

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring Report

Reporting Period: **Quarter 3 – Period 01st October 2014 to 31st December 2014**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the third quarter of 2014/15 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2. Key priorities for development or improvement in 2014-17 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
 - Financial Services
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development
 - ICT Infrastructure
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Policy & Performance
 - 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 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments within the Directorate during the period which include:-

Finance

- a) The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was considered by Executive Board on 20th November 2014, which set out an expected funding gap of up to £42m over three years (2015-2018) and the key assumptions upon which this was based. The Council's 2015/16 base budget has been prepared within the framework of the MTFS.
- b) The Government announced the Local Government Finance Settlement on 18th December 2014 which provided details of the provisional Settlement Funding Assessment for Halton for 2015/16. Overall the settlement inclusive of specific grants was broadly in-line with that forecast as part of the MTFS. As outlined in the MTFS this will require budget savings of 19m to be achieved. No indicative funding announcements have been made for the years post 2015/16. A Comprehensive Spending Review is expected in summer 2015 which will outline Government public spending plans for the following 2-3 years.

- c) On 20th November 2014 Executive Board recommended initial 2015/16 budget reductions of £11.3m which approved by Council on 10th December 2014. Many of these budget proposals can be implemented immediately and will contribute to keeping spend within budget for the current financial year.
- d) In October 2014 the benefits service started to receive Real Time Information Referrals from the Department of Work and Pensions. Cases are referred where Housing Benefit claimants have failed to declare, or under-declared, earnings or private pension payments. The number of cases is around 60 per month and they are being examined and overpayments are being raised for recovery where appropriate. In general the processing of HB claims and changes of circumstances remains amongst the highest in Merseyside and Greater Manchester at 14 days and 3 days respectively.
- e) The Unannounced OFSTED Inspection of Children’s Social Care took place in December 2014 and as first point of Contact for Children’s Safeguarding the Contact Centre processes and staff were also examined. The initial feedback on the Contact Role is extremely positive indicating that staff were professional and knowledgeable and had a clear understanding of safeguarding thresholds.
- f) The significant reforms to Welfare Benefits continue to result in a high demand for advice and the outcomes achieved by the Welfare Rights Team at tribunal continue to be extremely positive. Not with standing this delays in the processing of claims by government departments continue to cause hardship for residents.
- g) The Council has been successful in a joint bid to secure funding from the DCLG for a Counter Fraud Analyst post. The post will undertake proactive forensic analysis, investigation and awareness-raising in areas identified with a high risk of fraud across the four Cheshire local authorities. A recruitment process for the post is currently underway.
- h) The Finance Support Team is providing assistance to system users in advance of an upgrade to the Agresso finance system which is due to become live in January 2015.
- i) Schools are to be given the opportunity to have direct access to the Agresso system under the new Finance Service Level Agreement. This development will allow schools to have real-time access to the latest budgetary information and will also streamline the process for paying school invoices. Full training is to be provided to each school that buys into the Finance SLA.
- j) Since April 2013 the Council has handled all pre-litigation Public Liability (PL) & Employers’ Liability (EL) claims in-house up to the value of £25,000. This arrangement has delivered a substantial saving on claims handling costs and assists the defence of claims through the insurance team’s knowledge of the Council and the local area. The in-house claims handling arrangements are subject to annual audit by the Council’s insurers. The most recent audit was completed in November 2014 and resulted in an overall Technical Service Proficiency score of 99%, which the insurer categorises as an “excellent” rating.
- k) The Procurement Division successfully completed two external assignments during the quarter, further promoting the use of Halton’s Risk Based Sourcing model, and enabling two neighbouring council’s to build significant process efficiency into their procurement operations. The Council’s approach continues to be recognised and referenced by the Cabinet Office, with the Council’s approach having contributed to Procurement reforms to be implemented by the Cabinet office in the first half of 2015.

- l) Two very successful business briefings have taken place in the Borough (November 2014 and early January 2015), both being very well attended, enabling the Council to grow its supplier base to maximise competition in procurement of supplies and services, and also to help Halton's local business base to access opportunities with the Council and beyond.

Human Resources and Organisational Learning and Development

- m) Agreement was reached with the trade unions during the quarter to enter into a local agreement to continue with the deduction from salary for four days for a further twelve months. Additionally, agreement was reached to change to mileage payable from NJC rates to HMRC rates. This is expected to achieve savings in the region of £800,000 in 2015/16.
- n) Although initially due to commence during the third quarter, ILM Level 3 in Coaching has been delayed due to the departure of the lead trainer in this subject area. An alternative trainer has been identified and work is on-going to offer the qualification in 2015.
- o) In the second quarter of the year audits were undertaken by Internal Audit with regard to safeguarding and sickness management, while External Audit reviewed payroll processes. The review carried out on safeguarding and sickness management has resulted in an Action Plan now being developed.

ICT and Administration Support Services

- p) In collaboration with Directorates, the deployment of Electronic Records Management and the development of new and improved central reporting systems based upon the SharePoint Access solutions are in place linked to systems such as the "I Want" portals for Finance, ICT, Admin, Print and HR. Making services more accessible, this initiative has had a significant impact in reducing staff time and duplication across the authority.
- q) The service has also focused upon further developing opportunities for on-going income generation through the development of externally focused ICT applications. These opportunities include the development of a clouds-based solution for Schools, support to the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group, the Mersey Gateway Project and now the delivery of the Agresso Financial Management System within Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council, creating a collaborative and shared financial management solution between both authorities all hosted and managed within Halton. This project has now led to further opportunity within the Records Management Unit for the scanning and indexing of all Sefton Invoices.
- r) In order that ICT can be used to maximum effect the service has also delivered a broad range of training surgeries for staff and the continued emphasis on the use of electronic documents has resulted in a considerable reduction in the use of printed material and associated costs such as a reduction in the number of printers required.
- s) The Council continues to maintain Public Services Network Compliance which meets security requirements and has undergone a number of external audits during 2014 and into 2015 with the final audit expected in March 2015. This is a significant investment and demonstrates the Councils on-going commitment to maintaining a secure electronic

environment and supports the authority's on-going Information Governance arrangements together with innovative remote working solutions linked to the Halton Cloud services.

Legal and Democratic Services

- t) Substantial work has been carried out during the quarter to embed the scrutiny arrangements for the Liverpool City Region. As the lead authority, Halton has achieved this by utilising existing resources within Democratic Services. As the function gains momentum, the impact on the service may need to be reviewed. In addition, Officers from other disciplines working within Halton have supported the scrutiny process in specialist areas. This support operates alongside resources supplied by each of the constituent authorities.

Policy and Performance.

- u) A report has been prepared for Management Team regarding the proposed new statutory 'Prevent' duty contained in the recent Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill which is currently being fast-tracked through Parliament. The new duty will require local authorities to have due regard in exercising its functions to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.
- v) Data is being prepared to meet the publishing requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The documents will be published during quarter 4 2014/15 and made available on the Council's external website. Additionally the revised Corporate Plan will be presented for consideration by Executive Board in January 2015 prior to its submission to Full Council.
- w) Work continues on developing a Halton Cares Foundation, established to provide social investment and strategic charitable grant-making. The Foundation is a partnership between Halton Borough Council, Halton Chamber of Commerce, Halton & St. Helens VCA the Community Foundations for Lancashire & Merseyside and It is anticipated that the final proposals will be put to members and partners in March 2015.
- x) On behalf of Go-ON Northwest Halton is hosting a Pan-Cheshire Digital Inclusion Conference on the 13th February at the Stadium. This will bring together interested parties from across the sectors to share best practice, gain practical tips and ideas on how to increase the basic online skills on people in the sub-region. The Council will incur no costs for the event which will further promote the Stadium facilities to a wide audience.

Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

- y) New nutritional standards will be introduced in January 2015 which will apply to all maintained schools, academies, pupil referral units and free schools. At present all schools are compliant and have exceeded the standards since 2006.
- z) The school catering service, which uses only high-quality reputable foods suppliers, has received 2 prestigious awards for their menu offer to children and staff are continually being trained in new recipes and methods and are actively encouraged to share good practice between schools.

Property Services

- aa) Demolition works have now been completed to the former Moor Lane Business Centre site and it is currently being modified to provide additional parking facilities for the Health Centre.
- bb) Work is continuing with the move towards full agile working arrangements which is helping further rationalise office accommodation. John Briggs House will be vacated mid-January 2015. Discussions are currently ongoing with the Police in respect of them purchasing the site. It is anticipated that this will go to Executive Board for approval in February 2015. The vacating a sale of this site will significantly reduce our revenue expenditure and help to generate income.

3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of the Directorate including:-

Financial Management

- a) The new Accounts and Audit Regulations, expected to come into effect from 1st April 2015, will from 2017/18 bring forward the publication date for the Councils accounts from 30th September to 31st July and work will now be programmed to meet this new requirement.
- b) The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) have confirmed that Universal Credit (UC) will be rolled out in Halton for families from March 2015. This is a significant development for the DWP because these types of UC claims are more difficult to administer, and the Benefits Service will monitor the impact because of the effect on Council Tax Reduction claims.
- c) The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) have launched the Fraud and Error Reduction Incentive Scheme (FERIS) in November 2014. This scheme will offer threshold based financial rewards to councils who further tackle Fraud and Error (F&E) in their Housing Benefit (HB) caseload. . The first period of FERIS will commence on 1st December 2014 and run to 31st March 2015, and the second period will be for 2015/16 year.
- d) The Benefits Service has successfully applied to the DWP for maximum start-up FERIS funding of £15,821. The DWP will provide monthly extracts of our data to determine the level of reductions that are achieved and this is another new area of work that will require close monitoring.
- e) Prior to year-end a review of all cases subject to an award of discretionary non-domestic rate has been undertaken. The Executive Board will consider the potential extension, reduction or removal of awards of relief from 31st March 2016.

- f) As part of Halton Housing Trusts Digital First programme they have decided to end the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the One Stop Shops with effect from April 2015. However under a revised SLA the One Stop Shops will still provide tenants with the facility to make automated payments.
- g) Discussions with Cheshire Police continue to have Police Contact points available at the main Widnes and Runcorn One Stop Shops. These free-standing contact points are interactive touchscreen systems that allow communication with a Force Operator via telephone or web-chat and also provide access to an A – Z database of Frequently Asked Questions.
- h) Working age claimants presently receiving Disability Living Allowance are soon to have their claims reassessed against the criteria for the new replacement Personal Independence Payment. It is anticipated that many of the 6, 770 claimants within Halton will be seeking assistance through this transition from Welfare Rights Advisors.
- i) In order to support the protection of vulnerable people from financial abuse The Council is to sign up to a free service offered by CIFAS (the UK's Fraud Prevention Service) which will help safeguard those individuals under the Council's care who are subject to a court order of protection under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Under this system, when requests for credit or other services are made to a CIFAS member organisation in the names of these people, an alert will be issued so that the provider will be aware of the disabilities of the individual and can take appropriate action. This will help prevent vulnerable individuals being subject to identity fraud and will also help prevent them from entering into finance agreements which they are unable to afford.
- j) The Council is submitting an application to BACS to obtain 'Bureau Approved' status. If the application is successful the Council will be able to offer financial services to external organisations, such as academy schools. This will provide an opportunity for the Council to generate additional income through service level agreements. The Council already provides a BACS payment service to the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board.
- k) The Government is to close the Independent Living Fund (ILF) on 30th June 2015. This will result in funding being devolved to the Council to meet the support needs of approximately 50 ILF users. The intention of this reform is to allow the care and support needs of existing ILF users to be met by local authorities in a consistent way through personalised budgets and direct payments.
- l) The funding transferred to the Council for 2015/16 will be received as part of the s.31 grant and will not be ring-fenced. No advice has yet been received in regard to funding for 2016/17. All ILF users transferring will therefore have their needs assessed and met through the Council's existing eligibility and charging regime.
- m) The contract for the e-tendering portal 'The Chest' currently used by Halton and many other North West authorities is reaching the end of its term. A regional procurement exercise has been conducted and supplier submissions are to be evaluated throughout January. The outcome of this exercise will be a portal that reflects changes in procurement rules and practice. Some existing or potential suppliers may need support in adapting to a new system and the Procurement Division will respond to this as appropriate.

Human Resources and Organisational Learning and Development

- n) Preparations continue to deal with major changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme from 1st April 2015. This will require advance communication with all affected. Additionally the Division continues to support the transfer of staff to the Department of Work and Pensions as a Single Fraud Investigation Service is established.

ICT and Administration Support Services

- o) Data centre improvements and the development of the second data centre facility located at Picow Farm Records Management Unit (RMU) will predominantly become the focus over the following 12 month cycle as the facilities are linked and become highly resilient through a technology known as active/active data management whilst improving corporate facilities and bringing enhanced and innovative user based access solutions.
- p) The upgrade of Schools Networking together with the continued delivery of an enhanced Virtual Learning Environment into all schools will further enhance the quality of provision to the education sector, both within Halton and commercially.
- q) Additionally the wider implementation of the Halton Cloud Computing Platform and the development of the Agresso Financial Platform, Scanning, Records Management, SharePoint extranet data sharing and access arrangements will continue in order to maximise income generation opportunities and further support the delivery of holistic and integrated services to the community.
- r) In addition to extending the capacity of the I-Want portals the website developments will continue within the new SharePoint 2013 Platform and the ever expanding second data centre at Picow Farm Road, which will strengthen the Council's ICT infrastructure resilience and business continuity arrangements.

Legal and Democratic Services

- s) Preparations are well underway for the forthcoming General and Local elections in May and work continues on revising the Council's Constitution.

Policy and Performance.

- t) The Halton Strategic Partnership is supporting on going work to ensure the sustainability of the Safe in Town scheme. Whilst the funding for the initial pilot came from partnership funding, the current project is funded by the PCC and CCG, and is due to finish on the 31st March 2015 and discussions are underway to identify further funding from various Partners. The scheme currently has 504 individuals and over 80 different types of premises signed up, including venues in both Runcorn and Widnes.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

- 4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements. As such Directorate Risk Registers were updated in tandem with the development of the suite of 2014 – 15 Directorate Business Plans.

Progress concerning the implementation of all Directorate high-risk mitigation measures was reported in Quarter 2.

Risk Registers are currently being reviewed for 2015 – 16 in tandem with the development of next year's Directorate Business Plans.

5.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 5.1 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.

The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives was published on the Council website during quarter 4 and is available via:




[http://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/pdfs/EandD/Equality -
objectives progress report - April 2013.pdf](http://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/pdfs/EandD/Equality-_objectives_progress_report_-_April_2013.pdf)

6.0 Performance Overview

6.1 The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate:

Financial Management

Key Objectives / milestones







Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
FS 01	Report Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board November 2014 .	
FS 03	Complete the Draft Abstract of Accounts for certification by Chief Financial Officer by 30th June 2014 .	
FS 03	Publish the Abstract of Accounts by 30th September 2014 .	

Supporting Commentary

Medium Term Financial Strategy on track to be reported as planned and the 2013/14 Statement of Accounts certified by Chief Finance Officer on the 30th June 2014 and shared with External Auditor on the same day.

Audit of Statement of Accounts commenced 1st July 2014 and have been published on the Councils website on 30th September, following approval by the Business Efficiency Board and receipt of an unqualified audit opinion.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 04	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected.	95.82%	95.00+	83.62%		
FS LI 05	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received.	97.08%	95.00+	82.58%		
FS LI 07	Average time for processing new claims (Housing & Council Tax Benefit).	15.18	17	14.75		

Supporting Commentary

FSLI 04: This represents a slight reduction of 0.21% on the same point last year.

FSLI 05: This represents and an increase of 4.07% on the same point last year. However, Business Rates have wide fluctuations in collection rates due to the nature of the service.

FSLI 07: Though slightly down on the same point last year (0.31) this remains one of the best performances within the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA).

Human Resources & Organisational Development

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
HRLD 01	To further enhance i-Trent system capabilities. March 2015.	
HRLD 02	Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within Corporate People's Plan March 2015.	

Supporting Commentary

E-Payslips have now been rolled out across the Council where possible (requires provision of an email address) and also now available to schools. Work continues to encourage those schools who have not as yet taken advantage of the E Payslip to do so. The service is also working towards the implementation of E-P60s.

On-going Learning and Development continues to be provided for Employees of the Council with new courses, post entry training courses and E Learning modules being offered.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
HRLD LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (Corporate).	11.24	8.5	7.67		
HRLD LI 04	% of training delegates attending as proportion of places reserved.	86%	90%	89%		
HRLD LI 05 ¹	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are:					
	a) Women	55.47%	50%	55.81%		
	b) From BME communities.	2.80%	1.5%	2.83%		
	c) With a disability.	0.68%	8.0%	0.71%		
HRLD LI 06	No of staff declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act as a % of the total workforce.	1.49	10.0	1.46%		
HRLD LI 07	Minority of Ethnic Community staff as a percentage of the total	1.13	1.0	1.00%		

¹ The performance targets for these measures take account of local demographic profiles.

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
	workforce.					

Supporting Commentary

HRLD LI 01: This figure is subject to change as we move through the financial year; However, this figure is lower than the same period last year.

HRLD LI 04: Training continues to be well attended

HRLD LI 05: There is a slight increase across all three area's in comparison to the same period in the previous year.

HRLD LI 06: There is a slight increase in this category. Achievement of the 10% target will depend on applicants for vacant positions.

HRLD LI 07: Although this figure is slightly lower than the same quarter in the previous year (2013/2014), it is on target.

ICT Infrastructure

Key Objectives / milestones







Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
ICT 01	SharePoint and Records Management enhancement March 2015.	
ICT 01	Continued Social Care Systems Service Support Programme March 2015.	
ICT 01	Schools Cloud Services developments March 2015.	
ICT 01	Interactive Web Services and further SharePoint Integration March 2015.	
ICT 01	Development of commercial ICT opportunity within desktop, hosting and DR provision March 2015.	
ICT 02	Continued development of document management and distribution services March 2015.	
ICT 04	Conduct & Evaluate point of contact Satisfaction survey for ICT & Support Services March 2015.	

Supporting Commentary

All projects are presently on track. The SharePoint and Records Management software development has been completed is now operational with additional enhancements to complement operational processes are being undertaken, with data transfer of over 7.5 million documents underway into the new 2013 solution.

The rollout of Corporate Tablet use is progressing with Windows 8.1 Tablet devices in proof of Concept stage, whilst iPads are managed within the Councils Mobile Device Management Platform

Key Performance Indicators


Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI 01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.9	99	99.9		
ICT LI 04	% Of all responsive repairs completed within 2 working days.	94	80	81		
ICT LI 08	Average working days from order to completion of a new PC.	5	5	7		

Supporting Commentary

Although two measures are showing a slight drop in levels of performance when compared to the same period last year, all measures are expected to meet their individual targets for the year.

Legal & Democracy





Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
LD 02	To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a Member Action Plan (MAP) meeting.	

Supporting Commentary

MAP meetings are continually taking place throughout the calendar year.

Key Performance Indicators



Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 04	Average time taken to send out first draft business lease from receipt of complete instructions from Property Services (working days).	20	20	20		
LD LI 05	Average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department (working days).	1	3	1		

Supporting Commentary

Measures are showing sustained levels of performance when compared to the same period last year.

Catering, Stadium & Registration Services

Key Objectives / milestones











Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
CE 2	Identify areas for improvement in line with the Business Plan and Marketing Plan January 2015 .	
CE 3	Deliver a promotion and educational campaign - September 2014 and January 2015 .	

Supporting Commentary

A number of business areas have been targeted for this year which should have a positive impact upon Stadium revenue.

A number of promotional activities have taken place, the Universal Free School Meals have been introduced very smoothly and over 1,500 additional meals are being served on a daily basis compared to this time last year. A number of marketing initiatives have been used to raise the awareness of UIFSM and also of the quality of Halton School Catering Service.

Key Performance Indicators



Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 1	No. of meals served versus hourly input of labour	10.51	10.00	10.35		
The percentage (%) take up of free school meals to those who are eligible:						
CE LI 8	Primary Schools	85.12%	85%	84.59%		
CE LI 9	Secondary Schools	75.81%	75%	75.48%		
Take up of school lunches (Previously NI 52 a & b):						
CE LI 10	Primary Schools	52.12%	55%	51.47 %		
CE LI 11	Secondary Schools	55.22%	55%	55.08%		
Food cost per school meal (pence):						
CE LI 19	Primary Schools	N / A	76p	71p		-
CE LI 20	Secondary Schools	N / A	94p	£1.01		-

Supporting Commentary

The number of schools meals served in relation to input continues to show a positive trend and excellent results are being achieved in the take up of free and non-free schools meals with Halton having the 4th highest take up of secondary school meals nationally with an additional 1,500 FSM being served in primary schools each day.

[Property Services](#)

Key Objectives / milestones





Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
EEP 1	Review accommodation in light of budget decisions by July 2014 .	
EEP 1	Identify further property to be considered for sales and implement asset disposals by March 2015 .	

Supporting Commentary

A Members Asset Review Panel has been established to assist the work of the Asset Management Working Group with the inaugural meeting taking place in August to establish terms of reference etc.

Disposal programme is on track. The supply of HBC land for sale for development is now diminishing and work has commenced for further review assets with the potential for disposal.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
DIS LI 01	Occupancy of HBC industrial units.	85%	85%	82%		
DIS LI 02	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	84%	95%	82%		

Supporting Commentary

DISLI01: The Investment Estate continues to perform well with 93% of the Industrial Estate and 94% of the Commercial Estate occupied

DISLI02: The retail environment remains challenging. However, compared with this time last year fewer traders have left the market and there has not been any change year on year.

7.0 Financial Summaries

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2014

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	7,315	5,533	5,204	329
Supplies & Services	470	323	325	(2)
Other Premises	82	74	64	10
Agency Related	1	0	0	0
Insurances	1,436	1,064	1,058	6
Concessionary Travel	2,247	1,505	1,505	0
Rent Allowances	55,000	41,012	41,012	0
Non HRA Rebates	66	56	56	0
Discretionary Housing Payments	444	444	444	0
Local Welfare Payments	558	80	80	0
Transfers to Reserves	555	300	300	0
Total Expenditure	68,174	50,391	50,048	343
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-302	-222	-229	7
SLA to Schools	-770	-770	-730	(40)
NNDR Administration Grant	-169	0	0	0
Hsg Ben Administration Grant	-1,094	-875	-875	0
Rent Allowances	-54,410	-41,511	-41,511	0
Non HRA Rent Rebates	-66	-53	-53	0
Discretionary Housing Payments Grant	-387	-387	-387	0
Local Welfare Grant	-775	-582	-582	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-669	-627	-633	6
Liability Orders	-373	-359	-436	77
Transfer from Reserves	-681	0	0	0
Total Income	-59,696	-45,386	-45,436	50
Net Controllable Expenditure	8,478	5,005	4,612	393
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises	432	324	324	0
Transport	36	27	27	0
Asset Charges	19	0	0	0
Central Support Services	3,291	2,468	2,468	0
Support Services Income	-7,506	-5,630	-5,630	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,728	-2,811	-2,811	0
Net Department Total	4,750	2,194	1,801	393

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms spending is below the budget profile at the end of quarter three.

With regards to expenditure, employee costs are below the budget profile due to vacant posts that exist within the Revenues and Benefits Division and the Procurement Division. A number of temporary posts have been recruited to within the Revenue and Benefits Division to support the ongoing Benefits Reform programme.

Supplies & services expenditure is lower than the budget profile due to security costs at Ditton and Runcorn Halton Direct Links now being shared with Library Services.

Other premises costs are below the budget due to the business rates for one of the HDL One-Stop Shops being lower than anticipated following a rating review by the Valuation Office Agency.

With regards to income, SLA to Schools income is lower than the budget estimate which is due to a lower than expected take-up of the Procurement SLA.

Income from Liability Orders is in excess of the budget profile due to an increase in the amounts of orders being issued in respect of Council Tax arrears.

At this stage it is anticipated that spend will be within budget at the end of the financial year.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2014

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<i>Expenditure</i>				
Employees	1,544	1,163	1,163	0
Employee Training	133	90	58	32
Supplies & Services	111	83	77	6
Total Expenditure	1,788	1,336	1,298	38
<i>Income</i>				
Fees & Charges	-73	-70	-116	46
School SLA's	-437	-437	-437	0
Total Income	-510	-507	-553	46
Net Operational Expenditure	1,278	829	745	84
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	65	49	49	0
Transport Recharges	11	8	8	0
Central Support Recharges	302	226	226	0
Support Recharges Income	-1,612	-1,209	-1,209	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,234	-926	-926	0
Net Departmental Total	44	-97	-181	84

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms, spending is below the budget profile at the end of the third quarter.

With regards to expenditure spend on Employee Training is below the budget profile due to a reduction on the usage of training consultants and training resources.

Spend on Supplies & Services is slightly below the budget profile due to a reduction in the use of external training rooms.

Fees and Charges income is above the budget profile due to an increase in income from academy schools and other external organisations for provision of HR and payroll services. This will be a one-off underspend as this has been put forward as a saving for the 2015/16 budget.

At this stage it is anticipated that overall net expenditure will be within budget by the end of the year.

ICT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2014

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Variance to Date
	£'000	£'000	£'000	(Overspend) £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	5,512	4,078	4,076	2
Supplies & Services	454	256	260	(4)
Computer Repairs & Software	649	557	556	1
Communications Costs	333	285	285	0
Other Premises	36	25	24	1
Capital Financing	336	252	251	1
Transfer to Reserves	480	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	7,800	5,453	5,452	1
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-577	-292	-292	0
Transfers from Reserves	-37	-37	-37	0
SLA to Schools	-535	-535	-535	0
Total Income	-1,149	-864	-864	0
Net Controllable Expenditure	6,651	4,589	4,588	1
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises	521	391	391	0
Transport	17	13	13	0
Asset Charges	1,246	0	0	0
Central Support Services	1,035	776	776	0
Support Service Income	-9,371	-7,028	-7,028	0
Net Total Recharges	-6,552	-5,848	-5,848	0
Net Department Total	99	-1,259	-1,260	1

Comments on the above figures

Spending to 31st December 2014 is in line with the budget profile to date.

There are vacancies across the department which have resulted in spend to date being below the budget profile, this will continue to be the case for the final quarter of the financial year. Significant savings against the employee budget have been proposed for 2015/16 which will see employee spend for future years being in line with approved budgets.

Budgets have been realigned over the past quarter, variances against employees and supplies and services have been put forward as a contribution towards capital reserves, specifically to fund costs for the new ICT Data Centre. At this stage it is anticipated that overall net expenditure will be within budget at financial year-end

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2014

Capital Expenditure	2014/15 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend to Date £,000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
IT Rolling Programme	2,100	700	699	1,401
Net Expenditure	2,100	700	699	1,401

Comments on the above figures.

It is expected that the full capital allocation will be spent by the financial year end.

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2014

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
Employees	1,940	1,491	1,360	131
Supplies & Services	371	253	238	15
Civic Catering & Functions	29	13	13	0
Mayoral Allowances	21	13	13	0
Legal Expenses	220	99	99	0
Total Expenditure	2,581	1,869	1,723	146
Income				
Land Charges	-99	-74	-69	(5)
License Income	-251	-188	-182	(6)
Schools SLA's	-49	-49	-60	11
Other Income	-73	-67	-81	14
Transfers from Reserves	-10	0	0	0
Total Income	-482	-378	-392	14
Net Operational Expenditure	2,099	1,491	1,331	160
Recharges				
Premises Support	91	68	68	0
Transport Recharges	18	13	13	0
Central Support Recharges	481	361	361	0
Support Recharges Income	-2,111	-1,583	-1,583	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,521	-1,141	-1,141	0
Net Departmental Total	578	350	190	160

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms spending is below the budget profile at the end of the third quarter.

With regards to expenditure employee costs are lower than the budget profile due to vacant posts within the Legal, Marketing and Democratic Services teams. Some of the posts will be filled during the course of the year and some will act as contributions towards the Department's 15/16 savings target. The in-year savings resulting from the vacant posts will act as contributions towards the Department's 2014/15 staff turnover savings target.

Supplies & services expenditure is also lower than the budget profile due to reduced spend on legal books and publications as a result of a move to on-line resources.

With regards to income, buy-back of the Legal Services SLA has exceeded the original forecast, and other income is above the budget profile which is a result of fees charged for the ad-hoc Schools Appeals Service.

At this stage it is anticipated that overall net expenditure will be within budget by the end of the year.

ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2014

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Expenditure to Date £'000	Variance to Date (overspend) £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	4,376	3,162	3,220	(58)
Repairs & Maintenance	2,730	1,941	1,944	(3)
Premises	49	42	43	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	614	394	368	26
NNDR	613	604	590	14
Rents	458	390	391	(1)
Marketing Programme	36	21	17	4
Promotions	62	34	33	1
Supplies & Services	1,469	735	701	34
Agency Related Expenditure	76	42	43	(1)
Grants to Non Voluntary Organisations	148	148	148	0
Other Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	10,631	7,513	7,498	15
<u>Income</u>				
Fees & Charges	-544	-379	-388	9
Rent - Markets	-759	-563	-561	(2)
Rent - Industrial Estates	-691	-516	-525	9
Rent - Commercial	-563	-366	-364	(2)
Transfer to / from Reserves	-660	-588	-568	0
Government Grant - Income	-1,959	-1,277	-1,277	0
Reimbursements & Other Income	-90	-116	-122	6
Recharges to Capital	-297	-92	-92	0
Schools SLA Income	-553	-562	-573	11
Total Income	-6,116	-4,439	-4470	31
NET OPERATIONAL BUDGET	4,515	3,074	3,028	46
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support Costs	1,409	1,065	1,065	0
Transport Support Costs	30	17	17	0
Central Support Service Costs	1,970	1,483	1,483	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	2,414	0	0	0
Repairs & Maint. Rech. Income	-2,448	-1,836	-1,836	0
Accommodation Rech. Income	-2,652	-1,990	-1,990	0
Central Supp. Service Rech. Income	-1,457	-1,093	-1,093	0
Total Recharges	-734	-2,354	-2,354	0
Net Expenditure	3,781	720	674	46

Comments

Achieving staff turnover savings within the Department remains an issue this financial year, as there has been marginal turnover of staff. The staff savings turnover target set for Building & School Cleaning and Caretakers Service cannot be achieved as the services need to be fully staffed at all times.

Energy & Water Costs have continued to be under budget at the end of Quarter 3 following on from improvements that have been implemented throughout the Council buildings over the last few years.

NNDR budgets are under budget, as most of the Investment Properties are now fully occupied with HBC not being liable for empty rates.

In order to ease budget pressures spending has continued to be restricted in year on Supplies & Services. Promotions and Marketing has also been kept to a minimum in an effort to achieve a balanced budget position for the Department.

Income levels within the Asset Management Division have remained constant during quarter two and quarter three, as there has not been much change with the occupancy rates of the Investment Properties.

As rental income can fluctuate in year, close monitoring will continue on these volatile budgets.

The number of schools buying into the School Cleaning SLA has increased this financial year, resulting in the service over achieving on income.

Work has continued with Managers to deal with any in-year budget pressures. In overall terms it is anticipated that net expenditure will be under the overall Departmental budget by year-end.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY CAPITAL PROJECTS

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31st December 2014

	2014/15 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation To Date £000's	Expenditure to Date £'000	Variance to Date (overspend) £'000
Economy, Enterprise & Property Dep't				
Castlefields Regeneration	925	174	174	0
3MG	2,909	1,578	1,578	0
Widnes Waterfront	1,000	0	0	0
Johnsons Lane Infrastructure	466	15	15	0
Decontamination of Land	6	0	0	0
Sci Tech Daresbury	2092	1,377	1,377	0
Queens Arms	23	20	11	9
Former Crossville Depot	518	0	0	0
Moor Lane Demolition	150	11	11	0
Moor Lane Property Purchase	160	160	161	(1)
Former Fairfield Site – Demolition	2	2	2	0
Fairfield High Site - Contingency	51	49	49	0
Peel House Lane Cemetery	20	0	0	0
Peel House Lane Roundabout & Cemetery Access	155	0	0	0
Travellers Site - Warrington Road	1658	30	30	0
Widnes Town Centre Initiative	60	22	22	0
Lower House Lane Depot – Upgrade Disability Discrimination Act/Disabled Access	444	410	401	9
	150	38	38	0
Grand Total	10,789	3,886	3,869	17

Comments

Queens Arms – Works have now been completed on site with no further expenditure expected.

Lower House Lane Depot Upgrade – Works have now been completed on site (final account is due in before year-end).

Former Crossville Depot - There are a number of technical issues to overcome (including protection of the high pressure gas main as well as treatment of contamination), therefore work is not likely to start in this financial year.

Travellers Site - Approval has now been granted to proceed with the works with the anticipated completion date of the scheme being 31 May 2015.

Widnes Waterfront & Bayer - Heads of terms have now been agreed with the contractor and envisaged the remediation works to be started in the last quarter of the current financial year.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2014

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	12,496	9,178	9,202	(24)
Other Premises	1,418	925	861	64
Supplies & Services	1,665	1,154	1,104	50
Book Fund	192	158	156	2
Promotional	9	13	9	4
Other Hired Services	1,259	887	877	10
Food Provisions	681	493	482	11
School Meals Food	1,914	1,225	1,195	30
Transport	55	41	18	23
Other Agency Costs	652	43	33	10
Waste Disposal Contracts	5,012	2,782	2,817	(35)
Leisure Management Contract	1,467	991	1,059	(68)
Grants To Voluntary Organisations	333	265	260	5
Grant To Norton Priory	222	222	224	(2)
Rolling Projects	154	0	0	0
Capital Financing	13	0	0	0
Total Spending	27,542	18,377	18,297	80
<u>Income</u>				
Sales Income	-2,197	-1,552	-1,444	(108)
School Meals Sales	-2,049	-1,234	-1,274	40
Fees & Charges Income	-2,743	-1,948	-1,845	(103)
Rents Income	-187	-195	-203	8
Government Grant Income	-35	-16	-16	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-516	-346	-359	13
Schools SLA Income	-82	-81	-85	4
Internal Fees Income	-121	-72	-79	7
School Meals Other Income	-2,935	-397	-460	63
Meals On Wheels	-192	-138	-129	(9)
Catering Fees	-225	-125	-69	(56)
Capital Salaries	-53	-29	-27	(2)
Transfers From Reserves	-285	-285	-285	0
Total Income	-11,620	-6,418	-6,275	(143)
Net Controllable Expenditure	15,922	11,959	12,022	(63)
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	2,048	1,547	1,548	(1)
Transport Recharges	2,393	1,349	1,379	(30)
Departmental Support Services	9	0	0	0
Central Support Services	3,149	2,381	2,382	(1)
Asset Charges	3,197	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-357	-357	-357	0
Net Total Recharges	10,439	4,920	4,952	(32)
Net Departmental Total	26,361	16,879	16,974	(95)

Comments on the above figures:

The net budget is £95,000 over budget profile at the end of the third quarter of 2014/15.

At the third quarter of the year employee's expenditure is over budget profile by £ 24,000. Spending on agency staffing in open spaces and waste management continues however the rate has fallen during quarter three as vacancies begin to be filled and efficiency measures such as the apprenticeship scheme take hold. The other main driver for the over-spend are the savings targets including premium pay of £42,300.

Other premises and supplies & services expenditures are collectively currently £ 114,000 under budget at the end of quarter three. The main reasons for this are underspending on some equipment and utilities budgets and Open Space landscaping. Where possible, some of these budgets will be investigated for adjustment to offset underachieving income targets mentioned below.

Waste Disposal Contracts are expected to overspend by year-end. In recent years Halton has successfully increased the amount of waste recycled however this now results in a recycling bonus payment at the end of the financial year. It is assumed that this payment will be approximately £100,000 which is similar to 2013/14 as recycling levels are also similar. The department will strive to ensure the additional costs are met within its overall budget if possible, if not, underspends within the Directorate will have to be used to ensure an overall balanced budget is achieved.

Sales, fees & charges and catering fees across the Department continue to struggle against budget. The social club in the stadium has now closed and due to the opening of Pure Gym, membership to the Stadium fitness gym has declined, adding to previous year's decreases. The main areas struggling are catering sales, stadium bars, open spaces non contracted works, bulky waste charges, playing fields and some lettings for community centres. As mentioned above, in order to alleviate underachieving income, any underspending budgets on expenditure could be adjusted to offset income targets.




Capital Projects as at 31st December 2014

	2014-15 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation To Date £'000	Actual Spend To Date £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	80	75	77	3
Widnes Recreation Site	2,792	1,258	1,125	1,667
Children's Playground Equipment	79	15	4	75
Upton Improvements	63	47	49	14
Norton Priory	339	12	12	327
Crow Wood Play Area	13	0	0	13
Runcorn Hill Park	311	233	233	78
Runcorn Cemetery Extension	9	0	0	9
Cremators Widnes Crematorium	396	297	264	132
Open Spaces Schemes	189	142	138	51
Playground Third Party Funding	340	17	17	323
Litter Bins	20	0	0	20
Total	4,631	2,096	1,919	2,712





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