

Reporting Period: Quarter 2 – Period 1st July 2025 – 30th September 2025

1.0 Introduction

This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service area objectives and milestones and performance targets, during the second quarter of 2025/26 for service areas within the remit of the Health & Social Care Policy and Performance Board. These areas include:

- Adult Social Care (including housing operational areas)
- Public Health *NB. Quarter 2 data is not yet available*

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 There have been a number of developments within the Adults & Public Health Directorates during the second quarter which include:

Adult Social Care

Housing Strategy

The Council's housing strategy which has a strong focus on supported housing has been presented to elected members and is now out for consultation. A supported housing prospectus is to be developed to include our requirements for specialist supported housing and expectations from housing providers.

Rough Sleeper Strategy

The rough sleeper strategy 2022 – 2026 is due for review and presently underway. Upon completion a draft version will be presented to SMT for approval.

Homelessness Strategy

A review of the homelessness strategy is underway, consultation with service users and providers completed. Draft version of strategy is to be presented to SMT for approval in December 2025

Re-tender of the Single Homelessness Supported Accommodation Service (Halton Lodge, Brennan Lodge)

A re-tender exercise is underway for the service and will be subject to the new Procurement Regulations (2023). A new contract for the service will commence on 1st May 2026.

Bredon

Following a report taken to the Transformation Programme Board on Bredon Respite service, a request was made to look at options for transforming the wider provision including the respite service, crisis accommodation, day service provision and office space.

A preliminary market engagement process has been undertaken to gauge provider interest in working with the Council on this opportunity. Responses will be reviewed and a report will be taken to Adults Senior Management Team in November with options to progress.

Youth Protocol / Strategy

Joint review of youth protocol being undertaken with Children's Services to develop a clear pathway plan for young people when presenting as homeless. The youth strategy is also being reviewed and a draft version will be presented to SMT for approval November 2025.

Learning Disability Strategy

The final version of the strategy has been agreed by the working party and the ALD Partnership Board. Work is underway on the final design and an easy read version which will be taken to ALD Partnership Board in October.

Vulnerable Adults Supported Accommodation

The legal agreements between the Council and Halton Housing are now in place for the Council's capital grant contribution to the development and the nominations agreement for referrals into the service. Work is underway on site and the development of 3 accessible 2 bedroom bungalows and a 10 apartment 'own front door' provision is on course for completion by September 2026.

Cessation of Halton Borough Council's Community Meals Service

Work is underway to prepare for the cessation of the Council's Community Meals service on 31st March 2026. A multi-disciplinary group has been convened and is meeting regularly to review actions and progress. The group includes representation from HR, Transportation/Logistics, Commissioning, Care Management, Communications, Finance, Stadium Catering & Admin. All current Service Users have been notified by letter and are being contacted by Care Management to explore options for alternative meals provision. The aim is to manage a gradual reduction in the service up to 31st March 2026. No new referrals are being accepted into the service.

3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the second quarter that will impact upon the work of the Adults & Public Health Directorates including:

Adult Social Care

Re-tender of the Homeless Families Supported Accommodation Service (Grangeway Court)

Work is being undertaken to prepare for a re-tender exercise for the service and will be subject to the new Procurement Regulations (2023). A new contract for the service will commence on 2nd August 2026. Work is being undertaken with Children's directorate and Corporate services to expand the Service Specification to include development of the site at Grangeway Court to incorporate 12 additional accommodation units that will be utilised primarily for Domestic Abuse and may include people/families experiencing homelessness.

Asylum / Refugee Homelessness

Due to the change in discontinuation notice period from 56 days to 28 days this has resulted in an increase in presentations from asylum seekers receiving positive refugee decisions.

Many clients do not meet the homelessness criteria, resulting in an increase in rough sleeping within the Borough and further legal challenges, which can prove costly to the Local Authority. It is anticipated that there will continue to be an increase across this cohort which is being closely monitored.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements. During the development of Directorate Business Plans, services were required to undertake a risk assessment of all key service objectives with high risks included in the Directorate Risk Registers.

5.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

There have been no high priority equality actions identified in the quarter.

6.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorates. It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget. Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report. The way in which the Red, Amber and Green, (RAG), symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained at the end of this report.

Adult Social Care

5.0 Service Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

5.1 Progress Against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Total	21		9		12		0
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Appendix 1

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Progress Against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Appendix 2: Financial Statement

Appendix 3: Explanation of Use of Symbols

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Corporate Priority	01: Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
Directorate Objective 1	Universal Prevention & Wellbeing: Universal Services that connect people with their communities
Action	Implementation of the Prevention Strategy Implementation of the Carers Strategy

Milestones	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
DO1 1: Creation of a Universal offer for Wellbeing		Following a change at the 'Front Door' of Adult Social Care to a Prevention and Well-Being Service, which is supporting people to have access to information and support from Well-Being Officers to access preventative services and equipment in the community. We have developed an on-line and paper information pack, 'Living Well in Halton', which gives people information to access information for all areas of life, allowing people to access their own support moving forward. We have developed information support to practitioners, on which services and professionals in statutory and voluntary sector services are appropriate in meeting the needs of people who have been traditionally 'hard to reach'. Moving forward we will be developing a well-being offer at other entrances into Adult Social Care and improving our on-line information.
DO1 2: Evaluation from service users, carers and families and partners to feed into service development and commissioning processes		Work is being completed to reinstate the survey. Any coproduction activity that is undertaken will also impact on this.
DO1 3: Proportion of people aged 65 and over discharged from hospital into reablement and who remained in the community within 12 weeks of discharge (ASCOF 2D)		2024/25 Actual = NA 2025/26 Target = 85% 2025/26 Q2 = NA There have been changes to the ASCOF metrics since the change from Short- and Long-Term submission to Client Level Data. This metric now replaces the previous

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

		ASCOF 2B (91 days) and therefore, there is no comparable information available. The Q2 submission is not yet available.
DO1 4: Proportion of Carers in receipt of Direct Payments		2024/25 Actual = 98% 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = 98%
DO1 5: Proportion of Carers who receive self-directed support		2024/25 Actual = 98% 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = 98%

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Corporate Priority	01: Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
Directorate Objective 2	Independent at Home: Timely interventions that focus on strengths, wellbeing and independence. A responsive and co-ordinated offer of support in times of crisis or escalating need.
Action	Continue with the provision of the Prevention and Wellbeing Service and with a range of intermediate care services

Milestones	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
DO2 1: Percentage of people who are signposted to services		2024/25 Actual = 27% 2025/26 Target = 35% 2025/26 Q2 = 8% Information from Client Level Data shows only 8 per cent of requests received in Q2 were sign posted to other services.
DO2 2: Proportion of people who received short-term services during the year - who previously were not receiving services where no further request was made for ongoing support (ASCOF 2A)		2024/25 Actual = 57.5% (532 service users of which 306 were not in receipt of long term services) 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = NA The Q2 figure is taken from the latest Client Level Data, however, this is not due to be submitted until 31 October 2025. The Q2 figure will be updated after it has been validated.

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

DO2 3: Proportion of people aged 65 and over discharged from hospital into reablement and who remained in the community within 12 weeks of discharge (ASCOF 2D)	u	2024/25 Actual = NA 2025/26 Target = 85% 2025/26 Q2 = 115* There have been changes to the ASCOF metrics since the change from Short- and Long-Term submission to Client Level Data. This metric now replaces the previous ASCOF 2B (91 days) and therefore, there is no comparable information available. *115 figure is for all service users aged 65+ admitted to Reablement from hospital during Q2.
DO2 4: Number of People admitted into Reablement Service	✓	2024/25 Actual = 520 2025/26 Target = 520 2025/26 Q2 = 253 (cumulative) The aim for 2025/26 is to maintain the 2024/25 level of admissions made into the Reablement Service.
DO2 5: Number of people admitted into Intermediate Care Beds	✓	2024/25 Actual = 161 2025/26 Target = 160 2025/26 Q2 = 80 (cumulative) The aim for 2025/26 is to maintain the 2024/25 level of admissions made into the Oakmeadow Intermediate Care Beds.

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Corporate Priority	01: Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
Directorate Objective 3	Care in the Home: Providing support in people's own homes, which is personalised, safe, and compassionate, creating an enabling environment for them to thrive, including for those with Complex Needs.
Action	Maintain independence in a person's own home with appropriate level of support, avoiding admission to residential/ nursing care.

Milestones	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
DO3 1: Proportion of people who are supported in their own homes.		2024/25 Actual = TBA 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = 52.7% Since the introduction of client level data, we have been reporting on all people who are in receipt of services who are support in their own home or with family, this was previously restricted to those with a primary support need of learning disability; we therefore have no comparable data for this.
DO3 2: Proportion of people who receive long-term support who live in their home or with family (ASCOF 2E)		2024/25 Actual = NA 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = 60.2% (All) 2025/26 Q2 = 90.2% (Learning Disability only)
DO3 3: Proportion of section 42 safeguarding enquiries where a risk was identified, and the reported outcome was that this risk was reduced or removed (ASCOF 4B)		2024/25 Actual = 94.5% 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = 96% During Q2 2025/26 the results of a S42 enquiry where the outcome was that the risk was identified and removed or reduced is 96%.

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

		This is an increase compared to Q2 2024/25 at 84.4% and evidences the hard work of the safeguarding team in keeping Halton residents safe from harm and abuse.
DO3 4: Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support, and those receiving direct payments (ASCOF 3D)		2024/25 Actual = 76.3% 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q2 = 49.2% (Self-Directed Support) 2025/26 Q2 = 34.2% (Direct Payments) The way personal budgets are recorded in the Eclipse system is causing some issues with the self-directed support figures, we are working with our colleagues from I.T. to ensure accuracy of data.

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Corporate Priority	01: Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
Directorate Objective 4	Good, Local, Affordable, Quality Care: Developing a care and support market, that provides choice, sufficiency and person-centred care
Action	Stimulate market provision that provides choice and control for individuals to meet growing long-term demand, through a direct payment, individual service fund or as a commissioned service.

Milestones	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
DO4 1: Develop & Publish Halton Adult Social Care Market Position Statement.		Work on the refresh will be undertaken during Q3/Q4. Commencement has been delayed due to the re-tendering of the Single Homeless and Homeless Families contracts.
DO4 2 : Work with providers on the effective deployment of the Market Sustainability Improvement Funding.		Consultation is undertaken annually with providers in order to understand the market pressures and utilise the funding to set sustainable fee uplifts in line with governments target areas.
Do4 3: New accommodation provision – increased number of “own front door” services.		No new provision to date, but work in progress with Halton Housing to deliver a 10 unit own front door scheme by September 2026
DO4 4: Number of adults with learning disabilities who are in paid employment		2024/25 Actual = 22 2025/26 Target = 22 2025/26 Q2 = 16 There appears to have been a reduction in the number of people with a learning disability in paid employment, however this information has been taken from the Eclipse recording system and not from the external providers. We will make enquiries and cross reference this information to ensure its accuracy.

Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

DO4 5: Blended model of care (digital tech) to improve flexibility and independence and realise savings	u	The Supporting Independence Through Technology (SITT) pilot finished and an evaluation of the pilot was undertaken. This indicated that there are potential savings to be made from a blended model of care, as well as improved outcomes for people. Work is progressing to implement the savings from the pilot and then a roll-out to other areas will be taken forward, as part of the new Transformation Plan. Working in collaboration with the University of Chester, a funding bid for digital technology was submitted for the NIHR grant which has made it through to Stage 2 – Full Application.
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Appendix 1: Progress against Objectives/Milestones/Indicators

Corporate Priority	01: Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
Directorate Objective 5	A Confident, Sufficient and Skilled Workforce: A skilled workforce that is recognised, respected and valued
Action	Development and implementation of the Workforce Strategy for Adult Social Care in Halton.

Milestones	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
DO5 1: Development of Workforce Strategy		Workforce strategy for Adult Social Care in the borough has now been completed and a strategic group has formed to ensure delivery.
DO5 2: Proportion of staff in the formal care workforce leaving their role in the past 12 months (ASCOF 6A)		2024/25 Actual = 71 2025/26 Target = TBA 2025/26 Q4 = This is an annual submission from the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set; information will not be available until the submission has been validated. 2025/26 data will be published in April 2026.

Appendix 1 – Financial Statements

COMMUNITY CARE

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Residential & Nursing	21,630	8,499	9,070	(571)	(824)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	16,703	7,237	7,780	(543)	(1,288)
Direct Payments	15,513	8,166	8,300	(134)	(292)
Day Care	712	318	294	24	52
Total Expenditure	54,558	24,220	25,444	(1,224)	(2,352)
Income					
Residential & Nursing Income	-13,081	-5,657	-5,669	12	14
Community Care Income	-3,115	-1,198	-1,133	(65)	(140)
Direct Payments Income	-1,034	-398	-456	58	163
Income from other CCGs	-471	-165	-165	0	0
Market sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-1,398	-1,398	0	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-6,102	-3,051	-3,051	0	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-54	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-26,653	-11,867	-11,872	5	37
Net Operational Expenditure	27,905	12,353	13,572	(1,219)	(2,315)

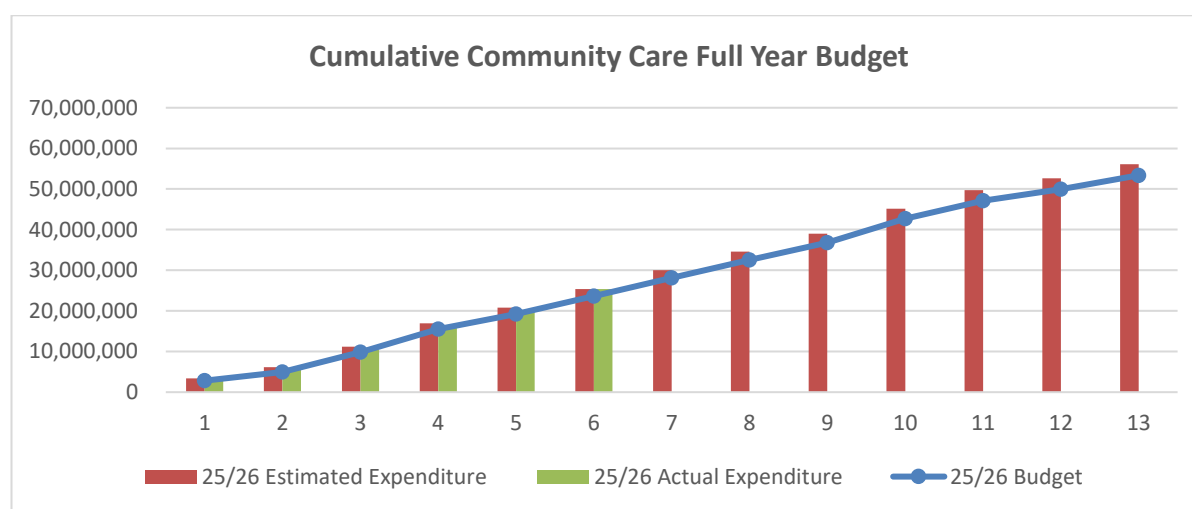
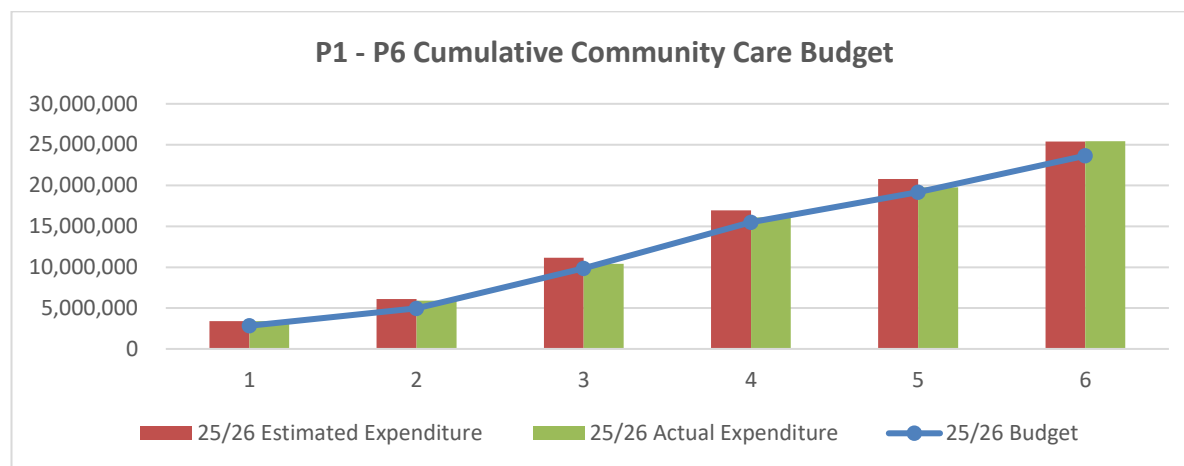
Comments on the above figures:

The net spend position for the community care budget at the end of September 2025 is currently £1.219m over the available budget and the year-end anticipated spend is forecast to be £2.315m over planned budget.

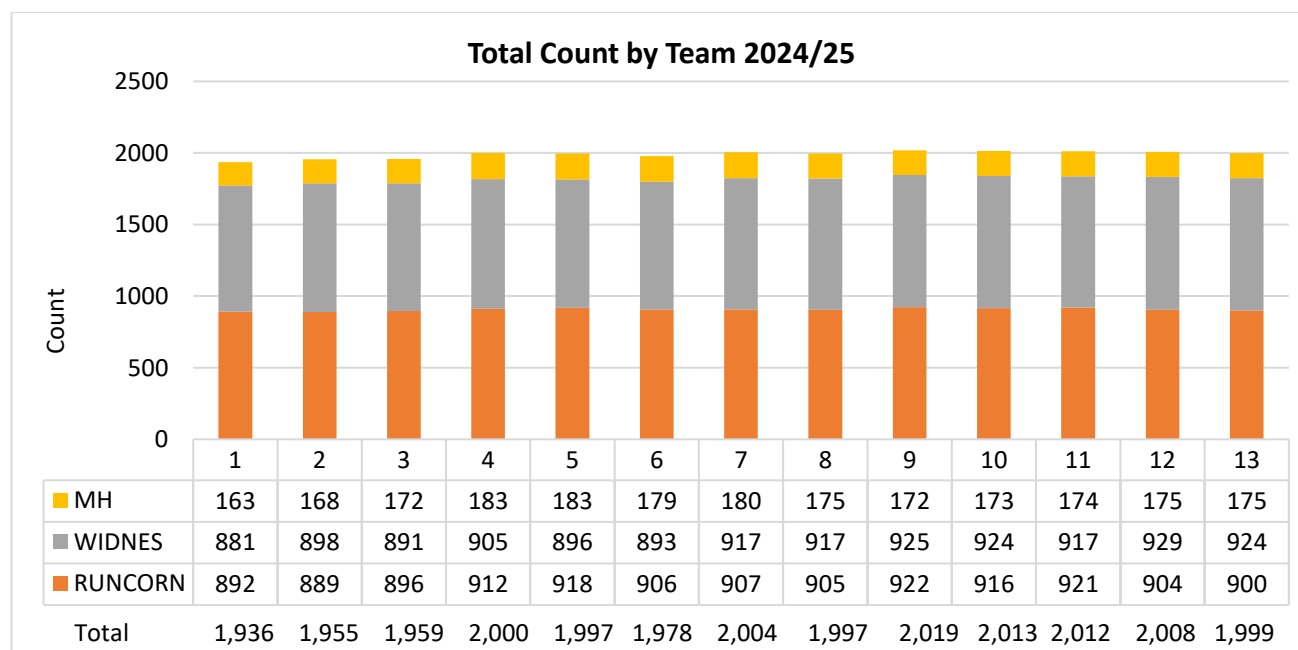
As previously reported, there has been a change to the methodology of the forecast for these services. The monthly actual financial performance is being tracked closely against predicted spend and in September we reduced our expected year-end forecast from £2.627m to £2.315m due to the impact of the recovery plan. Currently focus is on the following areas to try to reduce spend.

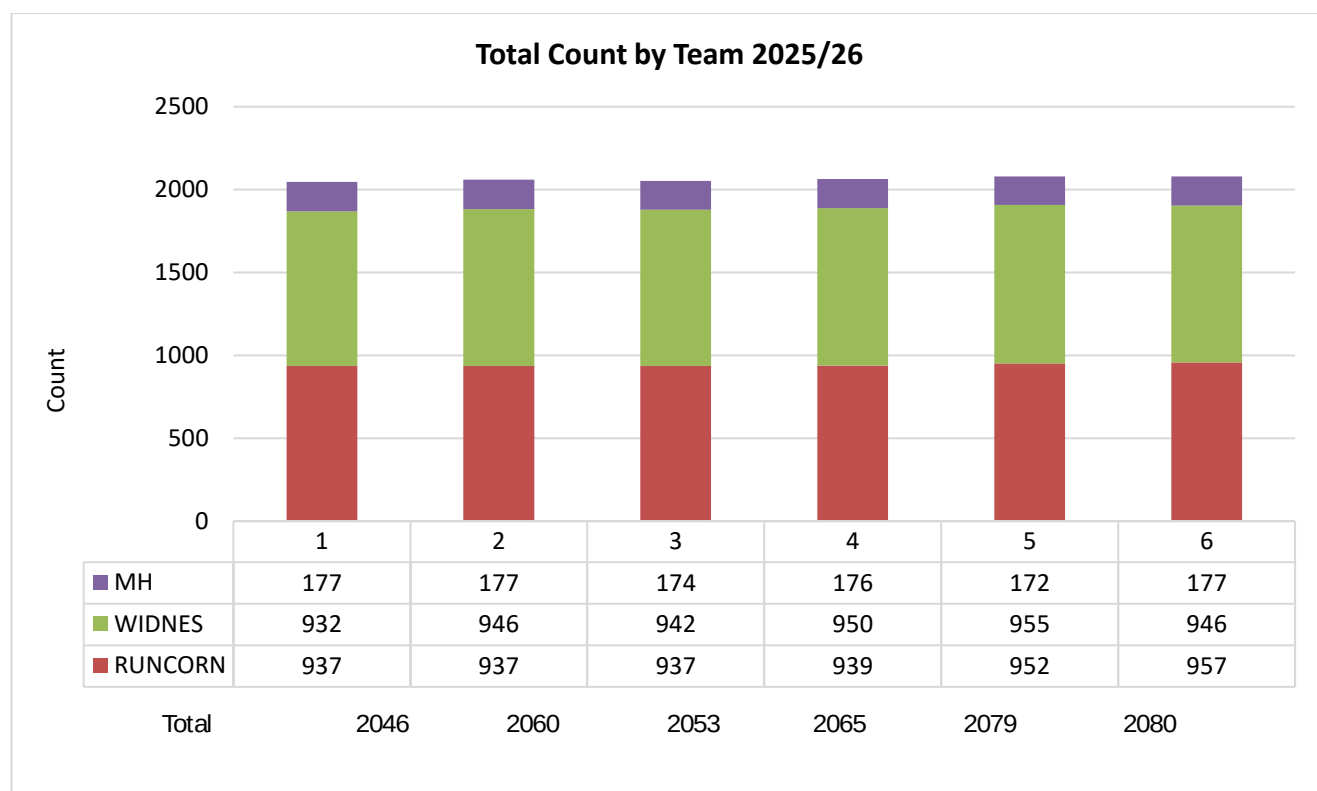
- Reduction of 1 to 1 packages of care if health's responsibility
- Review 15 minutes packages of domiciliary care to identify medicine prompts which are health's responsibility
- Ensure assessments carried out on discharge from hospital are complete and appropriate
- Maximise internal care home capacity

The graphs below show actual spend against expected spend and planned budget. In September actual spend exceeded predicted spend for the first time however as it is not deemed material (£11k) the year end forecast has not been revised at this point in time.



The graphs below show the total numbers of service users for all services as a whole, residential/nursing, domiciliary/supported living and direct payments. The average total count for 2024/25 was 1,991 and the average for 2025/26 is currently 2,064 an increase of 3.7%. Numbers across the teams this year are pretty static and there have been no major changes.

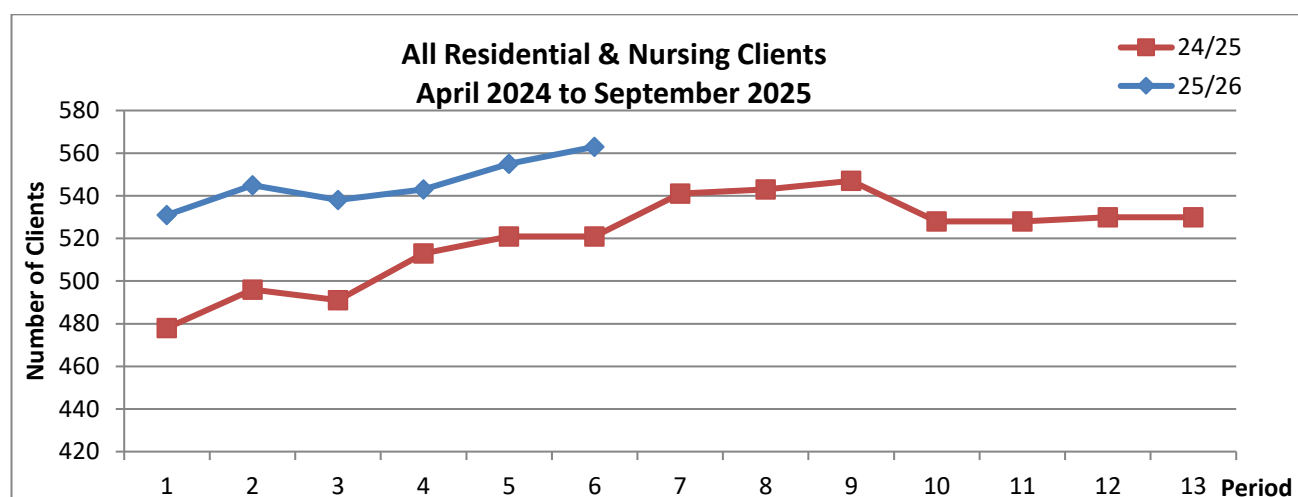




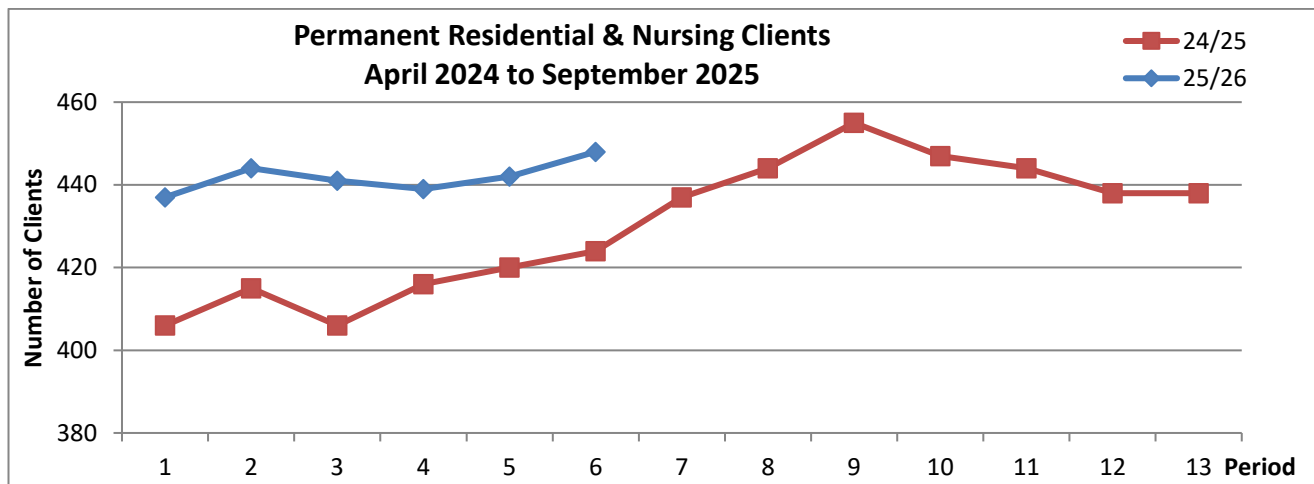
Further analysis of individual service budgets is provided below.

There are currently 563 residents in external residential/nursing care as at the end of September 2025. In April there were 531, therefore an increase of 6%. Compared to 530 at the end of 2024/25, an increase of 6.2%. Compared to the 2024/25 average of 520 this is an increase of 8.2%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £931.27 compared to £850.24 at the end of 2024/25 an increase of 9.5%. Supplementary invoice payments so far amount to £293k.

The graph below illustrates the demand for all residential and nursing placements.



The above external care home data can be further split out to show short stay and permanent placements as in the graphs below.

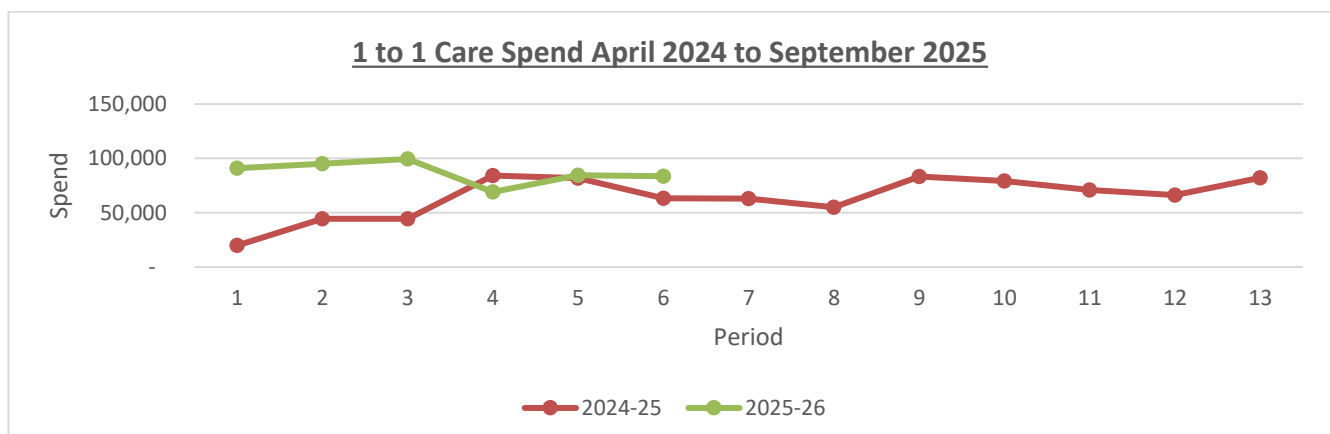
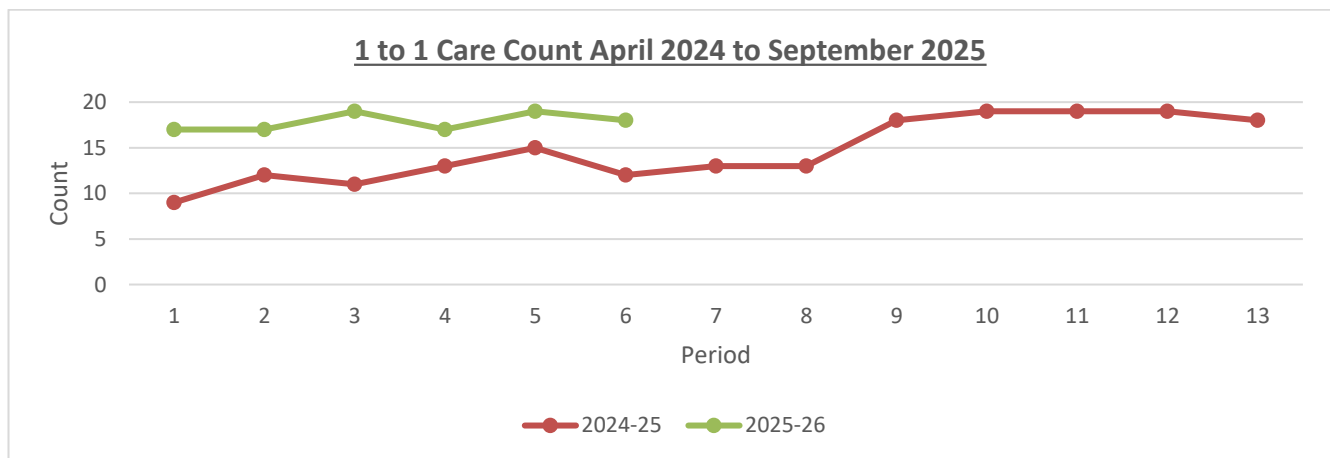


1 to 1 Support In Care Homes

Payments for 1 to 1 support continue to exert pressure on the budget. These are generally to mitigate the risk from falls particularly on discharge from hospital. The full year cost for 2024/25 was £837,882.

The graph below shows the count of service users receiving 1 to 1 care by period. Currently there are 18 compared to 13 at the same point last year. This is an increase of 38%, and an increase of 5% since last reported in July. These should reduce as packages continue to be reviewed, however some new packages coming through are still including 1 to 1 care.

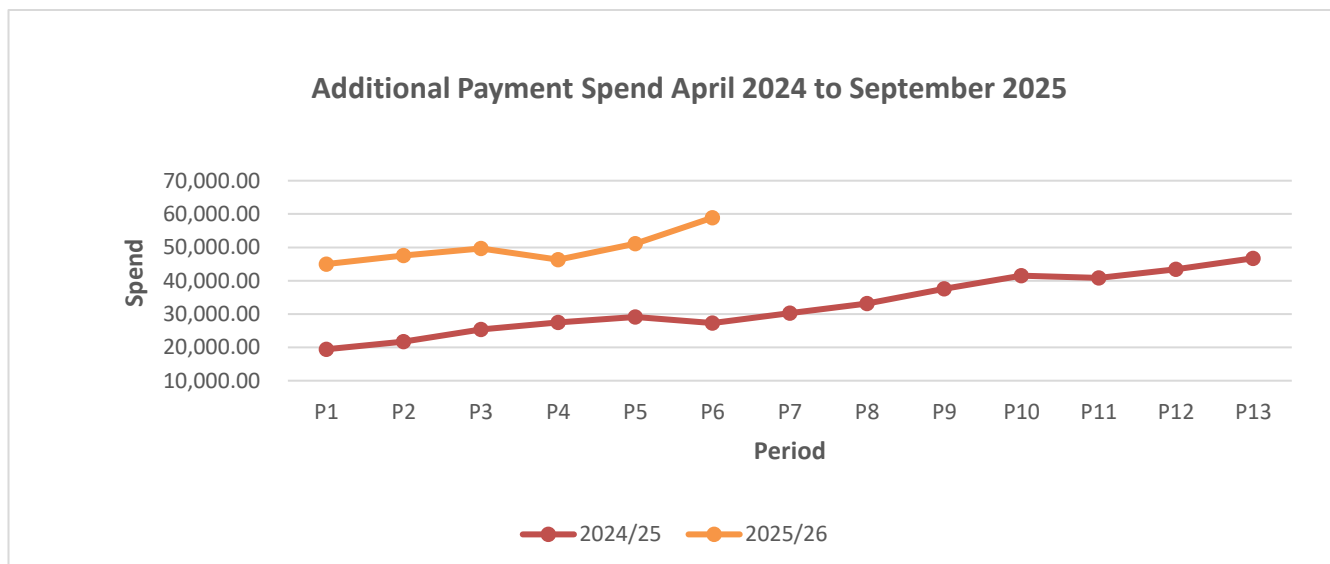
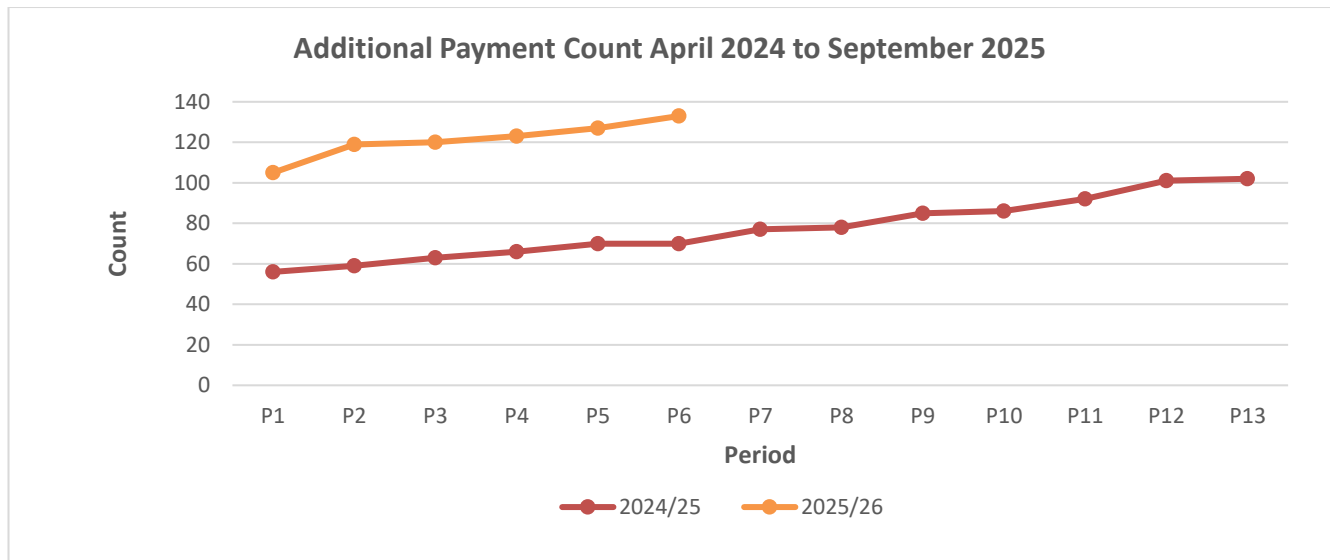
Care homes are being asked to provide monitoring reports as part of the review process to establish if there is a need for 1 to 1 care.



Additional Payments 2025/26

Additional payments to providers rose sharply throughout 2024/25, both in and out of the borough. These are where the care home charges an additional amount on top of the contracted bed rate. The cost of this for 2024/25 was £423,894.

The graphs below illustrate the count of service users with an additional payment by period. This clearly shows a steady increase in numbers and costs for 2025/26, the spend up to September is £298,913.80. If numbers and costs remain the same the forecast spend for the year will be approximately £711k. This is an increase of 17.5% from July where the estimate was £605k.



High Cost Packages

The number of permanent packages of care over £1k per week are tabled below:

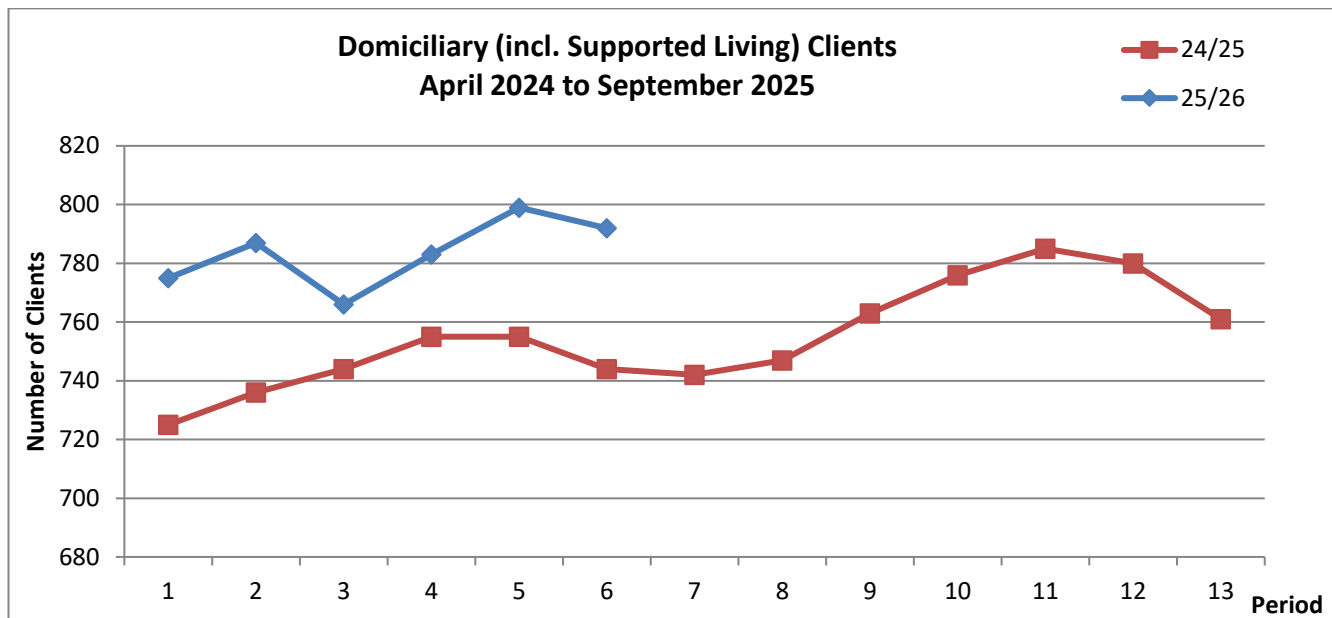
Weekly Cost £	No of Permanent PoCs					
	PERIOD 1	PERIOD 2	PERIOD 3	PERIOD 4	PERIOD 5	PERIOD 6
1000-1999	60	61	61	57	55	55
2000-2999	23	28	25	27	31	31
3000-3999	6	6	6	6	7	7
4000-4999	9	8	8	8	8	8
5000-5999	5	5	5	5	6	6
6000-6999	2	2	3	3	3	4
7000-7999			1	1	1	1
8000-8999	1	1	1			
>10,000						
Total	106	111	110	107	111	112
Over £1,000 Out of Borough	76	80	81	78	79	83
Over £1,000 Joint Funded	47	48	51	51	52	54

Since the beginning of the financial year the number of permanent packages over £1k has increased from 106 to 112. Out of borough placements over £1k has increased 9.2% from 76 to 83. Joint funded packages of care over £1k has increased 14.8% from 47 to 54. The weekly care charge has increased from £250k in April to £283k in September, an increase of 13.2%

Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

As at September there are 792 service users receiving a package of care at home, compared to the average in 2024/25 of 754, an increase of 5%. However compared with September 2024 the increase is 6.5%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £521.71 compared with the average of £450.64 in 2024/25 an increase of 15.7%.

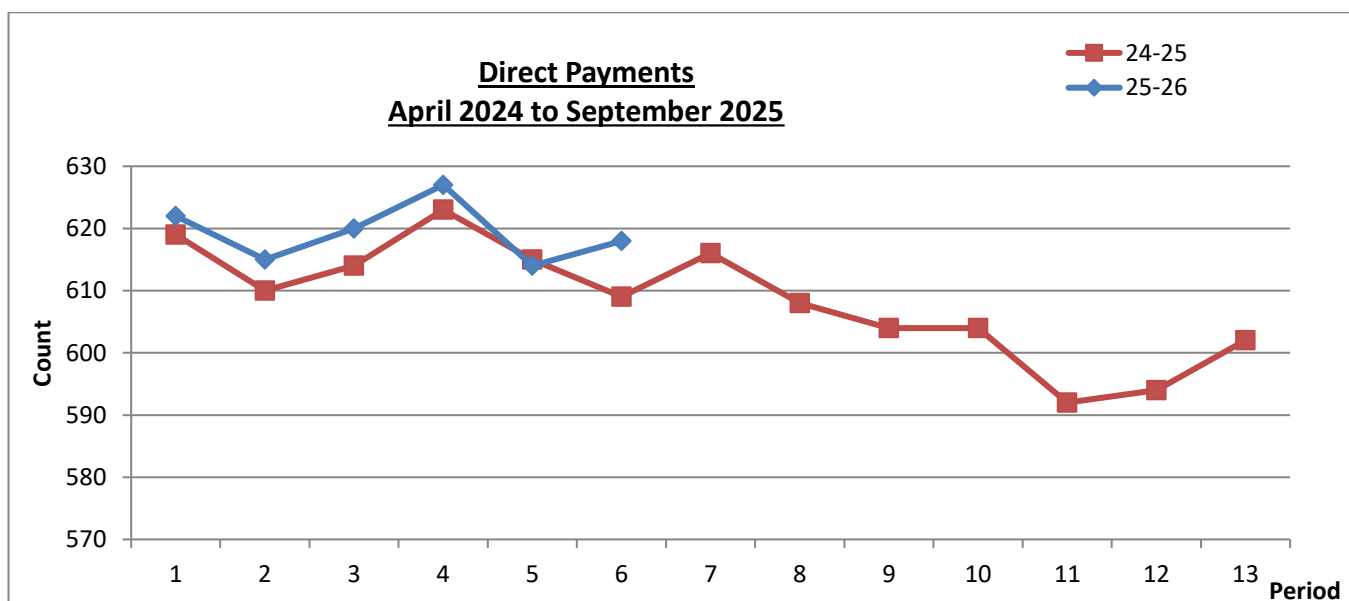
The graph below illustrates the demand for the service from April 2024 to September 2025.



Direct Payments

The average number of clients who received a Direct Payment (DP) in September was 618 compared with 622 in April, a small decrease. The average cost of a package of care has also decreased from £571.26 to £485.80, a reduction of 14.9%. The financial impact of this is a reduction in spend of approximately £200k per month.

The graph below shows movement throughout the year.



The Community Care budget as a whole is very volatile by nature as it is demand driven, with many influential factors. It will continue to be closely monitored and scrutinised in year to quantify pressures on the financial performance. The Community Care budget recovery group continues to meet regularly to identify savings and cost avoidance actions to try to mitigate some of the risk of overspend against this budget.

Care Homes Division

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
<u>Madeline Mckenna</u>					
Employees	790	395	344	51	123
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	43	(43)	(90)
Other Premises	90	42	36	6	5
Supplies & Services	26	10	11	(1)	2
Food Provison	51	21	28	(7)	(4)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-127	-42	-42	0	6
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-34	-17	-17	0	0
Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure	796	409	403	6	42
<u>Millbrow</u>					
Employees	2,245	1,123	626	497	937
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	534	(534)	(1,200)
Other Premises	117	53	71	(18)	(34)
Supplies & Services	72	32	29	3	16
Food Provison	81	34	41	(7)	(2)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-13	-4	0	(4)	(9)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-685	-316	-320	4	(23)
Total Millbrow Expenditure	1,817	922	981	(59)	(315)
<u>St Luke's</u>					
Employees	4,093	2,046	1,203	843	1,958
Agency - covering vacancies	62	31	890	(859)	(2,100)
Other Premises	156	70	93	(23)	(54)
Supplies & Services	67	29	34	(5)	(8)
Food Provison	128	64	84	(20)	(34)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-152	-58	-31	(27)	(9)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-1,546	-644	-657	13	79
Total St Luke's Expenditure	2,808	1,538	1,616	(78)	(168)
<u>St Patrick's</u>					
Employees	2,081	1,016	536	480	993
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	583	(583)	(1,166)
Other Premises	144	54	66	(12)	0
Supplies & Services	67	30	35	(5)	8
Food Provison	127	64	57	7	12
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-99	-49	-5	(44)	(93)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-716	-330	-298	(32)	(39)
Total St Patrick's Expenditure	1,604	785	974	(189)	(285)
<u>Care Homes Divison Management</u>					
Employees	326	163	93	70	123
Care Home Divison Management	326	163	93	70	123
Net Operational Expenditure	7,351	3,817	4,067	(250)	(603)
Recharges					
Premises Support	65	32	32	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	663	332	332	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	728	364	364	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,079	4,181	4,431	(250)	(603)

Comments on the above figures

Financial Position

The care home division is made up of the following cost centres, Divisional Management Care Homes, Madeline Mckenna, Millbrow, St Luke's and St Patrick's.

The spend for the first six months of the 2025/26 Financial Year to 30th September is £0.250M above profile, with an estimated spend above budget for the year of £0.603M. This primarily relates to unbudgeted agency staffing costs.

The projected outturn compares favourably to the previous report based on spend until the end of July, when a net overspend of £0.832M was projected for the full year. A number of residents who receive funding for 1:1 support have now had funding to the homes confirmed, and income has been received for the first 6 months of the financial year.

Supporting Information

Employee Related expenditure

Employee related expenditure is over budget profile at the end of September 2025 by £0.078M, with the expected outturn at the end of financial year being £0.422M over budget. Projections take into account agency spending patterns over the previous 3 financial years.

Recruitment of staff is a continued pressure across the care homes. There remains a high number of staff vacancies across the care homes. A proactive rolling recruitment exercise is ongoing within the care homes and is supported by HR.

Due to pressures with recruitment and retention in the sector, heavy reliance is being placed on overtime and expensive agency staff to support the care homes. At the end of September 2025 total agency spend across the care homes reached £2.050M, the cost of this has partially been offset by staff vacancies.

Premises Related Expenditure

Premises related expenditure is over budget profile at the end of September by £0.047M and is forecast as an estimated overspend at the end of the financial year 2025/26 of £0.083M.

Repairs and maintenance continue to be a budget pressure across all the care homes. The recruitment of a facilities manager would help to reduce these costs. Budget for this post has been made available but the recruitment to this position has so far been unsuccessful.

Income

Income Targets include those for privately funded residents, out of borough placements, and reimbursements from the ICB in respect Of Continuing Health Care, Funded Nursing Care, and Joint Funded placements. Income across all headings is currently projected to be under-achieved by £0.088M for the full year, although income can be volatile depending on the changing nature of resident's funding.

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Although there are no approved savings for the care home division in financial year 2025/26 increasing the occupancy rate of the care homes is part of the recovery plan for the community care budget. Maximising inhouse placements impacts directly on the community care budget helping to minimise costs incurred on externally commissioned residential & nursing placements. Occupancy on 29th September was 100% in Madeline Mckenna, St Lukes & St Pats with Millbrow less at 86

Risks/Opportunities

The demand for agency staff within the care homes has been significantly high for several years.

Currently agency staff are being used for a variety of different reasons, to cover vacant posts, maternity leave and sickness absence.

The forecasts for agency staff are continuously reviewed to account for fluctuations in demand, however, the difficulty in the recruitment of new staff and the inability to retain existing staff has resulted in

continued reliance on agency staff. The expectation is that the use for agency staff will be an ongoing issue.

COMPLEX CARE POOL BUDGET

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Intermediate Care Services	6,318	2,755	2,605	150	289
Oakmeadow	2,040	971	968	3	6
Community Home Care First	1,941	490	198	292	617
Joint Equipment Store	880	220	220	0	0
Contracts & SLA's	3,262	-28	-28	0	0
Inglenook	134	67	53	14	27
HICaFs	3,729	660	705	(45)	(124)
Carers Breaks	445	176	174	2	0
Carers centre	365	-15	-15	0	0
Residential Care	7,236	3,318	3,318	0	0
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,336	2,168	2,168	0	0
Pathway 3/Discharge Access	426	183	183	0	0
HBC Contracts	72	43	43	0	0
Healthy at Home	28	-28	-28	0	0
Capacity	30	20	13	7	12
Total Expenditure	31,242	11,000	10,577	423	827
Income					
BCF	-15,032	-7,516	-7,516	0	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-2,959	-1,480	-1,480	0	0
Oakmeadow Income	-2	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-17,993	-8,996	-8,996	0	0
ICB Contribution Share of Surplus	0	0	0	0	(414)
Net Operational Expenditure	13,249	2,004	1,581	423	413

Comments on the above figures:

The financial performance as at 30th September 2025 shows a significant underspend for the Complex Care Pool which is currently forecast to be the case through to the end of the financial year.

Intermediate Care Services is under budget to date by £0.150m, with an underperformance of £0.289m expected at the end of the financial year. This position is more favourable than Period 4 due to a reduction in spend on agency staff. However, the forecasts for unbudgeted spend on general computer supplies and services in Reablement has also been reduced following further analysis of the contracts.

Oakmeadow is currently under budget by £0.003m with an expected year end underperformance of £0.006m. This is due to a lower than anticipated expenditure on staffing, with spend on agency staff lower than expected for the first part of the year, but gradually increasing since period 5.

The overspend on HICaFS is primarily due to the use of agency staff to cover vacancies. In the previous financial year, this overspend was offset by the underperformance on the Warrington and Bridgewater HICaFS contracts. At present no contract spend information is available, therefore contracts are currently forecast to spend to target, however, any underperformance on the contracts in this financial year will reduce the budget pressure on this service.

Community Home Care First is currently indicating a £0.617m underperformance. The forecasts since period 4 have been revised to reflect actual spend to date and current contractual

agreements with providers. Costs have notably reduced, due to significantly lower payments to providers for agency staff cover. This is a demand led budget and spend can fluctuate throughout the year, however current forecasting adopts a prudent approach, including additional estimates for winter pressures. It is expected that spend for the year will be considerably lower than previous years for this service.

Inglenook is expected to be £0.027m under budget by the end of the financial year. At present there are two clients using the service, however one client is funded by Continuing Health Care, which minimises the expenditure on this budget.

Carer's Breaks is expected to spend in line with allocated budget, indicating a slight increase in spend since period 4 due to an increased uptake in this service.

Pathway 3 is currently forecast to spend to target at the end of the financial year, however, as this is a demand led budget it carries the risk that the spend will increase further, potentially resulting in a more unfavourable position.

There is a slight underspend on the Capacity contract for improving residential care. This is due to majority of the contract costs being incurred during 24/25, leaving a surplus of £0.012m in this financial year.

The forecast outturn for year end is currently showing a substantial underspend. However, in accordance with the section 75 agreement any unallocated underspends at year end will be shared between the partners. The Halton Borough Council allocation will be used to contribute towards the pressures within community care.

Pooled Budget Capital Projects as at 30 September 2025

Scheme Detail	205/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Sept 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Adults Directorate								
Grants - Disabled Facilities	2,200.0	2,000.0	318.0	1,300.0	1,600.0	2,000.0	0.0	700.0
Stair Lifts	400.0	650.0	268.0	400.0	500.0	650.0	0.0	700.0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	300.0	250.0	120.0	160.0	200.0	250.0	0.0	300.0
Madeline McKenna Residential Home	300.0	200.0	35.0	130.0	160.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Millbrow Care Home	200.0	200.0	29.0	130.0	160.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
St Lukes	50.0	200.0	104.0	130.0	160.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
St Patricks	200.0	200.0	29.0	130.0	160.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Care Home Refurbishment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Telehealthcare Digital Switchover	135.0	135.0	0.0	0.0	135.0	135.0	0.0	0.0
Oakmeadow and Peelhouse Network Improvements	40.0	40.0	0.0	25.0	35.0	40.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Lane Specialist Housing	250.0	250.0	0.0	160.0	200.0	250.0	0.0	0.0
Adults Directorate Total	4,075.0	4,125.0	903.0	2,565.0	3,310.0	4,125.0	0.0	1,700.0

Actual spend for Disabled Facilities Grants/Stair Lifts and RSL adaptations are marginally below the capital allocation overall. Minor adjustments to the capital allocations have been made from the original allocations to reflect spending patterns within the 3 schemes, although the total allocation across the 3 schemes remains unchanged.

The £400,000 Telehealthcare Digital Switchover scheme was approved by Executive Board on 15 July 2021. Significant capital investment is required to ensure a functional Telehealthcare IT system is in place prior to the switchoff of existing copper cable based systems. Procurement commenced in 2022/23 with an initial purchase to the value of £100,000. It is anticipated that the scheme will be completed in the current financial year, fully funded from the residual capital allocation of £135,000.

The Crow Wood Specialist Housing scheme represents a capital grant allocated to Halton Housing as a contribution to a new development at Crow Wood Lane in Widnes. The development consists of 10 one bed apartments, and three one bed bungalows, to be used solely for meeting the Borough's housing need. The grant was paid in full in October, and spend will be reflected in future reports.

Adult Social Care Commissioning have been working with Halton Housing to develop the service to be provided within the proposed accommodation to meet the Borough's identified needs. The use of accommodation and services provided will be governed by an agreement between the Council and Halton Housing. This is similar to existing arrangements in place in respect of Barkla Fields also managed by Halton Housing.

The scheme is designed to support reducing the need for out of Borough placements and also reduce voids within out-dated provision within the Borough.

On 16th June 2022 Executive Board approved a £4.2M refurbishment programme in respect of the four Council owned care homes, initially to be completed withing a three year timescale. Spend to 31 March 2024 amounted to £0.947m, leaving available funding of £3.253M at the start of the current financial year.

At present, detailed costing proposals are in development, with further revisions to the capital allocations to be submitted at a later date. The 2025-26 capital allocations against each home therefore just reflect ongoing minor refurbishment costs. The allocations have been revised slightly since the originals to reflect projected spend across the 4 homes, although total funding across all 4 homes remains unchanged.

Adult Social Care

Revenue Operational Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	18,788	9,394	8,727	667	983
Agency- Covering Vacancies			906	(906)	(1,454)
Premises	498	290	251	39	78
Supplies & Services	698	465	568	(103)	(176)
Aids & Adaptations	37	18	21	(3)	6
Transport	341	170	166	4	9
Food & Drink Provisions	228	133	74	59	96
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,408	704	554	150	293
Emergency Duty Team	157	34	33	1	(7)
Transfer To Reserves	295	13	13	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,044	451	458	(7)	(2)
Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes					
Homelessness Prevention	548	250	224	26	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	167	84	82	2	0
Trailblazer	75	38	38	0	0
Total Expenditure	24,284	12,044	12,115	(71)	(174)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,044	-435	-317	(118)	(253)
Sales & Rents Income	-538	-291	-286	(5)	(12)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,182	-1,000	-852	(148)	(301)
Capital Salaries	-117	-58	-58	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-783	-727	-727	0	0
Total Income	-4,664	-2,511	-2,240	(271)	(566)
Net Operational Expenditure	19,620	9,533	9,875	(342)	(740)
Recharges					
Premises Support	789	395	395	0	0
Transport	792	396	401	(5)	(11)
Central Support	4,039	2,020	2,020	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-112	-56	-56	0	0
Net Total Recharges	5,521	2,755	2,760	-5	-11
Net Departmental Expenditure	25,141	12,288	12,635	(347)	(751)

Comments on the above figures

The above information relates to Adult Social Care, excluding Community Care and Care Homes.

Net Department Expenditure is currently £0.347m over budget profile at the end of the sixth period of the financial year. Current expenditure projections indicate an overspend for the full financial year in the region of £0.751m.

Comparison to previous year outturn and period 4 forecasted outturn

The outturn position for financial year 2024/25 was £0.545m over budget. Based on the estimated outturn position for 2025/26, there is an expectation that the estimated outturn overspend will be £0.206m higher than the last financial year.

The outturn position for period 4 was £0.698m over budget. Based on the estimated outturn position for period 6, there is an expectation that the estimated outturn overspend will be £0.053m higher than period 4.

Employee related spend

The projected full-year cost is above the annual budget by £0.471m. This a reduction of £0.235m from the projected full year over budget spend as at period 4.

Factors relating to the projected overspend include;

Unbudgeted agency costs are in respect of covering vacant posts, particularly in terms of front line Care Management and Mental Health Team posts. However, there has been a reduction in Agency staff use by 3 Agency staff members since June 2025, the reduction of use of these Agency staff members has been reflected in the forecasted spend until the end of the financial year. Agency spend across the division as a whole at the end of September 2025 stood at £0.906m, with a full year spend of £1.454m projected. This is partially offset by a forecasted underspend on the staffing budget of £0.983m.

During previous agreed savings, the budget for Care Arrangers posts was removed. This has not been addressed within the staffing, resulting in a projected unbudgeted spend of £0.096m during 2025/26 financial year.

Within period 4 reports, it was reported of an unbudgeted Market Supplement which has been awarded to social workers across the division. To assist with easing budgetary pressures, the budget to cover the market supplement has been provided on a temporary basis, initially for 12 months, resulting in an increase in budget of £0.391m. This increased budget is reflected within the figures above and has assisted in the reduction of the full-year forecasted over budget spend between this report and the report from period 4.

Supplies and Services related spend

The projected £0.176m forecasted full-year spend above budget relates to an increased volume of caseload in respect to Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DoLS) assessments. Spend to September 2025 was £0.097m, with a total spend for financial year forecast at £0.233m.

Transport related spend

The transport and transport recharge budgets were substantially increased for 2025/26 financial year. Due to this, the forecasted spend is broadly to budget.

Housing Strategy related spend

Housing strategy initiatives included within the report include the Rough Sleeping Initiative and the Homelessness Prevention Scheme. The Homelessness Prevention Scheme is an amalgamation of the previous Flexible Homelessness Support and Homelessness Reduction Schemes, and is wholly grant funded. It is assumed that unspent funding is carried forward to the following financial year.

Income

Income for the Department as a whole is under the budgeted income target by £0.271m with a projected under achieved target at the end of the financial year being £0.566m. The main areas making up the under achievement of target income are Community Meals, Telehealthcare and Transport. Within the projected income figures for the remainder of the financial year is a further reduction of income for Community Meals in the run up to the end of the service in March 2026. There has been a drop in forecast income for the Supported Housing Network, funding of a significant care package through to the end of the year will no longer materialise.

2025/26 Savings

Savings targets including in the budgets for Positive Behaviour Service of £0.250m and Telehealthcare of £0.280m are unlikely to be achieved.

Progress against 2025/26 approved savings for the Adult Social Care Directorate are included at Appendix A.

2025/26 Adult Social Care Directorate Savings

Appendix A

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Housing Solutions	474	Remodel the current service based on good practice evidence from other areas.	125	0		Currently Under Review
Voluntary Sector Support	N/A	Review the support provided by Adult Social Care and all other Council Departments, to voluntary sector organisations. This would include assisting them to secure alternative funding in order to reduce their dependence upon Council funding. A target saving phased over two years has been estimated.	100	0		Achieved
Community Wardens/Telecare Service		Community Wardens/Telecare Service – a review will be undertaken of the various options available for the future delivery of these services, with support from the Transformation Delivery Unit.	0	280		Unlikely to be achieved – currently forecast overspend position

Care Management Community Care Budget		Community Care – continuation of the work being undertaken to review care provided through the Community Care budget, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.	0	1,000	x	Unlikely to be achieved – currently forecast overspend position
Various		Review of Service Delivery Options – reviews will be undertaken of the various service delivery options available for a number of areas including; Day Services, Halton Supported Housing Network, In-House Care Homes, Reablement Service and Oak Meadow.	0	375	u	Currently Under Review
Total ASC Directorate			225	1,655		

PUBLIC HEALTH & PUBLIC PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,692	2,654	2,471	183	365
Other Premises	6	3	0	3	6
Supplies & Services	375	89	198	(109)	(219)
Contracts	6,917	2,833	2,920	(87)	0
SLA's	488	60	45	15	21
Transport	4	2	1	1	0
Transfer to Reserves	550	0	0	0	(150)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	20	0	0	0	0
Other Agency	24	24	24	0	0
Total Expenditure	14,076	5,665	5,659	6	23
Income					
Fees & Charges	-122	-75	-68	(7)	(14)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-203	-229	-243	14	27
Transfer from Reserves	-428	-357	-357	0	13
Government Grant Income	-12,923	-6,666	-6,672	6	0
Total Income	-13,676	-7,327	-7,340	13	26
Net Operational Expenditure	400	-1,662	-1,681	19	49
Recharges					
Premises Support	209	104	104	0	0
Transport Support	24	12	13	(1)	(2)
Central Support	1,937	988	988	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-669	-335	-335	0	0
Net Total Recharges	1,501	769	770	(1)	(2)
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,901	-893	-911	18	47

Comments on the above figures

Financial Position

The current financial position shows the net spend for the department is £0.018m under the budget profile. The estimated department outturn position excluding the ring fenced public health grant for 2025/26 is £0.047m net spend under available budget.

Employee costs are expected to be £0.365m under budget profile. This is due to a number of vacancies and some reduced hours within the main Public Health department and the Health Improvement Team.

Budget pressures to be aware of are supplies and services which are currently forecasting a £0.219m overspend and contracts are currently forecast to balance to budget, however, there are a number of contracts which are due for renewal and in the current financial climate are likely to increase significantly. Also £0.254m has been used from Public Health grant reserves to balance the current year budget. This leaves a forecast balance of £1.147m in the Public Health grant reserve, excluding any underspend from current year.

The department is proactive and work is currently being done to identify any areas where savings can be made as the use of reserves from previous years will not be available to balance future budgets.

APPENDIX 2 – Explanation of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress		<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green		Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
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.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.</i>
Red		Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible performance measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention

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