

Directorate Performance Overview Report – Enterprise, Community & Resources

Reporting Period: **Quarter 4 – 01st January to 31st March 2017**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress within the directorate that have occurred during the period.

2.0 Key Developments

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

Finance

- a) The Government announced the 2017/18 final Settlement Funding Assessment (Grant Settlement) on 20 February 2017. For Halton there was no change in overall funding from that announced as part of the provisional settlement in December. The figures show a reduction in the Settlement Funding Assessment of £4.9m (10%) from 2016/17.
- b) The settlement also confirmed the start of the pilot business rate retention scheme operated by the local authorities within the Liverpool City Region. As part of this it was confirmed both Revenue Support Grant and the Improved Better Care Fund would not be paid as specific grant allocations but would instead be funded as part of the business rate retention scheme. The Government also confirmed a “no detriment guarantee” will be in place, which will ensure no council within the pilot scheme will be worse off than they would have been under the existing 50% retention scheme.
- c) Work has begun on closing the accounts for 2016/17 and the process is now in place to complete the draft Statement of Accounts prior to it being passed to the council’s external auditor (Grant Thornton LLP) on 30 June 2017. The external auditor has already commenced interim audit work in February and will follow this up with further detailed work from 01 July onwards. It is expected the Statement of Accounts will be signed off and published by 30 September 2017.
- d) The Chancellor announced the 2017 Spring Budget on 08 March 2017. The headline announcement for Local Government was the provision of an additional £2bn over the next three years of further funding for Adult Social Care. Indicative allocations show that over the three years this will be worth an additional £5.7m for Halton.
- e) The 2017/18 net budget of £103.249m was approved by Council on 08 March 2017. The net budget will be part funded from an increase of 4.9% to Council Tax, made up of a 1.9% general increase in council tax and a 3% Adult Social Care precept. Halton’s Band D council tax level is £1,312.27 and continues to be the fourth lowest in the North West.
- f) The Medium Term Financial Forecast has been updated for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. The funding gap for the three years totals £23m. The forecast is based on a number of assumptions and will be updated as new information comes to light during the year.

- g) The Council net spending position for the period to 31 December 2016 was reported to Executive Board on 23 February 2017. Net expenditure was £0.764m over the budget to date. Capital spending as at 31 December 2016 totalled £69.2m, which is 99.8% of planned capital spending at this stage.
- h) The Council recently won a national award for 'Driving Value for Money' in acknowledgement of the work done in delivering social value through commissioning and procurement. The Council has also been shortlisted in the 'Outstanding Procurement Initiative' category of the Public Finance Innovation awards. The winning entry will be announced in April.
- i) In March 2017, the Council's in house claims handling arrangements were subject to external review by Gallagher Bassett on behalf of the Council's insurer. The audit involved sample testing of claim files against a range of best practices. The score achieved by the Council's Insurance Team was 98.7%, which provides an overall rating of 'exemplary'.
- j) Since 2014 the Council has operated an Early Payment Scheme whereby suppliers have been offered the opportunity for accelerated payment of their invoices in return for the Council receiving a negotiated rebate on the value of invoices paid. The scheme has proved very successful and has generated over £100k in rebate income since it was launched. Further work is now being planned for early 2017 – 18 to further increase revenues from this process.
- k) The LCR authorities recently completed a joint tender exercise for a prepaid card provider. Sefton and St Helens have since implemented prepaid cards for direct payment users and Halton intends to go live during May for new direct payment users. Existing direct payment users will be able to transfer over to prepaid cards once the scheme has been established.
- l) It is anticipated that the use of prepaid cards will deliver financial savings and will facilitate the audit of direct payment accounts as the Council will have real-time online access to information on funds held by direct payment users and how those funds are being used. This will help to prioritise the audit process, improve the recovery of surplus funds, and mitigate the need to recruit additional Direct Payment Officers to manage the increasing number of direct payment users.

Policy, People, Performance and Efficiency

- m) As reported previously, a Council wide Apprenticeship Policy is in place to enable the Council to meet its obligations, as far as it is economically able to, in respect of an apprenticeship target set by Government. Stakeholder meetings have taken place with Council services to identify opportunities for apprenticeship placements from April onwards, and this is being supported by a skills audit. A regional practitioner network continues to consider how collective resources can have maximum impact, and links are being developed across the Liverpool City Region to ensure efficient and effective apprenticeship recruitment.
- n) The Council has now set up its electronic 'Levy Account' and is able to draw down training funding for approved apprenticeship placements set up in the Council.
- o) The Apprenticeship Levy has been introduced for April 2017. This has brought a significant additional burden to the payroll team in the HR service, especially given the number of school payrolls handled under Service Level Agreement arrangements – as maintained schools are considered part of the Council and must therefore contribute proportionally to the Levy payment. The Levy is collected and remitted alongside tax and national insurance contributions, and is based on a percentage of the pay bill. The additional work and reconciliation that this will create for each payroll period is as yet unquantified, however by the end of Q1 17/18 the exact resource implications will be clearer.

- p) A new Absence Management Policy has been developed and implemented by Management Team. Mandatory management training will take place in Q1 of 17/18, with the policy implementation date set for 1st July 2017. Reporting on absence following the implementation of this policy will be carried in this quarterly report.
- q) Following comprehensive review of the Councils recruitment process, and pay processes, a new HR service model continues to be developed. An e-recruitment system has now been procured, and processes are being engineered to enable that to be smoothly implemented. Along with other system enhancements and revised processes, this system will be the core of the Councils recruitment activity and will sit within a restructured HR function, taking effect around mid-2017.
- r) Within the Efficiency Programme, the review of the use of community assets, and the services delivered from them is underway. A report on The Brindley was considered by the Efficiency Programme Board in March 2017, which contained a summary of significant improvement in the efficiency and financial standing of the facility over recent years. Some operational recommendations emerged which have been passed to service management for action during 2016/17.
- s) In the same work-stream, a review of the Halton Direct Link facilities and the Select Security Stadium are underway, with reports currently in draft, planned to be considered by the Efficiency programme Board in May and July respectively.
- t) The Institute of Leadership (ILM) Level 7 certificate in Leadership & Management has now commenced with a cohort of 28 delegates. This project will continue to enhance leadership capacity and capability within the organisation, in line with the Council's Organisational Development Strategy.

ICT and Support Services

- u) Last quarter equipment to redevelop an in-house standalone data centre facility dedicated to the learning domain was procured. This solution will now be maintained and linked to additional schools services such as a new development of the Halton cloud based desktop facilities already enjoyed by schools at the moment.
- v) The Agresso project for Mersey Travel is now fully underway with the technical solution and the software solution currently being built. This is linked to a number of workshops with Mersey Travel to configure and define their requirement and transformation objectives and is expected to go live in October 2017.
- w) The externally sourced Bus/Taxi/Lift Generating co-ordination service for disabled users is currently being replaced by an in-house developed solution.. The system is currently close to completion and ready for testing within the near future by the client department.
- x) The rollout programme for the replacement desktop systems is now underway with extensive testing over the coming months, followed by a roll-out programme early in the new financial year. This will realise considerable opportunity for change both externally within the wider authority and internally within the department allowing for substantial changes to be made with the staffing structures and the user support structures.
- y) The NHS N3 Connection has now been ordered and will lead to greater connectivity with our NHS and CCG partners and associated service agencies. N3 is the national broadband network for the National Health Service (NHS), connecting all NHS locations in England.
- z) Halton's Customer Services teams, both the contact centre and the One Stop Shops have now been successfully integrated into the Administrative Support Services Division. Plans are in place to expand upon this opportunity by reviewing current process and procedures within this area, with a view to

extending their reach into the authority and improving upon and developing existing and new services.

Legal and Democratic Services

- aa) The newly constituted Elections Team have entered the final stages of preparations for the first Liverpool City Regional Mayor, with the election to be held in May 2017. The Legal Team have also contributed to the development of the LCR constitution which will be submitted to the LCR for approval in Quarter 1 2017 - 18.
- bb) The Legal Team have been working with colleagues in Trading Standards in Halton & Warrington on a longstanding and very complex car clocking case. A number of guilty verdicts were returned in Quarter 4, with sentencing to follow in the coming months.

Community and Environment

- cc) A report was presented to Executive Board in March concerning new powers available to Local Authorities to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for fly tipping offences. Members were advised that FPN's would be used for small to medium scale offences whilst large scale offences would be dealt with through the Courts. FPN notices would be fixed at £400 with an early payment discount of £100 where payment is made within 10 days.
- dd) There was a major storm event (on 23 February 2017) which resulted in hundreds of trees being blown down and operatives cleared all blockages and all highways by 8.00 p.m. Over the following days and weeks other damaged trees were found and the result was that planned winter work for the period 23 February to 27 March 2017 was not carried out. This work has had to be put back until Q3/4 of 2017/18 year.
- ee) Plans are now well advanced for the Elton John concert on 18th June and it is anticipated that over 15,000 people will attend. Tickets have started to be issued and HBC Highways Division have now completed the travel plan for the event.
- ff) The public consultation on potential changes to the opening hours at Ditton Library, and the staff consultation on a proposed restructure have both now been completed and the new library structure / opening hours will commence 1st June 2017.
- gg) The final staff structure for Leisure Centre operations has been agreed and recruitment commenced. The new structure will be operational from 1st June 2017. Staff members have faced many challenges since the transfer of the Leisure Centres back to the Council and they should be commended for the tremendous professionalism shown during extremely difficult times. The centres continued to perform well and within budget, making a significant contribution towards 2016/17 savings target.
- hh) Halton schools took part in the annual Swimathon event in March. A number of schools attended across Halton improving participation in this area based on last year's participation numbers. Specialised swimming advice and instruction was provided by trained staff and the Halton school swimming galas also took place in March at Runcorn and Kingsway Pools
- ii) The three leisure centres successfully ran an active schedule of activity programmes for the February half term. This included, free fitness sessions, swimming crash courses, including the introduction of snorkelling, and football camps and participation rates increased when compared to last year.
- jj) Get Active Project: The Sport England CSAF Project came to an end on 31 March 2017. The final figures being 5869 participants registered and a throughput figure of 150890. Both have over achieved on

their respective targets of 4376 / 63920 and a CSAF case study on the Halton project has been published by Sport England.

- kk) The Children in Need Grant is funding a club at the Frank Myler Multi Sports ground to start in with the emphasis being on developing a participant's confidence to go on and play sport more frequently within a club setting. Runcorn Multi Sports funded clubs are also in the planning stages, and are aiming to start in the summer months.

Economy, Enterprise and Property

- ll) The Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team managed 62 commercial property inward investment enquiries during the quarter 4 period with a cumulative inward investment enquiries total of 221. 8 inward investment enquiries were 'converted' into actual investment projects in Quarter 4 with the cumulative conversions total for 16-17 being 9%.
- mm) The Business Growth Programme within Halton continues to progress well with 147 businesses listed on the Halton. To date 47 businesses have been assisted and 11 jobs created.
- nn) March has been designated as 'Growth Hub Month' to raise awareness of the service and a Liverpool City Region (LCR) Growth Hub Showcase event was organised at the end of March 2017 to mark the occasion with over 100 people. Since the official launch in May 2016, the Halton Growth Hub has responded to 574 business enquiries helping businesses access over 807 initiatives.
- oo) The Select Security contract for both Astmoor and Halebank BID areas ended on 31st December 2016. Select Security will, however, continue to be the security provider until the end of the current BID term in March 2018. Security services are continuing as normal and additional patrols have been introduced at Halebank during the installation of the CCTV system.
- pp) Forty 'SelectaDNA' marking kits have been provided by Cheshire Police and will be distributed by PCSOs and the Astmoor Beat Officer across both estates. These supersede the old Smartwater kits. New signage, which in itself is a major deterrent, will also be prominent on both estates.
- qq) Feedback from previous Health & Safety (H&S) courses has indicated that there are weaknesses in several companies concerning adequate and legally compliant First Aid cover. The BID has addressed this issue by delivering 'Health and Safety Myth Busters Breakfast Seminars' where H&S professionals can network to better understand the requirements to remain legally compliant and avoid prosecution. The BID hopes to run other similar events in the coming months.
- rr) The BID Programme has been successful in encouraging several businesses to draw down Skills for Growth grants, which has seen businesses attend specialist and niche courses for which there is insufficient demand for the BID to run a course. Courses have been 80% funded by the Skills for Growth Fund and 20% funded by the BID Programme. In line with all BID training courses, there is no cost associated for eligible BID businesses.
- ss) Thirteen defibrillators have been installed across the two estates and training provided for over 55 employees. Internal directional signage and external signage has been provided identifying each host business as a defibrillator location. All businesses will be provided with a map detailing the location of their nearest machine together with accessibility instructions.
- tt) Techspace One was completed in January 2017 and the official launch event was held in March 2017 for property agents and companies. There is strong interest from 3 companies who are in initial lease negotiations with the Joint Venture. The design team have now been instructed for the next stage of the developments with a planning application expected in summer 2017.

- uu) Castlefield's Lakeside Phase 2 continues on site with the scheme now expected to be complete earlier than anticipated in September 2017. The scheme will deliver 79 two and three bedroom homes. Keepmoat are continuing with site investigation and feasibility work for Lakeside Phase 3.
- vv) HBC Field is progressing well. Alstom are on site and the construction of the new Transport Technology Centre is well underway with the Official Opening now being arranged for June 2017. The profile of the remaining land is increasing and we see it as a prime opportunity for Alstom or Jaguar Land Rover suppliers.
- ww) The New Markets 2 project is a business support programme for more developed businesses to help them access new market opportunities by using specialist consultants for activities such as marketing etc. This project will draw down £5.6m of ERDF for a range of delivery bodies across the City Region including Sci-Tech Daresbury. To date 39 companies have expressed interest in the programme, 11 have engaged on the programme and 3 have progressed to bespoke support.
- xx) HBC are also part of a LCR wide consortium bid with the Voluntary Organisation Learning Association (VOLA) who are the lead applicant for a Digital Inclusion Project through the Big Lottery Fund (BLF). The total amount of funding available is £ 3.1M and the consortium bid has been successful and Halton was awarded £62,000. Delivery of the project is due to start in April.
- yy) Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunal Service (HMCTS) will be taking on the lease of the third floor West at Rutland House as of 1st May 2017 with staff expected to take occupation in July / August 2017 and HMCTS have also indicated that they would like to take additional space in due course if feasible.
- zz) The two bids submitted by Halton as part of the Liverpool City Region One Public Estate (OPE) bid have both been successful. We have been awarded circa £66k in total to undertake master planning exercises in respect of the Former Police Station and Magistrates Court site and the immediate surrounding area in Widnes, and the current Runcorn Magistrates Court building and surrounding area of Halton Lea., the latter being linked to the healthy new towns programme. We are now looking at how best to take these projects forward in order to get the best value out of the funds which have been awarded.

Policy, Planning and Transportation

- aaa) Work is ongoing with Mersey Gateway Crossings Board on the feasibility for future delivery of the West Bank / Widnes Loops link road. Also, further feasibility work has been commissioned on the delinking of the expressways to the Silver Jubilee Bridge on the Runcorn side of the crossing.
- bbb) Work is ongoing on the Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP) and Influencing Travel Behaviour (ITB) programmes, to include works to Widnes Town Centre access improvements and cycle links to Heath/ Ineos. These schemes aim to improve sustainable travel, such as cycling, walking and public transport, to and from key sites in and around the borough, including places of work and education. Physical improvements to routes, better lighting, signalled crossings, etc are also included.
- ccc) A Department for Transport (DfT) Challenge Fund bid to supplement the existing major maintenance funding was made via Merseytravel, the results of which are due in May 2017. Securing this funding would enable the remaining outstanding steel arch elements to be painted during the planned closure of SJB that is due to be implemented in autumn 2017 following the PTU date of the Mersey Gateway.
- ddd) The Local Planning Authority (LPA) received notification from Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 16th December 2016 that Halton may be liable for designation under section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (aka 'special measures'). However following the submission of further information by the Council the DCLG confirmed that it would not be designating Halton under 'special measures'.

- eee) The LED street lighting conversion programme for this financial year (2016/17) was completed and will be continuing into future years. A programme to convert traffic signals to LED is underway as funds permit. Both of these initiatives will reduce ongoing energy and maintenance costs.
- fff) The Runcorn Site COMAH Operators Exercise was postponed in February 2017 due to Storm Doris, and has now been rescheduled.

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:-

Finance

1. From 1st April 2017 the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) are introducing the Right Benefit Initiative (RTI), which replaces the Fraud and Error Reduction Incentive Scheme (FERIS). This new initiative asks local authorities to focus solely on incorrect earnings of Housing Benefit claimants by processing DWP Optional RTI referrals that will be issued every month.
2. In April 2017 the government introduced a number of Benefits changes and some of these will impact upon the Housing Benefit and Universal Credit (UC) entitlement. The two notable changes relating to housing costs are as follows:
 - a) From 6th April 2017, new claimants with three or more children will not be able to claim UC, instead they will be directed to claim legacy benefits, including Housing Benefit where appropriate. DWP have informed us that this will be the case until November 2018.
 - b) From 1st April 2017 UC claimants under the age of 22 will no longer receive a housing cost element as part of their UC entitlement. These particular claimants cannot claim Housing Benefit, and because they have no entitlement to Housing Benefit or the housing cost element of UC they cannot apply for Discretionary Housing Payment.
3. The Government has allowed Councils responsible for Adult Social Care to again charge an extra precept for 2017-18, with the precept set as a maximum of 3% of the current 2016-17 charge. The Council has also made the decision to remove Council Tax discounts in respect of unoccupied and unfurnished properties from 1st April 2017. The combined effects of these two measures will result in an increase in accounts and collection activity.
4. From 1 April 2017 business properties are subject to new rateable valuations. The draft Valuation List was published on 30 September 2016 and leaflets were issued to businesses some time ago inviting them to check their new rateable value via the Valuation Office Agency website.
5. The upsurge in demand for Form Completion assistance for the new Personal Independence Payment continues. This benefit has considerably different rules to its predecessor. This has in turn led to an increase in the number of appeals. In the year to date over £4.5 Million of benefits income has been brought into Halton ~~by the team~~. With most of this being disability benefits for those in the greatest need. Success at disability tribunals is currently at 82%

Policy, People, Performance and Efficiency

6. The Trade Union Act 2016 had more of its provisions brought into force in March 2017 and new regulations around Trade Union Facilities Time in the workplace have been published and are currently being reviewed by HR management.
7. New gender pay reporting legislation comes into force at the beginning of April 2017, requiring employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female work on data collection and analysis will be undertaken in the coming months to ensure that the Council can meet this obligation.

8. As reported last quarter, the Council must ensure that it is compliant with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). An audit is required to ensure that all employee and personal data collected and processed meet GDPR conditions for employee consent. In conjunction with the Information Governance function, work is to take place to review and amend HR policies, procedures and privacy notices in HR documentation accordingly.
9. Government announced that the National Living Wage (NLW) for people aged 25 and over would increase from £7.20 to £7.50 per hour from 1 April 2017. The Council has previously taken a policy decision to apply the NLW to all employees, regardless of age. System amendments have been made to apply this increase to relevant employees via payroll. This is in line with the Pay Policy Statement approved by Council in March 2017.

ICT and Support Services

10. The development of the Halton Cloud Service will continue with the incremental roll out of the new desktop facilities to all officers with plans to roll out across all Schools later in 2017 with facilities now in place to develop a fully standalone schools data centre facility housed within the two Halton Data Centres.
11. The authorities' systems development programme will continue to manage and develop new integrated solutions releasing further savings as many of the systems over the last 36 months have been in-house developments reducing third party costs and procurement costs. With the transport co-ordination system almost complete and ready for testing.
12. The drive to develop external income opportunity will continue as the Financial Management Systems programme develops, together with the authorities offerings to Schools and external agencies.
13. To comply with the efficiency agenda both ICT and Administrative support Services will undergo a further restructure to allow for the delivery of the new desktop technologies currently being released, with a view to develop and enhance customer contact and issue resolution.

Legal and Democratic Services

14. The Constitution has been approved by Executive Board prior to being considered by Council in Quarter 1 2017 - 18.

Community and Environment

15. By way of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 all Dog Control Orders are to be replaced with Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) within 3 years of the Acts introduction. Officers are currently reviewing existing Dog Control Orders with a view to replacing them with PSPOs by October this year. As part of this exercise, Officers will be proposing that additional measures be covered by the new PSPOs to help deal more effectively with dog fouling and other forms of anti-social behaviour caused by irresponsible dog ownership.

Economy, Enterprise and Property

16. The External Funding service is currently experiencing a period of bids being rejected for reasons of excessive competition for funds; this combination of increased demand and high competition for funds necessitates an even more strategic approach to ensure the most appropriate and high quality bids are submitted and that productive relationships are forged with key funding bodies. It is increasingly important that we also engage at the Liverpool City Region level as funders are often looking at partnership approaches to funding applications.

17. A potential project has emerged out of the Well North pathfinder programme in Windmill Hill. The proposal, called Well Windmill Hill, is to develop an integrated health & wellbeing hub for the area housing all necessary services. An initial meeting has been held with the stakeholder group and a project brief is in the process of being developed following which consultants will be engaged to commence with a feasibility study.
18. The Employment, Learning & Skills division (via the Halton Employment Partnership) is continuing to work with Emovis, the tolling operator for the new and existing bridges. In May 2017, the bespoke pre-employment programmes will commence and these will form part of the recruitment process. First jobs will commence June 2017 at the Manor Park call centre facility and it is hoped a good number of these will go to Halton residents.
19. Stage 2 expressions of interest to become part of the supply chain for the new DWP Health & Work Programme are due to be submitted in May 2017. The 3 shortlisted organisations will then go down to one, so it is important to ensure submissions meet the deadline if the division is to be offered the opportunity to deliver. The Health & Work Programme will replace the current Work Programme for which the division delivers 75% of this in Halton.

Policy Planning and Transportation

20. The bid for A558 dualling feasibility work was unsuccessful. Further bids have been submitted for funding 3 schemes i.e. at Widnes Fiddlers Ferry Rd gyratory, Halton Lea, and Gorse Point (Bayer) and station access and applications currently being appraised.
21. The Environment Agency (EA) requires Preliminary Flood Risk assessment to be updated by June 2017. Guidance has now been received and work on a template replacement document commenced in quarter 4.
22. Discussions are ongoing with the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board over the Widnes approaches to SJB and re-configuration of the existing carriageway over the bridge deck.
23. A new Highways Maintenance Code of Practice was recently published and Councils have 2 years to implement its recommendations, the most significant of which is a risk based approach to Highway Maintenance.
24. A Housing White Paper, setting out the government's plans to boost the supply of new homes in England, has far reaching impacts for the Council and the reforms can be grouped into three principal strands as detailed below:
 - Planning properly so the right homes are built in the right places. (Perception that some Local Planning Authorities avoid difficult decisions and fail to produce plans that meet their local housing needs).
 - Speeding up the rate of build-out. (Government recognises that the rate of house building needs to be accelerated)
 - Diversify the housing market. (At present, around 60% of new homes are built by just 10 companies. Small independent builders can find it almost impossible to enter the market.)
25. As a flavour of the content of the paper, key changes include:
 - a) Neighbourhood Planning Bill proposes to allow the Secretary of State to require local planning authorities to review local plans and other local development documents at prescribed intervals
 - Every 5 years

- b) Statement of Common Ground between LAs on cross boundary issues like housing
- c) Consult on options for introducing a standardised approach to assessing housing requirements
- d) Ensure all authorities can dispose of land with the benefit of planning permission which they have granted to themselves. The Government will also consult on extending LAs flexibility to dispose of land at less than best consideration

26. Further details can be found via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-white-paper>

4.0 Risk Control Measures

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 2016 – 17 Business Plan.

Progress concerning the implementation of all Directorate high-risk mitigation measures were reported to the Board at Quarter 2.

5.0 High Priority Equality Actions

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 is published on the Council website and is available via:






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

6.0 Performance Overview

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	Q4 Progress
FS 01a	Report Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2016 .	
FS 02a	Provide monthly financial reports to budget holders within 8 days of month end.	
FS 03b	Publish the Statement of Accounts by 30th September 2016 .	
FS 04a	Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2016 .	
FS 05a	Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2016 .	

Supporting Commentary

The Medium term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was reported to Executive Board on 17 November 2016. The financial forecast is being regularly updated and the Statement of Accounts was approved by Business Efficiency Board and published on Council's web-site as planned.

The 2016/17 Treasury Management Policy and Prudential Indicators were reported to Council as above.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 04	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected.	95.21%	94.75%+	95.04%		
FS LI 05	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received.	96.89%	95.00%+	97.65%		


Supporting Commentary

There has been a slight fall in the Council Tax collection rate which is largely due to the replacement of the full Council Tax Benefit Scheme with the less generous Council Tax Reduction Scheme which leaves working age people on out of work benefits with some Council Tax to pay.

The slight increase in Business Rates collection can be attributed to a number of factors including the resolution of a numbers of cases which were previously in dispute now being paid in full.

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Service









Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
PPE 02a	Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy March 2017	

Supporting Commentary

Several strands of activity linked to the objectives of the Organisational Development Strategy were concluded during Quarter 4, including the review of absence management policy (linking to healthy workforce and resourcing objectives), and the adoption of the apprenticeship policy (linked to progressive development of staff over the long term).

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
PPPE LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (Corporate)	9.05	10	8.66		
PPPE LI 04	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are					
	▪ women	54.78%	50.00%	55.47%		
	▪ from BME communities.	2.06%	1.50%	2.41%		
	▪ with a disability	8.0 %	8.00%	1.00%		



Supporting Commentary

As detailed previously the new Absence Management Policy has now been developed and this will provide greater clarity and consistency for both Managers and staff in dealing with absence matters.

The workforce profile remains in line with expectations and the Council is a 'disability Confident' employer and ensures that employment opportunities continue to be managed through equitable and indiscriminate procedures.

ICT and Administrative Support Services

Key Objectives / milestones





Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
ICT 01a	Continued Enhancement of the virtualization platform to enhanced or new technologies - March 2017 .	
ICT 02a	Continuing improvements, enhancements and potential commercial use of Cloud system - March 2017 .	

Supporting Commentary

This Virtualisation Platform testing is now complete and a role out plan is in place that will target the role out by department and service area. Revenues and Benefits are currently completing a test phase and a full role out to this large team will take place over the coming weeks – with the project then focusing upon key strategic areas to move across to this new solution.

Commercial opportunities continue to be explored and exploited and a significant number of the Council's internal and external clients now successfully utilise the Cloud solution.

Key Performance Indicators


Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI 01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.00%	99.00%	99.01%		
ICT LI 02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	99.00%	99.00%	99.14%		

Supporting Commentary

The availability of servers and infrastructure continues to operate almost at ceiling providing a stable business platform for internal and external service users.

Legal & Democracy





Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
LD 01	Review constitution - May 2016.	

Supporting Commentary

The Council's Constitution was reviewed and approved as planned by Council in May.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10	10	7		
LD LI 04	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

Year-end performance for both indicators remains within expected levels with notable progress being made in relation to the issuing of prosecutions.

Community & Environment

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
CE 01b	Deliver a comprehensive programme of Sport and Physical Activity throughout Halton	
CE 04	Deliver a Library Services programme of extended informal learning opportunities including support for digital inclusion meeting identified local targets - March 2017 .	
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 2017 .	
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 2017 .	

Supporting Commentary

Additional resources received from Sport England and local partners for the Get Active project has allowed the delivery of an extended Sports Programme during 2016 – 17.

The Library Service’s Programme has remained successfully participative with 1352 children, parents & carers attending story sessions and 258 children & teachers taking part in library class visits to learn about libraries, reading & learning opportunities.









594 adults also attended work clubs & IT clinics to learn digital skills to support job seeking. 795 adults & young people were helped to develop digital skills through 1-2-1 support from library staff.

In addition 129 people attended code clubs to learn how to make computer games, animations and websites by learning how to code and 254 children attended, learning through play, LEGO / K-nex clubs to develop building, engineering, creative thinking & problem solving skills

Recycling initiatives have been on-going throughout the year have included holding a number of community events to engage residents in raising awareness of recycling and waste prevention, and directly mailing households in areas where residents have failed to comply with the Council’s waste collection procedures. A number of participation surveys and ‘door knocking’ exercises have been undertaken to engage with residents in areas where poor take-up of recycling services was evident.

A review of the Council’s arrangements for reducing incidents of fly-tipping, litter and dog fouling, and the subsequent issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices for such offences, continued throughout the year. A number of initiatives were carried out to help achieve this overall objective which has included themed targeted campaigns. A new initiative was also introduced which saw Council Officers and Police Officers carrying out joint enforcement patrols to tackle a range of environmental offences.

Key Performance Indicators





Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 05	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.	86.00%	87.00%	75.66%		
CE LI 06	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.	77.80%	77.50%	65.22%		
CE LI 09	Residual household waste per household.	578 Kgs	593 Kgs	591 Kgs		
CE LI 10	Household waste recycled and composted.	42%	42.00%	41.35%		

There appears to be a drop in the uptake of Free School Meals that is directly linked to the new Universal Credit system, we will continue to try and resolve this issue.

Household waste being collected / recycled remains consistent with that in 2015 – 16 and this is reflective of the national picture.

Economy, Enterprise & Property

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
EEP 01a	Commence development of Bayer Site by - March 2017 .	
EEP 01b	Complete Asset Review by – June 2016 .	
EEP 03c	Develop a charging policy for business and funding support by September 2016	
EEP 03d	Completion of Tech Space Development (SciTech Daresbury) by September 2016	





Supporting Commentary

Site investigation work on the Bayer site began during quarter 4 and a development agreement has now been signed. The Asset Review has also now been completed with a report for disposals now being prepared for Executive Board.

The detailed review of options for the introduction of a charging policy income generation has now been completed and a report is being prepared to present the findings to Executive Board.

The Tech Space 2 has now been completed and the building is presently being marketed.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 01	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions indicator (Tonnes CO2E)	21,124 (actual 14/15)	19,675	19,874 tonnes CO2e (actual 15/16)	N/A	N/A
EEP LI 07	Number of People supported into work	Not available	532	543		N / A
EEP LI 09	Number of Businesses Supported	Not available	40	47		N / A
EEP LI 14	Number of inward investment enquiries per annum.	174	250	221		



Supporting Commentary

GHG emissions figures for 2015/16 show an overall decrease of 5.9% since 2014/15 and are 4.9% below the target for the year. There was a reduction in emissions across all areas other than fleet transport which saw a 15.7% increase. Street Lighting had the largest annual reduction in the amount of 12%.

The number of people and business supported, and the number of inward investment enquiries, remain positive.

Policy, Planning & Transportation

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
PPT 01	Review progress against LCR SJB maintenance strategy and deliver 2016/17 major bridge maintenance works programme, March 2017 .	
PPT 03	To deliver the 2016/17 LTP Capital Programme March 2017 .	

Supporting Commentary



The major maintenance works, principal inspections and other structural monitoring activities have been completed on SJB for Year 1.













Works completed on site for the two footbridge GRP re-decking schemes on East Lane, Runcorn.

The LTP Highway Capital programme consists of two main strands:

1. Integrated Transport:
STEP schemes are continuing to be developed for; Widnes Town centre connectivity; Runcorn town Centre to the Heath business park which is now at ECI and Runcorn East Station Car Park improvements. These projects are likely to commence from Q2 onwards in the new year. The programme of bus accessibility improvements are continuing as is the improvements to the East/West bus priority routes along Liverpool road. We have successfully completed resurfacing and other minor improvement works at Liverpool Rd / Chestnut Lodge in Feb with further bus priority routes being developed to lead from Liverpool Road/Chesnut Lodge junction to Ditton Road along Hale Road.
2. Highway Maintenance: The carriageway and footway programmes of resurfacing and reconstruction have been phased over the course of the year and delivery to the full budget allocation has been completed.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
PPT LI 02	Net additional homes provided	471	552	N / A	N / A	N / A
PPT LI 03	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	146	138	N / A	N / A	N / A
PPT LI 04	Processing of planning applications (%) as measured against targets for, a) 'Major' applications	100.00%	60.00%	77.8%		

Ref	Measure	15 / 16 Actual	16 / 17 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
	b) 'Minor' applications	70.00%	80.00%	88.9%		
	c) 'Other' applications	86.00%	80.00%	100%		
PPT LI 16	% of network where structural maintenance should be considered:					
	a) principal roads	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%		
	a) non-principal roads	2.00%	4.00%	1.00%		
	b) unclassified road	2.00%	9.00%	3.00%		
PPT LI 19	No. of passengers on community based accessible transport	182,762	214,200	177,146		

Supporting Commentary

The figures for additional / affordable homes will be reported in Q1 of 2017/18 once the data has been processed.

The processing of minor planning applications is slightly below target as there has been an issue with late responses from statutory consultees and applicants not submitting the correct supporting documents on time.




Although there has been an increase in the percentage of unclassified roads where structural maintenance should be considered, overall the highways network is in-line with the Highways Asset Management Plan but consideration will need to be given to further long-term investment to maintain the current highway condition.

Bus passenger numbers are lower than that for the same period last year which has largely been due to a decrease in hire form Community Groups.





7.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

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

Direction of Travel Indicator

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