<b>(240)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>22,925</b>	<b>19,355</b>	<b>19,734</b>	<b>(379)</b>	<b>(467)</b>

## Care Homes

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<b><u>Madeline Mckenna</u></b>					
Employees	698	582	553	29	30
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	99	(99)	(119)
Other Premises	101	77	81	(4)	0
Supplies & Services	20	13	19	(6)	(6)
Food Provison	48	36	41	(5)	(1)
<b>Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(96)</b>
<b><u>Millbrow</u></b>					
Employees	2,057	1,744	1,099	645	665
Agency - covering vacancies	3	3	846	(843)	(952)
Other Premises	129	100	128	(28)	(33)
Supplies & Services	61	45	75	(30)	(31)
Food Provison	78	33	39	(6)	1
<b>Total Millbrow Expenditure</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>1,925</b>	<b>2,187</b>	<b>(262)</b>	<b>(350)</b>
<b><u>St Luke's</u></b>					
Employees	2,883	2,451	1,920	531	685
Agency - covering vacancies	433	433	1,257	(824)	(999)
Other Premises	172	132	214	(82)	(89)
Supplies & Services	60	41	82	(41)	(42)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-248	-226	-226	0	0
Private Client Income 1:1	-81	-81	-81	0	0
Food Provison	120	100	117	(17)	(17)
<b>Total St Luke's Expenditure</b>	<b>3,339</b>	<b>2,850</b>	<b>3,283</b>	<b>(433)</b>	<b>(462)</b>
<b><u>St Patrick's</u></b>					
Employees	1,838	1,531	1,030	501	608
Agency - covering vacancies	42	42	832	(790)	(944)
Other Premises	157	121	122	(1)	(3)
Supplies & Services	64	47	42	5	8
Food Provison	122	102	92	10	11
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-21	-21	-21	0	0
<b>Total St Patrick's Expenditure</b>	<b>2,202</b>	<b>1,822</b>	<b>2,097</b>	<b>(275)</b>	<b>(320)</b>
<b><u>Care Homes Divison Management</u></b>					
Employees	306	254	215	39	73
Supplies & Services	0	0	4	(4)	(4)
<b>Care Home Divison Management</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>9,042</b>	<b>7,559</b>	<b>8,579</b>	<b>(1,020)</b>	<b>(1,159)</b>
<b><u>Recharges</u></b>					
Premises Support	264	220	220	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	683	553	553	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>9,989</b>	<b>8,332</b>	<b>9,352</b>	<b>(1,020)</b>	<b>(1,159)</b>

## Community Care

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Residential & Nursing	13,715	11,929	14,050	(2,121)	(2,758)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	12,890	10,130	10,610	(480)	(624)
Direct Payments	14,125	13,063	13,289	(226)	(293)
Day Care	648	497	484	13	22
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>41,378</b>	<b>35,619</b>	<b>38,433</b>	<b>(2,814)</b>	<b>(3,653)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Residential & Nursing Income	-13,138	-10,345	-10,412	67	87
Community Care Income	-2,270	-2,000	-2,027	27	40
Direct Payments Income	-1,014	-882	-888	6	10
Income from other CCGs	-466	-446	-481	35	0
Market sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-2,330	-2,330	0	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-5,167	-4,306	-4,306	0	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-67	-55	-55	0	(11)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-24,918</b>	<b>-20,364</b>	<b>-20,499</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>16,460</b>	<b>15,255</b>	<b>17,934</b>	<b>(2,679)</b>	<b>(3,527)</b>

**Complex Care Pool**

	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Budget to Date</b>	<b>Actual Spend</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend)</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Intermediate Care Services	5,225	4,089	4,174	(85)	(103)
Oakmeadow	1,831	1,476	1,584	(108)	(129)
Community Home Care First	2,088	1,507	1,402	105	126
Joint Equipment Store	871	715	707	8	9
Development Fund	174	97	0	97	116
Contracts & SLA's	3,255	1,620	1,620	0	0
Inglenook	134	107	83	24	29
HICafs	3,703	2,468	2,275	193	231
Carers Breaks	554	436	332	104	126
Carers centre	371	361	342	19	23
Residential Care	7,265	5,435	5,435	0	0
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,227	3,170	3,170	0	0
Pathway 3/Discharge Access	391	0	0	0	(41)
HBC Contracts	72	73	78	(5)	(6)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>30,161</b>	<b>21,554</b>	<b>21,202</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Income</b>					
BCF	-13,484	-11,237	-11,237	0	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-2,959	-2,387	-2,387	0	0
Oakmeadow Income	-19	-17	-13	(4)	(4)
ASC Discharge Grant Income	-1,631	-1,360	-1,360	0	0
ICB Discharge Grant Income	-1,282	-1,282	-1,282	0	0
Other Income	-80	-80	-80	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-19,455</b>	<b>-16,363</b>	<b>-16,359</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
ICB Contribution Share of Surplus					(188)
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>10,706</b>	<b>5,191</b>	<b>4,843</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>189</b>



## Finance Department

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	6,989	5,829	5,713	116	140
Insurances	975	859	685	174	209
Supplies & Services	417	406	479	(73)	(87)
Rent Allowances	35,500	29,583	29,583	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,748	1,270	1,383	(113)	(136)
LCR Levy	1,748	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	77	0	0	0	(145)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	43	39	4	4
Discretionary Social Fund	106	90	12	78	94
Discretionary Housing Payments	300	199	186	13	16
Household Support Fund Expenditure	2,613	2,371	2,371	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>50,543</b>	<b>40,650</b>	<b>40,451</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-335	-252	-254	2	2
Burdens Grant	-60	-62	-85	23	26
Dedicated schools Grant	-144	-16	0	(16)	(19)
Council Tax Liability Order	-581	-507	-604	97	116
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	0
Schools SLAs	-312	-312	-307	(5)	(5)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,748	0	0	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-400	-325	-201	(124)	(149)
Rent Allowances	-34,700	-28,917	-28,717	(200)	(221)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-59	-61	2	0
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-300	-300	-277	(23)	(23)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-498	-415	-407	(8)	(9)
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	-2	-12	10	12
Universal Credits	-5	-4	0	(4)	(5)
Household Support Fund Grant	-2,613	-1,303	-1,303	0	0
VEP Grant	0	0	-7	7	7
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-87	-65	-70	5	5
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-185	-220	-440	220	263
Transfer from Reserves	-7	-7	-7	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-42,202</b>	<b>-32,766</b>	<b>-32,752</b>	<b>(14)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>8,341</b>	<b>7,884</b>	<b>7,699</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	377	314	314	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,365	1,971	1,971	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,053	-5,026	-5,026	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-3,311</b>	<b>-2,741</b>	<b>-2,741</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>5,030</b>	<b>5,143</b>	<b>4,958</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>95</b>

## Legal Services

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	1,511	1,321	1,326	(5)	(7)
Agency Related Expenditure	0	0	780	(780)	(871)
Supplies & Services	388	345	306	39	46
Civic Catering & Functions	23	14	4	10	12
Legal Expenses	218	166	365	(199)	(240)
Transport Related Expenditure	11	11	7	4	6
Other Expenditure	0	3	3	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,151</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>2,791</b>	<b>(931)</b>	<b>(1,054)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
School SLA's	-98	-95	-77	(18)	(20)
Licence Income	-304	-230	-228	(2)	(2)
Government Grant	-42	-42	-42	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grants	-164	-164	-164	0	0
Fees & Charges Income	-74	-65	-44	(21)	(25)
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-27	-27	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-709</b>	<b>-623</b>	<b>-582</b>	<b>(41)</b>	<b>(47)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>2,209</b>	<b>(972)</b>	<b>(1,101)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	53	44	44	0	0
Transport Recharges	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	275	229	231	(2)	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	0	0	0	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-2,391	-1,992	-1,992	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,063</b>	<b>-1,719</b>	<b>-1,717</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-621</b>	<b>-482</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>(974)</b>	<b>(1,101)</b>

## ICT &amp; Support Services Department

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,596	4,660	4,444	216	259
Supplies & Services	921	763	1,112	(349)	(420)
Capital Finance	100	84	43	41	49
Computer Repairs & Software	1,724	1,542	1,834	(292)	(350)
Communication Costs	13	0	123	(123)	(147)
Premises	159	130	108	22	27
Transport	3	2	2	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>8,516</b>	<b>7,181</b>	<b>7,666</b>	<b>-485</b>	<b>-582</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-1,056	-533	-589	56	68
Schools SLA Income	-646	-622	-571	(51)	(62)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	0	3	20	(17)	(20)
Transfer from Reserves	-148	-148	-148	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-1,850</b>	<b>-1,300</b>	<b>-1,288</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>(14)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,666</b>	<b>5,881</b>	<b>6,378</b>	<b>(497)</b>	<b>(596)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	550	458	458	0	0
Transport Support	19	18	18	0	0
Central Support	2,380	1,983	1,983	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
Support Costs Income	-8,831	-7,359	-7,362	3	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-4,388</b>	<b>-4,900</b>	<b>-4,903</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>2,278</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>1,475</b>	<b>(494)</b>	<b>(596)</b>

## Chief Executives Delivery Unit

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	3,304	2,689	2,776	(87)	(103)
Employees Training	99	82	65	17	21
Apprenticeship Levy	300	242	265	(23)	(27)
Supplies & Services	391	366	312	54	65
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,094</b>	<b>3,379</b>	<b>3,418</b>	<b>-39</b>	<b>-44</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-223	-150	-142	(8)	(8)
Schools SLA Income	-565	-559	-522	(37)	(43)
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-5	5	5
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-788</b>	<b>-709</b>	<b>-669</b>	<b>(40)</b>	<b>(46)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>3,306</b>	<b>2,670</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(90)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	174	145	145	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,209	1,008	1,008	0	0
Asset Rental Support	53	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,573	-2,978	-2,978	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,137</b>	<b>-1,825</b>	<b>-1,825</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,169</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(90)</b>

## Children &amp; Families

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	15,708	12,970	14,646	(1,676)	(1,994)
Other Premises	415	267	277	(10)	(14)
Supplies & Services	1,726	1,966	2,417	(451)	(571)
Transport	360	252	224	28	27
Direct Payments	1,097	822	1,053	(231)	(277)
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	224	168	168	0	0
Residential Care	18,620	14,049	19,391	(5,342)	(6,410)
Out of Borough Adoption	96	0	0	0	96
Out of Borough Fostering	4,363	3,154	3,930	(776)	(886)
In House Adoption	548	380	272	108	131
Special Guardianship Order	2,510	1,960	1,993	(33)	(39)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,739	2,150	1,859	291	348
Lavender House Contract Costs	234	176	164	12	15
Home Support & Respite	340	258	270	(12)	(13)
Care Leavers	277	251	378	(127)	(151)
Family Support	53	36	43	(7)	(9)
Contracted services	3	3	3	0	0
Early Years	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency Duty	132	38	72	(34)	(42)
Youth Offending Services	321	129	169	(40)	(47)
Transfer to Reserves	8	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>49,774</b>	<b>39,029</b>	<b>47,329</b>	<b>(8,300)</b>	<b>(9,836)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-33	-13	0	(13)	(14)
Sales Income	-4	-3	0	(3)	(4)
Rents	-81	-70	-70	0	0
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-832	-904	-766	(138)	(167)
Transfer from reserve	-82	-82	-82	0	20
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-11,559	-11,260	-11,191	(69)	(86)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-12,641</b>	<b>-12,332</b>	<b>-12,109</b>	<b>(223)</b>	<b>(251)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>37,133</b>	<b>26,697</b>	<b>35,220</b>	<b>(8,523)</b>	<b>(10,087)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	2,274	1,895	1,895	0	0
Transport	398	332	332	0	0
Central Support Recharges	16	14	14	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Internal Recharge Income	-955	-796	-796	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>1,733</b>	<b>1,445</b>	<b>1,445</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>38,866</b>	<b>28,142</b>	<b>36,665</b>	<b>(8,523)</b>	<b>(10,087)</b>

## Education, Inclusion &amp; Provision

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	7,390	6,158	6,318	(160)	(215)
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	230	(230)	(290)
Agency - addition to establishment	72	60	14	46	58
Premises	14	12	11	1	3
Supplies & Services	4,597	3,041	3,069	(28)	(33)
Independent School Fees	10,201	8,743	8,743	0	0
Schools Contingency	295	295	295	0	0
Transport	43	33	41	(8)	(10)
Schools Transport	2,341	1,433	2,130	(697)	(837)
Early Years Payments	11,419	9,696	9,696	0	0
Early Years Pupil Premium	132	102	102	0	0
Commissioned Services	1,879	1,431	1,525	(94)	(111)
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,164	973	973	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	110	25	75	(50)	(60)
Capital Financing	4,661	3,507	3,506	1	1
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>44,318</b>	<b>35,509</b>	<b>36,728</b>	<b>(1,219)</b>	<b>(1,494)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-556	-530	-527	(3)	(4)
Government Grant Income	-8,339	-6,838	-6,838	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-25,530	-21,275	-21,275	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-274	-274	-274	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,785	-1,343	-1,343	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-436	-374	-396	22	27
Transfers from Reserves	-119	0	-350	350	420
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-37,039</b>	<b>-30,635</b>	<b>-31,003</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>443</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>7,279</b>	<b>4,874</b>	<b>5,725</b>	<b>(851)</b>	<b>(1,051)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	344	287	287	0	0
Transport Support	528	427	582	(155)	(186)
Central Support	1,603	1,336	1,338	(2)	(3)
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>2,492</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>2,207</b>	<b>(157)</b>	<b>(189)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>9,771</b>	<b>6,924</b>	<b>7,932</b>	<b>(1,008)</b>	<b>(1,240)</b>

## Community &amp; Greenspaces

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	17,435	14,211	13,419	792	951
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	182	(182)	(218)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	0	200	(200)	(240)
Premises	3,455	2,466	2,532	(66)	(78)
Supplies & Services	2,243	1,622	1,748	(126)	(151)
Hired & Contracted Services	854	854	854	0	0
Book Fund	128	111	111	0	0
Food Provisions	388	334	304	30	36
School Meals Food	1,960	1,087	1,192	(105)	(126)
Transport	117	62	100	(38)	(45)
Other Agency Costs	429	425	425	0	0
Other Expenditure	0	0	67	(67)	(67)
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,002	3,562	3,326	236	284
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	64	50	24	26	30
Grants to Norton Priory	174	174	174	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>34,249</b>	<b>24,958</b>	<b>24,658</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>376</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Sales Income	-1,373	-1,218	-1,209	(9)	(10)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,490	-4,623	-4,775	152	183
Rental Income	-235	-193	-241	48	57
Markets Income	-910	-738	-716	(22)	(26)
Government Grant Income	-1,628	-1,628	-1,628	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-703	-687	-687	0	0
School SLA Income	-1,313	-563	-563	0	0
School Meals Income	-3,598	-2,127	-2,210	83	100
Internal Fees Income	-322	-214	-293	79	95
Capital Salaries	-173	-129	-58	(71)	(85)
Transfers From Reserves	-15	-15	-15	0	202
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-15,760</b>	<b>-12,135</b>	<b>-12,395</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>516</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>18,489</b>	<b>12,823</b>	<b>12,263</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>892</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	1,675	1,396	1,396	0	0
Transport	2,257	1,855	1,916	(61)	(73)
Central Support	3,897	3,247	3,247	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-1,148	-957	-957	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>6,880</b>	<b>5,541</b>	<b>5,602</b>	<b>(61)</b>	<b>(73)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>25,369</b>	<b>18,364</b>	<b>17,865</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>819</b>

## Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,075	4,438	3,991	447	536
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	349	(349)	(407)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,706	1,478	1,560	(82)	(98)
Premises	136	120	120	0	0
Energy & Water Costs	1,248	920	830	90	108
NNDR	690	684	659	25	30
Rents	173	133	128	5	6
Economic Regeneration Activities	21	16	16	0	0
Security	544	417	473	(56)	(67)
Supplies & Services	506	305	335	(30)	(36)
Supplies & Services - Grant	2,090	812	812	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	75	107	107	0	0
Capital Finance	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	185	186	185	1	1
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,449</b>	<b>9,616</b>	<b>9,565</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-987	-711	-771	60	72
Rent - Commercial Properties	-872	-758	-758	0	0
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-32	-33	1	1
Government Grant	-2,510	-1,714	-1,714	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-193	-510	-492	(18)	(22)
Schools SLA Income	-227	-223	-210	(13)	(15)
Recharges to Capital	-295	-239	-243	4	5
Transfer from Reserves	-1,120	-1,165	-1,167	2	2
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6,242</b>	<b>-5,352</b>	<b>-5,388</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,207</b>	<b>4,264</b>	<b>4,177</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	2,074	1,728	1,728	0	0
Transport Support	30	22	22	0	0
Central Support	1,947	1,623	1,623	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-7,927	-6,606	-6,606	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-3,872</b>	<b>-3,233</b>	<b>-3,233</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>2,335</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>116</b>



## Planning &amp; Transportation Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,814	4,831	4,440	391	469
Agency - covering vacancies	110	53	120	(67)	(81)
Agency - in addition to establishment	24	2	75	(73)	(88)
Efficiency Savings	-150	-125	0	(125)	(150)
Premises	193	169	127	42	51
Hired & Contracted Services	59	0	208	(208)	(166)
Planning Appeal Decision	0	0	0	0	(300)
Supplies & Services	144	178	340	(162)	(195)
Street Lighting	1,662	862	884	(22)	(25)
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,772	1,215	1,411	(196)	(235)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Works	1,908	1,028	738	290	349
Fleet Transport	1,455	1,202	1,184	18	21
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	23	22	15	7	8
Bus Support	498	746	746	0	0
Agency Related Expenditure	8	8	49	(41)	(41)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	31	0	0
NRA Levy	74	74	73	1	2
LCR Levy	1,059	794	794	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	359	359	359	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>15,043</b>	<b>11,449</b>	<b>11,594</b>	<b>(145)</b>	<b>(381)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Sales & Rents Income	-97	-80	-148	68	82
Planning Fees	-826	-691	-442	(249)	(299)
Building Control Fees	-245	-204	-190	(14)	(17)
Other Fees & Charges	-908	-760	-1,169	409	491
Grants & Reimbursements	-206	-131	-131	0	0
Government Grant Income	-240	-243	-253	10	0
Halton Hopper Income	-24	-20	-8	(12)	(15)
Recharge to Capital	-562	-91	-91	0	(36)
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,059	-1,036	-1,036	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-1,036	-794	-794	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-5,203</b>	<b>-4,050</b>	<b>-4,262</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>206</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>9,840</b>	<b>7,399</b>	<b>7,332</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>(175)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Recharges	560	467	467	0	0
Transport Recharges	749	634	648	(14)	(17)
Central Recharges	1,534	1,278	1,278	0	0
Asset Charges	851	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-5,129	-4,259	-4,699	440	528
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-1,435</b>	<b>-1,880</b>	<b>-2,306</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>511</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>8,405</b>	<b>5,519</b>	<b>5,026</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>336</b>

## Corporate &amp; Democracy

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	412	343	293	50	17
Contracted Services	39	32	35	(3)	0
Supplies & Services	119	108	110	(2)	(23)
Premises Expenditure	5	5	7	(2)	0
Transport Costs	1	1	8	(7)	(9)
Members Allowances	983	819	823	(4)	0
Interest Payable - Treasury Management	1,341	1,118	1,826	(708)	(849)
Interest Payable - Other	115	96	179	(83)	(100)
Bank Charges	132	99	203	(104)	(100)
Audit Fees	348	261	27	234	0
Contingency	538	538	0	538	667
Capital Financing	2,409	2	2	0	301
Debt Management Expenses	20	17	4	13	0
Precepts & Levies	240	200	175	25	30
Transformation Efficiency Savings	-4,000	-3,333	0	(3,333)	(3,871)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>3,692</b>	<b>(3,386)</b>	<b>(3,937)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Interest Receivable - Treasury Management	-4,152	-3,460	-4,358	898	1,078
Interest Receivable - Other	-19	-16	-16	0	0
Other Fees & Charges	-158	-128	-85	(43)	(61)
Grants & Reimbursements	-255	-85	-418	333	333
Government Grant Income	-377	-314	-504	190	315
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-4,961</b>	<b>-4,003</b>	<b>-5,381</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>1,665</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>-2,259</b>	<b>-3,697</b>	<b>-1,689</b>	<b>(2,008)</b>	<b>(2,272)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	21	17	17	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,016	889	889	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,026	-1,866	-1,866	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-1,989</b>	<b>-960</b>	<b>-960</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-4,248</b>	<b>-4,657</b>	<b>-2,649</b>	<b>(2,008)</b>	<b>(2,272)</b>

## Public Health

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,419	3,914	3,913	1	1
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	0	0	0
Other Premises	6	0	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	388	283	248	35	42
Contracts & SLA's	8,112	6,218	6,188	30	36
Transport	4	3	2	1	1
Transfer to Reserves	19	19	19	0	0
Other Agency	24	24	24	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>13,970</b>	<b>10,461</b>	<b>10,394</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-88	-116	-116	0	0
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-574	-559	-559	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,714	-1,714	-1,714	0	0
Government Grant Income	-12,193	-11,984	-11,984	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-14,569</b>	<b>-14,373</b>	<b>-14,373</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>-599</b>	<b>-3,912</b>	<b>-3,979</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	149	125	125	0	0
Transport Support	22	18	20	(2)	(2)
Central Support	2,387	1,990	1,990	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-669	-557	-557	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>1,889</b>	<b>1,575</b>	<b>1,577</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>-2,337</b>	<b>-2,402</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>78</b>



Capital Programme as at 31 January 2025

Appendix 3

Scheme Detail	2024/25 Original Allocation £000	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	Q1 Spend £000	Q2 Spend £000	Q3 Spend £000	Q4 Spend £000	Total Spend £000	Allocation remaining £000	2025/26 Allocation £000	2026/27 Allocation £000
<b>Childrens Directorate</b>										
Capital Repairs	749.0	749.0	151.0	531.0	50.0	1.0	733.0	16.0	550.0	
Basic Need Projects	600.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	600.8	
SEND capital allocation	3,355.2	1,529.2	178.0	519.0	356.0	65.0	1,118.0	411.2	1,781.0	
SCA unallocated	255.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	448.0	
Family Hubs & Start for Life	53.2	110.4	1.3	54.1	10.0	27.7	93.1	17.4		
Childcare Expansion	314.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	314.8	
<b>Childrens Directorate Total</b>	<b>5,328.6</b>	<b>2,388.6</b>	<b>330.3</b>	<b>1,104.1</b>	<b>416.0</b>	<b>93.7</b>	<b>1,944.1</b>	<b>444.6</b>	<b>3,694.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Adults Directorate</b>										
Halton Carers Centre Refurbishment	199.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Grants - Disabled Facilities	600.0	1,050.0	353.0	227.0	157.0	147.0	884.0	166.0	600.0	600.0
Stair Lifts	270.0	250.0	66.0	23.0	62.0	50.0	201.0	49.0	270.0	270.0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	270.0	250.0	53.0	24.0	81.0	49.0	207.0	43.0	270.0	270.0
Telehealthcare Digital Switchover	0.0	135.0	60.0	0.0	20.0	-20.0	60.0	75.0		
Oakmeadow & Peelhouse Network Improvements	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0		
Madeline McKenna Refurbishment	0.0	120.0	9.0	73.0	2.0	7.0	91.0	29.0		
Millbrow Refurbishment	0.0	50.0	26.0	8.0	0.0	12.0	46.0	4.0		
St Lukes Care Home	0.0	120.0	10.0	14.0	7.0	74.0	105.0	15.0		
St Patricks Care Home	1,200.0	150.0	14.0	16.0	-1.0	86.0	115.0	35.0		
<b>Adults Directorate Total</b>	<b>2,539.0</b>	<b>2,165.0</b>	<b>591.0</b>	<b>385.0</b>	<b>328.0</b>	<b>405.0</b>	<b>1,709.0</b>	<b>456.0</b>	<b>1,140.0</b>	<b>1,140.0</b>

## Capital Programme as at 31 January 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2024/25 Original Allocation	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Q1 Spend	Q2 Spend	Q3 Spend	Q4 Spend	Total Spend	Allocation remaining	2025/26 Allocation	2026/27 Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate</b>										
Stadium Minor Works	30.0	30.0	7.9	7.7	0.0	22.2	37.8	-7.8	30.0	30.0
Halton Leisure Centre	8,997.0	8,997.0	2,030.0	3,045.4	3,229.2	469.0	8,773.6	223.4		
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	1.0	1.0	40.0	0.0	42.0	25.8	65.0	65.0
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	340.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	340.0	340.0	340.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0		
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0		
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	600.0	130.0	154.4	135.0	-11.0	408.4	191.6	600.0	600.0
Runcorn Town Park	468.6	468.6	0.0	6.8	0.0	3.0	9.8	458.8	280.0	280.0
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,933.5	1,933.5	2.4	4.4	38.0	0.0	44.8	1,888.7		
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	503.0	503.0	9.7	1.2	1.1	0.0	12.0	491.0		
Replacement Cremator Widnes	308.0	308.0	0.0	77.3	7.0	0.0	84.3	223.7		
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
3MG	134.5	134.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	134.5		
Murdishaw redevelopment	21.2	21.2	5.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4	15.8		
Equality Act Improvement Works	293.2	93.2	8.7	17.6	59.6	3.8	89.7	3.5	300.0	300.0
Foundary Lane Residential Area	1,160.0	1,240.0	1.8	464.8	2.3	11.0	479.9	760.1		
Town Deal	11,352.9	11,552.9	174.9	261.8	940.0	588.0	1,964.7	9,588.2	7,190.4	
Property Improvements	360.2	460.5	4.3	131.1	286.6	136.3	558.3	-97.8	200.0	200.0
Runcorn Station Quarter	484.7	76.0	0.0	60.5	15.5	0.0	76.0	0.0		
Waterloo Building	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.3	73.7		
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	178.2	178.2	0.0	0.0	12.2	152.0	164.2	14.0		
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	484.7	268.7	8.6	122.9	61.5	0.2	193.2	75.5		
Changing Places	24.1	24.1	2.5	0.1	1.6	0.0	4.2	19.9		
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,200.0	
Port of Weston	0.0	20.0	0.0	1.3	1.7	0.0	3.0	17.0	3,940.0	
Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition	0.0	750.0	0.0	30.7	0.0	0.9	31.6	718.4		







## Capital Programme as at 31 January 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2024/25 Original Allocation £000	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	Q1 Spend £000	Q2 Spend £000	Q3 Spend £000	Q4 Spend £000	Total Spend £000	Allocation remaining £000	2025/26 Allocation £000	2026/27 Allocation £000
Bridge and Highway Maintenance	0.0	2,265.6	280.8	313.0	20.0	114.0	727.8	1,537.8		
Runcorn Busway	0.0	0.0	227.4	80.0	371.0	237.0	915.4	-915.4		
ATF3 Murdishaw to Whitehouse	0.0	3,000.0	175.3	363.0	497.0	194.0	1,229.3	1,770.7		
ATF4 Widnes Town Centre Accessibility	0.0	114.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	114.5		
A56 Reconstruction (Delph Lane)	0.0	943.7	351.1	0.0	10.0	2.0	363.1	580.6		
Dukesfield ATL (Waterloo Bridge)	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	-1.1		
LCWIP Phase 2 Daresbury	0.0	3,861.7	629.3	56.0	15.0	1.0	701.3	3,160.4		
Additional Pothole Funding	0.0	429.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	429.1		
CRSTS	5,819.4	5,288.6	1,656.0	884.0	2,184.0	305.0	5,029.0	259.6		
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	1,025.6	250.0	0.0	37.0	94.0	21.0	152.0	98.0	975.6	200.0
Street Lighting - Upgrades	969.4	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	869.4	
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	5,851.7	452.5	207.0	810.0	1,670.0	3,139.5	2,712.1	5,851.7	5,851.7
Risk Management	597.8	50.0	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.9	45.1	667.8	120.0
Fleet Replacements	4,927.4	2,500.0	1,081.8	455.0	256.0	76.0	1,868.8	631.2	3,850.7	
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate Total</b>	<b>49,390.3</b>	<b>53,054.5</b>	<b>7,247.4</b>	<b>6,800.4</b>	<b>9,187.5</b>	<b>4,085.1</b>	<b>27,320.4</b>	<b>25,734.1</b>	<b>27,380.6</b>	<b>8,006.7</b>
<b>Chief Executives Directorate</b>										
IT Rolling Programme	1,026.9	1,026.9	27.7	668.2	20.0	24.0	739.9	287.0	700.0	700.0
Halton Smart Microgrid	11,000.0	1,000.0	0.0	0.0	128.0	0.0	128.0	872.0	10,000.0	
Transformation Programme	3,740.0	3,740.0	435.0	624.0	712.0	201.0	1,972.0	1,768.0	1,000.0	
<b>Chief Executives Directorate Total</b>	<b>15,766.9</b>	<b>5,766.9</b>	<b>462.7</b>	<b>1,292.2</b>	<b>860.0</b>	<b>225.0</b>	<b>2,839.9</b>	<b>2,927.0</b>	<b>11,700.0</b>	<b>700.0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>73,024.8</b>	<b>63,375.0</b>	<b>8,631.4</b>	<b>9,581.7</b>	<b>10,791.5</b>	<b>4,808.8</b>	<b>33,813.4</b>	<b>29,561.6</b>	<b>43,915.2</b>	<b>9,846.7</b>

## Progress Against Agreed Savings



## Appendix 4

### Adult Social Care

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






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


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

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

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




## Legal and Democratic Services

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



## Children and Families

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

**Education, Inclusion and Provision**

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

**Community and Greenspace**


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



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



## Policy, Planning and Transportation

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

**Symbol****Objective**

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



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



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

## 2024/25 Budget Risk Register as at 31 January 2025

## Appendix 5

Risk No	Risk Identified	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk with Control Measures Implemented			Responsible Person	Timescale for Review	Progress Comments	Date Updated
						Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score				
1	<b>Pay costs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay award</li> <li>Staff Turnover Saving Target</li> <li>Agency, casuals and overtime</li> <li>National Living Wage</li> <li>Pension Costs</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget based upon individual staff members/vacancies</li> <li>Budget monitoring</li> <li>Contingency</li> <li>Balances</li> <li>Medium Term Forecast</li> <li>Engage with Cheshire Pension Scheme and pension actuary</li> <li>Recruitment and retention scheme children social care workers.</li> <li>Social Care Academy for children social care workers</li> <li>Connect to Halton</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB/Executive Directors	Monthly	2024/25 pay offer accepted and implemented November 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£1290 on all pay points from 1st April</li> <li>Equivalent to 5.77% on point 2 and 2.5% on point 43</li> <li>2.5% on all pay points above 43 and below chief officer level</li> </ul> Estimated 4% 2024.25 budget uplift will cover cost of pay award. Connect to Halton scheme went live September 2024, agency and casual appointments to be covered by the scheme.	31/01/25

2	<b>Redundancy and Early Retirements</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits Tracking Process</li> <li>• Future savings to take into account cost of redundancy and early retirements.</li> <li>• Seek Government approval to use capital receipts to fund transformation costs.</li> <li>• Transformation Reserve</li> </ul>	2	3	6	ED/SB	Quarterly	Tracker created to monitor redundancy costs in current year. Transformation reserve created to cover costs but limited reserves will impact use of this. Look to capitalise compulsory costs where possible where evidence exists it creates in a longer term saving.	31/01/25
3	<b>Savings not achieved</b>	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> <li>• Contingency</li> <li>• Reserves / Provisions</li> <li>• Rigorous process in approving savings.</li> <li>• Review of savings at departmental and directorate level</li> <li>• Monthly budget monitoring</li> </ul>	4	2	8	RR/ED/SB	Monthly	Savings for 2024/25 have been written into Directorate budgets. Budget savings monitored closely and if necessary offsetting savings sought. Transformation Programme Board meeting on monthly basis to discuss progress against programme.	31/01/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium Term Financial Forecast</li> <li>• 2023/24 to 2025/26 savings agreed February 2023.</li> <li>• RAG monitoring of savings included in quarterly monitoring reports.</li> <li>• Transformation saving targets reported monthly through Transformation Programme Board.</li> </ul>							
4	Price inflation	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prudent budget provision</li> <li>• Latest forecast information used eg. utilities</li> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> <li>• Contingency</li> <li>• Balances</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB	Monthly	CPI for January 2025 is 3.0% and RPI is 3.6%. Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast inflation to be 2.6% in 2025 and 2.1% through to 2027. Rates are higher than forecast in September 2024 and remain	31/01/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPI/RPI monitoring</li> <li>• MTFS</li> </ul>						above Governments 2% target.	
5	<b>Review of LG Finance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business rates retention – 100% Pilot and Review</li> <li>• Fair Funding Review</li> <li>• National Public Spending Plans</li> <li>• Social Care Green Paper</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPs</li> <li>• SIGOMA / LG Futures</li> <li>• Liverpool City Region &amp; Merseyside Treasurers Group</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>• Member of business rate retention pilot region</li> <li>• Dialogue with DCLG</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB/NS/MW/MG	Weekly/ Monthly	Business rate retention pilot continues through to March 2026. Government are committed to providing more certainty on LG Finances through multi year settlements. Final settlement announced 03 February 2025, funding is higher than within financial forecast.	31/01/25
6	<b>Treasury Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrowing</li> <li>• Investment</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasury Management Strategy</li> <li>• Link Asset Services advice</li> <li>• Treasury Management planning and monitoring</li> </ul>	1	3	3	ED/SB/MG	Daily / Quarterly	Investment rates continue to be high relative to last decade. BoE base rate reduced to 4.5%, Impact of Exceptional Financial Support request to be	31/01/25



					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at Networking and Benchmarking Groups</li> <li>Officer Training</li> </ul>						assessed with regards to timing of future borrowing.	
7	<b>Demand led budgets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in Care</li> <li>Out of borough fostering</li> <li>Community Care</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget monitoring</li> <li>Contingency</li> <li>Balances</li> <li>Review service demand</li> <li>Directorate recovery groups</li> <li>Monthly budget monitoring</li> </ul>	4	4	16	ED/SB/NS/MW	Monthly	<p>Children in care, numbers and costs continue to exceed budget. Numbers of children in care and with protection plans reviewed on a weekly basis. Community care costs and numbers on increase, reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>Investment in Children Services following OFSTED inspection to be monitored with regard to control and reduction of future costs.</p>	31/01/25

8	<b>Mersey Gateway Costs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs</li> <li>Toll Income</li> <li>Funding</li> <li>Accounting treatment</li> </ul>	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular monitoring with Crossing Board</li> <li>Capital reserve</li> <li>Government Grant</li> <li>Liquidity Fund</li> </ul>	2	1	2	ED/SB/MG	Quarterly	Arrangements in place to monitor spend and availability of liquidity fund.	31/01/25
9	<b>Council Tax Collection</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council tax monitoring on monthly basis</li> <li>Review of Collection Rate</li> <li>Collection Fund Balance</li> <li>Provision for bad debts</li> <li>Review recovery procedures</li> <li>Benchmarking</li> </ul>	3	2	6	ED/PG/SB/PD/BH/MG	Monthly	Collection rate to 31 January 2025 was 89.01% which is marginally lower than the rate of 89.09% at the same point last year. To 31 January 2025 £2.205m was collected in relation to old year debt.	31/01/25
10	<b>Business Rates Retention Scheme</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and monitoring of latest business rates income to baseline and estimate for year.</li> </ul>	3	1	3	ED/SB/LB/MG	Monthly	Collection rate to 31 January 2025 was 92.7% which is 3.21% higher than the rate at the same point last year. To 31 January 2025	31/01/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prudent allowance for losses in collection</li> <li>• Prudent provision set aside for losses from valuation appeals</li> <li>• Regular monitoring of annual yield and baseline / budget position</li> <li>• Benchmarking Groups</li> <li>• Review recovery procedures</li> </ul>						£2.057m was collected in relation to old year debt.	
11	<b>Income recovery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty to economy following Brexit, cost of living and high inflation</li> </ul>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate charging policy</li> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> <li>• Contingency</li> <li>• Balances</li> <li>• Income benchmarking</li> </ul>	3	2	6	ED/MM/SB	Monthly	Income shortfalls identified and cause of increased concern in certain areas are being closely monitored. Cost of living crisis adds to uncertainty over collection.	31/01/25
13	<b>Capital Programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs</li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Key Major Projects</li> </ul>	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Regular monitoring</li> <li>• Detailed financial analysis of new</li> </ul>	3	2	6	Project Managers/ED /SB/LH	Quarterly	Capital receipts have been fully committed therefore new capital schemes need to bring own funding.	31/01/25

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clawback of Grant</li> <li>• Availability and timing of capital receipts</li> <li>• Cashflow</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• schemes to ensure they are affordable</li> <li>• Targets monitored to minimise clawback of grant.</li> <li>• Contractor due diligence</li> <li>• Dialogue with Government departments.</li> </ul>							
14	<b>Academy Schools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of transfer upon Council budget</li> <li>• Loss of income to Council Services</li> </ul>	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early identification of school decisions</li> <li>• DfE Regulations</li> <li>• Prudent consideration of financial transactions to facilitate transfer</li> <li>• Services continue to be offered to academies</li> <li>• Transfer Protocol</li> </ul>	1	3	3	ED/SB/NS	Monthly	Consideration given in MTFS for loss of funding.	31/01/25
15	<b>Reserves</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diminishing reserves, used to balance budget, fund overspend positions.</li> </ul>	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitored on a quarterly basis, reported to Management Team and Exec Board</li> <li>• Benchmarking</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB	Quarterly	Monitored and reported on a regular basis. Council reserves at historic low levels. Reserves will need to be replenished	31/01/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial Forecast</li> <li>Programme to replenish reserves.</li> </ul>						within future budgets	
16	<b>Budget Balancing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council has struggled to achieve a balanced budget position for a number of years.</li> <li>Forecast for current year is an overspend position of £19m.</li> <li>Reserves insufficient to balance current year budget.</li> <li>Before transformation targets, there is a forecast budget gap of £68.5m through to 2028/29.</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current year budgets monitored on a regular basis.</li> <li>Forward forecasting through to March 2029 reported on a prudent basis.</li> <li>Regular conversations with DHLUC re Council's financial position.</li> <li>LGA to undertake a financial assurance review.</li> <li>Transformation programme in place.</li> </ul>	4	4	16	ED/SB	Ongoing	Updated benchmarking to be reported to better inform Transformation Programme targets.	31/01/25

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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