

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

Reporting Period: **Quarter 4 – 1st January 2019 – 31st March 2019**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the fourth quarter of 2018/19 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 2015-18 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
 - Community Services (Library and other 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 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

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

Employment, Learning & Skills

- 2.2 During the quarter 4 period the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Hub, which is managed by the Council on behalf of the LCR, delivered 4 skills shows across the region with a further 2 being sponsored in the Wirral and in Liverpool. The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network was also relaunched during the period and 4 Halton companies have now joined the Network to promote awareness of apprenticeships to other businesses and individuals.
- 2.3 During the course of the year the Employee Support in Skills Project which ended on 31st March delivered 33 Skills Shows across the Liverpool City Region engaging with over 17, 000 residents as well as holding almost 1200 outreach support meetings with over 25,000 residents of which almost 5000 were living in Halton.
- 2.4 Launch events also took place in quarter 4 for an additional 7 LCR Skills For Growth Sectoral Action Plans including Finance and Professional Services, Innovation, Maths and English and Digital Skills. In addition quarter 4 saw the launch of the Liverpool Enterprise Partnership's School Careers Hub, which is currently tasked with working with 34 schools across the City Region, some of which are in Halton (St Peter and Paul's Catholic College; The Heath; Sandymoor School). A further 3 Halton Schools have expressed an interest in being part of the second Hub, should the funding bid be successful.

Library Service

- 2.5 Popularity of libraries in Halton continues to grow with continued increases in use – both through digital channels and in person. Following the removal of fines for overdue books in January 2019 the number of repeat users has increased and this situation will be kept under review.

Leisure Centres

- 2.6 A number of events and initiatives have taken place and been introduced during the quarter 4 period and these are summarised below.
- 2.7 A multi-ethnic community group football session now takes place at Kingsway Leisure Centre on Saturday evenings and the Walking Football Group is seeking to add a third weekly session to its programme and initial interest has been strong.
- 2.8 Widnes and Runcorn Halton School Galas took place in January and March with the Schools Netball event and Highland Games also taking place in the same month.
- 2.9 Lifeguarding tuition is being provided to students from Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy to provide them with industry skills and enhance their future employment opportunities within the leisure sector. In addition reduced priced swimming has been introduced at Runcorn pool and Aqua Aerobics is growing in popularity with a current provision of 4 classes per week. Use of the Teen Gym which caters for 11 – 15 year old customers has also seen the number of users increasing during quarter 4.
- 2.10 Recruitment is presently underway to appoint to a new Aquatics Manager post with the purpose of providing a corporate focus for School Swimming, Learning to Swim Pathways and training and development and the recruitment of Swimming Instructors is ongoing.

Leisure Centres Income

- 2.11 The table below shows the income targets for the Community Centres Service and the income position towards the end of quarter four. The final end of year position may be slightly higher than indicated as income received towards the end of quarter four is yet to be credited to the respective accounts:

Centre	Income Target	Income (to date)
Castlefields	£73,640	£89,562
Ditton	£101,820	£92,438
Grangeway	£99,130	£91,630
Murdishaw	£45,160	£58,823
Upton	£117,310	£94,760
	£437,060	£427,213

Centre Usage and Activities

- 2.12 Across the service, usage remains consistent to that previously reported and in line with usage for the same period/s recorded for previous financial years. A summary of any activities across the community centres in this quarter are detailed below:

- 2.13 Castlefields continues to see an increase in trends reported earlier in the year; with bookings, attendance figures and income increasing year on year. As predicted, Castlefields has surpassed previous best reported figures for both attendances and income achieved in 2018/19. Both figures are largely attributable to the success of the community centre café and the demand for the centre to open 6 days per week rather than 5 as was previously the case.
- 2.14 It is anticipated that 2018/19 will see Murdishaw record the highest final income position in a number of years. The increase is largely attributable to the arrangement that sees the Bridge School occupy part of the Community Centre. The arrangement has been a huge success for both parties and will continue into the new financial year.
- 2.15 Disappointingly, earlier in the year, Upton lost a lucrative booking from an alternative education provider which significantly impacted upon the Centre's end of year financial position. However, during quarter four the centre has taken a booking for a similar provision run by a different provider which should help to balance the loss in the next financial year.
- 2.16 Quarter four also saw the centre partnership with the Sure Start to Later Life team to deliver a schedule of monthly themed events for older people across the Borough; replicating the setup that has been operating from Grangeway Community Centre for the last 18 months. The first two events were a success with over sixty people in attendance at each event. The café offer also continues to grow at Upton, with user figures increasing compared to the same period of last year and income rising by almost £2,000 compared to the previous financial year.
- 2.17 Both Ditton and Grangeway have benefited from further investment late in quarter four, resulting in adaptations in underused areas in both centres. Once the scheduled works have been completed, both centres will boast modernised, hireable spaces suitable for multiple purpose use; this will provide the respective centres with the opportunity to generate additional income in the coming years.

Brindley Theatre

- 2.18 Financially the Brindley Theatre had its most successful quarter period since it opened in 2004. The result of this, alongside the success of the previous three quarters, was that the Brindley has attained a cost-neutral position and it is a significant and unusual achievement for a small theatre like the Brindley to cover its operating costs from ticket, hire and refreshment income alone.
- 2.19 As a result of a reconfiguration additional seating space has been created within the café area without the need for an extension as was originally envisaged and this will increase the opportunity to create additional revenue

3.0 Emerging Issues

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

Employment, Learning & Skills

- 3.1 The Employee Support in Skills Project which funds the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Hub ended on 31st March 2019. The existing Hub Team will remain in post with the Council until the end July 2019. Plans are currently being drawn up to transfer the team to the Combined Authority, with extended funding coming from other sources.

- 3.2 The outcome of the Education and Skills Funding 1.1 bid application will be known in Quarter 1 and it is expected that funding will be secured and Ways to Work 1.1 can be extended to June 2021. Unfortunately given the level of match funding available Halton was unable to bid for the full allocation.
- 3.3 Final discussions will take place in coming months with the Combined Authority (CA) around the devolved Adult Education Budget which will come into play on 1st August 2019 and this will include the expectation of the CA with regards to reporting. N.B. The Combined Authority has now informed grant funded providers (colleges and council adult learning services) of their 2019/20 AEB allocations. The CA has also announced the 19 successful organisations that took part in the procurement exercise for the remaining AEB (see list below). A number of 'on boarding' meetings will be held for colleges and adult learning services, prior to any joint meetings with the other 19 organisations.
- 3.4 The priority for Halton is that any other AEB provision that will be delivered in Halton by organisations other than Riverside College and Halton Borough Council should not duplicate anything currently being delivered. The recommendation is that all AEB providers operating in Halton should attend future HEP meetings.
- 3.5 The launch of the LCR Skills Capital Prospectus Launch Event is scheduled for June 2019.
- 3.6 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority wishes to invite eligible Colleges and Post 16 apprenticeship and skills providers to a briefing session regarding the third Liverpool City Region Single Investment Fund – Skills Capital Prospectus on 5 June 2019 at No1. Mann Island.
- 3.7 The areas to be considered are:
- Overview of Liverpool City Region skills priorities
 - Skills Capital Investment Strands
 - Eligibility for Investment Strands
 - SIF Skills Capital Application process and timeline
 - Question and Answer Session

Further update is to be provided.

- 3.8 A number of European Social Fund calls will be made. One scheme, Graduate Supported Placements, will be used to provide purchase student placements (paid) in SMEs and the funding will also be used to broker relationships with learners/employers.
- 3.9 Also a call for apprenticeship and skills support is being developed, this funding will support improvements in the quality of apprenticeship provision in the City Region and also support diversification of apprenticeships in the City Region. ESF will also be used to sustain the Apprenticeship Hub and Skills for Growth teams and their associated activities in the Combined Authority.
- 3.10 Finally, in June 2019 bids for the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) will be invited. The Call is for the More Developed Region only, as this is the only Category of Region where YEI funding remains. Halton can bid for this fund, but the level of grant being requested will be dependent upon the availability of matching funding. This is a national 'pot' of approximately £80m

- 3.11 The essential upgrading of the digital infrastructure over the next 12 months highlights a number of challenges, both financial and technical, and these are being incorporated into future initiatives. Work has now commenced to introduce much-needed new self-service technology, and the replacement of the outdated public use PCs, essential to continue to meet community needs and to deliver digital skills support across the Borough, and the way this can be funded, will then begin.
- 3.12 The increasing popularity of Halton’s libraries will continue to put pressure on available resources and the service are actively exploring ways to ensure provision remains sustainable, as well as innovative and attractive. Investing in staff development is vital to ensure the team evolve alongside the library offer with advocacy at the core of this. In addition additional income generation opportunities are presently being explored for example through ticket sales, donations, external funding opportunities and bequests.
- 3.13 In recognising that there will be demand for digital literacy to support our economic future and tackle the lack of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and maths) skills in our future workforce and the library service currently offers an introduction to informal science learning, including coding and robotics, and the further evolution of this offer is currently being explored.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

- 4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council’s Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements. As such Directorate Risk Registers were updated in tandem with the development of the suite of 2018 – 19 Directorate Business Plans.
- 4.2 Progress concerning the implementation of any all high-risk mitigation measures relevant to the remit of individual Policy and Performance Boards were reported at quarter 2.

5.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 5.1 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.

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>

6.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.

Employment, Learning & Skills

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
EEP 02a	To prepare a Self-Assessment Review (SAR) by January 2019	
EEP 02b	To update a communications and marketing plan for the Adult Learning Service - August 2019	
EEP 02c	To deliver a career skills and apprenticeships show - June 2018	
EEP 02d	To develop, in conjunction with Riverside College, a business case for future Adult Education Budget	

EEP 02a

The annual Self-Assessment report has been completed and uploaded to Ofsted in January 2019.

EEP 02b

Marketing calendar continues to be updated and work is being undertaken to update and map out the marketing approach for 2019, with the inclusion of Twitter as a further tool to reach a wider audience and keep adult learning at the fore across the borough.

EEP 02c

The Apprenticeship Hub delivered a Liverpool City Region Skills Show on the 18 June 2018 at the Exhibition Centre Liverpool. Over 6,000 young people, teachers, parents and residents registered for the event with 4,058 attending. 50 out of the 58 pre-booked school groups attended, which included good representation from all Local Authority areas. The event presented 104 exhibition stands hosted by 109 different organisations. Visitors were able to get involved in a whole range of interactive activities to help them decide what jobs and careers they may want to pursue in the future and/or receive one to one support at the event to apply for live apprenticeship vacancies.

EPE 02d

Joint AEB meetings with Riverside College have continued. The council has submitted its Development Plan to the Combined Authority and it has been accepted. Allocations have now been agreed.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	17 / 18 Actual	18 / 19 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 08	Number of Enrolments (Adult Learning).	1,960	2,950	1618		N / A
EEP LI 09	Number of People supported into work.	319	400	133		N / A
EEP LI 10	Percentage of learners achieving accreditation.	56%	42%	25%		
EEP LI 11	Total number of job starts on DWP programme (People Plus).	22	9	4 (2017/18)		N / A
EEP LI 12	Total number of job starts on DWP programme (Ingeus).	43	70	25		N / A
EEP LI 13	Number of new starts into permitted/paid work for local people with disabilities (over 12 month period).	36	40	25		
EEP LI 14	Number of Businesses Supported.	658	700	220		
EEP LI 15	Number of individuals supported into paid work placements (ILMs)	New Indicator for 2018/19	58	10		N / A
EEP LI 16	Number of adult learners who feel prepared for choosing the next steps (e.g. into employment, another course, college/university etc.)	New Indicator for 2018/19	100%	98%	N / A	N / A
EEP LI 17	Number of adult learners who have progressed onto another course	New Indicator for 2018/19	50%	47%	N / A	N / A

Supporting Commentary

EEP LI 08

The academic year runs Aug – Jul, these figures are from the 18/19 academic year. The way in the enrolments are recorded has changed and this has reflected in the data, hence the reduction in the overall target. (If enrolments were being measured in the same way, in a comparison to how enrolments were recorded last year, the figures are higher this year). Learners will continue to enrol for the 2018/19 academic year and will complete learning programmes in July 2019. The final outturn will be available in 2019 Q2.

EEP LI 09

More than 133 people were supported into work in Q4 but the required ESF evidence hasn't been received from employers so the additional job starts have not yet been claimed. Cumulative job starts claimed to date for 17/18 is 351

EEP LI 10

247 learners have achieved accreditation in since the beginning of the academic year, this figure will increase throughout the year as exam results have not been published. Some courses have been extended and are longer than the one term, this will be reflected in the lower figures from last year. Learners will continue to achieve qualifications up to July 2019 and the final outturn will be available in Q2 of 2019.

EEP LI 11

0 job starts in total for People Plus in Q4 as the Work Programme contract finished. Cumulative total to date for 17/18 is 4

EEP LI 12

25 job starts on Ingeus contracts in total for Q4 on Work and Health Programme in Q4). Cumulative total to date for 17/18 is 51.

EEP LI 13

25 customers with health conditions/disabilities were supported into paid employment in Q4. Cumulative total to date for 17/18 is 55.

EEP LI 14

Growth Hub in Halton is delivered by the Halton Growth Hub Partnership led by Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise supported by Halton Borough Council. The Partnership is increasingly focused upon delivering more intensive support rather than simply brokerage to other agencies which has, in part, contributed to the number of interventions in 2018/19.

EEP LI 15

10 individuals were supported into paid placements (ILMs) in Q4. Cumulative total to date for 17/18 is 23.

EEP LI 16

Slightly below target, although data are collected on an academic year basis.

EEP LI 17

Of the learners who have completed a course since autumn term of the 18/19 academic year 47% have enrolled on to another course. Learners will continue to progress at the end of the learning programme up to July 2019 and the final outturn will be available in 2019 Q2.

Community Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q4 Progress
CE 01a	Deliver a programme of extended informal learning opportunities meeting identified local targets (use of libraries) - March 2018	
CE 02b	Develop a programme of cultural activity meeting identified local targets – (use of libraries) March 2018	

Supporting Commentary

An Awareness campaign operates twice yearly with staff attending Parents Evenings with samples and being prepared to answer questions.

Full programme of activity has been delivered in Q4 including author visits, school events, local history talks, archive exhibitions.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	17 / 18 Actual	18 / 19 Target	Q4 Actual	Q4 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 07	Number of active users (physical & digital resources) of the library service during the last 12 months.	574,045	400,000	614, 391		
CE LI 08	Number of physical and virtual visits to libraries (annual total)	614,045	600,000	636, 827		
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)	-	-	Not yet available	Not yet available	-
CE LI 10	Percentage of people physically inactive (KPI 2 from Active Lives survey)	-	-	27.9%	Not yet available	-
CE LI 11	Percentage of adults utilising outdoor space for exercise/ health reasons (MENE survey)	-	-	Not yet available	Not yet available	-

Supporting Commentary

CE LI 07

Increase in users against last year – continued rise despite national trends around library use.

CE LI 08

Increase in visits against last year due to increased cultural and learning activities, expanded use of external funding to deliver projects, and improved partnerships.

CE LI 09

No update (next data update expected June 2019).

CE LI 10

The November 2017/18 release enables you to look at changes over the last two years with comparisons to November 15/16 and November 16/17, though it is important to remember that still only have three years of data so it is too early to use this data to meaningfully talk about trends over time. Active Lives Adult report released 11.04.19. (Previous data for this indicator were as follows 28.2% Nov 2016; 27.6% Nov 2017).

7.0 Financial Statements

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY

Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2019

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Employees	4,870	4,882	(12)
Repairs & Maintenance	2,123	2,123	0
Premises	69	70	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	667	643	24
NNDR	543	541	2
Rents	377	378	(1)
Economic Regeneration Activities	20	18	2
Supplies & Services	2,132	2,112	20
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	56	56	0
Transfer to Reserves	402	402	0
Total Expenditure	11,259	11,225	34
<u>Income</u>			
Fees & Charges	-316	-318	2
Rent – Markets	-773	-763	(10)
Rent – Investment Properties	-53	-53	0
Rent – Commercial Properties	-1,166	-1,171	5
Government Grant Income	-2,449	-2,449	0
Recharges to Capital	-82	-101	19
Schools SLA Income	-502	-468	(34)
Transfer from Reserves	-1,064	-1,064	0
Rent & Other Grant Income	-302	-309	7
Total Income	-6,707	-6,696	(11)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,552	4,529	23
<u>Recharges</u>			
Premises Support Costs	1,965	1,965	0
Transport Support Costs	25	23	2
Central Support Service Costs	2,122	2,122	0
Accommodation Income	-2,396	-2,396	0
Repairs & Maintenance Income	-2,402	-2,402	0
Central Support Service Income	-2,042	-2,042	0
Asset Rental Support Costs	1,530	1,530	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,198	-1,200	2
Net Department Expenditure	3,354	3,329	25

Comments on the above figures

The outturn position shows the department marginally underspent by £0.025m against an annual budget of £3.354m.

Finance worked closely with the Department in year to ensure a balanced budget was achieved which is reflected in the above figures. Detailed work was undertaken to identify the financial resources available to support the delivery of the service and allocate resources where needed most, ensuring budget pressures were met.

Whilst effective control can be maintained over expenditure, income still remains a budget pressure as the majority of the income is externally funded and difficult to factor in with certainty.

Though the saving measures put forward by the Department for 18-19 have been met, future savings are becoming increasingly hard to find.

The significant budget variances are listed below.

The turnover of staff in the latter part of the year helped reduce the anticipated negative variance on employee costs. However, the staff turnover saving target was not achieved this year.

Employee budgets are based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 122.

Following reconciliations by energy providers, the Council has received a number of one off refunds relating to previous years utility charges.

Every effort has been made to ensure expenditure on controllable budgets was kept to a minimum within the Department and this is reflected in the Supplies and Services budget.

The School SLA income target for the year was not achieved. Due to the increase in staffing costs, SLA charges have increased, which in turn resulted in schools choosing to use alternative providers.

Market rental actual income fell short of the budgeted target due to the open market not meeting its full capacity. Following a restructure within the Department and with focus being to promote the markets it is envisaged there will be an increase to income levels for 2019/20.

Capital Projects as at 31 March 2019

Capital Expenditure	2018/19 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
3MG	399	399	0
Former Crossville Depot	440	109	331
Advertising Screen at The Hive	100	0	100
Stadium – Karalius Suite	260	246	14
Sci Tech Daresbury	382	286	96
Murdishaw Development	38	0	38
Broseley House	1,190	729	461
Equality Act Improvement Works	150	146	4
Venture Fields	41	0	41
Widnes Market Refurbishment	1,191	1,080	111
Linnets Club House	287	88	199
Solar Farm – Golf Course	100	68	32
The Croft	30	0	30
Decontamination of Land	50	51	-1
Net Expenditure	4,658	3,202	1,456

Comments on the above figures.

3MG - It's been a successful year for 3MG. Alstom have continued to secure further contracts. Stobart's opened a new Energy and Rail HQ and Liberty commenced a new speculative unit at Liberty Park.

Former Crossville Depot – The redevelopment of this site has been completed. Awaiting receipt of final account.

Broseley House – The acquisition of Broseley House was completed and will be developed along with adjoining site of the former magistrate's court and police station.

The Croft – The former Croft Public House had been closed and the site subject of anti-social behaviour and was visually unattractive. The sale has been agreed and to develop the site for residential use as assisted living units of accommodation.

Venture Fields - The initial phase of the LPW development at Venture Fields is complete. Retention monies are being withheld as there is still some excavated material on the adjacent land associated with the project to remove, as soon as this is dealt with all retention monies will be released.

Karalius Suite - The refurbishment of the Karalius Suite, which is now complete, has seen the room be significantly enlarged and provided with new associated facilities such as a new bar area and refurbished toilets.

Equality Act Improvement Works - Access improvement works have been undertaken to a number of premises including Picow Farm Depot, Ditton Library, Municipal Building and Oakmeadow. The Council have also commenced on a project to update access audits to public buildings with a view to implementing a programme of upgrade works later in the year.

Sci-Tech Daresbury - EZ Capital Grant is almost fully drawn down as the JV develops the Project Violet scheme. The project is currently out to tender and work is ongoing to secure the funding from Chrysalis for the delivery of the buildings.

Widnes Market - Final account now agreed for the roofing works; the remaining Widnes Market projects are to be prioritised within the remaining available budget for completion in the next financial year 2019/2020

Linnets - The final snagging items to the new build Pavilion are currently being completed; the ventilation system works are all complete; the new power supply and new water supply to the existing junior changing block are almost complete and final snagging items are being carried out

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2019**

	Annual Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000
Expenditure			
Employees	14,021	14,179	(158)
Other Premises	2,095	2,205	(110)
Supplies & Services	1,115	1,051	64
Book Fund	158	129	29
Hired & Contracted Services	1,174	1,157	17
Food Provisions	506	504	2
School Meals Food	1,980	2,105	(125)
Transport	51	134	(83)
Other Agency Costs	327	342	(15)
Waste Disposal Contracts	5,900	5,874	26
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	67	19	48
Grant to Norton Priory	172	174	(2)
Rolling Projects	20	20	0
Capital Financing	407	429	(22)
Total Expenditure	27,993	28,322	(329)
Income			
Sales Income	(1,829)	(1,325)	(504)
School Meals Sales	(2,368)	(2,315)	(53)
Fees & Charges Income	(6,137)	(5,460)	(677)
Rents Income	(231)	(221)	(10)
Government Grant Income	(1,198)	(1,072)	(126)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	(681)	(671)	(10)
Schools SLA Income	(1,347)	(1,357)	10
Internal Fees Income	(171)	(220)	49
School Meals Other Income	(254)	(240)	(14)
Catering Fees	(114)	(102)	(12)
Capital Salaries	(172)	(173)	1
Rolling Projects Income	0	(45)	45
Transfers From Reserves	(341)	(394)	53
Total Income	(14,843)	(13,595)	(1,248)
Net Operational Expenditure	13,150	14,727	(1,577)
Recharges			
Asset Charges	5,213	5,213	0
Central Support Services	3,665	3,665	0
HBC Support Costs Income	(421)	(421)	0
Transport Recharges	3,069	2,894	175
Premises Support	1,558	1,558	0
Net Total Recharges	13,084	12,909	175
Net Department Expenditure	26,234	27,636	(1,402)

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £1.402 million over budget at the end of the 2018/19 financial year.

Employee spend is over budget for the year, partly due to staff saving targets for the department which are not being met in the majority of areas due to the need to maintain frontline services. Casual spend for the year was £879,000, in contrast to £635,000 at the same point last year. The largest increases in casual spend are for Leisure Centres and School Catering, where there has been considerable difficulty in recruiting permanent staff. Casual spend has also been adversely impacted by the rise in the living wage which has caused casual pay rates to increase. Agency staffing spend is also significantly higher than last year at £163,000 compared to £95,000 in 2017/18, with School Meals the main cause of this increase.

Employee budgets are based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 477.

Premises spend was £110,000 over budget in 2018/19. Utilities costs have risen throughout the Department, with Kingsway Leisure Centre, Halton Lea Library and the Stadium all significantly over budget. Repair and maintenance costs for the Leisure Centres are significantly over budget due to the high costs of maintaining the ageing buildings. There have been some significant one-off premises costs in the Department this year, including £15,000 for concrete grave plinths at Runcorn Cemetery and £43,000 for a new plant control panel at Brookvale Leisure Centre.

Transport costs for the year are overspent by £83,000. This is due to additional Mersey Gateway toll charges being incurred across the Department. Budgets have been provided in 2019/20 to cover these additional costs.

There was an underspend of £26,000 on the new waste contract in 2018/19. Funding set aside in 2017/18 to cover estimated costs was over provided thereby creating the in-year saving.

Sales income was £504,000 short of budget in 2018/19. There was a significant underachievement on food and drink sales in Commercial Catering and the Stadium. Sales at the Stadium were negatively influenced by low attendances at Widnes Vikings games during the year. There was also no sponsorship income received for the Stadium in 2018/19. Registrar's income decreased by £37,000 from 2017/18 and was significantly short of target. Food and drink sales at The Brindley performed well and were £49,000 over the target for 2018/19.

Fees and charges income underachieved by £677,000 in 2018/19. Stadium executive box hire was £57,000 short of its target as sales decreased markedly due to Widnes Vikings' relegation from Super League. Gym membership at the Stadium underachieved by £64,000 this year due to the closure of the main gym from April 2019 and the associated reduction in membership renewals. Pitch booking fees at the Stadium also decreased this year as the pitch was replaced and therefore not in use for three months. There was no major concert at the Stadium in 2018/19 and therefore the events income target of £103,000 was not met. Fee income at the Leisure Centres underachieved by £488,000. A major reason for this was due to severe difficulties in the recruitment of swimming and fitness instructors, leading to cancelled swimming lessons and a lack of fitness classes, and should therefore be considered alongside a staffing understand of over £250,000 across the three centres.

Although many areas of the Department struggled to meet income targets, there were areas that generated increased income during 2018/19. Crematorium fees exceeded their income target by £59,000, with the introduction of the new Resident's Funeral Package proving popular. The Brindley increased their lettings and promotions income from last year, and exceeded their target by £7,000. Green waste collection fees again performed well, exceeding the forecast income by £52,000.

Government Grant income fell £126,000 short of target due to a £215,000 shortfall in income due for Universal Infants Free School Meals. Free children numbers have fallen dramatically in the last few years and this source of funding has been exacerbated by more schools converting to academies where this funding cannot be charged. This shortfall had a significant impact on the overall Schools Catering budget.

Transport recharges were lower than expected in Open Spaces and Waste Management during 2018/19 which contributed a £175,000 underspend to the Departmental outturn figure.

Income budgets have been reduced where possible as part of setting 2019/20 budgets, although based on current estimates income will continue to fall short of targets in 2019/20.

Capital Projects as at 31 March 2019

Capital Expenditure	2018/19 Capital Allocation £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	50	42	8
Stadium Pitch	300	279	21
Children's Playground Equipment	57	67	(10)
Landfill Tax Credits Scheme	340	0	340
Crow Wood Park	478	218	260
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery	500	135	365
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – Enabling Works	33	21	12
Phoenix Park	104	98	6
Runcorn Hill Park	5	-22	27
Sandymoor Playing Fields	1,032	839	193
Town Park	280	6	274
Bowling Greens	0	2	(2)
Brindley Café Extension	80	0	80
Victoria Park Glasshouses	170	0	170
Open Spaces Projects	511	468	43
Widnes & Runcorn Cemeteries – Garage & Storage	190	11	179
Litter Bins	20	20	0
Net Expenditure	4,150	2,184	1,964

Comments on the above figures.

Stadium Minor Works – New equipment has been purchased for the Stadium this year, including chairs and tables which should lead to revenue savings as these are currently being hired when needed. Equipment has also been purchased for the newly refurbished Karalius Suite in order to increase its appeal to potential hirers.

Stadium Pitch – It was necessary to replace the iPitch this year as the previous pitch did not meet FIFA standards for football matches. The work is mostly complete and the pitch is now in use by Widnes Vikings and Widnes FC. The contractor needs to come back on site to complete the works in the next couple of months.

Children's Playground Equipment – This is an ongoing project which includes spend on maintenance and improvements within the borough's playgrounds.

Crow Wood Park – On site building work is now 50% complete.

Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – The enabling works are almost complete, with only a small number of charges left to come in. Phase 3 of the main works have recently commenced and should take approximately 16 weeks depending on weather conditions.

Phoenix Park – The works at Phoenix Park have now been completed, and there is a retention payment of £2,500 due to pay in 2019/20.

Runcorn Hill Park - The main building works are now complete and the scheme has been closed. The remaining works to be completed on the area boundaries will be included under Open Spaces Projects.

Sandymoor Playing Fields – The main works have now been completed and the site is under a 12 month establishment / maintenance project. There are still some invoices from the contractors which have not yet been received.

Town Park – Work on the Southern Pathways at the Town Park is in an early phase and it is hoped that this will go out to tender in early summer.

Bowling Greens – Plans are currently being drawn up for the improvement works at Runcorn Hill. The removal of the King George V Bowling Green is currently on hold awaiting the demolition of the pavilion by Property Services.

Open Spaces Projects – Projects completed this year include works at Wood Lane, Prescott Road and the Sankey Canal sluice. Works at the Bridgewater (Crosville) site have been completed and the area is now under a 12 month establishment / maintenance contract which will need to be funded in 2019/20. Works on the boundary at Runcorn Town Hall are almost complete, as are works at Barrows Green, with some snagging items outstanding. Works are continuing at the Runcorn Ski Slope car park and Sunnybank Park. Work is due to start on the Town Park / Phoenix Park BMX Pump Track in May 2019 as grant funding has now been secured. Design work has been completed for the Runcorn Station Piazza and the scheme is currently awaiting confirmation of funding in order to progress further. Consultant engineers are currently working on the Runcorn Locks scheme, with their report due in May.

Widnes & Runcorn Cemeteries – Garage & Storage - Works have commenced on site and should take approximately 10 weeks.

8.0 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.