

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Operational Director – Finance

**PORTFOLIO:** Leader

**SUBJECT:** Transformation Programme and Budget  
Proposals 2023/24 to 2025/26

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

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To recommend to Council revenue budget savings proposals and the implementation of a transformation programme, for the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- (i) The Council’s latest financial position and forecast budget gaps, as outlined within section three of the report, be noted;**
- (ii) Council be recommended to approve the budget savings proposals for 2023/24 to 2025/26 presented in Appendix 1;**
- (iii) Council be recommended to approve the three year transformation programme and funding arrangements, as outlined within section five of the report.**

## **3.0 LATEST FINANCIAL POSITION**

3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) reported to Executive Board on 17 November 2022, forecast significant revenue budget funding gaps for the Council over the next three years. Since then we have continued to experience the national and local economic impacts of the conflict in Ukraine, the residual impact of the Covid pandemic, rising inflation, and political instability at a national level. All of these factors have impacted upon the financial forecast.

3.2 The MTFS has continued to be updated as further information has become available, particularly in light of the volatile position regarding pay and price inflation.

3.3 On 19 December 2022 the provisional Local Government Grant Settlement was announced, which provided a marginal improvement in Halton’s funding position. However, with continuing inflationary increases and service demand pressures, the latest MTFS still forecasts a total

budget funding gap of around £25m over the next three years, with a gap of £17m for 2023/24. The forecast assumes that for 2023/24 the Council will apply the maximum permitted general council tax increase of 2.99% and will also levy a 2% social care precept.

- 3.4 It was also confirmed through the provisional Grant Settlement, that there will be no reforms to the Local Government funding regime during the current Parliament at least. Therefore, there will not be any changes to the national funding distribution formula which might benefit Halton. The final Grant Settlement is expected to be received at the end of January.

#### **4.0 BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2023/24 TO 2025/26**

- 4.1 In setting the 2022/23 revenue budget, the Council agreed to use a significant amount of its useable reserves. This was done in order to provide time to establish an approach to identifying budget proposals over a three year period, which would bring the Council's budget onto a long-term, sustainable basis.

- 4.2 To this end, during the past year the Budget Working Group has led a process to review the budgets of all Council services and identify savings proposals over a three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

- 4.3 Each Department was required to review their budgets, by completing a questionnaire in respect of each individual service area. The questionnaire asked a number of challenging questions, regarding how services might be delivered differently, at lower net cost, and identifying potential service implications. Each Operational Director presented the outcome of their reviews to Management Team.

- 4.4 The Budget Working Group reviewed the outcome of this exercise and the resulting budget savings proposals totalling £6.881m over the three year period, are presented in Appendix 1.

- 4.5 However, it became apparent that in order to identify sufficient savings to bridge the forecast budget gaps, a far more fundamental approach would be required to transform service delivery.

#### **5.0 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME 2023/24 TO 2025/26**

- 5.1 The Council previously agreed to adopt a three year approach to setting a balanced budget, on the basis that:

- All of the "easier" savings had been taken in previous years
- Reducing expenditure to the levels necessary to balance the budget would require substantial changes to the way we delivered services
- Children's Services need time and support to improve
- The Council had removed much of the capacity to change the organisation in a sufficient timescale to deliver a balanced budget
- Change on this scale would require significant investigation, consultation, culture change and organisation change in order to be deliverable and sustainable - this could only be achieved in the medium term.

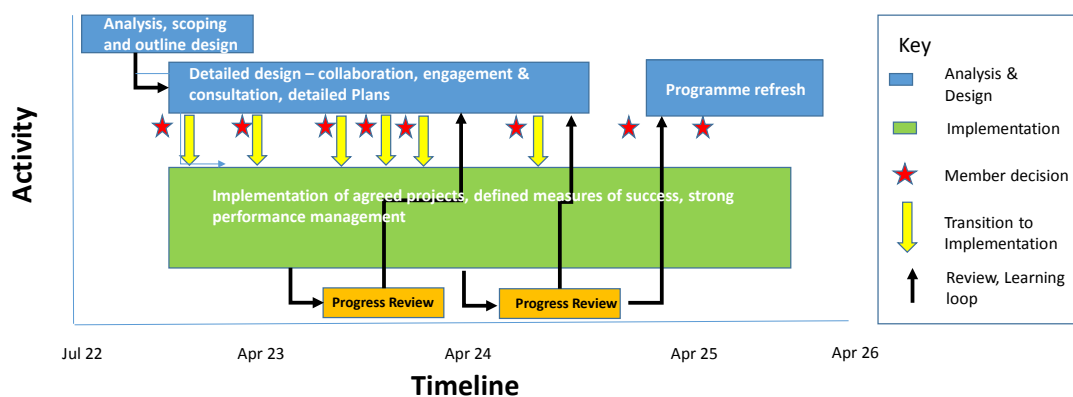
- 5.2 Work began at the end of July 2022 to assess the options for a three year transformation programme that would provide a strategic and deliverable response to the forecast financial challenges anticipated at that time.

### **Approach to Transformation**

- 5.3 Transformation programmes need to have a logic and be grounded in reality. In the public sector the programmes also need ensure that statutory responsibilities are upheld. It is therefore appropriate to compare the Council's delivery track record against other local authorities to identify the limit of what is realistically possible, to understand how others are delivering services at lower costs, to learn about the benefits or pitfalls of other delivery models, and to present a range of options to Members to transform how we deliver services.
- 5.4 The Council does not have an up to date Corporate Plan which would help to set the strategic direction - a project is in place to develop a new Corporate Plan and Vision for the Council and that will inform the transformation work as it evolves.
- 5.5 Initial conversations had identified that due to lack of corporate capacity, the Council had not in recent years systematically benchmarked service performance against other authorities or used comparisons to identify opportunities to change or transform services.
- 5.6 The approach taken has therefore been to:
- Benchmark the Council on both cost and quality from a range of sources against its statistical neighbours, to identify those Councils that in whole or part appear to deliver better or similar outcomes for less cost
  - Use the output from the benchmarking to identify key lines of enquiry to explore with service managers
  - Focus efforts on the areas of most significant opportunity
  - Align identified opportunities with existing initiatives, to determine and outline a three year programme of work that could deliver between £20m to £25m over the three year period
  - Identify the existing resources available within the Council that could support the transformation journey
  - Consult with Members on the shape of the programme, discussing the output of the comparative exercise and the opportunities for further development.
- 5.7 Statistical neighbours has been chosen as a relevant comparison group because of the economic, social, demographic similarities that contribute towards the core drivers of "need" and "demand" for public services. A list of Halton's statistical neighbours is presented in Appendix 2.
- 5.8 Diagram 1 below represents how the transformation programme will be delivered, identifying that projects will not be implemented until approved by Members following detailed design work. We are now at point of completing the outline scoping and design phase of the programme, having identified the key opportunities to be explored.

- 5.9 The next phases of work will be to conduct detailed design on each project, engaging with Members, partners and residents as necessary and to bring back the case for change for Members' approval before beginning implementation immediately thereafter. Implementation resources will be applied to each of the projects.
- 5.10 Regular reviews of progress will be made, identifying progress against key success measures for each project and what adjustments need to be made to the project or programme. This will form part of the Transformation Programme Governance Framework.
- 5.11 It should be noted that given the economic and political/legislative uncertainties that exist, the programme should be regularly re-visited and revised/adapted to fit with the new environment. That may require new projects to be established, a new approach to service design, and / or further acceleration of projects.

## Diagram 1 - Transformation Programme Structure



### Shape of the Programme

- 5.12 Comparing Halton's average spend per household relative to our statistical neighbours, identifies that in many areas our expenditure per household is higher. Table A below compares the financial year 2021/22 Outturn and 2022/23 Budget against statistical neighbours showing that if we were spending at a similar level to the average of the statistical neighbour group, Halton would be spending between £17m and £21m less.

**Table A**

	2022/23 Budget			2021/22 Outturn			Percentage of 2022/23 Budget
	Halton (£ per Household)	Stat Neighbour Average (£ per Household)	Net Value of gap to Stat. Neighbour Ave (£)	Halton (£ per Household)	Stat Neighbour Average (£ per Household)	Net Value of gap to Stat. Neighbour Ave (£)	
Adults	966.33	781.43	10,835,140	938.81	728.36	12,174,112	40.38%
Childrens	565.22	546.38	1,104,024	643.93	582.52	3,552,446	27.19%
Waste & Recycling	169.97	161.12	518,610	162.49	155.14	425,183	7.02%
Parks & Open Spaces	96.04	57.21	2,275,438	99.43	55.96	2,514,653	3.09%
Leisure	102.47	51.5	2,986,842	87.38	47.57	2,302,929	3.13%
Other Services	232.27	240.12	-460,010	261.7	258.12	207,096	9.70%
Notes:							
	<i>Other Services are Highways (excl. Mersey Gateway), Housing, Culture, Environment (excl. Waste and Street Cleansing), and Planning and Development.</i>						
	<i>Leisure includes Leisure Services, Libraries and the Stadium.</i>						
	<i>Leisure sites in Halton were closed for part of 2021/22 which led to decreased costs in the 2021/22 outturn data.</i>						
	<i>Excluded Knowsley from 2021/22 Open Spaces figures due to incomplete data.</i>						
	<i>Education is excluded altogether as these costs are affected by the number of academy schools.</i>						
	<i>Public Health is excluded as this is fully funded from the ring-fenced grant.</i>						

5.13 Exploring the potential reasons for these variations with officers has identified a variety of explanations and therefore opportunities, with these opportunities shaping the work to be delivered in the transformation programme.

5.14 It should be noted that this initial analysis is only the beginning of a constant process of comparison and evaluation that will change the way in which the Council assesses performance and identifies where further changes in service delivery are required.

5.15 Additionally, the phasing of the current forecast budget gap has meant that in considering the work of the transformation programme it has been designed so that where practical projects can be accelerated and savings delivered in financial year 2023/24.

### **“Re-imagining Halton”**

5.16 It is important that this programme is owned across the Council with a common theme that can be used as the catalyst for change internally and externally. It is proposed that the programme be known as “Re-imagining Halton” in reference to the principles that will enable the Council to successfully re-design services and deliver a sustainable financial position going forward. Work will be undertaken with Members, staff, partners and residents to “re-imagine” how services are delivered.

### **The Transformation Programme**

5.17 The recommended Transformation Programme is therefore as follows;

Programme Summaries		ACTIVITY			
		FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25	FY25/26
<b>Adults/ Adults with Learning Difficulties</b>					
1	Appropriate identification, submission and award of Continuing Health Care Funding to support health needs of adults in care				
2	Review of existing Supported Living arrangements and design a new strategy and delivery plan for a revised service offer to promote independence including new accommodation solutions				
3	Options appraisal and optimisation of Day Care delivery model to maximise impact and independence across the service				
4	Review the incidence of multiple care package recipients to re-align provision and promote independence.				
5	Increased employment opportunities for individuals with learning difficulties including remodelling support offer, business alignment, training, and work readiness				
6	Review transitions service and needs assessments to redesign service and prevent needs escalation with individuals who do not qualify for support under the Care Act				
7	Introduction of technology to aid hospital discharge, promote independence, improve safeguarding and re-model service delivery				
<b>Childrens Services</b>		<b>FY22/23</b>	<b>FY23/24</b>	<b>FY24/25</b>	<b>FY25/26</b>
8	Re-design Front Door to enhance multi agency offer, new panel arrangements, embracing Systemic Practice principles				
9	Implement Systemic Practice methods of working across the organisation to improve quality				
10	Implement High Cost placement panel and review all high cost placements, and integrate into BAU				
11	Commission Family Group Conference Contract				
12	Analyse potential benefits of PAUSE and commission PAUSE services				
13	Organisational review to establish new organisational design and roles consistent with Systemic Practice model				
14	Develop Digital solutions of social work				
15	Develop outreach work to support prevention in outreach placement work				
16	Develop 16+ housing offer				
17	Implement Juno				
18	Revised residential commissioning arrangement in place				
19	Review therapeutic model with CAHMS				
20	Develop vulnerable adolescent service complimentary to Edge of Care service				
<b>Special Educational Needs</b>		<b>FY22/23</b>	<b>FY23/24</b>	<b>FY24/25</b>	<b>FY25/26</b>
21	Redesign SEN Transport system to include re-designing pathway, re-training staff, improved partnership working, redesigned parent information including web site, re-negotiated contracts				
22	Deliver projects to create additional in-borough SEN provision and reduce out of authority placements				
23	Review needs analysis of children, develop enhance preventative solutions with parents, communities and schools to reduce escalation of needs, evolving relationship with schools and enhancing school inclusion				
<b>Accelerating Development &amp; Growth Income and Asset Rationalisation</b>		<b>FY22/23</b>	<b>FY23/24</b>	<b>FY24/25</b>	<b>FY25/26</b>
24	Identify short term critical posts to initiate acceleration in delivering the Local Plan and recruit				
25	Conduct detailed options appraisal to assess optimum model to accelerate income and reduce revenue risk to the Council				
26	Implement preferred approach to accelerating delivery of the Local Plan				
27	Develop review of Council assets and determine project to rationalise accommodation, improve usage and reduce costs				
<b>Optimised Services</b>		<b>FY22/23</b>	<b>FY23/24</b>	<b>FY24/25</b>	<b>FY25/26</b>
28	Review successful approaches to household waste reduction and increasing recycling. Design new campaign to achieve peer average performance for waste and recycling, and implement sustained campaign				
29	Review other waste services, review contractual arrangements with merseyside waste authority, assess joint working potential, designing new and sustainable waste delivery model				
30	Review parks and open spaces delivery models at other LA's, assess opportunities for greater community involvement, determine options for alternative maintenance arrangements				
31	Review commercial arrangements for Stadium, determine commercial strategy and implement with new offers and revised arrangements with users				
32	Develop and deliver new medium term leisure strategy to increase participation and reduce operating costs in advance of new leisure centre opening including alternative provision considerations.				
33	Build new corporate capacity to support development and sustainability of the Council in adapting to future changes and opportunities including policy, performance management, data insight, communications, organisational development, etc.				
34	Implement new corporate Operating Model to streamline processes, reposition administrative support, drive transparent performance management, create unified "front door" arrangements for residents with partners				
35	Implement new HR systems and processes and reduce reliance on agency staff, simplify administration processes, speed up recruitment and reposition Council in employee market				

## **Resourcing Delivery of the Transformation Programme**

- 5.18 The LGA Corporate Peer Review in 2019 highlighted a lack of capacity and skills within the Council to deliver substantial change. Since then further key posts that support change activity have been removed, e.g. business analysts.
- 5.19 The Council is therefore in a position that it will need to invest significantly in order to successfully deliver this programme. This investment will manifest in a number of ways:
- Seconding existing staff to be dedicated to delivering this programme and developing their capabilities, and backfilling to their existing roles;
  - Recruiting in specialist individuals on a project or fixed term basis to complete specific elements of the programme where those skills do not exist within the Council
  - Commissioning a limited number of consultancy projects to support specialist activity
  - Building additional capability within the organisation to create an organisation that is sustainable including additional IT, business analysts, data analysts, policy support, communications support.
- 5.20 It is proposed that the Council adopt an approach, commonly adopted by other Councils, whereby this investment in transformation is regarded as one-off expenditure in order to deliver a long-term, sustainable, financial position. Government regulations permit such one-off transformation related expenditure to be funded from capital funds, by initially using the Council's own capital receipts as funding and then replacing these by long term borrowing.
- 5.22 The capital accounting treatment of these costs will require the adoption of a "Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy" by Council at its meeting on 8 March 2023. From 2023/24 onwards the one-off transformation costs can then be funded as capital expenditure, whilst the initial expenditure incurred during the current year will be funded from reserves.
- 5.23 Officers have already engaged with the External Auditor to appraise them of the option and will require their endorsement of this approach to proceed. At this stage no obstacles to this approach have been raised. A proposal will also need to be submitted to the Department for Levelling-Up Housing and Communities, to inform them of the Council's intention to proceed with this approach to funding the one-off costs of the Transformation Programme.
- 5.24 It is estimated that a maximum budget for this transformation programme resource be set at £7m over the three year period. By funding this as capital expenditure, the impact upon the revenue budget would therefore be spread over a number of years, most likely 25 on average, with a net impact upon the Council's annual revenue budget estimated at £450,000 per annum.

- 5.25 Any other areas of expenditure that would fall under “business as usual” requirements but which would aid transformation, e.g. upgrading or replacing redundant IT systems, accommodation upgrades, etc would also be funded in the usual way through the capital programme.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The latest Medium Term Financial Forecast identifies budget gaps over the next three years totalling £25m with £17m falling in 2023/24.

- 6.2 In setting the 2022/23 budget the Council agreed to use a significant amount of its useable reserves, in order to provide time to establish an approach to identifying budget proposals over a three year period, which would bring the Council’s budget onto a long-term, sustainable basis.

- 6.3 Appendix 1 present budget savings proposals totalling £6.881m over the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

- 6.4 In order to identify sufficient savings to bridge the forecast budget gaps, a more fundamental approach is required to transform service delivery via the implementation of a three year Transformation Programme, as outlined in section 5 above. The one-off costs of delivering the Transformation Programme will be capitalised in accordance with Government Regulations.

- 6.5 Given the significant forecast budget gap remaining for 2023/24, further work will be undertaken to review the assumptions within the forecast, identify further savings proposals, and the scope to use one-off reserves to deliver a balanced budget for 2023/24. This will however only provide a short term financial solution and therefore it is essential for a longer term, sustainable solution to be implemented via the Transformation Programme.

## **7.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The revenue budget supports the Council in achieving the aims and objectives set out in the Council’s Corporate Plan.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES**

- 8.1 The revenue budget supports the delivery and achievement of all the Council’s priorities. The budget proposals listed in Appendix 1 have been prepared in consideration of all the Council’s priorities.

## **9.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 9.1 Failure to set a balanced budget would put the Council in breach of statutory requirements. The budget is prepared in accordance with detailed guidance and a timetable, to ensure statutory requirements are



met and a balanced budget is prepared which aligns resources with corporate objectives.

## **10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

10.1 None.

## **11.0 REASON FOR THE DECISION**

11.1 To seek approval for revenue budget savings proposals and the Transformation Programme, for the three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26.

## **12.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

12.1 There is no alternative option, as failure to set a balanced budget would put the Council in breach of statutory requirements.

## **13.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

13.1 The 2023/24 revenue budget will be implemented from 1st April 2023.

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

14.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.



## APPENDIX 1

### ADULT SOCIAL CARE DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
ASC1	Housing Solutions	474	Remodel the current service based on good practice evidence from other areas.	0	0	125
ASC2	Telehealthcare	680	Explore alternative funding streams such as Health funding or Disabled Facilities Grants.	0	170	0
			Increase charges / review income.	0	170	0
			Cease the key safe installation service.	0	15	0
ASC11	Dorset Gardens Care Services	471	Cease onsite support and transfer to the domiciliary care contract.	275	0	0
ASC17/18	Quality Assurance Team	395	Review the activities of the Quality Assurance Team, given there are fewer providers for domiciliary care and the transfer of four care homes into the Council.	35	0	0
			Merge the service with the Safeguarding Unit.	0	50	0
ASC12	Meals on Wheels	33	Increase charges to ensure full cost recovery. A procurement exercise will also be completed for the provision of food.	33	0	0
ASC16	Shared Lives (Adult Placement Service)	115	Engage with an external agency currently operating Shared Lives to take over the running of this service. It is anticipated that this would provide an improved service.	0	58	0
ASC19	Voluntary Sector Support	N/A	Review the support provided by Adult Social Care and all other Council Departments, to voluntary sector organisations. This would include assisting them to secure alternative funding in order to reduce their dependence upon Council funding. A target saving phased over two years has been estimated.	0	200	100

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
ASC4	Positive Behaviour Support Service	349	Increase income generated in order to ensure full cost recovery, through increased service contract charges to other councils.	0	100	0
			Review the Integrated Care Board contribution for Adults, to ensure the full recovery of related costs.	0	150	0
ASC6	Bridge Builders	250	Restructure and incorporate within the Care Management front door service, introducing the services currently offered by Bridge Builders to all new referrals.	120	0	0
ASC5	Mental Health Outreach Team	376	Streamline the service and focus on higher needs requiring joint funding from the Integrated Care Board.	140	0	0
ASC21	Mental Health Team Carers Officer	38	Commission the Carers Centre to complete all Carers assessments or undertake the function through the Initial Assessment Team.	38	0	0
ASC15	Learning Disability Nursing Team	424	Cease provision of this service. The service is a Health related function rather than Adult Social Care, but this is a historical arrangement. The Integrated Care Board would need to consider how they want to provide this function.	0	424	0
ASC14	Care Management Community Care Budget	18,982	Attract £500k investment from the pooled budget (BCF) from 2024/25. Undertake work in years 1 and 2 to reduce reliance upon contracted services from 2025/26. Services are currently in the process of being redesigned on a "Strengths Based Approach" ie. focused upon prevention.	0	500	1,000
<b>Total Adult Social Care Department</b>				<b>641</b>	<b>1,837</b>	<b>1,225</b>

## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
C1	Ditton and Warrington Road Daycare Centres	52	Closure of Ditton and Warrington Road daycare centres, given the significant on-going net losses at both centres. Sufficient alternative provision exists nearby, as well as in the adjoining nursery schools.	26	26	0
C2	Children's Centres	1,293	Reduce the opening hours of Children's Centres.	12	0	0
			Review the operation of Windmill Hill Children's Centre, where there is the potential to save on premises and staffing costs.	0	0	22
			Target to generate at least 5% additional income by increasing a range of charges at Children's Centres.	20	0	0
C3	Children with Disabilities and Inglefield	858	Explore the potential for selling Inglefield and then purchase two bungalows within the community to provide a more appropriate setting.	0	112	0
<b>Total Children &amp; Families Department</b>				<b>58</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>22</b>

## EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND PROVISION DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
EIP1	Education Psychology Service	339	There is excess demand from schools for the Education Psychology Service. The service is valued and there is opportunity to expand our offer and generate additional income.	0	52	0
EIP2	SEN Assessment Team	82	Consideration will be given to funding the full service costs from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.	0	80	0

EIP5	Commissioning	148	Review with Health colleagues how the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Carers could instead be provided by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as they are commissioned by the Integrated Care Board.	0	148	0
EIP5	Commissioning	291	Additional funding for Youth Grants has been confirmed for three years from the DfE Holiday Activity and Food Programme grant, therefore core budget can be released.	40	0	0
EIP9	Education Welfare Service	396	There has been increased buy-back of this service from schools and as a result the income budget can be increased.	60	0	0

<b>Total Education, Inclusion and Provision Department</b>				<b>100</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>0</b>
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## PUBLIC PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
PH2	Health Improvement Team	2,071	Consolidate the Ageing Well element of the service with the Sure Start to Later Life Service.	0	149	0
<b>Total Public Protection Department</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>0</b>

## COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
COMM1	The Brindley Theatre	64	Reduce Box Office opening hours from 10am-5pm Monday-Friday to 10am-2pm. Currently 80% of tickets are purchased online or by telephone and this is increasing each year.	10	0	0
			Replace all non-LED lighting in the building. This is estimated to reduce on-stage energy costs by 75%.	10	0	0
COMM3	Sport & Recreation	471	Restructuring the roles and responsibilities of the Sports Development Team	0	36	0
COMM4	Stadium & Catering Services	751	Franchise the concourse only catering services to an external operator.	50	0	0
			An organisational restructure is currently being implemented for Stadium & Catering Services to reflect recent service changes.	40	0	0
COMM6	Area Forums	170	Reduce the base budget provision to £50k temporarily for one year, with all unspent monies in 2022/23 (currently £120k) being carried forward to be spent by the relevant Area Forums in 2023/24. The base budget position will then be reviewed for 2024/25.	120	-120	0
COMM5	Stadium & Catering Services – School Meals	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over £200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.	0	0	12
<b>Total Community &amp; Environment Department</b>				<b>230</b>	<b>-84</b>	<b>12</b>



## FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
F1	Client Finance	109	Increase by £3 per week the charge to clients for the Appointeeships Service to ensure full cost recovery.	45	0	0
F6	Income Control	118	Removal of payment kiosks which are now significantly under-utilised and in need of replacement. The ceasing of annual rental and licence costs will provide a saving. Residents can instead make payments for council tax etc. via the numerous Paypoint outlets across the Borough.	20	0	0
F8	Insurance	1,043	Reduction in the insurance budgets, following a review of claims history over recent years with advice from the Council's insurance broker. The majority of claims are provided for via self-insurance, with external policies providing cover for exceptional or potentially high cost claims.	135	0	0
F9	Internal Audit	300	Restructure in light of potential retirements over the next two years within the Internal Audit Team.	0	0	50
F11	Purchase to Pay	27	Increase in the target income budgets for the Early Payment Scheme (£15k) and the Corporate Card Programme rebate (£15k)	30	0	0
F12	Benefits Processing & Administration	216	Deletion of a 1.0fte vacant Housing Benefit Officer Post and a 0.5fte vacant Visiting Officer Post.	55	0	0
F13	Discretionary Support Scheme	221	Review the roles, procedures and structure of the team.	0	25	0

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
F15	Business Rates	-26	Increase the charge to Halton Chamber of Commerce for providing billing and collection of Business Improvement District (BID) income.	2	0	0
F16	Concessionary Travel	1,892	Due to a decrease in passenger numbers following Covid, it is considered that the budget for concessionary travel costs can be reduced. The budget was underspent by £421k (20%) in 2021/22. A reduction in this budget will not prevent any eligible concessionary passenger from still being able to travel.	150	0	0
F17	Council Tax	84	Increase the charges applied when a court summons is issued by 30% (£23), to achieve full cost recovery over the three year period.	40	40	40
F17 Cont.	Council Tax	N/A	Establish a new post dedicated to reviewing council tax exemptions. It is considered at least a 3% reduction in Single Person Discount awards could be achieved, generating approximately £150k of additional council tax income, less the cost of the new post.	116	0	0
F18	Financial Management - Treasury Management	1,152	Closer management of medium- to long-term cash balances will give greater opportunity to invest in higher interest bearing accounts due to increasing interest rates.	300	0	0

<b>Total Finance Department</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>90</b>
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## ICT AND SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
ICT3	External Clients	N/A	Recharge the Youth Offending Services for the full cost of ICT services which are hosted by Halton, but have not thus far been recharged. This approach has been agreed by the Cheshire and Warrington partner councils.	232	0	0

<b>Total ICT and Admin Department</b>				<b>232</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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## LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
L4	Marketing, Design and Communications	45	Review the frequency of production of Inside Halton, as part of the wider consideration of the Council's communications strategy required for the Transformation Programme	0	15	0

L5	Mayoral Services	102	Review the various budgets comprising the Mayoral function, with a target to achieve a 20% savings across these.	20	0	0
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<b>Total Legal Services Department</b>				<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>
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## POLICY, PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
PPT1	Fleet Management & Maintenance	400	Reduction in the annual contribution to the Fleet Replacement Reserve.	40	0	0
PPT2	Transport Coordination	484	Reduction in the provision of subsidised bus grants. Currently, 14 bus services are subsidised through contracts where there are no commercial services. Passenger utilisation of routes would be assessed to see where reductions can be applied with the least impact upon services.	50	0	0

PPT4	Schemes and Maintenance	1,056	Reduction of 6% in the programmed road maintenance budget.	60	0	0
PPT5	School Crossings	70	Approach the Schools Forum to seek a contribution of at least 50% towards funding the school crossing patrol service, which is a non-statutory service.	35	0	0
PPT6	Traffic	N/A	Consider introducing civil traffic enforcement for traffic violations. Employ private sector civil enforcement officers to issue fines and generate income. It would take 12 months to apply for powers from the DFT and put the scheme in place. The Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board will consider this via a Topic Group.	0	150	0

<b>Total Policy, Planning &amp; Transportation Department</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>0</b>
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## POLICY, PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
PPPE1	Apprenticeships	198	Reduce the budget which provides for apprenticeship salaries by 50%. More apprenticeships will therefore be attached to vacant posts which are already budgeted for. This may particularly help to fill vacancies in areas where recruitment is difficult.	99	0	0
PPPE4	Organisational Development & Performance	383	Explore whether Organisational Development / Learning and Development activities could be rationalised and restructured to reduce cost, given there is currently a vacant post within the team.	65	0	0

<b>Total PPPE Department</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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## ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
EEP1	Capital Works Team	N/A	Increase the level of fee income by increasing the percentage charged or charging by time, including those works not currently charged for.	10	0	0
EEP4	Cleaning Services – Council Buildings	580	Review cleaning arrangements, with a focus on only emptying bins and cleaning toilets daily.	0	100	0
EEP2	Caretaking & Security Services	641	A review and restructuring of caretaking arrangements.	0	52	0
			Reduce security cover at Halton Lea to provide opening/closing and then static guarding 7.00am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday, and 9.30am to 3.00pm on Saturdays to cover the opening hours of Halton Direct Link.	35	0	0
EEP5	Corporate Buildings	927	Generate additional rental income by providing additional office space for external organisations at Rutland House, by letting out the remaining three floors.	120	0	0
EEP6	Facilities Management	165	Restructure the team in light of an expression of interest for retirement.	44	0	0
EEP8	Technical Support & Market Team	392	Restructuring of the team	98	0	0

<b>Total Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property Department</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>0</b>
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### **Halton's Statistical Neighbours**

Developed to aid comparative analysis between local authorities, the CIPFA Nearest Neighbours tool uses 40+ socio economic indicators to calculate specific local authority family groups for the purposes of comparison.

These family groups can help to provide an indication of relative variation in service quality and cost, and point to key lines of enquiry to support transformation activity.

Halton's CIPFA Statistical Neighbours are:

- Barnsley
- Calderdale
- Knowsley
- Rochdale
- Doncaster
- Derby
- Oldham
- Rotherham
- St Helens
- Wigan
- Tameside
- Telford & Wrekin
- Walsall
- Wakefield
- Dudley