

## Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Report Quarter 4

**Directorate:** Environment & Regeneration

**Departments:** **Community & Environment, Planning & Transportation, Economy, Enterprise & Property Services**

**Period:** Quarter 4 - 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

### 1.0 Introduction

This quarterly monitoring report covers the **Environment & Regeneration Directorate's** final quarter period up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

It describes key developments and progress against 'key' milestones and performance indicators for the service in line with the Corporate plan.

### 2.0 Data Quality Statement

The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data.

Where data has been estimated, it has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use, this has been clearly annotated.

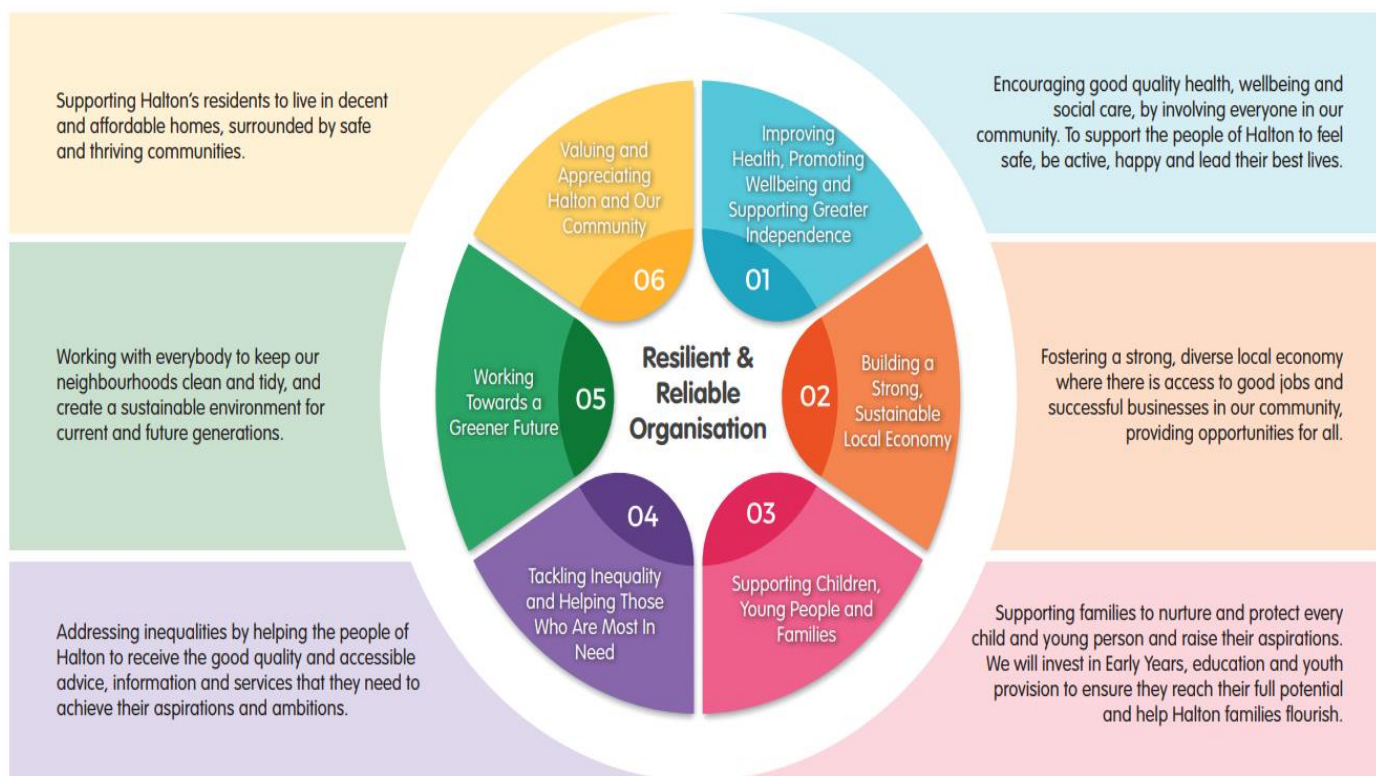
### 3.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Progress Against Objectives / Milestones



Appendix 2: Explanation of Symbols

Appendix 3: Progress Against Performance Indicators




Appendix 4: Financial Statement









	Priority 2 – Building a strong sustainable local economy. <b>Regeneration</b>
<b>ERD 01</b>	<b>Regeneration of Widnes Town Centre</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Secure LCR capacity funding by June 2024		Completed, previously reported
Develop & agree project brief by end of June 2024		Completed, previously reported
Start procurement process in July 2024		Completed, previously reported
Agree first draft of Framework - March 2025		Completed, Framework has been presented to the Town Panel
Present Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework to Town Panel by March 2025		Completed, Framework has been presented to the Town Panel




<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 2 – Building a strong sustainable local economy <b>Regeneration</b>
<b>ERD 02</b>	<b>Regeneration of Runcorn Town Centre</b>




Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Board member submission to DLUHC by 1 <sup>st</sup> June.		Completed however a change in policy has meant that this has been revisited with a new submission date of 22 April 2025.
Submission to DLUHC by 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2024		Work has started; initial public and stakeholder engagement has been completed however the submission date has been revised to December 2025.
Agree 10-year vision and 3-year investment plan by March 2025		Currently waiting for revised guidance from Government to enable the completion of this work for the revised submission date of December 2025.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority 2 – Building a strong sustainable local economy <b>Regeneration</b>
<b>ERD 03</b>	<b>Support development &amp; growth at Sci-tech Daresbury</b>


<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Assist JV to secure funding from the CA by July 2024		Discussion with the CA is ongoing regarding the Investment Zone funding. The appraisal demonstrated a significantly increased value gap because of the market, and this prompted a review of the deliverability of the scheme. Several potential solutions are currently being explored with the JV and the CA.
Secure Investment Zone funding by September 2024		As above.
Commence delivery of Project Violet Phase 2 – October 2024		The project delivery is currently delayed due to the funding situation as described above and potential re-design work. It is now anticipated that this will be delivered in early 2026.
Confirm funding arrangements for long term expansion by December 2024		Slightly later than anticipated but now confirmed. The funding to support the expansion of the campus through a CPO will be provided through Enterprise Zone Tax Increment Finance. Borrowing was approved by Executive Board in February 2025.
Report to Exec Board Q3 2024-25		The expansion of the campus through a CPO was approved by Executive Board in February 2025.
Agreed funding package for Project Violet by September 2024		As above the funding for Project Violet is currently under review by the CA and the JV pending an updated development appraisal.






<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Six – Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community Regeneration
<b>ERD 04</b>	<b>Providing new homes that meet Halton’s needs</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Sign the MOU by August 2024		Achieved - At its meeting on 11 <sup>th</sup> July 2024, Executive Board approved entering a Strategic Place Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with partners, leading to production of a Business Plan and new governance arrangements to be established. See Report: <a href="https://halton.gov.uk/reports/Liverpool-City-Region-Strategic-Place-Partnership.pdf">Liverpool City Region Strategic Place Partnership.pdf</a> ( <a href="https://halton.gov.uk">halton.gov.uk</a> )
Agreeing Halton’s Place Priorities by September 2024		Achieved - At the meeting on 11th July 2024, Executive Board provided delegated authority to the Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Climate Change, to agree details for the formation of the Strategic Place Partnership and finalise Halton’s Priorities. Halton Place Priorities were presented as a draft ‘Place on a Page’ to Executive Board.  The Strategic Place Partnership Interim Business Plan, including Halton’s Place Priorities, were approved at the Housing and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCR CA) first meeting of Strategic Place Partnership Board. This was held on the 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2024.
Establish Place Group by October 2024		Achieved - The Halton Place Group is Officer level meeting held quarterly with representation from the LCR CA and Homes England (HE). The Council lead is the Director of Economy, Enterprise and Property. Council Officer representation on the Halton Place Group has now been agreed.



		The first meeting of the Place Group was held on 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2024. As part of establishing the Group an orientation tour of key housing site within the Borough was provided to strategic partners
Produce a housing project pipeline, in line with Halton Place Priorities, by March 2025		Achieved – A pipeline of housing sites aligned with the Strategic Place Partnership Business Place and Halton Place Priorities has been established and this forms the basis for work of the Halton Place Group.
Secure first draft of Housing Strategy by March 2025		The production process is progressing with the draft Housing Needs Assessment anticipated April 2025. Alongside a Response Report setting out potential priorities and actions for incorporating into the first draft Housing Strategy. A First Draft Housing Strategy is now anticipated in June 2025.
Production of Housing Strategy by March 2025		The production process is progressing with the first draft Housing Needs Assessment anticipated April 2025. Alongside a Response Report setting out potential priorities and actions for incorporating into the first draft Housing Strategy. A First Draft Housing Strategy is now anticipated in June 2025.





<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy <b>Business Investment &amp; Growth</b>
<b>ERD 05</b>	<b>To provide support to all Halton’s businesses and encourage start-ups.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Deliver four sector network events and two business events by March 2025		In Q4 we delivered two logistics networks and supported two sustainability workshops and one tendering workshop.

		Across the whole year the target was achieved.
Carry out 150 diagnostics by March 25		By year end we carried out 68 diagnostics as part of the UKSPF business support.
Provide support to forty-seven town centre businesses by March 25		47 businesses in both Runcorn and Widnes town centres received a business diagnostic delivered by a specialist business advisor.
Provide support to 67 Halton businesses by March 25		We supported 63 businesses by March 2025 and whilst this was slightly behind target, several companies have had the support offer delayed to the new programme commencing in April 2025 due to availability.
Provide support to 114 businesses across the Borough by March 2025		In 2024/25 we have engaged with 202 businesses providing property advice, undertaking diagnostics, general enquiries and through a range of network events
Support sixteen business startups by March 2025		We supported 15 business start-ups by March 2025.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence <b>Programmes Office</b>
<b>ERD 06</b>	<b>Maximise new external funding opportunities and effectively manage and monitor existing funding programmes</b>


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Produce monthly funding bulletins.		Monthly Funding Bulletins produced as well as a specific Climate Change Funding Bulletin
Deliver quarterly training sessions for colleagues.		Part completed; we are in the middle of a phase of delivery with 2 courses completed and 2 still to complete in May. Next phase of delivery will be Sept/Oct 25

Submit compliant claims for all grant programmes		UKSPF Qtr. 3 claims submitted and compliant: next claims due April 25. Town Deal claims are submitted bi-annually; next claim due May 2025.
Provide an annual Programmes Office update to Corporate PPB in July 2024		Delivered and previously reported on.
Produce a pipeline of future regeneration projects to maximise the potential to secure future funding by October 2024		Pipeline produced and currently being refined.
Agree pipeline with members and the CA by March 2025		Pipeline to be shared accordingly once final changes have been made in early 25/26.





<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future Visitor Economy</b>
<b>ERD 07</b>	<b>To deliver a dynamic and exciting Destination Marketing programme promoting the Borough's cultural, heritage and green assets, to highlight Halton as a great place to live, work and play.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
A Taste of Halton campaign – April to June 2024		Delivered and reported on previously
50 Quirky Things campaign to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2024		Delivered and reported on previously
Heritage Open Days campaign August-Sept 2024		Delivered and reported on previously
Well, attended quarterly Marketing Halton meetings with clear ambitions.		Regular meetings held and well attended; current discussions about the future of the group being held. Next meeting 29 <sup>th</sup> April 25










Produce an external evaluation report by end April 2025		Draft report produced; final tweaks being made then will be shared.
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community. <b>Asset Management &amp; Valuation</b>
<b>ERD 08</b>	<b>Provide Support for the Council's Corporate Priorities through the Provision of Property Advice</b>





Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Agree a programme to renew agreements with providers of early years care in primary schools and the school by August 2024		School visits completed and proposed terms sent to legal to action. No further action required by Asset Management.
Support the provision of a café in the new leisure centre by March 25		No further action required by Asset Management as cafe to be provided by in house staff
Bring forward residential development land at Priory Meadow for development by March 25		Working to take site to market in Autumn 2025. Support provided from Regeneration and appointed external property consultants to finalise the marketing pack and engage with Homes England to resolve the matter of the calculation of 'clawback' payment due to Homes England on disposal. Marketing pack due for completion end Q2 2025/26 and go out to the market Q3 2025/26.
Provide a Property Service across the Council to support corporate priorities and accelerated growth throughout 24/25		Priorities are scheduled on the case load spreadsheet and handled by the team on an ongoing basis.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need. <b>Employment, Learning &amp; Skills</b>
<b>ERD 9</b>	<b>To promote access to learning to those who need it most and create employment opportunities for Halton residents</b>




<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Deliver six accredited ESOL and two Pre-ESOL courses across Widnes and Runcorn to help our BAME residents improve their English skills between 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 and 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025		Achieved – six accredited and two non-accredited ESOL courses running, with an additional ESOL 'Conversation Club' launching 24 <sup>th</sup> April to supplement structured sessions.
Utilise a budget of £11,300 LCR Devolved ESFA Hardship Funding for adult learners between 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 and 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025		Exceeded – as of March 2025, total is circa £14k. This has been used to support learners with childcare and transport costs, as well as to fund the centres' Warm Hubs
Commence learning programme for those aged 19+ by 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024		Achieved. Core provision of Adult Learning programmes commenced in September 2024 with additional creative, wellbeing and digital courses launching in December and January.
Commence year 3 of the Supported Internship Programme by September 2024		Cohort 4 started in September 2024, with 8 young people with SEND starting the Supported Internship Programme. All 8 Interns remain on programme at the end of Q4.
330 residents who access HPIJ employment programmes to obtain employment between April 2024 – March 2025.		101 residents were supported into work through HPIJ employment programmes in Q4. There were more job starts; however, we are awaiting evidence from employers for audit.
The % of learners (average across all target wards) who are of unemployed working age		On track for achievement by end of the academic year – current figure is 37.4%

residing in the LSOAs, and who access Halton Adult Learning will increase from 29% to 48% between 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 and end July 2025.		
The % of residents accessing Halton Adult Learning courses and achieving will increase from 88% to 92% between 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 and July 2025.		Achieved – overall achievement rate sitting at 96% at last Quality, Income and Marketing report


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. <b>Property Services</b>
<b>ERD 11</b>	<b>Rationalise the Council’s main office accommodation to deliver revenue savings.</b>


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Exec Board approval to vacate the Municipal Building and progress with associated works – June 24.		Whilst formal approval to vacate the Municipal Building has not been obtained, Members are in general supportive of the proposal to reduce accommodation and costs. We are currently looking at an alternative option for creating a ‘Head Office’ for Widnes, an outline feasibility is planned to be delivered in early May. Once this is completed further discussions will take place with Members to seek agreement on a way forward.
Agreement to revised officer to desk ratio – September 24		The agreement to the reduced officer to desk ratio is tied into the accommodation strategy so will be included in a report in due course once Members have agreed on the most appropriate option.
Complete options appraisal for Widnes office to present to members by March 25		See above
Agreed approach to provision of HBC staff accommodation by March 25		See above

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. <b>Property Services</b>
<b>ERD 12</b>	<b>Reduce Carbon Emissions from the Council’s Property Portfolio</b>


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Deliver the leisure centre by Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2025.		The leisure centre was delivered slightly ahead of programme and opened to the public on February 10th
Commence works on site at St Pat’s & St Luke’s by December 2024.		The scope of works has been reduced due to budget pressures, and we are now working on a reduced scheme. An application for grant was unsuccessful which has impacted on the available budget.
Ensure year on year reduction in carbon emissions from the Council’s property portfolio. Baseline at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023 - 6096 tonnes. target 3% after year 1, 5% reduction after year 3.		Emissions from Council buildings at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024 were 5593 tonnes, an 8.2% reduction from the previous year.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community <b>Planning &amp; Development</b>
<b>ERD 13</b>	<b>Create and maintain statutory plans, generated through community consultation, that guide decisions on future development proposals and address the needs and opportunities of the area</b>



Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Delivery during the plan period (2037)		Local Development Strategy agreed 6 SPDs identified within the work programme


As per Local Plan Monitoring Framework & Annual Monitoring Report		Annual AMR reporting to Environment and Urban renewal PPB reported on time.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. <b>Planning &amp; Development</b>
<b>ERD 14</b>	<b>Providing new homes that meet Halton’s needs</b>


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Granting of planning permission for housing and other forms of accommodation		A total of 3 applications have been approved for residential development for a range of application types such as Outline, Full and a S73 applications. In Q4 4 new residential development applications were received and are within the statutory deadline. Overall, 33 applications awaiting decision.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. <b>Planning &amp; Development</b>
<b>ERD 15</b>	<b>Provide an efficient Planning service that supports business investment in Halton</b>



Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
60% major determined within 13 weeks (or agreed extension)		100% 4 of 4 Applications therefore above target
70% minor application determined in 8 weeks (or agreed extension)		100% 8 of 8 Applications therefore above target

70% other application determined in 8 weeks (or agreed extension)		97% 61 of 63 Applications therefore above target
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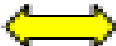

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future <b>Planning &amp; Development</b>
<b>ERD 16</b>	<b>Provide improvements to Biodiversity</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
The amount of BNG secured as part of planning applications.		Applications have been received that are expected to be liable for BNG, but none yet determined


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. <b>Logistics</b>
<b>ERD 17</b>	<b>Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon</b>


Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Percentage number of public transport journeys on-time at intermediate timing points Baseline 87% Target 95%		91.6% - 9.6% up against Q3. Indicator has achieved baseline target. Although highway works in Liverpool and along the A56 in Daresbury have had a negative impact on service punctuality (as indicated in Q3), alterations to services have improved performance in Q4. Ongoing liaison with operators.
Percentage number of public transport journeys departing the terminus on-time Baseline 96% Target 97%		Unable to safely perform punctuality checks at Murdishaw Centre (terminus) due to major highway works along the busway

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. <b>Logistics</b>
<b>ERD 18</b>	<b>Maintain Corporate Fleet Availability</b>



Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Number of vehicle maintenance & safety inspections completed within the statutory timeframe.		100% all vehicle safety inspections completed.
Number of litres of diesel consumed.		101,099 used in quarter 4. An Increase of 4899 from quarter 3.
Number of Community Meals delivered within the two-hour timeframe.		8765 meals delivered in quarter 4. An increase of 25 meals from quarter 3.
Number of student passenger journeys		69,104 calculated on actual school days in period.
Number of school transport routes		173 average of total during reporting period.
Cost of externally contracted school transport		£947,143 - Total cost for period £83,521 (increased from quarter 3 as quarter 4 was a busy term with few school holidays)

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. <b>Logistics</b>
<b>ERD 19</b>	<b>Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon.</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Number of referrals for travel training and number of successful uptakes from the referrals.		16 referrals during the reporting period with 14 individuals (87.5%) taking up the travel training offer. Quarter 4 has seen an increase in referrals (5) and an




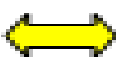

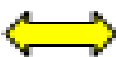

		increase in individuals taking travel training (6).
Number of students who engage in group classroom and outdoor tailored practical sessions.		41 individuals have taken part in weekly classroom-based sessions, 8 have taken part in weekly outdoor practical group sessions and 10 individuals have taken part in 1-2-1 ITT sessions in the same time frame.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future Highways</b>
<b>ERD 20</b>	<b>Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon</b>


<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Securing and Investing funding in Travel schemes		Same as last quarter in terms of securing funding. A consultation was carried out during June on a proposed Wilmere Lane Birchfield Rd Active travel scheme (likely to be CRSTS funded with design work to date funded by ATE capability funding streams). Also, the Halton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) documents have now been completed and a report presented to PPB.
Length of schemes implemented / delivered.		Our Contractors completed 462m of new cycleway along the Runcorn busway from tower Lane to Runcorn East and Barnfield Avenue to Parkgate Way bus top. They also completed Traffic Signal junction upgrades at Tower Lane and Barnfield Avenue









<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future <b>Highways</b>
<b>ERD 21</b>	<b>Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Securing and Investing funding in highway maintenance to protect the asset.		Highway Maintenance programme completed for 2024-25
Total length of highway asset		573km Carriageways not including Mersey Gateway
Length of maintenance schemes implemented / delivered.		1881m carriageways and footways resurfaced.
Value of insurance claims for highways defects		Claims settled in the period to the value of £29086.95
Number of bridges and structures maintained.	 	Annual works programme completed by end Q3.
Number of streetlights maintained		In this quarter officers have attended to 66 general streetlights repairs which is 60 less than in Q2. The Council maintains 21053 streetlights in the borough.


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence <b>Traffic</b>
<b>ERD 22</b>	<b>Deliver travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon</b>

Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Programme of education relating to road safety		Crucial Crew delivered to 622 year 5 pupils



		<p>6 x Stepping Out pedestrian training sessions delivered to 360 year 3 – 4 pupils</p> <p>6 x Rec &amp; Year 1 Sessions (120 pupils)</p> <p>2 x Year 2 sessions (60 pupils)</p>
Safety cameras and speed indication devices		Currently 19 SiDs located in the Borough with 3 of these undergoing repair. One new SiD currently on order and awaiting delivery
Analysis of collision sites		Still awaiting full year's data from Cheshire Police for 2024. Issue with quality of the data as although year is incomplete 6 RTCs have been wrongly attributed to HBC. A couple of small-scale schemes have been identified and are being designed.
Road safety audits for new schemes		Recently undertook one RSA for small scheme on Queensway, Widnes for Highways.
Number of school crossing patrols		21 x School Crossing Patrol (one of these is vacant) plus 1 mobile & 1 Casual
Number of bike-ability training sessions delivered		308 Bikeability lessons delivered
Number of safety cameras		Currently 13 No. mobile camera site and 8 No. static cameras in the Borough.



<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. <b>Leisure Services</b>
<b>ERD 23</b>	<b>To provide a new leisure centre for Widnes</b>

<b>Milestone: One new leisure centre open</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
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Opening February 2025		<p>Official opening on the 7<sup>th</sup> February with the public accessing from 10<sup>th</sup> February. As with all new buildings and services some operational and design/construction snagging and issues have arisen. The feedback from users has mostly been positive. Memberships increased by 50% and circa 6,000 visits per week.</p> <p>Training of staff, along with new risk assessments, safe systems of work, technology including a new leisure management system and other policies and procedures have been implemented. Alongside this front of house staff and management have completed customer service courses through Halton People into Jobs.</p> <p>Continue to develop the centre programme along with working through some design and defect issues that have arisen during mobilisation.</p> <p>The soft play and cafe areas will become operational in the next quarter.</p>
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need. <b>Leisure Services</b>
<b>ERD 24</b>	<b>Increase footfall at the Brindley</b>

<b>Milestone: Increase footfall at the Brindley</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Brindley - Total number of tickets sold	  	<p>15,067 in Q4 In line with expectations due to closures for building works = 22 Days.</p> <p><b>Total Tickets sold 2024/25 = 74,264</b></p>

		<p>A decrease of 8,096 tickets sold compared to 2023/24</p> <p>The enhancement works disruption, which commenced in August 2024, and the temporary access entrance were anticipated to affect attendances/performances throughout the period of construction.</p>
Brindley - Total number of days hired days		<p>37 in Q4 In line with expectations due to closures for building works = 22 Days for no Hire/Council Promotion bookings.</p> <p><b>Total number of hired days 2024/25 = 188</b></p> <p>A decrease of 25 Hired days compared to 2023/24</p>
Brindley - Total number of Council Promotions		<p>18 in Q4 In line with expectations due to closures for building works = 22 Days for no Council Promotions/Hire bookings.</p> <p><b>Total number of Council Promotions 2024/25 = 110</b></p> <p>A decrease of 10 Council Promotions compared to 2023/24</p>







<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<p>Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.</p> <p>Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy.</p> <p>Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families.</p> <p>Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need.</p> <p><b>Leisure Services</b></p>
<b>ERD 25</b>	<b>Increase footfall at the Libraries</b>

<b>Milestone: Increase footfall at the Libraries</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
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Footfall for all libraries, Ditton, Widnes, Runcorn & Halton Lea		<p>Ditton 8,988</p> <p>Halton Lea 25,843</p> <p>Runcorn 9,708 (inc. period of closure for relocation)</p> <p>Widnes Library 20,340</p> <p><b>Total 64,879</b></p> <p>Lower than same quarter last year and previous quarter, as expected with October half term &amp; Christmas events, plus warm welcome campaigns.</p>
Library Digital issues		<p>Digital issues total <b>1,091,536</b> an increase on the same period in the previous year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ebooks- 4,258</li> <li>• Eaudio-7,861</li> <li>• Pressreader- 939,841</li> </ul> <p>Online resources and subscriptions- 139,576</p>
Library Issues in branch: Ditton Library Widnes Library Runcorn Library Halton Lea Library		<p>Total library issues in branch <b>48,243</b></p> <p>Ditton 3,922</p> <p>Widnes 18,965</p> <p>Runcorn 6,704</p> <p>Halton Lea 18,652</p> <p>Reduced slightly from previous quarter, Q3 49,821, as expected with Runcorn period of closure for relocation, and down slightly (900) from the same quarter last year.</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<p>Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.</p> <p>Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy.</p> <p>Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families.</p> <p>Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need.</p> <p><b>Community Centres</b></p>
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ERD 26	Increase footfall at the Community Centres
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Milestone: Monitor footfall, hires and events at Community Centres	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary										
Community Centres - Total number of users in attendance (including drop-ins, events and hires)	<div></div> <div></div>	<p>The total number of users for Q4 is <b>73,581</b></p> <table><tr><td>Castlefields</td><td>11,756</td></tr><tr><td>Ditton</td><td>13,557</td></tr><tr><td>Grangeway</td><td>22,152</td></tr><tr><td>Murdishaw</td><td>10,272</td></tr><tr><td>Upton</td><td>15,844</td></tr></table> <p>The total number of users is much higher than the previous quarter across all five centres.</p>	Castlefields	11,756	Ditton	13,557	Grangeway	22,152	Murdishaw	10,272	Upton	15,844
Castlefields	11,756											
Ditton	13,557											
Grangeway	22,152											
Murdishaw	10,272											
Upton	15,844											
Community Centres - Total number of hires	<div></div> <div></div>	<p>The total number of hires for Q4 is <b>2,297</b></p> <table><tr><td>Castlefields</td><td>402</td></tr><tr><td>Ditton</td><td>341</td></tr><tr><td>Grangeway</td><td>453</td></tr><tr><td>Murdishaw</td><td>430</td></tr><tr><td>Upton</td><td>671</td></tr></table> <p>All Community Centres are performing well with increased bookings at two out of five centres at Murdishaw with a five day hire and Upton seeing increased bookings in the sports hall. A total increase of 39 hires compared to the same period last year 2,258.</p>	Castlefields	402	Ditton	341	Grangeway	453	Murdishaw	430	Upton	671
Castlefields	402											
Ditton	341											
Grangeway	453											
Murdishaw	430											
Upton	671											
Community Centres - Total number of Centre organised events	<div></div> <div></div>	<p>24 events</p> <p>12 bingo sessions were held at Upton Community Centre and Grangeway Community Centres.</p>										



<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future Environment Services</b>
<b>ERD 27</b>	<b>Provide a clean, safe, and attractive environment</b>

<b>Milestone:</b> Carry out Land Audit Management Surveys (LAMS) to assess the standard and quality of the Council's Parks, Cemeteries and Public Realm.	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Ensure that, as a minimum, inspections are carried out bi-monthly throughout the year with results uploaded to the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) for benchmarking purposes and Quality Standard Scores.		In Q4, 116 inspections on sites chosen at random have been completed. Results showed 32 at Grade A (27.59%) and 83 at Grade B (71.55%) and 1 at Grade C (0.86%).
Training to be delivered to all managers by June 2024 to ensure that they are able to carry out and record quality and inspections to the required standard.		Training completed on 2 <sup>nd</sup> May



<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future Environment Services</b>
<b>ERD 28</b>	<b>Safety within Parks and Open Spaces</b>

<b>Milestone:</b> Carry out planned equipment and safety inspections at playgrounds and Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs) in the Council's parks and public open spaces.	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
% of playgrounds, play equipment and MUGAs inspected in accordance with planned safety inspection schedules.		In Q4, a total of 1062 inspections were carried out. This is against a scheduled target of 1056. The completion rate is over 100% and is due to staff carrying out further inspections when revisiting sites to complete repairs on equipment.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future Environment Services</b>
<b>ERD 29</b>	<b>Increase the Council's recycling rate and reduce the amount of waste produced per household</b>


<b>Milestone: Quarterly updates on progress and annual performance data statistics to be reported to the relevant PPB by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Kgs of waste produced per household and % of waste recycled - reported annually to the relevant PPB.	 	<p>This is an estimated figure, indicating waste levels per household in Q4 (622kgs) are slightly higher than the same period in the previous year (598kgs) and higher than the estimate in Q3 (465kgs)</p> <p>This is an estimated figure, indicating that recycling levels in Q4 (35.4%) are slightly lower than in the same period in the previous year (36.1%).</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future Environment Services</b>
<b>ERD 30</b>	<b>Development plans for council's Cemeteries &amp; Crematoria</b>


<b>Milestone: To develop plans for the future provision of the Council's Cemeteries and Crematoria</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Developing a plan for replacing the current crematorium with an improved new facility, in a new location, to meet future regulations and service demands. As well as providing a facility which can be adapted for additional offers to produce a financially sustainable business.		A project is underway to secure a suitable site and begin a feasibility study to define project parameters and work on this is progressing in conjunction with colleagues in Legal and Property Services. An outline project programme is to be developed, and this work is also progressing.
Identify a future cemetery site for Runcorn. The existing Runcorn Cemetery extension has capacity for possibly up to 10 further years and, as such, a new suitable cemetery site is required.		This work is in progress and on-going and is added to the pipeline project list.



<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future <b>Environment Services</b>
<b>ERD 31</b>	<b>Safety within Cemeteries &amp; Crematoria</b>





<b>Milestone: Ensure memorial safety across the Council's 4 cemetery sites is carried out and properly recorded</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
<p>Memorials affected by adjacent burial excavations to be inspected, and actions recorded on burial forms/cemeteries database system.</p> <p>Progress integration of ALLOY asset management system to record memorial safety testing (5 year rolling programme to fully survey).</p>		<p>ALLOY integration is progressing with a joint HBC/ALLOY Project Team established and project team meetings in place to deliver the work programme.</p> <p>Ahead of full ALLOY implementation, inspections around new burials will continue to be carried out to ensure safety of staff and public.</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future <b>Environment Services</b>
<b>ERD 32</b>	<b>Increase standards of service within Cemeteries &amp; Crematoria</b>




<b>Milestone: Ensure high standard of service is maintained throughout the cemeteries; ensuring good upkeep.</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
<p>The general quality of cemetery grounds will be assessed and scored for quality, for grass cutting, weed control and overall management using the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Land Audit Management System (LAMS) system scoring.</p>		<p>Staff training completed and LAMS system now in use.</p> <p>In Q4, 91 inspections have been completed. Results showed 27 at Grade A (29.67%), 63 at Grade B (69.23%) and 1 at Grade C (1.1%)</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. <b>Community Safety &amp; Protection</b>
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ERD 33	<b>Deliver services that support victims of Domestic Abuse as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021</b>
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<b>Milestone: Deliver services that support victims of Domestic Abuse as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
% of those who have experienced high risk high harm perpetrators leave the service in a planned way	 	<p>The service received 461 referrals in Q4 a reduction in referrals from Q3 (502 referrals in Q3). The average case is open to the service for 22 days and 111 cases left the service in planned way having received an intervention.</p> <p>The average case is open to the service for 24 days and 89 cases left the service in a planned way having received an intervention.</p> <p>For the same quarter in 2024 the service received 473 referrals. The average case was open to the service for 30 days and 67 cases left the service in planned way having received an intervention.</p>
% of those who present with harmful behaviours leave the service in a planned way	 	<p>20 referrals were received for the CHOICES working with those that harm programme in this period, 34 referrals were received in the last quarter, and 28 in quarter 2.</p> <p>18 clients are currently actively engaging in CHOICES</p> <p>7 cases have been closed in Q4 with 29% completing the CHOICES behaviour programme.</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. <b>Community Safety &amp; Protection</b>
<b>ERD 34</b>	<b>Ensure preparedness and risk and resilience in Emergency Planning for Halton as set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004</b>


<b>Milestone: Report into Cheshire Resilience Forum and produce annual report for Safer Halton PPB and deliver Member session annually.</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Delivery of two COMAH exercises per year	 	2 Major Live Comah Exercises completed in 2024/25 (RSCO and Iconichem)
Number of Emergency Planning Training sessions attended		<p>37/48 Responding officers attended the responder training sessions that were held throughout 2024/25. More sessions are scheduled throughout 2025/26.</p> <p>30/48 Responding officers attended Exercise Responder</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future <b>Community Safety &amp; Protection</b>
<b>ERD 35</b>	<b>To work towards a cleaner, greener Halton applying statutory powers as set out in the Environment Protection Act 1990 &amp; Environment Act 2021</b>


<b>Milestone: Annual report to Safer Halton PPB</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Number of fixed penalty notices (FPN's) issued.	 	A total of 27 FPN were issued in the quarter, 21 for littering, 1 for smoking in a smoke free place, 5 for breach of dog control PSPO. This is an increase from Q3 when 16 FPN's were issued.
Number of prosecutions for environmental crime		There were no prosecutions heard/listed at Magistrates Court in this period, however, there have been a




		total of 14 successful prosecutions in 2024/25 in relation to Environmental Crime and further prosecutions pending going in 2025/26.
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<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community <b>Community Safety &amp; Protection</b>
<b>ERD 36</b>	<b>To co-ordinate an effective Community Safety Partnership, Safer Halton as set out in Crime &amp; Disorder Act 1998 placing the duty on Local Authorities</b>





<b>Milestone: Quarterly reporting to Safer Halton PPB and Safer Halton Partnership.</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Overall crime figures for Halton		<p>96.9 per 1000 of the population with annual figure of 12,422 crimes recorded in Halton, this is a 4% reduction compared to the previous operating year. The force average across Cheshire is 72.2 per 1000 of the population.</p> <p>Detailed data analysis is presented in an annual strategic needs assessment which will be received by Safer Halton Partnership in June 25.</p> <p>There has been difficulty in accessing the figures for publishing to date hence, there is no comparator and therefore unable to comment on target.</p>


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two - Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. <b>Community Safety &amp; Protection</b>
<b>ERD 37</b>	<b>Ensure a fit for purpose surveillance service that contributes to tackling crime &amp; disorder whilst supporting residents to feel safe in the borough.</b>

<b>Milestone: Annual report to Safer Halton PPB and Safer Halton Partnership</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
% of camera's fully operational per month		77% with 127 cameras fully operational. 4 additional pending to



		be added by June. 3 planned for upgrade in Victoria Park. 11 currently with outstanding faults. This was 82% in the previous quarter.
number of fully operational control room weeks	 	100% currently fully staffed with seven CCTV Operators which has enabled income generation from service level agreement with Mersey Gateway






<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. <b>Widnes Market</b>
<b>ERD 38</b>	<b>Provide a variety of affordable trading spaces at Widnes Market</b>

<b>Milestone: Deliver a new business plan by the end of 2025.</b>		
<b>Increase market occupancy levels both indoor and outdoor stalls. Increase the awareness of the Market offering and public perception.</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Indoor stall occupancy levels %	 	The Market experiences a high trader occupancy rate, which is currently at <b>82%</b> , it was 83% in the previous quarter, a marginal variance. This is in an economy where many local markets are suffering from reduced trader numbers, the national average of local market occupancy is <b>72%</b> (in accordance with the 2023
Outdoor stall occupancy levels %	 	Widnes outdoor market regular trading days are Monday, Friday and Saturday with the Flea and Collectors market on Wednesday, the occupancy levels overall for established trading is <b>79%</b> . Above the target of <b>72%</b> however, a





		<p>reduction from <b>88.5%</b> from previous quarter.</p> <p>A combined flea and retail trading day was introduced on Thursdays in April 2022 and uptake on this day each week is low in comparison to established regular days which reduces the overall occupancy in terms of data analysis, however, operates at no additional cost to the Authority; the combined occupancy of the outdoor market is <b>71%</b>, it was <b>70.25%</b> in the previous quarter.</p>
Overall footfall Indoor Outdoor		<p>Indoor visitor footfall is down by <b>5.7%</b> on the same period as last year.</p> <p>Outdoor visitor footfall is down by <b>32.8%</b> on the same period as last year.</p>



<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<p>Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.</p> <p>Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families.</p> <p>Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community</p> <p><b>The DCBL Stadium</b></p>
<b>ERD 39</b>	<b>Provide affordable space for business, community, cultural and recreational activities to take place.</b>

	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Meeting space occupancy levels %	 	<p>Meeting space occupancy in Q4 is <b>54%</b> which shows an increase of <b>35.25%</b> from the same period in the previous operating year of <b>18.75%</b>.</p> <p>During Q4 occupancy in the Stadium's suites for conferences and functions was <b>51.5%</b> compared to <b>48.80%</b> in the same period last operating year representing a <b>4.40%</b> increase.</p>

Sports hall occupancy levels %	 	Sports hall occupancy has increased in the Q4 period to <b>61.5 %</b> in comparison to <b>30.7%</b> in Q4 2024.
4g pitch occupancy levels %	 	The facility is well used which is demonstrated in the occupancy data showing a <b>75.8%</b> take up of available slots, this represents an increase on the same quarter in 2024 which was <b>69.7%</b>
Customer satisfaction % of 4/5-star reviews.		<p><b>97%</b> of returns rated the stadium in terms of 'Quality of Venue' between 4 and 5 stars.</p> <p><b>94%</b> of returns rated the stadium in terms of 'Quality of Catering' between 4 and 5 stars.</p> <p><b>97%</b> of returns said they would likely or very likely use the stadium again.</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. <b>Registrars</b>
<b>ERD 40</b>	<b>Provide accessible and efficient Registration Service to Halton residents.</b>

<b>Milestone: Quarterly updates on progress and annual performance data statistics to be reported to the relevant PPB (national benchmarks set by General Registrar Office)</b>	<b>Progress Q4</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Births (or declarations) within 5 working days of request	 	100% achievement, national benchmark is 95%. Appointment availability monitored to ensure births registered within required timeframe.
Deaths (or declarations) within 2 working days of request	 	99.05% achievement, national benchmark is 95%. Appointment availability monitored to ensure deaths registered with required timeframe

Waiting times - % of customers seen early, on time or within 10 minutes of their appointment time.	 	98.56% achieved, national benchmark is 90%
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## 4.0 Financial Statements

### **ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT** **Revenue Operational Budget at 31 March 25**

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	5,264	4,778	486
Agency - covering vacancies	0	417	(417)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,746	1,831	(85)
Premises	167	160	7
Energy & Water Costs	1,258	1,132	126
NNDR	687	666	21
Rents	173	166	7
Economic Regeneration Activities	17	-4	21
Security	544	588	(44)
Supplies & Services	477	570	(93)
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,270	1,270	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	159	154	5
Capital Finance	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	1,177	1,231	(54)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,939</b>	<b>12,959</b>	<b>(20)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges Income	-1,065	-1,175	110
Rent - Commercial Properties	-872	-900	28
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-38	0
Government Grant	-2,652	-2,661	9
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-330	-387	57
Schools SLA Income	-221	-212	(9)
Recharges to Capital	-383	-383	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,170	-1,170	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-6,731</b>	<b>-6,926</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,208</b>	<b>6,033</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	2,074	2,074	0
Transport Support	28	28	0
Central Support	1,947	1,947	0
Asset Rental Support	1,154	1,154	0
Recharge Income	-7,927	-7,927	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,724</b>	<b>-2,724</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>3,484</b>	<b>3,309</b>	<b>175</b>

### **Comments on the above figures**

Finance communicates with the department on a regular basis to manage and analyse spending, identifying potential savings that could support current and future priorities. In an era of constrained budgets, achieving these goals is essential. The final outturn position shows the department is £0.175m under the annual approved budget.

## **Supporting Information**

The department consists of 139fte, of which 69fte are externally funded, with a staff turnover savings target of £0.126m.

Through diligent account monitoring, the success of utilising grant and external funding to alleviate pressure on the core budget is evident in employee expenses. Specific projects have been identified, and staff time has been allocated accordingly. Ensuring at all times that the department is compliant with the grant conditions.

To fulfil statutory and contractual obligations and support the borough's regeneration, maintaining a complete staff is essential. However, the challenge of filling surveyor and project manager roles, even with a market supplement, has resulted in a lack of suitable candidates. Consequently, the engagement of agency personnel has been necessary, at a cost of £0.417m this financial year. Without these personnel, the borough's regeneration efforts would be hindered, potentially leading to a loss of business rates and council tax.

The recruitment of agency staff has increased commercial rental income by enabling the completion of pending rent reviews. All units at The Hive are now tenanted, although a rent-free period was provided to secure lease completions, resulting in a £0.020m shortfall. The budget should be balanced for the financial year 25/26, providing there is no increase in inflation.

A reconciliation of service charges at Rutland House and the relocation of Connect to Halton to the Municipal Building have increased the fees and charges income. As a result, the department had an overachievement of income by £0.110m for the year.

A recent exercise was conducted to determine the costs associated with empty properties within the Borough. Consequently a new cost centre was established to monitor these expenses. In addition to the loss of rental income whilst the properties remain vacant, the Council also incur additional costs for utilities, repairs, and maintenance. As of the end of the financial year, the total costs related to these properties amount to £0.230m. To reduce the expenses actions need to be taken to accelerate the leasing or explore temporary uses for properties, such as short-term rentals or community projects, which will generate some income and reduce costs. Some properties are in poor condition and require refurbishment before any letting could be considered.

The Department highlighted the necessity of expert advice to advance regeneration projects. Additionally, the change in Government highlighted the need for an up-to-date Housing Strategy for the Borough. Following a meeting with the Director of Economy, Enterprise, and Property, it was decided to use the Department's reserves to cover these one-off costs.

Seeking external advice will assist with future grant funding requests from the LCR and Government, and enable the department to fulfil its obligations regarding the borough's regeneration strategy.

Whilst there has been a significant increase in energy costs over the last few years, it is anticipated that costs this financial year will be £0.152m lower than in 2023/24, representing a decrease of over 11%. The department spend is £0.126m under budget for 24/25.

Due to a delay in securing a new security contract, the current provider has been granted a one-year extension. At the end of 24/25 costs are £0.044m over budget. It has been agreed that departments will manage their own security budgets for 25/26 which will allow for tighter control of spend.

The Repairs and Maintenance program is under continuous review to ensure it stays within budget. This financial year is particularly challenging because the 2024/25 budget did not include an inflation adjustment and was further reduced by 10%. An exercise was conducted with the service to distinguish between capital and revenue expenditures, and the budgets have been adjusted accordingly. Despite these adjustments, revenue expenditure was £0.085m over the approved budget for the year.



Similar to previous years, the school cleaning service's level agreement (SLA) is not meeting its financial targets due to the employment of agency for covering absences and leave, as well as the anticipated pay award. This service will no longer be offered from April 2025.

### **Approved 2024/25 Savings**

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

## **ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**

### **APPENDIX A**

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
EEP4	Cleaning Services – Council Buildings	580	Review cleaning arrangements, with a focus on only emptying bins and cleaning toilets daily.	100	0		A review of the cleaning service is underway with some positions removed from the structure. The full savings will not be achieved until the accommodation review is complete.
EEP2	Caretaking & Security Services	641	A review and restructuring of caretaking arrangements.	52	0		The restructure can now take place following the retirement of a member of

							staff. The full saving will not be made until financial year 25/26
<b>Total Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property Department</b>				<b>152</b>	<b>0</b>		

## **Capital Budget at 31 March 25**

	2024/25 Revised Allocation	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025	Allocation remaining
	£000	£000	£000
3MG	134.5	0.0	134.5
Sandymoor Open Spaces Improvements	0.0	2.9	(2.9)
Murdishaw redevelopment	21.2	21.9	(0.7)
Equality Act Improvement Works	93.2	89.7	3.5
Foundary Lane Residential Area	1,240.0	494.1	745.9
Town Deal	11,552.9	3,160.1	8,392.8
Property Improvements	460.5	627.4	(166.9)
Runcorn Station Quarter	76.0	76.0	(0.0)
Waterloo Building	75.0	4.5	70.5
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	178.2	236.7	(58.5)
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	268.7	186.7	82.0
Changing Places	24.1	7.0	17.1
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	0.0	0.0	0.0
Port of Weston	20.0	3.0	17.0
Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition	750.0	41.2	708.8
<b>Economy, Enterprise and Property Total</b>	<b>28,187.2</b>	<b>15,014.7</b>	<b>13,172.5</b>

## **Comments on above figures**

### **3MG**

3MG is in its final stages for development with HBC Field being finalised this year and developments for Liberty Park and the Mound not presently forthcoming.

### **Foundry Lane**

Resolving some of the site and financial issues remains the main focus of the work of this project in the quarter resulting in minimal expenditure with a view to being back on track in the next quarter. Work has now commenced on site.

### **Murdishaw**

The allocation has been brought forward to continue work to improve the amenity at Murdishaw Community Centre as part of the wider community project. Work has been completed to provide allotment space and further work is due to be undertaken to provide secure and accessible spaces, enhancing the allotment offer.

The improvements are part of the wider Murdishaw community regeneration scheme which has supported the delivery of the Tea Tree community café, improvements to bungalows on the estate and environmental improvements.

### **Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet**

Project Violet is currently being reviewed and a full business case is in development. As a result of increased costs, the development appraisal is being reviewed and the funding requirements being reviewed. The programme anticipates a procurement exercise in the next quarter and the revised delivery programme proposes a 26 month build with construction commencing in August 2025 and completion in Q4 2026.

### **Waterloo Building**

All works complete, site now sold.

### **Equality Improvement Works**

All budget has been spent, £200k allocated to The Brindley.

### **Property Improvement**

The budget has been adjusted to accommodate two new unforeseen projects: replacing the platform lift at Kids Planet and fully refurbishing the public lift at Halton Lea.

### **Changing Places**

Works all complete, grant money fully spent, some retention monies left to pay circa £5k.

### **Runcorn Station Quarter**

The Runcorn Station Development Project will formally be passed over to the CA Rail team as a Merseytravel project from 30th September.

A final invoice is estimated to be submitted during quarter 3 2024 period for Network Rail Project Management fees.

This is estimated to be no more than £10k. Once this has been paid and claimed, the CA Investment Team will formally end Halton's GFA. Halton's role will continue as strategic partner and actively be involved in the design process.

### **Town Deal**

Although at different stages work is progressing with all Town Deal funded projects. The Brindley started on site mid-August and the next phase of the Creative and Digital Skill centre started on site in September. The Health Hub design work is completed and the next stage is to tender the work. Design work progresses on the remaining projects.

### **Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development**

A contractor for the demolition works was appointed in March 2024, with Planning Consent gained in May 2024. Following a period of services disconnections and liaison with Halton Housing (who's adjoining building Church Mansions is connected to Churchill Hall), the demolition works commenced in mid-July 2024. The main demolition works are now completed, with practical completion anticipated in mid-Oct 2024. This will bring to a close the Council capital element of the project. The Council continues to work on developing residential proposals for the site in partnership with Halton Housing, community consultation is anticipated in Winter 2024.

### **Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition**

The demolition works are underway, following relocation of the Leisure Centre and period of decommissioning of the building.

### **Port of Weston**

A outline business case has been developed and finalised which demonstrates the viability of the Port of Weston as a business location with a mixture of uses including high-barn warehousing and a business park

Within the quarter a full business case was starting to be commissioned with a view to carrying out a green book assessment to secure the funding for site purchase and development.

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

Work has commenced at The Brindley. The allocation for the education room will be reflected in the forecast. The allocations for the High Street solar panels and Church Street works are projected for the end of the financial year.

## **COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE**

### **Planning, Provision and Transportation Department** **Revenue Budget as at 31st March 2025**

	Annual Budget	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	16,534	15,726	808
Agency - covering vacancies	0	191	(191)
Agency - in addition to establishment	0	256	(256)
Premises	3,443	3,367	76
Supplies & Services	1,452	1,710	(258)
Hired & Contracted Services	1,636	1,617	19
Book Fund	128	134	(6)
Food Provisions	388	416	(28)
School Meals Food	1,107	1,236	(129)
Transport	117	121	(4)
Other Agency Costs	460	486	(26)
Other Expenditure	41	63	(22)
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,072	7,190	(118)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	64	30	34
Grants to Norton Priory	174	174	0
Transfer to reserves	1,357	1,357	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>33,973</b>	<b>34,074</b>	<b>(101)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Sales Income	-1,389	-1,353	(36)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,771	-5,633	(138)
Rental Income	-235	-280	45
Markets Income	-910	-847	(63)
Government Grant Income	-2,034	-2,034	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,053	-1,053	0
School SLA Income	-553	-553	0
School Meals Income	-2,622	-2,622	0
Internal Fees Income	-322	-434	112
Capital Salaries	-173	-92	(81)
Transfers From Reserves	-421	-925	504
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-15,483</b>	<b>-15,826</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>18,490</b>	<b>18,248</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	1,675	1,675	0
Transport	2,257	2,295	(38)
Central Support	3,592	3,592	0
Asset Rental Support	2,845	2,845	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-843	-843	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>9,526</b>	<b>9,564</b>	<b>(38)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>28,016</b>	<b>27,812</b>	<b>204</b>

### **Comments on the above figures**



The net Departmental Expenditure has fallen £0.204m under budget at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The position is £0.614m lower than forecast at month 10 and is due to several factors detailed below.

The largest shift from month 10 is in regards to Waste Disposal Contracts, which has seen a drop from a forecasted £0.284m underspend against the budget profile to £0.118m overspend. The invoices for these contracts are typically received very late after expenditure has been incurred so it can be difficult to forecast and within recent years the performance has been well within the budget. However, costs have risen by at least 25% which is producing a significant budget pressure due to the monetary value of the contracts. There is central government initiative to incorporate food waste recycling into all waste provisions across the country, there is scope to drive down these costs in subsequent financial years as when sorted at source, the processing costs are reduced. There is potential for reconciliation adjustments to be received in 2025/26 which may result in the annual cost being closer to the budget, but at this stage, the costs have risen above the approved budget.

Fees and Charges has also seen a significant change from that reported in Month 10. The change from £0.183m overachieved to £0.138m underachieved is due to a larger than expected portion of the funds received within the 2024/25 period relating to subsequent financial years.

Transfers From Reserves has also seen an increase as more funds were identified for utilisation against community and library services, releasing £0.505m of funds in comparison to the £0.202m in Month 10. Work will be carried out in 2025/26 to continue to identify opportunities such as this to help alleviate revenue budget pressures.

The largest contributor to the underspend continued to be spend on employees within the department, seeing £0.808m under the approved budget profile by the end of the financial year. There have been several restructures taking place across the Department in this financial year, in order to facilitate these, a number of vacancies have been held vacant whilst waiting for the new structure to be implemented. These will continue to be held into the 2025/26 financial year. Offsetting this however, is agency spend within the Department which reached £0.447m for the 2024/25 financial year. As the Department offers a number of front-line services, including waste collections, in order to continue operations in the event of staff sickness, there is a reliance on agency to reduce the impact on residents within the borough.

Spend on premises costs is £0.076m under budget in 2024/25, a slightly improved position from month 10. Halton Leisure Centre is now open, and this facility will have lower building costs as there is little requirement for repairs and maintenance in comparison to the previous site. The premises costs of Kingsway Leisure Centre were a significant budget pressure for the department so the Council should start to see the benefits of increased revenue, and lower maintenance costs with the newer site. This has been built into the approved budget for 2025/26 so it is unlikely that there will be an underspend within the next financial year.



Supplies and services is showing an overspend of £0.258m which is a budget pressure throughout the Department, and is primarily caused by inflationary cost increases of key goods and services over

recent years, if the Council were to contain these costs within the budget profile there would be a reduction in the service provided.

The overall budget underspend of £0.205m for the department is largely contained to this financial year and not expected to continue into 2025/26. The budget for 2024/25 was set including a full year for the Kingsway Leisure Centre and School Meals service, next year does not include these, so the Council is likely to see expenditure and income more in line with the approved budget profile, there may be some temporary relief from vacancies as restructures are underway, and where possible, opportunities to identify available reserves will continue. However, due to the size of the waste disposal contracts, should there be any further increases even by a small percentage, any identified savings will be quickly offset.

## Budget Savings

### COMMUNITY AND GREENSPACES DEPARTMENT

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
				24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
COMM3	Sport & Recreation	471	Restructuring the roles and responsibilities of the Sports Development Team	36	0		 Phase 1 of the restructure is underway with subsequent phases to occur within the next financial year.
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	12		 The cessation of the service is complete.
<b>Total Community &amp; Environment Department</b>				<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>		

## Capital

	2024/25 Revised Allocation £000	Actual Spend to 31 March 2025 £000	Allocation remaining £000
Stadium Minor Works	30.0	37.8	(7.8)
Halton Leisure Centre	8,997.0	8,897.3	99.7
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	48.0	19.8
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	340.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	0.0	13.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	0.0	12.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	591.7	8.3
Runcorn Town Park	468.6	18.1	450.5
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,933.5	90.9	1,842.6
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	503.0	33.8	469.2
Replacement Cremator Widnes	308.0	325.9	(17.9)
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0
<b>Community and Greenspaces Departmental Total</b>	<b>13,292.9</b>	<b>10,063.5</b>	<b>3,229.4</b>




Halton Leisure Centre is now open so the costs will begin to wind up for this project, there will be some slippage into next financial year for any remedial works but the majority of work on the site is complete. Due to staffing issues several projects have had delayed starts so allocations will need to be carried through to the next financial year.

The overspend position against Stadium Minor Works and Replacement Cremator will be funded from the 2025/26 allocation being brought forward from 2024/25.




## Appendix 2: Explanation of symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

### Progress Symbols

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green		Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.
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.
Red		Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.

### Direction of Travel Indicator

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