

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Corporate & Inclusion Policy and Performance Board**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE 2025**

EXB3	DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF
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The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented three applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, for consideration.

It was noted that under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. This relief had previously only been available to organisations that were a registered charity, a community amateur sports club or a not for profit organisation.

The report outlined details of the three applications, in relation to their respective addresses. Appended to the report was the potential annual cost to the Council of granting the discretionary rate relief.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) discretionary rate relief for any new applications received during 2025/26 be awarded at the rates approved on 25 February 2025 for the renewal of existing awards, as outlined in paragraph 3.5;
- 2) the application for discretionary rate relief from the Cathie Stankevitch Foundation in respect of Unit 9, Foundry 10, Waterside Lane, Widnes with effect from 1 July 2024 be approved at 10%;
- 3) the application for discretionary rate relief from The Autism Wellbeing Project in respect of Suite A8, The Business Hub, Simms Cross, Widnes Road, Widnes with effect from 14 March 2025, be approved at 75%; and
- 4) the application for discretionary relief from The Autism Wellbeing Project in respect of Suite B2, The Business Hub, Simms Cross, Widnes Road, Widnes with effect from 14 March 2025, be approved at 75%.

EXB4	DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 2024-25
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets

for the fourth quarter period to 31 March 2025, for the Children and Young People Directorate; and the Enterprise, Community and Resources Directorate.

The Board was advised that the Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from the relevant quarter for each Directorate and was aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's performance management arrangements and Executive Board had a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability. Performance Management would continue to be important in the demonstration of value for money and strengthening accountability.

RESOLVED: That the report, progress and performance information be noted.

EXB5	2024/25 SPENDING AS AT 31 MARCH 2025
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The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position for the 2024/25 financial year.

A summary of spending against the Council's revenue and capital net spending position for 2024/25 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net spending as at 31 March 2024 was £16.073m over budget. This was an improvement from the forecast outturn position of £18.906m reported at the end of January 2025. Whilst an improved position, given the scale of the budgetary overspend the Council would need to access the exceptional financial support provisionally approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 24 February 2025.

The report also detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 March 2025. Other than the General Fund reserve of £5.149, there were no further reserves available to help fund future budgets.

In addition, it was noted that Capital Spending at 31 March 2025 totalled £46.517m, which was 91.7% of the planned spending £50.748m (which assumed a 20% slippage between years). Appendix 2 presented details of spending against all capital schemes. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 March 2025.

It was noted that the 2025/26 budget had been slightly increased to reflect the increased spending against all the high-pressure areas.

A report on the 2025/26 budget monitoring position as at 31 May 2025 along with an initial outturn forecast, would be presented at the earliest opportunity to allow for any urgent corrective action to be taken.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council's 2024/25 outturn position as presented in the report be noted;

- 2) Directorates take all possible steps to manage spending in line with budget during 2025/26;
- 3) priority is given to the acceleration of the Council's Transformation Programme, to ensure it is sufficiently developed to deliver the savings required to meet the medium-term financial gap and help the Council replenish its reserves; and
- 4) this report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

EXB11	PART 2 ITEM: EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION: STAFF UNPAID LEAVE
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director Chief Executives Delivery Unit, that provided details on a proposed scheme for a Christmas closure utilising a variation of the previously proposed four days unpaid leave arrangement.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the scheme and the commencement of formal negotiations with Trade Unions to finalise and implement the scheme for a Christmas closure.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2025

EXB15	COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 MAY 2025
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The Board received a report from the Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as at 31 May 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

A summary of spending against the Council's revenue budget as at 31 May 2025 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net revenue spending as at 31 May 2025 was £1.1m over budget.

The report also detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 May 2025. Other than the General Fund reserve of £5.149m, there were no further reserves available to help fund future budgets.

RESOLVED: That

- 5) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 3;

- 6) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the council wide forecast outturn overspend position; and
- 7) this report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

EXB16	HEALTH AND LEISURE IN HALTON
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that requested the Board to consider the relationship between increasing the cost of the local authority leisure facilities to residents and the potential impact on health inequalities in the borough. The Board was also asked to consider if it wished to subsidise leisure activities for certain groups in the borough. Options for how this could be implemented were outlined in the report together with a request from Halton Walking Football Club.

As health is the number one priority for Halton it was proposed that a temporary subsidy be put in place as stated in the report to allow existing groups to continue to be active but with the following recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) as being active is a key factor to promoting health and wellbeing in the borough the full subsidy amount should be allocated by contribution from Public Health;
- 2) to ensure fairness and consistency all groups who meet the criteria as set out in the report will receive a standardised 50 per cent discount; and
- 3) the Portfolio Holder for Employment Learning, Skills and Community Portfolio Holder be regularly updated on the status of discussions with the groups in receipt of the subsidy and the nature of support being provided by Sports Development. This ensures transparency and accountability whilst tracking progress toward the goal of enabling groups to become self-sustaining.