

F O R W A R D P L A N

FOR THE PERIOD: 1 DECEMBER 2025 TO 31 MARCH 2026

What is the Forward Plan?

The Forward Plan is a list of the key decisions the Authority intends to take during a four month period. The Plan is updated monthly and is available to the public 14 days before the beginning of each month.

What is a Key Decision?

Key decisions are defined as any executive decision which is likely

- to result in expenditure or savings which are significant in the context of the budget for the service or function in question; or
- to be significant in terms of its effects on the communities living or working in two or more wards in the area.

What does the Forward Plan tell me?

The Plan gives information about:

- what key decisions are coming forward in the next four months;
- when those key decisions are likely to be made;
- who will make those decisions;
- what consultation will be given;
- who you can make representations to, and how;
- what documents will be considered; and
- who you can contact for further information.

Who takes Key Decisions?

Under the Authority's Constitution, Key Decisions are taken by the Council, the Executive Board (and its Sub-Committees/Sub-Boards) or individual officers acting under delegated powers.

Most Key Decisions are taken at public meetings of either the Council or the Executive Board. Council meets at 6.30 pm at the Town Hall, Runcorn and the Executive Board meets at 2.00 pm in the Municipal Building, Widnes.

How to make representations and by when

Names of contact officers are included in the Plan and can be reached via 0303 333 4300. If you are unsure, please ring Committee Services via the same number and staff there will be able to assist you.

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS FOR THE PERIOD
1 DECEMBER 2025 TO 31 MARCH 2026**

	MATTER TO BE DECIDED	DECISION MAKER AND DATE	
1	Home to School Transport for Pupils with Special Educational Needs Disabilities Policy Recommendations	Executive Board	13 November 2025
2	School Capital Programme 2026-27	Executive Board	15 January 2026
3	School Admission Arrangements 2027	Executive Board	15 January 2026
4	Determination of the Council Tax Base 2026/27	Council	4 March 2026
5	Financial Recovery, Change and Continuous Improvement Resource	Executive Board	12 March 2026
6	Adoption of Borough wide Housing Strategy 2026 - 2031	Executive Board	13 November 2025

Key Decision	Decision-Maker and Date	Brief Summary of Decision to be Taken	Consultees and Consultation method	Relevant Background Reports	Lead Officer Contact Details
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Children and Young People Portfolio

Home to School Transport for Pupils with Special Educational Needs Disabilities Policy Recommendations	Executive Board 13 November 2025	On 25 February 2025, Executive Board granted permission to consult on proposals to support delivery of Home to School Transport for children and young people with SEND. The consultation ran from 2 April to 6 May 2025. The purpose of this report is to provide an update following the consultation and make recommendations for future Home to School & Post 16 Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).	Following the Executive Board report agreed on 25 th February a consultation has already been undertaken. This was launched, effective between 2 nd April and 6 th May. Two separate consultations were provided, one for parents carers and young people which incorporated all proposals across the different areas. A separate consultation was provided for stakeholders and residents of Halton asking relevant questions, alongside a request for their views on the proposals. Information around the consultation and the link were	Executive Board report – 25 February 2025	Benjamin Holmes Director of Education, Inclusion and Provision Benjamin.holmes@halton.gov.uk
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Key Decision	Decision-Maker and Date	Brief Summary of Decision to be Taken	Consultees and Consultation method	Relevant Background Reports	Lead Officer Contact Details
			promoted through a variety of channels, including social medial, school and face to face events, encouraging young people, parents, carers and residents of Halton to take part. The findings from the consultation have been used within the report to form the recommendations within the report.		
School Capital Programme 2026-27	Executive Board 15 January 2026	To approve the proposed Capital Programme for works to be undertaken at a number of Halton schools/educational establishments during the 2026-27 financial year, funded through Department for Education capital funding.	N/A	Schools Capital Funding Allocations – Department for Education can be viewed at 2 nd Floor, Rutland House, Halton Lea, Runcorn WA7 2ES	Martin West martin.west@halton.gov.uk

Key Decision	Decision-Maker and Date	Brief Summary of Decision to be Taken	Consultees and Consultation method	Relevant Background Reports	Lead Officer Contact Details
School Admission Arrangements 2027	Executive Board 15 January 2026	To approve the Council's School Admissions Policy for the September 2027 intake for all community and voluntary controlled schools for which the Local Authority is the admission authority, and to approve the Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes for all primary and secondary schools in the Borough.	Statutory consultation is undertaken for a six week period commencing no earlier than 1 st October 2025 and must be completed by no later than 31 st January 2026. Halton is consulting from 1 st October 2025 to 14 th November 2025. Consultation is undertaken via a comprehensive consultation document on the Council's website for parents and carers to access. The consultation is also issued to all schools via email. Neighbouring local authorities, academy schools and voluntary aided schools (who are their own admission authority) and the Diocesan authorities representing voluntary aided schools in Halton are also consulted.	N/A	Martin West martin.west@halton.gov.uk

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			Representations can only be made as part of the statutory consultation process and all consultees are aware of the deadline which is 14 th November 2025. Once the arrangements are determined, objections can then only be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator within the prescribed timescale.		

Corporate Services Portfolio

Determination of the Council Tax Base 2026/27	Council 4 March 2026	To seek approval for the 2026/27 council tax base for the Borough, which is required in order to calculate and set the level of council tax to be charged. It is used by both the Council as billing authority and by the major precepting authorities (Cheshire Fire	None	N/A	Director of Finance Ed.dawson@halton.gov.uk
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Key Decision	Decision-Maker and Date	Brief Summary of Decision to be Taken	Consultees and Consultation method	Relevant Background Reports	Lead Officer Contact Details
		Authority, Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority) in the calculation of their council tax requirements.			
Financial Recovery, Change and Continuous Improvement Resource	Executive Board 11 December 2025	Agreement for funding to resource a Financial Recovery, Change and Continuous Improvement function for the council from April 2026 following the end of the transformation Programme and its funding on 31st March 2026	N/A	The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026 – 2030. Financial Recovery Plan (Exec Board Paper September 2025)	Lisa.taylor@halton.gov.uk

Housing and Environmental Sustainability

Adoption of Borough wide Housing Strategy 2026 - 2031	Executive Board 13 November 2025	The adoption of a new five year Housing Strategy for Halton and endorsement of priorities for implementation.	Members workshop. Briefing Sessions with HBC Officers. Consultation with Key Stakeholders including registered	Housing Needs Assessment. Draft Housing Strategy	Executive Director Environment & Regeneration Wesley.rourke@halton.gov.uk
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			providers. Public consultation.		

NOTE

The following Members comprise the Executive Board:

Leader – Councillor Wharton

Deputy Leader – Councillor Thompson

Corporate Services Portfolio Holder – Councillor Dennett

Children and Young People Portfolio Holder – Councillor T McInerney

Adult Social Care Portfolio Holder – Councillor Ball

Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder – Councillor Wright

Community Safety Portfolio Holder – Councillor Wall

Environmental and Urban Renewal Portfolio Holder – Councillor Nolan

Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Portfolio Holder – Councillor Bevan

Housing and Environmental Sustainability Portfolio Holder – Councillor Harris