

Public Document Pack



Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 18 September 2023 at 6.30 p.m.
Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

S. Young

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Eddie Jones (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Angela Teeling (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Angela Ball	Labour
Councillor Emma Garner	Labour
Councillor Stan Hill	Labour
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Mike Ryan	Labour
Councillor Tom Stretch	Labour
Councillor Andrea Wall	Labour

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 20 November 2023*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

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Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY POLICY AND
PERFORMANCE BOARD**

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 19 June 2023 in the Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice-Chair), Ball, Garner, S. Hill, Hutchinson and Ryan

Apologies for Absence: Councillors C. Plumpton Walsh, Rowe, Stretch and Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: W. Rourke, A. Jones, S. Saunders, S. McDonald, T. Booth, K. Arrowsmith and J. Gallagher

Also in attendance: Sally Yeoman – Halton & St Helens Voluntary Action

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

		<i>Action</i>
ELS1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 30 January 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
ELS2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
ELS3	EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING, SKILLS AND COMMUNITY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23	
	The Board received the Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2022/23.	
	The Chair conveyed his thanks to all Members of the Board for their support over last year. He also gave thanks to the previous Vice Chair, Councillor Ellen Cargill, who has since retired.	

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report for 2022-23 be received.

ELS4 THE BIG CONVERSATION UPDATE

The Board received a report presenting the approach being taken to 'The Big Conversation', which was integral to formulating a new Council Corporate Plan, to take effect from April 2024.

Further to agreement at Executive Board in March, the Council would provide adequate opportunity for meaningful public consultation and ultimately produce a Corporate Plan, which was unique and meaningful to the people of Halton.

'The Big Conversation' was all about engaging with the public so that they understood the challenges the Council is facing. The approach being taken was between the Council and everyone who lived or worked in Halton, to work together in order to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life. It was noted that feedback would be welcome in all formats; paper submissions, electronically or face to face, between now and the end of the year.

The report and accompanying presentation outlined the survey themes and questions, the process of data analysis and gave the timescales the project will take, up to the launching of the new Corporate Plan.

Following the presentation Members' discussions and comments included the following:

- Hard to reach groups such as children and young people – QR codes should be included on the advertising so that the survey is accessed instantly by them on their phones;
- Paid advertising on Facebook will also encourage engagement;
- The themes suggested are expected to be provided by the Council anyway so what are we asking for;
- Requests to know the costs of the project;
- The engagement of those with disabilities, eg sight impaired or illiterate, how are they accessing the survey;
- Understood that engagement from the public as a whole was key for the success of the project;
- Targeted engagement was also important for hard to reach groups;
- Some questions need to be changed to make them

clearer and the purpose of them understood – noted that the survey had now progressed and some questions had been updated;

- It would be wrong to raise the public's expectations; and
- Suggested that one theme per month should be addressed by the survey.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) endorses the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'

ELS5 PRESENTATION HALTON AND ST HELENS VOLUNTARY ACTION

The Board received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Halton and St Helens Voluntary Action, Sally Yeoman, who outlined the Organisation's strategic priorities, training, development and capacity building, and the support given to local groups.

Her presentation provided Members with information on:

- The Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector in the Liverpool City Region (LCR);
- The LCR VCFSE Infrastructure Partnership;
- The LCR VCFSE Manifesto 2021-24 – the three priority areas;
- Equality and diversity in the region for all;
- The generation of economic growth locally and investing in communities;
- Employment and skills opportunities for all;
- Recent investment; and
- Opportunities for collaboration.

Members' discussed the information presented and requested further details on associate organisations from Halton, as well as website links to the manifesto and other particular areas of interest. The presentation would be sent to Members.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the presentation and action points.

ELS6 LIBRARY STRATEGY 2023-2028

The Board considered a report, which presented the Council's Draft Library Strategy for 2023-2028.

It was reported that the new Strategy had been produced in house by the libraries team and all library staff had been given the opportunity to comment and provide input. The Strategy provided useful information for the customer on what the Library Service offered and set objectives for the next 5 years, to improve the service and ensure it moved forward and widened the customer base. Following the Board's consideration of the draft Strategy, it would be taken to Executive Board for adoption.

Members also received information on the good work within the service that had taken place in 2022-23. The report presented attendance figures for the Library Services for 2022-23, which would be used as a comparison from one year to another going forward. It also gave information on new service offers and one off events carried out, as well as outreach service details and numbers relating to social media site visits.

The following responses were noted in response to Members' questions:

- The word 'employment' did not appear in the Strategy – this would be feedback and taken on board;
- Staff offered support to customers who were able to use the facilities free of charge and held workshops etc for public to attend;
- The lower numbers using the PC's in Widnes Library was probably due to demographics and the ability of customers to attend when the Library was open;
- Usage of the Borrowbox service was low – the service needed publicising to raise awareness;
- Memory Box Delivery as part of the outreach service – this was welcomed by Members and considered an important service for the Borough's care home residents;
- Staff welcomed suggestions from Members regarding authors for the Borrowbox – these could be emailed to the libraries' or Leisure Manager directly;
- Access to the service for full time workers was considered limited – the libraries division was undergoing a restructure, with the aim of all sites' opening hours being the same – this would avoid confusion in the communities;
- Runcorn Library on Granville Street would be moving

to the Old Police Station in the interim before The Brindley extension is complete; and

- All Library customers were able to subscribe to the monthly newsletter.

RESOLVED: That the draft Library Strategy be taken to Executive Board for adoption.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ELS7 THE BRINDLEY THEATRE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which set out the financial position of The Brindley since its opening in 2004. The report also requested that Members delegate the full commercial programming of the Brindley Theatre to the Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager.

The report outlined details of the Theatre's finances since 2004 when it was running at a loss up to 2011; the commercial management review carried out in 2012; its increased income following the review; the impacts of Covid Government grants; and the plans for a large extension as part of the Town Deal Fund, in 2024.

It was recognised that the commercial programming of the venue was critical to maximising income and to maintain the Venue's break even position, in what was a highly competitive and challenging marketplace.

Members discussed the programming for past years and the complaints that had been raised by some Members regarding two acts in particular. It was the opinion of some that the Borough's cultural and moral bar was not being reached in these cases and consideration should be given to future appearances of these acts. Although not in favour of censorship, Members suggested exploring the legalities within contracts, although it was recognised that this may be difficult. Members requested their views and sentiments in relation to the programming of these acts be forwarded to Executive Board for consideration. It was noted that no complaints had been received from the public so far this year regarding any act and Members suggested a further exploration of the complaints procedure.

Board Members presented reasons both in favour of and against the proposal and emphasised the need to take into account the wider views of Members, who had not attended the meeting.

In the meantime it was agreed by the Board that the

Brindley Manager and the Leisure Services Divisional Manager would resume full responsibility for the programming and when required, consult the Operational Director for Community and Greenspace and the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration.

RESOLVED: That the report is submitted to Executive Board for approval.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ELS8 PROGRESS ON PATHWAYS TO TEACHING PROGRAMME (CO-ORDINATED ON BEHALF OF THE LCRCA)

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an overview of the *Pathways to Teaching Project*, co-ordinated by HBC's Employment, Learning and Skills Division, on behalf of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA).

It was reported that the six local authority Adult Learning Services in the LCRCA were experiencing a shortage of good quality adult learning tutors to deliver their services, which caused a reliance on agency staff. Following discussions a pilot Programme was proposed, whereby each service would 'grow their own' tutor base. The LCRCA agreed to grant fund this and Halton Adult Learning Service agreed to act as the co-ordinator for the Programme – Pathways to Teaching, from September 2022.

Members were provided with detailed information on the Programme including its key four principles, as well as performance data and income and expenditure. The accompanying presentation gave examples of real case success stories and outlined the challenges faced and the next steps to the Programme planned for next year.

Members welcomed the Programme which could respond to the needs and aspirations of people in the community. It was hoped that the number of participants from Halton could be increased next year, as there were only currently four. As the infrastructure was now already there and the continuation of funding confirmed, it was hoped that more Halton residents would come forward and join the Programme.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

ELS9 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2022/23

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter three of 2022-23 (1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022) and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

It was noted that the key priorities for development or improvement in 2022-23 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to the Board as follows:

- Enterprise, Employment and Skills; and
- Community and Environment.

The report detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

Members discussed issues relating to Bonfire Night fireworks, Kingsway Learning Centre and refuse/recycling bins.

RESOLVED: That the quarter three 2022-23 performance management reports be received.

Meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 18 September 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	18 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community
SUBJECT:	Halton Leisure Centre, Village Change Facilities
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 A petition has been received in relation to the village changing room plan for the new Halton Leisure Centre. The online petition is titled [single sex spaces](#) and started on 2nd May 2023. It was submitted to the Council on 10th August 2023.

1.2 The report provides members with information on Halton Leisure Centre plans and the design process relating to the village changing rooms.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- i. The report is noted;
- ii. The Board recommends Option 1 as the preferred option and contractors continue to proceed with the current design layout and programme of works.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Approval to proceed with Halton Leisure Centre was originally granted by Executive Board on 15th October 2020, Minute No EXB34. Final approval to proceed, following submission of updated costs, Executive Board on 22nd October 2022, Minute No EXB37.

3.2 Ellis Williams are the architects appointed to design and develop the new Leisure Centre. They have followed the advice contained in the British Standard Code of Practice BS8300 (Design of an accessible & inclusive built environment). This is the recognised strategy for meeting the requirements of the Equality Act.

3.3 Community involvement took place throughout the course of the

scheme development. Executive Board on 19th September 2019 Minute No EXB35 placed the scheme and the draft design proposals in the public domain. This led to press coverage, including Runcorn and Widnes World on 17th September 2019. Inside Halton, a free magazine produced by the Council and circulated to all households, also had an article on the new leisure centre Winter 2019/2020 edition.

- 3.4 The main consultation events, relating to the building facility mix, took place in January 2020, this was prior to the pandemic.

During January 2020, comments and suggestions were sought on the facility proposals, this was to inform the next stage of the project.

The consultation period included:

- Information on display at Kingsway Leisure Centre for centre users and the public.
- A consultation event with the design team, was held on Tuesday 21st January between 3pm – 7pm at Kingsway Leisure Centre.
- Online consultation advertised, led by the Councils research team, they prepared and published a questionnaire, collated comments.
- Paper questionnaire was available on site and by request.
- Direct mailing to all Elected Members, specialist groups, such as, One Halton Population Board, Halton Sports Partnership, Merseyside Sports Partnership, Active Halton.
- Views and comments also encouraged via email to kingswayleisurecentre@halton.gov.uk

- 3.5 The questionnaire received 88 responses. Comments were provided by many stakeholders in both their professional / voluntary capacity, and in their personal capacity as Halton residents. An overview of the comments received during the consultation can be viewed in the Planning Statement.

- 3.6 Comments were again sought and received, from the public, when the planning application was submitted in May 2020, the planning application was advertised to the public and 20/00206/HBCFUL case number shared. Thus, full documentation was available for review. There was an extended period for comments to be received. <https://webapp.halton.gov.uk/planningapps/index.asp>

- 3.7 Concern has been raised that the village changing rooms put women and children at risk, and erode privacy for both men and women.

- 3.8 Instead of separate changing facilities for men and women the new facility has two areas described as “village changing” rooms.

- 3.9 In a village changing area costumes must be worn and customers are required to keep covered when in communal areas. Privacy is provided via individual cubicles for changing. There will be private cubicles and private shower areas. There is no communal nudity in these areas.
- 3.10 Village style changing rooms can be found in new and refurbished swimming facilities. There are village changing facilities in St Helens, Sefton, Knowsley, and Liverpool.
- 3.11 Benefits include the areas can be supervised by both men and women, thus checked more regularly, are easier to keep clean and hygienic and there will be more customers around to spot any issues, inappropriate behaviour.
- 3.12 Two areas also mean there will be no shared changing between schools and the public (an area of concern, which has led to Widnes schools swimming outside of Halton). The facilities cater for people with a range of abilities and needs.
- 3.13 Should the centre or a customer become aware or receive an allegation around possible taking or use of indecent images, then the matter would be referred immediately to the police.
- 3.14 Anyone (including other children) sexually assaulting others, or taking indecent images of children, including over/under adjoining cubicles, for example, renders themselves liable to arrest, prosecution and registration as a Sex Offender.
- 3.15 A pool operator is required by law to undertake a risk assessment of all activities and managerial practices in their centres and produce operational systems that ensure safety. As a result of the risk assessment the pool operator is required to produce Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOP), which includes the Normal Operating Procedures of the facility and the Emergency Action Plans. Within the PSOP the methodology of how the changing rooms is operated, supervised, and cleaned etc. should be included.
- 3.16 Pool operators are ultimately responsible for the safe management of their swimming pools and changing rooms and they must ensure that systems are in place to safeguard users and in particular children and vulnerable adults; however, there are many ways that this can be achieved, and customers must be aware of their responsibilities within that process.
- 3.17 Facility signage about mobile phones or devices being taken into changing rooms will be on display.
- 3.18 It is anticipated that customers will be shown round the new facility and there will be clear signage throughout the building. We

appreciate that new activity programmes and different service delivery models, may be challenging for customers. Key to delivery, at the new site, will be the communication between staff and customers. If any customers have concerns about arrangements, staff will be happy to explain how they work.

3.19 **Next steps**

3.19.1 **Option 1:** Do nothing, the current layout is retained.

No additional work or cost incurred.

3.19.2 **Option 2:** Review the current plans and provide a new floor layout, converting two changing rooms into three changing rooms. There would be a cost associated with a re design and this would take several weeks to complete.

Following the above exercise, the contractor would have to assess the implications of the new design on the existing works. This too would incur additional cost and the timeframe for completing this work is unknown. Construction of the new leisure centre would carry on during this period. It should be noted that the drains have been installed and the ground floor slab pour commences in the coming weeks.

To make a design change, of this nature and at this time, would have a significant impact not only on the layout, but also on the design of the drainage, mechanical and electrical installations. It would also affect other areas of work being completed by the contractor. The impact of these changes would likely be a significant delay to the project, which overall could have a huge bearing on the total project cost.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Council's policy as outlined in the Indoor and Built Facilities Strategy is to 'create a high quality accessible and sustainable facility capable of supporting sport, health and well-being which offer inclusive services for all; enabling the inactive to become active and more residents to fulfil their potential by participating in sport and physical activity, thus improving their long-term health and well-being".

The Leisure Centre Service is a non-statutory service, which supports statutory deliver, such as, school swimming and public health objectives, it also supports the Council's priorities.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 To change the design and layout of the changing rooms would have a significant negative effect on completion date and the overall cost of the project.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The service follows Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, in line with current legislation, regulations and guidance. It also refers to documents such as Wavepower 2020 – 2023. This is primarily aimed at Swim England affiliated clubs but is also utilised by swim schools and other related organisations, events, or activities where appropriate.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The service seeks to provide information and training to all staff, so that customers remain informed and can use the leisure centre in a safe and appropriate manner.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Regular swimming reduces the risk of serious illnesses, like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and stroke. Swimming can also help with weight loss, improve general flexibility, increase strength, and improve mobility. As well as improving physical health, swimming can also boost mood and reduce stress levels to improve mental wellbeing.

Exercising in water means reduced strain on joints when compared to other exercises like running or football. Swimming is a beneficial activity for people of any age or ability.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The safety and welfare of customers and staff is of paramount importance and any reports of unacceptable behaviour are taken extremely seriously.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Halton Leisure Centre, Moor Lane, Widnes, is a flagship project, which will regenerate the site area.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The Leisure Centre admission criteria and operational policies are based on Council policy and procedures and national guidance issued by, but not limited to, the following governing bodies, The Institute of Sport & Recreation Management (ISRM), Swim England, The Royal Lifesaving Society (RLSS) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA).

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The service supports groups and individuals to be and stay active. The service regularly reviews its activity programme and operating procedures. Flexible spaces can accommodate diverse customer needs and requests. Changing Places facility is being installed in the new Leisure Centre.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications as part of this report.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	18 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Environment & Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Employment, Learning and Skills and Community
SUBJECT:	Leisure Centre Workforce and Operations
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with a report on the Council's Leisure Centre operations, including recruitment, and to update members on construction of the Council's New Leisure Centre.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

- i) The report is noted.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The service provided an update on Leisure Centre operations at the January 2023 Board meeting. Recruitment at that time was proving difficult.
- 3.2 The service had appointed to all vacant posts in May (apart from the swim team). As is the nature of the service, resignations were received in June and July from 5 post holders. The Council's Resourcing team have worked hard to support the service and there has been a significant improvement in the time taken to recruit to vacant posts. All vacant posts have been advertised and appointed to. Pre employment check process simplified, no requirement for references with risk assessments in place, inductions can commence. There can still be a delay with start dates, but this is in the main due to the appointed person not presenting their basic documentation.
- 3.3 The Swim Team - 12 fully funded Level 1 course places advertised, all allocated, all attendees completed the course and recruited as Assistant Swim Instructors. Level 2 course places advertised and allocated. 12 completed the course in May and 11 have been placed in a casual seat. The remaining attendee has not committed to working for the Council and has been asked to repay course fees.

Once inductions and training has been completed it is hoped that the learn to swim programme can be permanently expanded.

3.4 Shortages of staff within the leisure business was a regional problem, being experienced by neighbouring authorities; in August the service hosted a NPLQ course at Kingsway, this was oversubscribed, course numbers were double that experienced 12 months ago.

3.5 Below are figures for Leisure Centre for 22/23. Going forward we will be able to present these figures as a comparison from one year to another, to show any increases for the services.

Kingsway	Total attendance figures
Fitness	44,466
Swim (general, LTS, School)	103,575
Dry side activity	57,483
Brookvale	Total attendance figures
Fitness	31,642
Swim (general)	48,819
Dry side activity (including 3G)	108,476
Cumulative visits – Kingsway and Brookvale	394,461
Go Live Members	2,613
Swim members	1,387

3.6 Work on constructing the new Leisure is progressing in a clean, safe, tidy, and co-ordinated manner and site have not had any accidents, incidents, or dangerous occurrences to report. 25 August Topping out event. The Active Halton website has a section dedicated to the new build, with pictures and updates regularly posted. <https://activehalton.co.uk/new-leisure-centre/>

3.7 Community engagement is ongoing, Wates have delivered many activities including.

- School engagement with Ashley High School, welcome to Wates, mock interviews, and personal safety sessions.
- St Peter & Paul Catholic High School work experience students attended site for one week placement with Commercial Team.
- Careers fair at Riverside College as part of National Careers Week. Green Technology talk at Riverside College.
- Pop up event at Cronton Sixth Form College and Riverside College attended.
- Community & Conservation Week volunteering event at

Simonsfield Care Home was a great success. 8 Site team members attended to help with tidying the gardens in time for their Summer Fete.

T Level Assessment Day planned for 18th September with Riverside College.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Leisure Centre Service is a non-statutory service, which supports statutory deliver, such as, school swimming and public health objectives, it also supports the Council's priorities.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The current programme provides opportunity for children and young people to engage in a wide range of leisure activities. The service engages with thousands of young people through a variety of coached activities, learn to swim programme, signposting to sports clubs and activity to support and increase participation.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The service provides volunteer opportunities and skill development for all ages, in coaching, administration, fundraising and access to resources for those learning new skills. Support adult and lifelong learning, through fitness referral programmes. Lifeguard training will continue to be hosted at site and free or reduced places, for residents, will remain a feature of service delivery. The new workforce development model resulted in recruitment to all vacant positions.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Sport and Physical Activity links directly with priorities in Halton's Health and Wellbeing strategy, prevention being the key. Physical activity links with prevention of certain cancers, mental health problems and falls. We need to put the customer first, focus on those least active and transform how activity is provided. The service will continue to promote and support local and National campaigns.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Sports activities and competitions, sports volunteering, sports leadership, sports training help develop individuals and communities, encourage healthier and more productive lifestyles and create inclusive communities and neighbourhoods that provide a shared identity and sense of place. The service will continue to work with partner agencies to deliver intervention programmes.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The New Leisure Centre on Moor Lane is a flagship project, which will regenerate the site area. The service supports groups looking to improve the areas where they live/work.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The Council leisure centre stock is old and of poor quality, mechanical failures can lead to service delays. As a result of utility price increases, operating cost have risen significantly.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Sport and Recreation service is open and accessible. The service supports groups and individuals to be and stay active. Flexible spaces can accommodate diverse customer needs/requests. Changing Places facility is being installed in the new Leisure Centre.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications as part of this report.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning & Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	18 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment & Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community
SUBJECT:	Halton Borough Council Adult Learning Annual Position Statement 2022 / 2023
WARD(S)	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the Halton Adult Learning Service's performance for the Academic Year 2022 / 2023.

To provide members with the opportunity to raise any questions about the Adult Learning provision.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) That the report be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Adult Learning provision for 22/23 was funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB), devolved to the LCR Combined Authority (CA). In addition to the mainstream AEB provision, funding was also available for Test and Learn initiatives and for the City Region Wide Pathways to Teaching project (co-ordinated by Halton Adult Learning). All budgets are managed and monitored through regular scrutiny and accountability meetings between the CA Relationship Manager and Senior Service Leaders within Halton Adult Learning.

- 3.2 **The service received its first Ofsted Inspection since 2017.** During the academic year 22/23, Ofsted undertook a 2-day inspection on the 28th/29th June, covering 4 'Deep Dive' areas: Child Care and Teaching Assistants, Functional Skills English, Wellbeing and Supported Internships (High Needs). The service was inspected by a Lead and 4 other inspectors. The service was also part of an Ofsted Quality Assurance Visit by a Senior His Majesty's Inspector.

- 3.3 **The service maintained its 'Good' grading.** The [report](#) outlined how the service equips local residents for work and life, as well as designing curriculum delivery in response to the local and national skills context. In order to improve, feedback should be consistent across the curriculum and tutors must reinforce high expectations for attendance across the service.
- 3.4 **Spend / allocation current position.** The service achieved 97.5% of its funding allocation for 22/23. The CA tolerance benchmark is 97%, meaning that the service was within allocation for the first time in 3 years and no clawback is required.
- 3.5 The service as a whole has identified key factors that will enable it to continue on this upward trend; previous recruitment challenges have now been addressed with no vacant tutor posts, meaning that a full suite of AEB and Community Learning programmes are available from the first half term of the new academic year. In addition, Test and Learns for 23/24 are innovative and responsive to local need, meaning that they will be attractive to new and returning learners. Furthermore, new relationships with Awarding Organisations allows the service to respond more flexibly to the needs of the borough; For example, Family Learning will now be offering accredited courses in schools linked to Mental Health & Well-Being, in response to schools' requests for this form of provision post-covid.
- Additionally, there will continue to be an allocation for the DFE Multiply funding, which has been able to fund community and volunteer programmes - 'Send R Us', 'Fresh Beginnings' and 'Citizens Advice Halton' - with projects that support local residents to develop and enhance their maths knowledge and understanding through cookery, budgeting and counting and measuring sessions.
- 3.6 **Pathways to Teaching** spend at the end of July 2023 was at 49.5%. This was due to a combination of fewer actual enrolments across the City Region compared to planned, and significant underspend on the programme across all of the 6 local authorities. The largest proportion of spend was on teaching / co-ordination costs and progression costs for learners. After consultation with the CA, the project will continue into the academic year 23 / 24 with a reduced spend and a reduced target of learners. 8 out of the 38 learners from the 22/23 LCR cohort will progress onto higher level teaching qualifications with a view to teaching in the Adult Education Sector (this includes 4 from Halton).
- 3.7 **Achievement** in non-accredited Adult Learning, Employability, Family Learning and 'Getting Started' maths and English improved. Non-accredited Adult Learning improved its achievement rates significantly (40%) as a result of the introduction of Wellbeing and

Craft courses. Conversely, accredited Adult Learning programmes and Accredited maths and English achievement rates declined, due to Quality Assurance Issues, such as: assessment practices and marking of learner work requiring improvements; learner withdrawals; and national delays in the release of exam results.

3.8 Learner recruitment denotes an upward trend, with learner and enrolment numbers increasing on last year, closing the gap between pre-covid numbers. Optimistically, more new learners were enrolled into the service than in the academic year 20/21, demonstrating the effect that a strong curriculum offer has in attracting new learners to the service. Withdrawals for 22/23 sit at 8% overall, which is 2% under the tolerance target of 10% and 6% lower than last year.

3.9 The service monitors and reports on a number of **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Measures (EDIMs)** including gender, ethnicity, and disability / learning difficulty. These EDIMs have shown positive trends this year; the number of male residents aged 19+ engaging with the service increased by 1.9% this year bringing the total to 26.2%. This was as a direct consequence of introducing short courses and Employability programmes. In comparison with local statistics (48.7%) there is still some work to do here.

Learners identifying as Black, Asian or any other minority ethnicity (BAME) rose by 3.2% to 13.4%, which is in stark contrast to the local figure of 1.8%. 57% of our BAME learners enrol onto English courses and we expect this to increase again with the introduction of the new ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses in 23/24.

Learners declaring a disability increased by 8.2% to 38.4% in 22/23 (local data 26.5%), and those declaring a learning difficulty increased by 1.7% to 15.6%. These upward trends reflect the curriculum design, our divisional values (Empowerment, Opportunity, and Resilience) and the robust Initial Advice and guidance all learners receive.

All local statistics used for comparative purposes relate to residents aged 19+.

3.10 **Attendance remains a focus for improvement.** Attendance overall dropped by 5.4% to 84.6% in 22/23. Moving into the academic year 23/24, the data team will ensure managers receive weekly attendance reports so that early intervention can take place and underperformance / missed opportunities are addressed with tutors. Despite Behaviours and Attitudes across the service being excellent, with Learner Voice detailing the value of the provision, current attendance is not viewed by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' and so

will remain a Quality Improvement Plan target for this academic year.

- 3.11 **Safeguarding in the service remains effective.** Adult Learning operates within a culture of safeguarding, with all colleagues, volunteers and learners sharing the understanding that 'It could happen here.' Safeguarding for staff and volunteers is responsive to local and national context; for example, all staff within the Division undertook County Lines and Child Exploitation training in response to the high levels of these issues in Halton. Learners are able to report any safeguarding issues or incidents confidentially using the service's Confidential Reporting Form. QR codes for the form are provided at enrolment and are also visible in the safeguarding posters around the learning centres.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific policy implications. However, as a result of the findings of the Ofsted Inspection (June 2023), adaptations will be made to the Service's Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Halton Adult Learning is on track to meet its Liverpool City Region Combined Authority financial target (97% tolerance). The service aims to apply for growth of AEB in November 2023 linked to the expansion of its ESOL offer.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The service will offer the Supported Internship provision to those aged 16-24 with an Education Health Care Plan for the third consecutive year. In addition, the service has planned a curriculum whereby Care Experienced Young people are able to access training and development to help contribute towards a reduction in Halton's NEET figures.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The service works hard to bridge the gap between the needs of Halton's residents and the local skills and employment needs.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The curriculum for 23/24 builds on the success of the Wellbeing provision from 22/23 and the offer has been broadened both across

the borough and into local schools. Mental Health and Wellbeing support remains a priority for the service and, as such, a new Divisional Wellbeing Forum has been convened, which includes colleagues from Halton Adult Learning and Halton People into Jobs.

6.4 A Safer Halton

All learners receive information on how to keep themselves safe, alongside appropriate signposting to safeguarding support within the borough. Additionally, curriculum planning across the entirety of the service includes information on online safety, including how to keep safe online, as well as identifying the signs and risks of radicalisation and extremism.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

N/A

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The key risks, which will be monitored closely through our Quality Improvement and Quality Income meetings, are to ensure that we are meeting our end of year expected funding targets for 23/24 and to be responsive in developing and adapting our delivery on a termly basis if we are not reaching the funding targets.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The service continues to measure and report on EDIMs and these are reported on a regular basis to the Combined Authority.

8.2 The new Adult Learning Marketing Strategy outlines those in the borough that are furthest away from economic prosperity and /or the job market. Activity will target the wards in which the densest populations of those that are economically inactive or of working age, but currently unemployed, reside.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Kingsway Adult Learning Centre is a 'Warm Hub', whereby residents can come into the centre, use the breakout area and help themselves to hot drinks and snacks. The introduction of the Warm Hub and associated purchases has led to an increase in the use of single-use plastics. However, the long-term environmental impact has been considered but the service considered the short-term Cost of Living Crisis impacts on benefits of priority. This increase in social value has had a positive impact on residents and it is felt that the socio-economic and wellbeing benefits of the Warm Hub mitigate the long-term impact of this provision on the environment.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	18 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community
SUBJECT:	Business Growth Programme Completion and Business Support Service Launch
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update members about the performance and closure of the Business Growth Programme phase three and introduce the Business Support Service funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

the report be noted and receive a further update with the progress of the Business Support Service in six months' time.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Business Growth Programme is a business support initiative that has been running in three phases since 2014. The programme was funded partly by Halton Borough Council to draw down European Regional Development Fund monies. As part of the process of leaving the European Union the allocation of structural funds to the UK ended. In July of 2022, the UK Government announced the replacement for European funding which is the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Progress of Business Growth Programme (Phase Three) up to 30th June 2023

- 3.2 The aim of the Business Growth Programme was to provide a range of business support services at no cost to the client, designed to build both on the capacity and the confidence within those SMEs reluctant to engage with existing business support providers. This reluctance might have been for many reasons, possibly because of

lack of knowledge, understanding or simply because they are reluctant to pay for, or did not perceive the value of, existing commercial provision.

- 3.3 The Business Growth Programme Manager undertook an intensive business diagnostic with all businesses and produced an action plan. The action plan focused on the main key area/s that the business required to help it grow and develop, and throughout the Covid-19 pandemic also helped businesses to remain sustainable.
- 3.4 Halton Borough Council offered one to one specialist support of up to a maximum of 24 hours in Phases 1 & 2. The number of hours reduced in Phase 3 down to an average of 18 hours; the 18 hours could be extended if it was deemed that there was a good enough reason, for example where support had been split into two areas and we didn't want the advice to be too diluted, or that the business showed growth potential.
- 3.5 Some businesses went on to engage with the supplier post Business Growth Programme (BGP) support, and feedback from the businesses indicated that they did not initially envisage just how beneficial the support would be.
- 3.6 The aims of the project have been met in respect of the engagement with businesses that would not necessarily seek out specialist support, and that the businesses have embraced and valued the support offered. Some of the businesses who are able, have gone on to engage with the specialist following on from the support received through the programme.
- 3.7 Phase 3 of the BGP faced an unprecedented environment, which businesses could not have foreseen, and were then faced with Brexit and the new rules and regulations regarding import/export paperwork, the energy crisis and on top of that the surge in the cost-of-living increase. Businesses have had to evolve to survive and develop new strategies to enable them to remain competitive within the market. When the businesses initially came out of lockdown, there was a rush for them to 'make up for lost time' and gain some normality. Some of the SMEs appeared 'too busy' to engage with specialist support as they felt it would take up too much of their time and did not always consider the investment of their time, or the long-term benefits it could bring.
- 3.8 The challenges mentioned above impacted on SMEs in terms of the job market and creating new jobs, although we are now hearing that some of the SMEs are slowly starting to create jobs again. The job market has also changed dramatically, and it has brought with it demands from prospective employees and changes to the way in which people work.

Achievements of the Business Growth Programme

- 3.9 The net result of achievements of programme are as follows - supporting 267 businesses with their growth plans as opposed to a target of 258. This is a performance of **7% above target**, which is quite remarkable given that the programme was significantly impacted by several COVID lockdowns. For example, in 2021 there were considerable lockdowns where businesses were inaccessible and contact between client and business were encouraged by Government advice to be kept to a minimal and this also covered restrictions with staff delivering the programme.
- 3.10 Employment targets were not met however we believe this is largely as a result of general economic nervousness with employers concerned about committing to costs long term. We will demonstrate in the explanation of the new business support service that this has been reflected in the new targets for that programme.

Business Support Service September 2023 to March 2025 (UKSPF)

- 3.11 The Halton Council's Business Investment and Growth Team, together with the other LCR local authorities, LCR Growth Platform and LCR Combined Authority will work in partnership to deliver Placed Based Business Support, building on activities and lessons learned from the ERDF Business Growth Programme. The work aligns with the LCR Plan for Prosperity and Halton Economic Strategy.
- 3.12 The aim is to deliver business support at the local level through direct, commissioned delivery and by linking businesses into the wider Shared Prosperity Funded (SPF) programmes and other support initiatives in the City Region.
- 3.13 The Business Support Service will provide an important function in assisting SMEs (predominantly) by providing direct support but will also be the principal access point for businesses to access all the other SPF programmes. In Halton's case this also includes Town Centre support, a separate but linked, UKSPF intervention which Halton Council's Business Investment and Growth Team will also deliver.
- 3.14 While there is a strong focus on SMEs and new enterprises, support will also be available to Halton's larger and foreign owned companies in partnership with Government providers and Growth Platform as part of wider inward investment activities.
- 3.15 With UKSPF in mind, the Business Investment and Growth Team at Halton Borough Council underwent a restructure to ensure that the

administrative burden of the programme would be shouldered by Halton Council, freeing up Government funding for direct delivery.

3.16 Halton Council's Business Investment and Growth Team is the enterprise, business support and inward investment service of Halton Council, it leads on business engagement and supports new and existing businesses and investors in Halton to increase economic growth in the borough. Halton Council's Business Investment and Growth Team is also the council's business support and investment delivery brand, working closely with partners across the Liverpool City Region including the Combined Authority, Growth Platform, Local Enterprise Partnership and a range of business membership organisations and networks to help maximise the benefits of the support offered by these organisations. The overall aim is to make Halton an attractive and easy place for businesses to start, operate, grow, and thrive. The team delivers the local business, growth, enterprise and inward investment objectives of the council's Halton 2030 Vision and Economic Strategy. It also delivers current European Regional Development and Government funded business growth projects, including Growth Hubs and UKSPF.

3.17 Halton Council's Business Investment and Growth Team services include:

- General business advice and guidance via triage service - any business, any size, any sector.
- Managed referral to specialist start-up support.
- One-to-one advice and support for businesses seeking to grow.
- Free business events and workshops including Halton Economic Forum; Halton Huddle (networking group for digital, creative & tech businesses); Financial and Professional Networking Group
- Production of business diagnostic and action plans.
- Help accessing finance including grants and loans.
- Finding sites and premises to start, expand or relocate businesses in Halton.
- Accessing new business markets and export.
- Supporting new inward investment.
- Development of key business sectors.
- Business consultation.
- Regular updates on our website and social media pages with any relevant business news or info
- Point of contact and referral system to other council departments where appropriate

Targets

3.18 Number of businesses receiving non-financial support **67**

Number of new businesses started **16**

Number of jobs created **54**

Benefits

3.19 The project will support in the region of 1,000 businesses including the 67 mentioned in the target agreed with the Liverpool City Region Mayoral Combined Authority.

Target of 16 business starts is ambitious however an additional benefit of this target is we will introduce a business start service in Halton specifically for Halton businesses, which we've not had before.

The jobs target is a little more difficult to achieve as it has not been achieved historically and we'll be working specifically with ambitious SMEs who are looking to recruit in the local area as part of their expansion plans.

Funding

3.20 The administration of the programme will be delivered by the HBC Business Investment and Growth Team, and direct delivery will be funded by UKSPF and reclaimed on a quarterly basis.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The programme fits with the overall ambitions highlighted in the economic assessment and Halton 2030 it will deliver the business support highlighted in those documents.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The funding for the programme is not borne by Halton Borough Council and will be claimed on a quarterly basis from the UKSPF from the Liverpool City Region Mayoral Combined Authority, who are the accountable body.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Programme has the potential of providing employment services for all communities and groups in Halton.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The project will provide opportunities for people seeking support and self-employment support in Halton.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Business and employment opportunities will help to promote a better quality of life locally.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are limited risks associated with this programme as the service has been providing similar support for more than a decade and the model has proved to be successful. One of the drawbacks of the previous programme was limited marketing and communications opportunities. Part of the restructure, which will enable the business support service to deliver in a way that will, now includes a marketing strategy accessing and using all platforms and media.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Programme is to provide equality and opportunity at all junctures to all groups to ensure access to those opportunities are enjoyed by all.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The major climate change implication of this programme is ensuring that training and business support is provided locally thereby reducing the need to perform unnecessary journeys as part of business and training transactions during the normal course of business.

One of the business support strands specifically is aimed at carbon

reduction, which is split into two parts, first being about reducing overall carbon emissions and the second looking at new and innovative methods of carbon reduction introduce the market.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	18 September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Reports for Quarter 4 of 2022/23
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and raise, any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the final quarter period to 31st March 2023.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022 - 23 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
 - Enterprise, Employment and Skills
 - Community and Environment

The report details progress against objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the final quarter performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 At the time at which annual business plans are developed, Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable

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

10.1 Not applicable

Employment, Learning, Skills and Community PPB – Priority Based Monitoring Report

Repor
ting

Period: 01st January to 31st March 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the final quarter of 2022 / 23 for service areas within the remit of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community (ELSC) Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022 - 23 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to Employment, Learning, Skills and Community (ELSC) Policy & Performance Board i.e.
 - Employment, Learning and Skills
 - Library and Culture and Leisure Services
- 1.3 The emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 7 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments during the period which include:-

2.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

Education maintenance programme 2023/24

The 2023/24 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council In March. The programme consists of 13 separate projects with an estimated cost of circa £780k. All projects have now been completed.

Corporate Maintenance programme 2023/24

The 2023/24 corporate maintenance programme has been approved by the Asset Management Working Group. Design works are starting to commence on the various projects in the programme.

Education SEMH Resource base projects

There are 5 schools where we are looking at upgrading the facilities to create Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) resource bases for both KS1 & KS2 groups. All projects

Community & Environment

2.3 Culture

The Brindley Theatre and Events

The Brindley Theatre bookings diary continues to increase with bookings now being made into 2025. The theatre has maintained its 5 Star Trip Advisor Rating.

Ticket sales for this year's Pantomime Jack and The Beanstalk totalled 15,074 (85% Capacity) an increase on the previous year's sales of 13,470 tickets (72% capacity)

Some groundworks clearance has taken place at the side of the canal towpath in preparation for the Refurbishment works starting in January 2024. This area will form part of the temporary entrance to the venue from the Bridgewater canal towpath.

2.4 Community Centres

Progress is being made to recruit staff into the centres. A supervisor has been appointed for Upton and Grangeway Community Centres. A Centre Assistant post will be advertised next and then bring the service to full complement, thus providing resilience within the service.

2.5 Library Service

Halton Libraries

Resources

The implementation and installation of the new public VDI PC offer is still underway at Ditton Library. There have been delays due to the withdrawal of Microsoft Office products. These issues are being addressed and we are expecting the installation to be rolled out to other service points during August 2023. The new equipment will provide library users with greater opportunities for searching and improve learning opportunities plus the new offer can be fixed remotely thereby avoiding long periods of down time.

Outreach

Bookstart – revitalising the scheme, with input from health visitors and Booktrust

Community noticeboards established in all libraries and an accompanying community information list is now available for staff. This

has improved access to community information for the public and provided an information offer for libraries to build on.

Halton Memories group continues to be popular.

Two carers coffee mornings were successful at improving awareness of library services to carers and the Carers Centre.

Reminiscence sessions at the Women's Centre

Social Media

Library social media channels Twitter, Facebook and Instagram continue to see an increase in engagement and followers. The most popular post was 'Bring your own food and drink to the library' reaching 7,824, followed by 'Palacefield's Ukelele Group in Halton Lea Library' and 'What's on this week'.

Widnes and Ditton Libraries

Widnes Library hosted MakeFest on 25th March 2023. The event, which featured 20 makers from around Halton, welcomed over 1000 visitors to the library to enjoy a wide range of creative activities including candle making, coding and seed planting.

Halton Lea and Runcorn Libraries

World Book Day events- interactive story teller session at both Halton lea and Widnes library saw over 100 children and adults attend a free event on 1st March

Rhyme time at Saturday stories for Jan-march 2023 saw 1,446 adults and children attend Halton Lea and Runcorn

Class visits from local schools- over 1,100 children and adults attended sessions held in Runcorn and Halton lea
February Half Term- 6 one-off events all free and accessible to all- attended by 145 children and adults
attended sessions held in Runcorn and Halton lea

Launch of new I.T Help club in Halton lea library- ' You Can Do I.T ! ' free weekly session open to all.

Below are the statistics for the Library Service

Widnes & Ditton	Total attendance figures
Rhyme time – Widnes & Ditton	2047
Saturday Stories	813
Lego Club – Widnes & Ditton	1311
Science Club - Widnes	177
Class visits – Widnes & Ditton	1818
Warm welcome winter coffee mornings	124
Public Pc's usage- Widnes & Ditton	9,099
Halton Lea & Runcorn	
	Total attendance figures
Rhyme time – Halton lea & Runcorn	3, 611
Saturday Stories	1,097
Lego Club - Halton lea & Runcorn	1257
Halton Home Education monthly meet up	271
Class visits - Halton lea & Runcorn	2,191
Public Pc's usage- Halton lea & Runcorn	17,193
Warm welcome winter coffee mornings	202
New Service offers launched and one off feature events :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Good Yarn, Brilliant builds! • Scrabble Club • You Can Do I.T! • Family History monthly helpdesk • Additional Lego Clubs • Home Ed monthly meet up • Monthly Coding Clubs in partnership with Mako Create and Daresbury Tech • Plus 1000 visitors to MakeFest at Widnes Library in March

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 2,500 people attended our one off and school holiday events across sites.
Social media	Total site visits
Facebook views	198,037
Twitter site views	125,666
Library website	50,328
Outreach Services	
Home Library Service	109 customers 10152 books delivered
Deposit Collections in 6 sites	840 books supplied
Reading Groups	5 internal groups / 5 external / 900 books supplied
Memory Box Delivery	Supplied monthly to 12 care homes 144 memory boxes delivered
Adult Outreach events	302 people reached at 24 events
Library User Statistics	
Active borrowers (KOHA)	15,585
Active borrowers (BORROWBOX)	9,070
Active users (PRESSREADER)	24,562
Book issues (all 4 sites)	203,595
Ebook issues (BORROWBOX)	15,571
Eaudiobook issues (BORROWBOX)	21,163
Articles read (PRESSREADER)	1,313,385
People visiting HBC Libraries (All 4 sites)	320,600

3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of services including:-

Employment, Learning & Skills

3.2 Employment, Learning & Skills

If successful, recruitment of specialist staff for the Home Office employability programme will take place in Q1.

Preparations for an Ofsted inspection will continue in Q1 with an adult learning inspection being imminent. A real focus will be on safeguarding of young people accessing the service in particular.

Successful Quality Assurance visit for Adult Learning took place in Q4, with only a few minor recommendations – all of which were actioned within a week of the visit.

The Division will cease the delivery of the LCR/ESF Ways to Work programme on 30th September 23. We are currently working with the CA to access SIF gap funding until March 24 when the new UKSPF programme will commence in April 24

Referrals to the DWP/G4S Restart programme have dropped significantly in line with indicative profiles. We are liaising with JCP/DWP/G4S to understand longer term implications of this on the Restart contract/staffing etc.

Community & Environment

3.3 Culture Services

The Brindley Theatre and Events

Planning permission is still awaited for the new extension. The detailed design is being finalised ready for procurement. An Executive Board report on the project will be considered on 21 April 2023.

3.4 Library Service

None detailed in return provided.

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 4.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council’s business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.
- 4.2 The Councils latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>




5.0 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 Directorate.



Employment, Learning & Skills









Key Objectives / milestones







Ref	Objective
EEP 01	Employment Learning and skills





Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To manage and sustain employment support programmes Work Programme by March 2023		The team continues to access funding to sustain the service. UK Shared Prosperity Funding has been ring-fenced to continue the Ways to Work Programme, albeit in a reduced format.
To deliver a Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony by September 2022		Completed – event took place in 2022.
To develop, in partnership with the CA/LCR CAs, a Pathways to Teaching in Adult Learning route way by September 2022		Pathways to Teaching project is underway and is being co-ordinated by Halton on behalf of the CA. The first cohort of PTT are nearing completion and will complete by Summer 2023.

Appendix 2: Progress Against Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 08	Number of Enrolments (Adult Learning).	698	2500	828			Although under target, enrolments are continuing to increase, despite repeated issues with the recruitment and retention of tutors.


Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 09	Number of People supported into work (HPiJ).	333	750	160			160 customers were supported into employment across all employment programmes in Q4. Cumulative number of customers supported into work 610 via HPIJ. The number of customers supported into work has been impacted on the reduction in referrals across all contracts. % achieved against actual participants was strong.
EEP LI 10	Percentage of learners achieving accreditation	15%	20%	21%			Recruitment issues have hindered the delivery of accredited programmes up to and including Q4. Additional tutors have now been recruited and the service has increased its curriculum offer with regards to accredited programmes in the Spring Term
EEP LI 11	Total number of job starts on DWP Work and Health and JETS programmes	142	257	51			39 customers were supported into employment on Work and Health and JETS Cumulative customers supported into work 266
EEP LI 12	Total number of job starts on DWP Restart programme (G4S). (New)	N/A	265	66			66 customers were supported into employment on Restart programme in Q3. Cumulative No of customers supported into work 226. The programme hasn't received the profile number of referrals.


Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 13	Number of Businesses Supported.	1091	500	182			47 for Q4 (8 Business Growth Programme, 26 property enquiries, 13 unique business engagements).
EEP LI 14	Number of individuals supported into paid work placements (ILMs)	47	100	11			11 ILM's commenced in Q4. The number of young people aged 16-29yrs of age wanting to apply for ILM's has reduced. There was also an issue of double funding for customers on other programmes preventing them accessing ILM's. The ILM programme ends in Sep 23 so employers not keen to start where they can only access funding for a shorter period of time
EEP LI 15	Number of adult learners who feel prepared for choosing the next steps (e.g. into employment, another course, college/university etc.)	90%	100%	94.1%			Learners are supported in identifying their next steps by their tutors and Frontline Services, who identify progression routes for learners completing courses. Target remains at 100%, although there has been a significant increase
EEP LI 16	Number of adult learners who have progressed onto another course	49%	52%	15%			The service has developed a curriculum that ensures that as many learners as possible have progression routes – including next level programmes and complementary learning.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 4 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
	Deliver supported internships (New).	N/A	10	8			9 learners started on programme out of the planned 10. 8 currently on programme as 1 withdrew for another programme of support. 5 interns commenced placements with 2 starting paid ILM's. Interns that's haven't started a placement are not ready to do so at this stage.
EEP LI 18	% Increase coverage in top 7 disadvantaged wards (New)	N/A	10%	5%			Service continues to focus on the most disadvantaged wards in the borough. Moving forward, will use more focused data to identify where specifically in those wards marketing and recruitment should be targeted

Community Services






Ref	Objective
CE 02	Develop a confident, energetic library service. Create a team that deliver pioneering projects with communities, from vibrant spaces & online. Establish the library service as an organisation embracing change, leading learning, - and contributing to a thriving Halton.



Milestone	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Create a digital offer that utilises up to date technology and hardware options to ensure residents are able to access information, communication, & learning opportunities that support personal growth and individual ambition. March 2022		The implementation and installation of the new public VDI PC offer is still underway at Ditton Library. There have been delays due to the withdrawal of Microsoft Office products. These issues are being addressed and we are Expecting the installation to be rolled out to other service points during August 2023.

Working in partnership, deliver an ambitious cultural programme that builds on the legacy of the Borough of Culture festival season, securing external funding to maximise impact, value & potential. March 2022		A Cultural Strategy is being produced
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Key Objectives / milestones

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CE LI 07	Number of active users (physical & digital resources) of the library service during the last 12 months.	1,799,950	1,250,00	911,399			The service is still recovering from Covid. Some users still haven't returned.
CE LI 08	Number of physical and virtual visits to libraries (annual total)	1,485,023	987,000	937,736			The service is still recovering from Covid. Some users still haven't returned.
CE LI 09	Increase in percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last month (KPI 1 from Active Lives survey)	50.1%	53%	63%			Just over six in 10 adults (29.1 million) achieved 150+ minutes of activity a week. Men's activity levels have returned to the highs seen in November 18-19, Women's activity levels remain slightly below this (down 0.7%). Both, however, continue to see activity levels up over the longer term. Among young people aged 16-34, activity levels were falling

							before the pandemic and this trend continues. Both 55-74-year-olds and those aged 75+ were seeing activity levels grow before the pandemic. This growth stalled during the pandemic but those aged 55- 74 have now seen activity levels increase once more (up 0.9% from Nov 18-19), while those aged 75+ record their highest ever reported activity level.
CE LI 10	Percentage of people physically inactive (KPI 2 from Active Lives survey)	38.9%	30%-	25.8			Adults with a disability or long-term health condition have seen activity levels recover. Significant inequalities continue to exist in activity levels between some minority ethnic groups. The least affluent continue to see activity levels negatively impacted. Those living in the most deprived places are yet to see activity levels fully recover.

6.0 Financial Statements

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Operational Budget as at 31 March 2023

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employee Related Expenditure	5,605	5,460	145
Repairs & Maintenance	2,211	2,285	(74)
Premises	92	102	(10)
Energy & Water Costs	1,059	1,059	0
NNDR	549	664	(115)
Rents	192	161	31
Economic Regeneration Activities	17	0	17
Security	486	548	(62)
Supplies & Services	822	621	201
Supplies & Services - Grant	740	740	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	162	162	0
Capital Finance	30	30	0
Transfer to Reserves	1,007	1,007	0
Total Expenditure	12,972	12,839	133
Income			
Fees & Charges Income	-906	-913	7
Rent - Commercial Properties	-801	-785	(16)
Rent - Investment Properties	-44	-44	0
Rent - Markets	-793	-766	(27)
Government Grant	-1,042	-1,042	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,612	-1,615	3
Schools SLA Income	-384	-362	(22)
Recharges to Capital	-153	-149	(4)
Transfer from Reserves	-2,248	-2,248	0
Total Income	-7,983	-7,924	(59)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,989	4,915	74
Recharges			
Premises Support	1,474	1,474	0
Transport Support	27	28	0
Central Support	2,082	2,082	0
Asset Rental Support	1,399	1,399	0
Recharge Income	-6,258	-6,258	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,276	-1,275	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	3,713	3,640	74

Comments on the above figures

As at 31 March 2023 net expenditure for the department was £0.074m below the approved budget for the year. An improvement on the forecast overspend position of £0.164m estimated at the end of December 2022.

The Department recognises the significant financial challenges they face and will continue to face into the near future, particularly given the elevated levels of inflation for commodities including fuel, energy, materials, and increased wage demands.

Financial Management continue to work closely with the Department and remain focused on achieving a balanced budget at year end. By carefully monitoring the accounts, the department has utilised grant, external funding and capital funding where possible to try and relieve the pressure on the core budget.

Across the Investment & Development Division several posts remained vacant in year due to a restructure that has taken place. Temporary measures have been taken where it has been possible to find the appropriate skill set required. The delay in recruitment of staff has improved the Employee budget position this quarter. The 2022/23 pay award was agreed in October and budgets updated accordingly.

The impact of increased energy and fuel costs continued to be monitored during the year. £0.156m was required from Council Reserves to fund the additional costs above budget. Latest forecasts show a further increase of 75% in gas costs and 52% electricity costs for 23/24 which have been allowed for in the approved budget.

Challenging income targets are particularly damaging to the Department, as unlike some other sectors the Council do not have the ability to passport additional costs pressure onto tenants as contracts are in place for a number of years and rent reviews can only take place when a review is due.

The Asset Management Service has incurred one off expenses this year, due to the vacant unit at The Hive that was previously occupied by Frankie & Benny's. Costs relating to NNDR, repairs and maintenance and service charges have had to be paid by HBC until the unit is leased. Negotiations are currently taking place with a new tenant.

Adult Learning Division has contributed £0.131m as match funding towards the Ways to Work Programme this financial year creating an employment programme to date of £6m.

Due to adverse trading conditions in the retail sector which have been worsened by inflation and increased utilities costs, the department under achieved on market rental income targets this budget year. During the last few months, the occupancy rate has dropped to 88%. This may be linked to the introduction of customers having to pay for parking outside the market.

The School Cleaning Service Level Agreement (SLA) did not cover its costs this budget year due to the need to employ agency staff to cover sickness and leave and the pay award. A review of SLA charges has been undertaken ahead of the next budget year.

The savings put forward to provide additional office space for external agencies at Rutland House was not achieved this budget year. This budget pressure will continue into financial year 2023/24. It is important that any future savings put forward can be delivered and will not create an added budget pressure.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**Capital Projects as of 31 March 2023**

Project Title	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
3MG	164	25	139
Murdishaw	31	1	30
Equality Act Improvement Works	200	247	(47)
Widnes Market Refurbishment	6	6	0
Broseley House	21	12	9
Solar Farm Extension	11	3	8
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2,117	3,569	(1,452)
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	36	0	36
Halton Lea TCF	388	353	35
Property Improvements	213	189	24
Astmoor Regeneration	14	14	0
Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Industrial Estate	500	518	(18)
Runcorn Station Building Development	110	60	50
St Paul Mews	500	515	(15)
Waterloo Building	0	7	(7)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	45	28	17
Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment	3,239	1,451	1,788
Totals	7,595	6,998	597

3MG – 3MG produced one major capital receipt in the form of the disposal of Linner Cottage in 2022 / 2023 however the anticipated disposal of HBC Field was delayed into 2023 / 2024 due to a boundary change with the land being disposed of. This means there will be a reduction in the size of plot disposed of, but the capital receipt will remain the same. The sale will complete in the first quarter of 2023 / 2024.

HBC was in negotiations to dispose of a plot of land in the north of the site but that petered out due to Central Government funding requirements and there are a small number of remaining plots that will form a portfolio of sites to be disposed of in 2023 / 2024.

Murdishaw – The Council have worked in partnership with Onward Homes to develop a community scheme which includes the establishment of a new CIC who will run a new venture from the former boxing club. A scheme of environmental improvements has been initiated across the estate with some signage improvements completed. Key priorities for the scheme include improvements to the external space at Murdishaw Community Centre and improvements to the Gorsewood area and external area adjacent to the former boxing club.

Equality Act - There are a number of access type schemes using the equality act budget this year. At quarter 3 it was anticipated that the budget would underspend and £0.100m was moved forward to 23/24.

Widnes Market Refurbishment – All Capital works are now complete, and all retentions paid.

Broseley House - All works are complete on site and invoices fully paid.

Solar Farm Extension - It has now been operational for 2 years. No key issues have been identified. The system is performing in line with expectations in terms of energy produced and income.

Foundry Lane – Project progressing on schedule with all ground remediation works now complete. Due to pre grant expenditure and additional costs for the land swap with Beesley & Fildes, it was agreed by Executive Board that the programme will be increased by £1.7m. This increase was placed in the Capital Programme for 23/24 and will need to be brought forward to 22/23.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improvement Works – Majority of the refurbishment works completed; redecoration works to the meeting rooms to be carried out.

Halton TCF – This LCR funded programme is now complete.

Property Improvements- There are a number of projects against this scheme including re-roofing the Fitness Suite at the Stadium, lift replacement at Kingsway Learning Centre, and re-roofing 73 High Street.

Astmoor Regeneration – Project is now complete.

Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Trade Park - Works nearing completion, anticipated completion by end of May, following which tenants can commence their fit-out.

St Paul Mews - Awaiting final tenant to be re-located, following which demolition of buildings will take place following a tender exercise.

Waterloo Building - Awaiting decision from Planning in respect of demolition, subject to approval being granted demolition will follow after a tender exercise.

Shared Prosperity Fund – Halton submitted an Investment Plan to the CA for three strands of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme – Town Centres; Local Culture, Arts and Heritage; Green, Resilient, Safe Communities. This amounts to £0.608m up to March 2025 and is a mix of capital and revenue.

Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment – The Town Deal programme covers a number of projects to strengthen the town centre economy, including Brindley Theatre Enhancement, Creative and Digital Skills Centre, Health and Education Hub, High Street Connectivity, Town Centre New Homes, Station Enterprise Facility, and Unlock Runcorn. Business cases for all projects have been submitted and approved. Work will continue on site for the next 3 years.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2023**

	Annual Budget	Actual	Variance (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure			
Employees	15,756	14,936	820
Premises	2,544	2,841	(297)
Supplies & Services	1,488	1,655	(167)
Hired & Contracted Services	453	475	(22)
Book Fund	147	142	5
Food Provisions	354	371	(17)
School Meals Food	1,872	2,069	(197)
Miscellaneous Transport Costs	115	133	(18)
Other Agency Costs	209	204	5
Other Expenditure	0	15	(15)
Waste Disposal Contracts	6,538	6,438	100
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	57	16	41
Grant to Norton Priory	172	173	(1)
Rolling Projects	0	20	(20)
Capital Financing	1,077	1,094	(17)
Total Expenditure	30,782	30,582	200
Income			
Sales Income	-1,196	-1,199	3
School Meals Sales	-2,730	-2,739	9
Fees & Charges Income	-5,351	-5,299	(52)
Rental Income	-209	-171	(38)
Government Grant Income	-359	-363	4
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-792	-818	26
SLA Income	-2,227	-1,785	(442)
Catering Fees	-88	-108	20
Internal Fees Income	-227	-289	62
Capital Salaries	-106	-75	(31)
Transfers From Reserves	-1,221	-1,314	93
Total Income	-14,506	-14,160	(346)
Net Operational Expenditure	16,276	16,422	(146)
Recharges			
Premises Support	1,496	1,496	0
Transport Support	2,325	2,433	(108)
Central Support	4,449	4,449	0
Asset Rental Support	3,519	3,519	0
Support Costs Income	-511	-511	0
Net Total Recharges	11,278	11,386	(108)
Net Departmental Expenditure	27,554	27,808	(254)

Comments on the above figures

The net department spend is £0.254m over the approved budget for the year.

This differs greatly from the forecast underspend position of £0.346m estimated at the end of Q3. The difference is predominantly to do with income estimates and further information is provided within the report.

Employee spend is £0.820m below the budget due to the number of vacancies within the department resulting from delays and difficulty in recruitment. This reflects vacancies within School Meals, Leisure and Stadium Services.

Premises costs are £0.297m over budget at the end of the year. Costs for utilities across all sites but in particular for Leisure services and Crematorium are overspent due to the increased cost of electricity and gas.

Spend on Supplies and Services is £0.167m over budget. This includes Crematorium spend for the decommissioning of the temporary cremator plus equipment costs.

Food Provisions, especially School Meals food is overspent by £0.197m due to the increasing inflationary food costs from suppliers.

Invoices relating to 2021/22 waste disposal contracts were received in Q3 2022/23 and were much lower than had been forecast in finalising the 2021/22 accounts. Charges for 2022/23 waste disposal contracts are calculated based on the average cost per tonne in the previous year. Therefore, the total outturn is £0.1m below the approved budget.

School Meals SLA income has underachieved by £0.442m, although mitigated by vacancies against budget for the service.

Transport recharges outturn overspend for 2022/23 is £0.108m due to fuel and other cost increases.

Capital Projects as at 31 March 2023

Project Title	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	37	16	21
Stadium decarbonisation scheme	0	145	(145)
Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment	70	42	28
Halton Leisure Centre	3,296	3,239	57
Children's Playground Equipment	80	40	40
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	0	340
Upton Improvements	13	0	13
Crow Wood Park Play Area	39	27	12
Crow Wood Park Pavillion	0	1	(1)
Open Spaces Schemes	450	170	280
Runcorn Town Park	256	282	(26)
Widnes Crem, Replacement Cremator	200	242	(42)
Spike Island / Wigg Island	60	1	59
Litter Bins	20	20	0
TOTAL	4,861	4,225	636

Comments on the above figures**Stadium Decarbonisation Scheme**

Grant-funded project to reduce the DCBL Stadium's carbon footprint. This involved replacing the gas boilers with air source heat pumps and installing LED lighting and additional installation. The scheme was completed in March 2022 with retentions paid in April 2023 over and above the approved budget.

Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment

The scheme is now complete but awaiting retentions invoice of approx £0.032m for the practical completion. There is a slight overspend due to additional fence panel/gate request works.

Halton (Moor Lane) Leisure Centre

The estimated cost of the new leisure centre has increased significantly due to the current levels of inflation, scarcity of materials etc. The Leisure Centre contract start date was 09/01/23 for a 108 week build. Spend to date includes all works associated with the PCSDA and CPO etc.

Children's Playground Equipment

This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds.

Landfill Tax Credits Schemes

Currently used to support improvements for a rolling programme of existing playgrounds and Open Space Schemes across the Borough. There were no projects identified in 2022/23.

Upton Improvements

Open space improvement works undertaken. Work has been delayed due to contractor workload and difficulty obtaining materials. No revised date set yet for when this may be spent.

Crow Wood Park & Pavillion

The main contract for the new park building has ended. A small amount of work to the building is required plus additional landscape contract to complete the paths - this is ongoing with some work from Property Services and Open Spaces team to complete.

Open Spaces

This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including Arley Drive/Halton Housing Trust and Fairfield History projects. Schemes on this code are progressing, although slightly behind the expenditure profile due to resource issues.

Runcorn Town Park

Project to renew park infrastructure. Project is ongoing with the next phase carried over to financial year 23/24. Some carry forward will be needed to complete work in season and for contingency payments plus some small sums for retention payments from previous phases. Anticipated further successful bids to the INEOS EfW fund for future phases.

Widnes Crematorium replacement Cremator

Contract works on the new cremator are complete. The over spend is as a result of the original budget of £0.200m being based on the quote from a company that later had to drop out of the process because they failed to meet the financial solvency requirements HBC needed. The company who could meet our financial requirements quote was an additional £0.031m. A further £0.010m overspend is as a result of repairs required to unforeseen damage to the original building slab under the old cremator when it was removed.




Spike Island / Wigg Island Recovery Works

The programme is slightly behind due to staff capacity issues. Waiting for a consultancy agreement to be put in place so the scheme can progress using external help.





7.0 Application 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.	<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

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.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	18 th September 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Environment & Regeneration
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Reports for Quarter 1 of 2023/24
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and raise, any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the first quarter period to 30th June 2023.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2023 - 24 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
 - Enterprise, Employment and Skills
 - Community and Environment

The report details progress against objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the first quarter performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and

Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The identification of business critical objectives / milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 At the time at which annual business plans are developed, Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable

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

10.1 Not applicable

Reporting Period: 1st April to 30th June 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the first quarter of 2023 / 24 for service areas within the remit of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community (ELSC) Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2023 - 24 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to Employment, Learning, Skills and Community (ELSC) Policy & Performance Board i.e.
- Employment, Learning and Skills
 - Library and Culture and Leisure Services
- 1.3 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 7 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments during the period which include:-

2.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

UKSPF/Economically Inactive – discussions between the 6 LAs and the CA commenced in Q1 regarding the co-design of the current LA-delivered Ways to Work programme and the CA's Households into Work programme. The 'new' programme will be funded from UKSPF, the allocations of which are much reduced compared to previous European funding. The focus of the new programme will be to support 'Economically Inactive' residents.

Local Skills Improvement Plan – St Helens Chamber, leading on this on behalf of the other Chambers in the City Region, submitted the final Local Skills Plan on behalf of the City Region. LSIPs aim to reshape skills training provision to better meet the local needs of employers and the wider economy. The Chambers undertook a range of consultation exercise with local businesses and stakeholders and an Emerging Priorities document was produced. This has formed the basis of the final LSIP submission and can be viewed here 925007_17c2761403ca4f1387ca99221bdaa782.pdf (lcrchambersofcommerce.co.uk).

Review of Adult Learning Full-Time/Fractional Tutor Contract – the contract has been in place since 2006 and requires a complete review. During Q1, managers worked together with HR and the unions to develop a more fit for purpose Local Agreement, to be implemented in Q2.

Provider Improvement Plan (DWP Restart Programme) - HPIJ has been placed on the next tier of the PIP along with many other providers nationally. The issue for Halton, in the main, is that due to referral numbers being much less than forecast, the size of the cohort is not allowing for the challenging job targets to be achieved (set by Prime Contractor). HPIJ managers are cooperating with actions being proposed by the Prime Contractor and will provide ongoing updates as necessary to PPB.

Adult Learning Ofsted Inspection – Halton Borough Council's Adult Learning Service had its first Ofsted inspection for 6 years at the end of Q1. Whilst the service was expecting a full inspection, Ofsted only undertook a short inspection over 1.5 days. The process was quite intense, trying to fit as much inspection activity in to such a short period of time, however, the results appear promising. A draft report will be sent to HBC in Q2.

Visit to Kingsway Learning Centre/HPIJ by ELS PPB Chair and Vice Chair – a valuable visit took place in Q1, whereby the Chair and Vice Chair spent a morning visiting both the Adult Learning Service and HPIJ offices with the Kingsway Learning Centre. The visit was a combination of presentations and walkabout, meeting staff, learners and customers. A follow up visit to HPIJ Runcorn offices and Acorn Learning Centre in Runcorn will be planned for September.

Recruitment continues to be a challenge – the Division has struggled to recruit good quality staff. For example, the vacant Supported Internship Team Leader post has been out to advert unsuccessfully twice, with a 3rd attempt due to take place in Q2. Current recruitment processes for some posts do not seem to be working for vacancies within the Division.

Progress on KPIs

Enrolments in target wards:

Central and West Bank – 131 – 10.49%

Appleton – 90 – 7.21%

Halton View – 83 – 6.65%

Grange – 110 – 8.81%

Halton Lea – 46 – 3.68%

Withdrawals – 105 – 8% (max 10% by end of year 3)

Funding allocation – 96% (target 97%, with more enrolments to be added to system)

Marketing activity in target wards:

- Central & West Bank – 11
- Appleton – 4
- Halton View – 2
- Grange 1
- Halton Lea – 5

Adult Learning Marketing Events Attended January to end of June – 36 (target 38, however tracking began in Jan with more events occurring in July)

Employer Engagement Activities were reviewed throughout Q1 and actions identified. Employer Engagement Strategy to be finalised in Q2 with achievement against KPI's to be reported from Q2

HPIJ Marketing Events Attended in Q1 -

- Attendance at partner/community events - 4
- Attendance at Jobs Fairs – 2

Community & Environment

2.3 Culture

A report of the Brindley Programming was considered by Employment Learning & Skills & Community PPB on 19 June regarding the Brindley programming. It was agreed that a report would be taken to Executive Board on 13 Jul

2.4 Community Centres

Old Police Station – works completed on a new lift to maximise the numbers of areas in the building which are DDA compliant, thus allowing greater occupancy.

2.5 Library Service

The Library Strategy for 2023-2028 was considered by Employment Learning & Skills & Community PPB on 19 June. It was agreed that a report would be taken to Executive Board in September following some minor amendments around employment support for customers.

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of services including:-

Employment, Learning & Skills

3.2 Employment, Learning & Skills

Local Skills Improvement Fund – following the submission of the LSIP, an application from LCR colleges was submitted to the associated Local Skills Improvement Fund in Q1. The intention is that the proposed delivery will meet some of the emerging priorities that came out of the LSIP. Consultation with the Division did not take place prior to submission.

Publication of Ofsted inspection report – a draft report will be published in Q2, with the full report going live on Ofsted website no later than Q3. Any recommendations detailed within the report will be actioned by the Adult Learning Team.

Pathways to Teaching in Adult Learning – following Test & Learn Funding for a Pathways to Teaching programme, previously reported on at PPB in June, Halton is awaiting confirmation from the Combined Authority about future funding. The project was developed because of not being able to recruit good quality adult learning tutors in the City Region and so has enabled local authorities to, in effect, ‘grow their own’ tutor base.

Restart Programme – continued drop in referrals from local JCP offices impacting on the delivery of the programme. Placed on stage 3 performance improvement notice.

Community & Environment

3.3 Culture Services

The Brindley revenue costs for heating, lighting and cleaning will increase following the extension and incorporation of the Library. In preparation for this, the team are bidding for funding to support the switch over to LED lighting. The first external funding Bid was unsuccessful. However, another bid has been submitted, decision is expected later in the year.

3.4 Community Centres

Old Police Station – One group have informed us they intend to leave their 2 rooms by December 2023. We have had interest in the space including an additional room which is vacant at present, we will ensure a smooth transition when the time comes. This will bring us to maximum capacity in the building.

3.4 Library Service

In consistent opening hours remain an issue. The service will be part of a restructure of Leisure Service and the aim will be to standardise the opening times across the four buildings.

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 4.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council’s business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.
- 4.2 The Councils latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>



5.0 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 Directorate.

Employment, Learning & Skills

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective: To facilitate & create employment To deliver a range of local/national externally funded employment programmes to increase the number of unemployed and economically inactive Halton residents to gain employment. To support local employers with sourcing local people for local jobs.
EEP 01	Employment Learning and skills

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
To deliver year 3 of the Supported Internship programme by September 2023		On track – recruitment of Interns has commenced with information sessions for learners and parents taking place at KLC.
To achieve the required outputs and customer service standards on the DWP/G4S Restart Programme contract to cease the Enhanced Performance Regime/PIP by June 2023		At the end of Q1 Restart Customer Service Standards had been achieved. Job Start and Job Outcomes (output targets) were not achieved in Q1 due to a drop in referrals from JCP, reduced caseloads and increased disengaged customers on a mandatory programme. This is being reviewed in Q2 as part of our performance improvement notice by G4S/DWP.

To review HPIJ Employer Engagement Strategy and implement improvements by June 2023 .		Employer engagement activities were reviewed throughout Q1 and actions identified. Employer Engagement Strategy to be finalised in Q2.
Implementation of new contracts within required deadlines (UKSPF/Home Office Refugee Programme if contracts secured) by July 2023 .		Ingeus didn't not secure the Home Office Refugee Programme therefore they have not sub-contracted this provision to HPIJ. UKSPF meetings held regularly across the LCRCA/LA's - on track to design the programme and implement in April 2024
To deliver a Pathways to Teaching programme, which will create adult learning tutor employment opportunities by September 2023		All learners on Pathways for Halton will achieve by 31/7/2023 (Microteaches 11/7/2023). Tutor in place for September and planning has begun for 23/24 PTT project

Ref	Objective: To promote access to learning to those who need it most To provide a curriculum offer designed on intent, which is effectively marketed and implemented and has maximum impact on Halton's adult residents.
EEP 02	Employment Learning and skills

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
To deliver an Adult Learning Marketing Strategy by April 2023		Adult Learning Marketing strategy has been implemented by Adult Learning, with key target wards identified and marketing implemented.
To review the Quality Assurances processes within the Adult Learning Service by July 2023		In light of Osted inspection and recommendations, the review will now take place over the summer ready for the commencement of Autumn Term (August 2023)
To review the adult learning tutor contracts by July 2024		Steering Group signed off the revised Tutor Contract (Local Agreement) for full time/fractional tutors on 6 th July 2023. The sessional tutor contract will be revised in order that both contracts are aligned.

Appendix 2: Progress Against Performance Indicators

STRATEGIC ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
High Unemployment	2.7% of economically active people are unemployed (2021 Census)			<u>HBC's contribution:</u> HPIJ delivery of Welfare to Work & Health programmes (Ways to Work, Restart, Work & Health Programme and Supported Internships Programme)	Percentage unemployed (aged 16-64 years). Percentage of economically inactive of working age
Low wage residents	Data not available from Census 21? Data from Adzuna – median salary in Halton is £26,000 which is 14.3% less than the national average of £30,000 (although there has been a YOY increase of 8% in Halton)			Employers signing up to the LCR Fair Employment Charter	Percentage of employees' earnings below real living wage.
Low-income households	Data??			<u>HBC's contributions:</u> HPIJ delivery of Welfare to Work & Health programmes (Ways to Work, Restart, Work & Health Programme and Supported Internships Programme).	Percentage employees who are local (FTE) employed on contract for one year or the whole duration of the contract, whichever is shorter.

STRATEGIC ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Good employment	Data not available from Census 21? Current Data from Adzuna – 26.93% in Permanent Employment, 9.68% in Contract Employment and 63.39% unspecified			Employers signing up to the LCR Fair Employment Charter <u>HBC's contribution:</u> Employer Engagement Strategy to be updated to recognise and celebrate 'good' employers in the borough.	Proportion of employed in permanent and non-permanent employment. Adzuna data??
Low skills levels in LSOAs are not being addressed in line with need.	No. of unemployed of working age population compared to number of actual HBC Adult Learning enrolments (Top 5 LSOAs for unemployment) Central and West Bank – 145 claimants, only 56 enrolled (38%) Appleton and Halton View – 100 claimants, only 35 enrolled (35%) Grange – 95 claimants, only 17 enrolled (18%)	Central and West Bank - 43% Appleton and Halton View - 40% Grange –25% Halton Lea – 38%	Central and West Bank – 48% Appleton and Halton View - 45% Grange – 35% Halton Lea – 43%	<u>HBC's contribution:</u> Targeted marketing of LSOAs – working with Customer Intelligence Team and use of Adzuna dashboard. Outreach and engagement schedule.	To increase the number of Adult Learning enrolments from residents aged 19+ living in Halton's LSOA areas

OPERATIONAL ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
The number of HBC adult learning withdrawals has shown a year-on-year increase. Withdrawals adversely affect income levels.	14% overall withdrawals in the year 21/22	12%	10%	HBC's contribution: Early intervention for learner issues. Implementation of 'Extensions in Learning' process. Reviewed onboarding process – distance learning.	To reduce the number of withdrawals in the Adult Learning Service
Halton adult Learner Voice does not consistently get used to promote the service	19 limited detail success stories provided in 21/22. Format does not showcase effectively the impact of the service	12 Meaningful case studies	12	Annual marketing strategy. Promotional videos of learning.	To increase the number of Adult Learning Case Studies produced each year
A reduction of HBC AEB funding due to performance levels only achieving 98%	–£14,197.92 (2% of overall budget)	0%	0%	To increase enrolment numbers. To reduce withdrawals. To deliver more accredited provision.	To reduce our Adult Education Budget threshold level, year on year
Marketing and promotion of the Adult Learning Service is inconsistent	10 Marketing events attended in 21/22	38	38	Attendance at partner events Increased social media presence and followers. Increase to at least one marketing activity per week during term time.	To deliver an annual programme of outreach and engagement adult learning activities

OPERATIONAL ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>Increase the number of Economically Inactive customers that we engage with on programmes not just for unemployed people (focused on Economically Inactive)</p>	<p>12% of Ways to Work participants on programme were Economically Inactive</p>	<p>25%</p>	<p>75%</p>	<p>Attendance at Jobcentres on a weekly basis (engaging with Work Coaches that support Economically Inactive customers) Attendance at partner/community events Attendance at Jobs Fairs Increased social media presence and followers Community Engagement Plan and Outreach Based Approach</p>	<p>‘Economically inactive individuals are those not in work and not actively seeking work (unlike unemployed individuals who are actively seeking work). Not all economically inactive individuals claim benefits. For those that do, this would include those claiming either “legacy” benefits or those within specific conditionality regimes in Universal Credit: The former includes Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Income Support (IS). The latter includes claimants within the Preparation Requirement or Work Focused Interview</p>
<p>Marketing and promotion of HPIJ services for programmes that allow self-referrals is inconsistent</p>	<p>Ad-hoc partnership working across the Borough Leaflets posters and and stands displayed across community venues.</p>	<p>48</p>	<p>48</p>	<p>Attendance at Jobcentres on a weekly basis Attendance at partner/community events Attendance at Jobs Fairs Increased social media presence and followers</p>	<p>To deliver an annual programme of outreach and engagement activities to market and promote HPIJ programmes that local residents can self-refer to.</p>

OPERATIONAL ISSUES	BASELINE POSITION	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 1	OUTCOMES AT END OF YEAR 3	INTERVENTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>Place Based Business Support Programme Delivered</p> <p>Targeted flexible place-based business support for existing businesses with growth ambitions and employment potential which provide equitable access across the city region. To include all businesses including social enterprises</p>	<p>Lead Officer nominated.</p> <p>Specialist advice commissioned in order to support businesses</p>	25	42	<p>Diagnostic sessions performed by trained staff and appropriate support sources for the business. Specific support can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy • Corporate Marketing • Procurement • Net Zero • Finance • Access to funding 	TBA by CA
<p>To provide support to Start-ups, with a focus on enterprise ready entrepreneurs (within 3 months of establishing a business) and a focus on founders who are looking to employ people within 24 months, export and/or generate high turnover growth. To include all businesses including social enterprises.</p>	<p>This service is currently not delivered by Halton BC</p>	5	11	<p>Business Starts in all sectors (non-specialised)</p>	TBA by CA

Community ServicesCommunity Services

Ref	Objective
CE 01	To manage a successful Theatre for the benefit of Halton residents and the sub region.









Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Programming report to PPB June 2023.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Report received by PPB and it was agreed it could be forwarded to Executive Board.
Programming report to Executive Board July 2023.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Report has been submitted.

Ref	Objective
CE 02	Develop a new library strategy for 2023-2028.

Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Programming report to PPB June 2023.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Report received by PPB and it was agreed it could be forwarded to Executive Board.
Programming report to Executive Board September 2023.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Report to be submitted in August.

CE 03	Increase the occupancy levels at the Old Police Station
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Milestone	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Improve the accessibility of the building June 2023.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Works complete.
Negotiate with new tenants to secure a tenancy agreements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In progress with the incoming tenant.

Ref	Description	Actual 2022/ 23	Actual 2022/ 23	Quarter 1 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Direction of Travel
CE LI 01	% occupancy of tenants at Old Police Station	93%	100%	93%			We expect the position to remain static until December 2023, due to the configuration of the building.
CE LI 02	Footfall for all libraries: Ditton Library Widnes Library Runcorn Library Halton Lea Library	Total 320,600	Total 320,600	Total 75,265 5,916 20,471 16,464 32,414			75,265 in total to date. There is a trend of footfall and in person issues reducing and digital issues increasing. The service is trying to buck this trend. Based on the first quarter, we are below where we want to be.
CE LI 03	Library Digital issues	1,350,119	1,500,000	882,868			Correlates with the reduction in person visits and issues.
CE LI 04	Library Issues in branch: Ditton Library Widnes Library Runcorn Library Halton Lea Library	Total 203,595	Total 203,595	Total 41,482 2790 19606 1884 17202			41,482 in total to date. There is a trend of footfall and in person issues reducing and digital issues increasing. The service is trying to buck this trend. Based on the first quarter, we are below where we want to be.

Financial StatementsECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENTRevenue Operational Budget at 30th June 2023

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,155	1,319	1,309	10	39
Repairs & Maintenance	1,930	587	589	(2)	(2)
Premises	104	91	91	0	(3)
Energy & Water Costs	1,765	302	247	55	222
NNDR	793	683	676	7	7
Rents	165	77	77	0	0
Economic Regeneration Activities	37	3	3	0	0
Security	509	77	86	(9)	(30)
Supplies & Services	297	128	139	(11)	(45)
Supplies & Services - Grant	535	110	110	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	85	25	25	0	0
Total Expenditure	11,375	3,402	3,352	50	188
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-803	-72	-62	(10)	(41)
Rent - Commercial Properties	-974	-186	-146	(40)	(158)
Rent - Investment Properties	-44	-13	-11	(2)	(6)
Rent - Markets	-853	-211	-191	(20)	(78)
Government Grant	-1,058	-130	-130	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,084	0	-4	4	6
Schools SLA Income	-294	-205	-169	(36)	(36)
Recharges to Capital	-232	-15	-15	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-375	-217	-217	0	0
Total Income	-5,717	-1,049	-945	(104)	(313)
Net Operational Expenditure	5,658	2,353	2,407	(54)	(125)
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,006	502	502	0	0
Transport	23	6	6	0	0
Central Support	1,710	428	428	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-7,728	-1,932	-1,932	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,985	-996	-996	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,673	1,357	1,411	(54)	(125)

Comments on the above figures

Economy, Enterprise & Property is forecast to be £0.125m over budget at the end of the financial year with a current figure of net spend being £0.054m over budget for the first quarter of the year.

Due to the energy costs budget increasing significantly in 2023/24, the department is forecasting that it will be £0.264m under budget in year, but this is still predicted to be £0.484m higher than 2022/23, which is an increase of over 50%. The forecast will change over the following three quarters depending on the change in energy costs and usage over this time.

There has continued to be delays in recruiting across the department, and so the projection is currently that the department will be under budget by £0.039m on employee costs. It is important to note that the pay award has not yet been agreed for 2023/24 and this could drastically change employee costs if awards are agreed higher than those budgeted for.

As inflation is running much higher than originally predicted at the time of budget setting, supplies and services and security are predicted to overspend by £0.030m and £0.045m respectively. These budgets will be monitored closely throughout the financial year.

As in previous years, and the long recovery from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the financial challenges of commercial property rent continue to present a significant financial challenge. The department is currently predicting to under achieve it's income target by £0.158m. This position takes into account an approved saving of £0.120m letting out vacant space at Rutland House not being achieved.

The department is also projecting to under achieve on market rental income targets this financial year, as the occupancy rate continues to be low, this may be due to continued impact of introduction of customers having to pay for parking outside the market but hopefully footfall will increase before year end.

Early predictions also suggest budget shortfalls in fees and charges income and School SLA Income. Financial Management continue to work closely with the Department and remain focused on achieving a balanced budget at year end, increasing income and decreasing spend where possible. This will continue to be closely monitored as the year progresses and updates will be provided accordingly.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

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

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**Capital Projects as of 30 June 23**

	2023/24 Capital Allocation	Allocation to Date	Actual Spend to 30 June 2023	Total Allocation Remaining
Expenditure				
3MG	138	12	12	126
Murdishaw	29	0	0	29
Equality Act Improvement Works	352	56	56	296
Solar Farm Extension	8	0	0	8
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2634	77	77	2557
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	35	0	0	35
Roof Top Garden	35	0	0	35
Property Improvements	224	16	16	208
Runcorn Station Building Development	514	30	30	484
Waterloo Building	93	0	0	93
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	17	0	0	17
Town Deal				
- Unlock Runcorn	176	10	10	166
- Brindley Theatre Enhancement	359	42	42	317
- Creative & Digital Skills Facility	845	69	69	776
- Town Centre New Homes - Rutland Street	282	0	0	282
- Health & Education Hub	44	12	12	32
- High Street Connectivity	201	6	6	195
- Enterprise Hub	62	0	0	62
- Programme Management	200	0	0	200
Total Capital	6,248	330	330	5,918

3MG – HBC Field was sold in April 2023 for £11.9m. There are a small number of remaining plots that will form a portfolio of sites to be disposed of in 2023 / 2024.

Murdishaw – The department has worked in partnership with Onward Homes to develop a community scheme which includes the establishment of a new CIC who will run a new venture from the former boxing club. A scheme of environmental improvements has been initiated across the estate with some signage improvements completed. Discussions are ongoing with Community Development and Murdishaw Community Centre to make improvements to the external space and refurbish the allotment space to allow for the local community to develop its allotment project.

Equality Act Budget- There are a number of access type schemes using the equality act budget this year.

Solar Farm Extension - It has now been operational for 2 years. No key issues have been identified. The system is performing in line with expectations in terms of energy produced and income.

Foundry Lane – Project progressing on schedule with all ground remediation works now complete. Due to pre grant expenditure and additional costs for the land swap with Beesley & Fildes, it was agreed by Executive Board that the programme will be increased by £1.7m for 2023/24.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improvement Works – Majority of the refurbishment works completed; redecoration works to the meeting rooms to be carried out.

Property Improvements- There are a number of projects against this code including Reroofing the Fitness suite at the Stadium, lift replacement at Kingsway Learning Centre, and reroofing 73 High Street.

Runcorn Station Building Development –PACE ES3has now been completed, following an options selection process and have agreed on a preferred option. Within Network Rail the project has been moved to the Capital Delivery Team, where a client remit document has been produced and being reviewed and agreed by partners, to prepare for a procurement exercise for a Stage 4 supplier to develop the single option and obtain an Approval in Principal.





Waterloo Building - Awaiting decision from Planning in respect of demolition, subject to approval being granted demolition will follow after a tender exercise.

UKSF – Halton submitted an Investment Plan to the CA for three strands of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme – Town Centres; Local Culture, Arts and Heritage; Green, Resilient, Safe Communities. This amounts to £608k up to March 2025 and is a mix of capital and revenue.

The Town Deal programme –. The Town Deal programme covers a number of projects to strengthen the town centre economy, including Brindley Theatre Enhancement, Creative and Digital Skills Centre, Health and Education Hub, High Street Connectivity, Town Centre New Homes, Station Enterprise Facility, and Unlock Runcorn. Business cases for all projects have been submitted and approved. Work will continue on site for the next 3 years.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY

APPENDIX A

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £	24/25 £	25/26 £		
EEP 1	Capital Works Team	N/A	Increase the level of fee income by increasing the percentage charged or charging by time, including those works not currently charged for.	10	0	0		On target.
EEP 4	Cleaning Services – Council Buildings	580	Review cleaning arrangements, with a focus on only emptying bins and cleaning toilets daily.	0	100	0		Until the accommodation review is complete, only limited savings will be made in 2024/25
EEP 2	Caretaking & Security Services	641	A review and restructuring of caretaking arrangements. Reduce security cover at Halton Lea to provide opening/closing and then static guarding 7.00 – 19:30	0	52	0		Restructure will take place in 24/25. It is anticipated the full saving will not be met in year. Cannot achieve savings for security due to anti-social behaviour in Halton Lea. Police have advised security is kept on site
				35	0	0		

			Monday - Friday, and 9.30 – 15:00 Saturdays to cover the opening hours of Halton Direct Link.					until this is resolved.
EEP 5	Corporate Buildings	927	Generate additional rental income by providing additional office space for external organisations at Rutland House, by letting out the remaining three floors.	120	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reflected in 2023/24 budget.
EEP 6	Facilities Management	165	Restructure the team in light of an expression of interest for retirement.	44	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reflected in 2023/24 budget.
EEP 8	Technical Support & Market Team	392	Restructuring of the team	98	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reflected in 2023/24 budget.
Total Economy, Enterprise & Property Department				307	152	0		

Community and Greenspace**Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2023**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	17,061	3,700	3,667	33	(50)
Premises	3,685	1,017	1,033	(16)	(63)
Supplies & Services	1,598	553	526	27	108
Hired & Contracted Services	527	128	151	(23)	(93)
Book Fund	140	62	62	0	0
Food Provisions	371	54	87	(33)	(72)
School Meals Food	1,965	526	500	26	50
Miscellaneous Transport Costs	117	35	38	(3)	(8)
Other Agency Costs	601	159	140	19	16
Waste Disposal Contracts	6,865	1,810	1,804	6	34
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	67	38	38	0	8
Grant to Norton Priory	172	87	87	0	0
Capital Financing	201	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	33,370	8,169	8,133	36	(70)
Income					
Sales Income	-3,974	-922	-795	(127)	(308)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,741	-1,800	-1,800	0	0
Rental Income	-221	-72	-73	1	5
Government Grant Income	-595	-595	-595	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-685	-389	-389	(0)	0
SLA Income	-2,391	-627	-543	(85)	(286)
Internal Fees Income	-592	-83	-72	(11)	(52)
Capital Salaries	-173	-25	-26	0	(9)
Transfers From Reserves	0	71	71	0	0
Total Income	-14,373	-4,442	-4,221	(221)	(650)
Net Operational Expenditure	18,997	3,727	3,912	(185)	(720)
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,825	456	456	0	0
Transport	2,046	512	517	(5)	(20)
Central Support	3,856	966	966	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-540	-140	-140	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,386	1,794	1,799	(5)	(20)
Net Departmental Expenditure	26,383	5,521	5,711	(190)	(740)

Comments on the above figures

Financial Position

The net department spend is £0.190m over budget at the end of Quarter 1 and the estimated outturn overspend against budget for 2023/24 is £0.740m.

Net employee spend is estimated to be slightly over the approved budget at the end of the financial year. The forecast outturn includes the pay increase proposal of £1,925 for all grades with the exception of a 3.5% increase for DM and above scales.

Whilst the proposed pay deal is over what had been included within the budget this is mitigated by a number of vacancies within leisure services and reduced casual usage in line with 2022/23 actual data.

Premises costs for cemeteries is overspent as contractors have been used for grass cutting services due to staff absences. Frank Myler Pavillion water meter charges is significantly higher than budget. Stadium premises electricity estimated outturn is based on previous years spend and will be reviewed during the course of the year.

Food Provisions is overspent due to the increasing inflationary food costs from suppliers.

School Meals food underspend is reflected in the underachievement of sales income.

Whilst it is currently forecast that waste disposal spend will be within the approved budget for the year this comes with a certain amount of caution. Waste disposal forecast cost is based on estimated tonnage of waste and the department is still waiting on invoices to be presented for previous years.

Sales income for the year is expected to underachieve compared to the budgeted income target. Shortfalls in income in the Leisure Centres and the Stadium plus a reduction in room hire at Community Centres and Libraries are forecast to contribute towards lower income levels.

School Meals SLA income is forecast to underachieve by £0.286m over the course of the year but this will be mitigated by reduced staffing costs.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

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

Capital Projects as at 30 June 2023

Project Title	2023/24 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	34	2	0	34
Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment	28	1	13	15
Halton Leisure Centre	15,056	5,096	6,882	8,174
Open Spaces Schemes	851	82	45	806
Children's Playground Equipment	105	10	6	99
Upton Improvements	13	0	0	13
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12	0	1	11
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	26	0	340
Runcorn Town Park	284	79	91	193
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,023	241	4	1,019
Pickerings Pasture Café	520	125	0	520
Litter Bins	20	1	0	20
Totals	18,286	5,663	7,042	11,244

Comments on the above figures**Stadium Minor Works**

Previous year carry forward to buy stage and canopy.

Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment

There are some small works required in July. This project should then be completed.

Halton (Moor Lane) Leisure Centre

The project is making good progress and remains on track. The contract sum agreed with Wates is £28,997.616 and the estimated final account is currently the same value. There have been additional costs associated with the CPO. The total capital scheme is circa £31 million.

Open Spaces

This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including Runcorn Hill, Ski slope & miniature railway improvements, Runcorn Cemetery improvements, Space Tree, Arley Woodland Park, Upton Rocks access works, The Big Halton Forest.

Children's Playground Equipment

This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds.

Upton Improvements

Open space improvement works undertaken. Work has been delayed due to contractor workload and difficulty obtaining materials. No revised date set yet for when this may be spent.

Crow Wood Park

The main contract for the new park building has ended. A small amount of work to the building is required plus additional landscape contract to complete the paths - this is ongoing with some work from Property services and Open Spaces team to complete.

Landfill Tax Credits Schemes

Currently used to support improvements for a rolling programme of existing playgrounds/open space schemes across the Borough.

Runcorn Town Park

Project to renew park infrastructure. Project is ongoing with 2 contracts on site. Carry forward to complete work in season and for contingency payments. INEOS funding of £300k was deferred - £10k each to 2023/24 & 2024/25 plus £280k to 2025/26.



Wigg/Spike Island Recovery Works



The programme is slightly behind due to staff capacity issues. Waiting for a consultancy agreement to be put in place so the scheme can progress using external help.

Pickerings Pasture Café

Creation of Café Facility at Pickerings Pasture, a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which would be operated as a franchise. The Council has been asked to include £520k within the Council's Capital Programme to fund the construction of the café facility. Funded over seven years, the capital financing cost would be £87,500 per annum. This sum could be realised through a bid to the Environment Fund (paying £87,500 pa for seven years). Once completed and opened the café would generate income for the Council from the franchise rental, which could be used to offset the running costs of Pickerings Pasture.

COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE DEPARTMENT
APPENDIX A




Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
COMM 1	The Brindley Theatre	64	Reduce Box Office opening hours from 10am-5pm Monday-Friday to 10am-2pm. Currently 80% of tickets are purchased online or by telephone and this is increasing each year.	10	0	0		Box Office core opening hours were reduced to 5 hours (Mon – Fri) 10am – 3pm. They will be realigned to 4 hours daily 11am – 3.00pm (Mon – Fri) from 1 September onwards.
			Replace all non-LED lighting in the building. This is estimated to reduce on-stage energy costs by 75%.	10	0	0		
COMM 3	Sport & Recreation	471	Restructuring the roles and responsibilities of the Sports Development Team	0	36	0		On track to meet savings identified for 2024/25.
COMM 4	Stadium & Catering Services	751	Franchise the concourse only catering services to an external operator.	50	0	0		
			An organisational restructure is currently being implemented for Stadium & Catering Services to reflect recent service changes.	40	0	0		

COMM 6	Area Forums	170	Reduce the base budget provision to £50k temporarily for one year, with all unspent monies in 2022/23 (currently £120k) being carried forward to be spent by the relevant Area Forums in 2023/24. The base budget position will then be reviewed for 2024/25.	120	-120	0		Implemented in 2023/24 budget setting.
COMM 5	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	0	12		Work underway in school meals being delivered through alternative means
Total Community & Environment Department				230	-84	12		





7.0 Application 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.	<i>Indicates that the annual target is <u>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

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.