

Environment & Urban Renewal 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 Environment & Urban Renewal (E&UR) 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 Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board i.e.:
 - Development & Investment Services
 - Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement
 - Highways, Transportation & Logistics and Physical Environment
 - Housing Strategy
- 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 remit of the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board during the period which include:

Development & Investment Services

- Proposed new Travellers site
A contract has been let to John Turners and we have approval from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to proceed with the project. It is anticipated that works will commence on site in early February 2015 with completion being due by 31st May 2015.
- Moor Lane Business Centre
Demolition works have now been completed and the site is currently being modified to provide additional parking facilities for the Health Centre. It has been agreed that the car park specification will be upgraded to provide a new tarmac surface in order to overcome any drainage issues.

- Runcorn Hill Park Pavilion & Widnes Rec Sports Pavilion
A contract has now been let to Whitfield & Brown in respect of the completion to both the Runcorn and Widnes Pavilion projects, following Globe going into administration. Works restarted on the Runcorn Hill Park Pavilion in November 2014 with the completion now being due mid-April 2015. Works will also restart on Widnes Rec Sports Pavilion in January 2015, with completion also expected by end April 2015.

- Castlefields, Lakeside Phase 1
On 11th November 2013, the Council completed on the disposal of the site of the former Barge Public House and adjoining land to Keepmoat Homes for the provision of new housing units. The scheme comprises of 66 units for Open Market Sale (OMS) and 20 two bed affordable homes for rent. These 20 units will be owned/managed by Plus Dane Group. In respect of OMS, to date 23 units have been sold and legally completed, 39 reserved, four still to sell. Joint publicity achieved at a number of key points. The scheme is expected to be completed by December 2015.

For further information about the development, please visit the following site:

<http://www.keepmoat.com/development/bridgewater-gardens-runcorn>

- Castlefields, Canalside
In March 2013 planning permission was granted to the Council for works to the former Busway Canal Bridge. This grants planning consent to form a new road and cycleway over the existing bridge to provide access to potential new development at 'Canalside'. In the same month, the bridge passed a structural assessment; although bridge parapets need some upgrading.

The works to the bridge deck and parapet commenced in November 2014 and are now complete, aside from final painting. Keepmoat has constructed a road to the bridge which is nearing completion. This was agreed as part of the site's disposal. A second vehicular link to Canalside has a number of benefits and will help market the site.

Further works to the Daresbury Expressway Bridge are due to commence in March 2015 to further improve access. Over the last few months, clearance works to the redundant Busway Carriageway and embankment have been undertaken by the HBC Open Spaces team to open up the site and to also enable assessment of the carriageway by Highways, planned for winter 2014-15.

- 3MG
The A5300 link road was completed in September 2014. Planning permission was granted for HBC Field on 8 September 2014. Executive Board approved the appointment of IDI Gazeley on 20th November 2014 as the preferred developer. A new planning application has been submitted for the latest Rail Sidings scheme and this will be considered by Development Control Committee in spring 2015.

The rail scheme is progressing through Network Rail's approval process. Good progress is being made on the proposals for a Biomass Plant and a new bridge which will span Stewards Brook.

➤ Investment Enquiries

The Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team managed 32 commercial property/inward investment enquiries in quarter 3 which resulted in 7 conversions (inward investment enquiries converted into actual investment projects).

The percentage of enquiries converted for quarter 3 was 21.87%. Cumulative total of enquiries for 2014-15 at end of quarter 3 was 193 against the annual target of 200. Cumulative conversions rate is 11% against the annual target of 10%.

Policy, Planning and Transportation.

➤ Work is nearing completion on integrating the Council's Housing Land Availability (HLA) and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) systems. This has involved creating/merging records for thousands of individual units and should streamline the production of these important documents in the future.

➤ The Bus services supported by the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) on the whole have been successful; the 200 service which serves a large proportion of Runcorn's employment sites is close to becoming a commercial (unsubsidised) service. However the 329, operating from St Helens to Daresbury via Warrington, was wholly subsidised through LSTF and will cease when the funding ends in March 2015. This is due to insufficient patronage levels and the lack of opportunities for future passenger growth.

➤ The first Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) will be introduced into the Borough under the current Liverpool City Region Better Bus Area (BBA) partnership. The QBP will provide for a number of improvements on the corridor between Widnes Town Centre and St Helens Town Centre and provide an improved co-ordinated 20 minute frequency and allow for reciprocal ticket arrangements between Halton Transport and Arriva.

➤ Following an earlier Defra consultation on the delivery of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) via planning legislation, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) will consult in January on proposed arrangements to make lead Local Flood Authorities Statutory Consultees on planning applications that have surface water drainage implications. This will have resource implications and a response to the consultation will be sent.

➤ Phase 2 of the Daresbury Expressway junction Local Pinch Point scheme at Innovation Way was completed in December and the new traffic signal junction was brought into operation.

➤ The Mersey Gateway Project

Merseylink's development of their detailed design proposals for the project and the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board's (MGCB) review of these submissions are ongoing.

Demolition activity in the Catalyst Trade Park and Astmoor areas is well advanced and the demolition of Royal Café on Hutchinson Street is scheduled to take place in January 2015.

Ongoing site activity within the Mersey Gateway site boundary includes:

- Diversions of utilities services (including diversion of electricity main on Clifton Park).
- Construction of the temporary trestle bridge (concurrently from both river banks).
- Construction of the sheet piled cofferdam structures for the north and south pylons of the main bridge crossing (to allow the foundations for the pylons to be constructed in dry conditions).
- Concrete piling for foundations of the north abutment of the north approach viaduct to the main bridge crossing.
- Construction of the reinforced soil retaining wall adjacent to the eastbound off slip road at M56 junction 12.
- Highway reconfiguration work at Ditton and Bridgewater junctions with associated temporary traffic management.

The next 6 months will see a significant change of focus from temporary works activities associated with the main bridge crossing to permanent works (highways and structures).

In particular, this will see the establishment of the long term phases of traffic management on the existing highway network including lane closures and diversions necessary to allow the works to be constructed in a manner which is safe for the construction workforce and the travelling public. Also included is a site compound office near the Hallwood Park estate in Runcorn.

Also, Off-peak roadworks on Weston Point Expressway around M56 J12 have been moved to overnight and weekend.

Open Spaces and Waste & Environmental Improvement

- **Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable (TEEP) Recycling**
During the third quarter, an assessment has been carried out to test the Council's compliance with the requirements of the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 to separately collect four key material streams; paper, metal, plastic and glass. The assessment process and the outcome will be the subject of a report to the Council's Executive Board.

The government is proposing to make it a requirement for councils to introduce separate collections of paper, plastic, metals and glass by 2015 when Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable (TEEP) and necessary to meet the appropriate quality standards for the relevant recycling sectors. Where not necessary or practicable, commingled (mixed) collections will be allowed.

- **Bonfire Removal Initiative**
The 2014 Bonfire Removal Initiative again resulted in a reduction in unauthorised bonfires across Halton. The initiative covered Mischief Night and Bonfire Night and ran from Monday 27th October 2014 through to Friday 7th November 2014.

The Bonfire Removal Initiative sets out to improve community safety by removing unauthorised and uncontrolled bonfires before they are ignited. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services data shows the number of attended unauthorised bonfires in Halton in 2014 was 52% lower than in 2013, with only 27 incidents in 2014 compared to 31 the previous year.



Parks

Improvement and refurbishment works restarted at Runcorn Hill & Heath Park as part of the Heritage Lottery Funded scheme that will create an enhanced visitor attraction and one that the Borough's residents and visitors from around the region will be able to enjoy for years to come. The works had stalled earlier in the year when the contractor went into receivership. The new café/visitor centre should be completed in Q1 of 2015/16.

As part of the Runcorn Hill & Heath Park project two officers, funded by the Heritage lottery Fund, have been employed to facilitate community involvement. In Q3 they hosted four events which have had an attendance of approximately 400. They have worked with a number of local community groups, including scouts, guides and cubs totalling 105 attendees. They have facilitated regular weekly school visits and 153 pupils have undertaken conservation tasks working towards various awards. Groups of between two and six volunteers have been out on site every week carrying out management tasks on heathland of Runcorn Hill Park.

Funding was secured in Q3 from WREN that will allow the service to refurbish the locks at Spike Island. It is essential that the locks are refurbished as they are essential for keeping the water levels in the canal where they should be. The works form part of the Sankey Interlocks project the aim of which is to bring the section of canal between Spike Island and Fiddlers Ferry Marina back into navigation.

WREN is a not-for-profit business that helps benefit the lives of people who live close to landfill sites by awarding grants for community, conservation and heritage projects.



Streetscene

Thirty-four new street litter bins were installed throughout the Borough in Q3. Many of the new bins have a section for items that can be recycled. The bins have been funded from the Area Forums and they have replaced worn out street furniture which has improved the visual aspect of many streets and neighbourhoods. In Q4 a further 134 bins will be installed.



Cemeteries & Crematorium

The first of two new cremators was brought into use at Widnes Crematorium in Q3, whilst the second will be completed in Q4 2014/15. The new cremators are far more fuel efficient and should half the gas consumption thereby delivering a saving on operating costs.

The required permissions were obtained in Q3 that have allowed progress to begin in earnest on the creation of a new cemetery for Widnes. The new cemetery will be called Peel House Cemetery and it will be located on the former Fairfield High School playing fields.

Housing Strategy



Housing

Subject to contract, the Salvation Army submitted the winning tender for the provision of the housing support service at the new homeless accommodation scheme in Albert Rd Widnes.

Plus Dane submitted the winning tender to retain the contract for the floating housing support service. Both contracts are due to commence in April.

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work within the remit of the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board including:

Development & Investment Services

- I. Coastal Communities Fund, joint project with Warrington Borough Council
The project aims to increase support to businesses based along the Sankey Canal from Spike Island through to Warrington. There are two members of staff in place and the project has commenced. There have been some issues with the installation of the Marsh House Bridge at Fiddlers Ferry which is being dealt with by Warrington Borough Council. Halton is also working on another joint contract with Warrington (the Highways & Maintenance contract) with Tarmac and it is hoped that the two projects will have some synergies, particularly around the creation of apprenticeships.
- II. Woodlands Building
The Canal Boat Adventure Project (CBAP) Organisation was due to take on the lease for the Woodlands Building however there have been some delays to this due to issues within the CBAP Organisation.
- III. Castlefields, Lakeside Phase 2/3
With the success of Phase 1, it is important that momentum within the private housing market continues on Castlefields and the Masterplan is realised. As such, with planning and other lead in times, attention has been focussed on bringing Lakeside Phase 2/3 to market. A three month period of exclusivity was entered into with Keepmoat Homes on 8th December 2014 to allow it time to undertake site surveys and to develop its plans. Subject to an appropriate offer being made, this will be presented for a formal Council decision on disposal.
- IV. Castlefields, Canalside
In June 2014, the Council (as land owner) had provided a submission to the Local Plan Allocations Document for Canalside to be allocated a residential development for up to 250 homes. This would provide certainty for the land and any future disposal and extend beyond the life of the Regeneration Programme. Interest in the purchase of the Canalside is starting to emerge but at this stage no formal approach has been made. Marketing / disposal of Canalside is currently not anticipated until 2017 although this situation could change to capitalise on any growth in the housing market. It is anticipated that an agent will be instructed by December 2015 to aid the marketing and disposal of the site.
- V. Merseylink Visitor Centres
Both the Runcorn and Widnes centres are due to open in Q4. The Catalyst will be home to the Widnes Visitor Centre whilst Halton Lea Library will provide the location for the Runcorn centre. Initially, Wigg Island was earmarked for the Runcorn side but accessibility and the safety of the volunteers has meant a re-think and Halton Lea has been identified as a suitable information point for the project. Around 45 volunteers have been trained to date and a further volunteer recruitment campaign will commence in Q4.

Policy, Planning and Transportation.

I. Planning Advisory Service Programme

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) is running a programme for Authorities who have adopted Core Strategies with housing policy figures, based on their (now deleted) Regional Strategies.

Halton is to receive free consultancy services (ARUP) to review our current position and advise on the risks and pitfalls associated with the differing options for moving forward (i.e. retain Core Strategy, review elements of Core Strategy, or produce new Local Plan). St. Helens Council is to receive similar advice from Peter Brett Associates.

II. Duty to Co-Operate (Strategic Planning matters)

Officers have been working with colleagues across the wider City Region to seek agreement to address the requirement to consider the 'Objectively Assessed Need for Housing'. The first stage of this work is to revalidate the suitability of the previous geography (groupings of Authorities) as 2011 Census migration and commuting data is now available.

Currently Halton is grouped with St. Helens and Warrington (Mid-Mersey) for housing matters and sits within a Travel to Work Area also containing Warrington, St. Helens, Wigan, as well as small areas of Cheshire West & Chester and West Lancashire.

III. Local Authority Electric Vehicle/Infrastructure Funding

In partnership with Merseytravel and other districts there is an appetite to apply to the above fund, which will support the integration of electric vehicles into LA fleets by providing 75% of total cost. Halton is potentially looking to fund 3 vehicles which could be used within the open spaces / community meals / courier teams.

IV. E-Taxis

The government has released details of future funding for taxi operators who wish to convert to electric vehicles from fossil fuels. To take full advantage of this potential fund better partnership working would need to be established between the Taxi operators and local authorities.

V. Transport Plan for Growth

The Transport Plan for Growth which merges and updates the Merseyside and Halton Local Transport Plans is nearing completion and is to be submitted to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Chief Executives early in February 2015 and to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on 6th March 2015. The plan works alongside the existing Local Transport Plan 3 and sets out how the LCR Transport priorities support economic growth.

VI. Highways Development

Halton has submitted proposals for four schemes totalling £1.2M to be undertaken under the LCR Growth Deal programme of Sustainable Transport projects over a two year period up to 2017. The Department for Transport (DfT) has confirmed the project can now be taken to the Combined Authority for approval and implementation.

Highway and Planning staff resources have continued to be engaged to a greater extent than anticipated at this stage, in respect of discharge of planning conditions and technical approval process in respect of the Mersey Gateway Project. Merseylink's delivery phasing and construction programme, and the associated statutory / highway processes, network management and the development of designs for sustainable transport post-opening, are all likely to continue to impact on resources in the medium term.

VII. The Mersey Gateway Project

The first phases of long term traffic management have focussed on Ditton and Bridgewater junctions. The next phases will expand to include other areas of the Project Road in the New Year particularly through the Central/Weston Point Expressway corridor. The scale and duration of the traffic management arrangements are expected to have journey time implications for the travelling public and businesses which may require review of normal travel plans.

Open Spaces and Waste & Environmental Improvement

- I. Department for Communities and Local Government to consult against HWRC charges
Proposals preventing councils from charging residents to use Household Waste Recycling Centres HWRC's have been announced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

A public consultation document published in January invites views on how HWRCs at risk of closure can remain open without local authorities resorting to charging residents for the service. An increasing number of councils in England have implemented or discussed charges for HWRC use in response to cuts to local government funding and a requirement to save money on 'essential' services.

The consultation claims that long-standing legislation enshrined in both the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990 require local authorities to provide free-to-use HWRCs for their residents. Under proposals outlined in the document, DCLG intends to prevent local authorities charging any entry or exit fee for using a 'discretionary HWRC' service, as well as any fee relating to the quantity of household waste and recycling that is deposited.

Apparently the rules would not prevent authorities from charging for household waste deposited by non-residents, waste delivered from commercial premises or non-household waste or recycling from both residents and non-residents. The consultation is due to end on February 18th 2015 and seeks views from councils, waste disposal authorities, the waste industry and the Local Government Association.

- II. Defra are to consult on new anti-waste crime measures
The government has given senior waste industry representatives an outline of its plans to consult on new regulations aimed at curbing waste crime. Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) officials outlined some of the proposals likely to be included in a planned consultation on new regulations, which would make it easier for the Environment Agency to prosecute perpetrators of waste crime.

These include giving the Environment Agency greater powers to suspend licences of sites that are operating outside of the law, and increased intervention at poor performing sites which are thought to be at risk of non-compliance. Defra is also looking to consider new laws to allow the Environment Agency to re-charge waste sites for the clean-up costs of illegal sites, similar to the way in which water polluters are made to pay for pollution.

It is expected that a consultation on the measures will be launched before the General Election, although Defra is continuing to assess the impact of any new measures on existing regulations.

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 2013/2014 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:

Development and Investment Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
EEP1	Commence Crossville development by March 2015 .	
EEP1	Commence construction of road at Johnson's Lane and introduce end user to site by March 2015 .	
EEP1	Commence work on site for project Techspace by September 2014 .	
EEP1	Acquisition and preparation of Lord Daresbury plot and hostel site by March 2015 .	

Supporting Commentary

Commence Crossville development by March 2015 - Work is ongoing with the developer to progress this site. However, this is a complex development, hence the delay to the start of the scheme.

Commence construction of road at Johnson's Lane and introduce end user to site by March 2015 - The project is on course to meet the start date for the road and end user for the site.

Commence work on site for project Techspace by September 2014 - The tenders have been received and are being evaluated. Anticipated contract award in December 2014. Start on site January 2015. However, enabling works have commenced on site.

Acquisition and preparation of Lord Daresbury plot and hostel site by March 2015 - Lord Daresbury plot purchased in June 2014. Hostel plot due to be acquired in December 2014. Preparation works to commence before March 2015.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
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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%		
DIS LI 05	Number of investment enquiries per annum.	295 (Cumulative)	200	193		
DIS LI 06	Inward investment enquiry conversion rate percentage.	15%	10%	11%		

Supporting Commentary

DIS LI 01: Occupancy of HBC industrial units - The Investment Estate continues to perform well with 93% of the Industrial Estate and 94% of the Commercial Estate occupied.

DIS LI 02: Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall - 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.

DIS LI 05: Number of investment enquiries per annum - The Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team managed 32 commercial property/inward investment enquiries in Quarter 3 2014/15 which resulted in 7 conversions (inward investment enquiries 'converted' into actual investment projects). The cumulative total of enquiries (Quarter 1 + Quarter 2 + Quarter 3) currently stands at 193 against an annual target of 200

DIS LI 06: Inward investment enquiry conversion rate percentage - The percentage of inward investment enquiries 'converted' into actual investment projects in Quarter 3 2014\15 was 22%. The cumulative conversions to date are at 11 % against an annual target of 10%.

Open Spaces and Waste & Environmental Improvement

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
CE 05	Woodland Expansion - Additional 200m ² of Woodland planted Borough wide - March 2015.	

Supporting Commentary

Woodland Expansion - Additional 200m² of Woodland planted Borough wide - March 2015 - In Quarter 3 of 2014/15 a new, commemorative, woodland was created at The Bongs, Widnes. Individuals are able to purchase trees in memory of loved ones that are then planted in the commemorative woodland.

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
CE 06	Complete the borough wide roll out of the Alternative Bin Collection service to all suitable properties September 2014 .	
CE 06	Continue to deliver communications and awareness raising initiatives to ensure that participation with the Council's recycling services is maximised and that residents comply with the requirements of the Council's Household Waste Collection policy March 2015 .	
CE 07	Continue to review and assess the effectiveness of the Council's Environmental Enforcement Plans and Policies and maintain actions to ensure that the Council continues to effectively prevent and tackle a range of waste and environmental offences March 2015 .	

Supporting Commentary

Alternative Bin Collection to all suitable properties September 2014 - The borough-wide roll-out of the Alternate Bin Collection scheme to all suitable properties requires the complete reconfiguration of all existing waste and recycling collection schedules.

This reconfiguration is to be carried out through the completion of a 'Route Optimisation' exercise, using specialist software, which will produce the most cost effective waste collection routes. Unfortunately, due to delays caused by unavoidable operational and technical issues this target timescale will not be met and the roll-out of the ABC service will be now completed in 2015.

Council Recycling Service, March 2015 - This work is on-going and includes direct delivery of information to households and articles in local media, including Inside Halton.

Council Enforcement Plans, March 2015 - This work is on-going and Members will receive updates throughout the financial year.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 13	Residual household waste per household (Previously NI191).	624 Kgs	650 Kgs	395 Kgs		
CE LI 14	Household waste recycled and composted (Previously NI192).	38.53%	40%	49%		
CE LI 16	Municipal waste land filled (Previously NI193).	57.17%	60%	16.7%		

Supporting Commentary

CE LI 13: Residual household waste per household (Previously NI191) - This is a cumulative figure however, performance in Q3 is lower than the corresponding period from last year (463 Kgs) and indications are that this target will be met.

CE LI 14: Household waste recycled and composted (Previously NI192) - This is an estimated figure but performance in Q3 is higher than the corresponding period from last year (39% Kgs) and indications are that this target will be met.

CE LI 16: Municipal waste land filled (Previously NI193) - This is an estimated, cumulative figure and will change however, as a result of the introduction of new contractual arrangements for the treatment and subsequent diversion of waste from landfill, as reported in Q1 2014/15, this target will be significantly exceeded.

Highways, Transportation & Logistics

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
PPT 01	Review progress against SJB maintenance strategy and deliver 2014/15 major bridge maintenance works programme. March 2015.	
PPT 02	To deliver the 2014/15 LTP Capital Programme March 2015.	

Supporting Commentary

PPT 01: Review progress against SJB maintenance strategy and deliver 2014/15 major bridge maintenance works programme, March 2015 - Schemes continue to be developed and programmed. Initially technical problems with the Shock Transmission Units refurbishment had affected expected delivery date but these are now scheduled to be installed towards the end of March 2015. This work is weather dependant and could be affected by poor weather conditions.

PPT 02: To deliver the 2014/15 LTP Capital Programme March 2015 - The LTP Capital programme consists of two main strands:

- Integrated Transport: Construction work on the programme of sustainable transport improvements is partially complete and remaining schemes are underway or in design.
- Highway Maintenance: A programme of six carriageway resurfacing and five footway reconstruction schemes has been completed. A further five footway schemes are programmed for implementation commencing in Q4 2014/15.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	13 / 14 Actual	14 / 15 Target	Q3 Actual	Q3 Progress	Direction of travel
PPT LI 01	Number of third party compensation claims received due to alleged highway / footway defects.	132	110	93		
PPT LI 04 (ex NI 157)	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for:					
	a) 'major' applications	83.3%	60%	100%		
	b) 'minor' applications	74.2%	85%	*93.5%		
	c) 'other' applications	83.6%	85%	*95.5%		
PPT LI 05	To ensure a five year rolling supply of housing land available for 2,760 homes over 5 years. Measure as supply of ready to develop housing sites (%).	111	110	N / A	N / A	N / A
PPT LI 11	Damage to roads and pavements (% dangerous damage repaired within 24 hours).	99%	98%	100%		
PPT LI 15	Bus service punctuality, Part 1: The proportion of non-frequent scheduled services on time (%):					
	a) Percentage of buses starting route on time	98.05%	98.0%	99.13%		
	b) Percentage of buses on time at intermediate timing points	91.60%	87.50%	94.25%		
PPT LI 17	No. of passengers on community based accessible transport	253,357	267,000	131,505		
PPT LI 19	Number of local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area in one year (000's).	5,522	6,200	4,124		

Supporting Commentary

PPT LI 01: Number of third party compensation claims received due to alleged highway / footway defects - Although this figure has slightly improved over the same period in the previous year, due to the nature of the way claims are received it is unclear at the moment if the target for the current financial year will be met.

PPT LI 04: Processing of planning applications - These figures include those applications where an Extension of Time (EoT) has been agreed with the applicant. EoT are taken into account in the data returned to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

PPT LI 05: To ensure a five year rolling supply of housing land available for 2,760 homes over 5 years - Significant work is nearing completion to integrate and improve the monitoring system (SHLAA) that produces this indicator. Figures will be reported in Q1 2015 / 2016.

PPT LI 11: Damage to roads and pavements (% dangerous damage repaired within 24 hours) - Information taken from Mayrise indicates that 100% of P0, P1 & P2 orders are completed within 24 hrs.

PPT LI 15 a & b: Bus service punctuality - Both these indicators continue to perform above expectations and it is anticipated the Performance Indicator will continue to perform at the current level. The performance of buses at intermediate timing points continues to improve through improved scheduling by the operators. 'On bus' monitoring equipment provides the operators with real time information to enable better informed decisions in relation to scheduling for both parts of this indicator.

PPT LI 17: No. of passengers on community based accessible transport - Patronage for this indicator has significantly decreased due the reduction in vehicle availability following the restructuring of Halton Community Transport (HCT). However, passenger numbers have continued to increase on the Council's In-house fleet.

PPT LI 19: Number of local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area in one year (000's) - The Q3 figures show that passenger numbers are performing slightly better than at the same period last year, though it is anticipated patronage will remain broadly at the 2013/14 levels for 2014/15 and unfortunately it is not expected to meet the target for this 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	-4,470	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	444	410	401	9
Disability Discrimination Act/Disabled Access	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.

POLICY, PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION 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	4,810	3,636	3,661	(25)
Other Premises	200	67	65	2
Hired & Contracted Services	433	289	283	6
Supplies & Services	314	203	206	(3)
Street Lighting	1,914	1,091	1,081	10
Highways Maintenance	2,383	2,049	2,038	11
Bridges	96	48	38	10
Fleet Transport	1,385	891	889	2
Lease Car Contracts	516	467	467	0
Bus Support – Halton Hopper Tickets	177	177	177	0
Bus Support	541	367	367	0
Out of Borough Transport	51	24	24	0
Contribution to Reserves	163	163	163	0
Finance Charges	406	238	238	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	68	68	68	0
NRA Levy	58	44	44	0
Total Expenditure	13,515	9,822	9,809	13
Income				
Sales	-253	-235	-267	32
Planning Fees	-506	-421	-435	14
Building Control Fees	-186	-155	-153	(2)
Other Fees & Charges	-1,008	-340	-349	9
Rents	-8	0	0	0
Grants & Reimbursements	-523	-373	-373	0
Efficiency Savings	-60	0	0	0
School SLAs	-39	-39	-43	4
Recharge to Capital	-312	0	0	0
Total Income	-2,895	-1,563	-1,620	57
Net Controllable Expenditure	10,620	8,259	8,189	70

<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	534	424	424	0
Transport Recharges	596	500	500	0
Asset Charges	7,946	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	2,385	1,786	1,786	0
Departmental Support Recharges				
Income	-432	-324	-324	0
Support Recharges Income – Transport	-2,884	-2,321	-2,321	0
Support Recharges Income – Non Transport	-2,385	-1,685	-1,685	0
Net Total Recharges	5,760	-1,620	-1,620	0
Net Departmental Total	16,380	6,639	6,569	70

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 3 is below budget profile. This is due to a number of expenditure and income budget areas.

Employees is over budget to date due to most areas being fully staffed and not being able to achieve the staff turnover savings target.

Other Premises is below budget to date mainly due to lower than expected utility bills and lower than expected NNDR for Lower House Lane Depot within the Logistics division.

Planning fees and are currently above budget due to a number of one off applications including the Redrow housing development in Widnes and the new David Wilson homes development.

The increase in sales income is mainly due to above average fuel sales at Lower House Lane depot.

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

POLICY, PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2014

	2014/15 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation To Date £'000	Actual Spend To Date £'000	Allocation Remaining £'000
<u>Local Transport Plan</u>				
Bridges & Highway Maintenance Bridge Assessment, Strengthening & Maintenance	1,114	300	272	842
Road Maintenance	1,388	1,000	914	474
	2,502	1,300	1,186	1,316
Total Bridge & Highway Maintenance				
Integrated Transport	1,020	200	152	868
	3,522	1,500	1,338	2,184
Total Local Transport Plan				
<u>Halton Borough Council</u>				
Street lighting – Structural Maintenance	200	100	83	117
Risk Management	120	50	39	81
Fleet Replacement	1,121	900	862	259
	1,441	1,050	984	457
Total Halton Borough Council				
<u>Grant Funded</u>				
Surface Water Management Grant	195	25	22	173
Mid Mersey Local Sustainable Transport	399	10	7	392
	594	35	29	565
Total Grant Funded				
<u>Local Pinch Point Fund</u>				
A558 Access Improvements	2,253	1,200	1,161	1,092
	7,810	3,785	3,512	4,298
Total Capital Programme				

Comments on the above figures

Repairs and maintenance on the Silver Jubilee Bridge have been staggered to reduce traffic congestion regarding the construction of the Mersey Gateway. All grant should be spent by the end of 14/15.

The programme of spend regarding surface water management is dependent on uptake by members of the public. This in turn is affected by local weather conditions.

Major works have now begun on the A558 junction improvements scheme. Assuming no major delays (adverse weather conditions etc) all capital allocation should be spent by the end of the 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 overspend is 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

COMMISSIONING & COMPLEX CARE 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	7,434	5,356	5,278	78
Premises	304	206	202	4
Supplies & Services	1,922	1,494	1,499	(5)
Carers Breaks	423	353	353	0
Transport	200	153	153	0
Contracts & SLAs	160	100	91	9
Payments To Providers	3,816	2,216	2,216	0
Emergency Duty Team	103	26	18	8
Other Agency Costs	795	484	488	(4)
Total Expenditure	15,157	10,388	10,298	90
Income				
Sales & Rents Income	-284	-242	-277	35
Fees & Charges	-173	-148	-112	(36)
CCG Contribution To Service	-840	-553	-526	(27)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-662	-497	-487	(10)
Transfer From Reserves	-948	-948	-948	0
Total Income	-2,907	-2,388	-2,350	(38)
Net Operational Expenditure	12,250	8,000	7,948	52
Recharges				
Premises Support	192	151	151	0
Transport	436	274	274	0
Central Support Services	1,685	1,245	1,245	0
Asset Charges	76	0	0	0
Internal Recharge Income	-1,685	-1,597	-1,597	0
Net Total Recharges	704	73	73	0
Net Departmental Total	12,954	8,073	8,021	52

Comments on the above figures:

Net operational expenditure is £52,000 below budget profile at the end of the third quarter of the financial year.

Employee costs are currently £78,000 below budget profile. This results from savings made on vacant posts, specifically in relation to Mental Health and Day Services. The majority of these posts have now either been filled, or are in the process of being recruited to. It is therefore not anticipated that the current spend below budget profile will continue at this level for the remainder of the financial year, and will not impact significantly on the 2015/16 budget year.

Income is below target to date. There is an anticipated shortfall on Fees & Charges income due to the temporary closure and refurbishment of a homeless facility. Additionally, income received from the Clinical Commissioning Group is projected to be below target. This income relates to Continuing Health Care funded packages within Day Services and the Supported Housing Network. The income received is dependent on the nature of service user's care packages, and is out of the direct control of the service. This shortfall is partly offset by an over-achievement of trading income from Day Services ventures, which is reflected in income above target to date of £35,000 for Sales and Rents. This trend is anticipated to continue for the remainder of the financial year.

At this stage in the financial year, it is anticipated that a balanced budget overall will be achieved for the year. Whilst income is projected below target, this will be offset by in-year savings in other areas, principally savings on staff turnover above the set target.

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
ALD Bungalows	100	0	0	100
Lifeline Telecare Upgrade	100	0	0	100
Halton Carer's Centre Refurbishment	50	16	16	34
Section 256 Grant	55	0	0	55
Community Capacity Grant	166	0	0	166
Total	471	16	16	455

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 <u>intervention or remedial action</u> 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.