

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 12 December 2024

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Finance

PORTFOLIO: Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Recommendations from Audit and Governance Board

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider two recommendations made to Executive Board by the Audit and Governance Board, as detailed below.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;

- (i) Consideration be given to the recommendation from Audit and Governance Board as set out in paragraph 3.2 below, regarding membership of the Transformation Programme Board;**
- (ii) Consideration be given to the recommendation from Audit and Governance Board as set out in paragraph 3.4 below, regarding a request to the Executive/Corporate Directors.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On 20 November 2024 the Audit and Governance Board received a report setting out the governance arrangements for the Council's Transformation Programme. A copy of the report is shown in the Appendix.

3.2 Following consideration of the report, Audit and Governance Board made the following additional recommendation;

“That Executive Board make changes to the governance of the Transformation Programme by making changes to the Transformation Programme Board to increase transparency, including the addition of two members of the Audit & Governance Board to the Transformation Programme Board, who should not also be Scrutiny (PPB) Chairs.”

3.3 At the same meeting, the Audit and Governance Board also received the Annual Auditor's Report 2023/24 from the Council's external auditor Grant Thornton UK LLP.

3.4 Following consideration of the report, Audit and Governance Board made the following additional recommendation;

“That Executive Board ask each Executive/Corporate Director to identify what items of non-staff related expenditure are defined as essential to the delivery of services within their Directorate, and provide written justification for the essential spend designation, outside of which no other spending will be permitted.”

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Changes to the membership of the Transformation Board will impact upon the Council's governance arrangements.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

5.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

5.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

5.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

5.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

5.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

There are no direct implications, however, the governance of the Transformation Programme and management of the Council's budget, support the delivery and achievement of all the Council's priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 Delivery of the Transformation Programme and management of spending against the Council's budget are essential elements in managing the Council's financial risks.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

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

REPORT TO:	Audit & Governance Board
DATE:	20 November 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Corporate Director – Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit
PORTFOLIO:	Corporate Resources
SUBJECT:	Transformation Programme Governance Arrangements
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of the governance arrangements for the Council’s Transformation Programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

the report is noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1

The Council’s Transformation Programme started to operate on 1st April 2023, since when it has grown in both scope and complexity. The programme is in place until 31st March 2026.

3.2

The governance of the Programme primarily sat with the Executive Board, who acted as the ‘Programme Board’.

3.3

As the programme entered its second year of operation, it was noted that the breadth and depth of the projects within the programme had grown, the monitoring of project performance, interface with other disciplines within the Council, and the monitoring and management of benefits, risks and issues has become more complex.

3.4

In August 2024 a Transformation Programme Board was established. This is formed of a working party consisting of the ten Executive Board members. A number of officers also form part of the Transformation Programme Board to facilitate and support its operation.

3.5 Where a project sits within an Executive Portfolio, the Portfolio Holder assumes the role of the 'Lead Member' within that transformation project.

3.6 A level of scrutiny operates across the projects within the programme through Topic Groups, led by the Chairs of relevant Policy & Performance Boards. Any recommendations emerging from this scrutiny are referred to the Transformation Programme Board, via the Lead Member for the respective project.

3.7 The Transformation Programme Board is in place to provide governance and oversight and has no delegated authority within the scope of the Council's Constitution. The Board may make recommendations to the Executive Board as and when required.

3.8 Where a formal decision is required following the Board's consideration of any matter within its purview, that decision is referred to be included in the agenda of the next available meeting of the Executive Board.

3.9 The Terms of Reference for the Transformation Programme Board are appended to this report.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no direct policy implications arising from this proposal.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The oversight provided by the Transformation Programme Board is a key element in the achievement of financial benefits within the Transformation Programme, which in turn contributes to the Council's financial standing.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

The Transformation Programme has links to the delivery of all corporate priorities.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

The Transformation Programme has links to the delivery of all corporate priorities.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The Transformation Programme has links to the delivery of all corporate priorities.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

The Transformation Programme has links to the delivery of all corporate priorities.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

The Transformation Programme has links to the delivery of all corporate priorities.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

The Transformation Programme has links to the delivery of all corporate priorities.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Failure to apply a sufficient level of governance and oversight to the Transformation Programme may result in opportunities being missed, financial and non-financial benefits not being achieved, with existing and future service delivery being compromised.

7.2 The Transformation Programme Board will monitor the programme risk register as part of its oversight role.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There is the possibility of the emergence of Equality & Diversity issues across the Council's service portfolio where transformation project work is undertaken. These issues would be addressed on a case-by-case basis and monitored by the Transformation Programme Board.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.