

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Health and Social Care Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 24 June 2025 at Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Davidson, Goodall, S. Hill, A. Lowe and N. Plumpton Walsh

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Hughes and McDonough

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, H. Moir, S. Wallace-Bonner and L. Wilson

Also in attendance: T. Leo – Halton Place, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		Action
HEA1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2025 were signed as a correct record.	
HEA2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
HEA3	HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES	
	The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting held on 12 March 2025, were submitted to the Board for information.	
HEA4	HPPB ANNUAL REPORT 2024 25	
	The Chair presented the Health Policy and Performance Board's (PPB) Annual Report for April 2024 to March 2025.	
	During this period the Health PPB examined in detail many of Halton's Health and Social Care priorities. Details of the work undertaken by the Board was outlined in the	

Annual Report.

The Chair thanked his Board Member colleagues and Officers for their input and support throughout the year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be received.

HEA5 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO FERTILITY TREATMENT POLICIES ACROSS CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

The Board received a report from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Place Director which outlined the proposals by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB to harmonise the existing 10 Fertility Policies in place across the 9 Local Authority Place areas in Cheshire and Merseyside into a single policy for Cheshire. This would result in some changes to existing access for patients registered with a GP practice in Halton. The proposals incorporated changes to:

- the number of NHS funded IVF cycles available to patients;
- changes to eligibility with regards Body Mass Index and Smoking;
- changes to definition of childlessness;
- changes to Intra Uterine Insemination commissioning; and
- wording on the lower and upper ages for fertility treatment.

A number of other options regarding IVF cycles were considered and the pros and cons of each were outlined in table 4 of the report.

A six week public consultation went live on 3 June 2025 and was due to finish on 15 July 2025. Following a period of consideration of the findings of the consultation, the recommendations for approval regarding the single Fertility Policy for Cheshire and Merseyside would be presented to the ICB Board at its meeting on 25 September 2025.

Members of the Board noted the report and shared some of their personal experiences. Following discussions, Members confirmed that they did not endorse the proposals outlined in the report and formally requested a Joint Scrutiny Board for further consideration on this topic.

The importance and sensitivity of the topic was acknowledged and Members were thanked for their

comments. They were also encouraged to participate in the consultation and make their views known. The comments regarding the impact on individual's physical and mental health were taken on board. Members were advised, that should the policy be adopted, it would only be until National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance was published (no expected date) and then the policy would be reviewed again.

The Chair agreed to email Board Members about participating in the consultation; two Members would be required to sit on a Joint Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) confirms that the proposal represents a substantial development or variation and Halton would participate in a Joint Scrutiny Board in line with the agreed protocol for establishment of joint health scrutiny arrangements for Cheshire & Merseyside; and
- 2) agree two Members of the Health Policy and Performance Board would be sought to participate in the Joint Scrutiny Board.

HEA6 HPPB SCRUTINY TOPIC 2025 26

The Board considered a report which presented the topic brief for the Health Policy and Performance Board's 2025-26 scrutiny review.

It was noted that at the February meeting it was agreed that '*Mental Health Support*' would be the focus of the 2025-26 scrutiny review. Appendix 1 set out the remit and areas of focus that would be considered as part of the Scrutiny Review.

It was confirmed that the first meeting of the topic group would take place in July and thereafter on a monthly basis. Members would be presented with information regarding the areas covered in the Topic Brief to scrutinise service delivery, emerging issues and opportunities in order to develop a set of recommendations for a report, which would be presented to the Board in February 2026. The Chair invited all Members of the Board to participate.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and

- 2) the Board approves the topic brief as outlined in Appendix 1.

HEA7 MINOR AND MAJOR ADAPTATIONS PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adults, which provided an update on performance relating to Minor and Major Adaptations funded through the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

A minor adaptations contract was in place for people in owner occupied or private rentals and work was undertaken by Upholland Property Services (UPS). Major adaptations, which required a DFG, were managed through Halton's Home Improvement Agency.

A home adaptation was delivered in 4 key stages and during April 2024 to March 2025 the following works were completed:

Minor adaptations (by UPS)	1515
DFG	35 (44 cancelled)
Registered Social Landlord/DFG	110
Stairlifts	9 (20 cancelled)

Members noted a number of challenges within the provision of minor and major adaptations and these were described in section 3.3 of the report.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

HEA8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS QUARTER 4 2024/25

The Board received the Performance Management Reports for quarter four of 2024/25.

Members were advised that the report introduced, through the submission of a structured thematic performance report, the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health in quarter three of 2024/25. This included a description of factors, which were affecting the service.

The Board was requested to consider the progress and performance information; raise any questions or points for clarification; and highlight any areas of interest or concern for reporting at future meetings of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management report for quarter four of 2024/25 be received.

HEA9 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 13 March 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast. The report also described the reasons for key variances from budget.

The Executive Board had requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information, to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

It was noted that some work had been undertaken to reduce agency costs which has resulted in some improvements, however, it was still too early to realise any significant savings.

A Member of the Board asked whether the Council was exploring any opportunities to share services and it was agreed that this would be confirmed in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as at 31 January 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Meeting ended at 7.41 p.m.