

Minutes

**For Presentation to the Council
At the meeting to be held on**

**Wednesday, 18 October
2023**

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COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 19 July 2023 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Abbott, Ball, Baker, Begg, Bevan, Bramwell, Cargill, Carlin, Dennett, Davidson, Dourley, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hutchinson, Jones, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, L. Nolan, Philbin, Polhill, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Rowe, Ryan, Stretch, Teeling, Thompson, Thornton, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors J. Bradshaw, P. Nolan, Stockton, Skinner and Wainwright

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, M. Osborne, S. Young and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: One Member of the press

*Action***COU16 COUNCIL MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 19 May 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU17 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:-

- The Mayor and her consort had attended many engagements since May. This included a visit to Liverpool for the appointment of the new High Sheriff of Merseyside; and
- following a visit to Hope Corner Church, the Mayor had received a gift of two copies of the New Testament.

COU18 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader reported on the following issues since the last meeting of the Council:

- an update on the LGA Conference held in July;
- following a recruitment process for the post of

Director of Children's Services (DCS), an offer of employment had been made and Members would be updated on the successful candidate as soon as all the formalities had been agreed. Council was advised that until the successful candidate was in post, John Wilson had been appointed as Interim DCS;

- the Transformation process was progressing, and the Labour Group and Opposition Groups would be kept updated. A Members portal was being developed on which the Transformation Team would deposit updates;
- the Council, along with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, had written to the Secretary of State for Transport, urging that they work with the train operators to prevent the closure of ticket offices at railway stations because of the detrimental impact on rail users;
- Grant Thornton (External Audit) had provided the 2021-22 Annual Report to Audit and Governance Board at its meeting on 7 July. This was an excellent report, coming at a time when the Council faced many challenges; and
- he congratulated Damian Nolan – Operational Director Commissioning and Provision, on being awarded an MBE.

COU19 URGENT DECISIONS

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive, on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Council note the report.

N.B. Councillor A. Lowe and J. Lowe declared a Registrable Other Interest in the following item of business (Executive Board Minutes - 15 June 2023 items 3A, and 3C) as they have a family member employed at St Lukes Care Home.

COU20 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board meetings on 16 March, 20 April, 16 May and 15 June 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU21 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 22 March 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU22 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

N.B. Councillor Bramwell declared an Registrable Other Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed within Halton Borough Council.

COU23 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023 - 2024

RESOLVED: That Council adopts this Pay Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2023/24.

COU24 HALTON MICRO GRID - KEY DECISION

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the intention to undertake a procurement exercise via The Chest with the purpose of securing a Design, Build, Operate and Maintenance Contract for the implementation of the Halton Micro Grid, be approved; and
- 2) Council agree to include the £11m total estimated cost of the Halton Micro Grid scheme within the capital programme, to be funded as outlined in section 5.

COU25 PROTOCOL FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/ALDERWOMEN

RESOLVED: That the Protocol for the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen appended to this report at Appendix B ("the Protocol") be adopted.

COU26 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

The Council considered the reports of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 19 May 2023:-

- Children, Young People and Families;

- Employment, Learning and Skills and Community;
- Health;
- Safer;
- Environment and Urban Renewal;
- Corporate Services; and
- Audit and Governance Board.

COU27 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of Council on 19 May 2023:-

- Development Management;
- Appointments; and
- Taxi Licensing Sub Committee

Meeting ended at 7.10 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 13 July 2023 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Dennett, Harris, M. Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, T. McInerney, Nelson, P. Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke, S. Baker and D. Nolan

Also in attendance: One member of the press

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>EXB12 MINUTES</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p>LEADER'S PORTFOLIO</p> <p>EXB13 URGENT DECISIONS</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Executive Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Board.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">It was noted that the Council's Constitution gave authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Operational Director Finance and/or the Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Two urgent decisions had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">RESOLVED: That the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.</p>	

EXB14 PROTOCOL FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/ALDERWOMEN

The Board considered a report which recommended a new protocol for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen.

The Council's current protocol reflected the law but did not set out any criteria or process of nomination and appointment. In order that clear guidance was provided for future Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and a fair and transparent process was followed, it was recommended that a new protocol was devised setting out both the criteria and procedure for nomination and appointment. Appended to the report at Appendix B was a copy of the suggested new protocol.

RESOLVED: That the Board

Chief Executive

- 1) approve the protocol for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen appended to the report at Appendix B ("the Protocol"); and
- 2) recommend to Council that the Protocol be adopted.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB15 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director: Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on the progress made within the Council's Transformation Programme. Work had continued to develop the scope of projects alongside service areas with a view to supporting changes that were designed to optimise operations, align service provision with demand and reduce the cost of service provision.

The Board noted the initial programme structure had been augmented to increase capacity as projects came on stream. The schedule of projects set out in Appendix A to the report had been updated to reflect this.

The programme methodology had also now become embedded and it balanced service involvement and ownership, with project support and challenge. The focus was now on applying the methodology through robust arrangements to identify and realise financial savings and service optimisation.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the contents of the update.

EXB16 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented the Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23.

The report updated Members on the activities undertaken on the money market, as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

Information was provided on the economic outlook, interest rate forecast, borrowing and investments, budget monitoring, policy guidelines and treasury management indicators. The Council's approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2022-23 were set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and was attached as Appendix one.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB17 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 and requested authority to delegate the full commercial programming of the Brindley Theatre to the Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager.

The Board was advised that the matter had been discussed in detail at the Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board meeting on 19 June 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be approved; and
- 2) the Board delegates the full commercial programming of the Brindley Theatre to the Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Employment, Learning and Skills and Community.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB18 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on improvements to the Borough’s Transport Infrastructure and network and sought approval for the next set of transport related projects.

It was reported that Halton’s adopted Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) set out the statutory context for investment in infrastructure to 2025/26. In association with the 22 ‘Primary Transport Strategies’ contained in LTP3, there were a number of major schemes and improvement projects that covered road, rail, bus, cycling and walking. The report provided Members with details for each of these projects and advised that many of the schemes had been delivered.

It was noted that, since the adoption of LTP3, there had been a number of changes to the way transport strategy and funding were administered. The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) had been created and new priorities such as Transport for the North, Northern Powerhouse Rail and High Speed 2 had emerged. Department for Transport funding was now directed to the LCRCA and redistributed to local councils. It was therefore imperative that schemes were developed to an advanced stage of design and appraisal to ensure funding success. Appendix 1 within the report contained the list of schemes that formed Halton’s ‘transport pipeline’ and Appendix 2 outlined current schemes.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the list of schemes in Appendix 1, attached to the report be approved, and be developed into deliverable schemes (including design, feasibility work, business case preparation, funding bids and, where appropriate, grant acceptance and entry into the Council’s Capital Programme);
- 2) the Operational Director, Planning, Policy and Transport, be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to take the necessary actions to ensure value for money through the appropriate procurement processes relating to the list of schemes (Appendices 1 and 2); and

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

- 3) the Operational Director, Planning, Policy and Transport, be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to take any other actions necessary to accept grant funding and enable timely delivery of the list of schemes (Appendices 1 and 2).

CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

EXB19 HALTON MICRO GRID - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which outlined the procurement process in respect of the provision of a Halton Micro Grid. The Halton Micro Grid sought to increase the size of the existing Solar Farm on the former St Michael's Golf Course by installing a combination of additional rooftop and solar farm solar PV generation schemes.

It was noted that the anticipated value of the contract would be in the region of £11m, with a contract for maintenance of £1.9m over the 30 year lifetime of the project. The cost of the works would be met from prudential borrowing and a grant of £2.5m from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The project would fund a number of capital investments and deliver long term revenue benefits to the Council, details of these were set out in the report.

Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the procurement of a Halton Micro Grid.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

It is proposed to invite bids from Engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contractors to support the design, build and maintenance of the project, which will provide alternative options from which the preferred solution will be identified.

Implementation Date

1 August 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the intention to undertake a procurement exercise via The Chest with the purpose of securing a Design,

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Build, Operate and Maintenance Contract for the implementation of the Halton Micro Grid, be approved; and

- 2) Council be asked to include the £11m total estimated cost of the Halton Micro Grid scheme within the capital programme, to be funded as outlined in section 5 of the report.

EXB20 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB21 SCI-TECH DARES BURY – PROJECT VIOLET PHASE 2 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive

Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the proposed next phase of delivery and funding arrangements at Sci-Tech Daresbury and the Investment Zone initiative. The report sought approval in principle to utilise the Enterprise Zone Tax Incremental Financing mechanism to support the viability gap for Project Violet Phase 2 and also to provide an equity contribution to the Joint Venture to delivery Project Violet Phase 2.

Reason(s) for Decision

A decision is required to enable the Council to progress the necessary legal and funding agreements for Project Violet which include use of the Enterprise Zone TIF Borrowing Mechanism.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A number of alternative funding arrangements have been explored; however there is currently no commercial market to fund a speculative development at Sci-Tech Daresbury.

Grant funding has been explored, but were not appropriate funding mechanisms at this point for a variety of reasons, including timescales and eligibility.

Reflecting its status as a designated Enterprise Zone, it is envisaged that a TIF mechanism, based on Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing against future business rates growth, will play a critical role in addressing barriers to the delivery of the masterplan.

Implementation Date

Subject to further due diligence, the project will continue to be developed through to procurement and the borrowing is likely to be required during 2024.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approve in principle the funding strategy for Project Violet Phase 2 outlined in the report, subject to the completion of the necessary due diligence.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB22 OFFICER LAPTOP REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – ICT and Support Services, which sought approval to enter into a contract for the supply of fully warrantied and insured laptops, over a five-year period on a lease rental basis, leading to the ownership of the devices for the sum of £1 per device upon completion of the contract.

Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the acceptance of a tender for the replacement of all officer laptop devices.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not to replace the laptops is not an option, as many existing devices will not operate Windows 11 and M365. A procurement exercise had been undertaken via a Government portal, resulting in a number of tender bids being received which meet the required specification.

Implementation Date

1 August 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) details of the procurement process undertaken, the proposed contract award and funding as set out in the report, be noted; and
- 2) the proposal for all officer devices be replaced with new laptops which are fully warrantied and insured under contract with Phoenix Ltd for a five-year period, be approved.

Chief Executive

MINUTES ISSUED: 18 July 2023

CALL-IN: 25 July 2023 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 25 July 2023.

Meeting ended at 2.18 p.m.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 14 September 2023 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Dennett, M. Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, T. McInerney, Nelson, P. Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Harris

Officers present: G. Cook, S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner E. Dunne, R Marr and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: None

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

Action

EXB23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB24 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 ("RIPA") & INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2016 ("IPA") UPDATED POLICY AND USE

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, that sought approval of the Council's updated Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) Policies and accompanying Employee Guides. These Policies covered the use of covert surveillance and the acquisition of communications data.

The report also provided members with an update on the Council's written response to the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO). The written response provided information of the Council's use and compliance with RIPA and IPA.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the revised RIPA policy and accompanying Employee Guide be approved;
- 2) the revised IPA Policy and accompanying Employee Guide be approved; and
- 3) the Board note the recent response to the IPCO.

Operational
Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

EXB25 URGENT DECISIONS

The Executive Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Board.

It was noted that the Council's Constitution gave authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Operational Director Finance and/or the Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.

One urgent decision had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.

RESOLVED: That the urgent decision taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB26 2023/24 SPENDING AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as of 30 June 2023, together with an initial forecast outturn position.

A summary of spending against the operational revenue and capital net spending position as at 30 June 2023 together with a 2023/24 forecast outturn position was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net spending as at 30 June 2023 was £2.023m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimated that net spend would be over the approved budget by £8.415m.

The report detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 March 2023. The current balance of reserves held was not sufficient to meet the current forecast outturn overspend position for the year and it was clear that there needed to be a significant reduction in spending by all

Departments over the coming months to reduce the forecast outturn overspend.

Council had previously approved the capital programme for 2023/24 at its meeting on 8 March 2023. Subsequently, new capital grant allocations had been received and slippage to capital projects for 2022/23 had been rolled forward to the current year. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 30 June 2023 and reported on the Council's total planned Capital Programme expenditure over the next three years. Appendix 4 outlined the saving measures against the budget for the three year period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026 together with information on action to date to achieve the target saving.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to only absolutely essential items;
- 2) Strategic Directors take urgent action to identify areas where spending could be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year, or additional funding secured; and
- 3) Council be requested to approve the 2023/24 to 2025/26 Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.18 and Appendix 3.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB27 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director: Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on the progress made within the Council's Transformation Programme. Work had continued to define the scope of additional projects within the Programme and the schedule of projects set out in Appendix A of the report had been updated to reflect this.

The Board noted that:

- early benefits had been realised within the 'A clear, affordable and appropriate SEND offer' project with cost avoidance of in excess of £300,000 identified;
- the realignment of Administrative Support services, which formed part of the 'Simplifying the Customer Journey' project was expected to realise savings in Quarter 3;
- there had been a refocusing of programme support provided to Children's Social Care, which was

coinciding with the appointment of the Director of Children's Services; and

- the estimated savings for the programme which were set out in Appendix B of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the contents of the update.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB28 HBC & NHS CHESHIRE & MERSEYSIDE JOINT WORKING AGREEMENT (BETTER CARE (POOLED) FUND) - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, that sought approval of the updated two year Joint Working Agreement (JWA) between Halton Borough Council (HBC) and NHS Cheshire & Merseyside (CM), taking effect from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025. The JWA replaced the previous one year JWA which was agreed by Executive Board on 16 March 2023.

It was noted that since March 2023, national guidance had been issued in respect of the Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan and discussions had also taken place between HBC and NHS CM regarding the governance arrangements in respect to the Pooled Budget. This had resulted in the establishment of a Joint Senior Leadership Team (JSLT) between HBC and NHS CM. The JSLT would be responsible for the direction, oversight and monitoring of the BCF Plan and associated Pooled Budget. The JSLT would be supported in this duty by the Better Care Commissioning Advisory Group.

The new governance arrangements along with links to the two year BCF Plan had been reflected in the new JWA.

As the JWA was currently being progressed through NHS CM's associated governance channels, it was requested that delegated authority be given to Executive Director – Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, to finalise the new JWA.

Reason(s) for Decision

Approval of the agreement will continue to support both the HBC and NHS CM in developing our integrated

approach to service delivery and transformation to improve the Health and Wellbeing of Halton residents.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Allow the JWA to cease.

Implementation Date

The two year JWA takes effect from 1 April 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report and associated Appendix be noted; and
- 2) the Agreement be approved, with delegated authority to the Executive Director – Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, to finalise the new Joint Working Agreement (JWA)

Executive Director
of Adult Services

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB29 CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE CARE PARTNERSHIP

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, that sought authority for the Council to become a member of the new statutory Integrated Care Partnership for Cheshire & Merseyside, to be known as the Cheshire & Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (C&M HCP). The Partnership is a statutory joint committee and formed part of the overall structure of the new Integrated Care System set out in the Health and Care Act 2022. The report set out the statutory functions of the C&M HCP, its role and membership. A copy of the terms of reference was also included as Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Council that

- 1) the Council become a member of the Cheshire & Merseyside Health & Care Partnership;
- 2) the terms of reference of the Cheshire & Merseyside Health & Care Partnership, set out at Appendix 1, be adopted and that the Operational Director – Legal & Democratic in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Health and Wellbeing, be authorised to make minor changes to the final version if necessary;

Operational
Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

- 3) the Portfolio Holder - Health and Wellbeing be nominated to be the Council's representative on the Cheshire & Merseyside Health and Care Partnership; and
- 4) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to nominate an Executive Director / Director of Public Health to be a member of the Committee if considered appropriate.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB30 HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION - AMENITY STANDARDS FOR LICENSED PREMISES

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health, which sought approval to adopt the Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing requirements and Amenity Standards Policy.

Over the past 12 months some Members had expressed concern about the proliferation and standards of HMO properties in certain parts of the Borough. Subsequently the Environment and Renewal Policy and Performance Board (PPB) had agreed to establish a working party to agree a set of HMO amenity standards and explore options for additional control of HMO's. The working party had met on a number of occasions and developed an action plan which was approved by the PPB in February 2023. Details of the plan were outlined in the report.

Following a progress report on the action plan to the PPB in June 2023, the Board had endorsed the proposal to submit the HMO Property Standards Policy to the Executive Board for adoption. A copy of the Policy document was attached to the report.

RESOLVED: That the adoption of the Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Requirements and Amenity Standards Policy be approved.

Director of Public Health

EXB31 PRELIMINARY PROCUREMENT NOTIFICATION - PORT OF WESTON, SURFACE ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided notification of the intention to undertake a procurement exercise to appoint a specialist multi-disciplinary team to prepare pre-development design and feasibility work for surface access improvements to Port Weston, Runcorn. The

contract was to be funded through the Liverpool City Region Freeport Seed Investment Fund, subject to securing a Grant Funding Agreement with the Combined Authority.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Members noted the intention to undertake a procurement exercise via the SCAPE Public Sector National Consultancy Framework, with the purpose of securing a specialist multi-disciplinary team to undertake design and feasibility work for surface access improvements to Port Weston; and
- 2) delegated authority is provided to the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement(s) with the Combined Authority to access the Liverpool City Region Freeport Seed Investment Fund.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EXB32 PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR LIQUID ROAD FUEL CONTRACTS – SUPPLY OF DIESEL, KEROSENE, HVO AND AD BLUE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval for the Council to be included in a national procurement exercise in order to award contracts for the supply of Liquid Road Fuels to Council sites.

The Council currently had a Liquid Road Fuel contract and a contract for the provision of Ad Blue in place with a total expenditure in the region of £733,000 per annum. These contracts were both awarded under a national Framework Agreement procured by Crown Commercial Services (an executive agency sponsored by the Cabinet Office that provided commercial services, including buying services for the public sector). Both contracts would expire on 31 March 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the use of Procurement Standing Order 1.4.1 to allow the Council to use a Framework Agreement procured by a Central Purchasing Body (Crown Commercial Services) in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulation 2015.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIOS

EXB33 REVOCATION OF HALTON'S AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS IN WIDNES TOWN CENTRE

The Board received a report of the Director of Public Health, which sought approval for the revocation of Halton's Air Quality Management Areas in Widnes Town Centre.

In 2011, the high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide measured $49\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ against the UK legal limit of $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. Since then, a number of developments have resulted in a significant improvement in air quality. These included improvements in vehicle emission technology and the opening of the Mersey Gateway Bridge in 2017, which resulted in reduced traffic congestion in Widnes Town Centre. Levels of Nitrogen Dioxide in those areas were now consistently below the UK legal limit.

The Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board (PPB) had previously endorsed a report which set out the rationale for revoking the air quality management in Widnes Town Centre and the proposal for the public consultation (Minute EUR32 refers). In June 2023, the PPB received a further report which set out the results of the public consultation and the Board endorsed that the report be submitted to Executive Board to seek approval for the revocation.

The air quality management areas would need to be revoked by way of an Order of the Council under the Environment Act 1995 and a copy of the draft Order was attached as Appendix 2.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the revocation of:

- 1) the Halton Borough Council Air Quality Management (Widnes No.1) Order 2011; and
- 2) the Halton Borough Council Air Quality Management (Widnes No. 2) Order 2011.

Director of Public Health

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB34 LIBRARY STRATEGY 2023/28

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided a copy of the draft Library Strategy for 2023-28 and gave an update on the work of the Library Service for 2022/23.

The Board was advised that the current Library Strategy would expire in 2023 and a new draft Strategy

document had been produced. A copy of the Strategy document was appended to the report for consideration.

The new Strategy had previously been considered and endorsed by the Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board at its meeting on 19 June 2023.

RESOLVED: That the Library Strategy be adopted.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EXB35 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB36 PROPERTY AND ACCOMMODATION REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Executive

Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the review of the Council’s property (buildings), feedback from the Members’ working group and information on the proposed next steps to be undertaken. The group had met on two occasions and the notes from these meetings were appended to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the update provided be noted;
- 2) Members confirmed that they were content with the actions and next steps being proposed; and
- 3) a further report will be provided with options once the survey work outlined in the report is completed.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

MINUTES ISSUED: 19 September 2023

CALL-IN: 26 September 2023 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 26 September 2023.

Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

At a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on Wednesday, 5 July 2023 at Karalius Suite - Halton Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillor Wright (Chair)
 Councillor J. Lowe
 Councillor T. McInerney
 Councillor Woolfall
 I. Onyia, Public Health
 W. Longshaw, St. Helens & Knowsley Hospitals
 A. Leo, NHS ICB – Halton Place
 S. Josepil, NHS ICB – Halton Place
 J. Hogan, Bridgewater Community NHS Foundation Trust
 D. Nolan, Adult Social Care, Halton Borough Council
 S. Drennan, Halton Borough Council (Care Homes)
 L. Olsen, Halton Housing Trust
 A. Doble, Public Health
 T. McPhee, Mersey Care
 L. Gardner, Warrington & Halton Hospitals
 T. Knight, Primary Care, Cheshire & Merseyside
 S. Yeoman, Halton & St. Helens Voluntary Action

Action

HWB1 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

HWB2 CARE HOMES - PRESENTATION

The Board received a report and presentation from the Clinical Development Lead for Care Homes which provided a progress update of the work to date within the Care Home Sector.

Nationally, Nursing Homes across the country required further investment to drive up the standards of care, and to ensure professionals recognised and received recognition for the work undertaken within care homes. To help do this, the Clinical Lead Development Officer was created and funded via the Cheshire and Merseyside Local Action Board. The aim of the post was to enhance quality within the Care Home Sector focussing on Nursing Care Homes

The presentation outlined:

- The role of the Clinical Development Lead Officer;
- Work undertaken to date;
- The work plan for the remainder of the 12 month project;
- Case studies to evidence the positive outcomes of the work undertaken to date; and
- Future developments.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

HWB3 UPDATE ON ONE HALTON PLACE BASED PARTNERSHIP - PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from the Place Director – Halton, which provided an update on the One Halton Place Based Partnership.

The new arrangements for the Integrated Care Systems (ICS) came into effect on 1 July 2023 and the aim was to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities. Locally, the One Halton Partnership Board was the vehicle for delivery of national priorities, local priorities and Halton's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Membership of the Board included representatives from Local Authorities, NHS/Foundation Trusts and Primary Care.

The key priorities of the Board were to:

- Improve population health and healthcare;
- Tackle unequal outcomes and access;
- Enhance productivity and value for money; and
- Support broader social and economic development.

The presentation set out the context and provided an overview of progress and the current position. It also outlined how Halton compared to the rest of the North West and how the challenges in Halton would be addressed.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

HWB4 GENERAL PRACTICE ACCESS - PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from the Place Director – Halton, which provided an overview on the current position in relation to access to General Practice (GP) Services in Halton and the National Delivery Plan for recovering access to Primary Care, NHS England.

Access to GP services is one of the key enablers in supporting residents health and wellbeing.

The presentation outlined the following key points:

- Between April 2022 and March 2023, there had been a 29% increase in GP appointments;
- In March 2023, across the 9 Cheshire and Merseyside Places, Halton had the:
 - second highest number of appointments provided face-to-face;
 - second lowest of appointments provided by telephone;
 - joint third highest % of appointments provided by a GP; and
 - third highest % of appointments provided on the same day.
- Between April 2022 and March 2023, “Did Not Attend” appointments had increased;
- The 4 key areas to alleviate pressure and address the increasing demands on Primary Care:
 - Empowering patients;
 - Implementing modern General Practice access;
 - building capacity; and
 - cutting bureaucracy.

The Board discussed the above points and shared experiences of local issues regarding difficulties that residents in Halton had received. It was suggested that Healthwatch Halton and the Voluntary Sector would be able to gather together some intelligence from local communities about access to GP appointments.

RESOLVED: that the presentation be noted.

HWB5 HALTON & WARRINGTON COMMUNITY DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE - PRESENTATION

The Board received a report and presentation from the Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Warrington and Halton Hospitals (WHH) which provided an update on the WHH Foundation Trust's Plan for the provision of a Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) in Halton.

It was noted that the Plan would be delivered in 3 phases:

- 1) Phase 1 - Warrington and Halton Diagnostics Centre at Nightingale building, Halton Hospital site. All works

completed and services fully operational with effect from 26 June 2023;

- 2) Phase 2 – Warrington and Halton Diagnostics Centre at Halton Health Hub, Runcorn Shopping City. Planned to be operational in late November 2023; and
- 3) Phase 3 – Warrington and Halton Diagnostics Centre at Captain Sir Tom Moore building, Halton Hospital site. Planned to be fully operational in Summer 2024.

RESOLVED: that the Board:

- 1) note the report and presentation; and
- 2) support the WHH Trust's plan for the development of the CDC at the Halton site.

HWB6 COMMISSIONING OF PRIMARY CARE DENTAL SERVICES

The Board received an update report from the Head of Primary Care (Cheshire and Merseyside) on the Commissioning of Primary Care Dental Services.

The report outlined that currently there was 13 dental practices and 2 Urgent Care Plus providers offering urgent dental care for patients that did not have a regular dentist. Despite ongoing challenges, there was increased activity across Cheshire and Merseyside. Commissioners were keen to explore the use of Dental Care Professionals i.e. Dental Therapists and Dental Nurses as these could free up Dental Performer time and support access for new patients.

The report also described the development of a Dental Improvement Plan which was approved by ICB System Primary Care Board in June 2023. An important part of the Plan was to develop access sessions for new patients across 60 practices in the ICB.

Commissioners were seeking an additional 30,000 appointments across Cheshire and Merseyside and would link with Local Authorities to identify suitable organisations who work with vulnerable people e.g. the homeless and asylum seekers. In addition to this, a number of Foundation Dentists would work across Cheshire and Merseyside from September this year.

The Board acknowledged that the update was

encouraging and Public Health asked to be part of future conversations about how children's dental health could be improved.

The Head of Primary Care agreed to:

- Circulate a copy of the Dental Improvement Plan to the Board;
- Confirm the number of practices that carry out NHS work; and
- Provide further updates to the Board in due course.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

*Head of Primary
Care*

HWB7 PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Board received a report and presentation from the Director of Public Health, which provided an update on the development of Halton's Public Health Annual Report (PHAR).

Each year a theme would be chosen for the PHAR and for this year the focus would be on health improvement and prevention work to support the Halton community with their health in the different stages of their lives, as well as coping with pressures, such as the recent pandemic and the rising cost of living.

The report would use 4 key life stages as a guide to the issues including the following sections:

- 1) Start – looking at children's health and giving children and young people the best possible start to their lives;
- 2) Strong – acknowledges busy lives and a range of pressures, needing services to be flexible and accessible;
- 3) Live – providing community and work based services that allow people with busy working lives to take action for their health as well as get help when it is needed; and
- 4) Well – living healthy and independent lives as we age, reducing impact poor health can have on our health and social care system as well as for individuals.

The Plan also contained some free local offers e.g. mental health for men, free blood pressure checks, free help to stop smoking etc. It was suggested that the offers be promoted via Halton Housing Trust (HHT) via their magazine that was sent out to tenants. HHT also agreed to promote

and signpost a range of health services, discussed at the meeting, to their tenants during home visits.

RESOLVED: That the theme and development of the PHAR be noted.

Halton Housing Trust

HWB8 TERMS OF REFERENCE REFRESH

The Board considered a draft version of some updated Terms of Reference which took into account several changes that had occurred since the last refresh in 2019.

In November 2022, the Department of Health and Social Care set out new guidance for all Health and Wellbeing Board in light of the changes to the NHS, in particular, the establishment of the Integrated Care Boards (ICB) and Integrated Care Systems (ICS). The guidance was to support the ICB and ICP (Integrated Care Partnership) Leaders, Local Authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards to understand how they should work together to ensure effective system and place-based working and to determine how best to deliver holistic care and prevention activities in the communities.

The Board previously received guidance that set out the functions of the Health and Wellbeing Board in relation to the new strategic partners and the revised Terms of Reference reflected these.

Members of the Board were invited to make any comments or suggestions before the end of July 2023. A final version of the document would be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Board:

- 1) note the refreshed draft Terms of Reference; and
- 2) feedback any comments by the end of July 2023.

Health & Wellbeing Board

HWB9 BETTER CARE FUND (BCF) 2022-23 YEAR-END RETURN

The Board received a report from the Executive Director of Adult Social Services, which provided an update on the Better Care Fund 2022/23 Year-End return, following its submission on 26 May 2023. The update provided the Board with information on the four national conditions which had been met, progress on the four national metrics, income and expenditure actual, year-end feedback and adult social

care fee rates.

RESOLVED: The Better Care Fund Year-End return for 2022/23 be noted for information.

Meeting ended at 3.50 p.m.

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CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 11 September 2023 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), C. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair), Baker, Goodall, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, McDermott, Rowe, Ryan and Skinner

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Farrell, A. Jones and J. Wilson

Also in attendance: C. Harris and V. Shepherd – Halton Carers Centre

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

		<i>Action</i>
CYP8	MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CYP9	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
CYP10	CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES PPB ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 The Chair presented the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2022-23. RESOLVED: That the 2022-23 Annual Report be received and noted.	
CYP11	YOUNG CARERS UPDATE The Board received an update on the work and achievements of Halton Carers Centre, which was at the request of the Chair.	

Members welcomed Carl Harris, CEO of Halton Carers Centre and his colleague Vikki Shepherd, Young Carers Support Worker. They reported that the Carers Centre was the primary organisation working with young carers in Halton. Their aim was to enhance wellbeing, build skills and increase knowledge for both young and adult carers in Halton.

According to the 2021 census, 2.7% of children and young people in Halton were identified as having a caring role; this was the highest proportion of unpaid carers amongst younger age groups in the Country. Currently there were 954 young carers aged between 5-17 registered with Halton Carers Centre.

The guests outlined how the Halton Young Carers Team supported registered young carers; gave examples of the tasks they may have to do at home; and explained the effects that these responsibilities can have on a young person. Appended to the report was the *Halton Borough Council 2022/23 Carers Report – Quarter 4*, which gave detailed information on Halton Carers Centre statistics for that period, which included activities and support information for the quarter and for the full year 2022/23.

Following the presentation Members raised questions and the following additional information was provided in response to these:

- The Centre did have and maintained links with other organisations for purposes such as raising awareness and arranging respite activities and days out for young carers;
- Concern for young carers was expressed;
- It was very difficult to identify a child who was a carer, which could take up to 4 years;
- With regards to increasing GP links, one member informed of the *Patient Participation Group*, which was a good way of being able to communicate with GP's;
- The Centre had a team of 3 support workers plus the CEO and would like additional funding to be able to recruit another support worker, to be able to increase outreach in schools for example;
- Only 27 schools were being engaged with by the Carers Centre at the moment;
- One Member, who was a SEND teacher, offered her services in the music and art area and invited the Centre to make contact if they wished to arrange an activity relating to the arts;

- The educational attainment of young carers was discussed and noted that this would need to be tracked for a young carer as it was with any other pupil and vulnerable group;
- Regarding absence and lateness from school, it was important that schools were aware of the reasons as to why a young carer may be late or absent from school and how they could try to mitigate this;
- Home visits were made to 'primary carers' of which there were 52 in Halton;
- Approximately 40% of young carers cared for parents with alcohol and drug misuse problems;
- Concerns were raised regarding the fact that Halton was identified as having the highest proportion of unpaid carers amongst younger age groups in the Country;
- School absence was a concern and schools needed help to be able to identify young carers, so they could seek support to enable them to support the young person; and
- Officers would share the Carers Centre details with the relevant teams within the Council, so that connections could be made.

Funding was explained – 58% came from Halton Borough Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and 42% came from outside funding. The Centre aspired to increase respite activities and days out for young carers but funding was limited for this purpose. Activities such as training, gardening, bee keeping, mental health awareness, first aid training, healthy eating and cooking had previously taken place for young carers and staff would like this to continue, as it reduced feelings of isolation many young carers experienced in their lives, as they are able to mix with people in the same situation.

A copy of the most recent Newsletter was passed to Members for information, this included details of days out arranged for young carers, such as Gulliver's World, Blue Planet, kayaking and therapy and podiatry treatments.

On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked Mr Harris and Ms Shepherd for attending the meeting today and sharing a valuable insight into the work of the Halton Carers Centre.

RESOLVED: That the information and comments made be received.

Operational
Director
Education,
Inclusion and
Provision

CYP12 OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The Board considered a report of the Interim Executive Director, Children's Services, which provided an update on Children's Early Help and Social Care in relation to unresolved issues in performance, quality, and practice.

It was reported that since the Ofsted Inspection known as ILACS (March 2020) there had been a continuous circle of priorities and plans, audits and reviews; two Ofsted Focus Visits including one which led to the issue of a DfE Improvement Notice (Jan 2022); and the creation of a Children's Improvement Board.

It was noted that staff changes at senior levels was stabilising and the appointment of a new Director of Children's Services, who starts in October 23, provided the context for the creation of a twelve week priority plan. The twelve week priority plan will focus its work in ensuring that children of the Borough were safe, which was distilled in three priorities: *see children, hear children, help children*. The focus of the twelve week plan, of which 6 weeks now remained, was described for Members.

The Board discussed the plan, and the following information was provided in response to questions:

- Identification of child neglect at an early age was best and at the right place at the right time, so that support could be built around the family to be able to help them and prevent entry of a child to the care system;
- Halton has good early years educational provision and health services which were able to support the identification of child neglect;
- Ensuring children received the right help at the right time was crucial and management oversight is essential for this to happen;
- Part of the 12 week priority plan included building morale amongst staff and motivating them going forward;
- The remaining 6 weeks of the plan would include a focus on the quality of plans put in place for children in need of help;
- A social work academy was being set up to enable a 'grow your own' approach to recruitment – this would provide training support for 10 newly qualified social workers each year;
- It was important to make the 'Halton offer' more attractive to potential employees, both newly qualified and to those with experience, as a mix of both was

needed; and

- There were currently 26 agency staff within the service.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) receives the update; and
- 2) is aware of the key challenges in children's social care and their implications for the Borough.

CYP13 SUMMARY OF 2023 PROVISIONAL UN-VALIDATED ATTAINMENT OUTCOMES

The Board considered a report of the Interim Executive Director Children's Services, which presented the provisional 2023 educational outcomes for Halton's children and young people.

It was noted that the Board regularly received reports on educational attainment and other educational developments and issues in the Borough, as part of the overview and scrutiny role for Children's Services in Halton. The report provided feedback on Statutory Educational Assessments throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and statutory assessments undertaken in the summer term throughout the primary, secondary and post 16 phases of education. It was noted that this series marked the return of non-compensated statutory assessment, post pandemic.

A summary of 2023 outcomes was provided for the Board for Early Years Good Level of Development (GLD), key stage one phonics and key stage 1, 2, 4 and 5 provisional unvalidated attainment information. The information provided also showed pre pandemic and 2022 performance, to gain an insight into the Borough's prior educational position and then the provisional results achieved this academic year.

Members were also advised of recent educational developments – the Priority Education Investment Area (PEIA) of which Halton was one, and Delivering Better Values Programme, which Halton was part of.

After receiving the information Members raised questions about foreign languages uptake in Halton which appeared to be declining, and the destinations of young people post 16. It was recognised that data on the latter was not available to local authorities.

Concerns were also raised on attendance figures, which had not recovered to pre pandemic levels. Officers advised that attendance was tracked and funding was being made available from the DfE for Attendance Support Officers, as part of the Priority Education Investment Area. This was a distinct role, with education welfare service continuing with the statutory attendance role. It was shared that Halton had also experienced a decline in attendance at its special schools, so this would be also be looked at further.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) receive the presentation; and
- 2) note the key updates and implications for the Borough.

Operational Director
Education, Inclusion and Provision - and

CYP14 PERFORMANCE MONITORING FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management reports for quarter 4 of 2022-23 (1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023). It was noted that these were emailed to Members on 12 July 2023, as soon as they were finalised.

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2022-23 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan for the following Departments:

- Education, Inclusion and Provision Services; and
- Children and Families Services.

The reports detailed progress made against objectives, milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period. Members were requested to consider the progress and performance information and highlight any areas of interest and/or concern, where further information could be reported at a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management reports for quarter 4 of 2022-23 be received.

CYP15 PERFORMANCE MONITORING FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2023/24

The Board received the Performance Management reports for quarter 1 of 2023-24 (1 April 2023 to 30 June

2023).

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2023-24 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan for the following Departments:

- Education, Inclusion and Provision Services; and
- Children and Families Services.

The reports detailed progress made against objectives, milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period. Members were requested to consider the progress and performance information and highlight any areas of interest and/or concern, where further information could be reported at a future meeting of the Board.

Family Hubs were highlighted – it was reported that the Family Hub on the Runcorn side would be at Brookvale. The Chair requested to know the opening date and the process put in place for the selection of the location for the Hub. This would be sent following the meeting and reported to a future meeting of the Board.

Members discussed the academisation of schools in Halton. It was confirmed that Local Authorities were not permitted to establish a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management reports for quarter 1 of 2023-24 be received.

Operational
Director -
Education, and
Inclusion
Provision

Meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.

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**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, 18 September 2023 in the Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice-Chair), S. Hill, Rowe, Ryan and Stretch

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Ball, Garner, Hutchinson, C. Plumpton Walsh and Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, S. Saunders, S. Lowrie, K. Arrowsmith and M. Jones

Also in attendance: Four members of the public

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>ELS10 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 19 June 2023, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p>Feedback relating to queries raised in ELS4 (The Big Conversation) would be emailed to Members following the Meeting.</p>	
<p>ELS11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.</p>	
<p>ELS12 HALTON LEISURE CENTRE - VILLAGE CHANGE FACILITIES</p> <p>The Board received details of an online petition received by the Council on 10 August 2023 titled '<i>Single Sex Spaces</i>', in relation to the village changing room plan for the new Halton Leisure Centre.</p>	

The report provided Members with detailed information on Halton Leisure Centre plans and the design process relating to the village changing rooms. It also included information on the main consultation events relating to the building facility mix and the subsequent advertising of the planning application, which was submitted in May 2020, where comments from the public were sought and received.

Officers referred to the risk assessments a pool operator was required to carry out and the requirement for the production of Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOPs), which included how changing rooms were to be operated, supervised and cleaned.

The Chair circulated copies of plans of the village changing area to Members (also available on the Council's website) and read out a statement of rationale provided by the Architect, as to why the changing village is the most appropriate option for the wet side change at the new leisure centre:

- *A changing village design is recommended by Sports England as being preferable to the single sex separate male and female open-plan changing rooms alternative. All the new pools we have designed have been based around village changing. All our remodelling and refurbishment projects have taken old-fashioned single-sex open plan changing and converted it to village changing;*
- *The changing village allows a male parent/carer to supervise a female child in changing before and after swimming, and a female parent/carer a male child. In the same way, helpers can accompany people with disabilities of the opposite sex. However, separate sex changing rooms discriminate against single parents and parents in a same sex relationship;*
- *Village changing offers greater flexibility to accommodate varying mixes of male and female users, including the flexibility of allowing family groups to change together;*
- *Village changing gives flexibility to allow staff of either sex to supervise, clean and maintain the area. All changing spaces and lockers are available to all users giving flexibility to accommodate any proportion of male and female users;*
- *There is nothing in the Moor Lane design to prevent*

Active Halton from running single sex swimming sessions as part of their timetable. Glazed screens between the foyer and the pool hall will be equipped with blinds. The separate adjoining school swimming/team change is available as an area that can be closed off for privacy during adult swimming for sensitive groups and will have separate access to toilets, pre-cleanse showers and the pool water;

- *The changing village will minimise any perceived sense of insecurity for sensitive users through being equipped with individual cubicles of various sizes giving privacy for changing: single person, two-person and four-person/family. It will also be equipped with separate shower cubicles for post-swim showers, again offering better individual privacy than single sex separate male and female open-plan changing.*

Members discussed the two options described in the report and agreed that option one was preferable, but made the following observations and suggestions to ensure extra safeguards:

- Although construction was underway, could changes be made to the partitions of the cubicles to ensure that the gap at the bottom was at a minimum – officers would send Members the current measurements of the cubicle doors and raise this with the Architect;
- A vertical split sliding door option was suggested which would offer more flexibility of the space – officers would discuss this with the Architect;
- CCTV was discussed – could this be installed in the communal corridor area of the changing village;
- The presence of staff was important to ensure that the rules of the Centre were complied with, this would instill confidence in the public to know they were in a safe environment;
- Signage must be robust enough to deter offending; this should include the penalties for rule breaking, ie prosecution;
- Signage to include no nudity in the changing village – cubicles are provided for changing;
- Signage to include warning against the use of mobile phones in changing areas; and
- It was felt that the changing village design would be more serviceable and practical for families and carers attending the pool.

It was confirmed that the Board would make a site

visit to the Leisure Centre following the meeting. Officers were also tasked with obtaining information from other leisure centres in the Country who operate the same village changing facility, so that these could be shared and offer reassurance to petitioners.

RESOLVED: That the Board recommends Option one as the preferred option, with consideration being given to the above suggestions, and contractors continue to proceed with the current design layout and program of works.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

One Member of the public asked to put forward a question on the above item. The Chair advised of the Public Question Time procedure, as described in agenda Item 3. She was invited to submit her question following the meeting for a response.

ELS13 LEISURE CENTRE WORKFORCE & OPERATIONS

The Board considered a report on the Council's Leisure Centre operations and received an update on the construction of the Council's new Leisure Centre.

The last update was provided to the Board at the January 2023 meeting, where it was reported that at the time recruitment was proving to be difficult, which was a regional problem being experienced in the leisure business; the report outlined the recruitment activities carried out since then. Members were advised that there was a significant improvement in the time taken to recruit to vacant posts, but that the service still experienced a high turnover of staff; the possible reasons for this were discussed, as well as the following:

- Funding for swimming instructors training and the caveat to pay this back if leaving employment of the Council within two years of completion;
- Casual contracts for swimming instructors and minimum hours required;
- The restructure of the service to ensure stabilisation;
- The development of a Leisure Centre app;
- Timings of the swimming lessons for babies/toddlers and confusion of information on the website – this would be checked; and
- The status of the 'Little Dolphins' group would be checked.

Leisure Centre attendance figures for 2022/23 were provided to the Board; these would be used as comparisons from one year to the next, to show any increases /

decreases for the service.

Members were advised that the construction of the new Leisure Centre was progressing well, and Officers gave updates in relation to this. The Active Halton website hosted a section dedicated to the new build, with pictures and regular updates were uploaded.

The Board was also advised that *Wates*, the contractor, had delivered many community activities, these were listed in the report in paragraph 3.7 and included events at Riverside College and Cronton Sixth Form College.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

ELS14 HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ADULT LEARNING ANNUAL POSITION STATEMENT 2022/23

The Board received an overview and accompanying presentation of the Halton Adult Learning Service performance for the Academic Year 2022/23.

It was noted that Adult Learning provision for 22/23 was funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB), devolved to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA). In addition to this, funding was also available for Test and Learn initiatives and for the City Region Wide Pathways to Teaching project, coordinated by Halton Adult Learning. The Board was advised that all budgets were managed and monitored through regular scrutiny and accountability meetings between the CA Relationship Manager and Senior service Leaders within Halton Adult Learning.

The report provided information on the Ofsted Inspection carried out on the Adult Learning Service and the 'Good' rating that was maintained. The Inspectors' report was presented via weblink within the report.

Information relating to the current position with funding; Pathways to Teaching, achievements in non-accredited adult learning and learner recruitment was also provided.

Following Members queries the following additional information was provided:

- Adult Learning was for clients aged 19+ so special schools were not routinely contacted as pupils did not

usually fit into this age group;

- It was suggested that the Adult Learning Team make contact with the Halton Young Carers Centre to market courses that young carers could aspire to;
- Recruitment of teachers was sometimes challenging due to the types of employment contracts on offer;
- Promotion of the Adult Learning Centre in colleges did already take place;
- The new marketing strategy would include more robust marketing methods;
- Members noted that most of the courses available were free for Halton residents; and
- The uptake of courses was recorded in a marketing log to show the Ward they came from.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ELS15 BUSINESS GROWTH PROGRAMME COMPLETION & BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICE LAUNCH

Due to the unavailability of the reporting officer, this item is deferred to the November meeting.

ELS16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2022/23

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 4 of 2022-23 (1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023) and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these. It was noted that these reports were emailed to Members on 10 July 2023 after they were finalised.

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.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 4 2022-23 performance management reports be received.

ELS17 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2023/24

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter one of 2023-24 (1 March 2023 to 30 June 2023) and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

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.

The Board noted the improvements reported within the recruitment and HR processes for the Leisure Service and Adult Learning. A suggestion was made that the currently empty *Frankie and Bennie's* unit could be used by students for training; this would be put forward.

RESOLVED: That the quarter one 2023-24 performance management reports be received.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.

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HEALTH POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Health Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 26 September 2023 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Baker (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Begg, Fry, Garner, C. Loftus, L. Nolan, Stretch and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Dourley

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, D. Nolan, L Wilson, H. Moir, I. Onyia and H. Birchall

Also in attendance: T. Knight – Primary Care NHS Cheshire & Merseyside and L. Gardner – Warrington & Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
HEA12 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2023 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.</p>	
HEA13 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The following public question had been received:</p> <p><i>“In 2016 (pre pandemic) HBC made the decision to reduce Carers breaks by 50%, this decision has not been reviewed, but has resulted in large underspends in carers break funding year on year, which has meant hundreds of thousands of pounds of carers funding has then been redirected to fill gaps in Adult Social Care. Is this bad management or a deliberate policy? Not to spend carers funding is inexcusable, to do so year on year is not defensible. The 6,000 registered carers in Halton deserve a response.”</i></p> <p>The following response was provided:</p> <p><i>Halton Borough Council did not reduce the Carers respite funding in 2016. Expenditure in 2015/16 was £445,206. Expenditure in 2016/17 was £394,583.</i></p>	

The allocated budgets across these 2 years remained the same, a reduction in expenditure was seen in relation to Direct Payments, £41,000 and in voluntary sector grant application of £6,000. As can be seen within the Carers Respite Finance report, the allocated budget for Carers Respite in 2022/23 was circa. £428k and represents a 9% increase in budget from 2019/20.

Spend against these allocated budgets does fluctuate dependent on activity / demand, but is not as a result of a deliberate policy by Halton Borough Council.

HEA14 HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES

The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board's meeting held on 22 March 2023 were submitted to the Board for information.

HEA15 COMMISSIONING OF PRIMARY CARE DENTAL SERVICES

The Board welcomed Tom Knight, Head of Primary Care: NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, who provided an update on the commissioning of Primary Care Dental Services.

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside had the delegated responsibility for the commissioning of dental services, including primary, community and secondary care. It was reported that access to dental services was a local, regional and national issue impacting negatively on patients.

Post pandemic, the restoration and recovery of primary care dental provision was part of the NHS Operational Plan for 2023/24, with the expectation being that activity would return to pre pandemic levels. Practices continued to recover, supported by commissioners alongside a small number of national contract changes allowing some flexibilities focussed on improving access and increasing activity.

The report provided details of dental provision in Halton currently, through 13 practices. It also advised of the development of the *Dental Improvement Plan*, which signalled NHS Cheshire and Merseyside's commitment and ambition to ensure that access was improved for routine, urgent and dental care for the most vulnerable populations and communities impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Plan was submitted to the ICB System Primary Care Board on 22 June 2023 for approval and identified the key strategic

aims; these were outlined in the report.

Following presentation of the item, the following comments were made by Members and some additional information was provided in response:

- The pandemic had made a huge impact on the oral health of the population nationally, including children. There were now more patients than ever requiring more treatment, resulting in a backlog;
- Staff retention – a workforce plan was being developed; it was important to understand what would encourage dentists to stay in the NHS and the offer required for this to be achieved;
- It was felt that the current contracts were unworkable;
- It was not just about the money – dentists had ambitions to achieve just like anyone else, these were restricted within the NHS which is why they turned to the private sector;
- Commissioners were working hard with providers to get more dentists signed up;
- It was confirmed that currently Halton's practices were not taking any more new patients – the list of the 13 practices would be sent following the meeting;
- The hard work of NHS dentists was recognised;
- Care home providers were struggling to get dentists in for residents – the requirements for care home residents had changed in recent years due to them having better teeth. Care home staff were being supported with encouraging better hygiene amongst residents – this aspect forms part of the Dental Improvement Plan;
- Halton had the lowest number of children being seen by a dentist in Cheshire and Merseyside; and
- Emergency telephone number for Halton – was discussed and requested to be an 0800 number like Manchester – Mr Knight would check if this was possible and report back.

Mr Knight was thanked for his presentation and the Chair invited him back to a future meeting when more data would be available on dental services in Halton in 5-6 months time.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

HEA16 HALTON & WARRINGTON COMMUNITY DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE

The Board received a report from Lucy Gardner, the Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHSFT, which provided an update on Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's plan for the provision of a Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) in Halton.

Further to the NHS Long Term Plan, the Department of Health and Social Care announced that it was making significant funding available for the creation of Community Diagnostic Centres and invited applications for funding from NHS Trusts. It was announced that the Trust was successful in its bid to secure an allocation of new capital and revenue funding to develop a CDC on the Halton site.

It was reported that the plan would be delivered in three phases:

- Phase 1 – Fast Track Community Diagnostic Centre (this was already fully operational since June 2023;
- Phase 2 – Community Diagnostic Centre in Halton Health Hub in Runcorn Shopping City – to be operational in November 2023; and
- Phase 3 – New Build Community Diagnostic Centre at the Trust's Halton site – to be fully operational in October 2024.

Members were advised that the CDC scheme would support improvements in population health outcomes across Halton and Warrington, through the creation of increased diagnostic capacity to support earlier diagnosis of conditions such as cardiac and respiratory disease or cancer. It would also significantly improve access to diagnostic services in one of the most deprived areas of Cheshire and Merseyside and will help address a number of stark health inequalities that were visible within the local population. The additional benefits of the CDC were discussed and the fact that the creation of the CDC was on the Halton site was welcomed.

The additional information below provided clarification following Members questions:

- The Community Diagnostic Centre in Runcorn Shopping City would include an outpatient Sleep Study Service, which patients would be referred to by their GP or other healthcare professional – it was noted that there were currently long waiting lists for

the service;

- The outpatients appointment telephone line had been addressed in relation to frustrations with patients being on hold; and an electronic booking system was being looked at so patients would be able to book online in the future; and
- An observation was made by one Member in relation to a reduction in phlebotomy services being offered at some local GP surgeries – a response would follow after the meeting as Officers were not aware of this.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

HEA17 ONE HALTON HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY AND UPDATE

The Board considered a report from the Director of Public Health, which provided an update on the development of the One Halton and Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy.

It was noted that Halton's previous Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy covered the period 2017 – 2022. Developments within the NHS had led to the creation of One Halton, and as a partnership approach it was agreed that a shared Strategy be adopted.

The report outlined the development of the Strategy, the consultation process, priorities identified and its four underlying themes – tackling the wider determinants of health; supporting communities in starting well; supporting communities in living well; and supporting communities in ageing well. There were two year goals and five year goals for each of the themes; details of these were outlined in the accompanying presentation.

The Strategy identified important system priorities and a strategic framework that would be used to develop a delivery plan.

The following additional information was provided in response to Members questions:

- The two Family Hubs had now been established – one in Kingsway which was already open and one in Brookvale Community Centre, which was due to open in the Autumn 2023;
- The inclusion of people with disabilities and special needs would form part of the Strategy which would support partnership work with other agencies. The

Strategy would challenge agencies to ensure that this cohort was supported with entering the jobs market for example;

- An observation was made by one Member that this type of strategy had been done before without success – and that this was the same but under another name;
- Observation made with regards to life expectancy and the disparity between Wards in Halton being a challenge; and
- At the time of starting the Strategy the health statistics of the population were not known due to Covid and the impact it had on data collection, where data was simply not collected by clinicians during 2021-22 when services were closed.

RESOLVED: That the report and presentation be received.

HEA18 PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received an update from the Director of Public Health, on the development of the Halton Public Health Annual Report (PHAR).

It was noted that since 1988 Directors of Public Health (DPH) had been tasked with preparing annual reports – an independent assessment of the health of local populations. The annual report was the DPH's professional statement on the health of local communities, based on sound epidemiological evidence and interpreted objectively. It also allowed the DPH to identify key issues, flag problems, report progress and thereby, serve the local populations. It was also a key resource to inform local inter-agency action and remained a key means by which the DPH was accountable to the population they served.

The Board was advised that the theme for the PHAR for 2022/23 had focused on health improvement and prevention work to support the Halton community with their health in the different stages of their lives, as well as coping with pressures such as the recent pandemic and rising cost of living. To do this four key life stages were used as a guide to the issues – *Start, Strong, Live and Well*.

A summary was provided of the content of the PHAR relating to these issues and a weblink to the Report was provided, as follows:

[HBC Director of Health annual public health reports \(halton.gov.uk\)](https://www.halton.gov.uk)

Members welcomed the PHAR and agreed it was informative and interesting to read. The resources provided with regards to cost of living information and support was highlighted and it was suggested that perhaps future reports could also include DWP information on how to access work information for residents. Thanks were given to the Health Improvement Team.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the theme and recommendations within the Director of Public Health's Annual Report.

HEA19 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Adults, which updated them on key issues with respect to safeguarding in Halton.

The Board was advised that in April 2023 Government announced that the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) would be delayed 'beyond the life of this Parliament' so whether the LPS were introduced now depends on what the incoming Government wants to do after the Election. It was the view that the LPS would offer a streamlined alternative to the current Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) system.

Halton received 894 DoLS applications last year; an increase of 6%. To keep up with the increase in demand, independent Best Interests Assessors (BIAs) were used to ensure the backlog list was kept below 12 months. Members were advised that work was ongoing with regional ADASS DoLS groups to explore different strategies in order to streamline the internal DoLS process and increase the DoLS assessments that were completed by Halton's BIAs and therefore reduce the need for independent BIAs.

The report outlined some key safeguarding facts from 2022-23 (paragraph 3.3). *A typographical error was noted – second bullet point, 19% should read 9%.* The report also included information on the development of the Cheshire All Age Exploitation Strategy 2023-2025; provided details of a peer review of the Safeguarding Adults Board; and information relating to Halton's 22 care homes, two of which were currently being supported by the Council.

Members were also referred to the Safeguarding

website: www.halton.gov.uk/adultsafeguarding which had been updated and contained a range of resources and toolkits for use.

Further to one Member's question, it was confirmed that Halton's inclusion with Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Safeguarding Adults Boards, as opposed to the Liverpool City Region's (LCR) Board, was due to the fact that Halton fell within the jurisdiction of Cheshire Police, not Merseyside Police. They did however, work together on many issues and shared information. Regarding a query on the need for a modern slavery toolkit for Halton, it was commented that best practice was learned from other areas including the LCR, in order to give people the knowledge to be able to report modern slavery.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments made be noted.

HEA20 CARERS RESPITE FINANCE

The Board considered a report which provided an update on the key aspects of the use of the funding available for respite services for carers in the Borough.

It was reported that the Adult Social Care Carers budget for 2022/23 was £428,070, which represented a 9% increase from the 2019/20 budget.

The Board was advised that the budget was available to spend on direct respite provision of services for carers of people who were in receipt of adult social care services as part of a carers assessment; carers who applied to Halton Carers Centre for finance to support their caring role; and as small grants to voluntary and independent sector organisations who applied.

The spend of the budget varied year on year; the report provided details of the allocated budgets and spend for the past 4 years. It was noted that the decrease in spend in 2020/21 and 2021/22 was due to the pandemic.

Further to Members questions, it was confirmed that the budget variance at the end of each year was not rolled over to the next and was not protected, as it formed part of a single budget within the Directorate. Further, use of the carers respite budget was purely demand led and there was no deliberate policy on the Council's part to underspend this. Also, the carers allocated respite budget had increased year on year, as presented in the report.

It was commented that the Halton Carers Centre was located in Runcorn but did have an outreach facility in Widnes, at St Marie's Church on Lugsdale Road.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

HEA21 HEALTH BASED PRIORITY PERFORMANCE REPORTS
Q1 2023/24

The Board received the Performance Management Reports for quarter one of 2023/24.

Members were advised that the report introduced, through the submission of a structured thematic performance report, the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health in quarter one of 2023-24. This included a description of factors, which were affecting the service.

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

No particular areas of concern were identified but one Member requested an update on the progress of the Big Conversation; this would be fed back.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management reports for quarter one of 2023/24 be received.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.

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SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 12 September 2023 at the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors N. Plumpton Walsh (Chair), Carlin (Vice-Chair), Baker, Bevan, Bramwell, Cargill, Ratcliffe and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Goodall, A. Lowe and Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler and N. Goodwin

Also in attendance: Councillor M. Lloyd-Jones, S. Baxter and J. Dwyer (Police & Crime Commission), S. Heath, R. McLoughlin and S. Pyke (Cheshire Constabulary)

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

	<i>Action</i>
SAF8 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<p>The Chair reminded Members of the Board that it had previously been agreed that the meetings would be held at alternative venues between Widnes and Runcorn so that the public could access the meetings from both sides of the River. To date, no members of the public had attended any recent meetings, however, the Board confirmed that their preference would be to continue with the current arrangement. The Chair agreed to review arrangements again at a later date.</p>	
SAF9 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
SAF10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>It was reported that no questions had been received.</p>	

SAF11 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE

Cheshire's Police and Crime Commissioner attended the meeting to present the latest Police and Crime Plan to Members of the Board. Following feedback from a public survey, the Plan set out the Commissioner's vision for policing, crime and community safety in Cheshire.

During the Commissioner's time in office, Cheshire was the only County in the Country to see a reduction in crime,

The six key priorities for policing and crime in Cheshire were to:

- Prevent and tackle crime;
- Make Cheshire's roads safer;
- Deliver justice for victims of crime;
- Protect vulnerable and at-risk people;
- Improve public confidence in policing; and
- Modernise the Police service.

It was noted that one of the concerns raised during the public survey was the speed issues on Watkinson Way and as a result average speed cameras were due to be installed in October 2023.

The Board noted the report and provided feedback which included:

- Councillors were confused with boundary changes and which Police Officers to contact on behalf of their constituents. The Commissioner agreed to provide an up-to-date contact list and this information would also be included on the newsletters which would soon re-commence again;
- Councillors believed that constituents did not report minor crimes. Both the Commissioner and the Police reassured the Board that they would encourage the public to report minor crimes as often those who commit minor crimes graduate to committing more serious crimes. All information received by the Police help them to build intelligence;
- There was a discussion about how the Police could improve their communications and it was suggested that Police messages need to be communicated at grassroot level e.g. women's community groups. Other communication outlets that were suggested were:
 - the Council's "In Halton" newsletter which was

delivered to every household in the Borough;
and

- Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action Group, of which 560 organisations were members.
- There was a discussion about dangerous dogs and the need for all dogs to be licensed and chipped. Councillors suggested that the matter would be taken via the MP; and
- The Police Commissioner was invited to contribute to a message that is delivered to all secondary school pupils via a group of Magistrates who visit schools to explain the consequences for those who commit crime.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SAF12 CHESHIRE POLICE - HALTON PERFORMANCE

The Board received a presentation from the Cheshire Police Halton Area Commander, the Chief Inspector for Runcorn and the Chief Inspector for Widnes, which provided an overview on policing performance and priorities for Halton.

The presentation outlined:

- Local performance figures (April – June 2023);
- Priorities for both Runcorn and Widnes Local Policing Units;
- An update on Operation Scrambler; and
- Recent improvements in the Runcorn and Widnes Local Policing Units.

Members of the Board discussed the information shared within the presentation and agreed to help share the good messages with their constituents.

The Board thanked Police colleagues for their hard work in keeping the Borough safe.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

SAF13 EMERGENCY PLANNING ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the work undertaken by the Emergency Planning Team during 2022-23.

As a Local Authority, Halton Borough Council had a statutory duty to comply with the following legislation:

- the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004;
- Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH) 2015; and
- Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR) 1996.

Members noted that Halton had a number of Emergency Plans in place with the aim to ensure resilience. These Plans were regularly updated and tested. The Board was advised on examples of local risks, details of the exercises that take place at COMAH sites in the Borough, information on Emergency Centres and the work the Emergency Planning Team carried out with partner agencies both within Cheshire and cross-border, and as part of Cheshire Resilience Forum.

Emergency Planning was part of the new Community Safety and Protection Division and an information session would be held at the Council meeting in October to update Members of the progress.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

SAF14 ENFORCEMENT TEAM OVERVIEW, INCLUDING ANNUAL COMMUNITY TRIGGER UPDATE

The Board received a report which provided an update on the work carried out by the Enforcement Team which included:

- Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Environmental Crime and Waste Enforcement; and
- Alcohol Licensing.

The report also provided an annual update on Community Trigger, however, it was noted that a more detailed report would be provided at the next meeting.

Following discussions on the report, Members of the Board requested further information including:

- An updated list of contacts within the Community Safety and Protection Division;
- Feedback following the “Love Parks Week”, and
- Details of any future campaigns.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

SAF15 WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the White Ribbon Initiative; a UK charity set up to engage boys and men to end violence to women and girls.

On 18 October 2023, Council would receive a Notice of Motion to support the development of an action plan and pursue accreditation.

Key elements of the action plan included:

- Awareness raising and e-learning offer to engage staff, Council Members and schools;
- A planned event in November delivered by Halton's Domestic Abuse Partnership, in collaboration with Safe Lives, the organisation Halton is actively working with; and
- A communication and engagement plan to ensure information was available to ease navigating support for victims and system learning from lived experience.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) endorse the draft Action Plan.

Meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

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ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 20 September 2023 at the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair), Abbott, K. Loftus, L. Nolan, Ryan, Stockton and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Ball, Hutchinson and Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs, J. Briggs and A. Plant

Also in attendance: None

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

Action

EUR10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

EUR11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

EUR12 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

N.B. Councillor Ryan declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as he had organised the petition to save the No 62 bus service.

EUR13 RECEIPT OF PETITION – POTENTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF 62 BUS SERVICE (MONDAY TO FRIDAY)

The Board considered a report of the Executive

Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided information on the petition received following the bus operator giving notice to withdraw the No. 62 bus service. A commercial decision was taken by the bus operator to withdraw the 62 Service due to it operating at a loss and therefore no longer commercially viable. The Council currently provided a level of public funding subsidy towards the operating costs under a “de minimis” arrangement.

A tender exercise to identify the cost to maintain the service had been carried out, however, the level of subsidy required by potential new operators was unsustainable by the Council given the budget position.

The Board was advised that since the publication of the agenda, the Council had carried out a further tender exercise with alternative bus operators to provide the service going forward. The Council recognised that the loss of the No.62 would leave Moore without a bus service as there were no close alternative bus routes. Following this exercise, Ashcroft Travel had been awarded a contract to provide the service. Ashcroft Travel would provide a similar timetable, starting on Monday 25 September.

It was noted that at a time of significant pressure on budgets, and the small amount of funding to support bus routes already being oversubscribed, it was fortunate that the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Travel Fund was able to provide the funding required to retain the No.62 service for the time being. It was hoped this would allow time for the route to re-establish itself on a commercial footing.

The Council would monitor usage of the service operated by Ashcroft Travel and would work with the operator to encourage increased passenger usage. It was vital that people used this service to ensure its viability.

RESOLVED: That in accordance with the Council Constitution, the petition be received by the Board.

EUR14 ENVIRONMENTAL FUND UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the expenditure of the Environmental Fund. Planning permission for the Runcorn Thermal Power Station (TPS) Plant was granted in September 2008. The Plant was subject to a legal agreement, under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The legal agreement contained a provision that the owner of the Plant agreed to

pay the Council an annual lump sum payment for every tonne of fuel received and processed.

To date, the Fund had generated £5,924,470 and the projects that had benefitted from those funds were set out in Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That the wide range of projects that had benefitted from the fund as set out in Appendix 1 be noted.

EUR15 HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND UPDATE 2022/23.

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration which provided a summary of the Annual Housing and Employment Land Monitoring Surveys undertaken by the Planning and Transport Department.

As set out in Halton's Local Plan, the report outlined a number of development targets for the provision of housing and the supply of land for employment including:

- 350 dwellings (net gain) per annum; and
- 180ha of land for employment purposes between 2014-2037.

In the year to April 2023, there had been 368 housing completions in Halton with 6 losses/demolitions with a net dwelling gain of 362 units. Of the 368 completions, 74% were in Runcorn and 26% were in Widnes.

Employment land monitoring for 2023 recorded the take up of 6.7ha of employment land, all of which had been in Widnes.

Members requested the number of affordable housing properties provided in the Borough in the past year and it was agreed that this information would be provided.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2023/24

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Reports for Quarter 1 of 2023/24.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2023/24 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

the Board as detailed below:

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services; and
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services.

The reports 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.

The Chair advised the Board that a Topic Group would be set up to consider the introduction of civil traffic enforcement for traffic violations. A report setting out further information would be brought to the next Board meeting.

Councillor Ryan advised that he had submitted a number of questions regarding the performance management reports and he had received written officer responses. It was agreed that the questions and responses would be circulated to the Board.

RESOLVED: That quarter 1 performance management reports be received and noted.

Meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 5 September 2023 in the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), J. Bradshaw, Hutchinson, Leck, Logan, A. Lowe and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors A. McInerney, N. Plumpton Walsh and Thornton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, E. Dawson, S. Davies and M. Reaney

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CS10 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 6 June 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CS11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CS12 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board was presented with the minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of the Board.</p> <p>Members discussed the minutes and the following comments were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board expressed an interest on the developments of the Transformation Programme; • Observations were made about environmental issues in the Borough; • Onward Housing had confirmed that some of their contracted services were to be brought back in-house in January 2024 and would work more closely with the Council to address some issues. 	

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

Councillors Wainwright and Hutchinson declared an other registratable interest for the following item as they are both trustees of the Catalyst Museum.

CS13 PROGRAMMES OFFICE UPDATE

The Board received a report on the work of the Programmes Office in securing external funding resources into Halton. The report provided an update on the Programmes Office key activities and priorities as well as emerging issues in external funding and funding statistics for 2022-23.

The key priorities for 2022-23 had been:

- Embedding the new Programmes Office function, including recruitment to new posts;
- Supporting the delivery of the Government's levelling up agenda, including Towns Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF);
- Disseminating details of funding that will support the Cost of Living crisis;
- Disseminating details of funding that will help mitigate climate change and help deliver HBC's Climate Change Action Plan;
- Ensuring the remaining ESIF (European Strategic Investment Fund) is secured, spent and monitored; and
- Supporting the development of the HBC Cultural Strategy and Heritage Open Days programme.

The report also described some of the key schemes currently supported by the team which included:

- The £23.6 million Town Deal Programme for Runcorn;
- Halton's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund;
- Halton's allocation of an LCR Destination Marketing programme;
- The Community and Voluntary Sector; and
- Liverpool City Region and Cultural/Visitor Economy work.

It was noted that the Programmes Office would work more with the new Environment and Regeneration Directorate on some smaller projects to try and develop them.

Members of the Board discussed the report and raised the issue regarding climate change and electric vehicles. They queried if the Council was involved in the Infrastructure Fund and Infrastructure Grant for the two periods 2023-24 and 2024-25. Officers agreed to provide a response for Members.

Monthly funding bulletins were produced and circulated and Members were invited to join the distribution list if they did not already receive it. It was suggested that the bulletins were also sent to local housing providers and Four Estates who did a lot of community work in Halton.

Corporate
Director, Chief
Executive's
Delivery Unit

It was confirmed that external funding training would be promoted in the Autumn and offered to the Member Development Group.

Executive
Director,
Environment &
Regeneration

RESOLVED: That the Board note the report.

CS14 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES

The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 14 March 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CS15 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 4 of 2022/23. The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and 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:

- Finance;
- Human Resources and Organisational Development;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services; and
- Property Services.

It was noted that Members had previously received a copy of this report via email in July 2023, when the report had been finalised.

Members of the Board discussed the report and referenced Local Indicator 12 - average time to recruit and subsequently requested a further update on the Council's recruitment processes following the report they had received last year.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 4 Performance Management report be noted.

Corporate
Director, Chief
Executive's
Delivery Unit

CS16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2023/24

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 1 of 2023/24. The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and 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:

- Finance;
- Human Resources and Organisational Development;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services; and
- Property Services.

Members of the Board discussed the report and asked if there was a reason for the reduction of take up of free school meals – performance indicator CE LI 01. Officers agreed to confirm this query in due course.

The Chair suggested that for future performance monitoring reports, Board Members should submit any questions in advance of the meeting to ensure that answers can be provided at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 1 Performance Management report be noted.

Operational
Director,
Community &
Green Space

Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Audit and Governance Board held on Wednesday, 5 July 2023 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chair), Wall (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Begg, Bevan, Dourley, McDermott, N. Plumpton Walsh and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillors J. Bradshaw and Gilligan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, M. Murphy and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: Mr M Green – Grant Thornton

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

	<i>Action</i>
AGB1 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
AGB2 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT & OPINION 2022/23	
<p>The Board considered a report of the Divisional Manger – Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, which summarised the work completed by Internal Audit during 2022/23, which included an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's overall risk management, control and governance processes.</p> <p>The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) required the Head of Internal Audit to deliver an annual audit opinion and report that could be used to inform the Annual Governance Statement (the Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23 was appended to the report).</p> <p>It was noted that it was the view of the Head of Internal Audit that sufficient audit work was completed during the year to be able to form an overall opinion. It was reported that the Council's risk management, control and governance processes that were in place during 2022/23</p>	

were considered to be adequate and had operated effectively during the year.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) receives and notes the overall opinion on the Council's risk management control and governance processes that were in place during 2022/23;
- 2) notes the Internal Audit Charter which sets out the purpose, authority and responsibility of the Council's internal audit activity; and
- 3) notes and endorses the safeguards established to limit any impairment to the independence or objectivity of the internal audit function.

AGB3 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT - 2022/23

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director - Finance, which sought approval of the 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement (AGS). A copy of the draft Statement was appended to the report.

The AGS described how the Council continued to maintain a robust governance framework and continually reviewed and developed its arrangements to demonstrate good corporate governance.

Once approved the AGS would be signed by the Council Leader and Chief Executive and published on the Council's website.

A Member commented on the new governance arrangements ("Office for Local Government"), which were announced by Central Government on 4 July 2023. It was expected that Civil Servants would communicate to all local authorities further details on the proposed arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 be approved.

AGB4 EXTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, which provided a copy of the Interim External Auditor's, Grant Thornton UK LLP, Annual Report 2021/22.

The External Auditor was required to consider

whether the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Annual Report detailed overall arrangements, as well as providing key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit.

On behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Michael Green presented details of the findings of the External Auditor to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the 2021/22 External Audit Annual Report be noted, including recommendations set out on pages 11, 15 and 22 of the report.

AGB5 EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN – 2022/23 YEAR-END

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director - Finance, which set out the 2022/23 year-end Audit Plan, presented by the External Auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP.

The Board was advised that the External Audit Plan was attached to the report and set out details of risks identified, their approach to the value for money conclusion and audit fees.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the External Audit Plan for 2022/23 year-end be noted.

AGB6 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were

applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

AGB7 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received a report from the Divisional Manager – Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, updating them on the internal audit activity since the last progress report to the Board on 22 March 2023. It also highlighted any matters that were relevant to the Board's responsibilities as the Council's Audit Committee.

Members were referred to appendix one, which listed all the planned work for the year and the current status. It was noted that the schedule of audit would be updated for future meetings to reflect the progress made in completing audits and any reprioritisation of work or enforced changes.

It was noted that by the end of May 2023, 192 days of audit work had been completed which represented approximately 16% of the total planned days for the year. The team was currently fully staffed and was making good progress finalising work from 2022/23 and in progressing planned work for 2023/24.

Appended to the report were the executive summaries of the reports issued numbering 2 to 18, as listed in paragraph 4.2.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Progress Report and comments made be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.30 p.m.

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Audit and Governance Board held on Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chair), Wall (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Begg, Bevan, McDermott and Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Dourley, Gilligan and N. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, M. Murphy, K. Keane and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: S. Nixon – Grant Thornton

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

		<i>Action</i>
AGB8	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
AGB9	2022/23 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE	
	<p>The Board received a progress update regarding the audit of the Council's 2022/23 year-end accounts from Grant Thornton UK LLP.</p> <p>It was reported that the audit was close to completion and the Auditor's findings would be reported to the Board in November 2022 alongside the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts prior to their publication by 30 November 2023.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the verbal progress update by the Council's external auditor Grant Thornton UK LLP be received.</p>	
AGB10	ANTI FRAUD & CORRUPTION UPDATE	
	<p>The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which provided an annual update on developments in regard to the Council's anti-fraud and anti-</p>	

corruption activity.

It was reported that the Board was responsible for the monitoring and reviewing the adequacy of the Council's anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements, which was a key aspect of the Council's risk management, control and governance framework.

The Board considered information relating to the following activities:

- A commentary on the fraud risk landscape;
- A summary of the fraud investigations from 2022/23;
- HR related investigations from 2022/23;
- Whistleblowing complaints received and action taken;
- An update on the National Fraud Initiative;
- Details of fraud investigation related information reported under the Transparency Code;
- Details of ongoing and planned anti-fraud work; and
- Details of the Council's suite of anti-fraud and anti-corruption related policies.

The Board discussed compromise agreements and how they were defined within the Council. Members proposed that the Council should have a clearer definition of a compromise agreement which should include reference to neutral and financial agreements. It was agreed to that a report covering these matters would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

Information on the number of Non-Disclosure Agreements signed by the Council in the past year and details of how the figure relating to Housing Waiting List valuation (£184,169) was calculated, would be provided to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the annual update on anti-fraud and corruption related activity be noted and the Board supports the counter fraud working being undertaken.

Operational
Director - Finance

AGB11 INFORMING THE EXTERNAL AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT

The Board considered a report by the Operational Director - Finance, which presented for information the draft response provided to the annual letter to the Board from Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditors, regarding their year-end audit of accounts work.

The Appendix to the report outlined the draft responses provided to a number of questions contained in a letter from Grant Thornton, which it was proposed to provide to them in order to assist with their year-end audit of accounts.

RESOLVED: That the draft responses shown in the Appendix be provided to the Council's external auditors.

AGB12 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER ANNUAL UPDATE 2023/24

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, on the annual update of the Corporate Risk Register for 2023/24.

The Board was advised that the Council recognised its responsibility to manage both internal and external risks as a key component of good corporate governance. At Directorate level, arrangements were in place for the high risk mitigation measures on the half year monitoring reports which were reviewed and updated at mid-year in line with Directorate Business Plans. Progress was then reported to Management Team and Policy and Performance Boards.

It was reported that the Risk Control Measures had been reviewed and updated in line with current changes within the Authority and as proposed by managers and stakeholders. The risks had been re-prioritised so that people, (the community and staff), took priority. These were set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the progress of actions be noted; and
- 2) the robustness of the Corporate Risk Register and the adequacy of the associated risk management arrangements be noted.

AGB13 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

- 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of

the Local Government Act 1972, because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

AGB14 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received a report from the Divisional Manager – Audit, Procurement and Operational Finance, updating them on the internal audit activity since the last progress report to the Board on 5 July 2023. It also highlighted any matters that were relevant to the Board's responsibilities as the Council's Audit Committee.

Members were referred to appendix one, which listed all the planned work for the year and its current status. The schedule of audits had been updated to reflect the progress made in completing audits since the last update to the Board. By the end of August 2023, 500 days of audit work had been completed, which represented 41% of the total planned days for the year. It was noted that some audits had taken longer to complete than originally planned which was partly due to issues arising in the course of the audit work and the team having three new starters who were undergoing training. It was likely that this would impact on overall coverage and some work may have to be put back to 2024/25.

Appended to the report were the executive

summaries of the reports issued numbering 2 to 15, as listed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Audit Progress Report and comments made be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 3 July 2023 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Leck (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Bevan, Carlin, Davidson, C. Loftus, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, Polhill and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors S. Hill and Thompson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, A. Evans, M. Webster, L. Wilson-Lagan, I. Dignall and A. Blackburn

Also in attendance: 32 members of the public and one member of the press

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

	<i>Action</i>
DEV5 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2023, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
DEV6 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
<p>The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.</p>	
DEV7 22/00318/FUL - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 328 DWELLINGS INCLUDING A MIX OF 1, 2, 3, 4 AND 5 BEDROOM UNITS, AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION, CREATION OF TWO NEW ACCESS POINTS FROM LUNT'S HEATH ROAD AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, OPEN SPACE, PLAY SPACE AND PARKING PROVISION ON LAND NORTH OF LUNT'S HEATH ROAD, WIDNES	
<p>The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.</p>	

Since the publication of the agenda updates were provided in the published AB list relating to amendments requested by MEAS from the applicant, which had been submitted but further comments on these from MEAS were still awaited. Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) comments had been received with no objections made. The list of proposed conditions had also been amended following the LLFA comments, to those listed on the update. It was noted that one further representation had been received from a member of the public. The Officer also outlined the approach to Green Belt Compensation and that Open Space payments were to be made and that these would be spent on Council owned sites within the remaining Green Belt. The Highways Officer provided the Committee with a highways update.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Harper, who opposed the application. He argued the following, *inter alia*:

- The loss of Green Belt land;
- No compensatory improvements had been made on the application and questioned why it was submitted without these;
- Quoted figures relating to compensation made for other Developments such as Bellway Homes;
- Quoted areas of developable land and numbers of housing developed per hectare;
- Made reference to the design and access document;
- HBC Committee should consider the residents of Farnworth when making the decision;
- There was a shortage of local services and facilities in the area;
- The Council's job was to manage a balance of homes; and
- This application did not meet the Council's objective and should be rejected.

The Committee was then addressed by Ms Burns, who represented the applicant. She stated the following *inter alia*:

- Public's concerns were incorporated into the scheme following a public consultation in early 2021;
- This was a widely scrutinised application;
- Although the site could accommodate 381 dwellings, only 328 were planned;
- A mix of dwellings will be available, from one to 5 bedrooms with varying tenure options;
- The layout and scale of the site was well considered,

as was the open space areas which included cycle and footpath lanes;

- S106 contribution had been agreed;
- New residents would receive free 12 month bus passes; and
- This was a high quality, sustainable development that would provide environmental and social gains to North Widnes.

After consideration of the application, updates and comments made by speakers, the proposal was moved and seconded and the Committee voted to approve the application.

RESOLVED: That authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Planning, Policy and Transportation, to determine the application in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee, following the satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issues relating to highways amendments, updated in line with comments from MEAS and updated comments from the LLFA.

Upon satisfactory resolution the application is to be approved subject to the following:

- a) S106 Agreement;
- b) schedule of conditions set out below; and
- c) that if the S106 Agreement is not signed within a reasonable period of time, authority is given to refuse this planning application.

Recommended conditions as follows, with any additional conditions recommended through the resolution of the Highways amendments, updates in line with comments from MEAS and updated LLFA comments to be added to the list below:

1. Standard 3 year permission;
2. Condition specifying plans;
3. Levels;
4. External materials;
5. Hard and soft landscaping;
6. Tree protection measures;
7. Bird breeding protection;
8. Soft tree felling measures;
9. Japanese knotweed scheme;
10. Japanese knotweed validation report;
11. Construction Environmental Management Plan

(CEMP);

12. Natural England Licence;
13. Bird and bat boxes scheme;
14. Site wide waste management plan;
15. Noise mitigation measures;
16. Energy and sustainability measures;
17. Air quality mitigation measures;
18. Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP);
19. Construction hours;
20. Tactile crossings;
21. Remediation strategy;
22. Verification report for contaminated land;
23. Unidentified contamination;
24. Lighting scheme;
25. Cycle parking details;
26. Vehicle access, service areas and parking;
27. Permitted development removed;
28. Archaeology methodologies and mitigation;
29. New watercourse crossing details; and
30. SUDs verification report.

DEV8 22/00377/FUL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND THE ERECTION OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (USE CLASS C3) WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, ACCESS/EGRESS, CAR PARKING, DRAINAGE, AND OTHER NECESSARY SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE ON LAND AT SOUTH LANE, WIDNES

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Since publication of the agenda four additional responses had been received from members of the public. Two raised questions concerning their own respective property boundaries in relation to the application site – these were responded to by officers. The Officer also outlined the approach to Green Belt Compensation and that Open Space payments were to be made and that these would be spent on Council owned sites within the remaining Green Belt. There were two other responses received, as detailed in the update list. The additional conditions that were recommended to be added to the schedule of planning conditions were noted, along with the three conditions that were to be deleted from the schedule.

The Highways Officer advised that this site and the previous application were joined and considered sustainable.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Harper, who opposed the application. He argued the following, *inter alia*:

- Reference to the loss of Green Belt land as with the previous application;
- Nothing in report to do with Green Belt improvements;
- The Council should conform to the requirements of the Local Plan in relation to house building numbers – current housing trajectory was above what was required for Halton;
- The Council should pause all house building for 18 months;
- Insufficient consideration given to Farnworth – there is a shortage of facilities which the Council say were not needed;
- There is already congestion at key junctions, this will worsen in future; and
- Questioned cycle lanes provision – these were under used by the public and queried whether this was the best use of tax payer money and disruption brought as a result of its installation, such was the case at Birchfield Road and Lunts Heath Road junction.

Mr Dawber, a representative of the Applicant then addressed the Committee. He advised that Prospect Homes GB was part of the Riverside Group He advised:

- The site is allocated as residential development (SRL7);
- The development would count towards the HBC housing needs strategy;
- It will consist of mixed dwellings of 2, 3 and 4 bedroomed family homes – 20% of which will be affordable;
- Ten of the first homes will be offered below market value for first time buyers;
- A small number of trees are to be removed but would be replaced with 68 new ones;
- The scheme had been designed with care and was compliant with all planning policies;
- They supported the Council's stance on the S106 request made by Cheshire Police;
- The proposal is sustainable, has a landscaping strategy and includes cycle and pedestrian routes;
- A S106 Agreement was in place; and
- New residents would receive free 12 month bus passes.

After hearing the concerns made by Mr Harper on

behalf of local residents', Councillor Woolfall stated that although the Committee had sympathy with Farnworth residents, he referred to the objections being made today regarding the loss of Green Belt and suggested that these should have been made during the consultation period of the Local Plan prior to its adoption in March 2022. He reminded everyone that as the new Local Plan had been adopted, these areas were now defined for residential developments.

Councillor Philbin commented that he was pleased to see an active travel provision through the site and on previous sites, underlining importance of delivery for this form of infrastructure. In relation to comments made by Mr Harper, Councillor Philbin noted that not all elements of active travel delivery would result in disruption to road users.

Clarity was provided to Members on their concerns with regard to speed restrictions in the area. It was confirmed that as South Lane bordered Warrington, Highways Officers were liaising with Warrington Borough Council to reduce the speed limit to 30mph.

Comments were also made in relation to affordable housing, social housing and the need to look at availability of school places as this may become a concern in future.

The application was moved and seconded and the Committee agreed to approve the application.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following:

- a) S106 Agreement that secures the terms set out in the Legal Agreement section of this report;
- b) schedule of conditions set out below; and
- c) that if the S106 Agreement is not signed within a reasonable period of time, authority be given to refuse this planning application.

Recommended conditions as follows:

1. Time limit – full permission;
2. Approved plans;
3. Contaminated land identification and remediation strategy;
4. Contaminated land validation report;
5. External facing materials;
6. Structural details of all retaining walls within 4m of a

- highway;
- 7. Boundary;
- 8. EV charge parking spaces to be detailed;
- 9. Construction management plan including avoidance measures re habitat / mammal / bird nesting / amphibians;
- 10. Construction waste audit;
- 11. Hedgehog highway network measures;
- 12. Ecological protection strategy;
- 13. Replacement of existing hedgerow;
- 14. Ecological habitat management plan;
- 15. Bird and bat boxes details;
- 16. Domestic refuse storage details;
- 17. SUD's verification report;
- 18. Removal of GPDO Schedule 2, Part 1, Class F – no fences forward of front elevation;
- 19. Standard 3-year permission;
- 20. Approved plans;
- 21. Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP);
- 22. Lead Local Flood Agency (LLFA) – details;
- 23. LLFA – validation report;
- 24. Prior to development a noise impact assessment;
- 25. Contaminated land investigation and remediation;
- 26. Landscape management plan;
- 27. Archaeology;
- 28. Bat licence;
- 29. Traffic calming measures;
- 30. Provision of cycleway connection to site allocation to east;
- 31. Emergency access provision;
- 32. Widening of path to 3.2m onto South Lane;
- 33. LLFA, existing and proposed levels relating to plots, road and estimated river and sea level;
- 34. Noise impact assessment measures;
- 35. Air quality impact assessment;
- 36. Measure for reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climatic conditions;
- 37. Waste audit; and
- 38. Lighting scheme to limit impact on nocturnal species.

In order to avoid any potential allegation of bias, Councillor C. Plumpton Walsh did not take part in the debate or vote on this item, as she had been a customer in the past when it was a Sports Bar.

DEV9 22/00602/COU - PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM BAR/BED AND BREAKFAST TO A 17 BEDROOM HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION, INCLUDING EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AT BRIDGE VIEW SPORTS BAR, 78 HIGH STREET, RUNCORN, WA7 1JH

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Officers advised of an error on page 94 of the report; it stated that updated comments were awaited from Highways, but these had been included in the report.

The published AB update list confirmed that a response had been received by the Council's Regeneration Officer who had maintained his objection regarding the application, for the reasons given in the List. A response was also provided from Environmental Health, who raised no objections. Local Councillors for Mersey Ward had also requested their objections be taken into consideration, as they were unable to attend the meeting.

The Committee was addressed by Mr O'Rourke, who was the Planning Consultant for the Applicant. He stated the following:

- The application was fully compliant with planning policies;
- The proposed new use of the building was justified;
- The previous business was no longer viable and the property was currently vacant;
- The scheme was in character with the surrounding area;
- Discussed the sustainable nature of the site;
- Amended plans were submitted and considered acceptable by the Local Planning Authority; and
- In conclusion – it met housing demands and was affordable; was effective land utilisation; would provide economic benefits (jobs, use of local businesses); affords housing opportunities to individuals; and would provide a social and community feel for residents.

In response to the objection made by the Regeneration Officer, it was noted that the Town Centre Team were not consultees on this application as they were not experts, the Environmental Health Department was the consultee in this case. Members raised the Council Tax 'loophole' with HMO's and it was commented that matters relating to the conduct of tenants and landlord's responsibilities was a licensing matter; this application must be determined in accordance with the policies within the Development Plan and law.

Clarity over the provision of en-suite shower facilities

for each unit and communal kitchen facilities was provided.

RESOLVED: That the application be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Reason for decision;
2. Standard time conditions;
3. Specifying approved plans;
4. External materials to match existing;
5. Details of refuse store to be agreed; and
6. Implementation and retention of cycle storage area.

DEV10 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

It was noted that the following Appeals had been received / were in progress:

22/00019/PLD

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use of development for the installation of a solar farm (ground mounted solar photovoltaic panels) at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, land bounded by Dungeon Lane, Hare Road and Baileys Lane, to the East of Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Speke, Liverpool, L24 1YD.

22/00285/ADV & 22/00284/FUL

The retrospective application for planning consent for the installation of a car park management system on existing car park comprising 4 no pole mounted automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras and 6 no. park and display machines at car park at Green Oakes Shopping Centre, Widnes, WA8 6UA.

21/00016/OUT

Outline application, with all matters other than access reserved for the erection of two semi-detached dwellings and four detached dwellings on the existing Church field and the retention of the existing scout hut at Hough Green Scout and Guide Group Hall and Church Field, Hall Avenue, Widnes.

It was noted that the following Appeal had been determined:

22/00103/FUL

Proposed construction of front dormer and rear dormer to newly formed first floor at 265 Hale Road, Hale, Liverpool, L24 5RF - **Dismissed**

Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 7 August 2023 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors S. Hill (Chair), Leck (Vice-Chair), Bevan, Carlin, Davidson, C. Loftus, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, Polhill, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant, A. Evans, G. Henry, L. Wilson-Lagan, I. Dignall and J. Farmer

Also in attendance: 18 Members of the public and Councillors M. Ryan, N. Plumpton Walsh and K. Loftus

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

	<i>Action</i>
DEV11 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
DEV12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE	
<p>The Committee considered the following applications for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decisions described below.</p>	
DEV13 21/00679/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF THREE AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS WITH ACCESS TRACK AND ANCILLARY CONCRETE APRON ON LAND TO THE EAST OF RAMSBROOK LANE AND ADJACENT TO CLAMLEY PARK PLANTATION, HALE	
<p>The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.</p>	

Officers advised of a correction to the table on page 10 of the agenda, which should state that two representations had been received. Since the publication of the agenda it was confirmed that Natural England had no objections to the application.

RESOLVED: That the application is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard time limits condition;
2. Plans condition listing approved drawings (GR1);
3. External facing materials (GR1);
4. Access provision (C1);
5. Existing and proposed site and finished floor levels (GR1);
6. Submission and agreement of drainage scheme (HE9);
7. Construction Environmental Management Plan (HW1, HE9);
8. Details in relation to wildlife protection (HE1);
9. Protection of nesting birds (HE1);
10. Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) for amphibians / reptiles and hedgehogs (HE1); and
11. Site waste management (WM8).

DEV14 22/00462/FUL - PROPOSED ERECTION OF 59 NO. AFFORDABLE RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS WITH ACCESS; LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS ON LAND AT WOODALLS FARM, STOCKHAM LANE, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Officers advised of a correction to the table on page 20 of the agenda, which should state that 7 representations had been received.

Following publication of the AB Update List, it was noted that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has now confirmed that they agree with the principles of the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and discussed drainage strategy but required modelling of the watercourse prior to commencement, as detailed in the update. They also requested that an updated drainage strategy be submitted prior to commencement, based on those principles discussed, as detailed in the update. It was noted that this response has removed the requirement for Officer delegation for this issue.

Officers highlighted the objection made by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which was due to the site falling within the inner/middle hazardous zone of the Sabic Trans Pennine Ethylene Pipeline, but the objection was not in relation to housing. The HSE 21 day call in notice was explained.

It was noted therefore that Officer delegation was requested in relation to the HSE call in procedure.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Dixon, a representative of the Applicant. He stated the following *inter alia*:

- The scheme of 59 affordable dwellings would provide a valuable contribution to Halton's housing needs;
- Modern methods of construction would be used; contributing to reduced living costs for residents;
- A native planting scheme and natural play areas will be incorporated, adding a sense of community;
- The site was adjacent to the Town Hall Park;
- The scheme is led by the landscape of the park and includes hedgerows and natural habitats in line with policy requirements;
- The scheme was carefully designed to include landscaped areas; and
- The scheme will consist of 100% affordable housing.

Further clarity was given regarding the HSE's response to the proximity of the pipeline.

The Committee agreed that the application be approved.

RESOLVED: That authority is delegated to the Operational Director – Planning, Policy and Transportation, to determine the application in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee, following the satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issues relating to the HSE call in procedure.

Upon satisfactory resolution, the application is to be approved subject to the following:

- a) S106 Agreement that secures affordable housing;
- b) schedule of conditions set out below; and
- c) that if the S106 Agreement is not signed within a reasonable period of time, authority is given to refuse

this planning application.

Recommended conditions as follows with any additional conditions recommended through the resolution of the flood and drainage strategy to be added to the list below:

1. Standard 3 year permission;
2. Condition specifying plans;
3. Bird nesting boxes scheme;
4. Ecological conditions (such as RAMS and hedgehog highway);
5. Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP);
6. Lighting scheme;
7. Vehicle access and parking to be constructed prior to commencement of use;
8. External materials;
9. Drainage condition(s) to include culvert survey, ownership details, drainage calculations, verification of Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) implementation, maintenance and management;
10. Hard and soft landscaping;
11. POS implementation and management;
12. Waste audit;
13. Site investigation, remediation and mitigation;
14. Landscape and ecological /habitat management plan;
15. Removal of permitted development rights for extensions;
16. Hard and soft landscaping;
17. Construction of emergency access;
18. Submission and agreement of boundary treatments
19. Securing ecological and habitat protection through a Construction and Environmental Management Plan;
20. Restriction construction and delivery hours; and
21. Requiring implementation of scheme of noise mitigation.

An adjournment was requested by the Legal Advisor so that advice could be provided to Councillor Davidson, regarding her declarations.

Councillor Davidson did not take part in the debate or vote on the following item as she has campaigned against further development in the area prior to being elected as a Councillor and had addressed the Committee as a speaker in opposition of the application. Following her address she moved to the public gallery.

DEV15 22/00543/OUTEIA - APPLICATION FOR OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED (EXCEPT MEANS OF ACCESS) FOR

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING UP TO 250 DWELLINGS, ELECTRICITY SUB STATIONS, ALONG WITH RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPE AND OTHER RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT SANDYMOOR SOUTH PHASE 2, WINDMILL HILL AVENUE EAST, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Councillor Leck advised the Committee that in her capacity as a colleague of Mike Amesbury MP, she had attended meetings as a note taker where the application was discussed but would make her decision on the planning merits, after hearing all the evidence and without bias or predetermination.

Since the publication of the agenda one further letter of representation had been received relating to access to the site and who would make the decision on this – these were addressed in the report. The Applicant had provided clarification on the statement made on page 87 regarding the adverse impact on primary school places – this is provided in the published AB Update List.

It was noted that condition number 17 had been updated to: *Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing bridleway provision including crossing points, to connect with, and complete, existing infrastructure provision as per the Sandymoor SPD.* Officers advised of a correction to the report – reference to access parameters plan at varying parts of the report should be Rev Q throughout and not Rev N.

Mr Cove, representative for Homes England, addressed the Committee. He advised that Homes England (HE) was the Government's housing regeneration Agency. He added *inter alia* that:

- Homes England's investment was historic and this development was a long standing priority;
- Public consultation had been carried out and HE had addressed concerns raised where possible, which had been documented in the Officer's report;
- This application was outline with reserved matters;
- The proposal would provide 250 high quality sustainable homes making a significant contribution to Halton's housing needs;
- The proposal would provide new public open spaces;

- £220k S106 monies were agreed for indoor sports provision; and
- The scheme complied with all planning policies.

Councillor Davidson then addressed the Committee in her capacity as Daresbury, Moore and Sandymoor Ward Councillor. She spoke of concerns raised by local residents in relation to the proposals as follows *inter alia*:

- Climate change was a big issue and should be taken into consideration;
- Green spaces should be protected and brownfield sites developed instead;
- The area was used by walkers, cyclists and contained a variety of habitats and wildlife;
- The plans would see an increase in traffic volume and there was only one road in and one road out of the site;
- There would be an increased demand for school places and NHS services; and
- The proposal was unsuitable in an already developed area.

During debate the following areas of concern were raised and responded to:

- The withdrawal of the Sandymoor bus service – S106 money will be available to ‘kickstart’ a bus service but it was up to the operator to continue with this;
- Primary School provision – a Primary School is included on the Masterplan for Sandymoor; the need for this has to be demonstrated;
- Flood risks in the area being exacerbated by further development – a Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out, this was explained;
- The railway crossing in relation to pedestrians and cyclists and responsibilities of Network Rail – discussions were ongoing with Network Rail but the Council did not support the closure of this;
- Speeding traffic on Windmill Avenue East and the impact of this development on the volume of traffic on it – speed assessments were already taking place; a Traffic Impact Assessment has been carried out which concluded that there would be a 10% increase in volume for Sandymoor;
- Active travel routes – this was briefly outlined but would be provided in detail when the reserved matters application is submitted;
- Climate change – page 93 of the report outlined

- mitigation measures which will be conditioned; and
- S106 requests for emergency services – these were not justified under the legal test set out in the CIL Regulations, as had been discussed on other similar application requests.

In conclusion Members agreed that they would like the application for the reserved matters to come to Committee for determination.

RESOLVED: That the application is approved subject to the following:

- a) entering a legal agreement under Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 with the Council land relating to:
 - Affordable housing; and
 - Indoor sports contribution
- b) conditions relating to the following:
 1. Time limit – outline permission;
 2. Submission of reserved matters;
 3. Development parameters;
 4. Implementation of the access arrangements;
 5. Submission and implementation of a public open space / provision for children and young person's management plan;
 6. Submission and implementation of lighting scheme to protect ecology;
 7. Hours of construction;
 8. Submission and implementation of Construction Environmental Management Plan;
 9. Submission and implementation of homeowner's information pack – information on responsible use code and available Sustainable Alternative Natural Greenspace;
 10. Submission of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (including undated metric);
 11. Submission and implementation of a full Landscape and Habitat Management Plan;
 12. Submission and implementation of a scheme should there be the requirement to remove and reinstate sandstone edging blocks along the canal edge to facilitate the growth of Freiburg's screw-moss;
 13. Implementation of breeding birds protection;
 14. Submission of copy of a licence issued by Natural England or Impact Assessment and Conservation

- Payment Certificate in relation to Great Crested Newts;
15. Submission and implementation of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement;
 16. Submission and implementation of scheme detailing structural work of New Norton Bridge and embankment, to accommodate highway widening – including AiPs/adoption;
 17. Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing Bridleway provision;
 18. Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing cycle routes and footpath provision to incorporate the principles of Active Design;
 19. Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing access and gating provision in relation to rail arch arrangements of Bridge 63 Wharford Farm Bridge;
 20. Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing bus infrastructure provision;
 21. Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing phasing, construction traffic routing and management;
 22. Submission and implementation of travel plan;
 23. Implementation of Site Investigation and Remediation Strategy / Verification Reporting as required;
 24. Submission and implementation of a detailed noise mitigation scheme;
 25. Reserved matters shall include detailed modelling of Sandymoor Brook, detailed culvert and crossing design, site and finished floor levels, blockage scenarios and flood routing plan;
 26. Implementation, maintenance and management of the detailed sustainable drainage scheme in accordance with the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) hierarchy;
 27. Verification report confirming that the SuDS system has been constructed in accordance with the approved design drawings;
 28. Submission and implementation of a scheme detailing protection of United Utilities water Main;
 29. Submission and implementation of a utilities strategy to consider potable water needs and associated water efficiency measures;
 30. Archaeological investigations to be carried out to establish whether remains of the houses east of Norton Bridge survive. Should those works establish that the remains survive and that they are of sufficient significance, then further

- investigation should be undertaken to record the remains prior to their destruction;
31. Submission and implementation of a Water Vole Mitigation and Monitoring Strategy;
 32. Submission and implementation of an operational energy scheme to demonstrated reduction in both energy consumption and carbon; and
 33. Submission and implementation of a Site Waste Management Plan.

In order to avoid any allegation of bias, Councillor Thompson did not take part in the debate or vote on the following item as he has met with both the applicant and objectors to the proposals and is also the local Ward Councillor for Halton Lea. He moved to the public gallery.

Councillor Davidson did not take part in the debate or vote on the following item as she has previously met with residents and campaigned against the proposals prior to being elected as a Councillor. She removed to the public gallery.

DEV16 23/00128/FUL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS; THE INFILLING OF THE EXISTING SUBWAY; THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW LOCAL CENTRE; A REPLACEMENT CHURCH / COMMUNITY FACILITY (USE CLASS F1/F2/E); THE CHANGE OF USE OF THE RETAINED TRICORN PUBLIC HOUSE AND ASSOCIATED STABLES INTO 10 DWELLINGS; THE ERECTION OF A FURTHER 59 DWELLINGS TOGETHER WITH IMPROVED PUBLIC REALM, PLAY FACILITIES, IMPROVEMENTS TO OPEN SPACE, HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS; AND OTHER ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS

AND

23/00129/LBC - APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF THE FORMER TRICORN PUBLIC HOUSE AND WORKS REQUIRED TO FACILITATE THE CONVERSION OF THE RETAINED BUILDING AND ASSOCIATES STABLES INTO 10 DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3) INCLUDING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO THE BUILDINGS - BOTH ON LAND WITHIN, ADJACENT TO AND SURROUNDING THE UPLANDS AND PALACEFIELDS, RUNCORN

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

Councillor Leck advised the Committee that in her capacity as a colleague of Mike Amesbury MP, she had attended meetings as a note taker where the application was discussed but would make her decision on the planning merits, after hearing all the evidence and without bias or predetermination.

Councillor Chris Loftus advised the Committee that although his wife, Councillor Kath Loftus, was speaking on the application today, he would determine the application on the planning merits, after hearing all the evidence and without bias and predetermination.

Since the publication of the agenda a request to speak had been received – the points of objection were outlined in the published AB Update List. Members noted the corrections, one for each application, on pages 406/407 and on page 414 – also detailed in the AB Update List. There were also changes to recommendations for each application and two additional conditions for 23/00128/FUL – all detailed on the AB Update List.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Davidson, a resident of The Uplands for 40 years, who spoke in objection to the application for the following reasons:

- He objected to the relocation of Palacefields Community Centre and the demolition of the Bethesda Church and the proposal that they are replaced by a joint/shared church and community centre building;
- The Community Centre is at the heart of the community and is used by a wide range of groups;
- The current Community Centre has a large outdoor space for children and activities to take place such as the summer fete; this would be lost;
- Bethesda Church is a consecrated building and provides worshipers with a weekly service as well as conducting weddings, funerals and hosts a food bank;
- The activities currently held at the Church could not take place in a shared facility;
- Some people have reservations about entering a Church that will be used for community purposes; and
- Riverside had promised that they were going to build a replacement church first before demolishing the current one; however, it appears that this is not the case so people would have no place to worship.

Mr Pemberton, a representative of the Applicant, then addressed the Committee, he provided the following

information *inter alia*:

- The Riverside Group was a Charity Status Housing Association and explained its strategy to transform the wider Palacefields Estate;
- A description of the site and full planning application before the Committee;
- Details of the listed buildings proposals – which were agreed with Historic England and the Council’s Conservation Officer;
- Proposals to acquire the heritage assets which are currently in a dangerous condition and encouraged anti-social behaviour;
- The development would enhance the visual and landscape setting of the listed buildings which would include a new play and public space at the heart of the new community;
- Details of the replacement Church and the benefits it will offer;
- Details of the proposed dwellings (mix of types and sizes), including specialist housing such as veterans apartments;
- The development will utilise low-carbon, energy efficient measures to promote environmental sustainability;
- The development will make a significant contribution towards meeting affordable housing needs in the area;
- Despite the loss of a small amount of poor quality open space, the scheme will deliver significant quality improvements to the retained open space; and
- Details of highway network improvements to reduce congestion; this will retain access to the Primary School.

In summary he stated that the scheme would support the renewal and transformation of this part of the Palacefields Estate and create an attractive neighbourhood that would deliver positive social and environmental change. It would also improve accessibility to high quality housing and help reduce levels of deprivation, unemployment and crime within the local community. Further, two listed buildings that are on the Risk Register would also be brought back in to use.

The Committee was then addressed by Councillor Kath Loftus, local Ward Councillor for Halton Lea. She supported the scheme in principle, noting that this first phase did not detail the removal of the Palacefields Community Centre. Also a positive of the scheme would

bring use to the long term derelict Tricorn Pub site, which is a blight on the local community in its current condition. She commented that although the subway being closed was a positive, consideration needed to be given to alternative routes with an emphasis on school walking routes for local children and pedestrian access across the busway.

Cllr Kath Loftus noted that the existing Church was in a poor state of repair so the community would benefit from its removal and replacement. She felt that the plans were good, bringing new facilities to the community including a new extra care facility and it would be easy for residents to get around which would benefit the local community.

Members debated the proposal and discussions / concerns were raised on the following:

- The shared facility arrangements may cause difficulties between some community groups who were less accepting of the beliefs of others;
- The administration of the shared facility;
- Active travel plans; and
- School places provision.

In response to concerns over school places provision Officers advised they had liaised with the Education Authority and provision in this area was confirmed to be sufficient. The joint use of the proposed church was a matter for future consideration, should an application come forward to demolish the Palacefields Community Centre. In response to the active travel queries, it was commented that the proposed scheme improved site permeability, comprising combined cycle and pedestrian routes that preserves access to schools. In addition, the scheme would connect to the future aspirations for active travel use of the existing busway adjacent to the application site, improving access to Halton Lea and the surrounding area. Details regarding a crossing over the busway would be dealt with as a S278 application under the Highways Act.

After taking into consideration the speakers' comments, Officer responses and reports/information before them, the Committee agreed that the application be approved, subject to the conditions listed below.

RESOLVED: That each application is approved as follows:

Planning Application 23/00128/FUL

Authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair, to determine subject to:

- a) a suitable mechanism to secure compliance with DALP Policy RD4;
- b) conditions considered necessary to ensure policy compliance;
- c) the resolution of the outstanding matter of green space contributions;
- d) S106 agreement that secures off site financial contribution toward off site green space improvements as required;
- e) the schedule of conditions set out below; and
- f) that if the S106 Agreement is not signed within an appropriate period of time, authority is given to refuse the planning application.

Conditions

1. Time limit – full permission;
2. Approved plans;
3. External facing materials;
4. EV charge parking spaces to be detailed;
5. Construction management plan including avoidance measures re habitat / mammal / bird nesting / amphibians;
6. Construction waste audit;
7. Construction management plan;
8. Landscape and environmental management plan;
9. Hedgehog highway network measures;
10. Lighting scheme to limit impact on nocturnal species;
11. Ecological protection strategy;
12. Ecological habitat management plan;
13. Bat licence;
14. Bat mitigation;
15. Bird and bat boxes details;
16. Domestic refuse storage details;
17. SuDS verification report;
18. Removal of GPDO Schedule 2, Part 1, Class F – no fences forward of front elevation;
19. Removal of permitted development rights for all dwellings on the site of the Tricorn buildings and car

- park;
20. LLFA – sustainable drainage details;
 21. LLFA – validation report;
 22. Prior to development a noise impact assessment;
 23. Contaminated land survey;
 24. Contaminated land validation report;
 25. Contaminated land unforeseen contamination strategy;
 26. Landscape management plan;
 27. Archaeology;
 28. Demolition strategy
 29. Local centre external plant details;
 30. Construction operating hours;
 31. Dust mitigation strategy;
 32. Wetland planning scheme;
 33. BNG no net loss off site delivery;
 34. Boundary treatment details;
 35. Updated condition survey;
 36. Detailed structural survey;
 37. Building record (level 3);
 38. Detailed technical drawings;
 39. Schedule of existing and replacement features including windows and doors;
 40. Schedule of existing and replacement materials and finishes;
 41. Detailed schedule of works;
 42. Any necessary structural designs and reports for interventions such as retaining steelwork or portal frames;
 43. Method statements for all proposed development works;
 44. Tricorn urgent stabilisation works to take place prior to development commencing.
 45. Prevention of the existing Church demolition until such time that the new Church is developed and ready for use; and
 46. Securing the use of the replacement church for the purposes of a church, community centre and café and for no other purpose.

Planning Application 23/00129/LBC

Authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair, to determine subject to:

- a) the referral to Secretary of State in relation to heritage objection;
- b) conditions considered necessary to ensure policy

compliance; and

c) the schedule of conditions outlined below:

Conditions

1. Time limit – full permission;
2. Approved plans;
3. Boundary treatment details;
4. Updated condition survey;
5. Detailed structural survey;
6. Building record (level 3);
7. Detailed technical drawings;
8. Schedule of existing and replacement features including windows and doors;
9. Schedule of existing and replacement materials and finishes;
10. Detailed schedule of works;
11. Any necessary structural designs and reports for interventions such as retaining steelwork or portal frames; and
12. Method statements for all proposed development works.

DEV17 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

The following Appeals had been received / were in progress:

22/00019/PLD

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use of development for the installation of a solar farm (ground mounted solar photovoltaic panels) at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, land bounded by Dungeon Lane, Hale Road and Baileys Lane, to the East of Liverpool John Lennon Airport Speke, Liverpool, L24 1YD.

21/00016/OUT

Outline application, with all matters other than access reserved for the erection of two semi-detached dwellings and four detached dwellings on the existing church field and the retention of the existing scout hut at Hough Green Scout and Guide Group Hall and Church Field, Hall Avenue, Widnes.

The following Appeals had been determined:

22/00285/ADV & 22/00284/FUL

The retrospective application for planning consent for the installation of a car park management system on existing car

park comprising 4 no. pole mounted automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras and 6 no. park and display machines at Car Park at Green Oaks Shopping Centre, Widnes, WA8 6UA – **Appeals allowed**

Meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Development Management Committee on Monday, 4 September 2023 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors S. Hill (Chair), Leck (Vice-Chair), Bevan, Carlin, Davidson, C. Loftus, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, Polhill, Thompson and Woolfall

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Jones, T. Gibbs, A. Plant and L. Wilson-Lagan

Also in attendance: None

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

Action

DEV18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

DEV19 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the following application for planning permission and, in accordance with its powers and duties, made the decision described below.

DEV20 23/00237/FUL - PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY REAR AND SIDE EXTENSION AT ROSE LEA, MOSS LANE, MOORE AND 23/00238/LBC - APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT TO ERECT A SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION, REPLACEMENT OF DECAYED WINDOWS AND HARDWOOD SASH CASEMENT AND REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED FRONT DOOR AT ROSE LEA, MOSS LANE MOORE

The consultation procedure undertaken was outlined in the report together with background information in respect of the site.

It was noted that an application of this nature would normally be determined under delegated powers, however the applicant is a Council employee, so the application has

to be determined by the Committee, as per the rules of the Council's Constitution.

Members were advised that the main issue was the affect the proposal may have on the listed building. The applicant had instructed a Heritage Consultant from the start and worked with the Heritage Officer pre and post application. The Heritage Officer at Cheshire West and Chester did not have any objections to the proposals.

RESOLVED: That both applications are approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The decision to grant permission and impose any conditions has been taken having regard to the relevant policies and proposals in the Development Plan set out below. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with planning applications in accordance with Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
2. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plans:
 - Elevations, Sections and Site Plans – WA4 6UU/RL/01 Rev A
 - Floor plans – WA4 6UU/RL/02 Rev A

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

4. No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces (eg. roofs, walls, floors, windows) of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, and to comply with Policy GR1 and HE2 of the Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

DEV21 MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

It was noted that the following Appeals had been received / were in progress:

22/00019/PLD

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use of development for the installation of a solar farm (ground mounted solar photovoltaic panels) at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, land bounded by Dungeon Lane, Hale Road and Baileys Lane, to the East of Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Speke, Liverpool, L24 1YD.

It was noted that the following Appeal was dismissed:

21/00016/OUT

Outline application, with all matters other than access reserved for the erection of two semi-detached dwellings and four detached dwellings, on the existing Church field and the retention of the existing scout hut at Hough Green Scout and Guide Group Hall and Church Field Hall Avenue, Widnes – **Appeal dismissed.**

Meeting ended at 6.45 p.m.

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APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Appointments Committee held on Tuesday, 18 July 2023 at the Karalius Suite - Halton Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), T. McInerney, McDermott, Ratcliffe and Thompson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor J. Bradshaw

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Young, G. Haining and H. Hamlett – Halton Borough Council.
S. Senior and R Malpass – North West Employers.

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

	<i>Action</i>
<p>APC1 MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2023, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and agreed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>APC2 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</p> <p>The Board considered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) whether members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were 	

applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

APC3 APPOINTMENT OF POST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CHILDRENS SERVICES

Following a long-listing recruitment process and the drawing up of a shortlist, the Committee considered candidates for the post of Executive Director, Children.

RESOLVED: That Zoe Fearon be appointed to the post of Executive Director, Children.

Chief Executive

Meeting ended at 12.57 p.m.

REGULATORY SUB COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Regulatory Sub Committee on Thursday, 24 August 2023 at the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Wallace (Chair), Fry and K. Loftus

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Wilson-Lagan (Legal Advisor), K. Hesketh (Licensing Manager), P. Wilson (Environmental Health Officer), L. Halliday (Police Licensing Officer) and J. Clarke (Police Solicitor).

Also Present: L. Fletcher and D. Owens (Residents of Ross Street, Widnes)

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

	<i>Action</i>
RSC2	MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING
	The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.
RSC3	APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE - BANKSEY'S BAR, 75 ALBERT ROAD, WIDNES, WA8 6JS
	The Sub-Committee met to determine an application made under Section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003 for a premises licence for Banksey's Bar, 75 Albert Road, Widnes, WA8 6JS ("the Premises"). The hearing was held in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 and Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005.
	<u>PREAMBLE</u>
	The hearing was held as relevant representations has been received from Cheshire Police, Environmental Health and 10 local residents.
	The Applicant, Ms Bethany Owens, was in attendance and was represented by her Solicitor, Mr Piers Warne. The

other parties in attendance were:-

Lesley Halliday, Police Licensing Officer,
Joanne Clarke; Solicitor for the Police;
Lyn Fletcher and Dawn Owens, two residents who live
on Ross Street;

Prior to the hearing, the Sub-Committee had been provided with evidence submitted by the parties, including a witness statement from Lesley Halliday, screen shots of the opening hours of licensed premises in the vicinity of the area and a video of the previous business that operated from the Premises when it was known as Annie's Bar which had been submitted by Ms Fletcher. They had also received a list of the licensed hours for the licensed premises within walking distance of the Premises from the Licensing Manager and a Schedule of agreed and disputed conditions from the Applicant.

Prior to the hearing, the Applicant made the other parties aware of her intention to remove live and record music from her application. This was confirmed to the Sub-Committee during the Applicant's submissions.

Also prior to the hearing, the Police made an application under Regulation 14(2) of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005, to exclude the public from part of the hearing. Submissions on the application were made by the Police and the Applicant in private and the Sub-Committee determined that the public interest in excluding the public from part of the Police's submissions outweighed the public interest in hearing them in public. The exclusion was restricted to what was necessary and proportionate in maintaining the public interest and the remainder of the Police's submissions were heard in public.

DETERMINATION

The Sub-Committee has considered the relevant representations, the evidence received before the hearing and the oral submissions and evidence heard from all parties at the hearing.

In reaching its decision, the Sub-Committee have also taken into consideration the Licensing Objectives, all of which are relevant but more so the prevention of crime and disorder and public nuisance, as well as the statutory guidance, the relevant case law and Council's own Licensing Policy.

The sub-committee resolved to grant the application subject to the hours and the conditions below:-

HOURS

Hours of opening	Monday – Wednesday	11:00 - 23:30
	Thursday, Friday, Saturday	11:00 – 00:30
	Sunday	11:00 – 23:30
Supply of Alcohol (on premises)	Monday – Wednesday	11:00 - 23:00
	Thursday, Friday, Saturday	11:00 – 00:00
	Sunday	11:00 – 23:00
Late Night Refreshment	Thursday, Friday, Saturday	23:00 – 00:00

CONDITIONS**A. Operating Schedule**

1. No children on the premises at any times.
2. Regular toilet checks.
3. Last entry to premises will be 30 minutes before terminal hour.
4. First aid on premises.
5. Only toughened glassware to be used.
6. No glasses outside the premises.
7. Notice will be displayed asking for patrons to respect neighbours.
8. No nudity or semi nudity at any time.

B. Police Conditions**Prevention of Crime & Disorder**

A CCTV system shall be used and shall be designed and installed in accordance with the Cheshire Constabulary's CCTV guidance document called 'CCTV in Licensed Premises – An Operational Requirement'. This system shall be in operation at all times when licensable activities are taking place.

Recorded CCTV images will be maintained and stored for a period of twenty-eight days.

A staff member from the premises who is conversant with the operation of the CCTV system shall be on the premises at all times when the premises are open to the public. This staff member shall be able to show/provide footage to a Police officer or an authorised officer of the licensing authority data or footage upon request. Any requests for CCTV shall be complied with, within 48 hours or less, or otherwise as agreed to comply with data protection

legislation.

Designated premises supervisors will need to demonstrate that their CCTV system complies with their Operational requirements. They will need to be able to demonstrate the following:-

- Recordings are fit for their intended purpose,
- Good quality images are presented to the officer in a format that can be replayed on a standard computer
- The supervisor has an understanding of the equipment/training,
- Management records are kept,
- Maintenance agreements and records are maintained,
- Data Protection principles and signage are in place.

Risk Assessed Door Staff

When there is a private function or event with regulated entertainment being held at the premises the Premises License Holder or Designated Premises Supervisor shall conduct an assessment of the need for SIA registered door supervisors, taking into account any advice offered by the Police.

Where the assessment shows that door supervision is required, supervisors shall be engaged at such times and ratios as are assessed to be necessary.

The risk assessment will be documented in a book kept for that purpose and will be made available to the police or an officer from the Licensing Authority upon reasonable request.

When such Door supervision is employed:-

A written record shall be kept on the premises by the Designated Premises Supervisor of every person employed on the premises as a door supervisor in a register kept for that purpose. That record shall contain the following details:-

- The Door Supervisor's name, date of birth, contact telephone number and home address;
- His/her Security Industry Authority license number;
- The time and date he/she starts and finishes duty;
- The time of any breaks taken whilst on duty;
- Each entry shall be signed by the door supervisor;
- Record of all incidents taking place in the venue.

The register shall be available for inspection on

demand by an Authorised Officer of the Council, the Security Industry Authority or a Police Constable.

Incident Log

The premises shall maintain an Incident Log, and this will be made available to the Police or Licensing Authority upon request.

Search Policy

When Door Supervisors are present, the Premise Licence Holder shall put in place a search policy to cover both drugs and weapons for the premises, which shall be to the satisfaction of Cheshire Constabulary. The Premises Licence Holder or Designated Premises Supervisor shall then ensure that this search policy is complied with at all times when the premises are open for licensable activities and door supervisors are employed.

Conspicuous notices advising customers of the search policy shall be displayed at all entrances to the premises.

There shall be a suitable secure location available for the safe storage of suspected drugs seized or found in the premises. The items to be placed within Police supplied drugs bags and appropriately labelled and sealed until handed over to the Police.

Anyone with drugs or weapons are to be refused entry, this is to be recorded in a refusals book kept for this purpose.

Drugs

The premises will operate a zero tolerance to drugs policy on the premises.

Prominent signage will be displayed in the toilets at the premises to advise patrons that management have a zero tolerance to drugs policy in place.

Anyone caught with drugs are to be asked to leave the premises immediately.

Public Safety

An effective method of communication between the licenced premises and other premises in the town and the

Police shall be in operation at times when the premises is open to the public, so long as such method is approved by the Police.

Protection of Children from Harm

A "Challenge 25" policy shall be operated at the premises at all times.

The only forms of ID that shall be accepted (at the discretion of the Management) as proof of age are a valid passport, a valid photographic driving licence, a PASS approved proof of age card, HM Services Warrant Card or other reliable photo ID (that has been approved for acceptance by the Police or an Officer of the Local Authority) or other forms of ID approved by the Home Office for age verification relating to sales of alcohol.

Publicity materials notifying customers of the operation of the "Challenge 25" scheme shall be displayed at the premises, including entrances and hall and include the message that it is illegal to sell alcohol to under 18's.

The Designated Premises Supervisor or Premises Licence Holder shall operate and maintain an up-to-date Register of Refusals of Sale of Alcohol, indicating the date, time and reason for refusal which shall be made available for inspection by Local Authority Officers and the Police. The register can either be hard-copy or part of a till prompt system.

The DPS or other responsible person shall check and sign the register once a week, if hard copy.

A documented training programme shall be introduced for all staff in a position to sell, serve or deliver alcohol. A written record for each member of staff shall be kept of the content of such training and shall be made available for inspection at the request of Local Authority Officers and Police.

The DPS or Premises Licence Holder shall conduct six monthly training reviews with all members of staff authorised to sell, serve or deliver alcohol in order to reinforce the training and to promote best practice. A written record for each member of staff shall be kept of the content of such reviews and shall be made available for inspection at the request of Local Authority Officers and Police.

A list of persons authorised to sell alcohol shall be

kept on site and made available for inspection at the request of Local Authority Officers and Police.

C. Environmental Health Conditions

Patrons who wish to smoke will be directed to the front of the premises on Albert Road. Smoking shall not be permitted on Ross Steet.

With the exception of pre-booked and advertised regulated entertainment the volume of music to be kept to a level that it could be considered incidental / background music.

All windows and doors are to be kept closed after 21:00 save for access and egress.

D. Additional Conditions

A cigarette receptacle shall be provided on the outside of the premises facing Albert Road to enable the disposal of cigarette butts.

At the start and close of the hours of operation, the pavements immediately outside of the premises on Albert Road and Ross Street must be swept and/or washed and litter and sweepings collected and disposed of in the premises waste receptacles.

Between the hours of 22:00 and 6:00, no waste or glass bottles shall be moved or deposited outside.

At the start of any regulated entertainment a check will be undertaken outside of 2 Ross Street to ascertain whether the volume of the entertainment is likely to cause a public nuisance. A log will be maintained showing when the check was undertaken and to confirm that the level is deemed not to be loud enough to cause a public nuisance. If any action is taken to reduce the volume this is to be recorded. A copy of the log will be made available for inspection by the Responsible Authorities.

E. Mandatory Conditions

As required under section 19 and 21 of the Licensing Act 2003.

REASONS FOR DETERMINATION

The reasons for the Sub-Committee's decision is as follows:-

- i. In respect of the prevention of crime and disorder, the Sub-Committee has taken into consideration the statutory guidance which provides that licensing authorities should look to the Police as the main source of advice on crime and disorder. It has therefore placed significant weight on their concerns. However, the Sub-Committee does not consider there is compelling evidence to refuse the application and the concerns of the Police were adequately dealt with by the conditions they have proposed in the alternative to a refusal.
- ii. In support of this, evidence was heard from the Police that the applicant is of good character and that they have no issues with her per se. Significantly, no evidence was provided to demonstrate that she had any connection to the previous business, Annie's Bar.
- iii. Furthermore, significant weight was placed on the Applicant's evidence that despite her young age, she had 5 years of experience in the industry working at Wetherspoons and had grown up in pubs as her father was the manager of a pub in the local area. The Sub Committee was also reassured by the fact that she would be supported by her stepsister who has over 10 years' experience in the trade and who would have a significant role in Banksey's Bar as it was a joint venture; her father who has over 17 years' experience; and the manager of Banksey's Bar, Gavin Pye who also has over 8 years' experience. The Sub Committee agreed that together this was a substantially experienced team to manage the Premises in a safe and responsible manner.
- iv. As for the residents' evidence which detailed various incidents of anti-social behaviour at the premises when it was known as Annie's Bar, the statutory guidance is clear that each application must be considered on its own merits. Banksey's Bar is a different business to Annie's Bar and is ran by different people. The applicant emphasized that Banksey's Bar would be a wine bar/ café and, at some point in the future, may also offer tapas and finger plates. Unlike Annie's Bar, the focus is not on music or dancing which is demonstrated by the fact that they have replaced the dance floor with more seating and are no longer seeking regulated entertainment. The Sub-Committee noted that this was corroborated later on by the Environmental

Health Officer, Mr Wilson, who advised that the layout of the Premises was different to Annie's Bar and stated that he would be surprised if the Premises became another Annie's Bar. It was also noted that some of Ms Halliday's fears were allayed on hearing the applicant's evidence. As such, the Sub Committee found there was no evidence that the Premises would be operated like Annie's Bar and, although not currently in operation, there was evidence that it would be a calmer bar with a different target of clientele. Furthermore, the Police conditions on CCTV, the use of door staff for regulated events, and search and drugs policies adequately deal with any such potential risks of crime and disorder. These conditions are also in accordance with the Council's own statement of policy.

- v. As for public nuisance, the Sub Committee has every sympathy with the residents given the past issues but again it must consider the application on its merits. That said, evidence was heard on the size of the premises, its very close location to residential premises and the fact that Premises' main door and windows were on Ross Street which is primarily residential. Ms Fletcher, in particular, described the houses on Ross Street being close to the Premises as they were terrace houses and that there were no grass verges to mitigate the impact of any noise. She also recounted how she would hear glass bottles being thrown out in the early hours of the morning when the premises was Annie's Bar despite living 13 doors away. As such, Sub-Committee considered that the noise related conditions, particularly conditions 34, 35, 36, 39 and 40, were necessary to promote this licensing objective.
- vi. In respect of the sound limiter condition proposed by Environmental Health, the Sub-Committee is mindful of the statutory guidance on this and considers that this condition is disproportionate and not justified in light of the amendment to the licensing hours (discussed further below) and the other conditions.
- vii. In addition, evidence was heard from the applicant that smokers would be directed to the front of the Premises on Albert Road. The Sub-Committee therefore considered conditions on providing a cigarette bin and keeping the area immediately outside the Premises clean were also necessary and proportionate.

- viii. As for the remaining licensing objections – protection from children from harm and public safety – again the Sub Committee considered that the Police conditions adequately deal with these concerns as do the conditions proposed by the applicant on the operating schedule.
- ix. Submissions were also heard from the residents about the proposed hours of the license. In taking into account the Council's statement of licensing policy, particularly paragraphs 39 and 48, the Sub Committee considered that the close proximity of the Premises to the residential premises justified a reduction in the hours, so as not to undermine the licensing objections, particularly the prevention of statutory nuisance as discussed further at paragraph v. above. The Sub Committee considers that the new hours strike the right balance between the interests of the residents who live in Ross Street and the Applicant's business.

The Sub-Committee have been comforted by the cooperative nature of the Applicant and the willingness to work with residents going forward. Again this shows how she is a responsible business owner. It is hoped that this open communication is maintained by all parties, if there are future issues.

If issues do crop up, the Sub-Committee would like to remind residents that there are powers to deal with premises if a licence leads to the licensing objectives being undermined. Not least is the power for residents or responsible authorities to bring review proceedings where steps can be taken to restrict the licence, impose further conditions or, in extreme circumstances, revoke the licence when evidence shows issues result from a licensable activity. Action can also be taken separately by environmental health in relation to statutory noise nuisance, if reported. The sub-committee hopes that this brings some reassurance to the residents.

TIME THAT THE DETERMINATION SHALL TAKE EFFECT

Forthwith.

Meeting ended at 6.31 p.m.