



Executive Board

**Thursday, 29 March 2007 2.00 p.m.
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

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

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members) to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
3. CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO	
(A) ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER	1 - 18
(B) GAMBLING ACT 2005 - DELEGATION	19 - 20

*Please contact Lynn Cairns on 0151 471 7529 or e-mail lynn.cairns@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 19 April 2007*

Item	Page No
(C) CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE POST OFFICE NETWORK	21 - 26
4. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO	
(A) SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2008/09	27 - 45
5. COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO	
(A) YOUTH MATTERS/CONNEXIONS TRANSITION	46 - 51
(B) ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY	52 - 105
(C) PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL STRATEGY	106 - 159
(D) LIVERPOOL CITY REGION HOUSING STRATEGY	160 - 246
6. ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND SPORT PORTFOLIO	
(A) OLYMPICS 2012	247 - 249
(B) WASTE MANAGEMENT	250 - 286
7. EUROPEAN AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO	
(A) CORPORATE RISK REGISTER	287 - 297
8. NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO	
(A) PARTNERSHIPS	298 - 306
9. PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO	
(A) BOROUGH OF HALTON (WINDMILL CENTRE, WIDNES) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2007	307 - 314
10. QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO	
(A) CAPITAL OF CULTURE	315 - 317

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to draw Members' attention to the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter prepared by the Council's Audit Commission Relationship Manager and District Auditor, Julian Farmer. Mr. Farmer and John Vis, the Audit Manager, will attend the meeting and answer any questions that Members may have.
- 1.2 The letter summarises the conclusions and significant issues arising from the Commission's recent audit and inspection work.

2.0 RECOMMENDED that the Executive Board receives and comments upon the Annual Letter.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council. It draws on the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council and inspections that have been undertaken in the last year and from a wider analysis of the Council's performance and its improvement over the last year, as measured through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this paper.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 There are no direct risks associated with this paper. However, responding to recommendations/proposals from the Council's Auditors plays a key role in the overall risk management arrangements of the Authority.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this paper.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Audit Letter	Ian Leivesley's Office, 6th Floor, Municipal Building,	Ian Leivesley

Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

Halton Borough Council

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively, to achieve high-quality local services for the public. Our remit covers around 11,000 bodies in England, which between them spend more than £180 billion of public money each year. Our work covers local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services.

As an independent watchdog, we provide important information on the quality of public services. As a driving force for improvement in those services, we provide practical recommendations and spread best practice. As an independent auditor, we ensure that public services are good value for money and that public money is properly spent.

Status of our reports

This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council, drawing on audit, inspection and performance assessment work and is prepared by your Relationship Manager.

In this report, the Commission summarises findings and conclusions from the statutory audit, which have previously been reported to you by your appointed auditor. Appointed auditors act separately from the Commission and, in meeting their statutory responsibilities, are required to exercise their professional judgement independently of the Commission (and the audited body). The findings and conclusions therefore remain those of the appointed auditor and should be considered within the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission.

Reports prepared by appointed auditors are:

- prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission; and
- addressed to members or officers and prepared for the sole use of the audited body; no responsibility is taken by auditors to any member or officer in their individual capacity, or to any third party.

Copies of this report

If you require further copies of this report, or a copy in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0845 056 0566.

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www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Contents

Our overall summary	4
Action needed by the Council	5
How is Halton Borough Council performing?	6
Our overall assessment	6
The improvement since last year - our Direction of Travel report	7
Work of other Inspectorates	10
Financial management and value for money	12
Conclusion	16
Availability of this letter	16

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Our overall summary

- 1 This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council. It draws on the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council and inspections that have been undertaken in the last year and from a wider analysis of the Council's performance and its improvement over the last year, as measured through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework.
- 2 The report is addressed to the Council, in particular it has been written for councillors, but is available as a public document for stakeholders, including members of the community served by the Council. The main messages for the Council included in this report are as follows.
 - The Council is judged to be improving well and has maintained its 'Excellent' (four star) rating under the CPA framework. It makes a significant contribution to wider community outcomes.
 - There has been an improvement in the percentage of people who are satisfied with the Council overall and in how well residents are kept informed. Both of these measures are now amongst the best when compared with other similar councils. There have also been improvements in resident satisfaction across a wide range of areas including recycling, transport, sports and leisure and libraries.
 - Service performance in areas identified by the Council as priorities has continued to improve. The Council has also maintained and improved performance in other areas. It has worked hard to make its services easier to access and made good progress on improving services for hard to reach groups.
 - External inspectorates comment positively on the Council's performance and plans for future improvements.
 - The Council has good systems of financial control and maintains its expenditure within available resources. Its financial management and reporting arrangements are effective.

Action needed by the Council

- 3 If the Council is to maintain its 'Excellent' rating and maintain its performance it has more to do in some key areas such as:
- Working with partners to decrease levels of burglary and improve the life expectancy of its residents.
 - Addressing some key challenges in connection with issues such as the assessment of needs of adopted children and young people and increasing the levels of recyclables collected from households.
 - Focussing its improvement activities in specific areas such as mental health and similarly in Children's Services where there is good 'Early Years' provision but high levels of unauthorised absence and permanent exclusions from secondary schools.
 - Strengthening its financial controls through including the financial impact of joint work with partners in the medium term financial strategy and fully embedding risk and performance management across all aspects of partnership working.
 - Ensuring that a rigorous performance management framework is in place to support the delivery of its ambitious capital programme and secure the Council's ongoing sound financial standing.

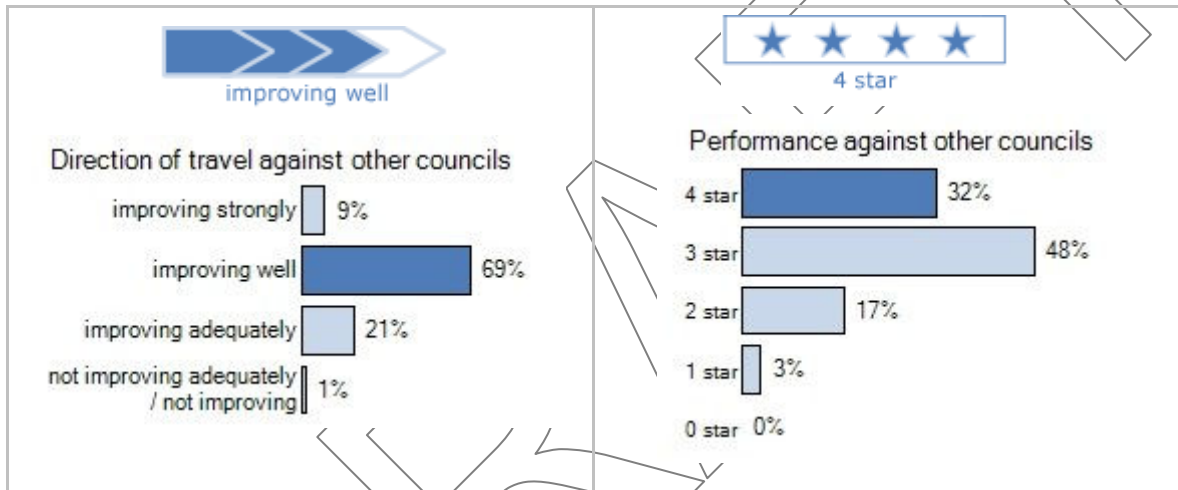
DRAFT

How is Halton Borough Council performing?

Our overall assessment

- 4 The Audit Commission’s overall judgement is that Halton Borough Council is improving well and we have classified Halton Borough Council as four star in its current level of performance under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). These assessments have been completed in all single tier and county councils with the following results.

Table 1



Source: Audit Commission

- 5 The detailed assessment for Halton Borough Council is as follows.

Table 2 The CPA scorecard

Element	Assessment
Direction of Travel judgement	Improving Well
Overall	4 stars
Children and young people	3 out of 4
Social care (adults)	3 out of 4
Use of resources	3 out of 4
Housing	3 out of 4
Environment	4 out of 4
Culture	3 out of 4
Benefits	4 out of 4
Corporate assessment/capacity to improve	4 out of 4

(Note: 1=lowest, 4=highest)

The improvement since last year - our Direction of Travel report

- 6 In this section we comment on the Council's overall direction of travel, and the progress it is making against its overall priorities. Our overall conclusion is that the Council is improving well.

Improving outcomes

- 7 Service performance overall has continued to improve particularly in areas identified as priorities by the Council for example:
- an increase number of young people gained A-C* passes at GCSE;
 - more older people being helped to live at home; and
 - major planning applications being dealt with more quickly.

The Council has also maintained and improved performance in other areas such as housing benefits (which remains excellent), cultural services, adult services and services for vulnerable children and young people. However there are still some challenges to be addressed such as the assessment of needs of adopted children and young people and increasing the level of recyclables collected from households.

8 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, How is Halton Borough Council performing?

8 The Council continues to make a significant contribution to wider community outcomes in several areas most particularly in respect of helping local people into jobs and improving their job-related skills. Council initiatives such as Halton People into Jobs have contributed to a fall in unemployment levels and a decrease in worklessness, both of which are key priorities for the Council. There has also been an improvement in other areas such as teenage conceptions, road safety and the numbers of 16 year olds in education or employment. However achievement in other areas is mixed such as:

- crime, where vehicle crime fell but burglary increased; and
- health where life expectancy improved but still remains at a low level compared with the rest of the country.

These areas are reflected well in Council and partnership future plans and strategies for improvement.

- 9 There has been an improvement in the percentage of people who are satisfied with the Council overall and in how well residents are kept informed. Both of these measures are now amongst the best when compared with other similar councils. There have also been improvements in resident satisfaction across a wide range of areas including recycling, transport, sports and leisure and libraries. However, whilst people's perceptions of anti-social behaviour have improved this is still higher than similar areas elsewhere in the country.
- 10 There has been good progress on improving services for hard to reach groups. This is reflected in an increase in childcare places, more adults and young people accessing training and more drug users accessing and continuing treatment. These are important areas that contribute to the Council's wider community priorities.
- 11 The Council has worked hard to make its services easier to access through the success of initiatives such as Halton Direct Link. This has led to an increase in the number of services accessed at a community level and the Council aims to increase this further by improved marketing of the facility. Service users rate this highly giving it a 93 per cent satisfaction rating.

The Council achieved level 2 of the equality standard in 2006 and there is a robust plan in place to achieve the higher levels of the equality standard with an emphasis on improving access to services and outcomes for local people. This is also reflected in the diverse make up of the Council's workforce which now generally reflects the community well.

Sustaining future improvements

- 12 The community strategy from 2006 provides a strong focus on the challenges the Council intends to address in terms of health, crime, jobs and skills, urban renewal and children and young people. This is supported by a clear range of measures to gauge the effectiveness of the Council and its partners in delivering improvements in the quality of life for local people up to 2011. The Council has also developed corporate priorities that clearly link to the community strategy priorities and are supported by specific targets of measure achievement. This demonstrates that the Council has a clear focus on both improving outcomes for the community and also on making itself more efficient.
- 13 Overall the Council is making good progress against the priorities set out in its corporate plan. For example the Council is working well in developing and implementing plans for urban renewal such as the Widnes Waterfront, development at Daresbury and the Mersey Gateway Bridge. There has also been good progress on implementing other plans and strategies. For example the Council has led on the development and implementation of the carers, supporting people strategy and procurement strategies. It has also and revised its private sector housing renewal strategy and generally responded well to previous reviews and inspections. The transfer of Council housing stock to the Halton Housing Trust was successfully completed during the year thus helping ensure that the decent homes targets can be met through additional investment. This is particularly important as some of this housing stock is in a poor condition.
- 14 The Council has invested in a number of areas in order to improve its capacity to sustain future improvements. In service areas this is reflected in the judgements of external inspectorates that there are promising prospects for improvement in adult services as well as strong prospects for improvement in children and young people's services. The Council is also aware that it needs to focus its improvement activities in specific areas such as in adoption services and mental health. It has also developed its arrangements for securing effective partnership working and setting clear priorities to steer future action. For example the recently agreed local area agreement has been designed to help tackle some deep-rooted issues such as health inequalities with a focus on smoking, alcohol and increased physical activity.
- 15 A sound approach to ensuring that the Council is more efficient is developing. A Board portfolio of Quality and Performance has been created with Business Efficiency at the heart of the role. A Business Efficiency Board has also been established as a committee of the Council to draw up an Efficiency Strategy. The aim of this new approach is to co-ordinate existing mechanisms for achieving efficiencies and VFM and to develop a more co-ordinated and targeted programme of efficiency reviews. The effective implementation of this will help the Council enhance its ability to deliver its plans and achieve its ambitions for the community.

10 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, how is Halton Borough Council performing?

Work of other Inspectorates

- 16 An important aspect of the role of the Relationship Manager is to work with other inspectorates and regulators who also review and report on the council's performance. Relationship Managers share information and seek to provide 'joined up' regulation to the Council. During the last year the Council has received the following assessments from other inspectorates.

BFI (Benefits Fraud Inspectorate)

- 17 The BFI has gathered information from an evidenced self assessment submitted by the Council and from best Value performance Indicators and performance measures to enable to assess the Council's performance. The results of the BFI assessment are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Performance Standards scores

Theme	2006
Claims Administration	4
Security	4
User Focus	4
Resource Management	4
Overall Score	4 = (Excellent)

BFI Analysis 2006

- 18 The overall score of 4 from the BFI is used to determine the CPA score for 'Benefits' as shown in the CPA scorecard at Table 2 in this letter.

CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection)

- 19 CSCI's annual assessment of the Council's services for adults is as follows

Table 4 CSCI ratings

Star Rating	Serving Adults Well	Capacity to improve services
★★	Most	Promising

www.csci.org.uk

- 20 CSCI's rating for the Council's adult services is used to help determine the CPA score for 'Social care (adults)' as shown in the CPA scorecard at Table 2 in this letter.

Ofsted Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)

- 21 OFSTED has worked jointly with CSCI in carrying out the annual assessment of the Council's children's services and have graded the Council as follows.

Table 5 OFSTED ratings

Aspect of assessment	Grade awarded
The contribution of the Council's children's services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3
The Council's overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people:	3
The of contribution the Council's social care services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	4

- 22 OFSTED's ratings for the Council's children's services are used to help determine the CPA score for 'Children and young people' as shown in the CPA scorecard at Table 2 in this letter.

Financial management and value for money

23 As your appointed auditor I have reported separately to The Executive Board on 21 September 2006 on the issues arising from the 2005/06 audit and have provided:

- an unqualified opinion on your accounts; and
- a conclusion on your vfm arrangements to say that these arrangements are adequate.

We have also provided a report on the Best Value Performance Plan confirming that the Plan has been audited.

24 The findings of the auditor are an important component of the CPA framework described earlier in this letter. In particular the Use of Resources score is derived from the assessments made by the auditor in the following areas.

- Financial reporting (including the preparation of the accounts of the Council and the way these are presented to the public).
- Financial management (including how the financial management is integrated with strategy to support council priorities).
- Financial standing (including the strength of the Council's financial position).
- Internal control (including how effectively the Council maintains proper stewardship and control of its finances).
- Value for money (including an assessment of how well the Council balances the costs and quality of its services).

25 For the purposes of the CPA we have assessed the Council's arrangements for use of resources in these five areas as follows.

Table 6

Element	Assessment
Financial reporting	3 out of 4
Financial management	3 out of 4
Financial standing	3 out of 4
Internal control	3 out of 4
Value for money	3 out of 4
Overall assessment of the Audit Commission	3 out of 4

(Note: 1=lowest, 4=highest)

The Council has continued to strengthen its arrangements in connection with its use of resources and good practice is evident in a number of areas. The key features of our work along with improvement opportunities are summarised in Table 7 below.

Table 7 Use of resources: key features

Improvements achieved	Improvement opportunities remaining
Financial reporting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial statements were produced well within the deadlines and were free from material errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure the public is more readily able to access to the financial statements in a variety of formats including Braille and audio and minority languages.
Financial management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget setting process and monitoring of expenditure against budget have both improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the financial impact of plans agreed jointly with partners within the medium-term financial strategy.
Financial standing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds held by schools have been brought into line with school development plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set financial health and performance targets particularly for the delivery of the capital programme.
Internal control	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management is being embedded across the Council's operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a partnership control framework that demonstrates that partnerships are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an appropriate format for the activity undertaken; - are properly accountable; and - and have clear exit strategies on completion.
Value for money	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of higher spending are generally in line with the Council's priorities and investment is resulting in improved services in some areas, particularly education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop whole-life costing techniques and an approach to assessing the impact of spending decisions on service users.

14 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 1 - financial management and value for money

- 26** Two specific pieces of work that we carried out as part of our review of the Council's overall governance arrangements warrant particular mention:
- arrangements for collecting, recording, reporting and using performance information (data quality); and
 - the level of staff awareness of key risks and controls in the area of information and communications technology (ICT).

The key finding from these reviews are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

Data quality

- 27** Our review entailed:
- a completeness check to ensure that reported performance data distinguishes real change in performance from changes in the methodology used to calculate the performance indicators (PIs); and
 - a detailed spot check of the compilation and calculation of a sample of key PIs and the information systems used to provide the data for their calculation.

The need for good data quality is becoming increasingly important for Members to be able to be sure that planned improvements are being delivered. We found the Council's overall governance arrangements in this key area of activity to be adequate and identified some examples of good practice such as protocols for sharing data with external bodies. We also found that the internal reporting of performance is properly focused and includes qualitative as well as quantitative measures of performance.

- 28** Since the end of the financial year the governance arrangements have been strengthened still further by the creation of an Executive Board Portfolio for data quality and a clearer definition of senior officers' responsibilities for data quality.

ICT

- 29** Our survey of staff awareness showed that although there were positive responses in some areas overall there is scope for improvement, with many areas falling below the national average when compared to other authorities. Responses in relation to theft and private work, accessing unsuitable material and unlicensed software were positive. However key areas for improvement include:
- awareness of virus infection policies and procedures - due to the fully automated methods of protection, the majority of respondents were not aware that virus protection software is updated daily by the council centrally; nor were they aware how to report in the event of an outbreak however it is recognised that this has always been dealt with centrally;
 - awareness of measures to prevent unauthorised access - due to the use of remote monitoring solutions the majority of ICT staff did not know if security violations would be immediately reported;

- change control and business continuity awareness – the majority of respondents felt that such procedures were not well documented;
- awareness of anti-fraud policies and procedures - there was good awareness of physical security features and officers access is restricted to essential data and systems only. However the majority were not aware of the link to the Council's general anti-fraud policy and the ICT elements therein;
- asset register status – this confirmed the need for better links between the records of hardware, software and licences; and
- personal data and confidentiality arrangements - the majority of respondents showed good awareness of the physical security of data but many were not fully aware of the Council's data protection policies and procedures.

DRAFT

Conclusion

- 30 This letter has been discussed and agreed with the Chief Executive and Strategic Director Corporate and Policy. A copy of the letter will be presented at the Executive Board in March 2007.
- 31 Further detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations on the areas covered by our audit are included in the reports issued to the Council during the year. These are listed in the following table.

Table 8 Reports issued since 2005 Annual Audit and Inspection letter

Report	Date of issue
Audit Plan 2005/06	May 2005
Audit Plan 2006/07	May 2006
Annual Governance Report	September 2006
Whole of Government Account Return: Auditor's Report	October 2006
Interim Report	November 2006
Final Accounts memo	November 2006
Data Quality: Management Arrangements Report	December 2006
Best Value Performance Plan : Auditor's Statutory Report	November 2006
Use of Resources report and Direction of Travel	January 2007 and February 2007 respectively
Your Business @ Risk ICT survey findings	November 2006

- 32 The Council has taken a positive and constructive approach to our audit and inspection. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the council's assistance and co-operation.

Availability of this letter

- 33 This letter will be published on the Audit Commission's website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk, and also on the council's website.

Julian Farmer

District Auditor and Relationship Manager

March 2007

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Gambling Act 2005 - Delegation

WARDS: Boroughwide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To recommend the Council to delegate authority to the Regulatory Committee to set fees under section 212 Gambling Act 2005.

2. RECOMMENDED: That

The Executive Board recommend the Council to delegate authority to the Regulatory Committee its power to set fees under section 212 Gambling Act 2005 in accordance with section 154 Gambling Act 2005.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 On 22 January 2007 the Regulatory Committee received a report on the Gambling Act 2005 which dealt with matters relating to powers and duties. The report detailed the matters which the legislation reserved exclusively either for full Council or for the Regulatory Committee.
- 3.2 Most fees under the Gambling Act 2005 are set by central government. However, section 212 of the Gambling Act 2005 enables Councils to set fee levels in limited circumstances. This function must be exercised by full Council unless the Council has delegated the function to the Regulatory Committee in accordance with section 154 Gambling Act 2005.
- 3.3 The Regulatory Committee resolved (Minute REG 19) that the Executive Board be requested to recommend the Council to delegate authority to the Regulatory Committee its power to set fees under section 212 Gambling Act 2005 in accordance with section 154 Gambling Act 2005.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council is fully entitled to exercise a policy decision to delegate this particular function.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications arising out of this report.

6. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

This report is based on Regulatory Committee Minute REG 19.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Consultation on the Future Post Office Network

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to draw the Board's attention to a consultation document issued by the Department of Trade and Industry on the future of the Post Office Network and to endorse the action taken by the Chief Executive in responding to that consultation document.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the action of the Chief Executive be endorsed; and**
- (2) further reports be brought to the Executive as and when more detailed proposals are produced by the Department for Trade and Industry.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) has issued a consultation paper on the future of the Post Office Network. Attached as Appendix 1 to this report is a summary of the proposals contained in that document. A full copy of the consultation document can be accessed from the DTI's website (www.dti.gov.uk).

3.2 The Chief Executive wrote in response to the DTI's consultation highlighting two particular concerns from Halton's perspective. A full copy of the Chief Executive's letter is attached as Appendix 2. The two issues were as follows:

- (1) The proposal to change the walking distance criteria for post offices in deprived urban areas from half a mile to a mile; and
- (2) the proposals to provide support for outreach services in "small remote communities".

3.3 The Chief Executive's letter outlines the importance of the Post Office to community life in areas like Halton and the potential impact of any reductions in service that may take place.

3.4 The Board are asked to endorse the action of the Chief Executive.

3.5 Further reports will be brought to the Board as detailed proposals emerge.

4.0 FINANCIAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial or policy implications for the Council.

5.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

5.1 Reducing the Post Office Network in Halton may make access to services more difficult for the more vulnerable members of the community.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
DTI – The Post Office Network Consultation document	6th Floor, Municipal Building	I. Leivesley

Summary of the Government's proposals for the Post Office network

- We intend to make substantial further funding available over the five years to 2011. This will support the necessary restructuring and modernisation of the network to put it on a more stable footing and provide ongoing support for the social network up to current levels. There will be a need for an ongoing subsidy of the social network beyond 2011.
- We propose to introduce new access criteria for the national Post Office network which includes criteria to protect vulnerable consumers in deprived urban areas and rural and remote areas.
 - *Nationally*, 99% within 3 miles and 90% of the population to be within 1 mile;
 - *In deprived urban areas*¹, 99% of the population to be within 1 mile;
 - *In urban areas*, 95% of the population to be within 1 mile;
 - *In rural areas*, 95% of the total rural population within 3 miles.
 - *In remote areas*, 95% of the population in postcode districts² within 6 miles.
 - Across the country as a whole there cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach to access criteria. In applying them, Post Office Ltd will take account of local conditions such as rivers, mountains, valleys, motorways and sea crossings to islands.
- The proposed new access criteria are in recognition of the important social role that post offices play in communities across the country.
- A national network is necessary to ensure that people have access to cash and benefits especially in remote areas.

1 deprived urban communities are those in the 10% most deprived super output areas as identified by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation

2 a postcode district is the first part of the postcode e.g. SL9. There are 2,795 nationwide of which 38 do not currently meet this criterion. These 38 will continue to be exempt but we will not allow any further postcode districts to be exempt.

The Post Office Network

- The current Post Office card account (POca) contract ends in March 2010. The Government has considered and decided that it will continue with a new account after 2010. This will be available nationally and customers will be eligible for the account on the same basis as they are now.
- We recognise the important social and economic role of post offices and we are committed to maintaining a national network but we also recognise that some restructuring will be necessary to put it on a firmer, more sustainable footing.
- We will provide support for a restructuring of the network with up to 2500 closures within that framework which will maintain a national network. Subpostmasters leaving the network under the restructuring programme will be compensated. We expect that Post Office Ltd will implement this process over an 18 month period from summer 2007, giving priority to protecting vulnerable communities in villages, towns and cities.
- We also intend to provide support for Post Office Ltd to open new Outreach locations to provide access to services for small remote communities by building on the success of the pilot trials including mobile post offices and post offices hosted in other locations such as village halls, community centres or pubs.
- We will provide support to enable Post Office Ltd to expand into new areas of business including the development of its new financial services products, such as savings and insurance, and provide finance to restructure and modernise and restore the network of Crown post offices to profitability transforming them into flagships of the Post Office brand alongside a number of closures and continued franchising through link-ups with experienced retailers.
- Post Office Ltd plan to develop new market and business opportunities for the network among Internet companies and other mail operators. For example, a key area of opportunity currently being trialled is to provide customers with the ability to pick up parcels they have ordered through mail order companies or via Internet services from post office counters. The company is also planning a rapid roll-out of up to 4,000 free to use ATMs across the network.
- For the longer term beyond 2011, we propose to investigate what role Local Authorities in England and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland might play in influencing how the postal services are best delivered in the future.

APPENDIX 2

Post Office Network Consultation
Department of Trade and Industry
Response Centre
1 Victoria Street
LONDON
SW1H 0ET

Our Ref 050307-01
If you telephone please ask for Rob Mackenzie
Your ref
Date 5 March 2007
E-mail address rob.mackenzie@halton.gov.uk

email to: dti.enquiries@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Dear Sirs

POST OFFICE NETWORK CONSULTATION

Halton Borough Council welcomes many of the proposals in the current consultation, and supports the need to take a systematic view of the network, taking into account the important social and economic role of Post Offices in the communities which they serve.

Halton is a predominantly urban area with high levels of deprivation but with a number of peripheral rural settlements. Some residential communities within the urban area of Widnes are isolated from other facilities by swathes of industrial development, and in many ways, are just as remote as rural villages (for example Halebank and Westbank). In Runcorn, there are large social housing estates, a legacy of Runcorn New Town, which are separated from other parts of town by substantial belts of landscaped open space and by expressways. These social housing estates also suffer from a form of urban isolation.

The Council wishes to express views about two aspects of the proposals:

1. It is concerned at the weakening of commitment to deprived urban areas. Under the proposed access criteria, 99% of the population in deprived urban areas should be within one mile of a post office compared to 95% in other urban areas. In effect, only 4% of the population in deprived areas would be any better served than if they lived in a non-deprived area, and the remaining 95% will have exactly the same level of service. This is a massive change from the current half mile standard for deprived areas.
2. Compared to other urban areas, the population in deprived neighbourhoods:
 - are more likely to be in receipt of benefits
 - less likely to have a High Street bank account
 - less likely to own a car
 - more likely to suffer from ill health (a high proportion on invalidity benefit)
 - less likely to be able to afford public transport
 - more likely to have caring responsibilities

Post Office Network Consultation
5 March 2007

For these reasons, it is vital that they have easy access to a Post Office. Even half a mile is a struggle for many elderly or infirm residents, or for single parents with young children. A mile is unreasonable.

The Council therefore urges that the basic half mile target for accessibility in deprived areas be retained.

3. The consultation proposes that the DTI will provide support for outreach services for "small remote communities". It is important that is recognised that urban communities can be "remote" in the sense of accessibility to services, and that they may benefit from outreach services just as much as rural areas. There are parts of Halton which are amongst the most deprived 10% of super output areas, but which are over half a mile from the nearest Post Office. These neighbourhoods could benefit from outreach services.

The Council therefore urges that consideration be given to supporting outreach services in less accessible urban areas as well as in remote rural areas.

The Council trusts that these observations will be taken into account and that the final proposals for network coverage will be amended accordingly. If you require any more information or supporting evidence I would be delighted to provide it.

Yours faithfully

David Parr
Chief Executive

REPORT: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children and Young People

SUBJECT: School Admission Arrangements 2008/9

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report fulfils the requirement under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, the Education Act 2002, The Education & Inspections Act 2006, and associated regulations, to determine Halton Local Authority's (LA's) School Admissions Policy for LA maintained community and voluntary controlled schools, and coordinated admission schemes for all primary and secondary schools for September 2008 following statutory consultation (attached as appendices A and B respectively).

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Executive Board

- 1) Approve the Admissions Policy and co-ordinated schemes for primary and secondary admissions for the 2008/9 academic year and,**
- 2) Note the National and Local Performance Indicator targets set/achieved for meeting first preference applications and on-line applications.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Halton LA issued a statutorily required consultation paper on the proposed admission arrangements and coordinated admission schemes in January 2007 to chairs of governors, head teachers and governing bodies of all nursery, infant, junior, primary and secondary schools, the four Diocesan Authorities responsible for voluntary aided schools in Halton, and neighbouring authorities.

3.2 The consultation paper proposed no changes to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to LA maintained community and voluntary controlled schools. These criteria follow Department for Education & Skills (DfES) recommendations contained within the revised School Admissions Code of Practice (i.e. Looked After Children, Siblings, and Distance). However, the revised School Admissions Code of Practice, which came into force on 28th February 2007, precludes the use of a first preference first system as previously operated in Halton, and requires all admission authorities (LA's for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided schools) to operate an equal preference system. Within the equal preference

scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form.

- 3.3 Responses received from the consultation are attached as Appendix C, and the Student Services Officer will respond direct to those schools where particular issues have been raised. Details of the responses have also been circulated to the Halton Admissions Forum.
- 3.4 Following an audit by Halton Borough Council's Internal Audit Section of the Authority's Admissions process it was recommended that Local Performance Indicators (LPIs) were introduced for meeting first preference applications for 2006/7 and subsequent years. The Halton Admissions Forum agreed targets of 96% for primary and 94% for secondary for 2007. Actual preferences met were 92% for primary and 95% for secondary, and the Forum will be considering LPIs for 2008 at its next meeting (to be scheduled).
- 3.5 On-Line Admissions: For applications for admission to primary and secondary schools in September 2007 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister set targets for Local Authorities regarding the number of on-line applications for secondary schools. Halton's target was 5% and the Authority achieved 6.5%. Although no targets were set for primary on-line applications, the Authority achieved 5.1% on-line applications. Further enhancements to the on-line application process and integration of parental preferences directly into the main pupil database are now ongoing in preparation for the 2008/9 admissions round.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Admissions Policy has been drawn up to maximize parental preference for Halton LA maintained community and voluntary controlled schools, and reflects the recommendations contained within the Revised DfES Code of Practice on School Admissions and associated Acts of Parliament and Regulations.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 The current admission arrangements and coordinated schemes are in place to maximise parental preference for Halton schools. Any amendment to the current arrangements may reduce parental preference and lead to an increased number of admission appeals, adversely affecting the intake at some schools, and may also affect the LA's School Place Rationalisation Strategy currently being undertaken.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 Halton's current school admission arrangements comply with the requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act 2001.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Code of Practice on School Admissions	CYPD	Martin West
School Standards & Framework Act 1998	CYPD	Martin West
Education Act 2002	CYPD	Martin West
Education & Inspections Act 2006	CYPD	Martin West



**HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME:
CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR
PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2008/9 ACADEMIC YEAR**

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into reception classes in maintained infant and primary schools.
- 2.0** This Co-ordinated Primary Scheme applies to those schools detailed on pages 7 and 8 of this document.

Halton Borough Council (as the Local Authority - LA) is the Admission Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools, and the Governing Body of each voluntary aided school is the admission authority for the school.

- 3.0** Halton residents (and any other parent wishing to seek admission to a Halton infant, junior or primary school) will be given the opportunity to complete a preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 primary schools using this form. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice. This form is also available on-line and parents are encouraged to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk. Parents/carers should only complete one preference form and should only include preferences for Halton schools. If parents wish to apply for a school in another authority they should contact the relevant authority direct. Any preferences for schools in other authorities entered on the Halton form will be disregarded.
- 4.0** Where a Voluntary Aided School requires supporting information e.g. asking for a reference from a priest or other religious minister for a faith school, when applying for Catholic schools parents will only need to complete the information on the LA preference form and on the on-line form. For applications to Church of England voluntary aided schools parents will be required to complete the LA form (or on-line form) and also supply additional information on a supplementary form and must contact the Church of England voluntary aided school direct for this

APPENDIX A

form which should be completed and returned to the appropriate Church of England voluntary aided school. VA schools will need to inform parents of their requirements within their school's published admission arrangements.

5.0 The DfES issued a revised School Admissions Code of Practice which came into force on 28th February 2007 and admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code. The revised Code no longer allows for a First Preference First Scheme as previously operated in Halton. Instead admission authorities must operate an Equal Preference Scheme. Within the equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (see paragraph 7.0).

6.0 APPLYING FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACE IN HALTON FOR SEPTEMBER 2008

6.1 Halton LA publishes an "Admission to Primary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). The preference form will be contained within this booklet and the booklet will be issued to all Halton Primary Schools and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the council's website, and upon request from the Student Services Team. The booklet will be issued in **September 2007** and the on-line form will be available at the same time.

6.2 The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order. The preference form must be returned to the Student Services Team within the Children & Young People's Directorate no later than **Friday 7th December 2007**. On-line forms must also be completed by this date.

6.3 Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring local authorities but **must** complete their preferences on the relevant authority's form.

6.4 The Student Services Team will load all preferences onto the database and, week beginning **Monday 21st January 2008**, will forward all first, second, and third preference forms to all Voluntary Aided Schools where admission is being sought, whose governing bodies will be required to meet and determine which pupils will be admitted against their admission criteria. Governing bodies must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admissions criteria. Voluntary

APPENDIX A

Aided schools will then be required to notify the Student Services Team on **Monday 4th February 2008** which pupils have been offered places and which have been declined.

- 6.5** When all preferences have been considered Halton LA will notify parents of their child's allocated Halton LA community, voluntary controlled or voluntary aided school. This notification letter will be sent on **Friday 14th March 2008** together with details of the appeal process if applicable.

7.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

- 7.1** If a Halton community or voluntary controlled school becomes oversubscribed, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school.

Children who have a statement of special educational needs will be allocated a place at the school named in the statement.

If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria, places will be allocated on distance grounds, i.e. living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. A geographical information system to determine distance is used.

Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated. Parents and schools should note that this does not apply to key stage one (infant classes) where statutory class size limits apply.

The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility the LA will use the address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

APPENDIX A

Where applications are received from families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants, school places will be allocated to children in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a return date with full address details and providing they would meet the criteria when they return to the UK.

If none of the parent's preferences can be met, in accordance with the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

8.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community or voluntary controlled schools will only be considered in limited circumstances. These may include when a single parent has been ill for some time, or a family have just moved into the area, or a family are returning from abroad – providing applications are received before offers of places are made. If the late application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeal process are given in paragraph 10.0.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school the school will advise how this will be dealt with.

It will be necessary for the applicant to provide the appropriate evidence to support an exceptional case for late application.

8.2 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the Council may not be able to meet the change of preference.

8.3 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 7th December 2007 parents must notify the Student Services Team immediately and request a new preference form (evidence of house move may be required). The preference form must be completed and returned as

APPENDIX A

soon as possible. If there is a place available at the school a place will be offered. If the year group is oversubscribed then parents will be offered the right of appeal and any other preferences will be considered.

8.4 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

Halton Borough Council reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

8.5 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for oversubscribed LA maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until 3 weeks into the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants.

9.0 MID YEAR ADMISSIONS

The Council is prepared to consider requests for transfers between schools other than at normal admission times, and parents seeking transfer should ask the child's current school to issue them with a transfer form, thereby enabling parents to outline the reasons for the transfer request. This will then be forwarded to the Student Services Team for monitoring purposes, who will forward the form to the proposed admitting school. Parents are, however, advised as a first step, to discuss their child's progress with the head teacher of the child's present school, and parents should not remove their child without first securing admission to another school. Transfers are normally made at the beginning of a term. If the year group is full, parents will be offered the right of appeal.

10.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred LA maintained community, voluntary controlled or voluntary aided schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. The Chairman of the appeal panel will be a lay-person having no connection with the LA. Other members of the panel will be suitably experienced persons.

APPENDIX A

Parents should note that the law requires that no 5, 6, or 7 year old in an infant class should be in a class of more than 30 pupils. Parents will have a right of appeal but an appeal panel can only uphold this appeal if it is satisfied that:

- a) the decision was not one which a reasonable admitting authority would make in the circumstances of the case, and/or
- b) that the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented.

The decisions of independent appeals panels are binding on the LA and on the school's governing body.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal.

11 ADMISSION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The DfES has issued guidance which has statutory force including the School Admissions Code of Practice (2007), Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and PRUs (2006), and Guidance on Hard to Place Pupils (2004) that requires Admission Forums to broker protocols for the admission of vulnerable children. The revised DfES School Admissions Code of Practice changes the name of the Hard to Place Protocol to the "In Year Fair Access Protocol". The LA is currently reviewing this protocol and will be communicating with schools regarding any changes.

Halton Local Authority has, through consultation, determined that Children in Public Care will be given first priority for admission to all community and voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary Aided Schools have, through their Diocesan Authority, received confirmation that these pupils should also be given priority in their school's admissions arrangements.

Children in Public Care who require admission to a school outside the normal admissions round will normally be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school. Arrangements are already in place for a child in public care to be admitted to the nearest appropriate school regardless of whether the school is oversubscribed. The Admissions Forum will monitor the number of this type of admissions to schools.

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

(The figure in brackets denotes the school's proposed Published Admission Number)

All Saints Upton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
 Astmoor Primary (25)
 Beechwood Primary (15)
 Brookvale Primary (40)
 Castleview Primary (20)
 Daresbury Primary (15)
 Ditton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
 Ditton Primary (60)
 Fairfield Infant (80)
 Fairfield Junior (80)
 Farnworth C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (56)
 Gorsewood Primary (30)
 Hale C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (25)
 Halebank C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (15)
 Hallwood Park Primary (25)
 Halton Lodge Primary (30)
 Hillview Primary (30)
 Lunts Heath Primary (45)
 Moore Primary (30)
 Moorfield Primary (45)
 Murdishaw West Community Primary (30)
 Oakfield Community Primary (40)
 Palace Fields Primary (40)
 Pewithall Primary (30)
 Simms Cross Primary (40)
 The Brow Community Primary (25)
 The Grange Infant (60)
 The Grange Junior (60)
 The Park Primary (20)
 Victoria Road Primary (40)
 West Bank Primary (30)
 Westfield Primary (25)
 Weston Primary (15)
 Weston Point Primary (20)
 Windmill Hill Primary (15)
 Woodside Primary (30)

APPENDIX A

VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

Runcorn All Saints' CE Aided Primary (20)
St Berteline's CE Aided Primary (43)
St Mary's CE Aided Primary (35)

CATHOLIC:

Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary (30)
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary (30)
St Augustine's Catholic Primary (15)
St Basil's Catholic Primary (60)
St Bede's Catholic Infant (60)
St Bede's Catholic Junior (60)
St Clement's Catholic Primary (30)
St Edward's Catholic Primary (20)
St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary & Nursery (25)
St John Fisher Catholic Primary (30)
St Martin's Catholic Primary School (30)
St Michael's Catholic Primary (35)
The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary (20)



HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME: CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS – 2008/9 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into year 7 at secondary schools.
- 2.0** The Co-ordinated Secondary scheme applies to the following schools in Halton (the number in brackets denotes the proposed Published Admission Number):

Fairfield High School (190)	Community
Halton High School (180)	Community
Saints Peter & Paul Catholic High School (300)	Voluntary Aided
St Chad's Catholic High School (170)	Voluntary Aided
The Bankfield (190)	Community
The Grange Comprehensive School (210)	Community
The Heath School (210)	Community
Wade Deacon High School (225)	Community

Halton Local Authority (LA) is the Admission Authority for the six community high schools, and the Governing Body of each school is the admission authority for the 2 voluntary aided schools.

- 3.0** Halton residents will be given the opportunity to complete a common preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 secondary schools using this form. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice. This form is also available on-line and parents are encouraged to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk. Parents/carers should only complete one application form and preferences may include Halton schools and schools maintained by other LAs.
- 4.0** The DfES issued a revised School Admissions Code of Practice which came into force on 28th February 2007 and admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided schools) **must** ensure that their determined

APPENDIX B

admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code. The revised Code no longer allows for a First Preference First Scheme as previously operated in Halton. Instead admission authorities must operate an Equal Preference Scheme. Within an equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered, if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place, the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place, parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (see paragraph 6.0).

5.0 APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2008

- 5.1** Halton LA publishes an "Admission to Secondary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). The preference form will be contained within this booklet and the booklet will be issued to all year 6 pupils attending Halton Primary Schools and Halton resident pupils who attend schools in other LAs, and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the council's website, and from the Student Services Team. The booklet will be issued in **September 2007** and the on-line form will be available at the same time.
- 5.2** The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order (regardless of which LA the school preferences are for). Halton residents whose child(ren) attend a Halton Primary School must return the form to the child's primary school no later than **19th October 2007**. Halton residents whose children attend primary schools in other authorities must return the form direct to Halton LA no later than **19th October 2007**. On-line forms must also be submitted by this date.
- 5.3** Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring LAs but **must** complete their preferences on the Halton form. Halton LA will work with its neighbouring authorities: Cheshire, Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley, St Helen's, together with any other admission authority where a parent has applied for a school place.
- 5.4** On-Line Admissions: As part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's E-Government Initiative, LAs are required to have a facility for parents to apply on-line for a secondary school place. This facility is in place for Halton residents via Halton Borough Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk and on-line applications will be dealt with along with all other applications.
- 5.5** Halton LA will record all preferences on the admissions database and will forward, week beginning **12th November 2007**, details of all first,

APPENDIX B

second, and third preferences for admission to aided schools or schools in other authorities to the relevant admission authority, for consideration in accordance with their published admission criteria.

5.5 The governing bodies of all Voluntary aided schools should note that they must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admission criteria and must notify the Student Services Team on **Monday 3rd December 2007** which pupils have been offered places and which have been declined.

5.6 When all preferences have been considered Halton LA will notify parents of their child's allocated Halton LA community or voluntary aided school place (and if parents have requested a school in another authority the maintaining authority will notify parents). These notification letters will be sent on **3rd March 2008** together with details of the appeal process if applicable.

6.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

6.1 If a Halton community school becomes oversubscribed places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school.

Children who have a statement of special educational needs will be allocated a place at the school named in the statement.

If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria, places will be allocated on distance grounds, i.e. living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. The LA uses a geographical information system to determine distance.

Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated.

The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the LA will use the

APPENDIX B

address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

Where applications are received from families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants, school places will be allocated to children in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a return date with full address details and providing they would meet the criteria when they return to the UK.

If none of the parent's preferences can be met, in accordance with the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect the parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

7.1 EARLY AGE TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Children of exceptional ability and maturity can be considered for transfer to secondary schools one year earlier than normal. Head teachers of primary/junior schools are invited each year to put forward the names of any pupils whom they consider are physically, intellectually, and emotionally suitable to benefit from such a transfer, and who might be educationally disadvantaged by remaining in the primary sector for a further year. However, as a first step, head teachers will discuss possible candidates with parents, the school's link adviser, and the Educational Psychologist. Parents who consider that early transfer might benefit their child should discuss this with the head teacher.

7.2 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton LA maintained community schools will only be considered in limited circumstances. These may include when a single parent has been ill for some time, or a family have just moved into the area, or a family are returning from abroad – providing applications are received before offers of places are made. If the late application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeal process are given in paragraph 9.0.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school the school will advise how this will be dealt with.

APPENDIX B

It will be necessary for the applicant to provide the appropriate evidence to support an exceptional case for late application.

7.3 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference.

7.4 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 19th October 2007 parents must notify the LA and request a new preference form. This form must be completed and returned to the LA immediately. If there is a place available at the school of first preference a place will be offered. If the year group is oversubscribed then parents will be offered the right of appeal and any other preferences will be considered.

7.5 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

Halton LA reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

7.6 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for oversubscribed LA Maintained Community Secondary Schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until 3 weeks into the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants.

8.0 MID YEAR ADMISSIONS

The LA is prepared to consider requests for transfers between schools other than at normal admission times, and parents seeking transfer should ask the child's current school to issue them with a transfer form, thereby enabling parents to outline the reasons for the transfer request. This will then be forwarded to the Student Services Team for monitoring purposes, who will forward the form to the proposed admitting school. Parents are, however, advised as a first step, to discuss their child's progress with the head teacher of the child's present school, and parents should not remove their child without first securing admission to another school. Transfers are normally made at

APPENDIX B

the beginning of a term. If the year group is full, parents will be offered the right of appeal.

9.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred LA maintained community or voluntary aided schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. The Chairman of the appeal panel will be a lay-person having no connection with the LA. Other members of the panel will be suitably experienced persons. The decisions of independent appeals panels are binding on the LA and on the school's governing body.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal.

10.0 ADMISSION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The DfES has issued guidance which has statutory force including the School Admissions Code of Practice (2007), Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and PRUs (2006), and Guidance on Hard to Place Pupils (2004) that requires Admission Forums to broker protocols for the admission of vulnerable children. The revised DfES School Admissions Code of Practice changes the name of the Hard to Place Protocol to the "In Year Fair Access Protocol". The LA is currently reviewing this protocol and will be communicating with schools regarding any changes.

Halton LA has, through consultation, determined that Children in Public Care will be given first priority for admission to all community and voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary Aided Schools have, through their Diocesan Authority, received confirmation that these pupils should also be given priority in their school's admissions arrangements.

Children in Public Care who require admission to a school outside the normal admissions round will normally be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school. Arrangements are already in place for a child in public care to be admitted to the nearest appropriate school regardless of whether the school is oversubscribed. The Admissions Forum will monitor the number of this type of admissions to schools.

The Halton Admissions Forum, in consultation with head teachers and governing bodies, has a protocol in place which expands upon these arrangements to include other vulnerable and hard to place pupils.

Appendix C

Response

GOVERNING BODY	CLERK	DAY	DATE	TIME	COMMENT
Murdishaw West Primary	Tasker, Steve	Tues	23-Jan	5.15pm	No comments
Ditton Nursery	Essery, Brenda	Wed	24-Jan	4pm	No comments
Chesnut Lodge	Tasker, Steve	Mon	29-Jan	1.30pm	N/A
The Grange Comp	Hall, Elaine	Mon	29-Jan	4.30pm	
Moorfield Primary	Tasker, Steve	Wed	31-Jan	5 pm	No comments
Pewithall Primary	West, Martin	Wed	31-Jan	4.30pm	No comments
St Edward's Catholic Primary	Tasker, Steve	Thur	1-Feb	5.30pm	No comments
Moore Primary	Worrall, Bert	Tues	6-Feb	6.30pm	No comments
St Basil's Catholic Primary	Tasker, Steve	Tues	6-Feb	4pm	No comments
St Mary's CE Halton Primary	Keogh Bernard	Tues	6-Feb	3.30pm	No comments
The Brow Primary	Essery, Brenda	Tues	6-Feb	5pm	No comments
Astmoor Primary	Worrall, Bert	Wed	7-Feb	4pm	No comments
Halebank CE Primary	Hollins, Clare	Wed	7-Feb	4.30 pm	No comments
Runcorn All Saints Primary	Essery, Brenda	Wed	7-Feb	3.45 pm	It was noted that the school's admission policy has been drawn up
Saints Peter & Paul	Wilson, Chris	Wed	7-Feb	4.30pm	
Farnworth Primary	Keogh Bernard	Thur	8-Feb	6.00 pm	No comments
Hale CE Primary	Richmond, Peter	Thur	8-Feb	6pm	No comments
OLPS Catholic Primary	Musson, Margaret	Thur	8-Feb	4.30pm	No comments
St Clement's Catholic Primary	Hollins, Clare	Thur	8-Feb	7pm	No comments
West Bank Primary	Essery, Brenda	Thur	8-Feb	3.45pm	No comments
St Chad's High School	Smith, Chris	Mon	12-Feb	TBC	
All Saints Upton Primary	Cunliffe, Pat	Mon	19-Feb	6 pm	No comments
Palace Fields Primary	Hollins, Clare	Mon	19-Feb	5pm	No comments
Lunts Heath Primary	West, Martin	Wed	21-Feb	5pm	No comments
Simms Cross Primary	Platt, Sylvia	Wed	21-Feb	4pm	
The Bankfield	Thomas, Nora	Wed	21-Feb	6pm	
The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary	Hollins, Clare	Wed	21-Feb	5.30pm	No comments
Birchfield Nursery	White, Val	Thur	22-Feb	4pm	
Daresbury Primary	Platt, Sylvia	Thur	22-Feb	5pm	
Cavendish	Tasker, Steve	Mon	26-Feb	9.30am	N/A
Westfield Primary	Tasker, Steve	Mon	26-Feb	5pm	No comments
Oakfield Primary	Essery, Brenda	Tues	27-Feb	4.30pm	No comments
St Martin's Catholic Primary	Cunliffe, Pat	Tues	27-Feb	6.30 pm	No comments
St Michael's Catholic Primary	Musson, Margaret	Thur	1-Mar	3.30pm	No comments
Beechwood Primary	Morgan, Yvonne	Mon	5-Mar	6pm	No comments

Brookvale Primary	Hollins, Clare	Mon	5-Mar	4pm	No comments
Hillview Primary	Lewis, Rita	Mon	5-Mar	4pm	No comments
Fairfield Junior	Platt, Sylvia	Tues	6-Mar	4.30pm	No comments
St Augustine's Catholic Primary	Worrall, Bert	Tues	6-Mar	5.45 pm	No comments
Windmill Hill Primary	Richmond, Peter	Tues	6-Mar	3.30pm	No comments
OLMS Catholic Primary	Richmond, Peter	Wed	7-Mar	5.30pm	No comments
St Bede's Infant	Rowlands, Mary	Wed	7-Mar	6pm	No comments
St Berteline's Catholic Primary	Mckenna Jane	Wed	7-Mar	4pm	No comments
The Grange Junior	Musson, Margaret	Wed	7-Mar	4.30 pm	No comments
The Park Primary	Turton, Gillian	Wed	7-Mar	6pm	No comments
Victoria Road Primary	Keogh Bernard	Wed	7-Mar	6.30pm	No comments
Ditton Primary	Essery, Brenda	Thur	8-Mar	5pm	No comments
Halton High	Collier, Ann	Thur	8-Mar	5pm	No comments
The Grange Infant	Burgon, Ursula	Thur	8-Mar	4.30pm	No comments
Warrington Rd Nursery	Hollins, Clare	Thur	8-Mar	3.45pm	No comments
Woodside Primary	Turton, Gillian	Tues	8-Mar	4pm	No comments
The Grange Nursery	White, Val	Mon	12-Mar	1.30 pm	No comments
St Gerard's RC Primary	Hollins, Clare	Tues	13-Mar	5pm	No comments
Castle View Primary	Cunliffe, Pat	Wed	14-Mar	5pm	No comments
Brookfields	Platt, Sylvia	Fri	16-Mar	2pm	N/A
Ashley	Tasker, Steve	Mon	19-Mar	5.30 pm	N/A
Fairfield Infant	Essery, Brenda	Mon	19-Mar	6pm	No comments
St Bede's Junior	Essery, Brenda	Tues	20-Mar	3.45 pm	No comments
Wade Deacon High	Kirkham, Ian	Tues	20-Mar	5.45pm	No comments
Gorsewood Primary	Mckenna Jane	Wed	21-Mar	4.45pm	No comments
St John Fisher Catholic Primary	Platt, Sylvia	Wed	21-Mar	3.15 pm	No comments
Weston Primary	Turton, Gillian	Wed	21-Mar	4pm	No comments
Weston Point Primary	Worrall, Bert	Mon	26-Mar	5.30pm	No comments
Hallwood Park Primary	Richmond, Peter	Tues	27-Mar	4pm	No comments
Halton Lodge Primary	Essery, Brenda	Tues	27-Mar	5pm	No comments
Ditton CE Primary	VACANCY	Wed	28-Mar	5.45pm	No comments
Fairfield High	Wadsworth, Maria	Thur	29-Mar	5.30pm	No comments
The Heath	Jordan, Trish	Thur	29-Mar	2007	No comments

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

PRESENTED BY: Acting Strategic Director – Children and Young People's Directorate

SUBJECT: Youth Matters/Connexions Transition

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide information on developments regarding Youth Matters and Connexions transition.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To support the development of proposals and options to secure Integrated Youth Support from April 2008.

2.2 That the information is noted and the actions proposed in section 6.0 agreed.

2.3 That a further report is presented to the Executive Board in October 2007.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 National Policy

3.2 The Publication of the Green Paper – Youth Matters presented proposals to

- Give young people more influence over the activities and facilities available to them locally – including sporting activities
- Engage more young people in positive activities and empower them to shape the services they receive
- Extend opportunities for all young people to make a contribution to their communities, for example through volunteering;
- Provide more and better information for teenagers and their parents about what they can expect in their area;
- Modernise the provision of information, advice and guidance on subjects important to young people and their parents, bringing it closer to young people at times, in places and in ways that will suit them; and
- Improve services to disadvantaged young people by encouraging better integration and collaboration of services for them.

The reforms build upon the Every Child Matters agenda and take into account the 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper proposals.

3.3 Youth Matters proposed the merger of a range of existing Government funding streams, which are targeted at young people. These will be devolved to

Local Authorities working through Children's Trusts to encourage a more holistic approach to meeting the needs of young people at a local level.

- 3.4 The subsequent Next Steps document cemented the proposals following consultation and identified four key themes as priorities for delivering services to young people. These being:
1. Empowering young people – things to do and places to go
 2. Young people as citizens – making a contribution
 3. Supporting choices – information, advice and guidance
 4. All young people achieving – Reforming targeted support
- 3.5 Within the key themes were specific actions which set down:
- The development of services to young people under the umbrella of 'Integrated Youth Support'
 - The reform of targeted support based on the needs of young people using the concept of lead professional
 - The introduction of Information, Advice and Guidance standards
 - The development of a national organisation for volunteering
 - The transfer of funding and responsibility of Connexions to Local Authority working within Childrens Trust Arrangements
 - The proposed timescales for implementation of the changes is April 2008.
- 3.6 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 consolidated these requirements placing new statutory duties upon Local Authorities to ensure that young people have access to a wide range of positive activities which empower them to shape the services they receive.
- 3.7 2007 has marked an increase in the pace of change with a range of policy and guidance published. In summary these are within an overarching Treasury/DFES thematic review of Children and Young People which will inform the Comprehensive Sending Review and will herald a 10 year Youth Strategy.

Specific guidance/information recently published include:

- Integrated Youth Support (IYS)
 - Guidance on framework for development of IYS expected April 2007
- Targeted Youth Support (TYS)
 - Prospectus for development expected April 2007
- Youth Work
 - DFES planning work on Strategy Youth Work guidance in 2007/2008
- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
 - Consultation on IAG standards ends in March, with final standards to be published in April 2007
- Connexions Transition
 - Ministers confirmed use of Connexions branding to continue
 - Health check by Government North West in 2007 (possibly September) on how transition and development of IYS is proceeding with each Local

Authority area.

- NEET
 - National NEET delivery plan expected April 2007 which in turn will inform local NEET plan.

4.0 Connexions Transition

- 4.1 Connexions are an information, advice and guidance organisation, which predominantly delivers services to 13-19 year olds. It employs Personal Advisors who are based in a variety of settings including schools, high street centres and multi agency teams. Whilst it is viewed as a universal service it has increasingly targeted its support to meet the national not in education, employment and training (NEET) agenda.
- 4.2 Connexions in Halton is delivered as part of Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership (GMCP). GMCP is made up of the boroughs of Halton, Liverpool, Wirral, St Helens, Sefton and Knowsley.

In order to ensure effective transition a GMCP Transition group was established with representatives at Chief Executive or Director of Childrens Services level from all six boroughs.

The terms of reference for the group included:

- Agreement of a transition plan
 - Assessment of risks and liabilities
 - Assessment of options for future Connexions service delivery
 - Consultation with Key stakeholders
 - Reporting progress to Government North West and DfES
- 4.3 The group published an interim report in January 2007, which set down a framework for development including agreement on the following:
- Partnership – ***GMCP will continue to operate as a discrete legal entity***
 - Structure, employment and legal continuity – ***GMCP will continue to employ all staff, hold property leases and other contracts***
 - Multi disciplinary working – ***operation of Connexions staff should be determined locally***
 - Integrated leadership and Management – ***Connexions Area Manager will join management structures of CYPD***
- 4.4 A further issue, which is particular only to Halton, is that Connexions are currently contracted to deliver the Youth Service until March 31st 2009. The contracting out to Connexions was a complicated process involving TUPE issues. The current youth service workforce is employed on a combination of JNC and Connexions terms and condition.

5.0 Halton Progress

- 5.1 A multi agency Youth Matters Steering group has been established and specific terms of reference set. The group will answer directly to the Universal Task group within the Children's Alliance Board framework. At the last Youth Matters Steering group a proposal for a smaller time limited Integrated Youth Support (IYS) working group to be established was endorsed. The main aim of this team will be to plan, co-ordinate and deliver a multi-agency change plan.
- 5.2 A specific multi agency half day event has already taken place which launched the transition process. The aim of this event was to identify the overarching outcomes of IYS and to develop a detailed change plan to enable implementation.
- 5.3 A plethora of opinions and ideas informed the workshop. The crucial issue of consultation and communication being at the forefront of the discussion. To this end the following key outcomes have been agreed:
- A specific large scale event with young people and professionals scheduled for June / July.
 - A series of workshops with staff including briefing and questions and answer sessions. Also suggested is a discrete linked website for improved communication.
 - A series of ongoing participation events with young people and parents / carers.
- 5.4 Furthermore Connexions Transition funding has secured the half time secondment of the Connexions Area Manager to the Local Authority to add capacity to develop the agenda, the secondment began on 1st March 2007.

6.0 Halton Next Step Actions

- 6.1 Taking into account the decisions made at the GMCP Transition group and the key messages from central and regional government regarding forthcoming guidance the following actions are to be agreed:
- i. A multi-agency change plan will be developed by April with a comprehensive implementation plan to follow. The change plan will concentrate on identifying the options for future developments.
 - ii. To explore the option of IYS becoming a mini trust. In the first instance the pooling of the resources for Connexions and Youth Services would occur. Following this the possibility of pooling other resources such as commissioned services could be pursued.
 - iii. Following the agreement of outcomes and consultation with key stakeholders the core structure of IYS (initially Connexions and YS) will be developed. This would include links to Halton Borough Council management structures.

- iv. The current contract arrangements to continue with Connexions whilst future options are explored.
- v. A report to be tabled to the Council's Executive Board and Children & Young People Alliance Board in October 2007 to propose specific recommendations and options.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Youth Matters is an integral part of the Every Child Matters programme. The development of Integrated Youth Support and the transition of Connexions will inform and influence the Halton Children & Young People Alliance Network concept. Furthermore the issue of integrated workforce development will be key to the successful implementation of the Youth Matters proposals.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Youth Matters – Next Steps indicated that from April 2008 funding will come to Local Authorities for Connexions in a single grant.
- 8.2 However the level of Connexions grant funding devolved to HBC from 2008 is not yet known. DfES has recently approved a team of consultants to make recommendations for apportioning the national Connexions grant allocation to individual Local Authority areas.
- 8.3 GONW has indicated that allocations will appear as aligned budgets within LAAs for 2007 -2008
- 8.4 The GMCP transition group is discussing the financial implications of Connexions transition. A specific risks and liabilities sub group of the transition group has been formed to develop these issues.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 9.1 Failure to propose the model for Integrated Youth Support will present the following risks:
 - The Local Authority and its partner will fail to implement the Youth Matters proposals.
 - The Local Authority will be in a weakened state in regard to Joint Area Review scheduled for March 2008.
 - The Local Authority will fail in its statutory duties within the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 10.1 The multi-agency change plan will incorporate a range of equality and diversity matters.

11.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

Integrated Youth Support is a key cornerstone of Youth Matters and integral to securing the delivery of Education and Inspections Act 2006.

12.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None.

13.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

To be agreed with proposals in October 2007.

14.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 197U2

Document	Place of inspection	Contact Officer
Children Act	Grosvenor House	Lorraine Butcher
Every Child Matters	Grosvenor House	Lorraine Butcher
Youth Matters	Grosvenor House	Lorraine Butcher
Education & Inspection Act	Grosvenor House	Lorraine Butcher

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health & Community

SUBJECT: Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present to the Executive Board a new Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy for Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) Promoting Positive Behaviour – Halton’s Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy be endorsed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Anti-social behaviour, or its perception, has been a concern that has received wide ranging publicity both Nationally and locally. With this in mind it was felt timely to review Halton’s approach to anti-social behaviour, and to develop a revised strategy and action plan to address these concerns.

4.0 PROCESS TO DEVELOP THE REVISED STRATEGY

4.1 Attached at Appendix 1 Halton’s Strategy: Promoting Positive Behaviour has a 3-pronged approach, Prevent & deter, Protect and Punish and Rehabilitation. Central to the strategy are the principles of prevention, education and community building, enabling communities to take action, supporting victims and taking quick and robust action against those who behave inappropriately.

The Strategy advocates a holistic approach to achieving safer communities where people are not only safe but also feel safe, and where they are confident those who do not contribute positively to their community and behave inappropriately are dealt with quickly and effectively.

4.2 Prevent & Deter

The aim of Prevent & Deter is to encourage (or if necessary deter) those who might otherwise commit acts of anti-social behaviour not to do so, by identifying the causes and putting in place positive, joined-up solutions that will prevent incidents from arising in the first instance or tackle it as soon as it arises. The main aspects to the strand are:

- Identifying those engaged in, or at risk of engagement in anti social behaviour
- Intervening at an early stage to encourage behavioural change.
- Identifying positive activity to engage or divert the focus of groups and individuals
- Minimising anti-social behaviour by addressing the physical factors that affect it.
- Using data to target interventions within the community.

Protect & Punish

The aim of Protect & Punish is once anti-social behaviour has occurred, the focus must move to the victim, who needs confidence that they will be protected from further harm and the offenders punished. The intention is to deliver a rapid, robust and effective response using current legislative powers, targeted towards the more serious incidents of anti-social behaviour. The main aspects of protect & punish are:

- Enable the individual to recognise the consequences of their behaviour
- Ensure that they change their behaviour
- Protect victims, witnesses and the community
- A multi agency approach to help have an impact on underlying issues and problems

Rehabilitate

The aim of rehabilitate is to ensure there is concerted action to ensure that offenders do not continue to offend. This can be done by tackling the causes of offending behaviour with the offenders and their families to break the cycle of anti-social behaviour. The main aspects of rehabilitate are:

- Work to develop services to change perpetrator's behaviour. This is particularly aimed at those who have already been subject to legal action (and their families)
- Try and break the cycle and re-occurrence of anti-social behaviour and to avoid further pervasive outcomes and exclusion.
- Some interventions may not be successful in changing behaviour first time round.

Action plans have been developed for each of the areas to make sure that delivery and targets are achieved. There is a performance-monitoring framework that has been in place and will be reviewed on a quarterly basis this information will be fed back to the Safer Halton Partnership and on a six monthly basis to the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board. A revised action plan would be published in 12 months time.

4.3 The strategy has been developed with partners, stakeholders and elected members via the topic group of the Safer Halton PPB. A consultation event took place in February with approximately 170 attendees including partners, Elected Members, young people and members of the community where the people could comment and ask questions in relation to the document.

4.4 If endorsed, the strategy will have a wide distribution both electronically and hard copies. Summary versions will also be produced for the general community and young people. A high profile launch is envisaged.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The new strategy, if endorsed, will become Council policy.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Council has recently invested additional funding in this area, for example, contributing to the employment of additional Police Community Support Officers. However, the Council will need to closely monitor the Strategy to ensure that the service achieves its outcomes and delivers an efficient and effective service.

7.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The implications of the Action Plan will need to be included in Directorate and other agencies business and service plans.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 The Strategy aims to reduce the risks associated with anti-social behaviour.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 The strategy is an all inclusive approach.

10.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

The strategy is in response to an issue that is high on the public agenda as voiced through community engagement.

11.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

All options were considered in producing the final strategy.

12.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

If endorsed the strategy would be launched in April 2007.

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

None under the meaning of the act.



Safer Halton **PARTNERSHIP**
a member of the Halton Strategic Partnership

**Promoting Positive Behaviour –
Halton’s Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
2007 - 2009**

CONTENTS	Page
Acknowledgements	3
Foreword	4
Executive Summary	5
1. Introduction	6
2. Strategic Links	7
3. Background to Anti-Social Behaviour issues from National and Local Perspective	8
4. The Local Challenges	9
5. Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003	12
6. Halton's principles to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour	13
7. What Partners will do to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour	18
8. Co-ordinating the Strategy	23
Appendix A – Anti-Social Behaviour Problem Solving Groups	
Multi Agency Meeting	25
Tasking and Co-ordination	26
Appendix B – RESPECT Legalisation	27
Appendix C – Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003	29
Appendix D – Data Maps	33
Appendix E – How agencies can get involved to combat Anti-Social Behaviour	36
Appendix F – Action Plans	37
Key Areas	38
Prevent and Deter	41
Protect and Punish	47
Rehabilitate	48

Acknowledgements

The Safer Halton Partnership would like to thank all its partners, elected members, young people and the residents of Halton for their input and commitment to the development of the strategy. We would also like to thank those people who attended the consultation event on 12th February 2007.

Signatures and logos of key partners to be added

FOREWORD

Social responsibility, respect for others and appropriate community behaviour are fundamental requirements of a thriving and successful community. The majority of residents recognize this and contribute positively to community life.

However, a minority does not. The conduct of this minority adversely affects the ability of people to enjoy the communities and facilities where they live, work and visit. This is not acceptable. **Anti-Social Behaviour is not welcome in Halton and will not be tolerated.**

The multi-agency Safer Halton Partnership has developed this strategy, which builds upon the existing work of the partnership.

The Strategy advocates a **holistic approach** to achieving safer communities where people are not only safe but also feel safe, and where they are confident those who do not contribute positively to their community and behave inappropriately are dealt with quickly and effectively.

The Strategy focuses on three specific areas

- **Prevent & Deter**
- **Protect & Punish**
- **Rehabilitate**

Central to the strategy are the principles of prevention, education and community building, enabling communities to take action, supporting victims and taking quick and robust action against those who behave inappropriately.

The strategy is designed to adapt to changing circumstances and partnership actions, which support the strategy, are continually monitored and reviewed.

Central Government continues to take a clear position in terms of tackling anti-social behaviour, backed up by new legislation and support for local partnerships. This strategy has been developed within this framework.

include photos and signatures of David Parr, Peter Fahy, Tony McDermott

Executive Summary

Within this strategy we will seek to address not only the effects of anti-social behaviour on the lives of residents of Halton, but also to review the causes of anti-social behaviour.

Our approach is to concentrate on three specific themes: Prevent & Deter, Punish & Protect and Rehabilitate. By working within these three themes we believe we will achieve an improvement in residents' lives, creating safer neighbourhoods and town centres.

Through these three themes we have identified a number of actions that we hope to deliver during the two-year life span of this strategy. These include: the development of community watch schemes; providing a rapid response to anti-social behaviour; enhancing our public protection responsibilities to protect communities by taking the necessary legal action against persistent anti-social behaviour offenders; working with communities to address the experience and effects of anti-social behaviour; and providing diversionary activities for young people, as well as improving our support for families. Family support will be key to looking at the causes of anti-social behaviour, as we need support from parents and carers to address some young peoples' behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour is not predominantly a youth problem and young people are more likely to be a victim of crime than commit crime themselves. In 2006 Halton's young people contributed over 14,000 hours of volunteering. The Safer Halton Partnership wants to help build on this and be more inclusive to all sectors of the community, to encourage stronger intergenerational links and to build in a cultural of respect for all.

We have consulted with our partners within Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire & Rescue, Youth Offending Team, Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Registered Social landlords, Elected Members, Young People and Halton residents during the development of the document: many views and comments from these groups have aided and added value to the completed strategy and action plans.

The action plans contained within the appendix tackle the wide nature of anti-social behaviour, from taking action around litter and youth nuisance to family support and education.

Anti-social behaviour takes many forms, and it will need the increased commitment of all our partners and community to help promote the positive behaviour that will help bring Halton people together as a community.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this strategy is to:

- Clarify ways of encouraging acceptable behaviour;
- Solve the problems, which lead to anti-social behaviour;
- Respond rapidly and effectively to incidents of anti-social behaviour;
- Make perpetrators aware their behaviour is not acceptable and that they will face robust enforcement action if it continues; and
- Protect and enhance the local environment.

1.2 It is our aim to improve quality of life for all residents, creating safer neighbourhoods and town centres. We have thus focused our work within this strategy on the three key areas, Prevent and Deter, Punish and Protect and Rehabilitate, which we believe will contribute to sustained reductions in nuisance and anti-social behaviour. We believe that by basing our response on the three strategic themes we will help the communities of the borough to feel safer and improve their quality of life.

1.3 Anti-social behaviour is directly linked to many causal and risk factors as well as being an active choice for some individuals and groups. There is indisputable evidence that deprivation; poverty, unemployment, poor education/misinformation, and a lack of access to facilities/services are factors. Similarly a lack of opportunities for positive association through *social places to go and social things to do*, addiction, alienation or a sense of not belonging, peer pressure or deviant family expectation, and mental health problems, are some of many other more personal factors. Thus, prevention needs to be seen as an amalgam of reducing causal factors and creating personal change in individuals who are most “at risk” of engaging in anti-social behaviour.

1.4 Whilst we have identified locally that anti-social behaviour is a problem, it is also acknowledged as an issue for communities nationally. The Government has recently launched its campaign to address this problem, and we will work within this to provide a local response to a national problem.

1.5 The members of the Safer Halton Partnership want to encourage respect for the areas we live in, for families and for individuals. We cannot achieve this alone, however, we need the community to support us in this. We are determined as a partnership to address the problem of anti-social behaviour and are working together to provide a first class quality of life for people in Halton. The Safer Halton Partnership are engaged in a long term commitment to promote community safety and foster confidence in the community they serve, making a real difference to the quality of life for everyone living in the borough.

2. STRATEGIC LINKS

2.1 Halton Borough Council's Corporate Plan and the Local Strategic Partnership Community Strategy seek to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the Borough. They set out a vision for Halton: -

“Halton will be a thriving and vibrant Borough where people can learn and develop their skills; enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality, sustained by a thriving business community; and safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.”

2.2 Five strategic themes have been agreed as a focus for activity, which are listed below: -

- A Healthy Halton
- Halton's Urban Renewal
- Halton's Children and Young People
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton

2.3 These priorities were developed in consultation with partners and the wider community and were based on facts and figures, about the conditions within the Borough.

2.4 Since the inception of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, local authorities and the police have a statutory duty to work together to develop strategies to tackle crime and the fear of crime and produce three-year community safety plans, setting out how they intend to tackle the key issues in their areas.

3. BACKGROUND TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ISSUES FROM A NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

- 3.1 The Government White Paper *'Respect and Responsibility: Taking a Stand Against Anti-social Behaviour'* explored the difficulty of agreeing a definition, and the importance of acknowledging this: "Anti-social behaviour means different things to different people - noisy neighbours who ruin the lives of those around them, 'crack houses' run by drug dealers, drunks taking over town centres, people begging, litter and graffiti, young people using airguns to threaten and intimidate, or people misusing fireworks."
- 3.2 A successful Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy is one that can assess the level of intervention and deliver responses tailored to each issue whilst being flexible enough to respond quickly to new reports of anti-social behaviour. The strategy should be based upon a clear assessment of local patterns of anti-social behaviour and community consultation but also allow scope for responding to newly emerging 'hotspots' of anti-social behaviour based upon the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and community reporting mechanisms.
- 3.3 Following the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Government has continued to develop measures for partnerships so they can respond effectively to unacceptable behaviour. The White Paper stresses the "absolutely vital" role of local authorities in tackling anti-social behaviour and states that agencies such as Youth Services, Connexions, Social Services and Environmental Health departments "all need to share responsibility for tackling the anti-social behaviour of those with whom they are working and play their part in enforcement."
- 3.4 It is also relevant to acknowledge the important role of youth work in helping to reduce anti-social behaviour emphasised in the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', "Taking sports, constructive activities includes, groups or classes and volunteering during teenage years has a positive outcome in late life. There is also evidence that involvement in positive activities help prevent teenagers from being drawn into anti-social behaviour and crime."
- 3.5 In November 2003 the Government's anti-social behaviour unit undertook the first ever-national day- count of reports of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. "A Day to Count". During this 24 hour period over 72,000 reports of anti-social behaviour were recorded – one report every 2 seconds.
- 3.6 In Halton in August 2004, a similar local exercise was conducted across the borough, over a 7-day period. During this period 526 incidents of anti-social behaviour were reported to Halton police. A further 389 incidents of anti- social behaviour were recorded by other agencies.

4. THE LOCAL CHALLENGES

4.1 The Safer Halton Partnership has a wide-ranging remit focused on two major concerns of Halton people. Crime and the local environment have consistently been two areas the public have raised as high priorities in successive consultations over the last few years. We want to make Halton a great place to live with an attractive quality of life and excellent local environment. However, this is very much dependent on reducing current levels of crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and improving the local environment in our neighbourhoods. Recent years have seen reductions in total recorded crime and for key crimes such as burglary and car crime. However, this remains the most pressing problem for most people in Halton, and fear of crime remains at unacceptable levels and impacts upon too many lives. At the same time, whilst general satisfaction levels are rising with Halton as a place to live, it is the condition of the local environment, which is of most concern to residents.

4.2 What is the extent of the problem in Halton?

The Halton 2000 Citizens Panel is made up of around 2,500 local residents who have agreed to receive and respond to quarterly questionnaires on a variety of issues and topics. The panel was used in November 2005 and January 2007 and questions were asked about their experience of anti-social behaviour. The most common aspects of anti-social behaviour that concerns people about their neighbourhood were:

November 2005		January 2007	
Anti-social behaviour	Percentage %	Anti-social behaviour	Percentage %
Litter	48%	Dog fouling	46.2%
Youth disorder	42.7%	Litter	41.2%
Inconsiderate parking	41.8%	Inconsiderate parking	40.2%
Dog fouling	39.1%	Youth disorder	29.2%
Drinking alcohol	36.8%	Drinking alcohol	28.3%
Criminal damage	36.3%	Criminal damage	25%

4.3 Halton has identified three neighbourhood management areas, Central Widnes, Castlefields & Windmill Hill and Halton Lea. Residents in each of the three areas were asked what their main priorities were with regard to community safety, the main findings are listed below.

4.4 Residents in Central Widnes (53%) feel that youth disorder is a big problem. This is the highest in all three NM areas. A further 39% feel it is a slight problem. Reasons given are mentioned in the Children and Young People section. 70.1% of respondents feel safe in their own home but only 49.2% feel safe in their local area.

38.7% of respondents have become more afraid of crime in the last two years. The most concerning behaviours include anti-social behaviour, drunken disorder and drug related issues. Respondents see these behaviours as being priorities for actions to make the area safer.

- 4.5 Respondents generally feel safe in their local area and in their homes. However, when outdoors in Halton Lea after dark 46.0% of respondents feel very or fairly unsafe. Reasons given for this include the presence of gangs of young people, young people drinking / taking drugs and crime rates / fear of crime. 29.5% of respondents have become more afraid of crime over the last twelve months due to anti-social behaviour (77.3%), drug related issues (47.2%) and drunken disorder (42.2%). 53.5% of respondents were dissatisfied with the visible levels of police / CSOs patrolling in Halton Lea.
- 4.6 Community 'spirit' can have a big impact on how people view life on an estate and 37% of residents from Castlefields & Windmill Hill agreed that there was a "real sense of community spirit" in their area. Community spirit between immediate neighbours increased to 58%. A sense of belonging and feeling of safety are incredibly important for residents and they felt much safer inside their properties than they did out in the local area. 73% of residents felt safe in their own home, compared with just fewer than 50% of people feeling safe in the local area. When introducing the time of day variable, it was clear that residents were more likely to feel unsafe whilst in the local area in the evening. 77% of residents felt safe in the daytime compared to just 32% in the evening. Fear of crime, large gangs of youths hanging around, lack of street lighting and many dark areas on the estates were the most common reasons for the perceived lack of safety. Residents also told us that the biggest cause for concern in Castlefields & Windmill Hill is anti social behaviour (65%), including vandalism, intimidating behaviour and excessive noise. The next most significant issues were drugs related (43%) or drink related (35%).
- 4.7 Taking into account the various number of consultations around anti-social behaviour from different sectors of the community over the last couple of years, the main forms of anti-social behaviour we will deal with in this strategy revolve around two broad categories:
- Interpersonal/malicious behaviour directed against individuals or groups, which includes:
 - Intimidation/threats by neighbours
 - Hoax calls
 - Criminal damage
 - Public disorder
 - Behaviour restricting the use of shared (public) space, which includes:
 - Intimidating behaviour by groups of youths
 - Street drinking/drunkenness
 - Off road motor vehicles
 - Burnt out cars
 - Fly tipping, litter and graffiti
 - Small deliberate fires

4.8 The Local Strategic Partnership and Halton Borough Council share a common goal in their strategic vision of creating “place where people want to live” and are committed to “tackling anti-social behaviour.” To deliver this goal, Halton Borough Council and its partners have entered into a three-year Local Area Agreement with the Government to reduce the perception and reports of anti-social behaviour being an issue of concern by residents.

4.9 Halton’s Local Area Agreement has targets in place from 2007/08 until 2009/10 and helps provide a further tool for the Partnership to develop its strategic leadership role and to tackle some of the big crosscutting challenges that Halton faces. It forms the delivery plan for Halton’s sustainable community strategy focused on a relatively small number of priorities for improvement.

4.11 Some of the targets we aim to achieve are:

- To reduce the perception and reports of anti-social behaviour being an issue of concern by residents from 33.6% to 27%.
- Increase the percentage of people who feel informed about what is being done to tackle anti-social behaviour in their local area.
- Increase the number of abandoned cars removed within 24hours to 100%
- Increase the responds of removal of offensive graffiti within 24hours to 100%
- To increase the reported perception of safety after dark by at least 15%
- To increase to 25% the number of 13-19 year olds that are reached by the youth service, and who have a youth centre or project open at least one night each week within a mile of their home
- To reduce male and female hospital admissions through alcohol.
- To improve the satisfaction rate of residents on quality of the built and natural environment by 10%
- To reduce the proportion of adult and young offenders, and prolific and other priority offenders who re-offend:
- To increase number of young people and their families accessing specialist support services

5. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003

5.1 What is it?

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduces a number of measures that build on the work started by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It gives local authorities, working in co-operation with the police and key local agencies, increased power to act - and act swiftly - to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour.

5.2 Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

Misuse of Public Space

- **Drugs/substance abuse:** under-age drinking, taking drugs, sniffing substances, discarding needles
- **Drug dealing:** crack houses, dealing in communities
- **Prostitution:** soliciting, cards in phone boxes, discarded condoms
- **Kerb crawling:** loitering, pestering residents
- **Begging/rough sleeping/street drinking:** aggressive begging
- **Vehicles causing obstruction:** car repairs in the street, inconvenient parking
- **Disregard of limitations on use:** ball games, skate boarding, and alcohol restrictions.

Inconsiderate Behaviour

- **Noise:** loud music, noisy cars/ motorbikes, alarms, noise from pubs, clubs
- **Nuisance behaviour:** urinating in public, fire-setting, inappropriate use of fireworks, climbing on buildings, disturbing the peace
- **Inappropriate vehicle use:** joyriding, racing cars, off road motorcycling on footpaths
- **Rowdy behaviour:** shouting, fighting, drunken behaviour, hooliganism/loutish behaviour
- **Animal-related problems:** dangerous animals, noisy animals, and cruelty to animals.

Acts directed at people

- **Harassment:** racial, homophobic, sexual, religious etc.
- **Intimidation:** making threats, bullying, following people, offensive comments, insulting/pestering
- **Hate crime:** racial incidents, homophobic incidents
- **Verbal abuse:** using obscene and offensive language
- **Hoax calls:** nuisance calls, false calls to emergency services
- **Neighbour nuisance:** excessive noise, misuse of communal areas, disputes, and domestic incidents

Environmental damage

- **Criminal damage/vandalism**
- **Graffiti:** defacing public/private property
- **Litter/rubbish:** dropping litter/chewing gum, fly tipping, fly posting
- **Abandoned/burnt out cars**
- **Dog fouling:** not cleaning up after dogs, allowing dogs to roam
- **Run down properties:** broken/boarded up windows, unkempt gardens

6. HALTON'S PRINCIPLES TO TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

6.1 For Halton's anti- social behaviour strategy we are using the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 definition of anti-social behaviour as acting:

“In a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress or has caused or is likely to cause.”

6.2 The work of Safer Halton Partnership aims to provide a holistic approach to tackling anti-social behaviour based upon 'Prevent and Deter', 'Punish and Protect' and 'Rehabilitate', which are not always mutually exclusive. In this way, the Partnership seeks to deliver the most appropriate response to complaints of anti-social behaviour. The support of the local community is vital in reporting and identifying individuals who cause anti-social behaviour and, in some cases, providing evidence to assist the Partnership in its efforts to prevent the unacceptable behaviour from continuing. There is confidence that, given the tools that are currently available, the Safer Halton Partnership will continue to deliver positive action to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Prevent and Deter

The aim of this strand is to encourage (or if necessary deter) those who might otherwise commit acts of anti-social behaviour not to do so, by identifying the causes and putting in place positive, joined-up solutions that will prevent incidents from arising in the first instance or tackle it as soon as it arises.

Punish and Protect

Once anti-social behaviour has occurred, the focus must move to the victim, who needs confidence that they will be protected from further harm and the offenders punished. The intention is to deliver a rapid, robust and effective response using current legislative powers, targeted towards the more serious incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Rehabilitate

Finally, there needs to be concerted action to ensure that offenders do not continue to offend. This can be done by tackling the causes of offending behaviour with the offenders and their families to break the cycle of anti-social behaviour.

6.3 Prevent and Deter

6.3.1 The Halton Local Area Agreement (LAA) commits us to Prevent & Deter anti-social behaviour and thus increases pro-social behaviour. We can do this by

- Identifying those engaged in, or at risk of being engaged in, anti-social behaviour;
- Intervening at an early stage to encourage behavioural change;
- Identifying positive activity to engage or divert the focus of groups and individuals;
- Minimising anti-social behaviour by addressing the physical factors that affect it; and
- Using data to target interventions within the community.

6.3.2 There are many things that can be done to prevent & deter anti-social behaviour, such as providing positive activities for young people, family support and mediation. There is also the need for partners to show **additionality, common focus** and **alliance**.

6.3.3 **Additionality** can be achieved by engaging or educating people within our usual organisational activity. **Common Focus** ensures that our combined efforts are targeted on the same geographical area or most-at-risk group and that we are all committed to a well-organised plan of joint action. **Alliance** means that partners undertaking within their normal agenda work that can impact positively on the prevention of anti-social behaviour can expect to receive the necessary support, from other partners within the anti-social behaviour network, whether that is in terms of enforcement or of other support.

6.3.4 Prevention can be delivered in a variety of ways (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Education
- Provision of adequate facilities
- Provision of engagement activities for all people as a right of all age groups
- The promotion of good conduct e.g. volunteers young and old make to their communities. Promoting the roles of peers and mentoring
- Promotion of mutual understanding and respect, particularly through school community programmes

6.3.5 Examples of prevention could include:

- Early years interventions with families, including parenting skills
- The promotion of good citizenship
- Involving young people in decision making, including appropriate representation
- Social Education in schools
- Development of role models and positive images
- Encourage positive options through volunteering, sporting and leisure facilities

- The role of Youth and Community Workers especially in outreach settings
- Substance misuse and sex education
- Other life –skills education (for e.g. money management, employment, housing)
- Planning and design measures, including CCTV and street lighting
- Survey of “hotspots” to design out difficulties
- Maintenance of ‘street scene’ – (e.g. removal of graffiti, cutting of bushes, maintenance of derelict properties, dumping etc)
- Re-invigorating Community Watch, Business Watch, etc

6.4 Protect and Punish

6.4.1 The Enforcement section of this strategy provides information on the structure and decision making processes that can be used to take action against anti-social behaviour, which causes repeated misery and distress to its victims.

6.4.2 Enforcement will only be successful as part of a multi agency approach that aims to impact on the underlying issues and problems that may be hindering a long-term change in behaviour.

6.4.3 It is important for communities to set the standards of behaviour by which they expect people to live. If these standards are to be credible and respected, the police, local authorities and other agencies should work with local people to take swift and effective action to uphold them if they are breached. The key aim of any intervention is to:

- Protect victims, witnesses and the community and by dealing with the offender appropriately, show that the harm to the victim has been recognised by society;
- Ensure offenders change their behaviour; and
- Enable the individual to recognise the consequences of their behaviour

6.4.4 The range of remedies has been designed to be as flexible as possible and many different combinations of tools may be appropriate for different individuals, locations and families. There are a number of stages at which different levels of intervention and enforcement are appropriate, which vary according to the nature, frequency and persistence of offending.

6.4.5 At each stage it is vital that the individual concerned is made fully aware of the consequences should they refuse to change their behaviour.

6.4.6 Enforcement can be delivered in a number of ways including:

- Action by Multi Agency Meetings
- Local Child Curfews
- Enforcement of tenancy agreements in relation to standards of behaviour [demoted tenancies]
- Warning letters
- Environmental enforcement
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Test purchasing of Alcohol and robust application of licensing legislation
- Respect based legislation:
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts (ABCs)
 - Parenting orders and contracts
 - Individual Support orders [10-17yrs]
 - Premises Closure Orders [used for the Sale and Taking of Drugs]
 - Dispersal Orders
 - Housing Injunctions

6.5 Rehabilitate

- 6.5.1 The Rehabilitate section of this strategy provides information on the structure and decision making process that can be used to help develop services to change perpetrators' behaviour. This is particularly aimed at those who have already been subject to legal action (and their families) in order to try and break the cycle and re-occurrence of anti-social behaviour and to avoid further negative outcomes and exclusion.
- 6.5.2 Rehabilitate will be delivered through a targeted approach, working with a small number of identified repeat offenders. Individuals will have been through a judicial process and will be known to multiple partner agencies. Appropriate intervention will be delivered to individuals and their families, who have not modified their behaviour and who are at high risk of re-offending. Needs will be addressed on an individual basis and all agencies will work together to deliver timely and appropriate interventions. These may include training, drug or alcohol treatment, re-housing or other activities, which have the best chance of changing behaviour. Essentially partners are presenting offenders with a simple choice – the opportunity to change behaviour or face a very swift return to court should they re-offend.
- 6.5.3 It is anticipated that in some cases the rehabilitate intervention(s) may not be successful in changing behaviour the first time and some persistent offenders may go on to re-offend. This is not necessarily a failure in the process, as by continuing to work with these individuals, we would hope to be able to reduce their re-offending and lessen its severity and therefore its impact on others. However where re-offending continues, then all partners must work together to issue appropriate enforcement action and ensure a swift return to court. This should not only make rehabilitation a yet more attractive option next time round for repeat offenders, but will also help protect the community that suffers from repeat offending behaviour.
- 6.5.4 Rehabilitate is undoubtedly the most difficult part of the process, but by targeting partner resources effectively both in terms of a carrot and stick approach, then it is hoped that a significant improvement can be made to the lives of offenders and their families and more importantly for the local community.
- 6.5.5 Rehabilitate can be delivered in a number of ways including:
- Links with the Prolific and Other Priority Offenders scheme (PPO)
 - Support to those at risk of continuing to offend, social exclusion or in need of specific services (Housing Floating support, Drug Intervention Programme, Aftercare)
 - Providing appropriate specialised support to help maintain a sustainable suitable accommodation
 - Involvement of the community where appropriate
 - Links to Adult Services- mental health
 - Promotion of responsible behaviour through education, advice and support
 - By improving support and parenting skills where appropriate for parents and carers

7. WHAT PARTNERS WILL DO TO TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

7.1 The partners involved in the development of the Anti-Social Behaviour strategy document are numerous and diverse. Other than Cheshire Constabulary and Halton Borough Council as a whole, there are departments within Halton Borough Council, agencies and interested parties involved in the preparation of the strategy. These include Housing, Fire Service, Youth Offending Team, Environmental Services, Waste Management, Victim Support and Voluntary Agencies.

7.2 Halton Borough Council will:

Halton Borough Council believes that residents are entitled to live in neighbourhoods where they feel good about themselves and their communities. In order to achieve this, we strive to work in partnership with others to reduce the level of crime, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment, and operate effective procedures to support victims and to take action against those who cause problems for their neighbours.

Our aim is 'to reduce and eradicate anti-social behaviour committed by children, young people and adults throughout Halton, using a combination of methods including prevention, early intervention, rehabilitation, education and enforcement.'

7.3 Halton Neighbourhood Management Partnership will:

The issue of anti-social behaviour was raised as one of the major concerns by the residents of each of the three neighbourhood management pilot areas of central Widnes, Halton Lea and Castlefields & Windmill Hill during a survey earlier this year. Also, the baseline data collated for the three pilot neighbourhoods has shown these communities suffer higher levels of anti-social behaviour than do most other parts of Halton.

Therefore, tackling anti-social behaviour will be one of the key priorities over the coming years of the neighbourhood management partnerships. The Halton Anti-social Behaviour Strategy will be a key tool that will make a contribution to achieving this.

At the neighbourhood level the neighbourhood partnerships' contribution will be to:

- Agree challenging but realistic targets to reduce anti-social behaviour in the pilot neighbourhoods and 'close the gap' with the rest of Halton.
- Help residents and service providers to develop ways to deter, prevent and deal with anti-social behaviour that deliver results in their neighbourhoods.

- Support new ways of working across organisational and sectional boundaries, sharing 'what works' and disseminating good practice to tackle anti-social behaviour in all our communities and neighbourhoods.

7.4 Halton Voluntary Action will:

Use their membership of Voluntary and Community groups in Halton to recognize the impact of anti-social behaviour on our neighbourhoods and is in full support of any initiative that tries to drive down cases of anti-social behaviour.

Halton Voluntary Action will:

- Continue to support and assist partnership agencies with joined up working strategies.
- Continue to facilitate access to the sector for partners who wish to consult and work with the voluntary and community groups in Halton.
- Seek and develop Voluntary and community intervention and diversionary activities.
- Seek and develop new opportunities in order to expand partnership working in relation to anti-social behaviour.
- Develop the role and understanding of the voluntary and community sector in relation to anti-social behaviour, linked to prevention-based activities.
- Be pro-active in sharing data relating to incidents of anti social behaviour monitored within the sector

7.5 Youth Service

The Youth Service fully supports the commitment to reduce crime and disorder in the Borough. Staff is committed to working across all agency boundaries to implement the key objectives of the Prevent and Deter strand of the Anti-Social Behaviour strategy. The Youth Service recognises its significant role in making Halton a safer place to live and work.

A fundamental principle in delivering Anti-Social Behaviour objectives is clear and accountable working partnerships. The Youth Service will work in partnership with the Safer Halton Partnership including the Cheshire Constabulary as we recognise our pivotal role in the area of youth crime reduction and anti-social behaviour.

Through planned programmes of youth work, the service offers the following products and services;

- **Centres & Projects** – offering personal, social, and health opportunities through exciting activities and events that are open to all young people within one mile of their home
- **Special groups** – where we target the service especially for disadvantaged and socially excluded young people. E.g. young carers, disabled young people, young people who are NEET.

- **Young people's VOICE and decision making** – through the UK Youth Parliament, Borough Youth Forum and Area Youth Forums as well as in every youth club and project. We are now helping the forum set up a Halton Youth Bank to roll out the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Fund.
- **Duke of Edinburgh Award** – in schools, colleges, and Youth Service provision which includes work with disadvantaged groups & volunteering opportunities for all
- **Information, Advice & Advocacy** – in Youth Information Centres, and through the Youth Service Youth Info CD ROM, which is a helpful resource for parents as well as young people. There is a directory of up to date "Places to Go & Things to Do" in these YAPs (Youth Access Points in all Youth Service drop-in centres and projects). There will be a YAP within a mile of every young persons home.
- **Street Work** – where young people "hang out" on the streets.
- **Community Cohesion projects** – helping young people and adults to work together to improve their community and to develop more community based youth activity

7.6 Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service will:

Recognise that some instances of anti-social behaviour may be related to fire. In an effort to drive down cases of anti-social behaviour, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service will:

- Continue to support and assist partnership agencies with joined up working strategies.
- Seek and develop youth intervention and diversionary activities.
- Seek and develop new opportunities in order to expand partnership working in relation to anti-social behaviour.
- Develop the role and understanding of fire fighters in relation to anti-social behaviour, linked to prevention-based activities.
- Be pro-active in sharing data relating to incidents of anti-social behaviour.

7.7 Halton and Warrington Youth Offending Team will:

The Youth Offending Team is committed to promoting positive behaviour and the principle that individuals are responsible for their own actions and that consequences of behaviour, positive and negative, will impact directly on the individuals concerned.

- Offer assistance, guidance and controls to young people aged 10 – 17 years who are under the supervision of the Organisation.
- Promote intervention, such as the Youth Inclusion and Support Panel, which shall seek to address poor behaviour at the earliest point of concerns being identified by the YOT and partner agencies.
- Encourage intervention proven to reduce the risk of criminal behaviours
- Ensure that our most intensive and restrictive interventions are targeted at those young people who are most criminally active.

The Youth Offending Team works with young people aged 10 – 17 who have been in contact with the Criminal Justice System through their anti-social or criminal behaviour. The YOT also works with the victims of such behaviours in attempts to 'repair' the damage of such actions whilst ensuring personal responsibility for poor behaviours are considered.

The Youth Offending Team works to promote respect for individuals and will take all enforcement actions within it's authority should young people on Court Orders not respond positively to interventions designed to assist them to refrain from poor behaviour.

7.8 Cheshire Constabulary will:

Recognise the importance of addressing anti-social behaviour in all its manifestations. We recognise that many issues of anti-social behaviour are dealt with on a statutory basis by its partner agencies such as Trading Standards and Environmental Services and have undertaken to support these partner agencies by working with them and sharing relevant information where appropriate.

Cheshire Constabulary is committed to resource agreed interventions such as ABCs, ASBOs and CRASBOs. We are also committed to effectively sharing information on reported anti-social behaviour with partner agencies and working with them at all levels to address anti-social behaviour locally.

Halton Neighbourhood Policing Units are responsible for resourcing local police activity to address anti-social behaviour and will adopt a multi agency problem solving approach. Where issues require prioritizing due to demands on resources, priority will be given to those areas where the information we have collected with our partners shows that the problems are greatest, as well as taking into account the need for public reassurance and community cohesion.

7.9 Registered Social Landlords will:

- Investigate all initial complaints of ASB within 24 hours if an emergency or 7 days for non emergency cases
- Work with other agencies on an individual and multi-agency basis to tackle ASB
- Support witnesses and complainants in their homes by maintaining regular contact and offering additional security measures as appropriate
- Work with other agencies to support perpetrators in modifying their behaviour to enable them to maintain their tenancy or that of their host.
- Take legal action as appropriate to stop ASB including injunctions demotions ASBOs and possession action
- Exchange information with all relevant agencies to limit and prevent ASB

- Commit to working in partnership with the Police Service and the community to tackle ASB and restore confidence to the community
- Implement the Respect Action plan and meet the standards of The Housing Management Respect standard
- Work with our customers to develop an environmental improvement programme giving appropriate priority for security measures and action to design out crime and ASB
- Work with other agencies to develop preventative services and activities to promote positive behaviour for all members of the local community
- Use its communication and participation strategies to engage with hard to reach groups including young people
- To maintain the environment around estates that is under its control in a clean and pleasant condition

7.10 Cheshire Probation Service

Cheshire Probation Area- (Halton) works with offenders sentenced by the Courts and during and following release from imprisonment to:

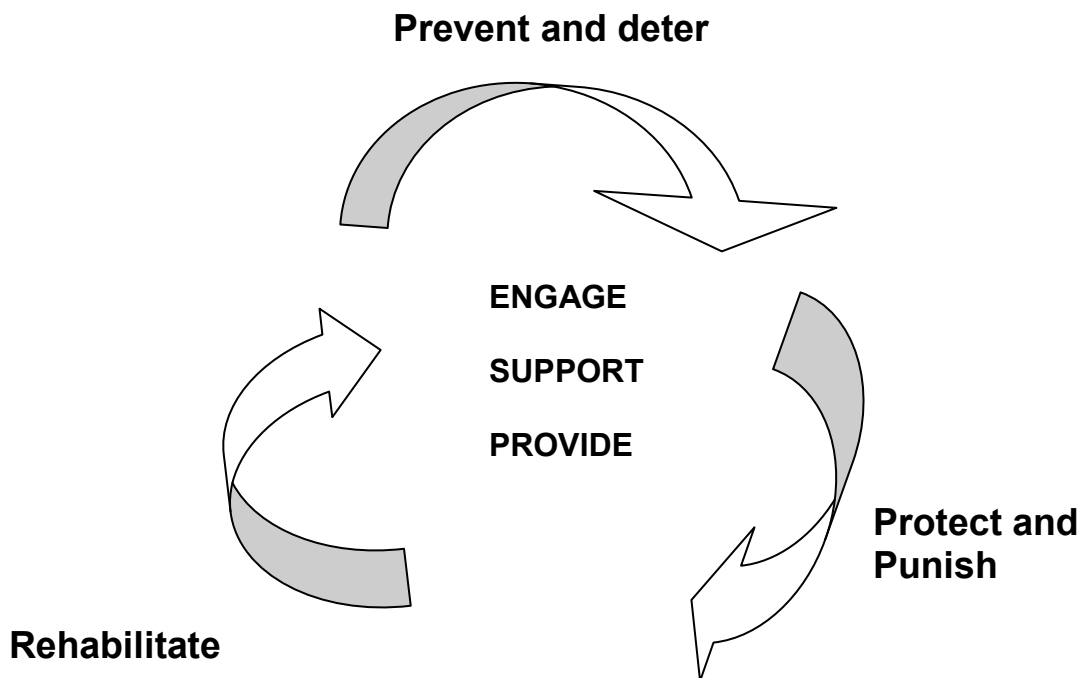
- Protect the public from harm
- Rehabilitate offenders and re-integrate them back into the community
- Reduce re-offending and its impact on the community
- Enforce Court Orders to ensure offenders are held to account
- Ensure the concerns of victims are taken into account

We achieve these objectives through some of the following means:

- Working closely in Halton with statutory, voluntary and other agencies to achieve these goals.
- Supervising offenders according to strict national standards and addressing their offending and risks through a wide range of other individual interventions
- Contacting victims of violent or sexual offending where the offender has received 12 months imprisonment or more
- Close involvement and participation with the Prolific and Priority Offender Scheme through a PPO Probation Officer and operational management of the scheme.
- Joint charring of local MAPPA with the police to manage the risks of those presenting the highest risk of harm to the local community.

8. CO-ORDINATING THE STRATEGY

- 8.1 An essential feature of the strategy is the emphasis on multi agency working, close co-operation and involvement with a range of other local groups and organisations. In order to pursue the options available, joint working is an integral part of the approach taken. In Halton we have a structure that incorporates anti-social behaviour through the Current and Repeat Crime Group, which over sees the work taken place by the Multi Agency Meetings and Tasking and Co-ordination process (See Appendix A). It is the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator's role to co-ordinate the efforts of the community and the borough partners within the Multi Agency Meetings and Tasking and Co-ordination process to provide a structured and transparent response to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- 8.2 This model ensures organisations, services and policy makers take account of the way their decisions affect people and this agenda when planning services or making decisions. It recognises that the aim of all aspects of the Anti-Social Behaviour strategy is to move individuals into the Engage/Provide/Support area where we all positively co-exist.



8.3 Community involvement

Individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities are encouraged to become involved in the development of a solution to the problem of anti-social behaviour. Action taken by the statutory and voluntary agencies will play a major part in controlling and preventing instances of anti-social behaviour. Communities, victims and witnesses also have a critical role to play by:

- Empowering and enabling individuals and communities to challenge instances of ASB when it happens.
- Informing people about what may or may not be anti-social behaviour, what they can do about it and what we can do as well.
- Reporting instances of unresolved anti-social behaviour to the council, police and other relevant agencies.
- Observing and recording full details of all incidents of anti-social behaviour and supplying this information to the agencies concerned.
- Making statements and appearing in court to give evidence if required to do so.

In some cases it will be difficult for agencies to pursue and sustain effective action without the involvement, support and co-operation of individuals or groups within the local community.

8.4 Victim and Witness Support

Witnesses need to be supported when agreeing to give evidence against those accused of anti-social behaviour. There is a need to ensure that witnesses do not suffer and are supported and protected when they come forward to make a complaint. Key actions to support this include:

- Use of officers as witnesses with special reference to collection of evidence in support of concerns.
- Responding immediately and effectively to suggested attempts at intimidation whether made directly or indirectly.
- Every effort will be taken to limit any intimidation, reprisals and perceived fear of violence of those who come forward to testify in court.
- We will look at the best ways in which a witness can be supported and continue to develop this support.
- Special measures available for victims and witnesses through the court witness service.

Problems with anti-social behaviour can begin to be resolved only when the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour get the message that their community will not tolerate their behaviour and that a system is in place that punishes the guilty quickly and decisively.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Anti-Social Behaviour Problem Solving Groups

Multi Agency Meeting

The function of the MAM is to make recommendations and decisions on approaches to be adopted in cases presented by partner agencies. The role of the MAM group is to create a plan of action to tackle ASB that will normally include a range of the activities stated below as a response, emphasising the need for joint working and multi-agency action.

Front line officers from all partner agencies will attend the MAM to discuss individual cases and situations. In addition the group will:

- Map and target hotspot areas
- Hold individual case conferences to decide upon appropriate action
- Consider the nature and extent of problems
- Ascertain the views and interests of the agencies and stakeholders Concerned
- Agree to objectives
- Evaluate options
- Decide upon a course of action to be followed, as well as the part each agency will play
- Agree to a timetable and mechanism for feedback to any complaints
- Agree to a timetable to review action.

Core membership of the multi agency meeting is:

- Halton Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator
- Halton Borough Council Social Services
- Youth Offending Team Manager (if under 17)
- Halton Borough Youth Services
- Cheshire Police Service
- Registered Social Landlord representatives
- National Probation Service
- POPO officer
- Education
- Floating Support Agencies
- Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service

(Other agency representatives, for example, Mental Health, Mediation, Substance Misuse Services will be invited as appropriate in individual cases.)

Tasking and Co-ordination

Tasking & Co-ordination is the process by which the police analyse current crime trends and then set out plans to tackle problem areas. The Northern Area holds Tasking & Co-ordination meetings on a fortnightly basis to discuss crime across Halton and Warrington. It was decided that Halton needed its own Tasking & Co-ordination meeting to address the lower level Partnership issues that are of concern to the local communities across the borough. The issues discussed are then addressed through a multi-agency partnership approach.

The group has discussed and addressed issues of anti-social behaviour, youth nuisance and lower level crime within the local community. The intelligence being used by the group to inform its decisions is coming from the Northern Area Intelligence Unit, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and individual agencies bringing information to the meetings. A standard report form has been devised to allow each agency to bring issues to the meeting.

Issues discussed at each meeting include:

- Burglary
- Vehicle Crime
- Violent Crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Criminal Damage
- Community Priorities

APPENDIX B - RESPECT LEGISLATION 2006

Anti- Social Behaviour Orders

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are civil orders that protect the public from behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress. Orders can be made on anyone aged 10 years or over who has displayed anti-social behaviour in the previous six months.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

An acceptable behaviour contract (ABCs) is a non-legally binding written contract between one or one agency and an individual outlining what the perpetrator should or should not do.

Parenting Orders

Parenting orders can be made by a criminal court, family court or magistrates' court, acting under civil jurisdiction when there has been a problem with a young person's behaviour.

Parenting Contracts

Parenting contracts are voluntary agreements made between local agencies and the individual parent(s). They can be used alongside ABCs or interventions and can set out what parents will do to address the anti-social behaviour of a child or children for whom they are responsible.

Individual Support Orders (for 10-17 year olds)

Individual support orders (ISOs) can be attached to an ASBO on a young person and contain positive obligations which are designed to tackle the underlying causes of a young person's anti-social behaviour.

Community Agreements

Community agreements are settlements reached between the residents of a community to resolve disputes. They are put in writing and each household or individual has a copy. The agreement, which is aimed at tackling the issues that affect people's quality of life, is based on the wishes of the majority and clearly states how those involved would like life to be within their community.

Crack House Closure Orders

A senior police officer can issue a closure notice on premises that they have reason to believe are being used for the production, supply or use of Class A drugs and are causing serious nuisance or disorder.

Dispersal of Groups

A senior police officer can designate an area where there is persistent anti-social behaviour and a problem with groups causing intimidation to be a dispersal area. The local authority must also agree to the designation of the area.

Anti- Social Behaviour Injunctions

An injunction is a civil order obtained from the county court that can control and remedy anti-social behaviour. An injunction made by the court can compel an adult over the age of 18 to do something and/or prevent a particular action or behaviour.

Demotion Orders

Demotion orders allow landlords to apply to the courts to reduce the security of tenure for tenants and can be precursor to possession. Demotion orders remove a number of tenancy rights, including the right to buy and the right to exchange.

Intervention Orders (for drug misusers over 18yrs)

Intervention order (IO) are civil orders to be used alongside ASBOs. The IOs require that the individual comply with positive conditions (e.g. treatment) that tackle their anti-social behaviour through the treatment of their drugs misuse.

APPENDIX C - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003

The following information provides a comprehensive guide to how the ASB Act 2003 impacts on Council's and Registered Social Landlords. The following points detail the changes:

Premises where drugs are used unlawfully

From 20th January 2004 the Police have the powers to close down any premises that they believe to have been used for supply, use or production of Class A drugs and where there is serious nuisance/disorder. The Superintendent or above must issue a Closure Notice and the Local Authority must have been consulted, and reasonable steps must have been taken to establish who lives at the property and is responsible for the property. The property can be closed for up to 48 hrs, and in that time the Magistrates Court must decide whether to close the premises for up to 3 months, if the conditions set out above are made out (this can be extended to 6 months). For the Breach of a Closure Notice a fine of up to £5000 and/or a 6 months prison sentence can be imposed. The Court must consider the effect the behaviour is having, and is likely to have on others and the effect if the conduct is repeated. This is an attempt to direct the Judges attention not just to the inconvenience of eviction and personal circumstances of the tenant and their family but also the position of witnesses and the wider community who have had to live with the ASB for some time.

Injunctions

The old S152 and S153 are being completely revoked and replaced by S153 A-E. RSL's and LAs will all have access to the same powers.

S153A – You can get a general ASB injunction against anyone whether a tenant or not. Conduct, which is capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance and which affects the Landlords housing management function, directly or indirectly.

S153B – There is a new injunction specifically to deal with unlawful use of a property. This permits social landlords to take out an injunction to restrain a tenant or visitor from using or threatening to use accommodation for an unlawful purpose.

S153C – This gives the Court a specific power to exclude a person from entering, or being in any area specified in an injunction, and allows a power of arrest to be attached if there has been:

- The use or threatened use of violence, OR
- There is a risk of significant harm

S153D – This allows Social Landlords to take out a power of arrest as part of an injunction to stop breach of Tenancy Agreement. This can be against a tenant in respect of their conduct, or the behaviour of a resident or visitor to their Tenancy that they can control AND there is actual, or the threat of violence, or a risk of significant harm.

S153E – confirms injunction provisions:

- Orders should last for a specific time
- A person can be excluded from their normal place of residence
- Can be granted on an emergency basis if just and convenient.

Power of arrest and exclusion orders can be attached to one of the Injunctions. The exclusion order can exclude the person from a specified area or property, including their own home, and this includes non-tenants. Where the incidents take place is irrelevant – what matters now is whether the conduct affects the Landlord's Housing Management Function and who it is to (there are a few exclusions).

Injunctions now have a power of arrest attached where there has been a use or threat of violence or a significant risk of harm. Under the old S152/153 both violence and significant risk of harm was required.

Demoted Tenancies

Under S15 of ASB Act we can ask the County Court to make a demotion order in respect of a secure Tenancy. This is where the tenant or a person residing in or visiting the property has:

- Engaged in or threatened to engage in conduct to which S153a and B applies AND:
- It is reasonable to make an order.

This order lasts for 1 year but would be extended if possession proceedings were commenced during that time. On a claim for possession, provided the Court is satisfied that the Landlord has served the Notice in the correct way, the Court **MUST** grant a possession order. Any review should also have been carried out properly and the decision of the Review must be communicated to the tenant **BEFORE** the date in the Notice given for when possession proceedings can be issued by. Some believe the demoted tenancy is an unsatisfactory "half-way house" between an immediate or a suspended possession order. Others feel a Court would be more likely to make a demotion order than give immediate possession. If problems persist the Court **MUST** give Possession, an attractive proposition to most social landlords compared to allowing the Court discretion to decide on possession.

Possession Proceedings

Under Ground 2 of Housing Act 1985 the Court must have regard to:

- The effect of the nuisance of people in the local neighbourhood or locality
- The continuing effect of that behaviour
- The effect of repeated nuisance on people in the locality

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

Enacted by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, amended by Police Reform Act 2002, ASBO's enable certain bodies to take out an order where:

- A defendant aged 10+ has acted in an anti-social manner (a manner that

causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm of distress to persons not of the same household as himself, AND

- An order is necessary to prevent further acts of ASB.

An ASBO allows the Court to make an order stopping the offender from engaging in any kind of conduct linked to the offending behaviour. Terms can include curfews and exclusion zones and terms can be individually tailored for specific cases. Breaching an ASBO is an arrestable offence, the maximum sentence being 5 years. Youths aged between 10 and 11 years of age can receive a community penalty, and individuals aged between 12-17 can receive a detention or training order. Councils can now bring proceedings for ASBO's. For ASBO's on under 16's the Court must make a parenting order so that the relevant conditions of the order are fulfilled.

Dispersal of Groups

Part 4 of ASB Act allows Police to disperse groups of 2 or more people where a Police Officer has reasonable grounds to believe:

- Any member of the public has been intimidated, harassed or distressed because of the conduct in public places in the past AND
- The ASB is a significant and persistent problem in the locality.

They can then not return for up to 24 hours. A suspected breach carries a power of arrest and a criminal penalty of a fine and up to 3 months in prison.

Firearms

Part 5 of ASB Act introduces changes to 1968 Firearms Act:

- It will be a criminal offence to carry an air weapon or imitation firearm in a public place without lawful authority.
- A young person may only own an air weapon when 17 years old
- It is an offence to give an air weapon to anyone under 17 years old
- Certain weapons with self contained gas cartridges systems have now been banned.

Sale of Aerosol Paint

It is an offence to sell the above to anyone under 16 yrs old.

Parental Responsibilities

- Local Education Authorities can apply for free standing parenting orders
- YOTs can also do this for parents of children who have engaged in or are likely to engage in criminal or ASB.
- Both LEA's and YOT's can enter into a parenting contract for parents of excluded children displaying criminal or anti-social conduct. This is a voluntary agreement for parents to sign.
- Parenting contracts have always been around, the new Act does not enforce them just highlights their availability.
- Fixed penalty notices to parents of truanting children.

Penalty Notices for Graffiti & Fly Posting

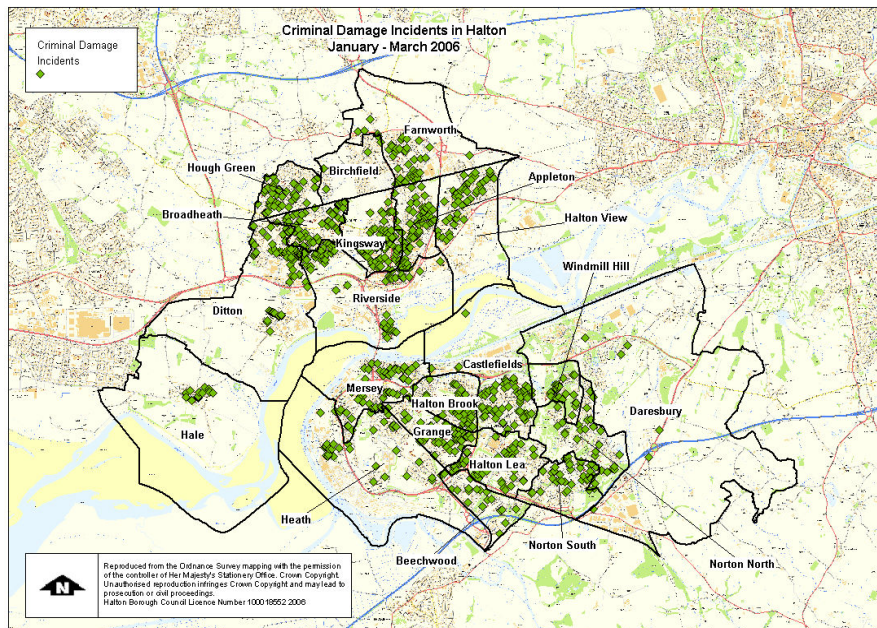
Local Authority Officers can issue fixed penalty notices on people committing acts of graffiti or unlawful fly posting.

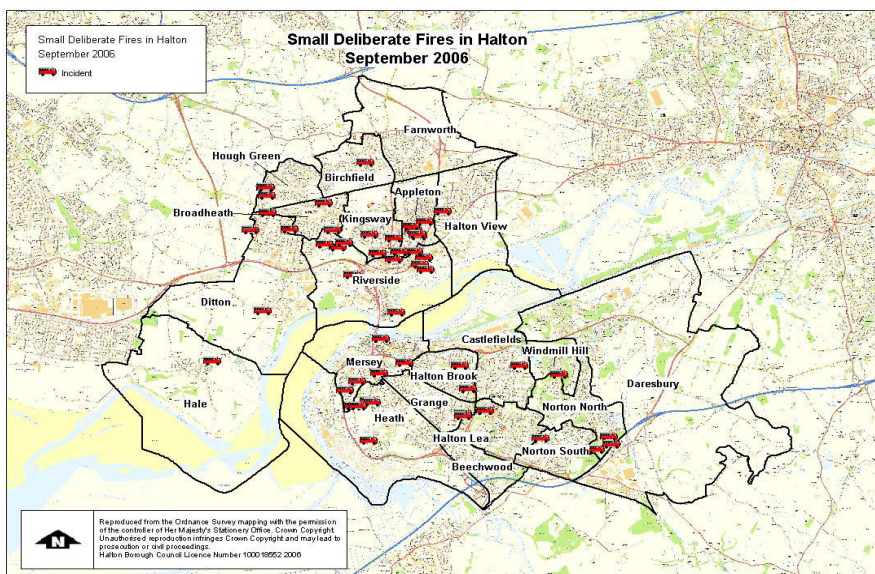
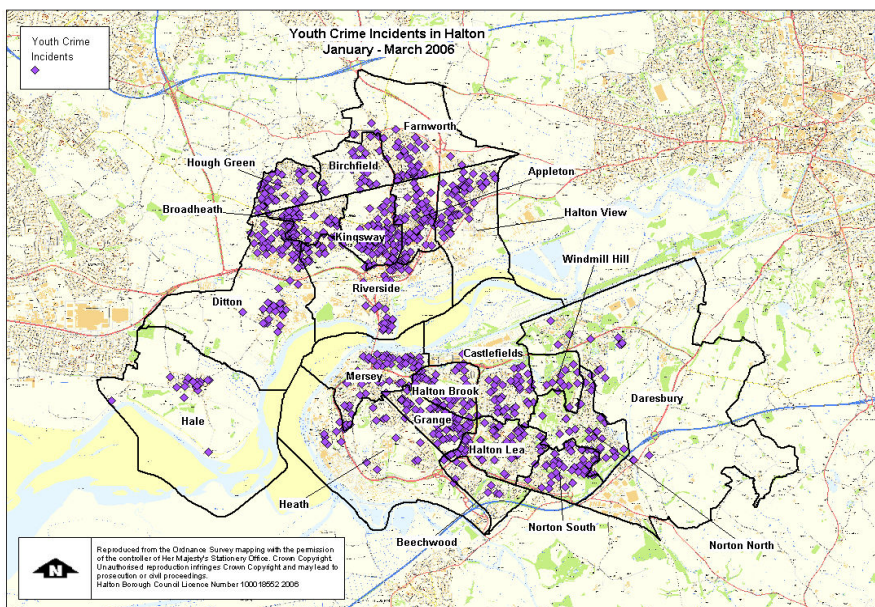
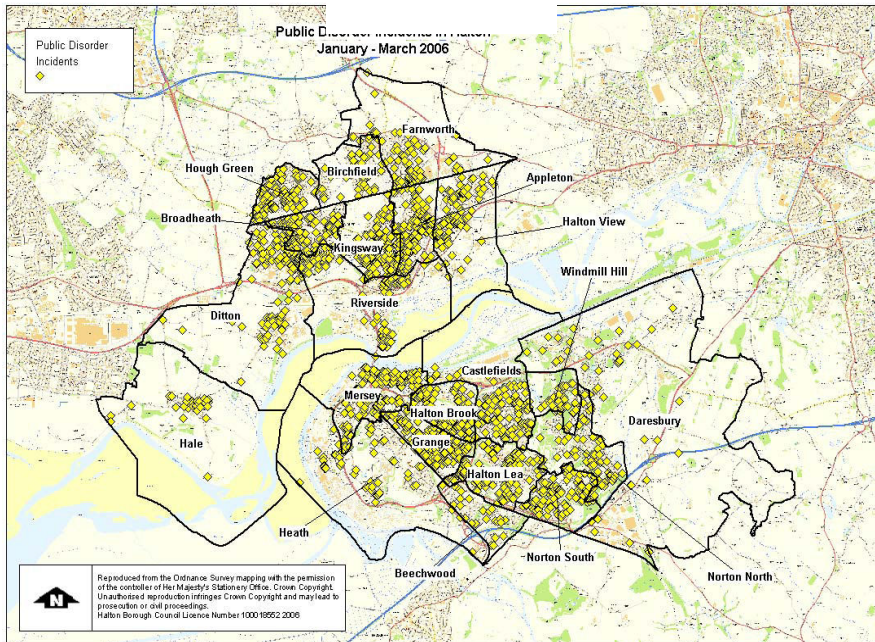
High Hedges (Oct 2004)

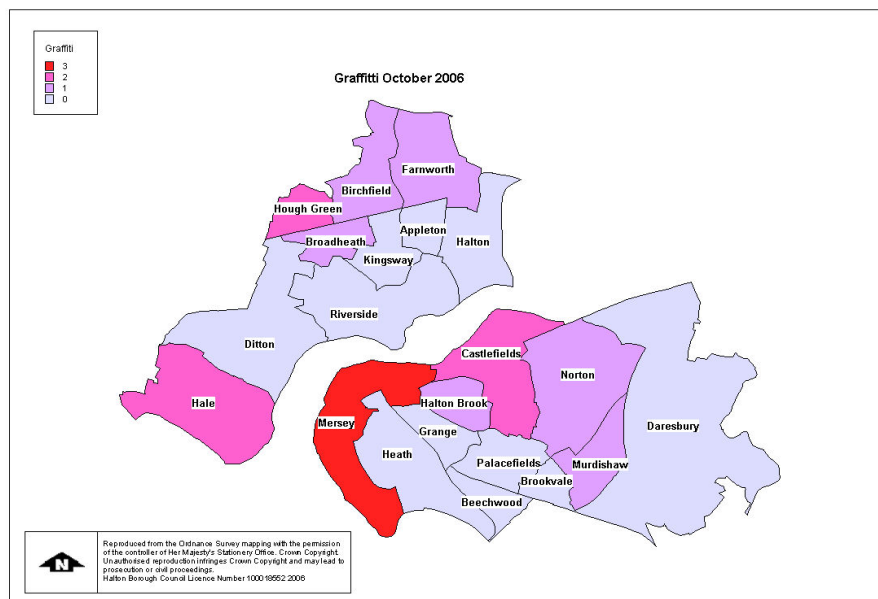
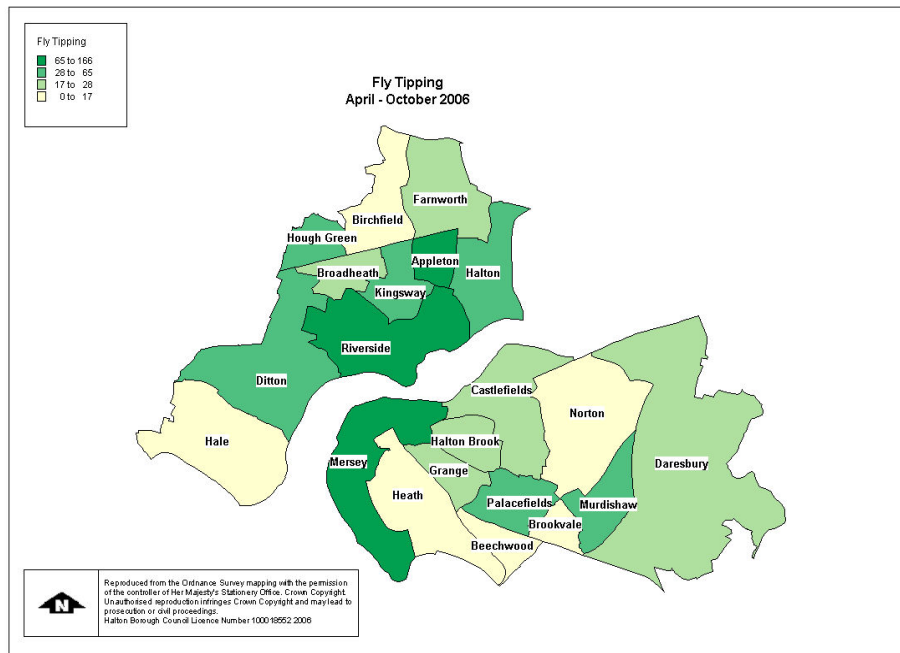
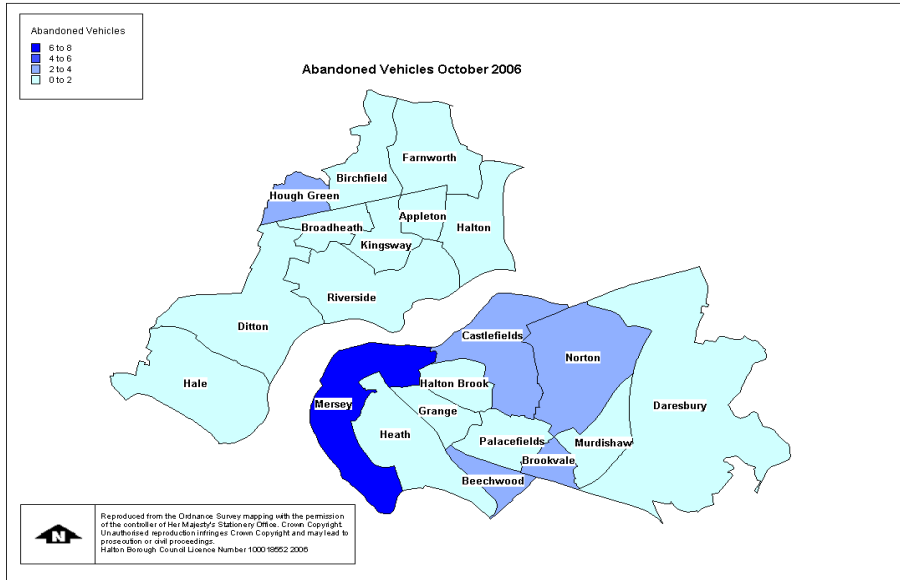
Local Authorities will have a power to deal with complaints about high hedges adversely affecting a neighbour's enjoyment of their property. If other steps have failed to resolve the issue and the complaint is made out, the LA can serve a remedial notice on the owner/occupier of the hedge, setting out what is required to rectify the complaint. Failure to comply is a criminal offence.

APPENDIX D – DATA MAPS

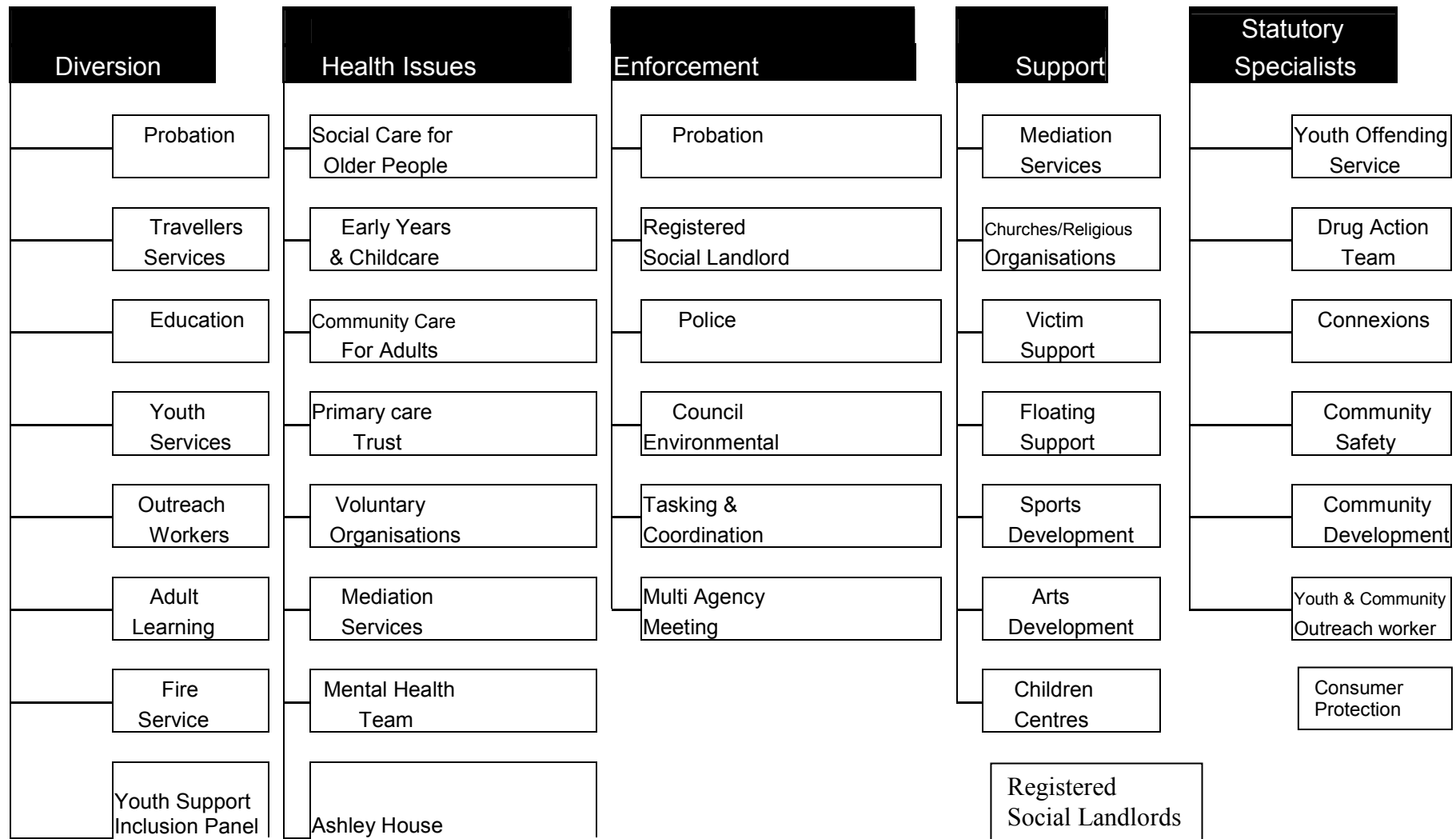
The following seven maps use data from 2006 that show criminal damage, public disorder, youth crime, small fires, abandoned cars, fly tipping and graffiti. The data has been collected from the Halton police, Halton Fire service and Halton Borough Council environmental services.







How Agencies can get involved to combat Anti Social Behaviour (Agencies are often involved in more than one strand)



APPENDIX F ACTION PLANS

The Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator Clare Myring and the Safer Halton Partnership Inspector Andy Ross will be performance monitoring the action plans on a quarterly basis and reporting the information into the Safer Halton Partnership.

These action plans are not set in concrete. It is the first time that the Safer Halton Partnership has sought to produce a document of this kind. We are not only fully committed to much closer working on community safety issues across the borough but to closer working with our local partners too in a shared and joint endeavour. So over the coming months, at both a strategic and operational level, we want to discuss the content of the action plans fully with all those who have a part to play in implementing it. We will reflect their views in a revised version, which we intend to publish in a year's time.

KEY AREAS

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
1.1 Develop intelligence led area profiles to identify hot spots, highlight emerging problems and target preventative measures	Existing resources from Cheshire Constabulary Safer Halton Partnership	Hotspots and problems identified via the ASB Multi Agency Meeting and Tasking & Co-ordination. Number of hotspots identified and number successful interventions issued within one month	National Community Safety Plan LAA HBC Community Strategy	Bi monthly reports to Current & Repeat Crime Strategic Group 3 successful interventions within 12 months. Consultation to be carried out in each case	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Inspector Andy Ross Safer Halton Partnership
1.2 Victims of ASB receive appropriate support by referral to identified support agencies e.g. mediation.	Existing resources from Registered Social landlords	Increase appropriate support for victims of ASB by receiving referrals from ASB Co-ordinator via the MAM. Number of cases referred and resolved from mediation Number of cases referred to victim support services	National Community Safety Plan Housing Strategy	Record number of cases referred to both agencies	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Registered Social Landlords
1.3 To ensure we engage with our partners and communities to identify specific hotspots for anti social behaviour and take remedial action to tackle them and monitor outcomes	Existing resources form Cheshire Constabulary Safer Halton Partnership	Set-up Tasking & Co-ordination Solving groups to make long term changes to tackle ASB in particular geographical areas Qualitative Community Satisfaction surveys will also be carried out in targeted area after intervention has been completed. Links with Ranger Service – 3 year pilot for 6 PCSO in parks	National Community Safety Plan LAA HBC Community Strategy Sport and Leisure Plan	Template of survey to be complete by May 07 Performance Monitoring Framework for PCSOs	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Inspector Andy Ross Safer Halton Partnership Tim Booth HBC Parks & Countryside

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
1.4 Provide crime prevention surveys in selected hot spot areas using principles of 'Secured by Design' to 'design out' crime and antisocial behaviour	Cheshire Constabulary Fund and deliver	To design out opportunities for crime and ASB in hot spot areas. Number of surveys complete Number of repeat victims Mapping of Alley gates within the borough complete by June 07	National Community Safety Plan	Record number of surveys complete and number of visits Baseline figures to be complete by June 07	Phil Buckley Crime Prevention Officer Current and Repeat Crime Co-ordinator
1.5 To reduce alcohol related to ASB There are several key tasks that are related to this point and these can be found in Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy	Safer Halton Partnership Cheshire Constabulary Halton & St.Helens PCT	Currently being developed	Halton Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy National Community Safety Plan Local Policing Plan Children and Young People's Plan Choosing Health	Currently being developed Quarterly performance monitoring will be in place by summer 07	Sarah Ashcroft Alcohol Intervention Officer Clare Myring Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator Jenny Owen Preventative Services Commissioning Manager Insp. Hill / Insp. Bailey Cheshire Constabulary Linda Smallthwaite Trading Standards Isabelle McFadden Halton & St. Helen's PCT
1.6 Ensure new and existing tenants are given adequate advice and information on ASB procedures and other good neighbour protocols.	Registered Social Landlords Existing resources	Emphasise importance of being a good neighbour at tenancy sign up. Reduction in ASB complaints Reduction in movement of ASB tenants	Housing Strategy Homelessness Strategy	Data to be collected quarterly broken down by ward Baseline data July 07	Dwayne Johnson Housing Partnership Group Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
1.7 Support and promote safe methods of using public transport	Halton Borough Council	Promote the use of public transport for moving about Halton Borough Council Promote safety messages particularly around vulnerable individuals. Ensure PCSOs actively use Public transport	Halton Borough Council Transport Plan	Record safety messages used annually Record number of journeys made by PCSOs	David Hall Transport Halton Borough Council Cheshire Constabulary
1.8 Work in partnership to involve local tenants & residents groups in the problem solving process.	Registered Social Landlords Existing resources	Number of community initiatives developed via Tenants & Residents groups Links to private landlord accreditation scheme	Housing Strategy Homelessness Strategy	Record Initiatives via Community Development Team Introduce MAM protocol by June 07	Dwayne Johnson Housing Partnership Group HBC Community Development Team Lucy Hardcastle Halton Borough Council
1.9 To provide support for victims of race/hate ASB incidents	Cheshire Constabulary Existing resources	Number of incidents reported To provide a prompt and effective service for victims of race/hate ASB incidents Results from Customer Satisfaction Survey Information sharing protocols established	National Community Safety Plan HBC Community Plan Race Qualities Strategies	Record and monitor number of incidents Quarterly reports from Race Hate Panel	Sergeant Jackie May Diversity Inspector Andy Ross Safer Halton Partnership

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
1.10 To proactively support positive action against perpetrators of domestic abuse where ASB is involved.	Funding from Domestic Abuse Budget	Increase the number of incidents of domestic abuse, which result in sanctioned detections 100% of referrals were domestic abuse is known from the ASB MAM to the Relationship Centre	Domestic Abuse Strategy National Community Safety Plan	Data collected quarterly Quarterly reports to Safer Halton Partnership	Cheshire Constabulary The Relationship Centre
1.11 To reduce ASB crime and substance misuse amongst adults referred to Ashley House for treatment and support	DAAT Pool Treatment Budget	100% of referrals were substance misuse is known from the ASB MAM to Ashley House Information sharing protocols established	DAAT Treatment Plan National Community Safety Plan	Record number of referrals made	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator

PREVENT AND DETER					
Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
ENVIRONMENTAL 2.1 To reduce the incidence of graffiti across Halton and improve feelings of safety	Halton Borough Council Safer Halton Partnership Existing resources ASB NRF Funding 07/08	Increase by 5% people's perceptions who say they feel safe after dark from baseline for 2005/06 8% increase in the number of offensive graffiti incidents removed from baseline from 2005/06 Promote the reporting of graffiti through the 'Name that Tag' Campaign and engage with young people, general public and Trading Standards in a programme of detection, enforcement, prevention and education.	National Community Safety Plan Waste Management Plan Children and Young Persons Plan	Annual Survey Quarterly reports to the Safer Halton Partnership Action Plan to be complete by May 07	CDPR Analyst Brian Leacy Environmental Services Inspector Richard Hill Runcorn NPU Jane Cummins School Liaison Officer Linda Smallthwaite Consumer Protection Dave Williams Youth Service
2.2 Provide quick response to local environmental problems in hot spot areas caused by vandalism littering rubbish dumping etc	Halton Borough Council and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Existing resources	Reduction in litter and detritus year on year Reduce recorded incidents of fly tipping by 7% from 2100 to 1890 by 07-08 (LPSA2) Reduce small deliberate fires by 10%	Waste Management Plan LAA Cheshire Fire Service Plan	Quarterly performance monitoring via Engagement and Liveability	Brian Leacy Environmental Services Alan Briggs Fire & Rescue Service Andy Williams Community & Liveability Co-ordinator

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
2.3 To reduce the number of abandoned or untaxed vehicles across Halton	Operation Car Clear Halton Borough Council	15% increase in the number of abandoned vehicles removed Reduce deliberate vehicle fires by 5% (Baseline 273)	Waste Management Plan HBC Community Plan	Quarterly performance monitoring reports from Engagement & Liveability	Brian Leacy Environmental Services Alan Briggs Fire & Rescue Service
2.4 To take effective action against environmental crimes recorded by CCTV	Environmental CCTV cameras Halton Borough Council Covert CCTV Community Safety	Reduction in reports from HBC of environmental ASB Provide covert CCTV cameras for targeted deployment against environmental crimes. Increase number of FPN served or successful prosecutions based on camera evidence and intelligence.	Waste Management Plan HBC Community Plan	Quarterly performance monitoring reports from Engagement & Liveability Training for officers on FPN complete by September 07	Brian Leacy Waste Management Simon Walker Enforcement Officer Inspector Richard Hill Runcorn NPU Inspector Nick Bailey Widnes NPU
GENERAL 2.5 To improve knowledge and information sharing for professionals and the wider communities in dealing effectively with anti-social behaviour crime and disorder.	Safer Halton Partnership to fund event	ASB Consultation Event Number of attendees Event evaluation shows that attendees are better informed about ASB, prevention and enforcement in Halton. Service gaps are highlighted and the CDRP identifies how these gaps may be filled. Actions arising from conference	National Community Safety Plan HBC Community Plan	12 th February 2007 Evaluation report complete April 07	Safer Halton Partnership Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Matt Atherton LSP Communications Officer
2.6 To obtain CCTV footage of crime hot spot areas, identify offenders and provide evidence for arrests and convictions	Cheshire Constabulary Halton Borough Council Remploy	Record number of incidents detected from use of CCTV Mapping of hotspots feeding into Tasking and Co-ordination	National Community Safety Plan	Quarterly report from Remploy with breakdown of data Quarterly Statistical Report to Safer Halton Partnership	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator CDRP Analyst Su Dawber CCTV Halton Borough Council

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
2.7 To follow-up on ASB issues raised by the community at Police Forums, PADS and CAMS	Cheshire Constabulary Existing resources	Record numbers of issues successfully addressed. 3% Increase in the number of people who say they are able to influence local decisions, as measured by Community Safety Survey Record and promote the number of community engagement activities in each ward	National Community Safety Plan	Quarterly Statistical Report to SHP Police/ Partnership surgeries in each ward by Sept 07	Inspector Nick Bailey Widnes NPU Inspector Richard Hill Runcorn NPU CDRP Analyst
2.8 To provide high profile policing, targeting seasonal crime anti-social behaviour issues.	Cheshire Constabulary Existing resources	Reduced crime in areas deployed (compared to figures from the same period last year)	National Community Safety Plan	Quarterly Statistical Report to Safer Halton Partnership Annual Programme created by Tasking & Co-ordination by April 07	Inspector Nick Bailey Widnes NPU Inspector Richard Hill Runcorn NPU Inspector Andy Ross Safer Halton Partnership
COMMUNICATION 2.9 To initiate CDRP 'Face the People' sessions with the roll out of Neighbourhood Policing forums and increase local knowledge and awareness of the CDRP.	Safer Halton Partnership	CDRP electronic newsletter produced quarterly Number of actions arising that result directly from community consultation 3% increase in the number of people who say that they are able to influence decisions affecting their local area	National Community Safety Plan LAA	Face the people sessions from summer 07 Annual Survey to be complete	Matthew Atherton LSP Inspector Andy Ross Safer Halton Partnership CDPR Analyst
2.10 To initiate a programme of media opportunities to promote 'good news' articles and crime reduction achievements to reduce fear of crime and promote CDRP.	Safer Halton Partnership	8% reduction in people's perception of ASB being an concern as measured by annual survey Produce an event calander At least 1 positive press article released per month. Numbers of press articles used by local media.	Halton Borough Council Community Plan	Annual Survey to be complete Complete March 07 Record articles from Jan 07	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Michaela Hall Community Safety Martyn Platts Press Officer Halton Borough Council

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
2.11 To provide support to Community Watch	Safer Halton Partnership	Increase the number of community watch co-ordinators Training sessions to start April 07 1 session per month To provide a medium to make the Community Watch network aware of crime reduction initiatives and their successes and to take a problem solving approach, working with local communities.	National Community Safety Plan	Training package complete by April 07 Website launched by May 07 Number of training sessions complete and number of hits recorded by website	Current and Repeat Co-ordinator Phil Buckley Crime Prevention Officer
YOUNG PEOPLE 2.12 To reduce anti-social behaviour by targeting young people who are causing high proportions of anti-social behaviour where conventional intervention has not effected positive change.	Safer Halton Partnership	Record number or referrals to YSIP and Positive Futures 60% of participants to successfully complete the programme Number of young people positively engaged with Youth Service 'On streets Respect team' To reduce by 5% the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System	Children and Young Peoples Plan National Community Safety Plan National Youth Justice Board	Record number of cases within 12 months Record number of young people that are engaged for 12 weeks or more Evaluation of on streets	Jenny Owen Preventative Services Commissioning Manager Colin Hughes Positive Futures Dave Williams Head of Youth Service Gareth Jones Youth Offending Team
2.13 To reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour by improving support for parents and carers.	RESPECT task force funding for Senior Parenting Practitioner Supporting People funded ASB Floating Support Worker	Full mapping of parenting provision including that available to benefit C&YP who are at risk of offending completed by May 07 Referral route secured through to parenting programmes by May 07 Track number of referrals of families to RESPECT Senior Parenting Practitioners Post as a result of ABC/ASBOs and map outcomes to identify reduction in offending behaviour	Children and Young Peoples Plan National Community Safety Plan Supporting People Plan	Quarterly performance monitoring from ASB co-ordinator	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Kate Banbury Halton Borough Council Abigail Escreet ASB Parenting Practitioner Emma Webster ASB Floating Support Worker

		50% of young people whose families attend Parenting sessions do not re-offend/ do not break ABC/ASBO conditions			
2.14 To provide targeted diversionary activities and adopt a preventative approach that will directly contribute to a reduction of young people offending or becoming involved in ASB.	Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Neighbourhood Management Team Halton Borough Council Parks and Country services ASB NRF Budget 07/08	Continue to support a 'Kooldown+' scheme (i) 3 Programmes held. (ii) 12 students entering the scheme. (iii) 85% of students completing the scheme. Full evaluation following completion of the scheme Provide activities during school holidays to target all young people (PAYP) Signpost individuals to Canal Boat Project, Positive Futures, Splash	Children and Young Peoples Plan Neighbourhood Management Plan National Community Safety Plan Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Sport and Leisure Plan	Report to be complete by July07 Record number of young people accessing activities Record police ASB data for the same period last year Programme Plan to be complete by May 07	Alan Briggs Fire & Rescue Service Nick Mannion Neighbourhood Management Director Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Jenny Owen Preventative Services Commissioning Manager Dave Williams Head Of Youth Service Tim Booth Parks & Countryside
2.15 Increase awareness in schools of the impact of ASB by young people and their families. Prevention of homelessness information	Safer Halton Partnership ASB NRF budget 07/08 Youth Service Homelessness Forum	Number of positive stories/ campaigns produced by young people Develop a programme of activities that promotes positive behaviour 100% of primary and secondary schools to be involved. Mediation and education packages around homelessness prevention	Children and Young Peoples Plan National Community Safety Plan Youth Service Plan Homelessness Strategy	Record number of campaigns carried out and number of young people involved in producing campaigns Record number of young people accessing Splash programme. Record police ASB data for the same period last year	Dave Williams Head Of Youth Service Jane Cummins Police School Liaison Officer Tim Booth Parks & Countryside Homelessness Forum School Advisory Service

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
<p>ADULTS</p> <p>2.16 Involve volunteers/ parents/ carers in providing targeted diversionary activities for young people.</p>	CEN Safer Halton Partnership	<p>Increase the number of people recorded as reporting in volunteering</p> <p>Number of young people involved in seeking solutions and making decisions</p>	<p>National Community Safety Plan</p> <p>Youth Service Plan</p>	Record number of volunteers recruited on quarterly basis	<p>Andy Guile Halton Voluntary Action</p> <p>Youth Forum- Dave Williams Youth Service</p> <p>Kate Storer YOT</p>
<p>2.17 Make early contact with parents of young people at risk of offending and develop appropriate links with support agencies</p>	<p>RESPECT task force funding for Senior Parenting Practitioner</p> <p>Supporting People funding for ASB Floating Support Worker</p>	<p>Numbers of parents and young people referred to the programme.</p> <p>Number of successful referrals where offending has reduced/stopped.</p>	<p>National Community Safety Plan</p> <p>Supporting People Plan</p>	Quarterly Performance monitoring in place from June 07	<p>Abigail Escreet ASB Parenting Practitioner</p> <p>Emma Webster ASB Floating Support Worker</p> <p>Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator</p>
<p>2.18 Conduct Multi Agency Meeting and implement appropriate action</p>	<p>Safer Halton Partnership</p> <p>SSCF for ASB Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Number of cases brought to the monthly MAM</p> <p>Agreed action plans for 100% of referrals to MAM</p> <p>Creation of database by May 07 showing number of police warning letters</p> <p>Database showing number of legal and non legal interventions carried out by agencies by May 07</p>	National Community Safety Plan	<p>Record number of cases</p> <p>Complete quarterly home office returns</p>	<p>Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator</p> <p>PC John Campbell Widnes NPU</p> <p>PC Anthony Donoghue Runcorn NPU</p>

PROTECT AND PUNISH

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
3.1 Use Antisocial Behaviour ACT 2003 and RESPECT legislation where prevention/diversion has failed	Safer Halton Partnership ASB Co-ordinator ASB Existing Funding Police Resources	Number of legislative processes used Number of ASBOs granted against application and also number of other positive interventions made with offenders	National Community Safety Plan HBC Community Plan	Data base to be complete quarterly Bi monthly reports to Current & Repeat Crime Strategic Group	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator CDRP Analyst
3.2 Take appropriate enforcement action in relation to: Dog Fouling Littering Fly Tipping Graffiti Abandoned Vehicles Underage Drinking Noise Nuisance where identified through problem solving process	Cheshire Constabulary PCSOs Blue Lamp Officers Halton Borough Council Enforcement Officer	Reduction in number of complaints to Police and Halton Borough Council Reduction in Noise complaints Increase in positive satisfaction from public perceptions Increase alcohol seized from underage drinkers	National Community Safety Plan HBC Community Plan LAA Children and Young Persons Plan	Annual LOGUS DATA Set baseline for noise complaints by June 07 Baseline to be set by June 07 figures collected monthly	CDRP Analyst Simon Walker Enforcement Officer Isobel Mason Environmental Health Cheshire Constabulary Jenny Owen Preventative Services Commissioning Manager
3.3 Use antisocial behaviour legislation & existing housing legislation to reduce evictions due to anti social behaviour	Registered Social Landlords Supporting People funded ASB Floating Support Worker	Record use of Demotions Reduction in number of evictions Referrals to MAM and ASB Floating Support Worker	National Community Safety Plan Housing Strategy	Data collection quarterly Performance Monitoring quarterly	Housing Partnership Group Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Emma Webster ASB Floating Support Worker
3.4 Centralised and improved reporting of ASB enforcement through the ASB Co-ordinator from all partners.	Continue to fund the post of Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator.	Record number of ASBOs and CRASBOs on home office quarterly returns Three month review of cases with ABCs/ ASBOs/CRASBOs	National Community Safety Plan LAA HBC Community Strategy	Bi monthly reports to Current & Repeat Crime Strategic Group	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator

REHABILITATE

Key Tasks/ Actions	Resources/ Funding	Outcomes/ Measures	Strategic Links	Milestones	Lead Officer / Agency
4.1 When appropriate work with the relevant agency to support young people attending court for ASB related offences	Existing YOT Funding ASB NRF Funding 07/08 YOT Substance Misuse Worker YSIP Co-ordinator	Number of young people supported Number of case conferences attended	Youth Justice Strategy Children and Young People's Plan	Record number of young people that are engaged	Gareth Jones Head of Youth Offending Team Jenny Owen Preventative Services Commissioning Manager Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator
4.2 To achieve a co-ordinated and effective POPO scheme	Safer Halton Partnership and Probation existing funding	Monitor the three POPO strands to ensure that they continue to link up and that appropriate interventions are taking place. Reduction in re-offending rates	Probation Plan LAA	Quarterly POPO data	Neil Burdekin Pete Shaw POPO Team David Wallace Probation
4.3 To reduce re-offending in those young POPOs already known to the YOT.	Existing YOT funding	YOT to identify and maintain a list of POPOs, carry out regular review and interventions Reduced offending by the individuals on the YOT PPO list by 10%.	Youth Justice Strategy LAA	Quarterly reports to the SHP Record offending rates	Gareth Jones Head of Youth Offending Team
4.4 Monitor and review of individuals who have been subject to an enforcement option (ASBO)	RESPECT task force funding for Senior Parenting Practitioner Supporting People funded ASB Floating Support Worker	Number of referrals to ASB parenting practitioner and ASB Floating Support Worker where appropriate	National Community Safety Plan LAA Supporting People Plan	Quarterly performance monitoring by ASB Co-ordinator Report to the SHP Supporting People monitoring	Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Abigail Escreet ASB Parenting Practitioner Emma Webster ASB Floating support worker
4.5 Work in partnership to support tenants previously known to have difficulties sustaining tenancies.	Registered Social Landlords Existing resources Supporting People funded ASB Floating Support Worker	Reduction in number of breached tenancies Reduction in number of abandoned tenancies Number of cases referred to ASB Floating Support Worker	Housing Strategy Homelessness Strategy	Quarterly reports to Housing Partnership Quarterly Performance Monitoring	Dwayne Johnson Housing Partnership Group Clare Myring ASB Co-ordinator Emma Webster ASB Floating Support Worker

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health and Community

SUBJECT: Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval to the proposed changes to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy set out in this report, both to reflect recent legislative change and to amend the different forms of financial assistance provided to clients.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Strategy be approved for implementation as soon as is practicable.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In 2002 Government announced its intention to give Councils increased freedoms in setting local policies to tackle poor housing conditions in the private sector, and subsequently repealed much of the legislation related to renovation grants and other forms of financial assistance. Halton responded by introducing its Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy in 2003.

3.2 A number of factors now make it necessary to revise this strategy, including -

- Increased Government focus on tackling none decent housing in the private sector that is occupied by vulnerable households.
- The need to provide incentives to promote membership of the recently introduced Landlord Accreditation Scheme.
- The need to provide assistance to reduce the number of long-term empty properties, as this is a Best Value Performance Indicator.
- A new requirement under the Housing Act 2004 to license certain houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).
- Under the Housing Act 2004, the introduction of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, replacing the “fitness” standard which for several decades was the yardstick for measuring housing conditions.

- 3.3 Appendix 1 summarises the principal changes being recommended in terms of the range of financial assistance to be offered to individuals, and the rationale for them. Appendix 2 is the full strategy which includes a new enforcement policy, HMO licensing policy, detailed eligibility criteria /conditions for financial assistance, and a policy for dealing with applications to reduce or waive requirements to repay assistance.
- 3.4 A consultation exercise has been undertaken through the press, Council web site, Landlord Forum, and directly with other local authority and stakeholder organisations. No responses were received.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The strategy contains new or revised policies for dealing with financial assistance, waiver or reduction of repayment conditions, enforcement procedures and HMO licensing.
- 4.2 The Urban Renewal PPB endorsed the Strategy for consultation purposes on the 15th November 2006, and no comments have been received to the consultation process that ended on the 9th March.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is a risk that the proposed changes to the financial assistance policy will result in demand exceeding the available budget. This will be monitored closely, particularly as the annual capital grant awarded for housing purposes has steadily decreased in recent years.
- 5.2 With the exception of Disabled Facilities Grants, the financial assistance offered under the policy is discretionary and therefore if budget pressures arise, a further report will be brought to Board to consider amendments to the eligibility criteria.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed enforcement and HMO licensing policies will ensure the Council fulfils its statutory duties, and changes to financial assistance should enable improved outcomes in terms of performance indicators. Improved housing conditions for vulnerable households will also contribute to the objectives within the Community and Corporate Plans.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 There are always risks of fraud or misuse of funds when financial assistance is provided, but the strategy seeks to minimise these risks through clear eligibility criteria and conditions, backed up by on-site inspections. The risk of challenge to policy and practise is minimised by following Government guidance and best practise where possible.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Many of the policies within the strategy relating to financial assistance positively discriminate in favour of the most vulnerable households.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Housing Act 2004	Grosvenor House	Housing Strategy Manager

PROPOSED CHANGES TO RENEWAL POLICY

CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED CHANGE	RATIONALE
Renovation Grant	Major Works Assistance	
Discretionary grant/loan available to owner-occupiers of pre 1964 property in Council Tax bands A, B and C.	Property to be 40+ years old rather than pre 1964. Remove Council Tax band criteria.	The 40+ age criteria will allow further properties to be eligible for consideration as they become older. Experience has revealed that few enquiries are received for properties in the higher tax bands, but when they are, the cases often merit assistance anyway.
Property must be deemed unfit for occupation.	Property must contain Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), or multiple Category 2 hazards that together constitute a danger to the health and safety of the occupier.	Under the 2004 Housing Act the fitness standard has now been replaced by the HHSRS.
Eligible works are those necessary to make the property fit.	Eligible works to include any necessary to make the property meet the decent homes standard.	Government expects LAs to target renewal resources on properties failing the decent homes standard that are occupied by vulnerable households (PSA7).

CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED CHANGE	RATIONALE
Grants are means tested as under the previous statutory scheme.	Applicant must be in receipt of one of the following benefits - Income Support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Pension Credit, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, or War Disablement Pension. For those on low income but not in receipt of one of the benefits, eligibility will be determined by the existing means test provided the calculated client contribution does not exceed £1,000.	This will target resources on those within the “vulnerable” category set out in the Governments decent homes target, retain a safety net for those on low incomes but not receiving the specified benefits, and simplify the application/administrative process.
Requirement for applicant to have lived in property for 3 years before application, but waived for those buying properties that have been empty for 12 months or more.	Remove provision for purchasers of empty property.	Only 1 application has been dealt with in last 3 years, so clearly not effective in getting empty properties re-occupied.
Assistance is 75% grant and 25% loan. Present policy requires grant/loan to be recalculated if unforeseen works arise after work has commenced.	Necessary unforeseen works that only become apparent after the grant and loan have been approved will be funded by additional grant.	This will enable the client at application stage to have some certainty about the amount of loan they are taking on, will avoid multiple loans being set up, and simplify the administrative process.
Early transfer of ownership triggers grant repayment, subject to adequate equity existing (except for certain exempt disposals).	List of repayment exemptions extended. (see Appendix 4 within strategy)	The revised list of exemptions reflects Government guidance in this area.

CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED CHANGE	RATIONALE
Second grants for similar works will only be considered after 15 years.	Reduce period to 10 years in case of central heating boilers, fixed heating appliances and flat roofs.	It is considered that 10 years is a more realistic lifespan for those particular types of appliance/structure.
In exceptional cases of financial hardship (e.g. where unfit rented property is inherited and new landlord/owner has no resources) an application may be considered.	Withdraw this form of assistance.	Seldom used and future requests can be dealt with under discretionary powers.
Grants for Landlords - HMO fire safety works to satisfy fire safety requirements in HMOs (60% of costs up to £12,000 max.).	Withdraw this form of assistance.	No applications have been received for this form of assistance since it's introduction.
Home Repair Assistance Grant	Minor Works Assistance	
Discretionary grant for minor works that are a risk to the health/safety of the occupier, or minor works related to a DFG application. Max. £5,000 grant.	Property must contain Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), or multiple Category 2 hazards that together constitute a danger to the health and safety of the occupier, or minor works related to a DFG application. Works subject to mortgage retention provisions will not be eligible. Max. grant raised to £6,000.	The proposed criteria broadly mirrors the existing ones but updated to reflect the HHSRS. It is proposed to continue to offer assistance by way of grant, as it is not considered cost effective to administer loans for this value of work. Increased max. grant to reflect inflation.

CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED CHANGE	RATIONALE
New condition.	Where the house inspection reveals multiple defects exceeding £6,000 the applicant will be required to apply for Major Works Assistance to have the works undertaken at the same time.	This will prevent having to process multiple applications for the same property, and evasion of the loan element of Major Works Assistance.
Available to owner occupiers where property is over 10 years old and in Council Tax band A, B or C.	Remove Council Tax band criteria, otherwise as existing.	Recent experience has revealed that few enquiries are received for properties in the higher tax bands, but when they are, the cases often merit assistance anyway.
Applicant must be on income related benefit. Preference given to over 60s.	Applicant must be in receipt of one of the benefits listed above under Major Works Assistance.	This will target resources on those within the "vulnerable" category set out in the Governments decent homes target.
Requirement for owner to occupy property for 3 years before and 1 year after grant.	Reduce prior residence requirement to 1 year.	This will extend the range of vulnerable clients that can be assisted.
Second grants for similar works will only be considered after 15 years.	Reduce period to 10 years in case of central heating boilers, fixed heating appliances and flat roofs.	It is considered that 10 years is a more realistic lifespan for those particular types of appliance/structure.
Accredited Landlord Loan Assistance	Accredited Landlord Loan Assistance	
Interest free loan for Accredited landlords (50% of cost of eligible works subject to £10,000 max. loan) to improve long-term empty property purchased for letting out. Assistance will be given to meet the decent homes standard.	No change.	This new form of assistance was only approved in June 2006 by Executive Board as part of the Landlord Accreditation Scheme, and therefore no changes are proposed at this time.

CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED CHANGE	RATIONALE
Group Repair	Block Repair Assistance	
Discretionary grant for the repair of the external fabric of a group of dwellings where this approach is deemed the most appropriate. Available to owner-occupiers and Landlords of pre 1964 property in Council Tax bands A, B and C.	Property to be 40+ years old rather than pre 1964. Remove Council Tax band criteria.	Same rationale as for Major Works Assistance.
Grant is means tested but owner's contribution limited to max. 50%, or 25% in Renewal Areas.	Owner-occupiers and Landlords both to be offered 75% grant and 25% loan.	Should the Council wish to proceed with such a scheme there needs to be a large incentive in order to get all owners signed up.
	Disabled Facilities Grant	
If it is not reasonable or practicable to adapt a property, and the occupier cannot afford a more suitable property in the locality, assistance may be provided to enable a move to a more suitable home. Up to £3,000 relocation expenses, and up to £5,000 to help with purchase costs.	Increase assistance to an overall sum of £10,000 max.	With house price inflation there is a need to increase the assistance available.



Health and Community Directorate

DRAFT
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING
RENEWAL STRATEGY

2007 - 2010

CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Strategic Relevance**
- 3. Private Sector Housing In Halton**
- 4. The Strategy - aims and objectives**
 - financial assistance**
 - partnership working**
 - resources**
 - the action plan**
- 5. Miscellaneous and Complaints**

Appendix 1 – Forms of Housing Assistance

Appendix 2 - Enforcement Policy

Appendix 3 - Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation

**Appendix 4 - Policy for Waiving or Reducing the Repayment
of Housing Assistance**

Appendix 5 – Scale of Fees

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Councils have a general duty to periodically assess housing provision and conditions within their boundaries, and to make plans for meeting needs and improving unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- 1.2 For many years the powers available to local authorities to improve housing conditions in the private sector were heavily regulated. In recognition that housing conditions and problems varied significantly across the country, and that a “one size fits all” approach was no longer appropriate, in 2003 Government repealed much of the legislation that governed what local authorities could do in terms of providing assistance, and authorities were given much wider discretion to provide locally determined assistance within the framework of a locally adopted strategy.
- 1.3 Halton introduced its first local strategy in 2003 and this new document builds on the lessons learned, and emerging good practise, in the intervening period. It also seeks to reflect important new changes introduced by the Housing Act 2004, Government priorities, and new Council initiatives. These include –
 - A requirement to license certain types of housing in multiple occupation (HMOs).
 - The introduction of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to replace the old fitness standard, which was the yardstick by which housing conditions were measured.
 - A Government target to reduce the number of owner occupied dwellings occupied by vulnerable households that fail the decent homes standard.
 - The development of a Landlord Forum in Halton.
 - The introduction of a Halton Landlord Accreditation Scheme.
 - An end to financial means testing for children/young people requiring adaptations under the Disabled Facilities Grant regime.
- 1.5 This document sets out the aims and objectives of the Council in seeking to improve private sector housing conditions within the Borough. It starts by describing the problems that exist, and identifies the measures that the Council will use to make the best use of the limited resources that are available. It also sets out the policies that the Council will implement when using its enforcement powers.
- 1.6 The strategy will remain in force until 2010, when it will be reviewed, and any significant changes that prove necessary in the interim will only be implemented after consulting stakeholders, advertising in the local press and adoption by the Council.

2. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

- 2.1 Whilst some of the services described in this strategy are delivered under statutory powers or duties, others are discretionary. As Councils strive to secure efficiencies to deliver services within budget and secure value for money, services need to demonstrate their relevance to the organisation's strategic aims and objectives. This section establishes those links.
- 2.2 Although Halton has much to be proud of in terms of the achievements it has made over the last 30 years, it still suffers levels of deprivation significantly above the national average. In particular it is ranked 16th on the Government Index of Deprivation (out of 354 English authorities) and 4th in the North West. It has higher than average unemployment, a relatively low wage economy, and some of the worst health statistics in the country.
- 2.3 The Council's Corporate Plan and the Halton Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy have identified key priorities that seek to address these inequalities, and this plan and the actions contained within it have a particular relevance to two of these strategic priorities - Health Improvement and Urban Renewal.

Health Improvement – Key Target “To remove the barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health, through ensuring that people have ready access to a wide range of social, community and housing services, and cultural and sporting activities that enhance their quality of life.”

- 2.4 The links between poor health and poor housing conditions are now well documented and widely acknowledged, and with Halton's poor health statistics it is particularly important that resources are targeted at improving that housing which is in the worst condition and which is occupied by the most vulnerable.
- 2.5 Given the significant levels of poverty in the Borough, and the forecast of significant growth in the percentage of elderly households, inevitably some residents in Halton will struggle to maintain their homes and increasing numbers will, due to ill health or disability, require their homes adapting to enable them to continue living within the community. The assistance available through this strategy will therefore directly contribute to this key priority.

Urban Renewal - Key Target “To support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet peoples expectations and add to their enjoyment of life.”

- 2.6 Under the priority of Urban Renewal there is an aspiration to make Halton a place where people are proud to live, in sustainable thriving neighbourhoods. It is generally acknowledged that without financial assistance some properties occupied by the most vulnerable will simply not be maintained and will deteriorate. Dilapidated and poor quality housing can be a highly visible sign of, and a contributor to, the decline

of neighbourhoods and affect their long-term sustainability. Through this strategy the tools are available, subject to resources, to assist those that need help to maintain their homes and to utilise enforcement powers if necessary.

3. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING IN HALTON

3.1 The Council's Housing Strategy describes in some detail the operation of the housing market in Halton and the main problems that exist. The following points summarise the key issues from that document and supplement them with information derived from a private sector housing condition survey undertaken in Autumn 2002 (before the introduction of the HHSRS and decent homes target, but updated where possible).

- The private sector stock in Halton has a higher proportion of terraced properties than the North West and national averages.
- Approximately 2.5% of properties are unfit, a much lower proportion than both the regional and national average (7%).
- The bulk of poorer housing tends to be in the older terraced areas surrounding the town centres of Widnes and Runcorn.
- The proportion of private rented properties is low (7% of private sector dwellings in the district) but the sector contains nearly three times the proportion of unfit dwellings than the Halton average.
- The number of Houses in Multiple Occupation within the Borough is relatively small (see Appendix 3 for definition).
- 82% of private sector properties have central heating.
- The average SAP value (a measure of energy efficiency on a scale of 1 to 120) is, at 48, better than the national average of 44 but there is scope to make improvement as one third of properties do not have cylinder jackets, and three quarters do not have cavity wall insulation.
- The overall level of private sector empty properties in Halton in 2005 was 3.31%, comparable to the England average of 3.29% and well below the North West average of 4.47%.
- Numbers of those aged over 65 and over 75 are predicted to increase by 40% and 11% respectively by 2013, and 21.5% of the population describe themselves as having a limiting long term illness. This points to an increase in the already high levels of demand for housing adaptation works in the future.

3.2 The following tables summarise the findings from the 2002 survey in terms of housing conditions.

Table 1. Dwelling Stock Age Profile

Area Name	Pre-1919	% of Area Total	1919-1944	% of Area Total	1945-1964	% of Area Total	Post-1964	% of Area Total	Area Total
Widnes	2,509	8%	3,263	10%	3,137	9%	9,367	28%	18,277
Runcorn	1,953	6%	2,868	9%	1,875	6%	8,119	25%	14,815
Totals	4,462	13%	6,131	19%	5,012	15%	17,486	53%	33,092

Table 2. Dwelling Stock Type Profile

Type	Detached	Semi-Detached	Terraced	Purpose Built Flats	Converted Flats	Temporary	Total
Number	6,319	11,355	13,816	1,221	267	114	33,092
% of Stock	19%	34%	42%	4%	1%	0%	100%

Table 3. Unfitness by Age band

Age Bands	Total Stock by Age Band	No of Unfit Dwellings	Percentage of the Whole Stock	Percentage Within Each Age Band	Percentage of Total Number of Unfit Dwellings
Pre-1919	4,462	377	1.14%	8.44%	46.26%
1919-1944	6,132	296	0.89%	4.83%	36.34%
1945-1964	5,012	27	0.08%	0.54%	3.35%
Post-1964	17,486	114	0.35%	0.65%	14.05% *but see 3.4 below
Totals	33,092	814			100%

Table 4. Unfitness by Property Type

Property Type	Number	Percentage of the whole stock	Percentage of unfits
Houses - Terraced	422	1.28%	51.85%
Houses - Semi-Detached	356	1.08%	43.73%
Houses - Detached	36	0.11%	4.42%
Total	814	2.47%	100%

Table 5. Unfitness by Tenure

Tenure	No of Dwellings Unfit-	No of Dwellings Tenure type-	Percentage Unfit by Total of Tenure Type
Owner Occupied	650	30,383	2.14%
Private Landlord	164	2,709	6.05%
Total	814	33,092	2.46%

Table 6. Unfitness by Area

Area	No of Dwellings Unfit	Percentage of Total Unfit
Widnes	470	58%
Runcorn	344	42%
	814	100%

Table 7. Reasons for Unfitness

Unfitness	No of Occurrences	Percentage of 814 Unfit
Disrepair	373	46%
Food Preparation	235	29%
Bath Shower	226	28%
Water Closet	200	25%
Heating	151	19%
Dampness	92	11%
Ventilation	58	7%
Drainage	34	4%
Water Supply	34	4%
Lighting	29	4%
Total	1,432	

Table 8. Combined Unfit and Borderline Unfit Dwellings by Area

Area Ref	No of Dwellings Unfit	Percentage of Dwellings Unfit in Area	No of Borderline Unfit Dwellings	Dwellings in Area	Percentage of Dwellings Borderline Unfit
Widnes	470	2.57%	1,509	18,277	8.3%
Runcorn	344	2.32%	1,206	14,815	8.1%
Total	814		2,715	33,092	

- 3.3 The preceding tables show that the number of unfit dwellings in the Borough is equally distributed between Runcorn and Widnes as a percentage of each town's stock.
- 3.4 The extrapolated figure (*) for unfitness in the post 1964 age band must be treated with caution, however, as it results from just one surveyed property being unfit. The true level of unfitness for this group is probably much smaller, and consequently the predominant dwelling types suffering unfitness are terraced and semi-detached types in the pre-1919 and 1919-1964 age bands.
- 3.5 Whilst the percentage of unfit dwellings is relatively low at 2.5% of the stock, the potential for this figure to rapidly increase to about 11% is shown in the number of borderline unfit properties (2,715) identified by the condition survey. Borderline properties are those that are likely to become unfit in the next five years unless repaired or improved by their owners.

- 3.6 The Government is committed to reducing the number of vulnerable households living in non-decent homes and authorities are required to monitor progress at the local level. Halton's private sector house condition survey was undertaken in 2002, prior to the introduction of this requirement, and consequently has no detailed information on how many households fall into this category in Halton.
- 3.7 Recognising this as a problem facing many authorities the Government has developed a model based on the findings of the English House Condition Survey that will produce an approximation of the numbers in each authority area. For Halton the model suggests that 65.7% of the homes occupied by vulnerable households currently meet the decent homes standard, which matches the 65% target set by Government for achievement by 2006. This figure will be used as the baseline for future monitoring until the next housing condition survey can provide more accurate data.
- 3.8 As a result of emerging concerns about the West Bank area of Widnes, with higher than average vacancy levels, a slow resale market, and a high proportion of privately rented stock, a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment was commissioned. Whilst the findings are not available at the time of this strategy being prepared, they will be used to inform future revisions of this document.
- 3.9 Although a large part of the Council's private sector housing functions is related to improving housing conditions in owner occupied property, it also has an important role to play in regulating Houses in Multiple Occupation, licensing residential caravan sites, and assisting private tenants to enforce their tenancy rights, particularly in liaising with Landlords to get repairs done.
- 3.10 Whilst the private rented stock is not large in Halton, it nevertheless generates about 120 complaints each year from tenants, and the stock condition survey showed that a significant proportion of this accommodation was unfit. If the recent trend of developers building apartments continues, then there is potential for the private sector rental market to steadily grow as investors buy to let. Appendix 2 of this strategy sets out the Council's enforcement policies for dealing with this area of Council activity, and Appendix 3 sets out the HMO licensing requirements.

4. THE STRATEGY

Aims and objectives

- 4.1 The overall aim of the Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy is to secure an improvement in the housing conditions of the Borough through the targeting of advice and resources at those most in need.
- 4.2 This overall aim then translates into a number of individual objectives relating to several different elements of the market, which have been developed as a result of the assessment of the problems identified earlier. They are -
- To regularly undertake an assessment of housing conditions in the Borough, in order to monitor changes and the effectiveness of this policy.
 - To secure the improvement of housing conditions and in particular to seek to reduce the percentage of owner occupied non-decent homes occupied by vulnerable households.
 - To improve standards in the private rented sector, and ensure that conditions within licensable Houses in Multiple Occupation are satisfactory, and that those that need to be, are licensed.
 - To advise of, and enforce, private tenants rights in relation to disrepair and harassment / illegal eviction, and through improved working relationships with Landlords to contribute to the Council's wider strategy of preventing homelessness.
 - To promote membership of the Council's Landlord Accreditation Scheme.
 - To offer advice to individuals on potential sources of finance for those ineligible for Council assistance.
 - To provide a service for those needing help to maintain or adapt their homes, with the option of using the Council's Care and Repair Agency.
 - To reduce the number of long-term empty properties.
 - To help vulnerable people undertake smaller scale works that pose a risk to their health and safety.
 - To promote energy efficiency.
- 4.3 The Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy comprises two distinct parts. On the one hand there is the provision of financial assistance and advice to help improve or adapt the housing stock and improve

energy efficiency, and on the other hand the use of enforcement and regulatory powers to require individuals to take action to improve unsatisfactory housing conditions or comply with statutory requirements.

- 4.4 This part of the document describes in broad terms the different forms of financial assistance that will be made available, and the other ways in which the Council will work in partnership to achieve its objectives. It also provides further detail about the changes introduced by the Housing Act 2004. Further detail about eligibility criteria for financial assistance and the enforcement approach is contained in the appendices.

Financial Assistance

- 4.5 By bringing together the results of the stock condition survey, Government guidance, and the aims and objectives set out above, a clearer picture emerges of how the Council should focus its financial assistance.

This includes a need to -

- reflect the Government target to reduce the number of non-decent homes occupied by vulnerable households.
- reflect the replacement of the fitness standard by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.
- maintain the mix of grant/loan assistance to “stretch” resources.
- focus on property 40 years or more old, as this sector exhibits the greatest incidence of poor conditions.
- maintain financial assistance limits to keep expenditure within budget.
- provide an incentive for Landlords to join the Accreditation Scheme.

The following range of assistance is therefore provided by the Council.

Disabled Facilities Grants

- 4.6 There is a well-established statutory framework for the provision of these mandatory, means tested grants and for determining eligibility. The only recent change has been the removal of means testing for applications relating to children and young people. Halton will continue to fund eligible works up to the statutory maximum (currently £25,000) that is eligible for Government subsidy.

Major Works Assistance

- 4.7 This is discretionary assistance in the form of a 75% grant and 25% loan (interest free) for properties that contain a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS, or multiple Category 2 hazards that together constitute a risk to the health or safety of the occupier. The property must be more than 40 years old, and eligibility is further restricted to those who have occupied the property for a minimum of 3 years, are in receipt of certain state benefits, or who qualify by a financial test of resources.
- 4.8 All works needed to meet the decent homes standard will be eligible subject to a maximum of £35,000. Beyond this limit the Council will do a value for money assessment to determine whether assistance should be granted.
- 4.9 Breach of grant conditions during the first 3 years may result in grant having to be repaid on a decreasing scale, with the loan element secured as a charge against the property until its future sale. Loans repaid in the future will be added to resources available for new assistance.

Minor Works Assistance

- 4.10 This is discretionary assistance in the form of a grant for properties that contain a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS, or multiple Category 2 hazards that together constitute an imminent risk to the health or safety of the occupier, or minor works related to a DFG application. The property must be more than 10 years old, and eligibility is further restricted to those in receipt of certain state benefits. The maximum grant is £6,000.
- 4.11 Typically this grant is offered for smaller scale works such as badly leaking roofs, and faulty gas or electrical installations where the property may not qualify for, or it may not be cost effective to offer, major works assistance, and where harm to the occupier may result from the works not being undertaken.

Accredited Landlord Loan Assistance

- 4.12 This is discretionary assistance for accredited landlords who wish to acquire property that has been vacant for more than 1 year, which they intend to let out subsequently for a minimum of 5 years. Eligible works include those necessary to meet the decent homes standard. Maximum eligible costs are £20,000 and assistance is in the form of an interest free loan for 50% of the cost of eligible works.
- 4.13 This is intended to act as an incentive for the Accreditation Scheme, to help reduce the numbers of long-term empty property in the Borough, and to increase the supply of well managed private rented accommodation.

Block Repair Assistance

- 4.14 In some instances it is more beneficial, both economically and in terms of the outcome, to repair the external parts of a whole terrace of properties where they share common problems and visually detract from the appearance of an area. Although Block Repair has not been used in Halton for many years it is considered appropriate to retain the power to offer assistance bearing in mind their potential role.
- 4.15 Property must be over 40 years old and assistance will be in the form of a 75% grant and 25% interest free loan. All owners must agree to participate in the scheme, the Council will organise the works, and all schemes will be subject to approval by the Council's Executive Board Sub given the significant resources this type of scheme requires.

Relocation Assistance

- 4.16 At its discretion, the Council may offer grant assistance to help an owner-occupier move to and/or adapt a different property if it is not reasonable or practicable to adapt the present home. The Council, in circumstances where it is satisfied that the applicant cannot afford a suitable alternative property within the locality, may offer a grant of up to £10,000 to assist with relocation and purchase of a more suitable home. This will not prevent an application being made to carry out essential works to adapt the new home if necessary.

Partnership Working

- 4.17 Much of what local authorities do involves partnership working, and housing is no exception. The following describes the initiatives developed in partnership to achieve the Council's objectives and those of its partners.

Energy Efficiency

- 4.18 The Council works closely with, and partly funds, the work of the Cheshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (CHEEAC) for the provision of a free phone energy advice service to all Halton residents. The organisation has expertise in all energy related matters and signposts clients to the various grants that are available to assist householders with energy efficiency improvements, and in particular it refers eligible clients to the Government funded Warm Front scheme. It also plays a vital role in raising awareness of energy matters in the Borough through promotional activity.
- 4.19 CHEEAC also manages two grant aid schemes funded by the Council, known as Energy Zone and the Hearth Scheme, which provide discounted energy efficiency measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation and central heating.

Halton Care and Repair Agency

- 4.20 In partnership with the client, the Private Sector Housing Team provides a full agency service to private sector housing clients accessing Disabled Facilities Grants, Major and Minor Works Assistance. This ranges from initial help and advice to complete the application forms to a full architectural design and contract administration service.
- 4.21 Based on a 60% questionnaire return rate satisfaction levels with the service are very high, with 93% reporting the service as “good” or “very good”, rising to 100% when “satisfactory” is included. The client’s main concerns are the length of time they have to wait.

Landlord Forum

- 4.22 Over the last two years significant effort has been put into establishing a Landlord Forum, to improve communication and relationships with private sector landlords. An established group has now developed that meets three times a year, and the events are a useful means of addressing the concerns of the various parties, and for cascading information about Council initiatives and legislative change.

Landlord Accreditation Scheme

- 4.23 One direct benefit of the Landlord Forum has been joint working to develop a mutually acceptable Halton Landlord Accreditation Scheme. The scheme offers a number of benefits to members in return for adherence to certain minimum management standards. Initial signs are promising and the Council will endeavour to maximise the number of landlords registering for the scheme over the coming years.

Handy Person Scheme

- 4.24 The Council and Age Concern jointly developed this scheme, originally with the help of Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) resources and now Neighbourhood Renewal Funds, to provide a service where elderly vulnerable residents could apply to have minor repairs done. Now managed by Halton Age Concern, it provides a service where the applicant pays for the materials and the scheme provides the labour.

Resources

- 4.25 In the 3 years since the last strategy was implemented (2003/04 to 2005/06) the Council has invested £3.2m in private sector renewal assistance as follows –

Renovation/ Home Repair Assistance Grants	£1,488,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	£1,584,000
Energy Efficiency Promotion	£ 152,000
Total	£3,224,000

This has enabled the Council to make fit 160 properties, provide adaptations in 172 properties, and secure energy efficiency improvements to approximately 1,000 properties.

- 4.26 Subject to there being no significant change in the pattern of financial settlement given to the Council, resources for the years 2006/07 to 2008/09 are forecast as follows –

Major/Minor Works/Accredited Landlord Assistance	£1,452,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	£1,980,000
Energy Efficiency Promotion	£ 210,000
Total	£3,642,000

- 4.27 This reflects both an increase in resources, and a slight shift from Major and Minor Works Assistance to Disabled Facilities Grants to reflect the significant backlog of applications for adaptation works. Even so clients applying for assistance, and for DFGs in particular, may experience delays due to inadequate levels of resources.

Action Plan

- 4.28 The action plan on the following page sets out what the Council intends to do over the next 3 years to meet or contribute to the objectives set out at the start of section 4.

Action Plan

Desired Outcome	Action	Timescale	Funding Implications	Dependencies
Updated house condition data to inform strategy and provide baseline for decent homes monitoring.	Undertake house condition survey.	Complete by December 2008.	One off revenue growth bid for 2008/09.	Resources. Officer time.
Secure annual reduction in non-decent owner occupied homes occupied by vulnerable households.	Target financial assistance on relevant households by advertising in Press twice per year, and distributing leaflets to Contact Centres.	Ongoing.	Funded from existing operational budgets.	Take up of assistance by clients.
Ensure all relevant HMOs are licensed.	Identify HMOs, inspect premises, and ensure requisite standards are met, through enforcement action if needs be. Establish future inspection programme.	Complete by June 2007.	Costs covered by agreed scale fees.	Officer time. Ability to identify premises.
An increase in the number of private lets covered by the Landlord Accreditation Scheme.	Promote LAS to all Landlords, review satisfaction with scheme annually.	First review April 2008.	Funded from existing operational budgets.	Take up by Landlords and their agents.
Agency services are available to individual owner occupiers accessing all forms of housing financial assistance	Extend access to Care and Repair services to Major and Minor Works Assistance clients.	By June 2007.	Funded by additional Supporting People finance.	Officer time and client take up.

Desired Outcome	Action	Timescale	Funding Implications	Dependencies
Increased supply of experienced contractors to undertake housing works.	Develop approved contractor list.	By October 2007.	Funded from existing operational budgets.	Officer time. Capacity of local builders.
Improved literature about housing assistance.	Review all literature and amend as necessary, to include BME straplines.	By June 2007.	Funded from existing operational budgets.	Officer time.
Service standards established.	Develop and introduce service standards after consultation with stakeholders.	By August 2007.	Funded from existing operational budgets.	Officer time.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 Whilst every effort has been made to frame the policies set out in this document in a clear manner to remove any doubt about what the assistance is for, eligibility, and other conditions that apply, applications may arise in which there are exceptional circumstances not covered by this document, where there are compelling reasons to justify providing assistance.
- 5.2 For example this may be where the spirit of the policy clearly intends to provide assistance in a particular set of circumstances, but the policy has been worded in a way that unintentionally precludes help being given.
- 5.3 In these circumstances the Strategic Director of Health and Community will have discretion to determine whether or not such exceptional applications can be approved. The Director will also consider appeals for assistance that exceed the specified maximum amounts where the officer dealing with the application has initially refused to approve the excess amount.
- 5.4 Alternatively, if the complaint is not about the policy but about the way in which a service was provided, or the way in which an application for help or advice was handled, the complaint should be made initially to the officer concerned in the hope that he/she can resolve the problem.
- 5.5 Should the complaint not be resolved, the Council has a formal complaints procedure set out in a booklet called "Any Complaints". Copies are available at main Council offices or can be requested by telephoning 0151 907 8300.

FORMS OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Major Works Assistance

Purpose

This form of discretionary assistance is intended for the improvement or repair of private sector housing within the Borough which is deemed unsuitable for occupation because it contains a Category 1 hazard under the Government's Housing Health and Safety Rating System, or several Category 2 hazards that together constitute a danger to the health and safety of the occupier, and to make such property meet the decent homes standard.

Eligibility

Priority will be given to applicants that meet the following criteria –

1. The applicant must be the owner-occupier of the property to be improved and occupy it as their only or main residence. Assistance is not available to occupiers of mobile homes or houseboats.
2. The property must be a minimum of 40 years old at the date of enquiry, and the applicant must have owned and occupied the property for a minimum of 3 years prior to the application.
3. Applicants in receipt of one of the following benefits will automatically be eligible to apply –

Income Support
Housing Benefit
Council Tax Benefit
Pension Credit
Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
War Disablement Pension

A financial means test will be applied to those not on one of the above benefits to determine eligibility.

4. Eligible works include those necessary to rectify the Category 1 and 2 hazards, and any other works required to make the property meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. Assistance for works to alleviate overcrowding will not be given.

Conditions

5. Assistance will be based on maximum construction and professional fees/associated costs of £35,000. Where these costs exceed £35,000 applications will only be approved after undertaking a “value for money” assessment to determine whether financial assistance to repair/improve would be the best use of public money.
6. At approval stage 75% of any assistance offered will be in the form of a grant, and 25% will be an interest free loan secured as a legal charge against the dwelling. The loan is repayable to the Council when the applicant disposes of their interest in the property. An individual can choose to repay the loan earlier if they wish.
7. If, after the application has been approved, the final costs increase due to unforeseen works agreed in advance by the Council, these extra costs will be paid for as grant, not loan.
8. Although assistance will not be given just for these works, the Council will, where practicable, require the application to include works for –
 - Gas/electrical/fire safety
 - Energy efficiency improvements
 - Security measures

Other grants are sometimes available for energy efficiency works (e.g. Warm Front grants), and the Council will expect that these be used to finance such works before agreeing to include them in a Major Works Assistance application. The Council will advise on their availability.

9. The applicant must provide 3 separate builders quotes for the works. The builders must not be related to, or be, the applicant. If an applicant is unsure whether a particular relationship breaches this criterion, he/she should disclose the relationship when submitting the quotes.
10. Eligible costs for kitchen cabinets and bathroom sanitary fittings will be determined on a case by case basis by reference to the Council's schedule of rates
11. Works must be completed within one year of the application being approved. Time extensions may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
12. It is a condition that the applicant must continue to own and reside in the property for a period of 3 years after the completion of the works. If this condition is breached, the financial assistance will be repayable to the Council as follows -

- Disposal within the first year 100%
- Disposal within the second year 75%
- Disposal within the third year 50%

Thereafter the applicant will just have to repay the sum secured by the property charge (the loan).

13. Applications relating to works that have previously been financially assisted by the Council will not normally be considered within 15 years of the completion of the previous application. In the case of central heating boilers, fixed heating appliances and flat roofs, this period is reduced to 10 years.
14. Where a property is jointly owned, the application form and legal charge/loan forms must be signed by each owner.
15. Where the applicant dies before the approved works are complete, the Council will pay an amount of grant proportionate to the amount of the works that have been completed. The Council will exercise its discretion in determining whether or not it would be appropriate to pay for some or all of the outstanding works, although this will normally be restricted to making the property safe and weathertight. In these circumstances the Council will require repayment of the loan but not the grant.
16. Any breach of these conditions may result in the Council seeking full repayment of the grant subject only to the exceptions set out in the Council's policy for waiving or reducing the repayment of housing assistance.
17. Financial assistance is discretionary and will be made available subject to the Council having adequate resources

Minor Works Assistance

Purpose

This form of discretionary assistance is intended for smaller scale works to deal with defects in private sector homes that pose an imminent risk to the health or safety of the occupier (where Major Works Assistance would not be appropriate, or where the property is not old enough). Additionally assistance may be given for minor works related to a Disabled Facilities Grant application.

Eligibility

1. The applicant must be the owner-occupier of the property to be repaired or be a tenant under a protected tenancy arrangement with certain obligations to undertake repairs. The property must have been owned and occupied as the applicant's only or main residence for a minimum of one year at the date of enquiry. Owners of mobile homes are also eligible subject to the same conditions of occupation.
2. Owners of houseboats are also eligible but must produce evidence that they have had exclusive mooring rights in Halton for a period of not less than one year before the date of the enquiry for the grant, and unexpired rights for a further one year.
3. The defects for which assistance is being sought must be judged to represent a Category 1 hazard under the Government's Housing Health and Safety Rating System, or several Category 2 hazards that together constitute an imminent risk to the health and safety of the occupier.
4. The property must be a minimum of 10 years old at the date of enquiry.
5. Applicants must be in receipt of one of the following benefits –

Income Support
Housing Benefit
Council Tax Benefit
Pension Credit
Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
War Disablement Pension

Conditions

6. Assistance will be provided in the form of a grant up to a maximum of £6,000 (which includes the administrative fee). If, after the application has been approved, the final costs increase due to unforeseen works agreed in advance by the Council, the grant offered will be increased to cover the costs.

7. Where the property inspection reveals multiple defects exceeding £6,000 the applicant, if eligible to do so, will be required to apply for Major Works Assistance to have all the works undertaken at the same time. If the applicant is not eligible for Major Works Assistance, assistance will be given to deal with the most urgent works.
8. Successive applications will not be considered until one year has elapsed since the completion of the works that were the subject of the previous application.
9. Applications relating to works that have previously been financially assisted will not be considered within 15 years of the completion of the previous application. In the case of central heating boilers, fixed heating appliances and flat roofs, this period is reduced to 10 years.
10. The applicant must continue to reside in the property for a period of one year after the date of completion of the works.
11. The applicant must provide 3 separate builders quotes for the works. The Council will use its discretion to reduce this requirement where the applicant can demonstrate that they have been unable to obtain 3, and in the case of mobile homes and houseboats where the number of suitably qualified locally based contractors is limited.
12. Applications to replace defective gas central heating boilers will normally only be considered if the boiler is over ten years old and cannot be replaced under any other energy efficiency scheme such as Warm Front.
13. Although assistance will not be given just for these works, the Council will, where practicable, require the application to include works for –
 - Gas/electrical/fire safety
 - Energy efficiency improvements
 - Security measures (window locks etc.)

Other grants are sometimes available for energy efficiency works, and the Council will expect that these be used to finance such works before agreeing to allow them for Minor Works Assistance. The Council will advise on their availability.

14. Works must be completed within six months of the application being approved. Time extensions may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
15. Any breach of these conditions may result in the Council seeking full repayment of the grant subject only to the exceptions set out in the Council's policy for waiving or reducing the repayment of housing assistance.

16. Financial assistance is discretionary and will be made available subject to the Council having adequate resources.

Accredited Landlord Loan Assistance

Purpose

This is discretionary assistance for accredited landlords who wish to acquire property that has been vacant for more than 1 year, which they intend to let out subsequently for a minimum of 5 years.

Eligibility

1. The premises must be a minimum of 40 years old at the date of enquiry and have been vacant for a period of not less than one year when purchased, as determined by Council Tax records.
2. The applicant must be a landlord accredited under the Halton Landlord Accreditation Scheme, and have been accredited for a period of not less than one year.
3. Eligible works include those necessary to rectify Category 1 and 2 hazards, and any other works required to make the property meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

Conditions

4. Assistance offered will be in the form of an interest free loan secured as a legal charge against the premises. The loan is repayable to the Council when the applicant disposes of their interest in the property. An individual can choose to repay the charge earlier if they wish.
5. Maximum eligible costs (including professional fees) are £20,000 and assistance will be provided for 50% of the cost of eligible works (e.g. £10,000 maximum).
6. The premises must meet the decent homes standard on completion of the works.
7. Assistance will not be provided for premises which are intended to be let out as a house in multiple occupation.
8. The applicant must provide three separate builders quotes for the proposed works.
9. Works must be completed within one year of the application being approved. Time extensions may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
10. The applicant must continue to let out the premises for a period of not less than five years after the completion of the works, and throughout this period the landlord must remain accredited under the Halton Landlord Accreditation Scheme.

11. Any breach of these conditions may result in the Council seeking full repayment of the assistance subject only to the exceptions set out in the Council's policy for waiving or reducing the repayment of housing assistance.
12. Financial assistance is discretionary and will be made available subject to the Council having adequate resources.

Block Repair Assistance

Purpose

When a group of privately owned properties (typically in a terrace) are all in need of external repair to the roofs or brickwork, the Council may ask the owners to join in a block repair scheme so that the necessary work can be done at one time by the same contractor. This has the effect of creating financial savings, both for the Council and the owners, compared to the cost of improving properties one at a time. It also improves the appearance of the properties.

Block Repair schemes have to be approved by the Council's Executive Board Sub before they can proceed as they can take up a significant amount of financial resources.

Eligibility

1. The applicant must be the owner-occupier of the property to be improved and occupy it as their only or main residence, or be a Landlord owner of the property. The property must be a minimum of 40 years old.
2. Financial assistance is discretionary and will be made available subject to the Council having adequate resources and deciding that Block Repair is an appropriate method of tackling the external structural problems that exist.

Conditions

3. Every owner in the group of properties must consent to proceed with the proposed works for the scheme to be approved.
4. The Council will organise and supervise the works.

75% of any assistance offered will be in the form of a grant, and 25% will be an interest free loan secured as a legal charge against the dwelling, to be repaid to the Council when the applicant disposes of their interest in the property. An individual can choose to repay the charge earlier if they wish.

5. If, after the application/scheme has been approved, the final costs increase due to unforeseen works, these extra costs will be paid for as grant, not loan.
6. It is a condition that the applicant must continue to own and reside in the property for a period of 3 years after the completion of the works (or let the property out for a similar period in the case of landlords). If this condition is breached, the financial assistance will be repayable to the Council as follows -

- Disposal within the first year 100%
- Disposal within the second year 75%
- Disposal within the third year 50%

Thereafter the applicant will just have to repay the sum secured by the property charge (the loan). The circumstances in which the requirement to repay grant and/or loan will be reduced or waived are set out in the Council's policy for waiving or reducing the repayment of housing assistance.

7. Where the applicant dies before the approved works are complete, the Council will pay an amount of grant proportionate to the amount of the works that have been completed. The Council will exercise its discretion in determining whether or not it would be appropriate to pay for some or all of the outstanding works, although this will normally be restricted to making the property safe and weathertight. In these circumstances the Council will require repayment of the loan but not the grant.

Disabled Facilities Grants

Purpose

These grants are provided for works to adapt the homes of chronically sick or disabled persons to enable them to continue to live independently in their homes. Typically they are for works to allow individuals to get in and out of their home, to move around their home safely, and to improve access to bathing and toileting facilities.

Applications must be supported by an assessment from a specialist (e.g. an Occupational Therapist) from either the Council's Independent Living Team or one employed by the applicant. Most Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations) will organise these works for their tenants if supported by a referral from the Independent Living Team.

The Disabled Facilities Grant scheme is a statutory one meaning that the rules and regulations about eligibility etc. are set out in law rather than Council policy. A more detailed leaflet is available upon request. The Council has discretion in only a few areas. It is also the only grant that the Council is legally obliged to provide.

Eligibility

The detailed scheme conditions are set out in Part 1 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 but the following summarises some of the main points.

1. The applicant must be the owner or tenant of the property to be adapted (this includes owners of mobile homes or houseboats), although this may not necessarily be the person for whom the works are required. A Landlord may support an application on behalf of a disabled tenant, and foster parents can apply for a disabled child in their care provided the fostering arrangement is intended for a minimum of 5 years.
2. The Occupational Therapist or other specialist must be satisfied that the proposed works are necessary and appropriate to meet the disabled person's needs.
3. The application will only be approved if the proposed works are reasonable and practicable, taking into account the age, condition and layout of the property.

Conditions

4. At its discretion, the Council may alternatively offer grant assistance to help an owner-occupier move to and/or adapt a different property if it is not reasonable or practicable to adapt the present home. When the

Council is satisfied that the applicant cannot afford a suitable alternative property, it may offer a grant of up to £10,000 to assist with relocation to and the purchase of a more suitable property, to include legal fees, moving expenses and purchase costs, payable only on completion of the move. This will not prevent an application being made to carry out essential works to adapt the new home if necessary.

5. The applicant, and any owner in the case of a landlord, must sign a certificate stating the intention that the disabled person will occupy the property as their only or main residence for a period of five years after the works are completed (or such shorter period as the person's health or other relevant circumstances permit).
6. The grant is means tested except in the case of applications for children and young persons as defined in the legislation.
7. Some works are considered essential or "mandatory" to meet an individual's needs. Others are considered non-essential or "discretionary". Grant will not be paid for discretionary works.
8. The Council will award Disabled Facilities Grant up to the statutory maximum (currently £25,000 including all professional and planning fees, VAT and any client contribution etc.). However, under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 the Local Authority can consider the needs of disabled people and under this provision additional Social Service financial support has been provided to a number of people in the past. This policy will be continued within available resources.
9. The Council is required to approve or reject any application within six months of receiving a valid application and any other relevant information reasonably required.
10. Although an applicant is only required to submit two quotes for the work, the Council recommends obtaining three. Where the applicant or a relative undertakes the work, grant will only be paid for the cost of materials.
11. Works must be completed within one year of the application being approved. Time extensions may be considered in exceptional circumstances.
12. Where the disabled person dies, or ceases to use the property as the main place of residence, or their intention to occupy the property changes, before the approved works are complete, the Council will pay an amount of grant proportionate to the amount of the works that have been completed. The Council will exercise its discretion in determining whether or not it would be appropriate to pay for some or all of the outstanding works, although this will normally be restricted to making the property safe and weathertight.

Applications will be prioritised in consultation with the Independent Living Team according to the relative urgency of the works after taking account of the applicant's circumstances. However every effort will be made to approve all applications within six months of receipt.

APPENDIX 2

HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Housing Act 2004 introduces a new means of assessing the suitability of dwellings in the form of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and a variety of enforcement options for local authorities to use. The HHSRS replaces the long established fitness standard and repeals the provisions relating to this in the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by the Housing and Local Government Act 1989).

In addition the previous legislation concerning repair notices for dealing with deficiencies in dwellings and much of the previous legislation relating to HMOs is repealed and replaced by new enforcement options, licensing provisions and regulations. This enforcement policy is being introduced to replace the previous 2003 policy in order to reflect the changes introduced by the new legislation.

Formal enforcement action can be particularly important in the case of rented properties and HMOs in the private sector, where some of the worst housing conditions are to be found. The Council's Policy will be to take account of the views and circumstances of tenants, landlords and owners, and we will consult where appropriate with social services, housing management officers, and other support agencies in dealing with vulnerable occupants. The Council will also adopt the principles of the Government's Enforcement Concordat, as a basis for fair, practical and consistent enforcement.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HHSRS and powers available apply to all types of residential premises, including HMOs, purpose built blocks of flats and converted flats regardless of tenure type i.e.

- owner occupied
- privately rented
- RSL owned properties.

The Government has introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005 (SI R005 no 3208), the Housing Health & Safety Rating System Operating Guidance and the Housing Health & Safety Rating System Enforcement Guidance, and the Council will have regard to these in the operation of this policy.

The HHSRS will be used to determine whether or not any action is required by the Council to address unsatisfactory conditions in the housing stock. There are 29 potential hazards in relation to the HHSRS. The Council's enforcement officers will undertake as full an inspection of premises as possible in obtaining relevant evidence of any hazards whether minor or serious. Officers will have regard to the HHSRS operating guidance in assessing and rating the severity of hazards and will determine whether any

category 1 or category 2 hazards exist in or at the premises. The inspections will be to establish whether or not there are any deficiencies and to assess their potential harmful effects on the health, safety and well being of any current or potential occupants or visitors to the premises.

The assessment of hazards will be a two-stage process to: -

- consider the likelihood of an occurrence within 12 months following an inspection.
- consider the range of probable harm outcomes in the event of an occurrence taking place.

These two factors will be combined using the standard method to score each hazard and to determine whether it is a category 1 or category 2 hazard.

The scores from different hazards will not be aggregated, but the presence of a number of category 2 hazards may be a factor in the officer deciding what enforcement action to take. In some cases occupants may encounter one minor hazard after another as they move around the property to such an extent they may create a less safe environment than one with a single high scoring hazard alone.

In determining the appropriate action to be taken having assessed the relevant hazards the officer will consider: -

- the hazard score as determined under the HHSRS
- based upon the score whether the Council has a duty or discretion to act.
- the most appropriate means of dealing with the hazard, taking into account the potential and actual occupants.

Powers and Duties

In considering taking formal enforcement action the Council will have regard to the principles of the Enforcement Concordat. The Council has a general duty to act in relation to a category 1 hazard and must take one of the following actions: -

- serve an improvement notice in accordance with Section 11 of the Act
- make a prohibition order in accordance with Section 20
- serve a hazard awareness notice in accordance with Section 28
- take emergency remedial action under Section 40
- make an emergency prohibition order under section 43
- make a demolition order under Section 265 of the Housing Act 1985 as amended
- declare a clearance area by virtue of Section 289 of the Housing Act 1985 as amended.

The Council has similar powers to deal at its discretion with category 2 hazards, but cannot use the emergency measures, demolition orders or clearance area provisions in response to category 2 hazards unless the circumstances have been prescribed in regulations. No such regulations have been made at the present time.

In accordance with Section 8 of the Act the officer will provide a statement of reasons for the decision they have taken and a copy of the statement will accompany any notices, copies of notices and copies of any other order served under Part 1.

The assessments of hazards under the HHSRS is based on the risk to the potential occupant who is most vulnerable to that particular hazard however in the decision making process regard will be had to the present occupants in determining the action to be taken. Some account of the views of the occupants will also be taken.

Enforcement Options

Improvement notice

This is a possible response to a category 1 or 2 hazard under section 11 or 12 of the Act. Under Section 11 the action to be taken must as a minimum remove the category 1 hazard but may extend beyond this. The notice should try to ensure that any works required are carried out to a standard that prevents the building elements deteriorating and should try to avoid “patch and mend” repairs which may require the Council to take action again should conditions deteriorate.

The notice may relate to more than one category 1 hazard. Where multiple hazards include category 2 hazards the same notice can require action to deal with both category 1 and 2 hazards. The notice cannot require remedial works to start within 28 days of the service of the notice. Appeal against the notice to a Residential Property Tribunal must be made within 21 days of service of the notice. The Council has the power to carry out work in default with or without the agreement of the person on whom the notice was served.

Prohibition Order

This is a response under Section 20 or 21 of the Act to a category 1 or category 2 hazard. It may prohibit the use of part or all of the premises for some or all of the purposes, or occupation by particular members or descriptions of people.

The order becomes operative 28 days after it is made unless the order is appealed. Any appeal must be made to the Residential Property Tribunal within 28 days from the date the order was made.

Emergency Remedial Action and Emergency Prohibition Orders.

The Council has discretion to take emergency enforcement action against category 1 hazards that present an imminent risk of serious harm to occupiers. In such circumstances the Council will take the remedial action to remove a hazard and recover reasonable expenses or will be able to prohibit the use of all or part of a property. The owner will be able to appeal but any appeal will not prevent the action from being taken or the prohibition being put into effect.

The Council may enter the premises at any time to take: -

- emergency remedial action or
- to make an emergency prohibition order
- an emergency prohibition order is served on the day it is made

Appeals may be made to the Residential Property Tribunal within 28 days of the date of the emergency remedial action being taken or the date of the emergency prohibition order being made.

Hazard Awareness Notice

This is a response under Section 29 to a normally less serious hazard where the Council wishes to draw attention to the desirability of remedial action. It is also a possible response under Section 28 to a category 1 hazard as long as no management order is in place under Part 4 of the Act. There may be circumstances where works of improvement or prohibition of use are not reasonable or practicable in which case a hazard awareness notice might be appropriate.

The procedure does not require further action by the person served with the notice but the Council may consider monitoring any hazard awareness notice that it serves. There is no appeal provision against the notices. The council may serve a hazard awareness notice where a person has agreed to take remedial action and the Council are confident the work will be carried out in a reasonable time. In the event of non-compliance the Council may then take further formal action to remove unacceptable hazards.

Demolition Order

The option to serve a demolition order remains available under Part 9 of the Housing Act 1985 as amended, where this is the appropriate course of action to take in response to category 1 hazards. An appeal can be made to the Residential Property Tribunal within 21 days of service of the order.

Clearance Areas

The provisions of part 9 of the 1985 Act as amended are retained in respect of clearance areas with certain changes to align with the new legislation. The Council can declare a clearance area if it is satisfied that each of the

residential buildings in the area contain one or more category 1 hazards (or that these buildings are dangerous or harmful to the health or safety of the inhabitants as a result of their bad arrangement of the narrowness or bad arrangements of the streets); and any other buildings in the area are dangerous or harmful to the health of the inhabitants.

Power to Charge for Enforcement Action

The Council may decide to make a reasonable charge to recover certain expenses incurred with the taking of enforcement action as mentioned above. The charges may relate to: -

- the inspection of premises
- the consideration of action to be taken
- the service of notices.

The Council is not making charges for enforcement action at the present time.

Informal Action

In most cases the Council will adopt an informal approach to try to resolve matters, in keeping with the Government's Enforcement Concordat. Where an owner or landlord agrees to take the required action, the Council will be prepared to give the person a reasonable amount of time to undertake the necessary action before resorting to formal action.

In some cases a hazard awareness notice might be served to document the process. In some cases however, where for instance there is considered to be a high risk to the health or safety of the occupant or where there are concerns perhaps through previous experience that the owner/landlord will not co-operate, then formal action will be commenced without the need for an informal approach.

The Council has introduced a scheme for the accreditation of landlords within the borough in order to develop closer working relationships enabling greater scope for informal arrangements to be agreed. The Council will promote and provide support to landlords who are prepared to meet agreed standards in terms of management and property conditions.

Situations where a service may not be provided to tenants

The Council will obviously want to assist tenants in securing necessary repairs etc to their homes. However in some circumstances it may not be considered appropriate to offer a service e.g.:

- Where the tenant unreasonably refuses access to the landlord, managing agent or landlord's builder, to arrange or to carry out the works.
- Where the tenant has, in the opinion of the Council, clearly caused the damage to the property and there are no other items of disrepair etc.

- Where the tenant has failed to keep an appointment with the investigating officer and has then not responded to a letter or appointment card requesting them to make further contact.
- Where the tenant is shortly intending to move out of the property.
- Where the tenant is already in the process of taking a private legal action regarding the matter and is pursuing a claim for compensation from the landlord.

Re –Connection Of Services

Statutory powers will be used to ensure the re-connection (or to prevent the disconnection) of the gas, electricity or water supply, to tenanted properties where the tenant is not responsible for payment of the bill.

Where section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 is used the cost of re-connection and/or payment of the bill will be charged to the owner.

Harassment/Illegal Eviction

The Protection from Eviction Act 1977 makes it a criminal offence for any person to evict a tenant without following the correct procedure. The act also makes it a criminal offence for a landlord, their agent, or any other person to harass a tenant with the aim of making them leave their home. The Council considers both the harassment and illegal eviction of tenants to be serious matters and will endeavour to give guidance to those who are victims of such actions, and to prosecute offenders in appropriate circumstances.

Caravan Sites

The Council has responsibility for residential caravan sites particularly in relation to the provisions of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960.

The responsibilities include:

- The issuing of site licences for residential caravan sites.
- Liaison with site owners and homeowners regarding contravention of site licence conditions.

Whenever possible an informal approach is used to resolve concerns over site licence conditions, however enforcement action will be considered in appropriate circumstances.

APPENDIX 3

LICENSING OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

The Housing Act 2004 contains various new responsibilities and powers for Local Authorities in dealing with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). From 6th April 2006 Councils were required to introduce mandatory licensing schemes for certain higher risk HMOs.

Larger HMOs which include bedsits and shared houses often have poorer physical and management standards than other privately rented properties, and the people who live in them are often amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society. It is therefore considered important that such properties are properly regulated.

HMO definition

A HMO is a building or part of a building such as a flat that: -

- Is occupied by more than one household and where more than one household shares or lacks an amenity – such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities, or
- Is occupied by more than one household and which is a converted building, but not entirely self-contained flats (whether or not some amenities are shared or lacking), or
- Is converted into self-contained flats, but does not meet the requirements of the 1991 Building Regulation, and at least one third of the flats are occupied under short tenancies.

and if more than one household occupies the building: -

- As their only or main residence, or
- As a refuge for people escaping domestic violence, or
- By students during term time, or
- For other purposes prescribed by the government.

A household is: -

- A single person, or
- A family such as husband and wife, co-habiting couple, same sex couple and related family members e.g. son, daughter, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece etc, or
- Other relationships as prescribed by the government

The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 – (SI no 373 2006) gives further guidance on persons to be regarded as forming a single

household and persons to be treated as occupying a property as their only or main residence.

Exemptions

Certain buildings cannot be defined as HMOs, irrespective of whether they meet the definitions above and include: -

- Buildings managed by a Local Authority, Registered Social Landlord, Police, Fire Authority or Health Authority.
- Buildings occupied by religious communities.
- Buildings predominantly owner occupied, including resident landlords where the owner-occupier (and his family) occupies the building (or flat) with no more than two other persons.
- Buildings occupied by only two persons who do not form a single household.

Mandatory Licensing Requirement

The licensing regime is intended to ensure that: -

- Landlords of HMOs are fit and proper persons or employ managers who are fit and proper persons.
- Each HMO is suitable for occupation by the number of people allowed under the licence.
- The standard of management of the HMO is adequate.

HMOs that meet the following definition are required to be licensed: -

- All HMOs of three or more storeys and occupied by 5 or more persons (comprising of at least two households).

Note – “Storey” includes basements and attics if they are occupied, (including by a resident landlord) or have been converted for occupation or are in use in connection with the HMO. Commercial premises, e.g. shops, offices on the ground or any upper floor are also included in the calculation of the number of storeys but not basements in purely commercial use.

See - The Licensing of House in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Descriptions) (England) Order 2006 – (SI no 371 – 2006)

Licensing Process

Anyone who owns or manages an HMO that is subject to the Mandatory Licensing requirement must apply to the Council for a licence.

The applicant will be required to complete the Council’s application form as owner or manager of the relevant HMO and must provide any supporting information reasonably required by the Council to enable the Council to exercise their licensing functions.

Upon receipt of an application the Council will decide as soon as reasonably practicable whether any action is required under Part 1 of the Act in relation to the Housing Health and Safety Hazard Rating System (HHSRS), and in any case must do that within a period of 5 years from receiving the application.

The Council will determine applications for licensing in accordance with any existing guidance set down by the Government.

The Council will grant a licence if it is satisfied that: -

- The HMO is reasonably suitable for occupation or can be made suitable for the number of intended occupants.
- The proposed licence holder is a fit and proper person.
- The proposed licence holder is the most appropriate person to hold the licence.
- The proposed manager, if there is one, is a fit and proper person.
- The proposed management arrangements are satisfactory.

The Council may refuse to grant a licence if it does not appear that any or all the above conditions will or can be met.

In approving the licence if the Council deem that the arrangements are unsatisfactory for the proposed number of occupants then it may: -

- Approve the licence for a lesser number of occupants, or
- Impose by condition of the licence that specified works are required within a given timescale to bring the property to a desired standard for the proposed number of occupants.

The Council is required to assess whether the applicant, any manager and any person associated with them or formerly associated with them are a fit and proper people to own or manage an HMO. A person will be considered fit and proper if the Council is satisfied that:

- They have no unspent convictions relating to offences involving fraud, dishonesty, violence, drugs or sexual offences.
- They have not practised unlawful discrimination on grounds of sex, colour, race, ethnic or national origins or disability in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business.
- They have no unspent convictions relating to housing or landlord and tenant law.
- They have not been refused an HMO licence, been convicted of breaching the conditions of a licence or have acted otherwise than in accordance with the approval code of practice under S233 of the Act within the last 5 years.
- They have not been in control of a property subject to an HMO Control Order, an Interim Management Order (IMO) or a Final Management Order (FMO) or work in default carried out by a Local Authority within the preceding five years.

- They have not been subject to legal proceedings by a Local Authority for breaches of planning, compulsory purchase, environmental protection or other relevant legislation.
- There is no evidence of any offence referred to above having been committed within the previous five years.

An unspent conviction or other failure is not necessarily automatic grounds for refusing a licence; other circumstances (e.g. training undertaken by the landlord or subsequent co-operation with the Local Authority) will be taken into account. Equally, the legislation refers to evidence of an offence; it is not necessary when refusing to accept someone as a fit and proper person to demonstrate that a conviction has been obtained. Evidence of spent convictions, i.e. those to which the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 applies, is not taken into account.

Where there is evidence of a problem, the Council will invite applicants to submit an explanation of their actions. The applicant will be required to account for the failure to comply with legislation, and satisfy the Council that this will not recur.

The licence if granted, will be for a maximum period of 5 years from the date of approval and will only apply to the particular HMO for which it is granted. The licence cannot be transferred to another person.

The licence will contain various conditions, which may include the following: -

- The production of valid gas safety certificates annually.
- Proof that electrical appliances and furniture are kept in a safe condition.
- The installation, proper siting and proof of maintenance of smoke alarms.
- Each occupier to have a written statement of the terms on which they occupy the property – a tenancy agreement.
- Restrictions or prohibitions on the use of parts of the HMO by occupants.
- Requirement to maintain all facilities and amenities in good repair and working order.
- Requirement to undertake specified works or repairs to be carried out within a specified timeframe.

In deciding on whether or not a HMO is suitable for occupation by a particular maximum number of households the Council will have regard to The Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006 – (SI no 373 2006) and any other guidance or amenity standards given by the Government or any recognised body e.g. CIEH or any local standards, later agreed by the Council.

Application Fees

The Council will charge a fee based upon the costs reasonably incurred in carrying out the administration of the licensing scheme. The cost of the licence application will be as follows: -

- £ 285 Per HMO (up to 6 habitable rooms)
- £ 295 Per HMO (up to 8 habitable rooms)
- £ 300 Per HMO (up to 10 habitable rooms)
- £ 310 Per HMO (11 or more habitable rooms).

Note – Habitable rooms are living rooms and bedrooms.

Variation or Revocation of a Licence

The Council may vary the terms of a licence at any time during its life in the following circumstances: -

- With the agreement of the licence holder, or
- Following a change in circumstances since the licence was granted.

A change in circumstances would include: -

- The discovery of new information.
- A change in any prescribed standards since the licence was granted.

The licence can be varied either under the Council's initiative or at the request of: -

- The licence holder, or
- Any person having an interest in the property (not tenants with an expired lease of 3 years or less), or
- Any person having control or managing the property, or
- Any person on whom the proposed licence imposes any restriction or obligation.

Where an application to vary a licence comes from any of the above the Council may refuse to do so having given consideration to the reasons for the request.

The Council may revoke a licence (i.e. bring it to an end before expiry by passage of time) in the following circumstances: -

- With the agreement of the licence holder.
- Where there has been serious or repeated breach of licence conditions.
- Where the licence holder or management are no longer deemed to be fit and proper persons to hold the licence or manage the property.
- Where the HMO has not been brought up to the standard required.

Interim and Final Management Orders

In certain circumstances, for example where unlicensed or problem HMOs present a risk to the health, safety or welfare of the occupiers of the property, the Council may apply to take over the management of the property. The owner retains their ownership rights. The Interim Management Order (IMO) lasts for a year to enable suitable permanent management arrangements to be made. If the IMO expires and there has been no improvement then the Council can issue a Final Management Order, which may last up to 5 years and can be renewed.

Appeals

Any person aggrieved by the Council in relation to: -

- Refusal of an HMO licence application
- Imposition of any conditions attached to a licence
- Revocation of a licence
- Variation of a licence
- Refusal to vary a licence
- Making of an Interim or Final Management Order.

can appeal to a Residential Property Tribunal.

Offences

It is an offence for any person who manages or controls an HMO, which is required to be licensed but is not licensed. Upon conviction, they may receive a fine of up to £20,000. It is also an offence for any person having control or managing an HMO to allow the property to be occupied by more people than are permitted by the licence or to fail to comply with licence conditions. In either case they may upon conviction be subject to fines of up to £5,000.

Rent Repayment Orders

Where housing benefit has been paid by the Council in respect of an unlicensed HMO that should have been licensed, the Council may apply to a Residential Property Tribunal for an order that the person authorised to receive rent payments e.g. the landlord, should repay a sum equivalent to the benefit paid. This can be for a period of up to 12 months. Similarly where any occupier has paid rent during a time when the HMO should have been licensed they may also appeal to a Residential Property Tribunal to claim back any rent they may have paid during the unlicensed period, again to a limit of up to 12 months. This can only be done if the Council has been successful earlier in taking proceedings against the person concerned.

Temporary Exemption Notices

The Council can if it deems fit serve a Temporary Exemption Notice (TEN) where a person who is required to hold a licence notifies the Council that they

propose to take steps to secure that the HMO no longer needs to be licensed. The TEN exempts the property from licensing for 3 months from the date the notice is served. If the situation is not resolved a second TEN may be served for a further 3 months. When this notice runs out the property must then either become licensed, cease to be licensable or may become the subject of an Interim Management Order.

Power of Entry

Where the Council considers that entry to premises is required to determine whether it requires a licence any officer duly authorised should be allowed entry at any reasonable time provided that the owner and any occupiers are given at least 24 hours notice.

There is no requirement to give notice where the Council considers that entry to the premises is required for the purpose of determining whether any offence has been committed (for example operating without a licence or breaching the conditions of a licence).

If entry is refused the Council can apply to the court for a warrant authorising entry (by force if necessary).

Register

The Council will provide and maintain a register of: -

- All licenses granted and in force.
- All Temporary Exemption Notices served and in force.
- All Management Orders made and in force.

The register will be available for inspection by the public.

HMO Management Regulations

The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 – (SI no 372–2006) apply to all HMOs, not just those which are subject to mandatory licensing. These place responsibilities on those having control of HMOs to ensure proper management and maintenance of amenities, gas, electricity and safety provisions. In addition they require occupants to co-operate with managers of HMOs in the reasonable execution of their duties.

Any person who fails to comply with the regulations commits an offence under Section 234(3) of the Housing Act 2004, which is punishable on conviction with a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, currently £5,000.

APPENDIX 4

POLICY FOR WAIVING OR REDUCING THE REPAYMENT OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE

This policy sets out the circumstances under which the Council will consider reducing or waiving the repayment of grant and/or loan assistance provided under its Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy. Decisions in these matters will be taken by the Operational Director for Health and Partnerships.

For the purposes of this policy a “disposal” of premises is a conveyance of the freehold or an assignment of the leasehold title.

Grant Assistance

1. Financial Hardship
A disposal made following such a change in the financial circumstances of the relevant person that he/she would suffer financial hardship if all or part of the amount of grant was repaid.
2. Employment
A disposal made to enable a relevant person to take up employment or to change the place of his/her employment.
3. Health and Well-being
A disposal made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health, or well being, of a relevant person.
4. Provision of Care
A disposal made to enable a relevant person to live with, or near, any person
 - (a) who is disabled or infirm and in need of care which the relevant person is intending to provide: or
 - (b) who is intending to provide care of which the relevant person is in need of by reason of disability or infirmity.
5. Insufficient Disposal Proceeds
Where the disposal proceeds are insufficient to repay any grant due to the Council.
6. Disposal to the Local Authority
A disposal to the Local Authority where the Authority acquires the premises for redevelopment using compulsory powers, or by negotiation with the same intent.

7. Inheritance
A disposal by a relevant person of premises to which an application for grant relates where those premises were vested in that person as a person taking under a will or on an intestacy and where the premises continue to be occupied by that person for the balance of the period specified in the original grant approval.
8. Matrimonial Causes
A disposal pursuant to an order made under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973.
9. Annuity Disposal
A disposal to raise a retirement income from an insurance annuity where the relevant person retains the right to occupy the property until death. The individual must be at least 70 at the time of disposal.

Loan Assistance

If a disposal falls under the provisions of points 6 or 9 above, the Council may consider reducing or waiving any loan assistance that falls due to be repaid.

If a disposal arises as described in point 7 above, the requirement to repay the loan will be deferred until the next relevant disposal, secured by a continuing legal charge against the premises.

Consideration will also be given in circumstances where the disposal proceeds are insufficient to repay any loan due to the Council.

How to Apply

Requests under this policy should be made in writing prior to any circumstances that may result in a breach of grant and/or loan conditions, and be addressed to -

Principal Housing Inspector
Health and Community Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Dee Floor 1
Grosvenor House
Halton Lea
Runcorn WA7 2ED

Additional supporting documentation may be requested to enable a decision to be made. Subject to the speedy supply of such documentation a decision will normally be made within 1 calendar month.

Any person dissatisfied with a decision should use the Council's formal complaints procedure.

APPENDIX 5

SCALE OF FEES

Type of Works	Fee
<u>Minor works Assistance</u>	£200
<u>Care and Repair Agency Services -</u>	
Lifts and equipment only	£200
All other schemes	The higher of £500 or 9% of net contract value (*)
Administration charge for outsourced design consultancy	£200 in addition to (*)
Aborted work on schemes that are fully designed	6% of actual or estimated contract value.

VAT at 17.5% is charged in addition to the above fees.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director (Health and Community)

SUBJECT: Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy

WARDS: All wards

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Executive Board of the development and draft findings of a Housing Strategy for the Liverpool City Region, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- i) That the Executive Board note the report and support the thrust of the comments identified within Section 6 within the Conclusions section.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy is a major piece of work, funded by Government Office NW but commissioned by the Merseyside Housing Forum, which will provide an investment framework for future housing development across the City Region. It is a key element of the Sustainable Communities workstream of the Liverpool City Region Development Programme in response to the Northern Way challenge.

The first phase of the work, carried out in 2005/06 by Ecotec, defined three housing markets within the City Region on the basis of travel to work patterns, demographic information and housing market conditions. There is some overlap between the three areas, known as "Zones of Flexibility", for example, Halton is contained within both the Northern (Liverpool focused) and Eastern (Warrington focused) Housing Market Areas.

The second stage of the work has been prepared by a consortium of consultants led by GVA Grimley and includes Housing Market Assessments for each of the three areas, an Identification of Vulnerable Housing Markets report, and a report on BME and Gypsy/Traveller Households in the City Region. The findings from these reports, summarised below, and existing plans such as the Liverpool CRDP and the draft Regional Spatial Strategy have been fed into the development of the draft City Region Housing Strategy.

It is expected that the current draft of the Strategy will be signed off by members of the Merseyside Housing Forum at their meeting on 2nd April 2007 and endorsement of the Strategy will be sought at the Chief Executives and Leaders Group at the end of April. Unfortunately the requirement to complete and pay for the commission by the end of March has led to challenging turn round times for consultation and feedback.

4. THE EVIDENCE BASE

Housing Market Assessments

The Housing Market Assessments consisted of an assessment of the existing housing stock in each Housing Market Area (HMA) and its ability to meet future demands based on demographic and economic forecasts. The key findings arising from the assessments are:

Northern HMA (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton, West Lancashire and Wirral)

The area has the greatest potential for economic growth but faces the most acute stock imbalance, environmental and multiple deprivation issues. Without intervention to address these issues, the full benefits of expected economic growth will not be captured in the area.

Southern HMA (Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Flintshire, Vale Royal and Wrexham)

The area offers unrivalled quality in its neighbourhoods and quality of life. However, there are extreme issues of affordability and lack of housing choice, compounded by constraints on housing development due to a shortage of brownfield sites and location of services and infrastructure.

Eastern HMA (Halton, St Helens, Vale Royal and Warrington)

The area is the most diverse and as a whole offers the most balanced housing market. There are, however, emerging issues of affordability in the Southern part of the area, coupled with regeneration challenges and a need to build balanced housing markets within Halton and St Helens.

Vulnerable Housing Markets

This research builds upon earlier work on low demand undertaken by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies and uses an index of housing, quality of place, quality of life and socio economic factors based on 2001 Census and 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation indicators to map the 15% most vulnerable housing markets in the City Region. Although the data used is already out of date, these are the

most current sources of data to enable consistent comparison between local authorities.

The areas identified correlate precisely with the existing New Heartlands intervention areas, but also include smaller concentrations of underlying market vulnerability in areas of Knowsley, Halton, St Helens, West Lancashire, Warrington and Ellesmere Port.

Within Halton the areas specifically identified are around the Widnes waterfront from West Bank to Crow Wood, Central Widnes around Kingsway and the social estates around Ditton and Hough Green. It is felt that market vulnerability in these areas stems from multiple deprivation and low quality of life and the Strategy recommends that housing interventions in these areas should be part of wider, comprehensive programmes of neighbourhood change.

In Runcorn, the vulnerable markets identified are listed as “the Runcorn social estates around Castlefields and Brookvale¹.” Vulnerability in these areas is thought to be more attributable to poor access to services combined with structural weaknesses in the choice of housing, implying that housing led intervention is more appropriate.

BME/Gypsy and Traveller Households

This research consisted of a review of the challenges and responses to BME and Gypsy and Traveller communities at City Region level. The findings show a link between concentrations of multiple deprivation and areas with significant BME populations, particularly in localised areas of Liverpool. The research also recognises the recent growth in migrant workers entering the Northern HMA, particularly in Liverpool and Sefton and identifies a shortfall in provision of authorised caravan pitches across the City Region.

5. STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

The draft Strategy identifies 7 Strategic Enablers as the building blocks to meet the Strategy’s vision to create sustainable communities. The Strategic Enablers and the appropriate policy responses required to deliver them are summarised below.

Strategic Enabler 1 – Planning for a sustainable level of growth

This recognises that due to a series of forthcoming major projects, economic growth is predicted in all HMAs centred around the core areas of Liverpool, Warrington and Chester leading to newly arising housing demand. The Strategy recommends the level of housing growth to 2021 in each HMA to meet this demand with an emphasis on

¹ Brookvale has not previously been considered to be an estate in significant risk of market decline. We have asked the consultants to amend this reference to “The Runcorn New Town estates”

joint working and co-operation between authorities to deal with potential undersupply relative to the level of economic growth.

Strategic Enabler 2 – Sustainable Growth Locations

The Strategy recommends prioritisation of housing growth within the New Heartlands Pathfinder area and other inner urban areas of Liverpool. Outside these areas, housing policies should prioritise growth in identified Priority Regeneration Areas (selected from the 15% most vulnerable neighbourhoods using the criteria below), then in areas proximate and accessible to employment growth areas as identified by the CRDP.

This represents an opportunity to capitalise on the Mersey Gateway crossing as a catalyst for area based regeneration in the identified vulnerable neighbourhoods of South Widnes and the New Town estates.

Also recommended is the development of joint planning policies between Halton, Warrington and St Helens to distribute housing growth in view of Warrington's land availability constraints.

Strategic Enabler 3 – Priority Regeneration Areas

Again, the emphasis is on New Heartlands as the primary regeneration focus for the City Region with a recommendation for authorities within the Northern HMA to explore developing a Multi Agency Agreement to support delivery of the programme.

Outside this area, the Strategy recommends cross boundary working within each HMA to prioritise regeneration of the 15% most vulnerable neighbourhoods using criteria such as potential contribution to economic growth, diversification of housing choice, ability to lever private sector investment and co-existence of other regeneration programmes.

Based on these criteria there is potential to make a strong case for additional funding from the Regional Housing Pot to regenerate areas of South Widnes, given its proximity to the Mersey Crossing and EDZ and some of the New Town estates in view of the constituent monolithic social housing provision. It also supports the continued regeneration of Castlefields through the National Affordable Housing Programme.

Strategic Enabler 4 – Creating Balanced Markets

The Strategy recommends increased provision of larger “aspirational” house types in the Northern and Eastern HMAs to compensate for an historical undersupply of this type of provision and to capture a high proportion of growth associated with managerial and professional

occupations to meet the demand generated by economic growth, a policy which has been adopted by Halton for some years.

It also advocates the diversification of mono tenure estates within vulnerable areas through the introduction of intermediate housing and new market housing for sale.

Strategic Enabler 5 – Delivering a Better Choice of Affordable Housing

The Strategy recommends affordable housing (both social housing and intermediate provision) figures for each of the HMAs but with higher rates in areas with more acute affordability issues i.e. Southern HMA authorities, South Warrington, West Wirral, Sefton and West Lancashire. Halton has the lowest average income to house price ratio (1:4.3) of all the City Region authorities.

Strategic Enabler 6 – Delivering Quality Neighbourhoods

A range of policy responses are recommended to improve environmental quality in the Regeneration Priority Areas, specifically working with service delivery agencies and establishing neighbourhood management initiatives to complement and support housing investment. This perhaps strengthens the case for additional funding in Halton's most vulnerable areas due to the congruous location of the existing neighbourhood management pilots.

Strategic Enabler 7 – Equality and Diversity

Recommended policy responses focus on the need to increase understanding of the future needs of BME communities at City Region and local level and to jointly review provision for Gypsies and Travellers as required by the Housing Act 2004. A cross Cheshire Gypsy and Traveller needs assessment has recently been undertaken with the final report expected in April.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy undoubtedly has a New Heartlands/Liverpool focus. Informal discussions with colleagues in St Helens and Knowsley have revealed concerns about the degree of emphasis based on the Pathfinder area.

Nevertheless, the findings and recommendations of the Strategy may present opportunities to increase investment in some of Halton's poorest neighbourhoods. The Strategy also supports continued investment in Castlefields through the National Affordable Housing Programme as the area is identified as one of the top 15% vulnerable housing markets.

The authors of the Strategy have recognised that given the deadline for completing the commission it is unlikely that agreement could be reached between partners on the relative merits of each vulnerable area. The report, therefore, restricts itself to suggesting a broad framework for partners to use to determine priority areas for investment. Failure to include specific priorities may reduce the value of the document as a tool for bidding for resources.

It is important that the Strategy is not viewed in isolation and that delivery plans take account of interlinked policies and strategies dealing with issues such as social inclusion, transport and education.

Whilst the document is called a Housing Strategy, many of the policy recommendations focus on high level strategic planning issues rather than the detailed mix of house types and size required in local authority areas. There is a particular focus on the development of joint planning policies which planners feel may prove problematic to deliver within Local Development Frameworks.

Some concerns have been received that the Strategy fails to deal with specific housing issues such as the impact of changing demographics, particularly the housing needs of the increasing elderly population across the City Region and the issue of homelessness. It is likely that the authors of the Strategy would contend that the purpose of the document is to recommend policies to support economic growth and regeneration and that such issues are best addressed through local authorities' individual Housing Strategies.

At the time of writing the report there are a number of comments being received as a result of wider distribution of the Strategy which require further clarification from the consultants about their data sources and interpretation. We intend to invite the consultants to meet with relevant Council Officers to ensure a speedy resolution to some of the issues being raised.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the Strategy will feed into Regional, Sub Regional and local policy development, specifically Halton's Housing Strategy, Local Development Framework and Economic Development Strategy.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The North West Regional Housing Board has earmarked £9 million for investment in areas of vulnerable housing markets outside of the Pathfinder areas. The vulnerable housing markets identified in the Strategy, including the areas identified in Halton, may benefit from this investment.

9. RISK ANALYSIS

Not applicable

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

Regeneration of the most vulnerable areas of the City Region and the creation of sustainable communities will have a positive effect on social inclusion. The Strategy also contains recommendations to respond to the needs of diverse groups within the City Region including Black and Ethnic Minorities and Gypsies and Travellers.

Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy

2nd Working Draft

February 2007

Contents

1	Preface	2
2	Introduction	3
3	Strategic Policy Context	11
4	The Evidence Base	14
5	Vulnerable Housing Markets	39
6	The Vision and Objectives	42
7	Spatial Framework	45
8	Strategic Enablers of Change	50
9	Monitoring Framework	73

Draft

1 Preface

- 1.1 The Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy is a major piece of work, funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government, which will provide an investment framework for future housing development across the city region. The work is being led by a steering group drawn from all of the city region's local authorities, and the Strategy is being prepared by a consortium of consultants led by GVA Grimley LLP.
- 1.2 The Liverpool City Region Housing Strategy will provide a framework for housing investment to support regeneration and economic growth in the City Region. It will provide context for Local Development Frameworks, future reviews of Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy. It also addresses the demands of recent and emerging housing, planning and economic policy developments, notable recent Planning Policy Statement 3, the Barker Review of Land Use Planning, and the Northern Way Growth Strategy. It is a key element of the Liverpool City Region Development Programme, helping to deliver the Sustainable Communities element of the CRDP.
- 1.3 The first phase of work was carried out in 2005-06 by Ecotec, which defined the three housing markets within the City Region. These were defined on the basis of travel-to-work patterns, demographic information and housing market conditions. There is some overlap between the areas. The first phase of the project also provided a large amount of information and evidence – economic, social and so on – which prepared the ground for the second phase – the preparation of the Strategy itself.

A Note on the “Working Draft” Housing Strategy

- 1.4 This is a working draft of the Housing Strategy. It is intended to share key evidence and suggested policy responses. This document will be the basis for consultation with partners in March 2007. Feedback from partners will then be incorporated and the Housing Strategy refined for its launch in April 2007.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Partners across the Liverpool City Region have been working collaboratively to fully understand the way in which their housing markets work, interact and complement one another. The City Region has set out its economic growth plans in the City Region Development Plan (CRDP). These plans will build upon recent economic successes, exploit competitive advantages and put in place the strategic infrastructure that is required to sustain growth.
- 2.2 The City Region authorities have jointly agreed a response to the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy which details a sustainable level of housing supply at a local level in order to regenerate the most vulnerable parts of the City Region and grow the housing market in a sustainable way.
- 2.3 Recent changes in the economy and demographics of the City Region have added impetus to the need to jointly understand and plan for the right choice of housing in the right locations. At the same time, Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) has reinforced the need to undertake “strategic” housing market assessments as a basis for planning for a balanced growth in functional market areas.
- 2.4 These are not insignificant drivers of change. The City Region authorities and their partners have therefore worked collaboratively to devise a Housing Strategy that responds to the opportunities and challenges that are likely to arise from the growth of the City Region’s economy. The Strategy is informed by a series of strategic “Housing Market Assessments” covering all local authorities within the City Region.
- 2.5 It is worthy to note that this is the first City Regional Housing Strategy to be prepared and represents joint working and a shared vision between thirteen local authorities and a range of stakeholder groups.

The Vision

- 2.6 The City Region Housing Strategy aims to secure balanced housing markets which will meet locally defined needs and provide a choice of housing and neighbourhoods that will underpin economic growth. Integral to this vision is a focus on growth of the City Region’s economic assets and the ways in which the housing can reinforce their growth while at the same time redressing disparities in socio-economic conditions.
- 2.7 The City Region’s principal economic assets are:

- Liverpool City Centre - a Regional Centre;
- Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the Merseyside Ports, in particular the Port of Liverpool - regional and national gateways and generators of economic activity;
- The Strategic Investment Areas (SIAs) and Economic Development Zones (EDZs); and
- The West Cheshire / North East Wales sub-region – with specific reference to Chester as a driver of City Region Growth.

2.8 This vision builds on the economic rationale and strategy contained in the Liverpool City Region Development Plan. The CRDP aims to provide the type of housing in the range of neighbourhoods which will enable realisation of its economic vision. Its vision is set out below:

“Our Vision is to regain our status as a premier European city region by 2025. We will secure an internationally competitive economy and cultural offer; and outstanding quality of life; and vibrant communities contributing to and sharing in sustainable wealth creation.”

2.9 This Housing Strategy represents a long-term approach to creating balanced housing markets. At its heart are long-term population and economic forecasts which suggest where it is necessary to restructure parts of the City Region's housing market and the type of housing which is required to sustain economic growth

2.10 The Housing Strategy sets out how the authorities and their partners will focus policy, resources and partnership activity to secure a mutually reinforcing economy and housing markets within the City Region.

The Make-up of the City Region

2.11 The Liverpool City Region is home to two million people and as such forms a major part of the Northwest's regional labour market, business base, housing stock and culture.

2.12 The City Region consists of thirteen local authorities, inclusive of the New Heartlands HMRI Pathfinder area. It incorporates the local authorities of Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton,

St Helens, Wirral, Halton, Ellesmere Port and Neston, West Lancashire, Chester, part of Vale Royal, and the Welsh authorities of Wrexham and Flintshire. Warrington is located both in the Liverpool and Manchester City Regions, however it forms an integral part of the economic and housing offer of the Liverpool City Region and as such is considered constituent.



- 2.13 The City Region has at its core the City of Liverpool, a Regional Centre for retail, commercial, tourism and leisure. In the south the West Cheshire / North East Wales sub-region, centred on Chester, is also a key area for economic growth and tourism. In the east, Warrington has developed a role as a centre for service, logistics and manufacturing industries, taking advantage of its strategic location at a major motorway intersection and the nexus of the West Coast Mainline and Trans-Pennine rail routes. A

number of other settlements across the city region provide employment as well as more localised retail, community and leisure facilities.

2.14 All are linked in terms of household movements, travel to work, leisure and shopping areas. For the purposes of this Strategy, three functional housing market areas have been identified. They are:

- The Northern Housing Market Area
- The Southern Housing Market Area
- The Eastern Housing Market Area

2.15 The Housing Strategy articulates the policy, partnership and resource commitments that are required in order for each of these functional market areas to become appropriately balanced and sufficiently appealing to underpin economic growth.

The Overarching Challenges

Draft

2.16 The City Region is pursuing an aggressive programme of economic development through its City Region Development Plan. Following the delivery of a series of high-impact business and transport related projects it is estimated that an **additional 48,000 jobs will be created**. This unprecedented level of economic growth offers a tangible opportunity to create sustainable communities, to address social exclusion, worklessness and areas of entrenched economic disadvantage. Household demand resulting from this level of growth is estimated to be over 115,000 across the City Region.

2.17 However, in order to capture the full benefits of economic and household growth and to channel this to drive regeneration, the City Region has to address some fundamental issues in relation to its housing stock, neighbourhood quality and affordability. In several areas, authorities need to respond jointly to overcome local capacity constraints that might cause displacement of demand outside the City Region if left unaddressed. It is this level of strategic choices and decisions that the Housing Strategy aims to inform and provide policy recommendations to.

2.18 The overarching housing challenges relating to each market area are set out below along with reasoned justification for their inclusion in the Strategy:

- In the **Northern Housing Market Area** (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens, Sefton, West Lancashire and Wirral), the key challenges are ones of securing economic growth, facilitating physical renewal (particularly housing market renewal through the 15 year NewHeartlands programme), and securing social inclusion.

Justification - The Northern Housing Market Area has the greatest potential for economic growth in the City Region, containing a critical mass of economic assets which under the CRDP will generate employment and GVA growth. However it also faces the most acute market renewal issues and unparalleled concentrations of multiple deprivation. Significant areas of its housing stock are fundamentally out of balance with current and emerging household needs, demands and aspirations. Many of its neighbourhoods are severely blighted by poor environmental quality and even poorer quality of life for its residents. The perceptual effects are not just localised but stigmatise large areas of the Northern Market Area.

Without intervention to address these impediments, the full benefits of economic growth will not be captured within the Northern Area. The potential to harness growth to address socio-economic disparities will be diluted and the gap between affluent and deprived neighbourhoods will effectively widen. This Strategy therefore recognises the economic driver that the Northern Area has the potential to become, but also the imperative need for a prioritisation of measures to address its market renewal issues. These are issues of significance for the whole of the City Region.

- In the **Southern Market Area** the challenges are focused on supporting continued economic growth in a sustainable manner, and addressing the twin issues of housing affordability and choice.

Justification – The Southern Market Area, focused on Chester, is an important economic driver in its own right. It is not only attractive to businesses but also offers a good balance of housing types that are likely to appeal to households in sectors of the economy which are forecast to grow. The Southern Market Area also appeals due to the quality of its neighbourhoods, attractive environment and the unrivalled quality of life that it offers.

This positive role played by the Southern Market Area is counterbalanced by apparent and emerging disparities in relation to affordable housing. While the area's housing stock offers a range of house types, its stock of social rented housing is relatively small. Average house prices, and lowest quartile prices, have risen to a level which is inaccessible to many current and prospective households. Policy interventions have started to address the provision of affordable stock as a major component of new development, however new units have been focused on single person and small family accommodation. The Southern Market Area effectively lacks a ladder of affordable accommodation catering for different stages in the household life-cycle.

Coupled with this imbalance, Chester faces environmental and Green Belt policy issues which limit its potential to accommodate its own economic growth in a sustainable manner. Increasingly the market has provided housing across the national border and travel to work and migration links with the North East Wales authorities have strengthened.

The North East Wales authorities face regeneration issues associated with settlements along the Flintshire Coast and Dee Estuary. Affordability is becoming a more urgent issue as housing demand has progressively migrated across the border due to property "hot spots" in Cheshire.

In order for the area to continue to contribute to City Region economic growth, collaborative working is required between local authorities to plan for an appropriate supply of housing and to prioritise supply of a range of affordable accommodation. This Strategy is structured to respond to these challenges.

- In the **Eastern Market Area** the challenges are similar to the Southern Area, with an emphasis upon local authorities acting collaboratively to sustain and accommodate economic growth. However discrete neighbourhoods within the Eastern Area also face challenges of urban renewal and social inclusion.

Justification – Warrington has effectively capitalised on its strategic location at the intersection of national road and rail networks and has attracted businesses in logistics, distribution and manufacturing industries. It has also developed an "out of town" business park economy with major office occupiers present. In the past this has led to levels of

economic growth which have reinforced travel to work links with its adjacent authorities and spurred population growth. Warrington is functionally linked to St Helens, Halton and Vale Royal local authorities in labour market and housing terms, however its economy is a clear driving force in the Eastern Market Area.

Warrington is forecast to post continued economic growth, not least due to major (regional level) projects such as the Omega employment site and investment in the town centre retail offer. However it faces land constraints in accommodating associated household growth. Joint authority will become increasingly important, in particular with St Helens and Halton, in order to accommodate future growth in a sustainable manner.

The Priorities

2.19 Four priorities have been identified in planning for the City Region's housing markets. These priorities have been confirmed by a strategic Housing Market Assessment prepared for each of the three market areas. The priorities at City Regional level are:

- To grow critical mass in the economy and population as a sustainable basis for housing markets;
- To tackle housing market failure - with specific reference to the inner urban areas of the City Region covered by NewHeartlands;
- To balance housing markets and offer a choice of accommodation in a range of tenures
- In balancing housing markets, to plan for affordable housing requirements – with particular emphasis on developing a range of “move-on” accommodation in the Southern Market Area; and
- To devise joint strategic approaches sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.

2.20 These priorities have helped to shape the Housing Strategy.

The Shape of the Strategy



2.21 The Housing Strategy has been informed by three strategic Housing Market Assessments, an analysis of BME/ Gypsy and traveller household needs and an assessment of vulnerable housing markets.

2.22 The Strategy is made up of the following parts:

- A vision which is consistent with the Liverpool City Region Development Plan.
- A series of objectives that relate to the challenges and opportunities highlighted by the housing market assessments;
- A spatial framework provides a settlement hierarchy and guidance in relation to the location of priority interventions in the housing market;
- A series of 7 “Strategic Enablers” which suggest the ways in which partners should intervene individually and collectively; and
- A delivery framework which identifies the partnership and policy actions that need to be pursued.

2.23 Before the Strategy is introduced, the next sections briefly review the policy context and provide a summary of evidence from the housing market assessments.

3 Strategic Policy Context

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3)

3.1 PPS3 was launched in November 2006 and represents a key part of the Government's guidance on the creation of sustainable communities. Within the strategic housing policy objectives of PPS3 the Government's key housing policy goal is stated as,

"...to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home which they can afford, in a community where they want to live"

3.2 In order to achieve this goal the Government is seeking:

- To achieve a wide choice of quality homes, both affordable and market housing
- To widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need
- To improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing
- To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed income communities in all areas, both rural and urban.

3.3 PPS3 sets a requirement for multi-authority working and recommends the preparation of strategic housing market assessments to cover functional market areas. This Housing Strategy has been prepared using the terms of reference set by PPS3.

3.4 **The Sustainable Communities Plan** released in 2003 emphasised the government's priorities with regard to regeneration and planning with its primary concerns being; sustainable development, housing and urban design issues. Importantly, the plan contained a package of measures to address the undersupply of housing in the south east and low demand in many other areas, predominantly the north.

3.5 Building on this Plan two complementary 5 year plans were released in 2005 which together comprise the second phase of the sustainable communities delivery strategy: **Sustainable Communities Homes for All** and **Sustainable Communities People, Places and Prosperity**.

- 3.6 **The Northern Way** was launched in February 2004 as part of the Sustainable Communities Plan. It aimed to address the £30 billion productivity gap between the North and South of England by maximising the opportunities for growth across the three northern regions (North West, the North East and Yorkshire and the Humber). The three northern RDAs have been charged with developing a “growth and jobs corridor” between Newcastle, Hull and Liverpool, complementing existing work being taken forward under the Sustainable Communities Plan, in order to raise the economic performance of the north.
- 3.7 The outcome of this has been the **Northern Way Growth Strategy**, launched in September 2004. This identifies 8 city regions, the Liverpool City Region being one, for which **City Regional Development Programmes (CRDP)** were subsequently produced in 2005. The city region concept is embedded in sub-regional working and has helped to foster greater understanding and collaboration across real economic geographies. Irrespective of the future development of the Northern Way, its partnership benefits will be a positive legacy.
- 3.8 The **Northern Way Action Plan** produced in 2005 identified the Liverpool City Region as a distinctive seaboard urban area, with a unique waterfront location which is undergoing a phase of recovery and re-inventing itself for the 21st century.
- 3.9 A programme of research has been conducted to support the Northern Way with two key research papers released: **Locating Homes in the Right Places** and **Quality of Place and the North’s Residential Offer**. These have provided further evidence and arguments for the need to ensure that investment in housing is targeted to remove constraints on economic growth potential whilst also raising the importance of the ‘residential offer’ and the range of influences which affect this offer. These papers reinforce the need to understand the relationship between economic performance, the residential offer and housing markets. They also call for complementarity between economic, spatial planning and housing policy and investment frameworks.

The Regional Housing Strategy

- 3.10 The Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) was produced by the North West Regional Housing Board in 2005. Its core aim of delivering a housing offer that promotes and sustains maximum economic growth within the region fits with wider national strategy and the Northern Way. Emphasis is placed on creating balanced housing markets and sustainable communities with delivery of affordable housing and tackling areas of poor quality and low demand housing at its core.

- 3.11 The Strategy notes that the housing market in the North West has clearly entered a phase of change with prices rising rapidly. Significantly, prices have not risen uniformly across the city region with higher priced areas experiencing the greatest increases meaning that the gap between higher and lower priced areas have widened.
- 3.12 In order to differentiate housing markets within the region the Regional Housing Strategy identifies seven broad housing market typologies. In terms of the Liverpool City Region designation, central Merseyside is classed as being an “*unbalanced market*” with much of the area requiring market renewal, however, a thriving city centre market is also identified. Warrington forms part of an arc stretching to Bury which is classed along with West Lancashire (excluding Skelmesdale) as a balanced housing market. Skelmersdale’s market is deemed one of low value with potential and Chester is classed as a buoyant area with ‘high value/potential’.
- 3.13 Within the City Region the Regional Housing Strategy sets priorities which focus on urban regeneration across much of the sub-region, including stock renewal and replacement and improved tenure mix. The Strategy acknowledges that more radical measures may be required in Skelmesdale and that complementary planning policies that recognise the inter-relationship between the neighbourhoods experiencing low demand and those with potential growth will be crucial to the success of the NewHeartlands Pathfinder area.

Summary

- 3.14 There is strong level of policy support for the development and implementation of this Housing Strategy. It will deliver under the guidelines of the recent PPS3, will provide an essential contribution to the City Region’s economic growth agenda and will also help to create sustainable communities.
- 3.15 In the next section the evidence base informing the Strategy is summarised.

4 The Evidence Base

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy draws its evidence from three strategic Housing Market Assessments (HMAs). These are documents which profile the population and demographic trends, the existing stock of housing and how effectively it is meeting current needs, and also provide a basis for thinking about what kind of stock is required in the future to meet emerging demands.
- 4.2 These housing market assessments have been prepared to reflect the boundaries of “functional housing markets” or areas which share common characteristics and sets of relationships.
- 4.3 Information from the Housing Market Assessments and econometric forecasts have been used within a model which predicts household demand, broad tenure split (open market/affordable housing) and likely trends in demand for different house types.
- 4.4 The findings of these HMAs have been verified in consultation with local authorities and their partners during a programme of consultation spanning November 2006 to March 2007.
- 4.5 In addition, bespoke research has been undertaken in relation to the following issues of strategic importance to the City Region:
- Vulnerable Housing Markets – examining and mapping the vulnerability of areas against an index of housing, quality of place, quality of life and socio-economic factors; and
 - BME/ Gypsy Traveller Housing Needs – a review of the challenges and responses at the City Region level.
- 4.6 This provides an unprecedented level of intelligence with regard to the defining characteristics and future direction of housing markets within the Liverpool City Region. The research programme is also consistent with the cross boundary approach recommended by Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3). However, while the Housing Market Assessments serve to provide headline housing demand figures for the City Region, functional market areas and local authorities, the detail of an appropriate balance

between tenures and mix of house types is something that has to be determined by individual local authorities at a lower level.

4.7 The purpose of this section is to outline:

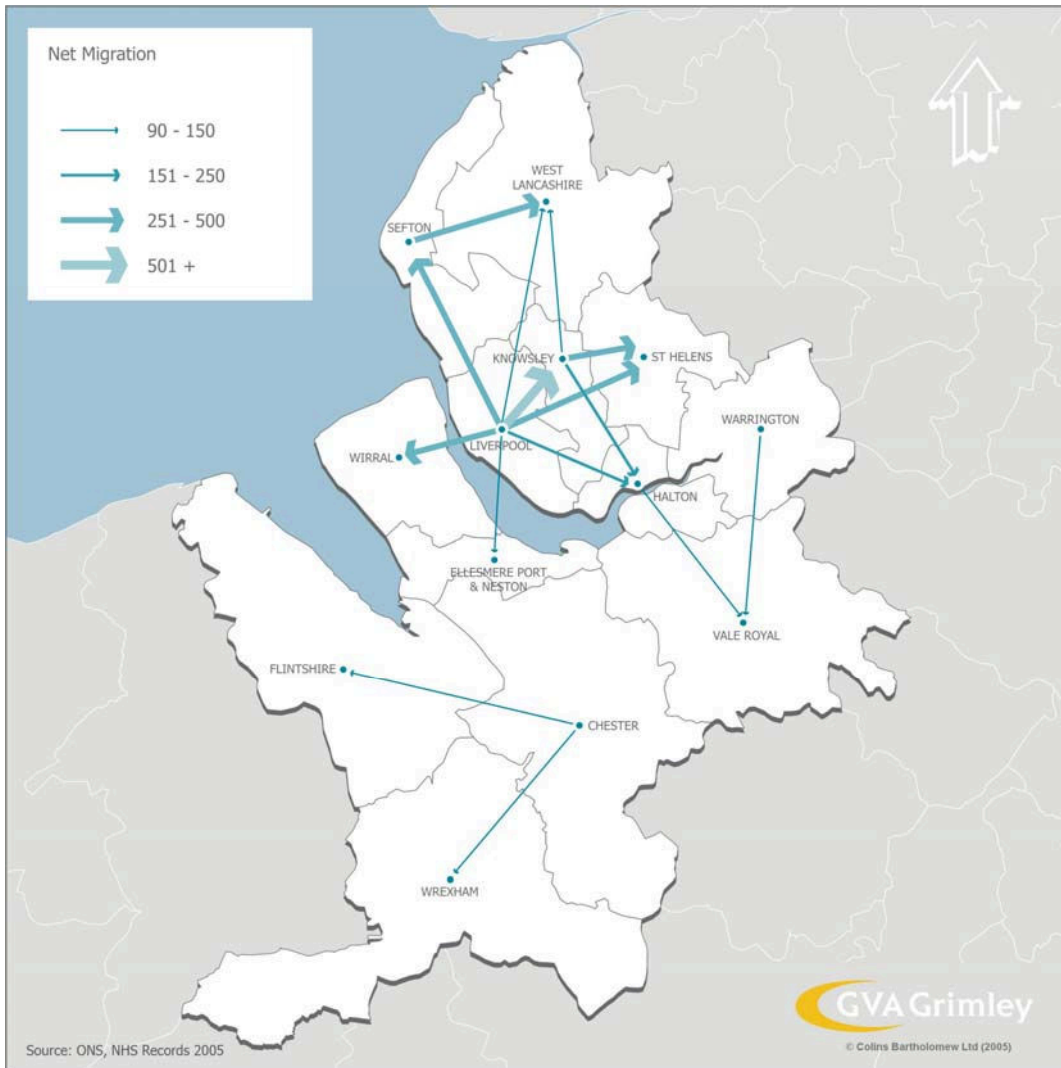
- The Defining Characteristics of each market area;
- The Key Drivers of each market area;
- Future Economic Drivers;
- Future Demographic Drivers;
- A summary of BME and the Gypsy/ Traveller research

Defining Characteristics of the Housing Markets

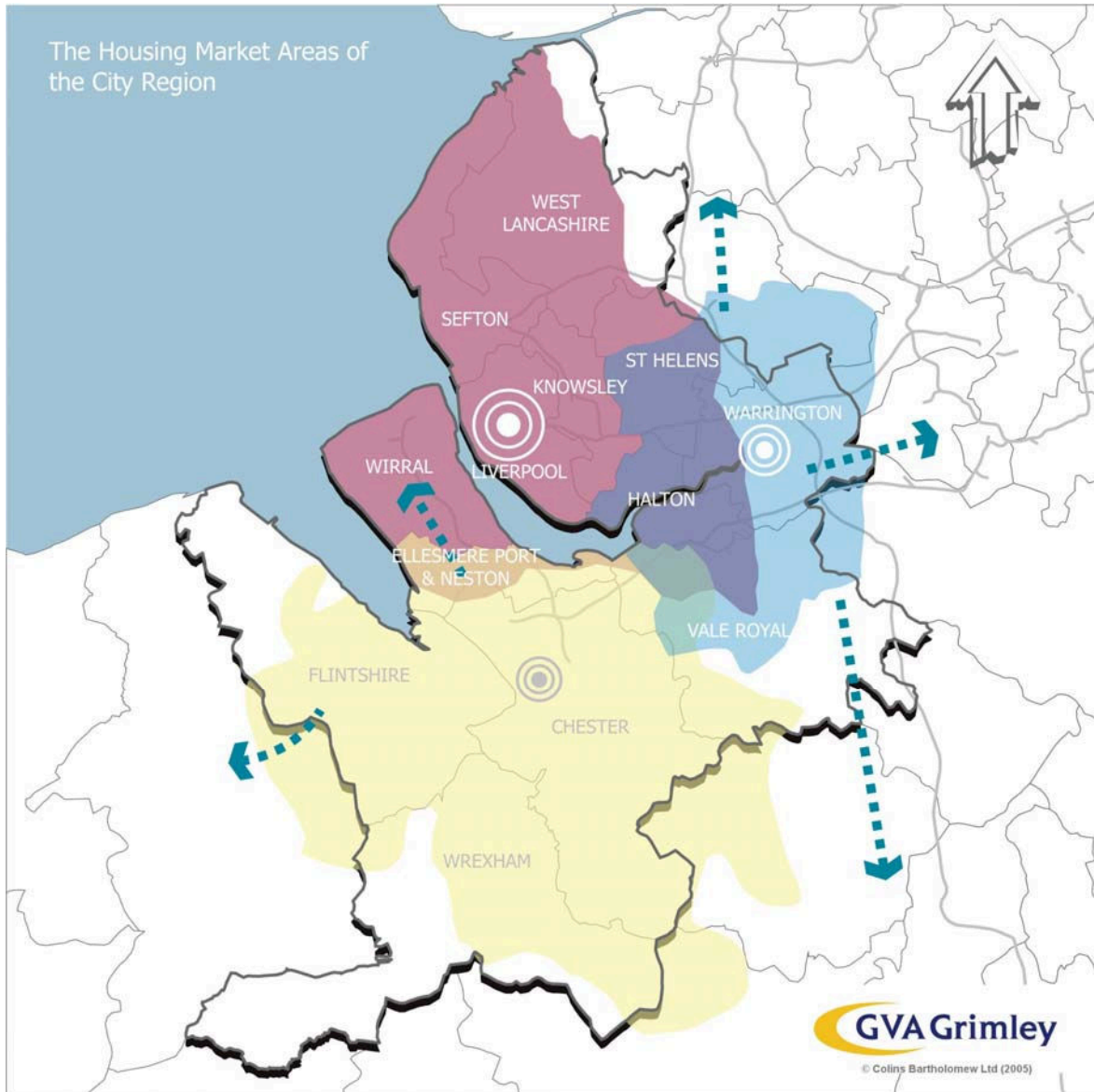
4.8 The strategic HMAs applied a series of five thematic tests in order to define housing markets and their relationships to one another. Patterns of movement were examined, including analysis of travel to work and migration data over time. The role and function of areas was examined in relation to shopping, employment and educational catchments. Socio-economic and neighbourhood characteristics were analysed and mapped and differences in house prices were examined.

4.9 These tests conclusively proved the existence of **three functional housing market areas** showing high levels of “functional integrity” or shared characteristics. These are considered to be the right areas at which to be planning for a balance of house types and tenures.

4.10 Patterns of net migration between the City Region’s authorities provide an illustration of the functionality of each housing market as the following diagram illustrates:



4.11 The migration patterns demonstrate three functional market areas focused upon Liverpool, Chester and Warrington. This market definition is reinforced in terms of travel to work patterns. These market areas are illustrated in the diagram overleaf.



Northern Housing Market	Southern Housing Market	Eastern Housing Market
Liverpool	Chester	Warrington
Knowsley	Flintshire	Halton
Sefton	Wrexham	Vale Royal
West Lancashire	Ellesmere Port	St Helens
Wirral	Vale Royal	
St Helens	Wirral	
Halton		
Ellesmere Port		

4.12 Despite what we consider to be a **high level of functional integrity** within each of the three market areas, at the extremities of each area there are observed **'zones of**

flexibility'. We have characterised such zones as exhibiting connections with one or more of the major housing market areas. The local authority areas which are considered to be within the zones of flexibility are highlighted in the above table. These are areas which effectively show links with more than one housing market and as such will respond to and influence other housing markets.

- 4.13 More detail is provided on each of the functional housing markets can be found in the detailed Housing Market Assessments.

Current Housing Market Drivers

- 4.14 The Strategic drivers of the Northern, Southern and Eastern market areas are profiled below before considering their future economic and demographic drivers.

The Northern Housing Market Area

- 4.15 The Northern Market Area is centred upon Liverpool (The Regional Centre) and comprises the Merseyside authorities of Wirral, Sefton, Halton and Knowsley plus West Lancashire. The Northern market as a whole has been characterised in the past by a significant trend of population decline resulting in lower demand for housing. Recently, this has shown signs of abating, with several local authorities posting positive growth figures.
- 4.16 The Northern Housing Market's economy has experienced profound structural changes as it has moved out of the manufacturing economy and developed in the service sector economy.
- 4.17 The Northern Market Area is notable for the prevalence of stigmatised markets and in the late 1990s, the emergence of a severe problem of low demand which led to the formation of NewHeartlands Pathfinder. Evidence contained within this Strategy suggests that despite the changes in the economy (and indeed the housing market), Housing Market Renewal areas remain the most structurally vulnerable to market change in the City Region. This suggests that the shadow of low demand and market vulnerability will continue to exert an influence on performance of the inner areas of Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral while the Pathfinder programme works through its long-term programme of transformation.
- 4.18 Social rented housing continues to feature prominently across the Northern Market Area constituting approximately a quarter of all stock. Demand for this sector has increased as

a result of increasing household headship rates and unprecedented levels of house price growth over the last five years which has started to price many first time buyers out of the market. Social housing will remain an important tenure projecting into the future and taking demographic and economic factors into consideration.

- 4.19 Large parts of the Northern Housing Market continue to be characterised by the prevalence of smaller terraced properties and comparatively low levels of larger family housing (for example detached housing represents only 14.9% of properties compared with 32.7% and 20.3% in the Southern and Eastern markets respectively). This skewed stock profile is likely to affect the ability of the market area to respond to changing occupational and household demand in the future.
- 4.20 Despite above average proportions of smaller stock and lower average house prices than other areas in the City Region, affordability is still an issue within the Northern market area. Within a number of areas this is the result of low household incomes relative to rapidly increasing house prices. This is particularly apparent in relation to Housing Market Renewal areas where house price growth has outpaced household incomes. In addition there are also parts of the market, such as South Liverpool and West Wirral where high pricing is exerting a significant effect upon affordability levels creating pressure and high demand.
- 4.21 A review of the Northern Market Areas “quality of place” reveals that
- Extremely poor neighbourhood and environmental quality within the ‘core’ urban area. The periphery generally performs better notwithstanding problems associated with peripheral and monolithic social housing estates on the edge of settlements; and
 - Good access to services, as a result of higher density residential areas and better infrastructure, makes most of the inner neighbourhoods comparably sustainable locations for future development. There is more variability in access to services associated with peripheral estates found at the edges of the towns and cities in the Northern Market Area.

Overall there is latent potential within the Northern Market Area. It's infrastructure, proximity to employment and quality of service provision make it a sustainable location to live thus representing potential for facilitating economic growth through the accommodation of new households. However, the poor environmental conditions within the core areas are continuing to push those actively moving within the housing market towards more peripheral areas where the overall quality of place is perceived to be better, and where larger stock types are more prevalent.

The Southern Housing Market Area

- 4.22 The Southern Market Area is centred upon Chester and includes Ellesmere Port and Neston, Vale Royal, and the Welsh Authorities of Wrexham and Flintshire. The Southern Area is well positioned in terms of its economy, with business sector strengths that provide competitive advantages and will continue to deliver growth over the forthcoming period.
- 4.23 Economic growth in the past has been associated with strong population growth and in – migration creating pressure on the housing market. House prices have risen to levels which indicate the desirability of the area and the intense pressures on the housing stock.
- 4.24 The Southern market on the whole enjoys a very strong positive image and represents an aspirational housing market for much of Merseyside and Greater Manchester. Demand for property is therefore very high with the success of Chester displacing demand further into the North East Wales authorities.
- 4.25 These market pressures have driven up house prices fuelling affordability issues across the area. The Southern Market Area records the highest affordability ratios within the City Region and includes a significant area in which it very difficult to locate affordable housing.
- 4.26 The area contains a low proportion of social sector housing and this relative “shortage” of stock means that the ‘safety net’ offered by this tenure could be considered deficient. Combined with relatively high average prices this has an effect on the accessibility of the market to new entrants.

- 4.27 Affordable properties are largely limited to flatted accommodation with developers continuing to increase this stock type (terraces constitute only 19.1% of stock), suggesting a lack of choice in the 'entry level' market.
- 4.28 The long-term prospects for continued growth of the area could be affected by a shortage of brownfield development sites, particularly around Chester. The tight supply of sites is due to policy based restrictions, issues of flooding and environmental designations. In response to these limitations the North East Wales Authorities have witnessed considerable levels of development to meet demand.
- 4.29 A review of Quality of Place across the Southern market area illustrates that:
- Quality of neighbourhoods and the resultant quality of life enjoyed by residents is a key factor distinguishing the Southern Market Area and is lasting appeal to households; however
 - It is a largely rural area and many areas have poor access to essential services. This raises questions about the future capacity of small settlements to absorb higher levels of new development.

Overall the Southern Market Area offers unrivalled quality in its neighbourhoods and quality of life. This has fuelled high demand for property in the area, although as noted capacity issues regarding available land and the location of services and infrastructure limit the options for continued growth. Joint working between authorities will be increasingly important in the future if the Southern Market is going to effectively supply the level of housing required to sustain its economic development and wider contribution to the City Region.

The Eastern Housing Market Area

- 4.30 The Eastern Market Area is projected to experience marked differences in population growth with Warrington expected to continue growing whilst St Helens and Halton stagnate. Reflecting the demographic split the Eastern Market shows a concomitant split in terms of its economic structure. Warrington and Vale Royal have labour force capacity to participate in and support the development of higher value industry. This directly

contrasts within Halton and St Helens where the labour force is skewed towards lower value and skilled occupations. The labour force structure acts as both an economic enabler and constraint on future growth potential in different areas of the Eastern Market.

- 4.31 Localised concentrations of deprivation are identifiable within the market area, in particular within St. Helens and smaller concentrations in North Warrington.
- 4.32 Housing choice across the Eastern Market Area is generally balanced. The southern areas (parts of Warrington and Vale Royal) are distinguished by higher than average levels of detached properties with smaller terraced and semi-detached properties represented in North Warrington and St. Helens.
- 4.33 Significant house price rises within the Eastern market area coupled with a number of localised areas of low household income mean that affordability is becoming an increasing problem within this housing market area. This has particular relevance to the southern part of the market area.
- 4.34 Overall the area offers good a good quality of place, quality of life and access to essential services. However the “dual” nature of the area serves to mask extremes in areas of multiple deprivation.

The Eastern Market Area is diverse. As a result of the contrasting housing stock characteristics of the authorities within the market area it provides a generally ‘balanced’ housing offer. Warrington would appear likely to continue to benefit from its close proximity to both Liverpool and Manchester and its relatively strong ‘residential offer’. There are regeneration challenges and the need to build balanced housing markets in St Helens and Halton.

Future Economic Drivers

- 4.35 The CRDP sets out a number of priorities and interventions considered necessary to deliver an accelerated pace of economic development. The ultimate aim is for the City Region to contribute to the growth of the North of England economy and help reduce the economic gap with the rest of the UK.

4.36 Major projects included within the CRDP are summarised below:

- Revitalised Liverpool City Centre with the Paradise Street retail development and the World Heritage Status for the Waterfront;
- Mersey Waterfront Regional Park
- Projects associated with Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008
- Further development of Daresbury Science and Research Park
- National Biomanufacturing Centre
- Liverpool Science Park
- Knowsley Innovation and Technology Centre
- Growth of Omega and the Deeside Hub

4.37 This is not a comprehensive list and it is limited to major physical projects. However, it illustrates the planned scale of economic intervention and the need to factor in the potential impacts of these projects on the surrounding housing market areas.

4.38 Significant investment in improving and creating new elements of the transport infrastructure will be delivered in tandem. Improved links between settlements will impact on the ability of people to travel greater sustainable distances to work. The major transport interventions anticipated within the City Region are listed within the CRDP. These include:

- Improving access to the Port of Liverpool by rail and road, including the expansion of Ditton and Knowsley Rail Freight Terminals and the reinstatement of the Olive Mount Chord rail link.
- Expansion of Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the intention being to service up to 12 million people by 2030 (current estimates are 6.3 million for 2006).

- A new Mersey Gateway – proposed new bridge across the Mersey to ease current congestion issues and open up wider connections through to North Wales¹.
- Up-grading of Liverpool Lime Street Station and the opening up of a new station – Liverpool South Parkway Interchange - to serve Liverpool John Lennon Airport (project now completed and open)
- On-going West Coast Main Line improvements – journey times between Liverpool and London have already been dramatically reduced.
- Expansion of the existing Knowsley Rail Freight Terminal

4.39 The employment generated by CRDP project delivery has been considered and modelled using an extrapolated forecast covering the period 2006-2021. Employment growth by market area is detailed below.

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CRDP Project Delivery: Absolute Change in Employment: 2006-2021

Northern Housing Market Area	30,400
Southern Housing Market Area	13,800
Eastern Housing Market Area	19,400
City Region	48,800

4.40 Employment is likely to grow by 48,800 jobs due to the implementation of CRDP projects. This is some 23,300 more than that might be expected under normal conditions in the economy. This illustrates the scale of the CRDP programme and its ability to shift economic performance onto a new trajectory.

4.41 The CRDP projects will continue the trend of movement from manufacturing to service sector activity across the Northern and Eastern Market Areas. The heaviest losses in

¹ Note: It is suggested within the CRDP that the proposed Mersey Gateway will realise over £1.4 billion in net present value. With an estimated annual GVA increase of £80m based on a narrow estimate of the value of the 3350 directly produced jobs.

manufacturing will be those in the Northern HMA, however this will be counterbalanced by significant increases in Public Sector Services and Business Services.

4.42 Looking at each of the housing market areas in turn:

- **Growth is forecast to be highest in the Northern HMA**, where many of the key business service sectors are located and major interventions are planned. This improved outlook for the Northern HMA is based upon a halting of the trend towards population decline that has been in effect for much of the past 2 decades. Recent evidence suggests an emerging trend of stabilisation and reversal of the long-term trend.
- As the smallest of the HMAs, the **Southern HMA sees lower absolute change** in most sectors, although it is expected to have the fastest growing Retail and Wholesale sectors by some margin.
- The Eastern HMA is forecast to post **high employment growth in Business Services and Retail and Wholesale** sectors, although this is countered by significant job losses in manufacturing sectors.

4.43 In summary, the economic context for the City Region's housing markets is expected to change significantly and positively in the period to 2021. This, coupled with emerging demographic trends will lead to a transformation in the demand for housing and will re-iterate the need for investment in quality neighbourhoods and services in order to capture demand effectively.

Future Economic Drivers: Distribution of Growth

4.44 Economic Growth under the CRDP Project Delivery Scenario will lead to different rates of economic growth at local authority level. These differences have important consequences in planning for a supply of housing which is well related to economic drivers.

4.45 The local authority distribution of job growth under the CRDP Project Delivery Scenario is presented below:

Local Authority	Net Additional Employment (000)	% Total Employment	Rank of Employment Generation
Halton	6.9	14%	2
Vale Royal	1.4	3%	8
Warrington	7	14%	2
Chester	5.6	11%	4
Ellesmere Port	1	2%	9
West Lancashire	-0.5	-1%	11
Knowsley	0.4	1%	10
Liverpool	10.7	21%	1
St Helens	4.8	10%	5
Sefton	4.1	8%	6
Wirral	2.6	5%	7
Flintshire	5.8	12%	3
Total	49.8 ²	100%	

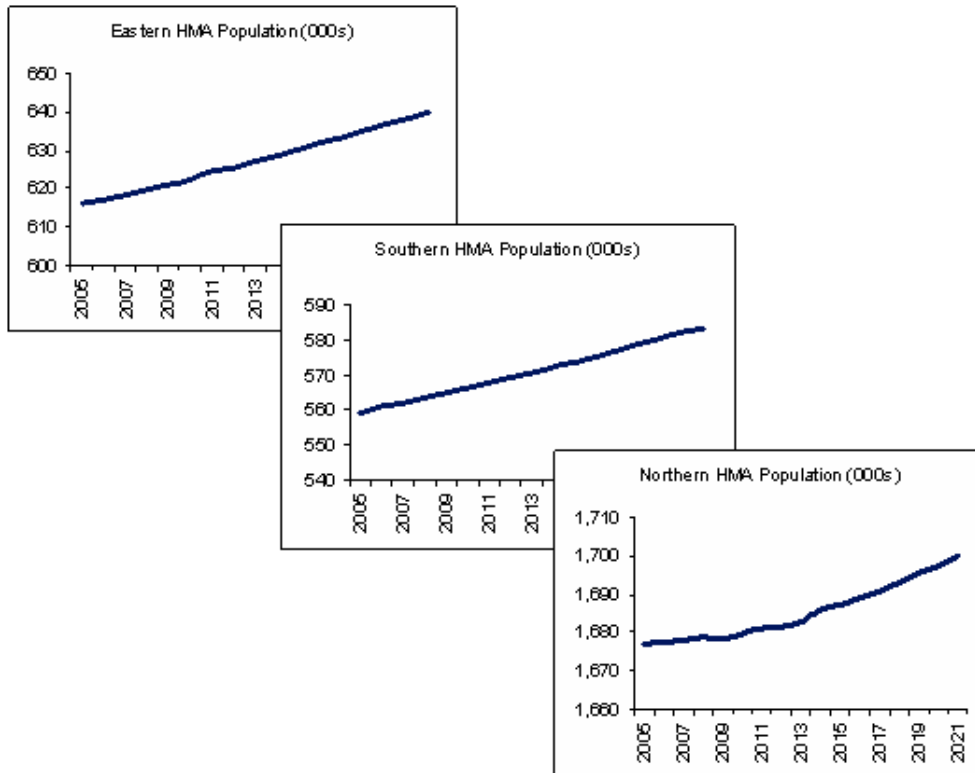
Source: Cambridge Econometrics/ Interpretation GVA Grimley

- 4.46 The results demonstrate that the highest levels of employment growth are forecast to occur in Liverpool (21% City Region growth), Warrington and Halton (14% respectively). Within the Southern housing market area the major growth drivers are forecast to be Flintshire (12%) and Chester (11%).
- 4.47 The Strategy aims to reinforce these economic growth nodes through the provision of an appropriate level of new housing.

Future Demographic Drivers

- 4.48 2004-based sub-national population projections suggest population increases in each Housing Market Area, with migration and longevity both influencing demand for housing. The diagram below illustrates 2004 based projections by Housing Market Area.

² Due to rounding within the CE data, the proportional shares of employment growth should be consulted

Figure 7.11 – 2004 based sub-national population projections, HMAs

Source: ONS, GAD, Deloitte Analysis

4.49 Household projections for the period 2006-2021 are provided at local authority level below. The results illustrate that household numbers are projected to grow across all authorities with notable rates of increase in Vale Royal (21%), Warrington (13%) and Wirral (12%).

Local Authority	2006	2011	2016	2021	Absolute Change (000)	% Change
Knowsley	62	64	65	66	4	6%
Liverpool	195	202	209	215	20	10%
St. Helens	74	76	77	79	5	7%
Sefton	119	122	125	128	9	8%
Wirral	138	144	149	154	16	12%
West Lancashire	46	47	49	51	5	11%
Chester	51	53	54	56	5	10%
Ellesmere Port and Neston	34	34	35	36	2	6%
Vale Royal	53	57	61	64	11	21%
Halton UA	49	51	53	54	5	10%
Warrington UA	82	86	90	93	11	13%

Source: ONS (2003)

- 4.50 Household formation rates are also expected to rise significantly over the next decade, with a falling average household size (from approximately 2.3 to 2.1 at City Region level over the period 2006-2021) and with it greater demand for housing. This reduction in household size will be driven by changing headship trends. Headship rates are projected to grow for all age-bands below 70 and fall for the over 70 cohort. This is a national phenomenon and is attributable to an increasing incidence of single person households amongst younger cohorts coupled with increasing longevity and associated co-habitation amongst older population cohorts. The effect is an increase in headship rates.
- 4.51 As a result of this trend more people are likely to form their own households in the future. Therefore both population change and increasing headship rates are forecast to increase household demand across the City Region and each of the three housing market areas.

Implications for the Level of Housing Required

- 4.52 All HMAs will require more housing due to a combination of higher headship rates, reduced household size and increasing population. Demographic projections underpinning this Strategy suggest an inflow into the Northern HMA, bucking the trend seen over the last 2 decades. However, the ability of the Northern HMA to absorb higher levels of household demand will be determined in relation to its ability to modify its housing offer and tenure choice to meet the needs and aspirations of newly forming and incoming households.
- 4.53 Housing demand under the CRDP Project Delivery Scenario is projected to be:

CRDP Project Delivery – Estimated Household Demand (2006-2021)

- Northern HMA: 74,700
- Southern HMA: 14,900
- Eastern HMA: 25,900

Implications for Tenure

4.54 Patterns of demographic change, employment change and income profiles have been used to assess the likely tenure requirements. Two tenure categories have been investigated:

- open market housing; and
- affordable non-market housing (defined as a combination of social rented housing and intermediate tenure options)

4.55 Taking into consideration the planned employment growth to be delivered by the realisation of the CRDP projects plus demographic and headship trends, the following estimates of demand for affordable non-market housing have been produced.

CRDP Project Delivery – Household Demand for Affordable Housing (2006-21)

- Northern Market Area: 17,600
- Southern Market Area: 3,300
- Eastern Market Area: 5,600

4.56 While the average household is less likely to require affordable housing, the fact that absolute household numbers will increase significantly effectively offsets any reduction in the demand for affordable housing.

4.57 Clearly, this is a change from past trends associated with decreasing demand for social housing in certain areas of the City Region, alongside a falling overall demand for housing. However, it should be noted that demographic changes will cause this “structural break” from previous trends and lead to higher levels of need.

4.58 In terms of the overall split between market and non-market housing the following table illustrates the results for each housing market area:

Housing Market Area	Total Household Demand	Market Demand	% Market Demand	Non-Market (Affordable)	% Non-Market
Northern	74,700	57,100	76%	17,600	24%
Southern	14,900	11,600	78%	3,300	22%
Eastern	25,900	20,300	78%	5,600	22%
Total	115,500	89,000		26,500	

- 4.59 The implication for developing a City Region Housing Strategy is that intermediate housing, comprising social and hybrid models of ownership, will form a significant component of household demand over the period to 2021. Local Housing Needs Studies are required to articulate the appropriate split in demand between social rented and intermediate options.
- 4.60 It is important to note that the social rented sector will continue to play an important role for a significant number of households. These include households with specific requirements, for example sheltered housing as well as households affected by unemployment and employment in low paid occupations.
- 4.61 It is recognised that local authorities within the City Region are aiming to create a more balanced tenure profile through increasing levels of owner-occupation and addressing areas of unpopular social stock. This is particularly relevant in the Northern Market Area where stock is currently skewed towards social rented property. Given the funding constraints associated with the provision of new social housing, partners across the City Region are considering the wider role that intermediate housing can play in meeting identified household needs.
- 4.62 In addition to the trends noted above, the rising value of housing on the open market has effectively priced some households out of owner occupation. There is latent demand across the City Region for an affordable and aspirational housing product. Intermediate housing therefore has a potentially important role to play in bridging the gap between social and open-market housing where households have sufficient resources to sustain an equity stake in a property.

The Potential Role of Intermediate Housing

- 4.63 Analysis within the Housing Market Assessments helps to establish the potential role of intermediate products within the City Region. The following conclusions have been reached:

- Across the City Region the current pattern of household income support the need to develop a wider range of options to assist households that are unable to access open market housing. The CACI household income profiles consulted suggest a significant proportion of households with income levels falling relatively close to that required to purchase entry-level housing. Intermediate housing might therefore offer an option for these households in bridging the affordability gap.
- To a lesser extent the analysis has highlighted that intermediate housing might be a viable proposition for some households that are able to afford a smaller proportional share of equity in a shared ownership product. This could partially address demand pressures in the social rented sector however is unlikely to be a mainstream response to addressing housing need at lower levels of household income. There are greater risks associated with households sustaining rental and mortgage repayments that may render intermediate housing options unsustainable for lower income groups.
- There may be a role for “Homebuy” models in which social rented housing tenants can acquire an equity stake in their existing home or a new property. Development of this type of tenure option might serve to break up large monolithic social housing estates in the Northern Market Area and ease pressures on social housing within the Southern Market Area.

4.64 Analysis at the local level, through detailed Housing Needs Surveys, is required to distinguish this finer level of detail and provide clearer indication of the products required and changing levels of households with a propensity to take-up housing within this tenure.

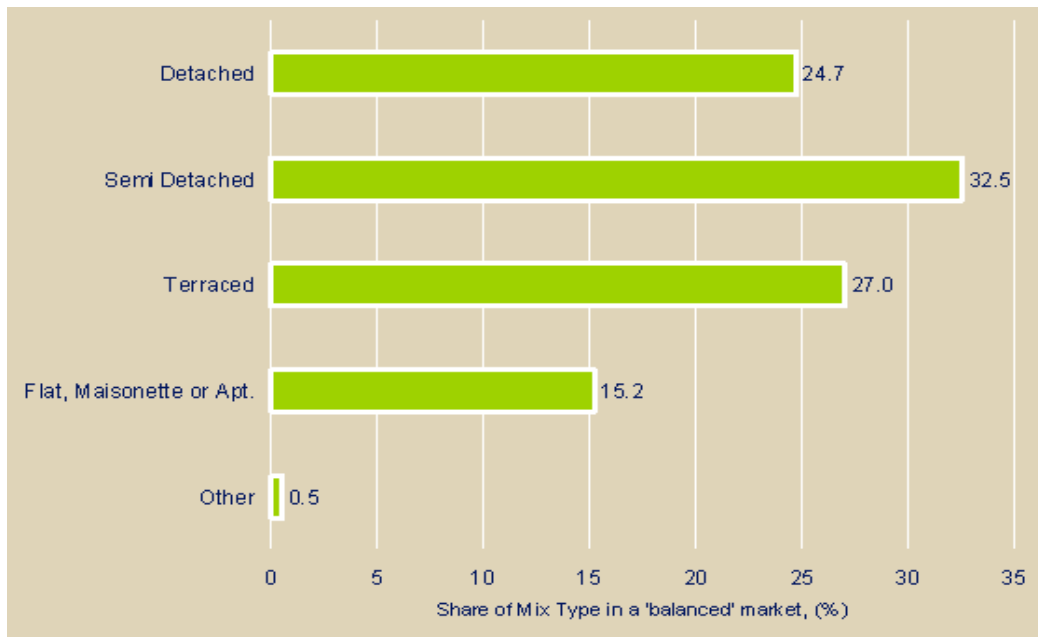
4.65 It is also important in the context of the strategy to recognise the need to create balanced, mixed income communities in monolithic, single tenure housing estates. Therefore, intermediate products might form one component, alongside housing for sale and private rent.

Implication for the Type of Housing Demanded

4.66 Within the Housing Market Assessments, analysis has been undertaken to relate the existing stock profile to that which is likely to be demanded in the future. This exercise serves to illustrate the ways in which local authorities will need to influence the supply of new housing to ensure it meets economic demand.

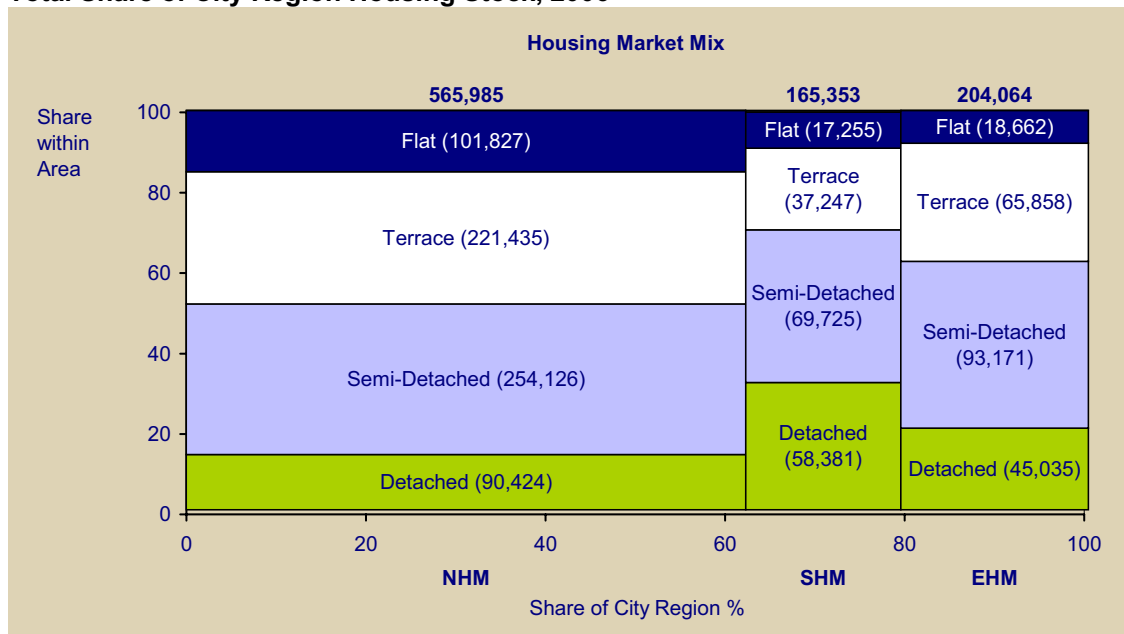
Current Mix

4.67 The Census 2001 provides information on the mix of housing types across the national (England and Wales) housing market. This has been used as a proxy for a “balanced” housing market against which comparisons with the City Region housing market area can be drawn. A breakdown of the national housing market is provided below by stock type.



1.1 The chart below relates the size of the HMA to the City Region (horizontal axis), and the proportion of houses in each HMA (vertical axis). The size of each 'block' in the chart is representative of the size of that type of housing relative to the City Region as a whole.

Total Share of City Region Housing Stock, 2006



Source: ONS, DCLG, Deloitte Analysis

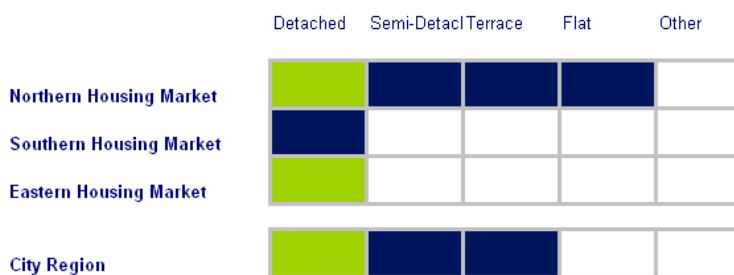
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4.68 This shows that:

- The housing mix is very different between housing market areas. The Southern HMA has relatively few flats and terraces, whilst the Northern HMA has relatively few detached houses. The proportion of semi-detached housing is very similar in all 3 areas.
- Based upon the prevailing mix in England and Wales, the Northern HMA would seem to have a surplus of terraced housing and a shortfall of detached housing. This is equally applicable to the housing mix in the Eastern HMA.
- The Southern HMA is broadly in line with national mix.

Future Housing Mix

4.69 The “direction of growth” for each type of housing is shown in the diagram below. Where the growth rate is not significantly different no shading is applied. If relative growth is anticipated the cell is shaded green and if the model implies the mix type will be subject to a relative lowering of demand the cell is shaded blue in colour.



Source: Deloitte Analysis

4.70 Under the assumptions of CRDP Project Delivery, household demand is largely generated by people working in high-earning occupations. As people in high-earning occupations are more likely to live in houses than flats, the strong growth in flats is offset by increasing demand for semi-detached and terraced properties.

- In the Northern HMA this means that while the demand for larger aspirational housing products is high, demand for all other types falls relative to the baseline.
- In the Eastern HMA, occupational growth is will also result in higher levels of demand for larger aspirational house types relative to all other types.
- The occupational profile for the Southern HMA is likely to result in a “softening” of demand for larger, detached property types relative to other types of accommodation. As previously noted this is a reflection of the interaction between demographic factors and occupational trends. It does not imply an absolute reduction in demand for larger family products.
- In summary the City Region is likely to see elevated demand for larger property types driven by economic and occupational changes (Northern and Eastern Areas) and increased demand for smaller family accommodation in the Southern Area.

4.71 Planning to accommodate these changes in demand is essential if the City Region is to grow its population and regenerate areas of vulnerable housing markets.

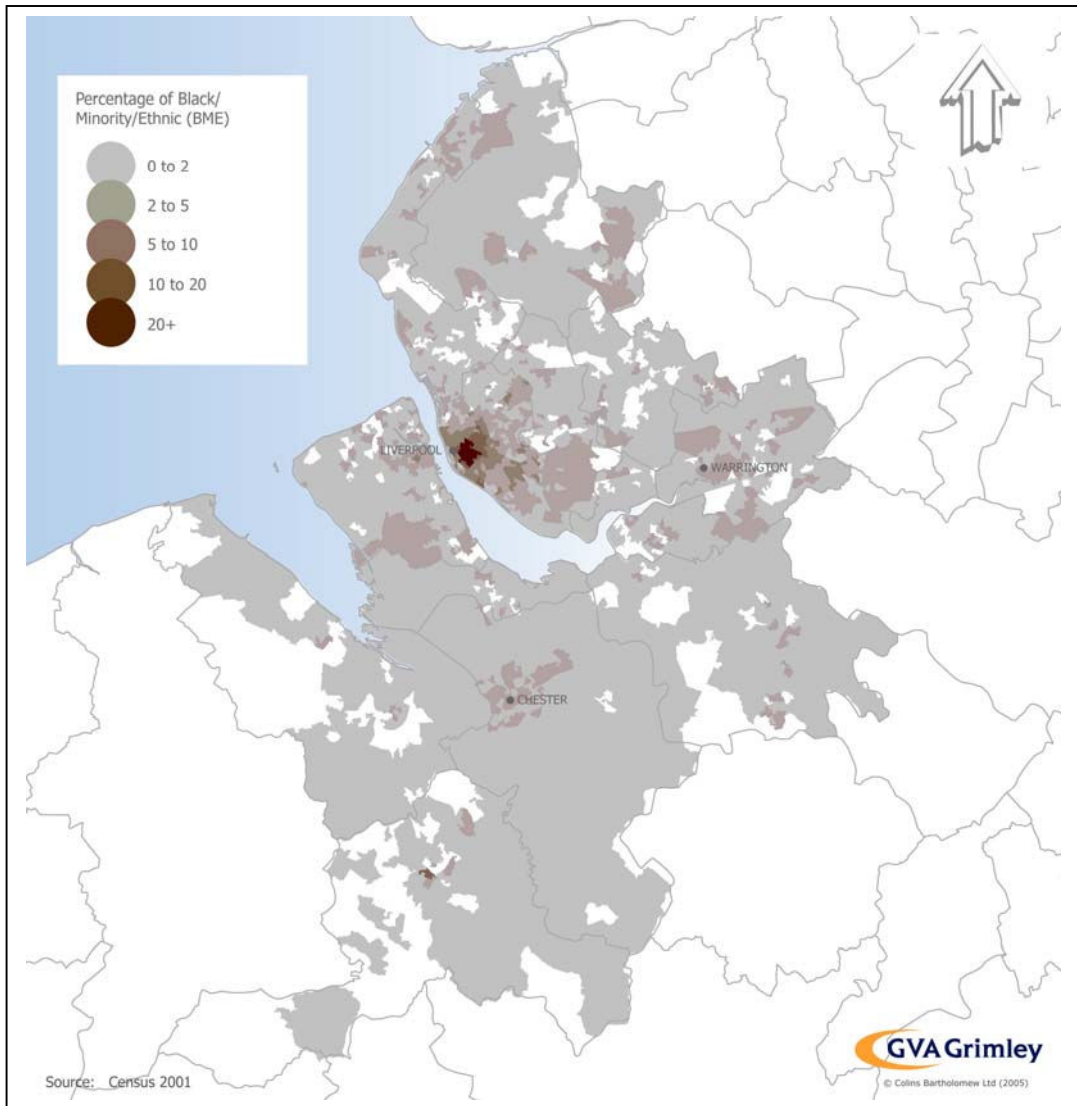
Equality and Diversity

- 4.72 A review of current information relating to the situation and needs of BME and gypsy travelling households was carried out to inform the Housing Strategy. The key findings of this study are reproduced below.

BME Communities

- 4.73 The Chinese population is the largest single BME group in each HMA and thus the City Region as a whole. The City Region has relatively small Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, the most predominant Asian group being those of Indian origin. Most of the City Region's Black Caribbean population is concentrated in the Northern HMA.
- 4.74 The distribution of BME communities is illustrated on the plan below:

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- 4.75 This plan suggests a concentration of BME populations in Liverpool, and within the Northern quadrant of West Lancashire. Within the Eastern Market Area, BME households are concentrated in areas of Warrington. In the Southern Market Area both Chester and Wrexham contain above average concentrations of BME households. Detailed profiles of ethnicity are provided as part of the research informing the Strategy.
- 4.76 In most areas of the City Region the BME community is just as likely to reside in socially provided accommodation as any other members of the population. The exception to this rule is Liverpool and the Northern Housing Market Area. BME communities in Liverpool demonstrate a higher take-up of social housing than their share of the population would otherwise suggest.
- 4.77 BME households are found to be much more likely to rent from the private sector across the City Region, and are much less likely to own their property. However, Asian groups within the City Region tend towards higher levels of ownership and are less likely to live in social housing.
- 4.78 In terms of differences between housing market areas, BME ownership is much more likely in the Eastern and Southern areas than the Northern Housing Market Area. There are also notable differences which persist between rural and urban areas to suggest that BME residents in rural areas have resided in the ward for over 20 years, compared to the high levels of 1st generation migrants residing in urban areas.
- 4.79 The following conclusions are drawn in relation to occupation of house types:
- BME households are more likely to occupy flats and maisonettes within the City Region than non-BME populations (with particular representation in the Black Caribbean community residing in Liverpool);
 - The likelihood of living in shared accommodation is significantly higher among BME groups. This is particularly the case for Black African and Pakistani groups; and
 - The chances of BME households living in overcrowded conditions is much higher than non-BME households.
- 4.80 Finally, the research informing this Strategy proves a link between concentrations of multiple deprivation and areas with significant BME populations. This is particularly true of localised areas of Liverpool.

Migrant Workers

- 4.81 Significant changes are taking place in the population of migrant workers entering the Northern Market Area. Research undertaken by the Merseyside Social Inclusion Observatory (MSIO) gives an estimate of volume of in-migration in the 2 years since Accession States joined the EU. This demonstrates particular concentrations of in-migration in Liverpool and Sefton and a high-growth trend in Liverpool, St Helens and West Lancashire authorities. The MSIO report suggests that the majority of migrants are ineligible for social housing and are therefore likely to find accommodation in sub-standard private rented housing.

Gypsy and Traveller Households

- 4.82 DCLG data relating to the supply of and demand for caravan pitches has proved that in all but one local authority there is a current shortfall in provision. In particular Chester and Vale Royal have the biggest capacity issues accommodating gypsy and traveller households due to a lack of authorised pitches.
- 4.83 Research undertaken by Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU)³ points to a very few instances of gypsy and traveller households being accommodated in social housing within the City Region authorities. This serves to illustrate the significance of undersupply in caravan pitches across the Housing Market Areas.
- 4.84 In the absence of further information, the Strategy can only reliably be informed by the supply and demand information in relation to caravan pitches.

³ Brown, P. (2006) – “North West Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and Related Services Assessment”

5 Vulnerable Housing Markets

5.1 The City Region is one of extreme contrasts in terms of the quality and desirability of its neighbourhoods. At one end of the spectrum large areas of the inner core of Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral have experienced the debilitating effects of market failure coupled with socio-economic deprivation and environmental degradation. At the other extreme, Warrington, Chester and Vale Royal among other authorities in the south of the City Region have enjoyed unprecedented levels of house price growth and have become desirable high-demand areas. The partners recognise these important differences and the potential effects on:

- The ability to attract households and grow the population;
- The ability to capture household growth specifically associated with economic development and the delivery of the City Region Development Programme; and
- The ability to address issues of multiple deprivation and socio-economic disparities between communities

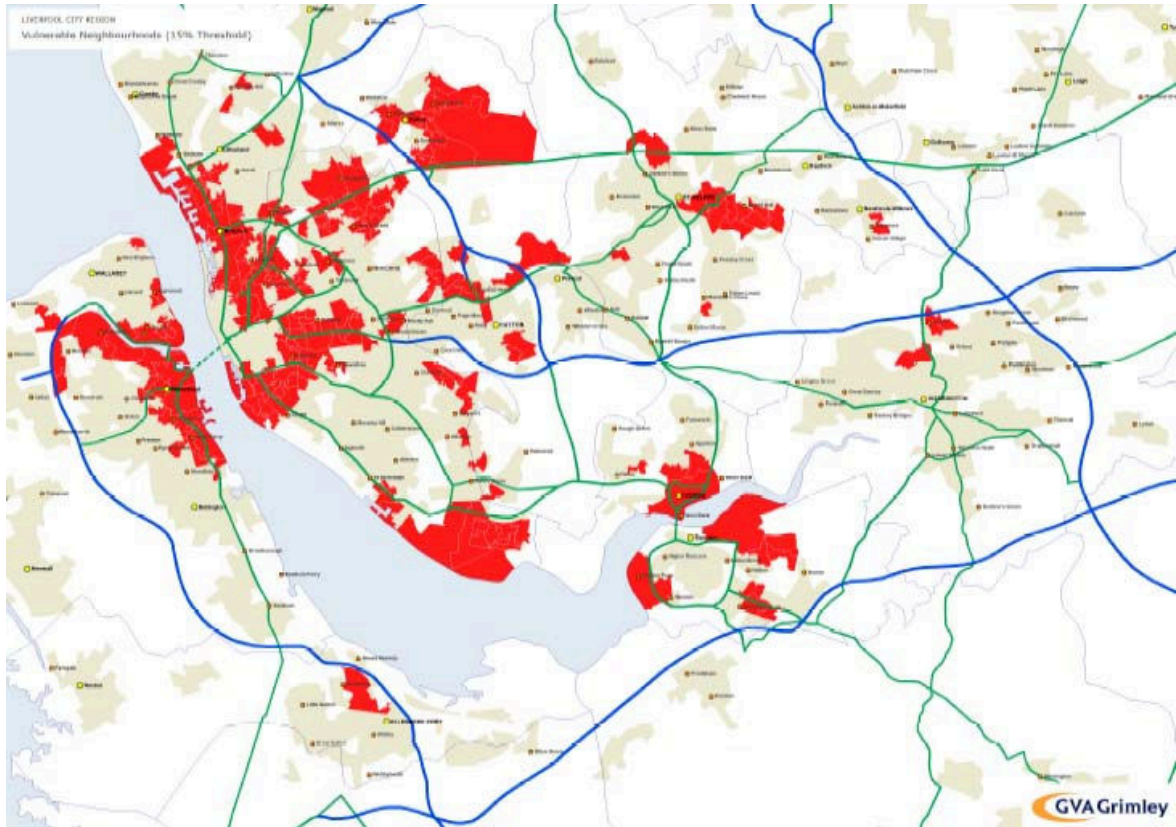
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5.2 With this in mind the local authority partners have commissioned research to examine areas of the City Region housing market which remain vulnerable to changing demand and macro-economic conditions⁴. This research builds upon earlier studies of the low demand issue undertaken by CURS and factors in a contemporary narrative of changes that have happened in the market place since the Housing Market Renewal Initiative was established.

5.3 The new analysis uses updated data in order to identify areas of structural vulnerability. It draws on a series of indicators that relate to:

- The socio-economic and demographic characteristics of neighbourhoods;
- The range and choice of housing stock;
- Access to essential services;
- Measures of quality of life (health, educational attainment); and
- Measures of quality of place (greenspaces, housing condition, overcrowding)

- 5.4 When combined these indicators show concentrations of conditions which render neighbourhoods vulnerable to wider changes in the economy, changes in the supply of housing and competition from adjacent locations.
- 5.5 The pattern of neighbourhoods that are considered to be most vulnerable is highlighted in the plan below:



Using the index, the 15% most vulnerable areas have been identified. These areas correlate precisely with the existing NewHeartlands intervention areas and also distinguish smaller but apparent concentrations of underlying market vulnerability in Knowsley, Halton, St Helens, West Lancashire and Ellesmere Port.

While areas have been identified on the basis of the Index, consideration has been given to the relative importance of each driver to neighbourhood vulnerability. The following pattern of strategic drivers emerges:

⁴ Research jointly undertaken by Salford University and GVA Grimley

- The Pathfinder intervention areas (North/ South Liverpool, East Wirral, South Sefton) are distinguishable by the fact that multiple deprivation and housing conditions are equally implicated in their underlying vulnerability. This pattern is not repeated to the same intensity outside Pathfinder areas. The analysis serves to illustrate the concerted intervention that is required across housing and social regeneration agendas in order to redress market vulnerabilities in the Pathfinder areas;
- North Huyton, Prescot, Kirkby and areas of Widnes exhibit signs of multiple deprivation with corresponding socio-economic characteristics in the resident population and low quality of life apparent. This suggests that whilst housing interventions are critical to social and physical regeneration in these areas, they should be part of wider, comprehensive programmes of neighbourhood change
- The underlying vulnerability in both Runcorn and Skelmersdale is associated with poor access to services, combined with structural weaknesses in the choice of housing.

5.6 The following recommendations are made in relation to prioritisation of neighbourhoods:

- That the **NewHeartlands Pathfinder** intervention areas remain the primary focus of investment to address entrenched structural weaknesses relating to socio-economic characteristics and housing stock drivers;
- That **outside the HMR Pathfinder** areas there are a series of vulnerable markets focused on the local authority areas of Knowsley, Halton, St Helens, Ellesmere Port and West Lancashire. The regeneration of the identified neighbourhoods within these authorities is a local priority in terms of reducing disparities and building sustainable and balanced communities.

5.7 Further consideration is given to the balance of City Region and local regeneration priorities within the Strategy.

6 The Vision and Objectives

- 6.1 The City Region Housing Strategy builds on economic rationale and strategy contained in the Liverpool City Region Development Plan. It aims to provide the type of housing in the range of neighbourhoods which ensure the realisation of this vision.
- 6.2 The vision that focuses the CRDP is inclusive of the role of the City Region's housing and neighbourhoods and as such is the basis for this Housing Strategy:

“Our Vision is to regain our status as a premier European city region by 2025. We will secure an internationally competitive economy and cultural offer; and outstanding quality of life; and vibrant communities contributing to and sharing in sustainable wealth creation.”

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- 6.3 To attain the vision the City Region Development Plan proposes action and investment under five priorities:
- The Premier Destination Centre.
 - The Well Connected City Region.
 - The Creative and Competitive City Region.
 - The Talented and Able City Region.
 - The City Region of Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Communities.

6.4 The City Region Housing Strategy will help to directly deliver the latter “Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Communities” priority and will indirectly support development under the other priorities.

6.5 The Sustainable Neighbourhoods strand of the CRDP proposes action to:

- Grow critical mass in the economy and population;
- Tackle housing market failure;
- Balance housing markets
- Develop a strategic agenda in which partners take shared responsibility for delivering sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.

6.6 These actions within the Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Communities strand are fully reflected in this Housing Strategy.

Objectives

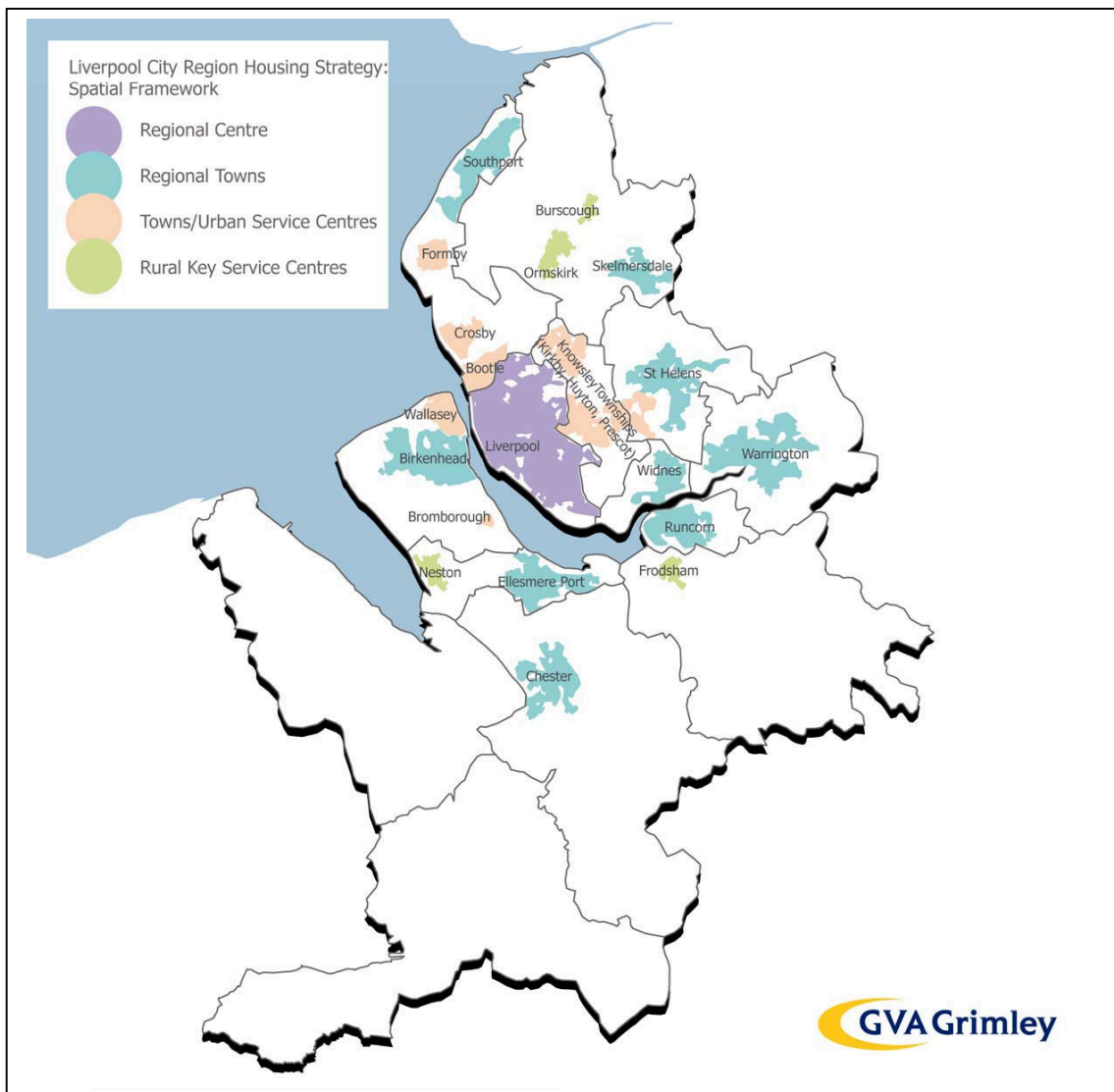
6.7 A series of objectives have been devised taking into consideration the housing and neighbourhood challenges that the City Region faces. The objectives of the Housing Strategy are:

- To support the economic growth and regeneration of the City Region
- To identify sustainable locations for growth, linked to economic development prospects, sustainable levels of infrastructure, service provision and housing land availability;
- To maximise the contribution that regeneration areas can make in supporting the economic development of the City Region;
- To provide for a range of affordable housing products across the City Region in recognition of the growing mismatch between income levels and lowest quartile house prices
- To secure investment in the quality of neighbourhoods as a major economic asset of the City Region in attracting and retaining population
- To develop an understanding of and respond to the needs of diverse groups within the housing market

- 6.8 The Housing Strategy objectives cover issues of housing distribution, type, tenure, quality and neighbourhood amenity. However, unlike previous strategies at local and regional levels, this Housing Strategy seeks to focus and prioritise resources on the areas which can support and enhance the impact of economic development within the City Region. This includes areas of current vulnerability which have potential for growth and recovery. Housing Market Renewal Areas surrounding Liverpool City Centre are examples of areas of current vulnerability with growth potential linked to a strong economic driver.

7 Spatial Framework

- 7.1 The Housing Strategy is a logical extension of the Liverpool City Region Policies developed by the Merseyside Policy Unity in response to Draft RSS. The overall aim of these policies is to provide a **clear spatial framework which supports the delivery of economic, housing and transport objectives** required for sustainable regeneration and development and the promotion of social inclusion.
- 7.2 The LCR Policies propose a spatial framework which is focused upon the primary economic driver (The Regional Centre) while recognising the dual importance of secondary drivers in the Northern and Southern Market Areas⁵. A settlement hierarchy is also included within the spatial framework, in order to distinguish between the role and function of settlements. The settlement hierarchy is illustrated in the plan below:



7.3 The Economic Drivers, priorities and complementary actions that define the spatial framework are set out by market area in the following series of tables:

Economic Driver	Priority	Complementary Actions
The Regional Centre and Surrounding Inner Areas	<p>Focusing appropriate commercial, retail, leisure, cultural and tourism development within the Regional Centre to further develop its role as the regional shopping centre, main employment location and primary economic driver of the city region;</p> <p>Expanding the knowledge economy within the Regional Centre by maximising the research and development roles of the Universities and delivering knowledge nuclei sites in line with the Regional Economic Strategy; and</p> <p>Improving access to the Regional Centre through investment in infrastructure and public transport facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus residential development in deprived areas proximate to the Regional Centre ▪ Support and reinforce the NewHeartlands Programme of intervention ▪ Enhance the role that Bootle and Birkenhead play in relation to the Regional Centre ▪ Support sub-regionally significant SIAs (Atlantic Gateway, Eastern Approaches, Wirral Waterfront)

7.4 The LCR spatial framework prioritises development of the Regional Centre's economy and the regeneration of inner urban areas via the NewHeartlands market renewal programme. Outside the Regional Centre, the following provisions are made:

Economic Driver	Priority	Complementary Actions
The Northern Housing Market Area	<p>Maintain and enhance the role of existing towns and service centres as providers of retail and community facilities, services and employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the quality and choice of housing to meet identified regeneration needs and renewal programmes and to meet local demographic needs; ▪ Maintain and support the sub-regionally significant employment role of SIAs (Approach 580, Speke

⁵ Warrington was not originally included within the spatial framework developed for the purposes of Draft RSS, however is functionally integral to the Liverpool City Region in terms of its economic development potential, labour force and housing offer. Spatial priorities have been devised for the purposes of this Strategy

		<p>Halewood, St Helens, Prescot Huyton, Widnes Waterfront</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring forward the delivery of a knowledge nuclei site in South East Halton in line with the Regional Economic Strategy; and ▪ Secure the delivery of the key infrastructure including expansion of Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the Mersey Gateway Bridge and intermodal freight terminals (Newton-le-Willows, Widnes) ▪ Development in settlements in West Wirral (that part of the borough to the west of the M53) and within West Lancashire District should be linked to rural regeneration and local needs, must be appropriate to the scale and function of each settlement, and be consistent with other regeneration programmes and policies.
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7.5 The LCR spatial framework recognises the local regeneration challenges outside the Regional Centre, linked with building sustainable communities and balancing housing markets. It also provides appropriate recognition for sub-regionally significant employment locations as important drivers of the housing market in their own right.

7.6 Warrington was represented within the Manchester City Region submission to Draft RSS and as such the Merseyside Policy Unit spatial framework did not extend to cover its priorities. Consideration has been given to the specific priorities that are relevant to the Eastern Housing Market Area.

Economic Driver	Priority	Complementary Actions
<p>The Eastern Housing Market Area</p>	<p>Promote sustainable growth and development of the Eastern Market Area as an economic driver for the Liverpool City region</p>	<p>Within the Eastern Market Area prioritise the economic growth of Warrington as a gateway to the Liverpool City Region, a major interchange of national road and rail routes and a significant employment location in its own right</p> <p>Ensure the delivery of the Regional Investment Site at Omega as a major driver of City Regional economic growth</p> <p>Secure regeneration and strengthening of Warrington town centre as a shopping, cultural and leisure destination within the</p>

		<p>Eastern Market Area</p> <p>Ensure provision of housing to meet local needs commensurate with Warrington's role as a Sub-Regional Town</p> <p>Support targeted regeneration of communities in multiple deprivation</p> <p>Deliver affordable housing stock commensurate with local need</p>
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7.7 Policies relating to the Southern Housing Market Area are detailed below:

Economic Driver	Priority	Complementary Actions
The Southern Housing Market Area	Promote sustainable growth and development of the West Cheshire - North East Wales Sub-region as a key economic driver for the Liverpool City region	<p>Ensure the Strategic planning and management of the sub-region's economy, housing market, transport network and environmental and cultural assets through joint working with authorities and agencies across the sub-region;</p> <p>Ensure the provision of housing to meet local needs and address barriers to affordability;</p> <p>Further develop the skills base of the labour force and promote access to employment;</p> <p>Support and diversify the rural economy and improve access to services in the rural areas;</p> <p>Support the role of Chester as a key economic driver of the sub-region and Liverpool City Region, and as a city-regional centre for shopping, leisure, culture tourism and employment, particularly high-value added sectors including financial services, headquarters functions and knowledge based industries, whilst ensuring that any development is compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the historic city centre and its setting;</p> <p>Support the sustainable economic growth of Ellesmere Port through sustained and co-ordinated programmes for development and investment, with emphasis on developing its reputation for 'high tech' manufacturing, promoting diversification of the economy and</p>

		<p>improving the image and perception of Ellesmere Port;</p> <p>Support the regeneration and enhancement of the quality of life in Ellesmere Port and West Chester;</p> <p>Improve the internal and external transport links, in particular with North East Wales, in line with the priorities for transport investment and management set out in Policy RT8 and the Regional Public Transport Framework set out in Policy RT1;</p> <p>Develop the role of Chester as a key public transport interchange and gateway to the region in line with Policy RT1;</p> <p>Improve road safety, manage traffic growth and maintain a high-quality environment through mitigating the impacts of road traffic on air quality, noise and health, particularly in disadvantaged areas; and</p> <p>Enhance links between areas of opportunity and areas of need, including those regeneration areas served by the following transport corridors:</p> <p>Wrexham - Bidston – Liverpool rail corridor</p> <p>Wrexham - Chester;</p> <p>Flintshire Coastal Corridor; and</p> <p>Other corridors radiating out from Chester, in particular, the M56 and M53/A55, and links with Ellesmere Port and Broughton.</p>
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8 Strategic Enablers of Change

8.1 Seven “Strategic Enablers” have been developed in order to focus policy, investment and delivery within the Spatial Framework described the previous section. The purpose of each one of these is to support and maximise the contribution that housing can make to the economic growth, regeneration and social inclusion agendas of the City Region.

8.2 The Strategic Enablers are:

- Strategic Enabler 1: Planning for a Sustainable Level of Growth
- Strategic Enabler 2: Sustainable Growth Locations
- Strategic Enabler 3: Regeneration Priority Areas
- Strategic Enabler 4: Creating Balanced Markets
- Strategic Enabler 5: Delivering a Better Choice of Affordable Housing
- Strategic Enabler 6: Delivering Quality Neighbourhoods
- Strategic Enabler 7: Equality and Diversity

8.3 Each of the Strategic Enablers is described below.

Strategic Enabler 1: Planning for a Sustainable Level of Growth

Relevant Objective:

- To support the economic growth and regeneration of the City Region

Rationale

8.4 The City Region Development Plan includes a series of major projects which will lead to the creation of new jobs, the attraction of households and new demands on the City Region’s housing stock. The attraction and retention of households is absolutely essential if the City Region is service the requirements of employers and grow the economy to its full potential.

8.5 Population growth is also essential for the City Region to repopulate and regenerate its inner urban neighbourhoods which for many years have suffered from the out-migration of households and the effects of depopulation on essential neighbourhood services.

- 8.6 Growth, however, is highly dependent upon providing the right level of housing to meet the needs and aspirations of existing and future residents. In the past, housing requirements have been calculated on the exclusive basis of demographic change.
- 8.7 This Housing Strategy factors in the way that the economy is likely to change, alongside demographic changes in the population. The result is to plan for a sustainable level of housing – sustainable in terms of what is required to achieve economic growth and also in terms of meeting household needs.
- 8.8 Supplying a lower level of housing than that which is required to meet need and capture newly arising demand could potentially damage the City Region's economy. It could also lead to unintended consequences such as increased levels of in-commuting, heightened affordability pressures and growing levels of social inequality.
- 8.9 The housing demand model which informs this strategy provides estimates of total household demand, the necessary split between open market and affordable housing tenures and the type of housing which is required in each of the Housing Market Areas to secure and maximise growth.
- 8.10 It is not sufficient, however, to plan for a set level of economic growth and a related level of housing. The relationship between economy and housing supply needs to be monitored and growth estimates refined to ensure that one is mutually supportive of the other.

Policy Responses

- LCR 1.1 Plan for the level of housing growth required to support economic and regeneration priorities within each Functional Housing Market Area. Over the period 2006-2021 plan to provide:**
- **74,700 homes in the Northern Market Area**
 - **14,900 homes in the Southern Market Area**
 - **25,900 homes in the Eastern Market Area**

- LCR 1.2** **Joint-authority protocols to be developed to enable sharing of housing figures within Functional Housing Markets in order to compensate for potential undersupply of housing relative to the level required to sustain economic growth**
- LCR 1.3** **Local authority partners work jointly to ensure production of consistent and up-to-date local Housing Needs Surveys within each Functional Market Area. The results of which will be used to refine housing requirements and distribution of new stock**
- LCR 1.4** **Monitoring of economic growth and housing delivery indicators to be undertaken at Housing Market Area level in order to identify potential mismatches between supply and demand factors as they arise**

Strategic Enabler 2: Sustainable Growth Locations

Relevant Objective:

- To identify sustainable locations for growth, linked to economic development capacity, sustainable levels of infrastructure/ service and housing development capacity
- To maximise the contribution that regeneration areas can make in supporting the economic development of the City Region;

Rationale

- 8.11 The level of economic growth forecast poses a series of delivery challenges and opportunities for the City Region. Most importantly there is the opportunity to capture household based demand within the City Region and to ensure that the requirement for “imported” labour and in-commuting is minimised. The economic benefits of containing household demand are multifaceted. They include increased demand for businesses and services and enhanced levels of spending power and investment in communities. By capturing household demand the City Region also has the opportunity to repopulate its regeneration areas that have long suffered from the outflow of households to suburban locations.
- 8.12 However the challenges are more fundamental than simply planning for an appropriate supply of housing within the City Region. Research informing this strategy has served to demonstrate the operation of three functional housing markets which are constituted by shared travel to work, socio-economic and housing market characteristics. They form the building blocks of the City Region in which the majority of “living and working” choices and trade-offs are made.
- 8.13 First and foremost, planning for a sustainable housing locations necessitates consideration of the opportunities to **capture demand at this level of functional housing markets** and to provide an appropriate choice of products and neighbourhoods.

8.14 Second there is a requirement to look at sustainable locations for growth within these defined market areas and ensure that local housing markets are balanced.

Key Evidence

8.15 Capacity to accommodate growth within each housing market area has been assessed in relation to Draft RSS housing figures and also in relation to the location of major employment generating projects under the CRDP Project Delivery Scenario.

8.16 Draft RSS housing figures are presented in the table below by housing market area. It should be noted that these figures may be subject to changes during 2007 and the Strategy will be updated to account for any material change resulting from the RSS EiP process.

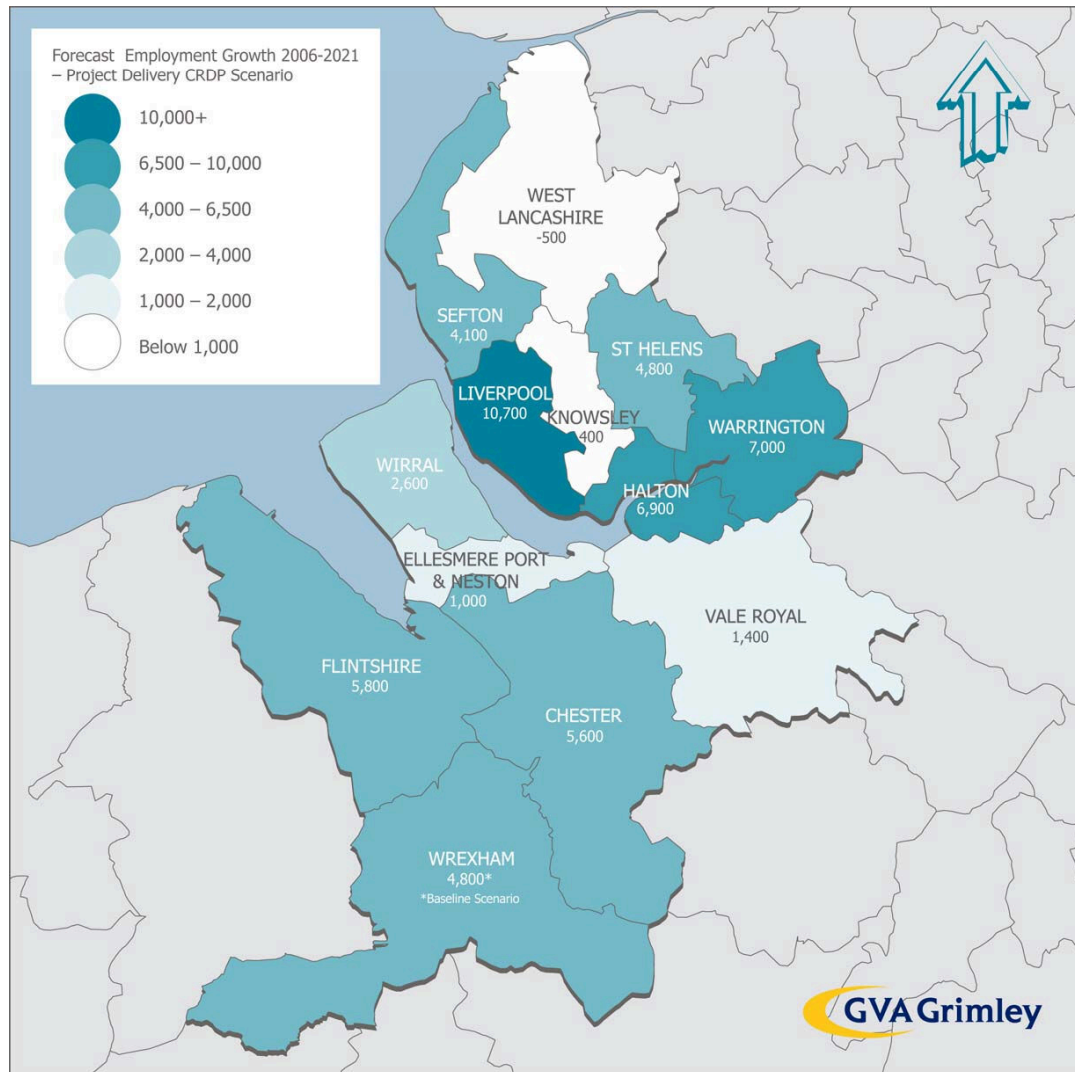
Draft RSS Housing Figures by Market Area

Housing Market Area	Annualised Housing Target (2006-2021)	Proportionate Share of Housing Target (%)
Northern Housing Market Area	4,920	61%
Southern Housing Market Area	1,317	16%
Eastern Housing Market Area	1,850	23%

8.17 In terms of the Draft RSS Housing Targets, the functional housing market areas appear to be appropriately provided in relation to estimated levels of demand. The Northern Area target is some 4% lower than its estimated share of household growth under the assumptions of the CRDP Project Delivery Scenario. The Draft RSS target for the Southern and Eastern Areas are marginally higher than forecast demand,. However, given the market attractiveness and planned economic growth it is not unreasonable to expect growth rates in Southern and Eastern areas to strengthen over the forecast period to 2021.

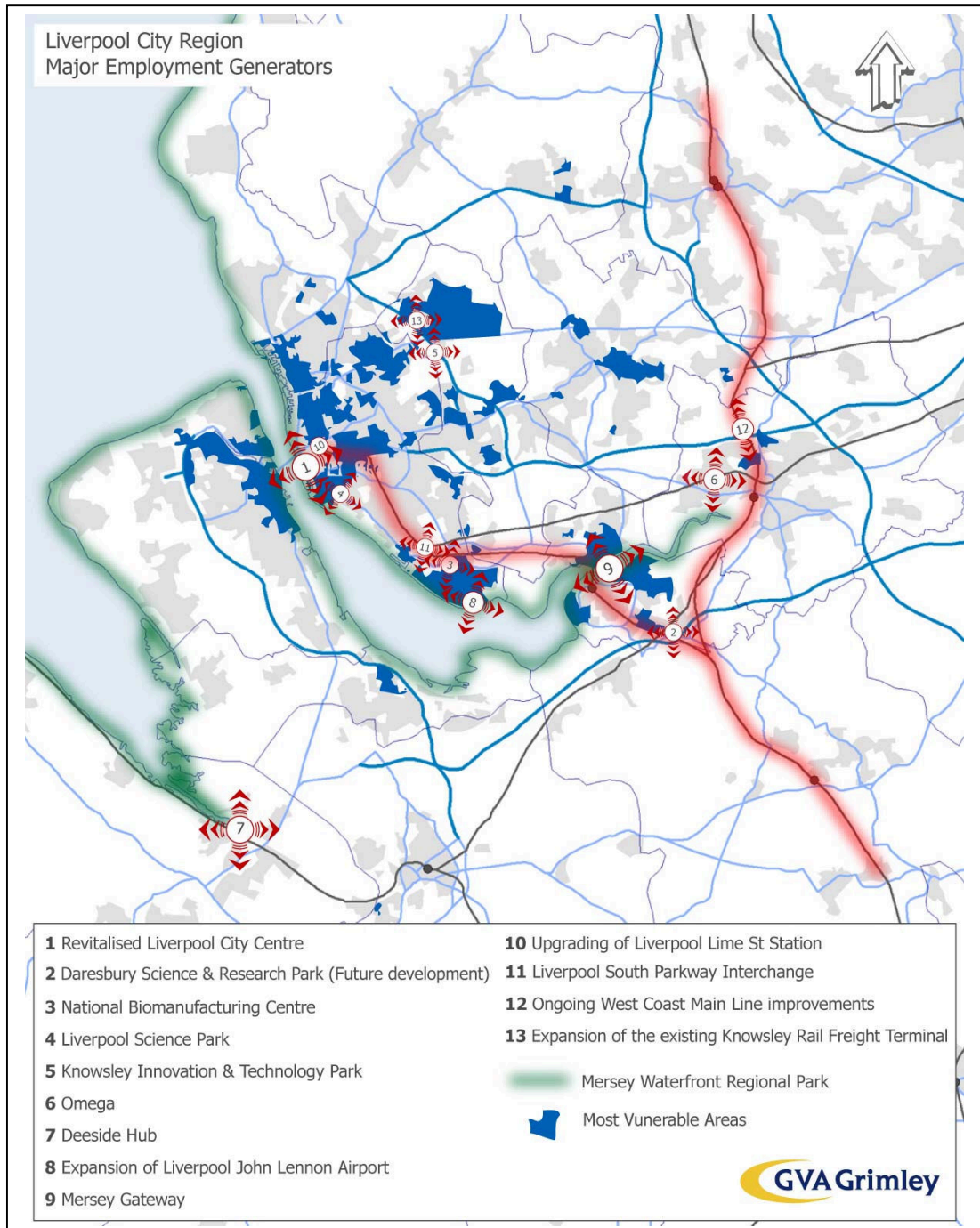
8.18 In summary the CRDP Project Delivery derived housing figures and the Draft RSS figures are in broad accordance.

8.19 The pattern of employment growth by local authority is profiled in the diagram below, using as its base the CRDP Project Delivery Forecasts:



- 8.20 Refining the analysis further, the major employment generating projects within the CRDP have been mapped and vulnerable housing markets overlaid. The purpose of this plan is to show where there is potential to co-locate employment growth generators and new housing to meet arising household demand.
- 8.21 This plan (overleaf) demonstrates that in many areas across the City Region, the most vulnerable areas and communities are located close to locations where major employment growth will occur. The Housing Strategy takes into account the real opportunity to link economic opportunity with areas of need and sets policies accordingly. There are apparent opportunities in the following areas:
- To link the NewHeartlands neighbourhoods into the growth and development of the Revitalised Regional Centre, ensuring that they play an integral role in capturing household demand arising;

- To link economic growth generators in South Liverpool (for example the Airport expansion) to the regeneration of vulnerable neighbourhoods such as Speke;
- To harness the Mersey Gateway crossing as a catalyst for area based regeneration in Halton Borough (for example South Widnes/ Castlefield, Runcorn); and
- To link Knowsley Innovation Park and Rail Freight Terminal to neighbourhood regeneration in Kirkby and North Huyton
- Regeneration of the Dock Estate to the benefit of regeneration areas in North Liverpool



and South Sefton

Policy Responses

- LCR 2.1** **Unilateral support for the continued growth of the Regional Centre as the primary driver of economic growth in the City Region**
- LCR 2.2** **Prioritise housing development within inner urban areas of the Regional Centre to support the recovery and growth of the NewHeartlands area and the contribution that it can make to the economic regeneration of the City Region**
- LCR 2.3** **Outside the Regional Centre, develop consistent LDF housing policies to prioritise housing growth according to the following sequence of locations:**
- **Within Priority Regeneration Areas (see Strategic Enabler 3);**
 - **In areas which are proximate and accessible to CRDP employment growth locations identified (see the plan entitled “Employment Growth Drivers”)**
 - **Other sustainable locations in accordance with PPS3 sequential criteria;**
- LCR 2.4** **Develop joint LDF housing policies within the Southern Market Area to support the economic growth of Chester and the Deeside Hub and recognise the environmental and Green Belt constraints limiting housing land capacity. Local partners to agree sustainable locations for growth on the basis of the LCR 2.3 criteria.**
- LCR 2.5** **Support the economic growth of Warrington and recognise land availability constraints by the production of joint LDF housing policies which seek to distribute housing growth to functionally linked authorities (St. Helens/ Halton)**

Strategic Enabler 3: Priority Regeneration Areas

Relevant Objective:

- To maximise the contribution that regeneration areas can make in supporting the economic development of the City Region

Rationale

8.22 The performance of regeneration areas is integral to the wider success of City Region economy and will help to determine whether it reaches its full potential. Analysis underpinning this strategy has shown that many of the City Region’s regeneration areas enjoy good levels of accessibility to neighbourhood services and proximity to major employment opportunities under the CRDP strategy. As such they are considered to be sustainable locations for growth and an efficient re-use of land.

- 8.23 Failure to invest in regeneration areas carries an opportunity cost in terms of labour force, earnings potential, housing and environmental capital foregone. If left unaddressed these areas will potentially dilute the effect of economic development in the City Region, damage perceptions of the area and limit its ability to capture household demand emanating from economic change.
- 8.24 The need to balance housing markets and offer a range of housing that will appeal to household demand arising from economic growth is key to the overall success of the City Region's regeneration areas.

Key Evidence

- 8.25 Research informing this Strategy has confirmed the co-existence of a range of factors which suggest that the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area is rightly identified as the regeneration priority for the City Region. The HMRI Pathfinder Areas of Liverpool, South Sefton and Wirral coincide with concentrations of socio-economic disadvantage, labour market exclusion, tenure and house type imbalances and poor quality of place.
- 8.26 An independent review of vulnerable market markets undertaken by the University of Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit and GVA Grimley has confirmed the validity of the areas identified to be at risk of low and changing demand by the CURS report. Given the underlying vulnerabilities in the housing stock, tenure mix and neighbourhood quality, the conclusion reached by Salford University is that the areas identified by CURS remain an appropriate regeneration focus for the City Region. Further work to investigate the drivers of market vulnerability has exposed the twin-action of poor housing choice, conditions and socio-economic deprivation which expose the Pathfinder neighbourhoods to changes in market demand.
- 8.27 But the case for continuing to prioritise the NewHearlands area is also, and most importantly, founded on the contribution that it can make to achieving a sustainable pattern of housing that is spatially "aligned" to economic growth. In particular the Pathfinder areas to the South and North of Liverpool City Centre offer an unparalleled opportunity to provide for household demand where it arises. The development and investment in the City Centre will provide a nucleus of employment, cultural, leisure and shopping opportunities. The HMRI areas adjoining the City Centre can provide a range of accommodation to meet the household requirements of those people finding employment in the City Centre and aspiring an accessible location with national connections.
- 8.28 Work to establish regeneration priority areas within the City Region has also identified the following areas of regeneration need and potential:

- The index of market vulnerability has identified areas outside the Pathfinder which are vulnerable to change and considered to be within the 15% most vulnerable neighbourhoods across the City Region. The Strategy recommends that local authorities work across boundaries to devise a prioritised and phased programme of regeneration in these areas.
- In addition to these priority areas, a series of peripheral and monolithic social housing estates have been identified on the fringes of Liverpool and Sefton. These estates fail to offer the range of house types and tenure choices that are the hallmarks of “balanced” neighbourhoods. They are exposed to changes in market demand and vulnerable to shifts in housing consumer preferences;

Policy Responses

- LCR 3.1 The most important regeneration priority for the City Region is the recovery of neighbourhoods in the NewHeartlands area and the growth of its population. The Pathfinder will therefore remain the primary focus for public investment and housing provision in the City Region:**
- **LCR 3.11: Within the Pathfinder recognition for the potential of City Centre North, South and Wavertree Intervention Areas to support economic growth of the City Centre and provide a balanced mix of aspirational homes**

- LCR 3.2** NewHeartlands will continue to direct investment within the Intervention Area over its full 15 year programme. It will channel investment to provide the housing that will create “balanced” markets and make the inner core of neighbourhoods attractive to existing and incoming households.
- LCR 3.3** NewHeartlands will work to improve some of the worst neighbourhood and environmental conditions in the City Region by complementary investment in the public realm, open spaces and streetscape alongside new and refurbished housing.
- LCR 3.4** NewHeartlands will work with agencies responsible for skills and training delivery to ensure that the most economically marginalised residents are equipped to benefit from employment opportunities created within the Regional Centre.
- LCR 3.5** Local authorities within the Northern Market Area will investigate developing a Multi Area Agreement (MAA) to support delivery of the NewHeartlands programme. Under this agreement specific provision should be made to link the annual rate of housing supply within the Pathfinder authorities (Liverpool, Sefton, Wirral) to the level of housing required to 1) deliver regeneration proposals and 2) reach a critical mass of population to sustain essential neighbourhood services.
- LCR 3.6** Outside the NewHeartlands Areas, partners will work together (in Functional Market Areas) to devise joint regeneration programmes focusing upon the 15% most vulnerable neighbourhoods as defined within this Strategy. The prioritisation and phasing of specific areas should take account of the following factors:
- The contribution that the regeneration of individual areas can make to the economic growth and inclusion agendas of the CRDP;
 - The contribution that the regeneration of individual areas can make to the diversity of neighbourhoods and the choice of housing within the City Region;
 - The opportunity to lever major private sector investment to lead the regeneration process in the context of limited public funding availability;
 - The coexistence of other regeneration programmes/ investments which will boost the impact of housing-led regeneration;
 - The support of key partners in delivery/ funding
 - The level of additional investment required in neighbourhood facilities and services in order to make sustainable neighbourhoods
 - Value for Money of the interventions proposed

LCR 3.6

The 15% most vulnerable areas (inclusive of NewHeartlands) are:

Local Authority Area	15 % most Vulnerable Areas
West Lancashire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skelmersdale
Sefton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanley Road corridor through Bootle; Seaforth, Litherland, Netherton. Strong correlation with NewHeartlands Pathfinder area
Wirral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mersey shore and Docklands between Tranmere, Wallasey and North Birkenhead, also New Brighton. Strong correlation with NewHeartlands Pathfinder area
Ellesmere Port	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overpool
Chester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blacon
Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widnes waterfront from West Bank to Crow Wood, central Widnes around Kingsway, social estates around Ditton/Coronation Drive and Hough Green; Runcorn social estates around Castlefield and Brookvale,
Warrington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bewsey, Old Hall, Hulme
St Helens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earlestown and Newton-le-Willows to central St. Helens
Knowsley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescott and North Huyton, Kirkby, pockets of Hunts Cross and Halewood.
Liverpool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong correlation with the NewHeartlands Pathfinder area. Swathe from Dingle and Toxteth north of Ullet/Rathbone Road through Smithdown/Picton and Wavertree to the A57 at Dovecot. This wraps around the restored Georgian district of Canning and the City Centre, covering Edge Hill, Kensington, Anfield, Everton and the Stanley Road/Scotland Road/Dock Road corridor through Kirkdale to Walton and across the Sefton boundary. Speke, Garston, Netherley/Belle Vale, Norris Green, Croxteth, Gilmoor, Fazakerley

Source: LCRHS Vulnerability Index (2007)

- LCR 3.7** **Use the most vulnerable areas in the City Region to target complementary actions under the worklessness, skills and training agendas of the CRDP. This will help people resident in vulnerable neighbourhoods to access the employment opportunities of the City Region.**

Strategic Enabler 4: Creating Balanced Markets

Relevant Objective

- To provide a choice of housing that will contribute to and sustain the economic growth of the City Region

Rationale

- 8.29 In order to “capture” household demand effectively it is necessary to link economic growth to the requirements of particular households which are likely to be created, attracted and retained in the City Region. Mismatches between supply and demand may cause areas of strong demand to be reinforced and areas of market vulnerability to be further exposed.

Key Evidence

- 8.30 The Strategy is informed by an analysis of the relationship between occupational groups operating in the economy and their revealed preferences for different types of housing. This analysis allows the changing occupational structure of the City Region to be mapped onto the range of house types and conclusions to be drawn in relation to the likely mix requirements in future years.
- 8.31 In terms of occupational trends the economy is forecast to deliver growth at both ends of the spectrum. It is anticipated that higher managerial, professional and associate professional groupings will grow as a proportion of overall occupational demand. At the other end of the occupational scale, elementary occupations associated with service sector activity are also forecast to grow. The forecasts tell a story of a “hollowing out” of the economy with suggested losses in skilled trades – consistent with the long-term restructuring of the economy from a manufacturing base.
- 8.32 Each functional market area is forecast to experience different levels of economic growth and associated occupational structures. This will manifest in different requirements for housing products by market area:
- Given the occupation structure that is likely to prevail under the Project Delivery scenario, the Northern and Eastern Market Areas are likely to experience strengthened demand for larger, family housing, as revealed by the housing preferences of occupational groups in growth sectors. This type of housing is currently under-represented in the stock of the Northern and Eastern Markets.

- The economic/ occupational growth profile associated with the Southern Market Area is distinct and denotes higher levels of retail and consumer service sector employment. Under these growth conditions (combined with a trend towards smaller household sizes) it will be necessary to supply a range of smaller family properties. Smaller properties are currently under-represented in the stock mix of the Southern Market Area.

Policy Responses

- LCR 4.1** **Secure a balanced mix of house types in all new developments to encourage the development of mixed income, inclusive communities**
- LCR 4.2:** **Support economic growth and resulting occupational and household requirements by:**
- **LCR 4.2.1: Prioritising development of a range of larger “aspirational” house types within the Northern Housing Market to meet requirements linked to economic growth and to address stock deficits**
 - **LCR 4.2.2: Prioritising development of smaller family housing in the Southern Market Area to meet emerging household requirements and address the lack of smaller stock in the area**
 - **LCR 4.2.3: Prioritising a range of affordable “move-on” accommodation (3 bed +) to cater for household requirements in the Southern Market Area and to redress current stock deficits**
 - **LCR 4.2.4: Developing a range of larger “aspirational” house types in the Eastern Market Area to cater for emerging household requirements linked to economic growth**
- LCR 4.3** **As part of the Multi-Area Agreement covering the Northern local authorities, provision will be made to prioritise the supply of larger, aspirational forms of housing within the NewHeartlands area in the early years of CRDP delivery. This will enable household demand to be channelled effectively to the City Region’s priority regeneration area.**
- LCR 4.4** **Diversify housing within mono-tenure estates which are vulnerable to market change⁶ and/or do not meet the current requirements of residents:**
- **LCR 4.4.1: RSL partners in the Northern Market Area to identify opportunities within their estate portfolios to diversify tenure through introducing a mix of Low Cost Home Ownership (where financially sustainable for tenants) and new market housing for sale.**

⁶ The 15% most vulnerable neighbourhoods in the City Region as defined by this Strategy

Strategic Enabler 5: Delivering a Better Choice of Affordable Housing

Relevant Objectives:

- To improve the role that social housing plays in meeting existing and emerging household requirements and aspirations
- To provide for a range of affordable intermediate housing products across the City Region in recognition of the growing mismatch between income levels and lowest quartile house prices

Rationale

- 8.33 The ability of households to access owner-occupied housing has become a national problem with the Government continuing to explore mechanisms and policy approaches which can assist First Time Buyers (FTBs) and other market segments to enter and move within this tenure.
- 8.34 The rapid increase in house prices across the nation has far outstripped the growth of average household earnings. It is well reported that this has left many FTB unable to enter the property market and also left lower income households struggling to find suitably sized properties in the locations they wish to live in.
- 8.35 These households play a critical role in ensuring the continuity of the housing market. If households are unable to buy entry level properties other elements of the 'housing chain' cannot operate smoothly, impacting on all components of the housing market. Under-supplying affordable housing also increases the risk of household demand being displaced to locations outside the City Region.
- 8.36 Increases in population, changes in headship rates and the nature of growth in the City Regional economy has been proven to lead to an increasing demand for affordable housing. Consideration of National funding streams and recent evidence suggests that there is unlikely to be significant social stock additions within the City Region. Therefore it is necessary to consider other tenure options for households on low incomes.
- 8.37 Social housing provides a safety net for households unable to secure private market housing. Increasingly, under the climate of sustained house price rises, social rented housing has started to play an enhanced role at the beginning of the housing "lifetime" – providing an accessible resource and a decent standard of accommodation. Where affordability issues prevail, social housing can also provide appropriately sized accommodation for households as they grow and move on. There have been improvements to the stock and performance of social housing in recent years, notably:

- The Decent Homes programme to 2010 - addressing physical deficiencies in the stock and its modernity;
- Right to Buy sales have diversified tenure on monolithic housing estates and enabled tenants to build an equity stake in a property; and
- Choice Based Lettings (CBL) policy has led to increasing levels on waiting lists and has added an element of consumer choice to the tenure

8.38 However, there remains a predisposition for owner occupation as the tenure of preference. Social housing remains stigmatised in terms of wider consumer perceptions. The environmental and neighbourhood conditions associated with much of the City Region's social stock means that it is not performing to its full potential in terms of meeting household need and demand.

8.39 In summary, social housing will have an increasingly important role to play in accommodating City Regional growth. However the current image of the sector combined with environmental qualities of estates and compounded by socio-economic deprivation are constraining factors that the Strategy must address.

Key Evidence

8.40 The Strategy is informed by estimates of tenure demand, based on the propensity of households to need affordable housing. The estimates are an overall requirement and should be interpreted at a local level on the basis of need:

Housing Market Area	Demand for Affordable Housing (2006-2021)
Northern	17,600
Southern	3,300
Eastern	5,600

Source: Deloitte

8.41 Within these estimates local authorities will look to secure elements of improved stock and new build social housing in addition to intermediate housing products.

8.42 Evidence of housing affordability is provided in the analysis of local incomes and house prices. The table presented below demonstrates that areas of both high and low demand suffer from acute affordability problems due to the interaction of low incomes and high house prices. The relationship between incomes and average house prices is illustrated in the table below.

District	Average ratio (Income to Price)	Minimum ratio	Maximum ratio
Chester	5.7	2.5	12.2
Flintshire	4.7	2.2	10.5
Ellesmere Port and Neston	5.2	2.5	16.1
Wirral	5.2	2.1	13.8
Vale Royal	5.1	2.1	14.1
Liverpool	4.9	1.8	17.2
Knowsley	4.8	2.4	10.5
Sefton	5.4	2.1	15.5
Halton	4.3	2.0	9.6
West Lancashire	5.0	1.8	9.7
St. Helens	4.5	2.3	10.9
Wrexham	5.0	2.5	9.2
Warrington	4.9	2.2	10.3
City Region Average		1.8	17.2

Policy Responses

- LCR 5.1** **Local authorities will develop complementary LDF policies in order to jointly deliver the following levels of affordable housing (social + intermediate):**
- **17,600 affordable homes in the Northern Market Area (24% total supply)**
 - **3,300 affordable homes in the Southern Market Area (22% total supply)**
 - **5,600 affordable homes in the Eastern Market Area (22% total supply)**

- LCR 5.2** In the Southern Market Area, higher proportions of affordable housing provision will be sought in Chester to reflect the severity of affordability issues, the relatively “tight” supply of affordable stock and limited supply of housing land for development
- LCR 5.3** In the Northern Market Area, higher rates of affordable housing provision will be sought in Sefton (HMRI and Southport), Wirral and West Lancashire to reflect the severity of affordability issues
- LCR 5.4** In the Eastern Market Area, higher rates of affordable housing provision to be sought in Warrington to address the severity of affordability problems in the South of the Borough
- LCR 5.5** Planning authorities within the Southern Market Area will investigate developing LDF policies covering provision of Local Occupancy Housing in smaller rural settlements to meet local need
- LCR 5.6** Planning authorities will develop consistent LDF affordable housing policies with a threshold of 15 units and flexibility to set lower thresholds where acute affordability problems persist
- LCR 5.7** Enhanced provision of affordable housing through the use of s106 agreements:
- **LCR 5.7.1:** Local authority partners to develop a shared approach to calculating “affordable” house prices as a basis for quickly negotiating s106 contributions and speeding up delivery of affordable housing
 - **LCR 5.7.2:** Local authorities to develop consistent policies stipulating a preference for on-site provision of affordable housing over and above forms of off-site provision and commuted sums
- LCR 5.8** Local authorities to audit land and property holdings to identify assets which can potentially be released at sub-market values in order to support the development of affordable housing
- LCR 5.9** Local authorities to work with non-statutory bodies (such as Communities England/ MOD) to establish potential release of land holdings at sub-market values to support development of affordable housing
- LCR 5.10** Local authorities to consider the reallocation of surplus employment land for affordable housing development in areas of acute affordable housing need:
- **LCR 5.10.1:** Local authorities to identify surplus employment land through the Employment Land Review Process informing preparation of LDFs

- LCR 5.11** Empty Property Strategies to be prepared to cover areas of high demand and acute affordable housing need within the City Region (Chester; Vale Royal; Sefton; Wirral; Warrington)

Policy Responses (Social Housing)

- LCR 5.12** Up-to-date Housing Needs Surveys will provide a basis for estimating the required mix of social and intermediate housing at a local level. A common specification for the preparation of Housing Needs Assessments will be prepared to ensure consistency of approach across the City Region
- LCR 5.13** Protect and invest areas of sustainable social rented stock as an integral part of the City Region's future affordable housing offer
- LCR 5.14** Prioritise new social housing provision within areas of existing low stock and demonstrable housing need:
- **LCR 5.13.1: Focus Social Housing Grant⁷ on improving housing choice within the Southern Market Area**
- LCR 5.15** RSL partners to improve the environment of social housing estates in tandem with improvements to the housing stock in order to provide attractive and appealing neighbourhoods.

Policy Responses (Intermediate Housing)

- LCR 5.16:** RSLs to develop and offer Social HomeBuy models in order to enable tenants to build an equity stake in their home.
- LCR 5.17** RSLs to develop and offer a programme of New Build Homebuy in areas of acute affordable housing need (Chester; Vale Royal; Sefton; Wirral; Warrington)

Policy Responses (NewHeartlands)

- LCR 5.18:** NewHeartlands will continue to develop a range of Low Cost Home Ownership products serving the specific requirements of low income households within the Pathfinder area

Pathfinders have moved to a loan and equity loan approach when assisting residents to take up new housing opportunities. Although this will secure a return of monies invested, in many cases this may be very long term, i.e. ten, fifteen or twenty years. Pathfinders are now working to reduce this immediate call on resources, and the tying up of limited investment finance. NewHeartlands chairs an experts group which has been established to assess the extent to which there is institutional interest in taking over the Pathfinders' and key partners' portfolio of loans, which latest estimates suggest could be as large as £142m.

NewHeartlands has set up teams of dedicated home ownership advisors who work with people, particularly in clearance areas who want to remain or become home owners. In some cases these teams are employed and managed by partner RSLs. These teams have built up an invaluable range of skills which are needed to ensure that our objectives of retaining communities and increasing owner occupation are met. They work in conjunction with a panel of Independent Financial Advisors who provide free financial advice to homeowners whose homes are due to be cleared.

Strategic Enabler 6: Delivering Quality Neighbourhoods

Relevant Objective:

- To secure investment in the quality of neighbourhoods as a major economic asset of the City Region in attracting and retaining population.

Rationale

- 8.43 The City Region is one of “sharp contrasts”, and this attribute is particularly apparent in relation to the quality and diversity of its neighbourhoods. The concept of Quality of Place has gained growing importance in thinking about the sustainability of neighbourhoods. In early 2006 the Northern Way Sustainable Communities team commissioned research to establish the role that quality of place plays in constraining or enabling economic growth potential.
- 8.44 The Northern Way research has served to increase recognition that housing, place making and economic investment should be mutually supporting. This necessarily requires a housing offer and quality of place that is capable of attracting and retaining skilled labour force and a strong business base that is required for economic growth.
- 8.45 Quality of place is defined as:
- **Residential Offer** –range, quality and value for money;
 - **Quality of Place** –culture, local environment, public realm, housing, community safety, access, health – which together make somewhere an attractive place to live⁸
- 8.46 Through co-ordinated investment in the City Region’s residential offer and quality of place, a strong basis for capturing and retaining economically derived household growth can be created.

⁷ Social Housing Grant is a capital grant provided by the Housing Corporation to fund Registered Social Landlords to develop social housing.

⁸ Yorkshire Forward *Renaissance Town and Cities Programme*

Key Evidence

8.47 A quality of place assessment has been undertaken for the City Region, applying the Northern Way methodology at a low level of analysis. This has revealed the “sharp contrasts” in the City Region’s neighbourhoods. Given the notable differences that prevail, key findings from each of the functional housing markets are summarised below:

Northern Market Area

- A significant offer in terms of ‘Value for Money’ with a large amount of areas still accessible for first time buyers
- Liverpool and the area extending out towards St Helens offer very good access to services. These areas also offer good access to the main employment opportunities within Liverpool City Centre which his continuing to expand.
- A concentration of neighbourhoods exhibiting poor quality of place and environmental quality. This is particularly true of many neighbourhoods in North Liverpool. This represents the under-realisation of a significant asset in terms of economic growth with these areas representing potential for contributing to sustainable locations for housing.
- Poor environmental conditions are continuing to push those actively moving within the housing market towards areas more on the fringe where the overall QOP is perceived as being better.

Southern Market Area

- In terms of ‘Value for Money’ the Southern housing market area is the least accessible to First Time Buyers (FTBs) and households on low incomes. There are very few areas classed as ‘affordable’ and there is a limited supply of housing which falls below the value of £125,000. The existence of localised issues around overcrowding maybe the result of concealed households unable to access the housing market.
- The quality of place and life enjoyed by households within the market area is a key driving factor in producing a high ‘Quality’ residential offer. Many areas enjoy being located within easy access of quality greenspace and there are relatively few areas which have poor quality housing stock.
- Many of the areas score poorly in terms of access to services, by virtue of the rurality of the Southern Market Area. This raises questions about their future capacity to absorb higher levels of new development.

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Eastern Market Area

- The Eastern housing market area still contains areas classed as 'affordable'. These tend to be concentrated in and around the urban centres of St Helens and Warrington. However these areas perform relatively poorly against quality of place and life indicators.
- Given the buoyancy of parts of the housing market within the Eastern area it is likely that these areas will increasingly become attractive to FTBs looking to find affordable property within sustainable neighbourhoods. This in turn is likely to have a positive effect in terms of improving the neighbourhoods within these areas. The fact these areas also score highly in terms of 'access to services' suggest that they are sustainable locations for new development.
- Warrington occupies a complex position, located between the significant economic drivers of Manchester and Liverpool. Economic growth is forecast for both of these metropolises (in addition to Warrington itself) and it is likely that given its easy commuter links and good 'residential offer' that it will continue to prove to be attractive to a range of households.

Policy Responses

- LCR 6.1 Develop a protocol for multi-agency delivery of the Housing Strategy**
- LCR 6.2 Work with service delivery agencies to ensure that the spatial and regeneration priorities of the Housing Strategy are reflected in their operational business plans**
- LCR 6.3: Work with service providers to sequence their investment in neighbourhood services to coincide with planned investment in the housing stock of priority regeneration areas (NewHeartlands + 15% most vulnerable areas)**
- LCR 6.4 Establish neighbourhood management initiatives to complement and support housing investment in the City Region's most vulnerable neighbourhoods:**
- **LCR 6.4.1: Neighbourhood Management programmes to be identified and implemented through Local Strategic Partnerships**
- LCR 6.5 Use the Market Vulnerability Index to identify areas and target funding and resources at the areas of poorest environmental quality in the City Region:**
- **LCR 6.5.1: Focus funding on Regeneration Priority Areas within the Northern Market Area which demonstrate the poorest quality neighbourhood environments in the City Region**

Strategic Enabler 7: Equality and Diversity

Relevant Objective:

- To develop an understanding of and respond to the needs of diverse groups within the housing market

Rationale

- 8.48 The City Region is made up of a diversity of groups with individual housing needs, aspirations and differing abilities to realise their housing requirements.
- 8.49 Original research informing this Strategy has looked at the issues facing BME communities and gypsy traveller households. This research has demonstrated the need for a more robust basis for estimating future BME housing needs. It has served to demonstrate that BME communities have distinct need profiles that are influenced by a combination of cultural, economic (income) and community related factors. Thus it is not effective to target policy on the basis of partial or incomplete evidence. The research has also shown that BME housing issues are played out at a relatively localised level within the City Region given the concentrations of communities within the inner urban areas and particularly focused on Liverpool. This has been taken into consideration in developing appropriate policy responses.
- 8.50 Similar issues surround a detailed understanding of the needs of gypsy and traveller households. However, under measures included in the Housing Act 2004 it will be necessary for all local authorities to carry out Accommodation Needs Assessment inclusive of these client groups. Therefore more comprehensive data will inform subsequent iterations of the Housing Strategy and will enable policies to be targeted to specific housing needs and gaps in supply.
- 8.51 The strategy recognises the needs of vulnerable groups identified within the Supporting People Strategies covering the City Region and endorses their policy responses at a local level;
- 8.52 This strategy also recognises the needs of the growing elderly population within the City Region and the need to improve the range of housing available aligned to care and support options.

Policy Responses

- LCR 7.1** Produce a series of BME household demographic projections at a local level. Demographic projections to be used to inform evidence-based policy at a local level
- LCR 7.2** A standardised project specification will be produced for local authorities undertaking Housing Needs Surveys in order to ensure BME needs data is collected on a consistent basis across the City Region
- LCR 7.3** Establish local-authority level “stakeholder forums” where there are specific BME housing issues in order to gather primary evidence and as a conduit for conducting wider consultation exercises
- LCR 7.4** RSLs to focus on marketing themselves and tailoring their products/ services to BME housing needs, with specific focus on RSL stock in Liverpool
- LCR 7.5** Local authorities to jointly review provision of sites for the gypsy travelling community in order to secure a choice of sites across traditional boundaries and to ensure a net increase in provision within Functional Market Areas
- **LCR 7.5.1:** Each local authority to consider the needs of the gypsy travelling community under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004
- LCR 7.6** Ensure that CRDP-related skills and labour market plans take account of the barriers to economic participation that affect BME and gypsy travelling households and target support accordingly
- LCR 7.7** Joint “Supporting People Strategies” to be prepared at the level of Functional Market Areas
- LCR 7.8** Joint commissioning of research to investigate supported housing needs by client group where reliable/ consistent information does not currently exist

9 Monitoring Framework

- 9.1 The Housing Strategy has been informed by three Housing Market Assessments. These documents have benchmarked performance, assessed trends and identified key drivers of change. This has then been drawn together to consider, based upon the best evidence available now, the future trajectory of change.
- 9.2 Housing markets are though, by their very nature, dynamic. The Partners within the Liverpool City Region will therefore need to monitor trends and activity in the housing market in a co-ordinated and timely manner. This reflects the Government's 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to the planning system and the need to be responsive to changes in the economic and demographic assumptions underpinning the Strategy.
- 9.3 The objective of monitoring is to validate and identify fluctuations within the trajectory of the housing market. A consistent assessment of indicators provides an indication where change is occurring and the direction of that change therefore allowing for corrections to be made and the development of responsive policy. It is therefore intended to be a continuous and proactive process which informs policy development and how and when policies are implemented.
- 9.4 The scale of the Liverpool City Region means that comprehensive monitoring is likely to be a time and resource-intensive process. It is therefore critical that there is an emphasis on efficiency with existing mechanisms and resources used wherever possible. This has informed our suggested approach and the identification of indicators which should be monitored.

Scope of Current Monitoring Activity Across the City Region

- 9.5 Recently emerging national planning guidance has placed increasing emphasis on developing a robust evidence base from which to develop strategy, evaluate delivery levels and assess planning applications against. The vast majority of authorities are therefore now monitoring key indicators relating to society, **housing** and employment and produce Annual Monitoring Reports summarising and interpreting the data.

LA annual monitoring reports

- 9.6 All authorities are required to produce annual monitoring reports establishing progress against a range of planning indicators. This includes updating the housing trajectory through an examination of the supply of properties against the assigned housing requirement figure provided through Regional Planning Guidance. A compilation of housing supply data is therefore provided, including the level of houses built over the past year (completions) and the

number of planning permissions which have been approved (pipeline). An assessment is also made of the level of housing land available within the authority reflecting development.

- 9.7 A number of other multi-authority data collection exercises are already in place and affecting authorities within the City Region. A quick summary is provided below of the major examples.

RSL monitoring

- 9.8 RSLs record their own letting information as an ongoing process. The CORE (COntinuous REcording) information source collects together data from over 700 Housing Associations. Those involved submit consistent data which covers a vast range of categories of information and enables the assessment of change over time.

Mott MacDonald MIS

- 9.9 The six Merseyside Authorities have a framework of services with Mott MacDonald MIS. Mott MacDonald MIS act as the custodian of an evidence base for these authorities and provide regular reports that provide analysis and monitor information for the sub-region. The objective is to ensure a consistent evidence base that can be analysed and reported on in a flexible way to meet changing priorities and programs.

Liverpool Asset Management Project (LAMP)

- 9.10 LAMP is working with the three HMR authorities, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral, to gather consistent data for analysis aimed at picking up key signals of market change. The intention is to collect data against 24 indicators which cover a range of key market factors such as:

- Commercial market price and turnover;
- Environmental factors such as green space, leisure facilities and derelict land;
- Development site availability;
- Demand indicators such as planning applications;
- Social indicators such as crime poverty etc...

- 9.11 The intention is to collect contemporary data to ensure that dynamic change is identified.

NewHeartlands HMRI

- 9.12 The NewHeartlands Pathfinder has commissioned and continues to commission a significant amount of detailed analysis into the housing markets and socio-economic profile of neighbourhoods falling within this national programme. Data collection has extended beyond

secondary sources with a range of primary surveys commissioned, the aim being to build up a comprehensive evidence base with which to target interventions.

Mersey-Dee Alliance

- 9.13 The Mersey-Dee Alliance has over recent years commissioned studies which examine the sub-regional area of North East Wales and West Cheshire. This has involved the collection of consistent data across this area. The focus is currently on economic development indicators, with consistent economic forecast data held for the sub-region. However, the intention is to strengthen the agreements and extend analysis to include consistent assessment of housing need. The intention is also to develop connections with Merseyside therefore assisting in enhancing City Region linkages.

Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance (CWEA)

- 9.14 CWEA is one of five Sub Regional Partnerships (SRPs) in the Northwest working with partners to help deliver the Northwest Regional Economic Strategy (RES). As the designated SRP it is the conduit for economic development strategies, activity and funding across Cheshire and Warrington.
- 9.15 CWEA monitors the economic performance of the sub-region (incorporating parts of the City Region) and economic development projects therein.
- 9.16 There is clearly considerable work already being undertaken in collecting data beyond local authority boundaries within the Liverpool City Region offering a significant resource from which to draw. However, currently this is relatively disjointed and the data collection process is on the whole not consistent, this is examined further below.

Market Drivers

- 9.17 The evidence constructed within the Housing Market Assessments has led to the identification of key strategic drivers impacting upon the housing market within the Liverpool City Region.
- 9.18 Consideration is required of the wider demographic and economic trends which influence the operation of the housing market alongside measuring changes in market dynamics (including supply, demand and price variables) and housing land availability.
- 9.19 These factors can be broadly captured under five themes. These themes linked to the drivers of change establish the framework for monitoring.
- **Market Performance** – the housing market is dynamic and this is reflected in changes within the market. Market change has significant implications for the development of new stock and the ability for people to access different sections of the market;

- **Demographic Dynamics** – housing need is partially driven by varying demographic dynamics. The Liverpool City Region and in particular Merseyside has ambitions to continue the reverse of previous trends of decline, assessing the dynamic characteristics of change (including household size) is therefore a key component of pressure on the housing market.
- **Economy and Labour Market** – the changing nature of the economy and the linked labour market is a key component in assessing housing need. An ambitious growth programme is being implemented through the CRDP to transform the City Regions economy. New housing pressures will result from this evolution and ensuring a clear understanding of the direction of change is vital to ensuring that housing assists in the facilitation of growth.
- **Supply Trends** – the dynamics between demand and supply of stock represents the critical issue for developing balanced and sustainable housing markets. Evaluating the extent of the response to demand through the level of housebuilding and the type of product delivered is a core element of monitoring the ‘health’ of the housing market.
- **Capacity** – development within the housing market has implications for future capacity. Existing infrastructure (communications and services) and land availability represent finite inhibitors of future development. The monitoring of supply and demand should be performed in line with an assessment of the capacity of areas to deliver development. The intention being to identify areas where capacity is becoming an issue but also recognising where it represents an opportunity (under-used or new schemes).

Key Indicators for Monitoring

9.20 Using the five themes the following table outlines the key indicators for monitoring across the City Region.

Monitoring Framework

Theme	Indicator	Geography	Data Source	Monitoring Frequency	Responsibility
Demographic	Total Population	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates	Annual	Corporate
	Population by Age Cohort	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates	Annual	Corporate
	Components of Population Change (i.e. Natural Change/Migration Balance)	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates	Annual	Corporate

	Spatial Patterns of Migration	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	NHS CHR (Table 2a available on request from ONS)	Annual	Housing
	International Migration	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	ONS	Annual	Housing
Economy & Labour Market	GVA per Head	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	ONS/ Cambridge Econometrics	Annual	Economic Development
	Numbers in employment (Resident and Workplace based)	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Annual Business Inquiry	Annual	Economic Development
	Economic Activity Rates	City Region Local Authority	Annual Population Survey	Annual	Economic Development
	Employment by Sector	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Annual Business Inquiry	Annual	Economic Development
	Workplace-based Earnings	City Region Local Authority	Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings	Annual	Economic Development
	Residence-based Earnings	City Region Local Authority	Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings	Annual	Economic Development
	Household Incomes	City Region Local Authority (six-digit postcode)	CACI Paycheck	Annual	Housing/Economic Development
	Jobseekers Claimant Count	City Region Local Authority	NOMIS	Annual	Economic Development
	Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disability Allowance Claimants - Joint Measure	City Region Local Authority	Department for Work & Pensions	Annual	Economic Development
Housing Supply Trends	Completions	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority Geographic specific	Planning Dept.	Annual	Planning
	Completions by Tenure and Size	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority Geographic specific	Planning Dept.	Annual	Planning
	Housing Trajectory	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Planning Dept.	Annual	Planning
	Affordable Housing Trajectory	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority Geographic specific	Planning Dept.	Annual	Planning
Housing Market Performance	Average House Prices	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority Postcode sector	HM Land Registry	Annual (Quarterly)	Housing

	Lowest Quartile House Prices	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	DCLG	Annual (Quarterly)	Housing
	Assessment of affordability (entry-level)	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	HM Land Registry, CACI Paycheck	Annual (Quarterly checks against house price)	
	% Private Renting	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority Geographic specific	Council Tax Records	Annual	Housing
	Private Sector Rents	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Local Estate Agents Rightmove	Annual	Housing
	Social Sector Turnover	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	RSLs/ CORE	Annual	Housing
	Qualitative Information on market performance and trends	Local Authority	Local Estate Agents	Annual	Housing
	Vacancy by Tenure	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Council Tax Records/ RSLs/ CORE	Annual	Housing
Capacity	Housing Land Supply	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Planning Dept.	Annual	Planning
	Investment in Infrastructure	City Region Housing Market Area Local Authority	Planning Dept.	Annual	Planning

9.21 The compiling of data within the Housing Market Assessments identified the clear disparities in the manner in which data is collected in the Welsh authorities. Historical data is not held consistently within the Welsh authorities making trend analysis difficult to undertake in a consistent manner with the English authorities. Discrepancies also exist in terms of the definitions used and the time periods over which data is collected. This cross-border lack of current consistency is a key issue identified in the delivery component of this section.

Monitoring Period/ VFM

9.22 The indicators listed in the previous section can on the whole all be updated on an annual basis. However, a number of them are unlikely to represent significant change on a year-to-year basis.

9.23 The approach taken to monitoring should ensure that those factors, which have changed over the year, are clearly identifiable. A short report assessing those indicators where significant change has been apparent should be produced on an annual basis.

9.24 In order to reflect the longer-term cycles within the housing market it is proposed that a 3-year evaluation be produced as part of the rolling programme. This would assess in detail the levels of change identified evaluating the fluctuations within the overall supply demand dynamic and variance from the conclusions reached in the Housing Market Assessments.

Data Collection and Protocols

- Agreed data specification between local authorities
- Agreed annual milestones
- Agreed format for data collection

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health & Community

SUBJECT: Olympics 2012

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to establish an ‘Olympic Fund’ to support sports persons in the Borough to aspire to high level performance.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) An Olympic Fund be established within existing resources to support young people in the Borough to get involved in the Olympic Games and Para-Olympic Games.
- ii) Details of the Fund be agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Leisure and Sport and the Strategic Director for Health and Community.
- iii) That further reports be presented to the Board outlining progress.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 London will stage the Olympic Games in 2012. There is a strong desire to maximise the effect of the Games across the country, indeed the Department of Culture, Media and Sport intend to introduce a performance measure for all authorities to judge their contributions to the 2012 legacy.

3.2 Already local authorities have been asked to register any facilities they could offer for training camps for visiting countries. Halton has registered the Stadium and the St Peter and Paul/Wade Deacon site. There are opportunities with the regional table-tennis centre at the Stadium, and contacts have been made with China and Tongling to test their potential interest. Halton is also part of a pan-Merseyside registration and is working with Cheshire on a range of common issues.

3.3 A visit has been made to Newham Borough Council, the authority that will host the major part of the Games. A number of initiatives have been discussed, not least the opportunity of exchanges with young people, and Halton’s sports persons attending the Newham academy.

3.4 There has been strong support in Halton to promote young talent and there are a significant number of young people who could properly aspire to representing their country at the Olympic and Para-Olympic. Even if young people do not ultimately achieve such representation 2012 offers them the opportunity to aspire, to improve and to adapt healthy lifestyles through sport. There are also opportunities for volunteers to get involved in the Olympics and Para-Olympics.

3.5 With all this in mind it is proposed to set up an Olympic Fund. The fund could be used in a variety of ways for example to bring coaches and practice partners into the Borough to improve our sports people, to bring role models into the Borough to inspire young people to participate in sport, to support training opportunities or provide kit.

3.6 The intention would be to set up a fund using existing budgets that could roll forward each year, but could be used to attract further external/match funding and sponsorship. Initially, using monies from the enhanced sporting opportunities budget, and contributions from the Sports Partnership a fund of £50k could be achieved. Clear criteria would be established about the management of the fund and awards of grants.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Culture and Leisure Services already support local sport through its grants scheme, and the principal of sports contributions to healthy lifestyles is firmly embedded in Halton's Corporate Priorities. Establishing the Olympic Fund would seek to build on all this.

4.2 Consideration needs to be given to transport issues, both regionally and nationally if the Games are to be truly accessible to the whole country.

4.3 Many of the initiatives and issues raised in this report are still in the embryonic stages of development and further reports to the Board will be presented over the next few years.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The fund would be set up using existing resources.

6.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 The Olympics offers the opportunity to raise the profile of sport in the Borough which in turn contributes to the Council's priorities in respect of health and self-development. By not taking a lead the Council could miss an opportunity to attract further funding into the Borough and to develop sport within the Borough.

7.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 Both the Olympics and the Para-Olympics will be staged in London in 2012. In setting up the fund it will give opportunities for all to participate.

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

8.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 29th March 2007
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment
SUBJECT: Waste Management
WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks to update Executive Board on the progress made with the developing partnership arrangements with the Merseyside Authorities, the procurement of waste treatment services and facilities and the financial consequences as a result. The report also seeks approval of the Council's Waste Action Plan and of the Council's Contract Procurement Strategy with the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority.

2. RECOMMENDED: That;

- 2.1 Executive Board note the progress being made with the procurement of waste treatment services and facilities and the developing partnership arrangements with the Merseyside Authorities;
- 2.2 Executive Board approve the adoption of Halton's Waste Action Plan and of the Contract Procurement Strategy with the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members will recall that at their meeting of 21st September 2006, Executive Board approval was given for the establishment of a formal partnership with the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) for the procurement of appropriate waste treatment & disposal services and facilities (EXB 40/2006 refers). Officers subsequently declared Halton's intentions to the MWDA and at a meeting of 17th November 2006, the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority Board Members approved Halton's inclusion in the Merseyside Waste Partnership.
- 3.2 Members of the Board will also be aware that as a member of the Merseyside Waste Partnership, Halton was required to align both strategically and operationally with Merseyside and to achieve this officers have been working, with the support of external consultants, to accomplish a number of objectives, including the development of an updated Waste Management Strategy, a Waste Action Plan, and a formal Inter Authority Agreement between the two parties.
- 3.3 Halton was also required to commit the financial expenditure required to deliver the future waste treatment infrastructure and to this end consultants were commissioned to produce a Financial Analysis Report to establish the financial consequences of working in partnership with Merseyside to allow the Council to fully consider the implications of such a commitment.

4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Waste Management Strategy Update

- 4.1 To successfully develop the Partnership with Merseyside, Halton's Waste Management Strategy was required to be updated and restructured to align with that of Merseyside. Funding for direct consultancy support has recently been approved by Defra in order to carry out the updates of both Halton's and Merseyside's Strategies. Initial meetings and preparatory work has already commenced and the draft strategies are expected to be complete by October 2007.
- 4.2 The new waste strategy will incorporate a detailed action plan for waste prevention, with a prioritised programme of key initiatives for waste avoidance, minimisation and reuse, timescales, resource estimates and responsibilities for implementation and delivery.
- 4.3 The overall aim is to ensure that Halton's Waste Management and Prevention Strategies, together with the associated Waste Action Plan, (see Para 4.8) are sustainable. The consultant's work will therefore provide a sound basis on which existing and developing documents can be appraised now, as part of this exercise, and in the future.
- 4.4 Where appropriate, the aims, objectives, targets and pledges will remain as described in Halton's current document. Key areas where an update will be required include Legislative changes and new Government policies, including UK Sustainable Development Strategy, Climate Change Action Plan, Sustainable Procurement Action Plan and the revised National Waste Strategy.
- 4.5 The revised national waste strategy is due to be published by the end of March 2007. Although at the time of writing this report no date for the publication had been confirmed, recent updates from Government Office North West representatives indicates that the following outcomes are likely:
- A proposed 40% recycling target by 2010.
 - Beyond that higher targets may be proposed but subject to further consultation
 - Greater working on linking commercial/business waste and local authorities
 - The landfill tax escalator will be reconsidered and consultation on setting higher rates will be expected. The tax is likely to rise more than the current £3 per year increase and above the current £35 maximum.
 - It is envisaged that 25% of the residual waste stream will be utilised in energy from waste EFW facilities.
 - There will be a new target for residual waste per household
 - Local Authority powers for direct charging for household waste and consultation is likely to be decided by the current "Lyons" review.

Pooled Targets

- 4.6 A pooled recycling target proposal, submitted on behalf of the Merseyside Waste Partnership (including Halton), was approved by the Minister of State

for Local Environment, Marine and Animal Welfare on 19th December 2006. The amended targets for Halton and Merseyside are detailed below:

Authority	Existing Target 07/08	New Pooled Statutory Target 07/08
Knowsley	20%	20%
Liverpool	20%	20%
Sefton	21%	23%
St Helens	20%	23%
Wirral	20%	23%
Merseyside WDA	22%	26%
Halton	20%	25%
Merseyside & Halton Pooled Target	–	26%

- 4.7 The pooling of standards strengthens the cooperation between Halton and the Merseyside authorities and shows our commitment to joint working and it is anticipated that Halton will achieve this new stretched statutory performance target by the end of 2006/07.

Waste Action Plan

- 4.8 Halton has commissioned consultants to produce a report that sets out its aims for future collection services and Halton's Waste Action Plan sets out future plans for the further introduction of recycling services within the borough. Essentially, the plan is to extend the current dry recyclables (paper) kerbside collection to a multi-material collection. The aim is to encourage participation in the scheme and to increase the tonnage of recyclable materials collected. Plastic bottles, cans and cardboard will be added to the collection scheme, with the potential to include glass if practicable.
- 4.9 It is proposed that initially, a trial will be undertaken with approximately 6,000 properties receiving the multi-material collection service. The blue 140 litre wheeled bins will continue to be used to collect the multi recyclable materials, in addition to paper, and the frequency of collections will increase from four weekly to fortnightly. The increased collection of recyclable materials will facilitate the collection of residual waste on a fortnightly basis from these properties. If successful, the scheme will be rolled out across the Borough to all suitable properties from 2008/09 to 2009/10. This would see the collection of co-mingled recyclable materials (as well as the kerbside garden waste collections) provided to approximately 36,000 properties and would facilitate the provision of alternate weekly collections of refuse at these properties.
- 4.10 The multi material recycling collection service will be extended to all remaining properties in 2010, however, those properties that cannot be serviced with a wheeled bin collection, or those with particular waste receptacle storage difficulties, will remain on a weekly collection of residual waste.
- 4.11 A report commissioned by the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), and carried out by independent consultants has found that the alternate weekly collection of residual waste does not increase the risk of

infestation, and despite recent fears, the report found that there is also no health risk to members of the public with the introduction of such a scheme.

- 4.12 The draft Waste Action Plan is attached as Appendix 3 and the table below summarises the direct additional annual costs for the introduction of the additional services up to 2010/11;

Budget Year	Additional Annual Growth
	£'000
2008/2009	161
2009/2010	185
2010/2011	182

- 4.13 The Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 requires all English waste collection authorities to collect at least two types of recyclable waste from all households in their area by 31st December 2010. This target is a statutory performance indicator (BVPI 91b) and Halton's current performance of 57% places the authority in the bottom quartile.
- 4.14 A recent Audit Commission report highlighted that one area that the Council needed to address was to increase the level of recyclables collected from Households and the Waste Action Plan details the Council's plans to meet this requirement by annually extending number of households served by such collections.
- 4.15 A commitment to develop and approve a Waste Action Plan was required in order for Halton to be accepted as a partner in the procurement process with Merseyside.

Contract Procurement Strategy

- 4.16 The Council continues to pursue a '3 contract' procurement strategy for;
- Landfill Disposal - This contract provides for landfill disposal facilities for residual waste from 1st February 2008 until 1st October 2013 (or when fully integrated within the MWDA arrangements, which ever is sooner.)
 - Waste Management & Recycling - This contract includes the Operation and Management of Recycling and Household Waste Centres (RHHWC's), the Management of Materials Recycling Facilities and the Management of Waste Transfer Stations as from 1st October 2008, for a contract period of between 15 and 20 years.
 - Resource Recovery - This contract includes the construction and operation of Residual Waste Treatment plants as from October 2008 for a period of 25years.
- 4.17 The Council is to be included in the joint procurement arrangements for the Waste Management & Recycling Contract and the Resource Recovery Contract with Merseyside, but as the MWDA had already issued an OJEU notice and PQQ for Landfill Disposal prior to Halton's involvement in the partnership, Halton is required to make it's own contractual arrangements for landfill disposal.

- 4.18 Furthermore, as the Councils contractual arrangements for the Management and Operation of Recycling and Household Waste Centres (RHHWC's) end on 31st January 2008, and the new contractual arrangements with Merseyside will not commence until 1st October 2008, interim contractual arrangements are required to put in place to continue this service during that period. Following Executive Board approval on 25th January 2006, Waste Management Officers are currently proceeding with arrangements to ensure that all necessary contractual arrangements are in place as from 1st February 2008. The associated procurement costs, estimated to total £260,000, are to be met from within existing Waste Management budgets and the procurement timetable for all major contracts is attached as Appendix 1.

Financial Analysis Report

- 4.19 Previous forecasts predicted that the costs of working in partnership with Merseyside represented no greater financial burden to the authority than previous partnership options and an exercise has recently been undertaken to identify the costs of the Joint Working Arrangement with Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority. The scope of the exercise was to produce financial modelling of the costs associated with:-
- 4.19.1 The 'Do Something Option' which would see Halton entering into a joint working arrangement for the Authority to jointly procure with MWDA a Waste Management & Recycling Contract and a Resource Recovery Contract. The outcome of this course of action produces a funding gap between forecasted budgets over a 26 year period of £67m.
- 4.19.2 A 'Do Nothing Option' with Halton continuing with the status quo, which assumes a continuing dependence on landfill for the disposal of residual waste. The outcome of this course of action produced a funding gap over the same period of £82m.
- 4.20 A summary of the report is attached as Appendix 2, and the table below highlights the short and medium term increases in the Waste Management Services budget required to achieve the above options. The large increase in budget year 2011/2012 in the 'Do Something' column represents the new facilities coming on-line.

Budget Year	'Do Something'	'Do Nothing'
	£'000	£'000
2008/2009	-142	121
2009/2010	178	645
2010/2011	274	865
2011/2012	1374	1188
2012/2013	284	1455

- 4.21 These figures include Halton's apportionment of the costs of acquiring land upon which to site new waste treatment facilities, and assumes a payment mechanism whereby Halton is charged on a tonnage basis for waste treated through the various joint contractual arrangements.

Inter Authority Agreement (IAA)

- 4.22 A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) containing partnership principles between Halton and the MWDA was agreed and signed by both parties. Work is continuing on the preparation of a formal Inter Authority Agreement (IAA), although, two key issues remain unresolved at this time;
- 4.22.1 The IAA will represent an agreement for MWDA to procure facilities on behalf of Halton Borough Council, however, the definition of "procurement" and exactly what it is that Halton will be delegating to the MWDA has yet to be determined.
- 4.22.2 As Halton is not constitutionally permitted to sit on the MWDA Board, and therefore has no voting rights, Governance remains a key area of concern for Halton. The setting up of a joint Committee with decision making powers currently appears to be a favourable option for both parties.
- 4.23 Work is continuing on the IAA and when completed it will be submitted to a future meeting of this Board for approval.

MWDA Progress Update

- 4.24 The Reference Project being taken forward by MWDA identifies the need for 2 Large Combined Facilities delivering Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) together with Energy Recovery (ERF), though the MWDA is pursuing 4 sites in order to deliver two strategic facilities. The Authority is taking two sites forward to the planning stage and holding two in reserve and have taken this approach in order to mitigate the risk of failure should any particular preferred site or application stall for unforeseen reasons. It is intended that the MWDA will present to the Merseyside Leaders and Chief Executives the final list of sites to be taken forward to acquisition and planning.
- 4.25 A revised Outline Business Case (OBC) for PFI Credits of £90m will be submitted by the MWDA for reconsideration on 17th April 2007. The revised OBC includes Halton as member within the Merseyside Waste Partnership.
- 4.26 With regard to the Waste Management and Recycling Contract, 9 expressions of interest were received, and the Pre-Qualification stage is now nearing completion. Due to it's complex nature, this contract will be procured through a competitive Dialogue process with an evaluation report, and approval of short list, expected in May 2007.

5. FINANCIAL ISSUES

- 5.1 The relevant financial issues are covered within this report.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The relevant policy implications are covered within this report

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8. RISK ANALYSIS

- 8.1 Failure to approve the Waste Action Plan or failure to commit to the expenditure required to move forward with the procurement of facilities and services with the MWDA will jeopardise Halton's membership of the Merseyside Waste Partnership and leave the authority vulnerable to the significant financial and other risks associated with failing to deliver facilities required to meet future waste management targets.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 9.1 There are no specific equality or diversity issues as a result of this report.

3 CONTRACT PROCUREMENT - KEY DATES TIMETABLE**Halton Landfill Contract**

Issue of OJEU notice	19.03.07
Deadline for receipt of completed PQQs	30.04.07 (42 days)
Evaluation of PQQs (Enviros)	30.04.07 – 21.05.07
Consideration of recommendations	07.06.07
Issue of ITT documentation	11.06.07
Deadline for receipt of completed ITTs	06.08.07
Evaluation of ITT's (Enviros)	07.08.07 – 11.09.07
Consideration of recommendations	18.10.07
Award of contract	22.10.07

Recycling Contract and Waste Management Contract (Joint Halton and MWDA)

OJEU Notice Issued	November 2006
Descriptive Document & PQQ issued on receipt of EoI	November 2006
Bidders Conference & Completed PQQ returned	December 2006
PQQ Evaluation & Prequalified List of Bidders	January 2007
Open CD and Invitation to Submit Outline Solutions	March 2007
Outline Solutions Completed	April 2007
Evaluation and dialogue on Outline Solutions	May 07 – Oct 07
Evaluation report and approval of short list	May 2007
Refinement of key documents to reflect issues raised	June 2007
Issue Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions	June 2007
Bidders complete Detailed Solutions and on-going Dialogue	September 2007
Evaluation, Clarification and Dialogue on Detailed Solutions	November 2007
Assess readiness to close dialogue	December 2007
Potential further dialogue and Refinement of Solutions	December 2007
Close Competitive Dialogue and Call for Final Tenders	December 2007
Final Tender Completed	February 2008
Final Evaluation. Preferred Bidder selected.	April 2008
Final Clarifications, Due Diligence and Approvals	May 2008
Financial Close	July 2008

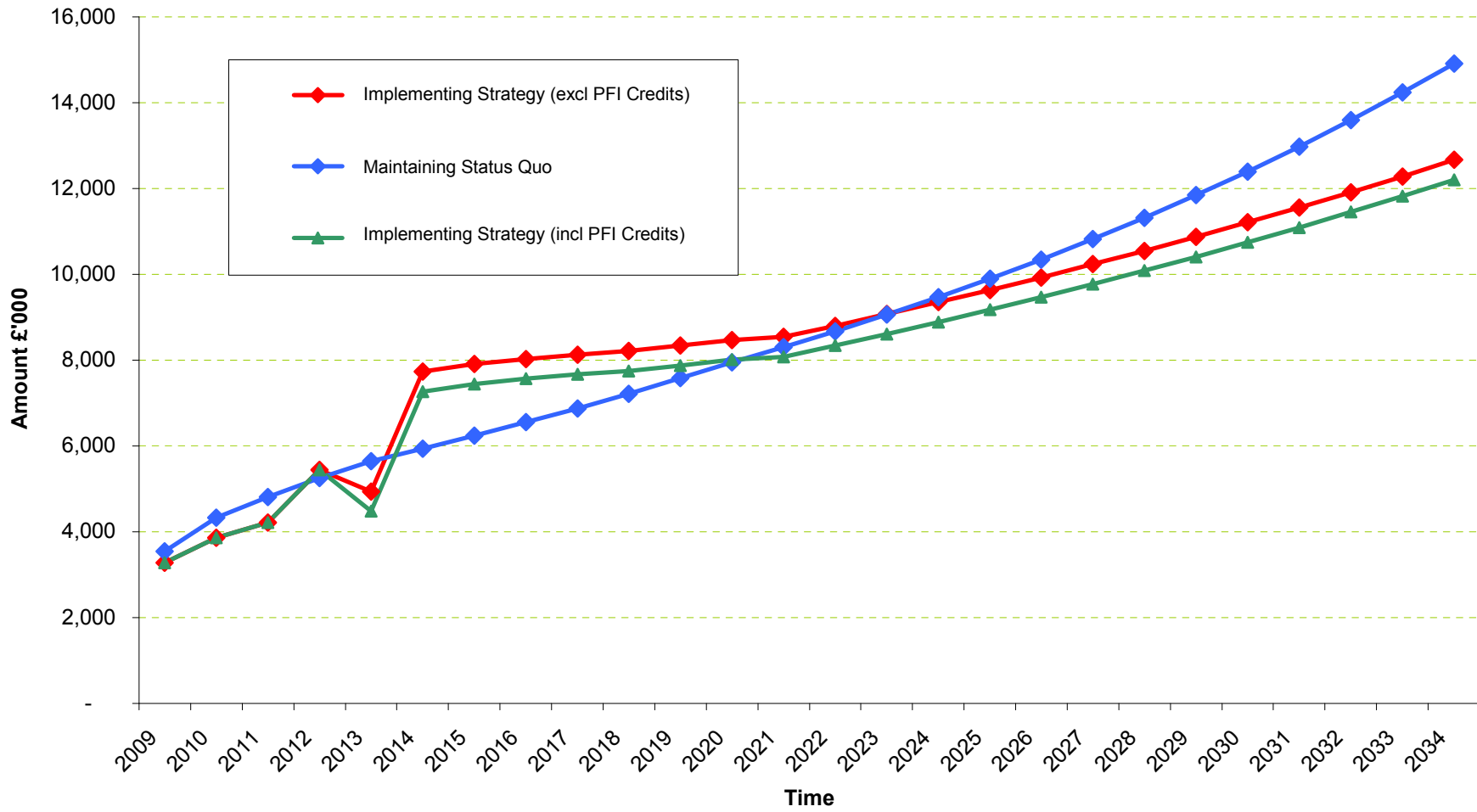
Recovery Contract (Joint Halton and MWDA)

Notice in the official journal of the European Union published	26 March 2007
PQQ Return date	7 May 2007
Invitation to submit outline solutions	13 July 2007
Invitation to submit detail solutions for short listed bidders	29 October 2007
End of Dialogue Phase and Call for final tenders	26 May 2008
Appoint preferred bidder	3 October 2008
Contract award notice	20 February 2009

Halton Borough Council Waste Treatment Cost Projections

Implementing The Waste Strategy								
Year Ending Amount	Accumulative Total up to 2033 £'000	31-Mar-08 £'000	31-Mar-09 £'000	31-Mar-10 £'000	31-Mar-11 £'000	31-Mar-12 £'000	31-Mar-13 £'000	31-Mar-34 £'000
Recycling Contract	66,909	0	872	916	1,001	1,896	1,990	3,665
Recovery Contract	127,293	0	0	0	0	0	2,379	7,750
Land Prudential Borrowing	3,501	0	135	135	135	135	135	135
Landfill Contract	25,956	0	2,271	2,440	2,596	2,759	436	1,115
LATS	1,504	0	0	368	486	650	0	0
Total Costs	225,163	0	3,278	3,859	4,218	5,440	4,940	12,665
Projected Budget	147,649	3,161	3,420	3,681	3,944	4,066	4,192	7,948
Funding Gap (before PFI credits)	77,514	-3,161	-142	178	274	1,374	748	4,717
PFI Income	10,202	0	0	0	0	0	464	464
Funding Gap (after PFI credits)	67,312	-3,161	-142	178	274	1,374	284	4,253
Maintaining Status Quo								
Year Ending Amount		31-Mar-08 £'000	31-Mar-09 £'000	31-Mar-10 £'000	31-Mar-11 £'000	31-Mar-12 £'000	31-Mar-13 £'000	31-Mar-34 £'000
Recycling Costs	70,498	0	1,183	1,255	1,330	1,411	1,496	5,137
Landfill Contract	125,735	0	2,358	2,592	2,832	3,023	3,157	8,062
LATS	33,540	0	0	479	647	820	994	1,717
Total Costs	229,773	0	3,541	4,326	4,809	5,254	5,647	14,916
Projected Budget	147,649	3,161	3,420	3,681	3,944	4,066	4,192	7,948
Funding Gap (before PFI credits)	82,124	-3,161	121	645	865	1,188	1,455	6,968
PFI Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Funding Gap (after PFI credits)	82,124	-3,161	121	645	865	1,188	1,455	6,968

Project Waste Treatment Costs



Contents

1.	HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL	2
1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Strategic Aims	2
1.3	Integration with the Merseyside Partnership and JMWMS	2
1.4	Approval Process and Timescales	4
1.5	Current and Future Performance	4
1.6	Current Waste Management Services	5
1.6.1	Household Residual Waste Collections	5
1.6.2	Kerbside Dry Recyclable Collections	6
1.6.3	Kerbside Compostable Collections	6
1.6.4	Bring Sites	7
1.6.5	Recycling and Household Waste Centres (RHWCs)	7
1.7	Future Plans - Summary	7
1.7.1	Residual Collections	7
1.7.2	Kerbside Recycling	8
1.7.3	Compostable Collections	9
1.7.4	Bring Sites	9
1.7.5	Recycling and Household Waste Centres (RHWCs)	9
2.	ACTION PLAN	10
2.1	Introduction	10
2.2	Service Levels and Performance	10
2.3	Key Procurement Issues	14
2.4	Indicative Costs and Income	16
2.4.1	Indicative Direct Service Costs - Table 2.5	16
2.4.2	Indicative Growth Costs - Table 2.6	19
2.4.3	Annual costs of service improvements and effect on performance	21
2.4.4	Potential LATS Costs	21
2.4.5	MWDA Costs	22

Appendix - Summary table showing the cost and effect of improving recycling services

1. HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.1 Introduction

Situated in the North West of England, Halton Borough Council borders Merseyside, Warrington and the Shire county of Cheshire. The Council was formed in 1974 and established itself as a unitary authority in April 1998.

The Borough covers an area of 79 sq km and encompasses the major towns of Runcorn and Widnes. It has a population of 118,900, within 52,909 properties (2005/06).

The Council's overall net budget for 2006/07 is £92 million. Specific waste collection related budgets include approximately £1.58 million for refuse collection and £58,000 (net) for kerbside paper recycling. Approximately £523,000 is allocated to green waste collections, of which £123,000 is for gate fees at the composting site.

1.2 Strategic Aims

The Council is currently focussing on the diversion of biodegradable material from household waste collections through the provision of separate garden waste and paper collections.

The key strategic aims of the Council, in relation to waste management, are as follows:

- Implementing a long term waste management solution that is cost effective;
- Achievement of Best Value;
- Providing a practicable and deliverable waste management system;
- Implementing future plans which complement the Council's key priorities and take into account the socio-economic make up of the Borough.

In addition the Council's 5 Strategic Priorities as contained within its Corporate Plan are:

- A Healthy Halton;
- Halton's Urban Renewal;
- Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton;
- Children & Young people in Halton;
- A Safer Halton.

1.3 Integration with the Merseyside Partnership and JMWMS

The Council is currently progressing with the formalisation of partnership arrangements with the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) and its partner Merseyside authorities. A recommendation to develop the partnership was formally accepted by the MWDA board on 17th September 2006 and agreed by Halton's Members on 21st September 2006.

Once established, the partnership will enable the joint procurement of appropriate waste treatment and disposal services and facilities.

The Merseyside Waste Partnership currently consists of the following authorities:

- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council;
- Liverpool City Council;
- Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority;
- Sefton Council;
- St Helens Council;
- Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.

The existing partner authorities developed a joint strategy in 2005, *the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Merseyside* (JMWMMS).

This document specifies overall, pooled recycling targets as follows:

- 2010 – 33%;
- 2015 – 38%;
- 2020 – 44%.

In addition to these recycling targets, the following aims are specified:

- All Districts to move to the separate collection of dry recyclables, biodegradable waste and residual waste, using kerbside sort or wheeled bin collection systems by 2010;
- All Districts to maximise green garden waste and paper collections;
- All Districts to collect recyclables as often as possible and move to fortnightly residual waste collection by 2010;
- All Districts to move to the kerbside collection of kitchen waste by 2010;
- MWDA to upgrade existing HWRCs to make them more user friendly and customer focused by 2010;
- Every District to optimise its Bring Bank locations across Merseyside to an optimum saturation rate of one per 1000 population.

Part of the development process for the new partnership between Halton and Merseyside has been the consideration of waste management strategies.

Halton produced a waste strategy document in 2004 entitled '*Waste Management Services – The Aspirations and Guidelines*'. The document broadly considered the existing situation and services at that time and potential options for the development of waste and recycling services.

Specifically, the preferred options identified within the document are for the development and consideration of the following:

- More intensive kerbside collections;
- Flexibility to procure an appropriate residual waste treatment facility which offers the best available and acceptable option to replace the existing set of contracts which expire in 2008;
- Harnessing potentially significant economies of scale by working with another authority to deliver shared recovery infrastructure.

These preferred options are considered to be consistent with the JMWMS and the proposed partnership arrangements.

To achieve the integration with Merseyside, Halton Borough Council officers have been working, with the support of external consultants, to accomplish the following objectives:

- An approved Action Plan for Halton Borough Council (March 2007);
- A Memorandum of Understanding (Completed and Agreed October 2006);
- A formal Inter Authority Agreement (Spring 2007);
- A joint Communications and Awareness Protocol with the MWDA. (Completed November 2006);
- Interim arrangements/succession strategy for Halton's current waste management contracts (January 2007);
- A public panel consultation on methods for achieving objectives of the Action Plan (January 2007);
- An updated Waste Management Strategy for Halton (October 2007).

To assist integration and joint working with the Merseyside Waste Partnership, the Council have identified a number of areas for clarification, discussion and potential co-operation within new partnership arrangements, these include:

- Pooling of targets (Approved by DEFRA, December 2006);
- Interim waste management and recycling contract arrangements;
- Financial arrangements;
- Density and provision of bring sites;
- Kerbside collection infrastructure.

1.4 Approval Process and Timescales

The action plan will be submitted to Halton's Executive Board in March 2007 for consideration and approval.

1.5 Current and Future Performance

The Council's most recent waste BVPI performance data for 2004/05 and 2005/06 and estimates for future years are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1
BVPI Performance Data¹

BVPI	Description	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Targets	2007/08 Targets
82a	% of household waste recycled (%)	13.65	13.58	14.58	15.58
82b	% of household waste composted (%)	9.15	9.64	10.64	11.64
82b (combined)	% of household waste recycled and composted (%)	22.8	23.2	25	28
84a	Number of kilograms of household waste collected per person (kgs)	549.7	549.5	555	561
86	Cost of waste collection per household (£)	26.29	26.95	29.00	31.00
91	% of population served by a kerbside collection of recyclables (%)	100	100	100	100

1.6 Current Waste Management Services

The Council's core waste collection services considered in this action plan are as follows:

- Household residual waste collection service;
- Kerbside paper recyclable collections;
- Kerbside compostable collections;
- RHWC (Recycling and Household Waste Centres);
- Bring Sites.

1.6.1 Household Residual Waste Collections

The majority of households (85%) are provided with a 240 litre black wheeled bin for the storage of residual waste; the remaining households have a sack collection. Collections are made from the boundary of the property on a weekly basis.

An in-house team provides the collection service using the following resources:

- Nine refuse collection rounds (eight full and one part domestic/part trade), using nine RCVs;
- One driver plus two operatives per vehicle for wheeled bin rounds;
- One driver plus five operatives per vehicle for the sack collection round.

¹ Halton Borough Council Performance Plan (2006/07)

The Council's refuse collection service achieves a high customer service rating and attained a CPA score of 4. As a result, the Council plans to continue using its in-house team and have no current plans to market test the service. However, in view of the potential changes to collection services that could be required, the delivery of the service will remain under review to ensure continued 'best value'.

The majority of collected residual waste is delivered to the Arpley Landfill site in Warrington. The rest is delivered to the Huyton waste transfer station on Merseyside, which is used as an alternative site when bank holiday arrangements result in weekend work. This is due to restricted opening hours at Arpley on weekends.

1.6.2 Kerbside Dry Recyclable (Paper) Collections

Halton's current kerbside collection service for paper recycling covers all 52,909 households within the Borough. 36,000 households have a blue 140 litre wheeled bin and 16,909 use a blue plastic sack. Collections are made every four weeks for wheeled bins and every two weeks for sacks, from the boundary of the properties.

The paper collection service was initially operated by a private contractor using sacks. Successful trials using blue bins were introduced in 2003, which resulted in a further expansion of the blue bin service to replace sack collections at all appropriate properties. Participation in the scheme is estimated to be around 45%.

An in-house team provide the collection service using the following resources:

- One RCV for the wheeled bins;
- One 3.5 tonne boxed tipper for collecting sacks;
- One driver plus two collectors per vehicle for sack collections;
- One driver plus two collectors per vehicle for wheeled bin collections.

Collected paper is delivered to a local, privately owned transfer station for storage, bulking and loading. It is then transported to Shotton, Deeside for reprocessing.

Approximately 9,000 terraced properties in the borough are not suitable for the provision of a second wheeled bin. Where practical, consideration will be given to the use of communal recycling bins or other local recycling facilities, to service these, and other properties, that cannot be provided with additional wheeled bins.

1.6.3 Kerbside Compostable (Green Waste) Collections

The kerbside collection of garden waste is currently provided to 30,000 households within the Borough. These households are provided with a green 240 litre wheeled bin, which is emptied fortnightly. It is estimated that the service has a participation rate of around 50%.

The garden waste collection service was first introduced in 2002/03 on a trial basis. Following the success of the scheme, it was rolled out using Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) funding. This was carried out in stages and the service currently covers 75% of suitable properties.

The Council's in-house team provides the collection service using the following resources:

- Two RCV 'rotopress' vehicles;
- One driver plus two collectors per vehicle.

Garden waste is collected from households and delivered to the facility at Haddocks Wood in Runcorn, where it is composted using open windrows. This facility is also used to process the green waste that is collected at the Recycling and Household Waste Centres.

1.6.4 Bring Sites

There are 35 recycling bring sites in Halton. Some consist of containers for a single material such as glass or paper, whereas others accept a range of materials such as glass, cans, plastic bottles, paper, shoes, textiles and books.

Details of the Council's Bring Sites are provided in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2
Bring Sites

Material types	No of Banks	Collection Company
Glass	33	Glass UK
Cans	8	Solidcast and Valient Recycling
Paper	18	In house service
Plastics	6	Solidcast and Valient Recycling
Books	2	British Heart Foundation
Shoes	5	European recycling company
Textiles	5	Oxfam

1.6.5 Recycling and Household Waste Centres (RHWCs)

Halton has two RHWCs; One is located in Runcorn, the other in Widnes. Both sites are currently managed by Mersey Waste Holdings, under contract until the end of January 2008. The sites currently achieve a recovery rate of approximately 60%.

1.7 Future Plans - Summary

1.7.1 Household Waste Collections

The Council currently use an in-house collection team for refuse and recycling services and have no current plans to market test the service. However, to ensure continued 'best value' in the delivery of the service, and to deliver potential economies of scale, a combined recycling and refuse collection service or a shared working exercise with other local authorities, could be considered in the future.

Future plans for the refuse service include proposals to increase both the range of recyclable materials collected at the kerbside, and the number of properties served by such collections, with all households receiving kerbside multi material collections by 2010.

The waste flow diagrams and costings associated with this report assume a trial multi material recyclable collection scheme in 2007/08 to approximately 6,000 households. As part of the trial, the properties receiving this enhanced recycling collection service will also receive a fortnightly collection of their residual waste.

If successful, this will be followed by the phased introduction of multi material collections, and alternate weekly collections of residual waste, to approximately 36,000 properties, in total, over the two year period 2008/9 - 2009/10.

The multi material recycling collection service will be extended to all remaining properties in 2010, however, those properties that cannot be serviced with a wheeled bin collection, or those with particular waste receptacle storage difficulties, will remain on a weekly collection of residual waste.

Through the roll out of services, the Council will communicate with members of the public through enhanced community engagement and publicity. The primary aim is to increase awareness of waste issues and improve participation in the Council's recycling services through a structured and locally delivered communications strategy and publicity program. This will include regular leafleting of households and continually updated information and support through other forms of media.

1.7.2 Kerbside Recycling

The Council plan to extend the kerbside dry recyclable collection to a multi-material recyclable collection service. The aim is to encourage participation in the scheme and to increase the tonnage collected. Plastic bottles, cans and cardboard will be added to the existing waste paper collection scheme.

Initially, a trial will be undertaken with approximately 6,000 properties receiving the multi-material collection service. The 140 litre wheeled bins will continue to be used to collect the multi recyclable materials and the frequency of collections will increase from four weekly to fortnightly. The increased collection of recyclable materials will facilitate the collection of residual waste on a fortnightly basis from these properties.

The areas for the trial to be conducted will be identified through consultation with elected members, and introduced in consultation with the elected members and residents in the chosen areas.

If successful, the scheme will be rolled out across the Borough to all suitable properties in 2008/09. This would see the collection of co-mingled recyclable materials (as well as the kerbside garden waste collections) provided to approximately a further 30,000 properties and would facilitate the provision of alternate weekly collections of residual at these properties.

The multi material recycling collection service will be extended to all remaining properties in 2010, however, those properties that cannot be serviced with a wheeled bin collection, or those with particular waste receptacle storage difficulties, will remain on a weekly collection of residual waste.

The recent increase in new developments consisting of apartments at various locations within Halton will require communal containers of sufficient capacity to enable the collection of dry recyclables. These will be provided and collections built in to the existing rounds as new developments are completed.

Once collected, the materials will subsequently be sent to a Material Recycling Facility (MRF) for separation, before re-processing. It is anticipated that a MRF facility, procured in partnership with MWDA, will be used for this.

At present there are no plans to collect glass through the kerbside scheme. This decision is due to uncertainty about the potential impacts on the quality and marketability of co-collected paper. Trials are currently being undertaken at MRF facilities to determine the suitability of including glass within such collections. If the trials show that the quality of paper and end

markets are unaffected, the Council would consider the inclusion of glass within their co-mingled scheme.

It is anticipated that that the inclusion of glass within kerbside collections may provide a significant increase in recycling rates due to the material's relatively high weight/density ratio. Therefore, it is assumed that the waste flow model associated with this report shows a conservative estimate of the potential performance of the co-mingled recyclable collections.

1.7.3 Compostable Collections

The Council plans to extend its garden waste collection scheme to all suitable households within the Borough. It is estimated that there are approximately 10,000 properties that could be added to the scheme. The service will be rolled out to these properties in 2008/09 and each property will be issued with either a wheeled bin or a re-useable sack, according to the nature of the property.

The Council has considered introducing a collection for kitchen waste, however it currently has no plans to do so. This decision was taken following a financial analysis of the likely costs involved in piloting a scheme. Food waste collection is an option that the Council intends to re-consider in the future should their circumstances change.

1.7.4 Bring Sites

The Council are aiming to introduce up to 20 new sites across the Borough. Each site will consist of a bank for paper, glass and cans. The roll out of the new sites will be spread across three years, from 2007/08 to 2009/10. Attention will be focused on identifying gaps in the provision of bring facilities through liaison with local elected representatives, Area Forums and private housing organisations. The possibility of dedicated facilities for new developments will also be considered. The specific details of such sites and facilities will be contained within further project plans to be produced in conjunction with the Councils Waste Management Strategy.

1.7.5 Recycling and Household Waste Centres (RHWCs)

The contract for operating the RHC's is due to terminate at the end of January 2008. After this time, an interim contract will be established until the management of the sites is included in joint contractual arrangements with MWDA.

There are no major changes intended for the sites before 2008 due to their high performance.

2. ACTION PLAN

2.1 Introduction

This section outlines the assumed developments in waste management services in Halton for each year of the JMWMS from 2006/07 until 2020/21.

The following key elements are considered for each year:

- Service levels (e.g. types of service, number of households served);
- JMWMS MSW recycling targets;
- Estimated performance levels (MSW and household recycling and composting rates);
- Procurement issues (e.g. procurement processes, potential co-operation with neighbouring authorities);
- Indicative Costs (from 2006/7 – 2010/11).

2.2 Service Levels and Performance

Table 2.1 on the pages below identifies the following key service issues and assumptions for each year:

- JMWMS MSW recycling targets and assumed interim targets, showing progression towards key target years;
- Estimated performance levels (MSW and household recycling and composting rates);
- Estimated participation rates;
- Key service level details for kerbside residual, dry recyclable and garden waste collections (e.g. major changes to services and number of households served). Assumptions are linked to the data calculated in separate waste flow diagrams and the levels of diversion required to achieve the JMWMS targets;
- Other relevant issues, for example the commencement of new contracts, changes to residual collections; including the introduction of alternate week collections.

Table 2.1 Action Plan Summary Table

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Merseyside (JMWMS) Target	24.2%	26.4%	28.6%	30.8%	33%
Estimated MSW Recycling Performance	26.98%	27.67%	30.36%	31.92%	33.71%
Estimated Household Recycling Performance (BVPI 82 a & b)	23.87%	24.65%	27.66%	29.40%	31.41%
Kerbside Dry Recyclable Collections	No change to materials collected in 2005/06 Additional 3000 properties converted to blue bins Participation rate 45% for paper collection.	Multi-material collection trialled with approximately 6,000 households. Participation rate of 50%. Participation rate 45% for paper only collection.	Multi-material collection rolled out to half of remaining properties. Participation rate 50%. Participation rate 45% for paper only collection.	Multi-material collection rolled out to remaining properties. Participation rate 50%. BVPI 91 a & b achieved.	Participation rate 53% for all materials
Kerbside Garden Waste Collections	An additional 5,000 properties added to the scheme, taking total to 30,000. Participation rate 55%	No change to collection service. Participation rate 55%	Remaining 10,000 suitable properties added to scheme. Takes scheme to 100% coverage of suitable properties Participation rate 55%	Participation rate 55%	Participation rate 60%
Bring Sites	-	8 bring sites added. Paper, glass and can bank at each site.	6 bring sites added. Paper, glass and can bank at each site.	6 bring sites added. Paper, glass and can bank at each site.	-
Other (incl. changes to residual collections and procurement issues)	-	Pilot multi material recyclables and alternate weekly refuse collections. Jan 2008 all waste management contracts due for renewal.	Alternate weekly collections phased in to half of remaining suitable properties.	Alternate weekly collections phased in to remaining suitable properties.	-

Table 2.1 Action Plan Summary Table (continued)

Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Merseyside (JMWMS) Target	34%	35%	36%	37%	38%
Estimated MSW Recycling Performance	34.00%	35.40%	36.80%	37.46%	38.34%
Estimated Household Recycling Performance (BVPI 82 a & b)	31.74%	33.30%	34.87%	35.61%	36.60%
Kerbside Dry Recyclable Collections	Participation rate 55% for all materials	Participation rate 60% for all materials	Participation rate 65% for all materials	Participation rate 65% for all materials	Participation rate 70% for all materials
Kerbside Garden Waste Collections	Participation rate 60%	Participation rate 65%	Participation rate 70%	Participation rate 75%	Participation rate 75%
Bring Sites	-	-	-	-	-
Other (incl. changes to residual collections and procurement issues)	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2.1 Action Plan Summary Table (continued)

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Merseyside (JMWMS) Target	39.2%	40.4%	41.6%	42.8%	44%
Estimated MSW Recycling Performance	39.33%	40.85%	41.95%	42.81%	44.48%
Estimated Household Recycling Performance (BVPI 82 a & b)	37.70%	39.40%	40.63%	41.60%	43.47%
Kerbside Dry Recyclable Collections	Participation rate 75% for all materials	Participation rate 76% for all materials	Participation rate 78% for all materials	Participation rate 79% for all materials	Participation rate 80% for all materials
Kerbside Garden Waste Collections	Participation rate 75%	Participation rate 80%	Participation rate 80%	Participation rate 80%	Participation rate 85%
Bring Sites	-	-	-	-	-
Other (incl. changes to residual collections and procurement issues)	-	-	-	-	-

2.3 Key Procurement Issues

Key procurement issues identified for Halton are as follows:

- Procurement process for new containers (wheeled bins for garden waste roll out in 2008/9);
- Revised vehicle procurement/maintenance timetables in accordance with revised service delivery plans. New vehicles, in addition to the new fleet referred to in Para 2.4.1, may be required from 2009/10 if multi-materials are added to the kerbside dry recyclables collection as referred to in Para 1.7.2;
- Procurement process for potential new contracts, due for renewal in 2008:
 - Landfill - from the end of January 2008, for a period to be confirmed;
 - Paper re-processor - from the end of January to the commencement of the MWDA recycling contract;
 - Garden waste re-processor - from the end of January 2008, for a period to be confirmed;
 - RHWC's management - from the end of January to the commencement of the MWDA recycling contract.

Potential joint procurement opportunities with neighbouring Merseyside authorities may be appropriate in a number of areas.

Table 2.2 summarises potential areas for joint procurement for the Merseyside authorities and Halton, showing the years when new service contracts, vehicles and containers are expected to be introduced.

In addition to the issues highlighted in the table it is recommended that joint arrangements for the sale of recyclable and compostable materials are investigated.

Halton have also highlighted the following joint procurement and working opportunities:

- Containers. The Council would consider a joint Merseyside procurement initiative as appropriate;
- Joint vehicle procurement. The Council would consider revised specifications and joint procurement of RCVs with Merseyside authorities;
- Joint working arrangements: Cross boundary working and joint collection arrangements with neighbouring authorities would be considered if appropriate.

Table 2.2 Joint Procurement Potential

Authority	Potential Introduction of New Collection Contract/Contractor	Potential Introduction of Significant Numbers of New Collection Vehicles (in-house or private contractor provision)	Potential Introduction of Significant Numbers of New Containers (in-house or private contractor provision)
Knowsley	-	2007/08-2008/09. Potential new RCVs for co-mingled kitchen and garden collection. Potential new kerbside sort vehicles to accommodate plastics.	2007/08-2008/09. Kitchen waste containers (caddies, liners).
Liverpool	October/November 2008. Potential combined Refuse and Recycling Contract.	2008/09-2010/11. Potential new kerbside sort vehicles to accommodate plastics and kitchen waste. (Note vehicle requirements will be subject to a future service procurement process)	2009/10. Kitchen waste containers (caddies, liners and kerbside collection containers). (Note container requirements will be subject to a future service procurement process)
Sefton	December 2010. Recycling Contract.	2006/07-2007/8. Potential new RCVs (with bin lift equipment) for alternate week residual and garden waste collections. Potential alteration to kerbside sort vehicles to accommodate kitchen waste and potentially plastics.	2006/07 and 2007/08. Wheeled bins and kitchen waste containers (caddies, liners and kerbside collection containers).
St. Helens	2007 Kerbside Recycling Contract (potential two year extension)	2008/09. Potential new kerbside sort vehicles to accommodate plastics and kitchen waste.	2007/08-2008/09. Kitchen waste containers (caddies, liners and kerbside collection containers).
Wirral	2006. New combined Refuse and Recycling Contract. Subject to outcome of service procurement process.	2006/07-2007/08. Potential new RCVs (with bin lift equipment) for residual, recyclable, kitchen and garden waste collections. (Note vehicle requirements subject to outcome of service procurement process)	2006/07-2007/08. Wheeled bins for separate garden waste, co-mingled kitchen and garden and co-mingled dry recyclables collections. (Note container requirements subject to outcome of service procurement process)
Halton	2008 All waste management contracts end in 2008.	2007-8- 2009/10. Potential additional RCVs for expansion of garden waste collections and introduction of co-mingled multi-material dry recyclables collection.	2008/9. 10,000 wheeled bins required for expansion of garden waste collection service.

2.4 Indicative Costs and Income

Estimates of costs and income for Halton Borough Council for the period 2006/07-2010/11 are considered in the sections below.

Costs and income are outlined in the following areas:

- Residual collection costs;
- Dry recyclable collection costs;
- Compostable collection costs;
- Bulking and transport costs;
- LATS costs.

2.4.1 Indicative Direct Service Costs - Table 2.5

Table 2.5 provides a summary of indicative collection, bulking and transfer, costs for the period 2006/07-2010/11.

2.4.1.1 Collection Cost Assumptions

Detailed breakdowns of the assumptions used to compile the collection costs have been provided separately within spreadsheet files.

Indicative costs are provided in this document to enable potential changes in costs, over a five year period, to be considered.

These costs do not reflect additional costs incurred through future partnership arrangements with MWDA.

Costs will also be subject to procurement processes and should, therefore, not be regarded as 'actual' costs.

Key collection cost assumptions in this report are as follows:

- Labour costs include allowances for spare labour but not for supervision, management or internal support costs;
- An annual inflation rate of 2.5% has been applied to staff salaries, containers and vehicle costs;
- Containers:
 - Wheeled bins for refuse are depreciated over a period of ten years;
 - Wheeled bins for dry recyclables are replaced at a total of 1,000 per year;
 - Wheeled bins for garden waste are replaced at a total of 1,000 per year;
 - Re-useable sacks for paper recycling are replaced annually up until 2008/9. Post 2008/9 sacks will be used for the multi-material co-mingled collection and replaced fortnightly;
- The purchase of a new fleet is planned within the next year. Figures for potential costs/savings were unavailable, therefore vehicle costs are based on current hire prices and inflated annually;

- Bulking and transport costs have been included. They are based on quotes provided by CZ waste for bulking and haulage of materials;
- Additional corporate costs and profit are not included.

2.4.1.2 Bulking and transport cost assumptions

Details of the assumptions used to calculate these costs have been provided in a separate spreadsheet. The figures are based on bulking/storage charges provided by CZ waste; £5.50 per tonne for both paper and co-mingled dry recyclables. Transport costs for co-mingled dry recyclables from CZ waste have been quoted as £160 per transfer to the Bidston MRF, with each vehicle carrying approximately 12 tonnes of co-mingled dry recyclables. An annual inflation rate of 2.5% has been applied to the costs.

2.4.1.3 Support costs for the roll out of new schemes

Costs to cover items such as publicity and support staff, which will be required for the roll out of the new schemes, are not included in the annual costs shown.

Table 2.5 Indicative Direct Service Costs (2006/07-2010/11)¹

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
<i>Residual Collection Cost</i>	<i>£1,691,019</i>	<i>£1,733,294</i>	<i>£1,776,627</i>	<i>£1,821,042</i>	<i>£1,857,395</i>
<i>Dry Recyclable Collection Cost</i>	<i>£249,744</i>	<i>£255,987</i>	<i>£262,387</i>	<i>£426,714</i>	<i>£608,595</i>
<i>Garden Waste Collection Cost</i>	<i>£299,160</i>	<i>£306,639</i>	<i>£463,368</i>	<i>£474,952</i>	<i>£486,826</i>
Collection Cost Sub Total	£2,239,923	£2,295,920	£2,502,382	£2,722,708	£2,952,816
Bulking and Transport Costs	£17,299	£27,747	£47,783	£88,174	£115,764
Total Collection and Transport /Bulking costs	£2,257,222	£2,323,667	£2,550,165	£2,810,882	£3,068,580

¹ Refer to sections 2.4.1 for breakdown of assumptions and details of items included and excluded
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2.4.2 Indicative Growth Costs - Table 2.6

Table 2.6 summarises the growth in expenditure that will be required to fund the improvements to the waste management service.

2.4.2.1 Potential Income

The Council currently receives income for source segregated paper. This income is subject to the contractual arrangements for the collections and it is assumed that paper collections of this type will be phased out and potentially replaced with the introduction of co-mingled recyclable collections.

Table 2.4 shows the estimated potential income from the sale of paper based on current rates of £33 per tonne. Table 2.6 shows the difference in paper income between each year as a growth item.

**Table 2.4 Halton Borough Council
Potential Paper Income**

Year	Estimated Tonnes per Annum	Income per Tonne	Total Income per Annum
2006/07	3145.31	£33	£103,795
2007/08	2821.98	£33	£93,125
2008/09	2137.65	£33	£70,542
2009/10	719.67	£33	£23,749
2010/11	0	£33	£0

2.4.2.2 Growth required for improved recycling services

The figures shown in Table 2.6 summarise the additional expenditure that will be required each year to provide the service improvements. The calculations take into account the assumed collection and bulking and transport costs. Inflation has been removed in an attempt to show the 'real' annual increase in expenditure required to roll out the different schemes.

Table 2.6 Indicative Growth Costs (2006/07-2010/11)²

Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Growth to allow for loss of paper income	-	£10,670	£22,583	£46,793	£23,749
Growth required for improved Recycling Service	-	£9,771	£161,427	£185,908	£182,027
Total Annual Growth Costs²	-	£20,441	£184,010	£232,701	£205,776
Cumulative Growth Costs	-	£20,441	£204,451	£437,152	£642,928

² Growth costs over and above previous year's budget. See section 2.4.2 for details of assumptions and items included/excluded

2.4.3 Annual costs of service improvements and effect on performance

The tables in Appendix 1 provide additional detail of the year on year increases in collection/bulking/transport costs for delivering the changes to each service as laid out in the action plan. The table shows the estimated effect that each service change may have on household and MSW recycling performance.

The costs shown are for the additional expenditure required over and above the previous year's costs. These direct costs show the additional costs for labour, vehicles and containers which will be incurred each year to provide the new services. The transport costs show the additional expenditure required each year for bulking and transferring of additional recyclable materials. The figures demonstrate that additional funding continues to be required in 2010/11, even though the roll out of the recycling services is completed in mid 2009/10. This is due to 2010/11 being the first full year in which all services are fully rolled out.

The performance figures show the estimated impact of the roll out of the schemes on household and MSW recycling rates. By comparing the predicted recycling performance with the JMWMS targets it can be seen that by 2008/9 the strategy targets would not be achieved without improvements to the collection services for garden waste and by 2009/10 the strategy targets would not be achieved without improvements to the dry recyclables collection.

2.4.4 Potential LATS Costs

In addition to the collection and growth costs considered above, Halton Borough Council will be subject to potential LATS costs. These costs relate to the amount of landfill 'allowances' allocated to the Borough and the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill.

The successful application of recycling and composting collection systems for biodegradable wastes, including paper and compostable materials, will assist the avoidance of additional LATS costs to the Council.

Indicative LATS performance has been considered in outline. It should be noted that future tonnages of biodegradable materials landfilled are dependant upon the types of collection, recycling and composting services provided by the Council and, crucially, the level of participation of Halton's households.

Table 2.7 shows the tonnage of biodegradable materials that the Council are permitted to landfill between 2005/06 and 2010/11, the predicted performance (subject to the delivery of the development plans outlined in Table 2.1) and the predicted surplus or deficit of allowances for each year.

Year	LATS Allowance	Estimated Biodegradable Waste Landfilled	Allowance Difference	Allowance Balance	Cost / Surplus @ £40 per tonne	Cost / Surplus @ £20 per tonne	Potential Penalty @ £150 per tonne
2005/06	41,732	37,160 ⁽¹⁾	4572	4572	182,880	91,440	
2006/07	39,403	36,496	2907	7479	299,160	149,580	
2007/08	36,298	36677	-379	7100	284,000	142,000	
2008/09	32,417	35358	-2941	4159 ⁽²⁾	166,360	83,180	
2009/10	27,759	35113	-7354	-7354	-294,160	-147,080	-1,103,100
2010/11	24,669	34397	-9728	-9728	-389,120	-194,560	-1,459,200

Notes:

(1): Tonnage figure for 2005/06 shows final, reconciled data.

(2): Surplus from 2008/09 cannot be carried forward into 2009/10

It should be noted that, with the exception of the quoted 2005/06 data, the estimated tonnages of biodegradable waste landfilled are indicative figures and do not reflect final agreed and reconciled figures.

2.4.5 MWDA Costs

The Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority will provide further information about other potential costs associated with future partnership and contractual arrangements between Halton Borough Council and The Merseyside Waste Partnership.

Appendix 1

Summary table showing the additional cost of improving and extending recycling services and the effect on recycling performance as a result of doing so.

The introduction of increased recycling and green waste collection services will have a net effect upon disposal costs, and will reduce the Council's exposure to LATS penalties. This is covered in other reports.

2007/8										
Scheme	ADDITIONAL COST			EFFECT ON HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			EFFECT ON MSW RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			
	Direct cost for improved service	Bulking/transport cost	Total (additional costs over and above previous year's budget)	Household recycling rate with scheme	Household recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	MSW recycling rate with scheme	MSW recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	JMWMS target
Pilot multi-material dry recyclables	£0	£9,771	£9,771	24.65%	24.32%	0.33%	27.67%	27.38%	0.29%	26.40%

2008/9										
Scheme	ADDITIONAL COST			EFFECT ON HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			EFFECT ON MSW RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			
	Direct cost for improved service	Bulking/transport cost	Total (additional costs over and above previous year's budget)	Household recycling rate with scheme	Household recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	MSW recycling rate with scheme	MSW recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	JMWMS target
Co-mingled multi-material dry recyclables collection rolled out to 23,500 additional properties (Total = 29409).	£0	£19,547	£19,547	27.66%	26.68%	0.98%	30.36%	29.49%	0.87%	28.60%
Garden waste collection rolled out to 10,000 additional properties (Total = 40,000)	£141,880	£0.00	£141,880	27.66%	25.62%	2.04%	30.36%	<u>28.54%</u>	1.82%	28.60%

2009/10										
Scheme	ADDITIONAL COST			EFFECT ON HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			EFFECT ON MSW RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			
	Direct cost for improved service	Bulking/transport cost	Total (additional costs over and above previous year's budget)	Household recycling rate with scheme	Household recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	MSW recycling rate with scheme	MSW recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	JMWMS target
Multi-material dry recyclables collection rolled out to 23,500 additional properties (Total = 52,909)	£146,503	£39,405	£185,908	29.40%	27.11%	2.29%	31.92%	<u>29.87%</u>	2.05%	30.80%
Garden waste collection service at 40,000 properties	£0	£0	£0	29.40%	27.36%	2.04%	31.92%	<u>30.10%</u>	1.82%	30.80%

2010-11										
Scheme	ADDITIONAL COST			EFFECT ON HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			EFFECT ON MSW RECYCLING/COMPOSTING PERFORMANCE			
	Direct cost for improved service	Bulking/transport cost	Total (additional costs over and above previous year's budget)	Household recycling rate with scheme	Household recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	MSW recycling rate with scheme	MSW recycling rate without scheme	Contribution of improved service to recycling rate	JMWMS target
Multi-material dry recyclables collection (Increase due to full year effect of new services)	£155,110	£26,917	£182,027	31.41%	28.29%	3.12%	33.71%	<u>30.93%</u>	2.78%	33.00%
Garden waste collection service at 40,000 properties	£0	£0	£0	31.41%	29.18%	2.23%	33.71%	<u>31.72%</u>	1.99%	33.00%

Assumptions

Costs show the additional cost of providing the improved recycling service, over and above the previous year's budget.

Direct Cost:

2007-8

Dry recyclables - No additional direct costs due to the same vehicle/crew being used to collect refuse and co-mingled recyclables on an alternate weekly basis.

2008-9

Dry recyclables - No additional direct costs due to the same vehicle/crew being used to collect refuse and co-mingled recyclables on an alternate weekly basis.

Garden waste collection expanded to additional 10,000 properties. This requires: (A) Additional vehicle; (B) Additional Crew. See Halton Costings 271106 spreadsheet for detailed breakdown of costs.

2009-10

Dry recyclables - The direct cost is due to the additional vehicles plus crew that are needed to enable the borough wide roll out of the scheme from the last six months of the year onwards. This is because a proportion of the properties (approximately 17,000) remain on a weekly refuse collection and so two additional RCVs are required to provide a recycling collection to these properties.

There is also an additional cost of replacing the re-useable sacks with sacks for properties on a bag collection for recycling.

See Halton Costings 271106 spreadsheet for detailed breakdown of costs.

2010-11

Dry recyclables -the completed expansion results in additional RCVs plus crews being required. The cost of delivering the service is also increased by the replacement of reusable bags with disposable sacks. See Halton Costings 271106 spreadsheet for detailed breakdown of costs.

Bulking/Transport Cost:

Bulking costs have been calculated at a rate of £5.50 per tonne for paper and co-mingled dry recyclables (Quote from CZ waste)

Transport costs have been provided by CZ waste for co-mingled multi-materials at £160 per trip to Bidston for a load of approximately 12 tonnes

Transport costs for garden waste have not been included because the annual cost of vehicles includes fuel and there are no additional bulking costs.

Refer to transport cost spreadsheet for detailed calculations

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate & Policy

SUBJECT: Corporate Risk Register

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to ask the Executive Board to review the Corporate Risk Register and to make such changes as it considers necessary.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the revised Corporate Risk Register (attached as Appendix A) be approved.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council's Strategic Risk Management framework requires the Executive Board to review the Corporate Risk Register periodically. The Corporate Risk Register as reviewed by officers is therefore attached hereto for the Board's consideration.
- 3.2 In terms of reviewing the Register, it is not proposed that any new risks be added to the Register at the present time. There is a brief commentary beside each risk which will hopefully give members a flavour for what has changed in relation to that risk since the last report.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None except as identified in the Risk Register itself.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Regular monitoring and management of the key corporate risks is essential to the proper management of the authority. The details of the risks and the control measures proposed are set out in the register attached.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 None at the present time.

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

7.1 None

APPENDIX A - Corporate and Strategic Risk Register - March 2007

Risk No	Risk Identified	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk with Control Measures Implemented			Responsible Person	Timescale for Review	Progress Comments	Date
						Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score				
1	Partnerships – Ineffective and Poorly controlled partnership working leads to a lack of accountability and ineffective use of resources resulting in failure to achieve outcomes/objectives	3	4	12	Action Plan required setting out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures • Central Register of Partnerships • Governance Standards • Clear Targets/Outcomes • Audit Programme • Risk Analysis 	3	2	6	Ian Leivesley	3 monthly	PPB has made recommendations to Exec board with regard to the Council's Partnership governance Arrangements.	1/3/07
2	Partnerships – Failure by NHS bodies to agree provision of resources for health prevention leads to failure of health prevention programmes resulting in the health of local people failing to improve to the levels of other areas.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get NHS bodies to fully commit (both energy and resources) to priorities and health prevention agenda • Lobby NHS Bodies to allocate funding • The Council has been consulted and involved in the health service deliberations to reconfigure their services. • Influencing the development of the community strategy. • Development of draft 	4	3	12	Dwayne Johnson	3 monthly	Structural Change in relation to health continues to mean that this is a high risk area. However a new team is currently been recruited within the PCT and progress has been made already with the new DPH, a report has been presented to the Exec Board 2 Nov, which clarifies these issues. Good progress also made on the Health LAA although	1/3/07

					<p>health outcome measures for inclusion in the future preparation of a health Local Area Agreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular performance monitoring at both the Health Performance Board and Chief Officers Group. 						resources are required to implement actions.	
3	<p>People – Single Status/JE –failure to implement an agreement on single status with Trade Union agreement leads to an unstable employee relations climate, resulting in possible industrial action, recruitment and retention problems and equal pay challenges.</p>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and regular communication with Staff, Trade Unions and Managers Link to financial forecasts and make financial provision (provision made in budgets for 2006/7 & 2007/8) Effective Project Management Trade Union Consultation/ Involvement through membership of Steering Group 	4	3	12	Ian Leivesley	3 monthly	<p>Process is now well under way (3 out of 4 Directorates completed and final Directorate almost completed). Recent court cases on back pay may make agreement at the end of the process more difficult.</p>	1/3/07

4	People – Lack of effective Management /Leadership Development arrangements leads to managers/organisation failing to achieve full potential resulting in underperformance	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Development Programme (required) • Member Development Programme 	3	2	6	Ian Leivesley	3 monthly	<p>MSC and ILM 5 courses have been introduced. The MSC is now in its second year. The Year 2 intake for the MSC was over subscribed showing the high level of demand for this course</p> <p>The Council won the Municipal Journal and APSE awards for its work on Member Development.</p>	1/3/07
5	Stakeholders – Community Engagement – Failure to communicate effectively and engage local community participation in service planning, design, and delivery leading to complaints and tensions and conflict on specific initiatives resulting in loss of reputations, alienation of people from local government reduced collectivism and more individualistic opting out	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective LSP • Effective and inclusive Area Forums • Use of Halton 2000 • Research and Intelligence Unit • Community Development Team 	4	3	12	Ian Leivesley/ Dwayne Johnson	3 monthly	<p>The Council has developed its youth consultation arrangements (Youth Forum, Youth Parliaments, proposals for a YouthBank etc). The Council has developed its consultation links with the Business Community through the Business Forum (which also links strongly with Risk 14 and the Council's role in promoting business continuity)</p> <p>The Council has recently adopted a</p>	1/3/07

											Community Engagement Strategy and set up a stakeholder consultation group to ensure consistent consultation and stakeholder engagement. The Council now needs to look at how to monitor and measure its effectiveness in engaging with the community.	
6	Finance – Failure to effectively align resources to corporate objectives leads to a lack of focus on priorities resulting in failure to deliver objectives	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Budget Process to Service Planning • Service Planning • Review of Corporate Priorities/Community Plan • Communication of Priorities to Staff/Members/Managers to achieve buy-in • Meet Gershon Targets 	2	3	6	Ian Leivesley	3 monthly	The 2007/08 Budget process has been a significant challenge for the authority. Future budgets are likely to be equally challenging.	1/3/07
7	Mersey Gateway – Lack of effective project management leads to uncontrolled costs, delays and lack of credibility resulting in cancellation/delay of	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of experienced Project Director and early involvement of professional advisors • Project Structure based on PRINCE2 control 	4	2	8	Dick Tregoe	3 monthly	The Project Team is now in place. The arrangements for the various professional advisers have been reviewed. The Governance	1/3/07

	the project. Potential abortive development cost of up to £15m secured by Council borrowing.				<p>procedure under the governance of the Procurement Group involving key members, officers, and professional advisors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Plan and regular monitoring of plan and periodic independent gateway reviews • Delivery within the Funding framework agreed with Government reviewed at regular intervals 						arrangements of the project have been amended by the creation of a dedicated sub-committee of the Executive Board to oversee the project.	
8	Major Projects – (e.g. 3MG, Widnes Waterfront, Castlefields, Canal Quarter) Ineffective Project Management of major projects leads to delay increased costs resulting in failure to regenerate borough	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Development Group • Individual Project Management Groups • Project Teams • Performance Management Reports • Partnering Arrangements • Project Management Training for officers 	3	2	6	Dick Tregoe	3 monthly	<p>Significant progress continues to be made. Arrangements for the necessary CPOs at Castlefields have been approved by the Executive board and are underwritten by an Indemnity from the NWDA.</p> <p>In relation to the 3MG the structural arrangements for the project, particularly whether to establish a company with partners, need to be determined. The Village Green application needs to be</p>	1/3/07

											monitored closely.	
9	IT – Lack of disaster recovery arrangements leads to an interruption of IT facilities in the event of a disaster resulting in the inability to deliver frontline services	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster recovery plan needed (and requires resourcing) Business Continuity Plans needed for IT and service areas 	4	1	4	Ian Leivesley	3 monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT being restructured to provide greater focus on Disaster Recovery (DR). DR Plan now in place.. Key Applications priority list – first draft of top 14 applications produced. Criteria required to prioritise key corporate applications agreed by ICT Services Management Team Provisional hardware infrastructure matrix produced to enable external organisations to provide indicative costs for the support arrangements for the 14 prioritised 	1/3/07

											applications.	
10	Employee Wellbeing – Failure to implement effective health, safety and wellbeing strategies leads to unsafe, unhealthy and poorly motivated workforce resulted in increased staff dissatisfaction, demotivation, and problems of low staff retention and productivity	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Policy • Wellness Room • Stress Risk Assessments • Absenteeism procedures 	3	2	6	Ian Leivesley/ Dwayne Johnson	3 monthly	An Employee Welfare group was established earlier in the year, comprising of frontline staff, Managers and the Trade Unions. An action plan has been produced and it has now been agreed that the group will produce strategies for a range of employee welfare issues and employee benefits. Exec. Board has agreed to Halton developing a programme of flexible working as an exemplar for local government good practice.	1/3/07
11	Waste – Failure to develop a cogent Waste Management Strategy leads to a failure to meet Government Targets resulting in increased cost of waste disposal (impacting on the Council's ability to deliver other services)	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Joint Waste Strategy • Formal local authority and private sector partnership • Internal procurement Group and Joint Waste Steering Group • Effective Management of agreed Project Plan • Consultation with key stakeholders 	3	3	9	Dick Tregoe	3 monthly	The Council is working with the Mersey Waste Disposal Authority to develop a pan-Merseyside solution to the issue of waste. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and MWDA has been completed and an Inter Authority Agreement is being developed.	1/3/07

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review at Regular Intervals. 							
12	Educational Attainment – Failure to close the gap between Educational Attainment in the Borough and Educational attainment nationally undermines the Council's efforts to improve life chances and employment for young people	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies and Resources in place Effective liaison and communication arrangements with schools Performance monitoring, targeting and management arrangements 	3	3	9	Dwayne Johnson (interim basis only)	3 monthly	Educational attainment has been agreed as a 'priority for action' with Ofsted, CSCI and Audit Commission. Action Plan has been established and is subject to performance monitoring. This remains a challenging and complex agenda.	1/3/07
13	Children's Services Integration – – Failure to deliver improved (measurable) outcomes for Children & Young People via the establishment of effective partnerships to deliver the Children Act requirements	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesigned C&YP Strategic Planning Arrangements Clear shared Vision and project plan 'Migration to Children's Trusts' Full engagement of all partners at a senior level (including schools) Clear PMF with outcomes focus 	3	2	6	Dwayne Johnson (interim basis only)	3 monthly	Significant progress has been made. A Children's Alliance Board has been established, with 4 Task Groups (each with a Business Plan) reporting to it. Halton's Safeguarding Board is established completing the transition from ACPC. A performance management framework to deliver Children's Services Integration/Every Child Matters has been agreed by all key	1/3/07

											stakeholders.	
14.	Resilience in the event of Civil Contingencies – Failure to implement robust civil contingency arrangements leads to the Council being unable to sustain a resilient community and services in the event of a major disaster	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Emergency Plan Partnership Working Performance Management Implementation Plan Business Continuity Plans for Services 	3	2	6	Ian Leivesley	3 monthly	A Community Risk Register is now in place. Business Continuity Plans have been produced, with Action Plans to support their delivery, and are currently being updated for 2007/2008. An Avian Flu Contingency Plan is in place. The Council takes an active role in the Local Resilience Forum, It also has strong links with the regional arrangements.	1/3/07

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Partnerships

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To advise the Board of the recommendations of the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board (PPB) meeting of 9th January 2007 in relation to Partnerships.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) the definition of partnership as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the attached report be agreed;**
- (2) a register of all partnerships of which the Council is a member be created and kept by the Council's Solicitor including the information as outlined in the report;**
- (3) all new partnerships created or joined by the Council be notified to the Council Solicitor by the Officer with responsibility for the partnership;**
- (4) the governance of partnership checklist be formally endorsed;**
- (5) the issues set out in the checklist be properly considered and addressed before a decision is taken to form or enter into a new partnership;**
- (6) annual progress reports be presented by each partnership in the register to the appropriate PPB;**
- (7) the Corporate Services PPB review the partnership register and partnership arrangements on an annual basis to make sure that they are working effectively; and**
- (8) as the process with regard to partnerships is developed, additional reports be brought to the Corporate Services PPB.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Corporate Services PPB considered the attached report at its meeting of 9th January 2007 and made a number of recommendations to be considered by the Executive Board as outlined above.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As per attached report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

As per attached report.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

As per attached report.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

As per attached report.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9th January 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate & Policy

SUBJECT: Partnerships

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to draw some conclusions on the work done to date in relation to Partnership activity within the Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Board make the following recommendations to the Executive Board:

- (1) the definition of Partnership set out in paragraph 3.5 is agreed;**
- (2) a register of all partnerships of which the Council is a member is created and kept by the Council Solicitor including the information outlined in paragraph 3.2;**
- (3) all new partnerships created or joined by the Council are notified to the Council Solicitor by the Officer with responsibility for the partnership;**
- (4) the Governance of Partnership Checklist is formally endorsed;**
- (5) the issues set out in the Checklist are properly considered and addressed before a decision is taken to form or enter into a new Partnership;**
- (6) annual progress reports are presented by each Partnership in the register to the appropriate PPB;**
- (7) the Corporate Services PPB reviews the Partnership Register and Partnership arrangements on an annual basis to ensure that they are working effectively.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 As has been reported previously there is considerable partnership working going on between the Council and other agencies. Considerable time and resources are spent by both members and

officers in this partnership working activity, and it is therefore necessary to ensure:

- That Partnership work is properly directed and overseen by the Council
- That resources invested in Partnership working are properly managed
- That arrangements are in place to ensure propriety and probity in Partnership working
- That Partnership working delivers value for money in terms of outcomes.

3.2 A register has been established and previously considered by the Board. The register records the following items of information in relation to Partnerships:

- Name of Partnership
- When Established
- Period of Partnership
- Purpose of Partnership
- List of Partners
- Halton B.C. Officer Representatives
- Halton B.C. Member Representatives
- Annual Revenue Budget
- Annual Capital Programme
- Percentage of Funding Provided by Halton B.C.
- Other Bodies Providing Funding
- Is Halton B.C. the Accountable Body?
- Arrangements for Reporting Decisions/Commitments to Halton B.C.
- Is a formal Partnership Agreement in Place?

3.3 This register is still in its formative stages and will develop to be a more comprehensive record of partnership working over time. It is possible that the register may never be fully comprehensive of all partnership activity going on, but the important thing is to ensure that it picks up all the key partnerships i.e. those that are crucial to delivery of the Council's priorities. As new Partnerships are established it is important that they are picked up and included in the register.

3.4 In addition to the register, a Governance of Partnerships checklist has been established (and is now available on the Council's intranet – see Appendix 1 attached). This focuses attention on the key areas to be addressed when the Council is considering Partnership working. By not making the checklist too long or onerous it is hoped that this will persuade officers to view the checklist as a helpful tool and therefore encourage its use. Initial feedback suggests that officers have found it useful and are happy to have some straightforward guidance when considering new partnership arrangements.

3.5 One issue that still needs to be addressed is how Partnership is defined. The partnership working identified so far ranges from organisations with significant budgets and employing a considerable number of staff (e.g.

the Halton and Warrington Youth Offending Team) to meetings of groups of specialist officers from neighbouring authorities simply to share experience and good practice. The suggested definition below (taken from the Audit Commission) is suggested for members consideration and is intended to capture the key partnerships with which the Council is involved.

Partnership – A joint working arrangement where the partners:

- are otherwise independent bodies
- agree to co-operate to achieve a common goal
- and to achieve it, create an organisational structure or process, an agreed programme, and share information, risks and rewards

- 3.6 The Board might wish to consider whether it is now in a position to make a number of recommendations to the Executive Board in relation to Partnership working so that the work done so far is formally incorporated into Council Policy and Procedure.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As considerable resources are invested in Partnership working it is important that appropriate arrangements for the control and oversight of partnership working are put in place to ensure proper husbandry of the resources invested.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Considerable financial and other resources are invested in Partnership working. The Council depends on the effectiveness of its partnership arrangements for delivering large parts of its agenda. It is vital therefore that the Council puts in place appropriate control, accountability, scrutiny and governance systems for its partnership arrangements.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 None.

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

- 7.1 None

APPENDIX 1 - Governance of Partnerships - Checklist

Rationale for the Partnership

The aims and objectives of each partnership should be clearly aligned with the Council's key priorities.

All partnerships must identify and evaluate each partner's objectives. Each partnership must then ensure that all partners agree clearly defined and mutually shared objectives. Failure to achieve this may result in the Council not being able to lead and co-ordinate the efforts of the various partners.

- Why does the partnership exist? Does the organisation have clear and sound reasons for being involved in the Partnership?
- What are its agreed aims?
- Where have they been published?
- Is the partnership for a fixed term – how long?

Added Value from the Partnership

Partnerships involving the Council are generally established to contribute to improving the quality of local public services and to residents' quality of life. It is therefore important that partnerships can demonstrate accountability to the general public, service users or other stakeholders.

Partnerships should actively publicise their activity, where it is appropriate to do so, and where possible, promote transparency and openness. Examples may include articles published in the local press or Inside Halton magazine.

- How does this partnership add value?
- How is this added value demonstrated to the public?
- How do you know whether funds are being well spent? How is this information communicated to the public?

Governance Framework

Partnerships must have formal arrangements in place outlining the roles and responsibilities of all partners. For example, a written agreement or contract to be in place, which states the objectives of each partnership and the roles, responsibilities and regulations for

all partners. Accountability arrangements, both to the Council and to other stakeholders must also be considered.

The absence of formal arrangements can inhibit the achievement of the partnership's objectives and increase the potential for disputes and breakdowns in governance, control and probity.

The partnership arrangement shall be subject to prior approval by the Council Solicitor and the Section 151 Officer (Operational Director – Financial Services).

- Is there a written partnership agreement in place describing partner roles and responsibilities?
- Is there a governance framework and how does it function? Does this involve some form of scrutiny and/or use of Internal Audit processes?
- How do the partnerships governance arrangements link to those of individual partners?
- How are decisions made? Are they delegated to the partnership or must decisions be reported back to the constituent bodies for approval before action?
- How are they recorded? Who makes sure they are acted on?
- Who scrutinises them?
- To whom are they reported?

Performance Management

Partnerships need to demonstrate that they operate within the Council's financial reporting and scrutiny frameworks, to enhance the accountability of the partnership. Similarly, elected members and other stakeholders need assurance that the partnership is achieving its intended purpose and providing value for money.

- What action is taken to ensure that the plans/targets of the partnership are aligned with corporate objectives?
- How is the performance of the partnership monitored? E.g. How do you know which partnership targets you are meeting and which you are failing to meet?
- Who manages and reports progress?
- How do we monitor partner contributions?
- What scrutiny systems are in place?

Financial Management

Accountability to all stakeholders in terms of financial reporting and performance management should be clearly defined.

- Who provides the money?
- Who decides how to spend it?
- Can the money be reallocated?
- What are the financial reporting arrangements?
- Are procurement arrangements compliant with this Council's Procurement SOs?

Risk Management

As partnership working offers less direct control than delivering services alone, there are increased risks such as difficulties in managing different organisational cultures. A common commitment to objectives, and understanding of risks, and how those risks are to be managed is therefore integral to delivering a successful partnership.

- What criteria was used to decide whether to join the partnership?
- What is the extent of our involvement in the partnership?
- Has a risk assessment exercise been undertaken to achieve a common understanding of the risks and how they will be managed, and to provide clarity over the allocation of risk ownership?
- Have you considered whether there are any sustainability issues for the projects after funding ceases?
- How do you know when things go wrong?
- What arrangements are in place to avoid or manage conflicts of interest?

Termination Arrangements

When establishing a partnership, consideration should be given to when its work is likely to end and how any gains achieved through the partnership can be sustained. This is particularly important to avoid leaving a legacy of problems and potential financial and / or legal commitments for which the Council may become liable.

Similarly, arrangements for the ongoing ownership of a partnership's assets need to be clearly defined.

- What are the arrangements if the partnership comes to an end?
- Or if you decide you no longer want to be involved? Do you have an exit or a continuation strategy?
- How will resources/assets be disengaged?
- Is there any financial liability for the Council if partners withdraw?

Serving the Public

Partnerships should develop joint complaints procedures or determine which organisation is responsible for redress if things go wrong. If partnerships fail to document their processes then the public will not know which partner agency to contact, or which individuals within it deal with complaints.

- How does the partnership communicate with the public?
- How can the public and service users obtain redress when things go wrong? E.g. Is there a formal complaints and suggestion process the public can use?

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Borough of Halton (Windmill Centre Widnes) Compulsory Purchase Order 2007

WARD: Appleton

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report seeks authorisation to make the Borough of Halton (Windmill Centre Widnes) Compulsory Purchase Order 2007 under Section 226 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. The purpose of the Compulsory Purchase Order ("the Order") being to facilitate land acquisition and acquisition of land and new rights in land (together referred to as "the Order Land") for the redevelopment of the Windmill Centre for the reasons set out in detail in this report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

Subject to:

- (a) the prior completion of an appropriate indemnity agreement with the Developer; and**
- (b) the satisfactory grant of planning permission for redevelopment of the Order Land (as and for the purposes herein detailed in this report);**

The Executive Board is asked to resolve as follows:

- 1.1 To make the Borough of Halton (Windmill Centre Widnes) Compulsory Purchase Order 2007 ("the Order") under Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 for the acquisition of all interests in the Order Land and the acquisition of new rights within the Order Land;**
- 1.2 The Order Land shall (subject as provided otherwise in this resolution) comprise the areas shown coloured pink and blue respectively on the plan attached for the purpose of redevelopment of the Windmill Centre comprising of demolition of existing buildings, construction of new retail units together with associated provision for access, servicing, parking and landscaping; and**

1.3 That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director Environment (whether acting personally or through any other person nominated by him) to:

1.3.1 Take all necessary steps as soon as is reasonably practical to finalise the Order map and schedule, (including the exercise of powers of requisition) secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the Order including the publication and service of all notices and the presentation of the Council's case at any Public Inquiry.

1.3.2 Negotiate to acquire and acquire all interests in the Order Land and new rights within the Order Land either by agreement or compulsorily including prior to the making of the Order and where appropriate to agree terms for relocation.

1.3.3 To reduce (but not increase) the area of the Order Land and/or any interests therein should the said negotiations make the inclusion of such land and/or such interests unnecessary.

1.3.4 Make arrangements for the relocation of owners and occupiers, where appropriate.

1.3.5. Approve agreements with the owners of any interest in the Order Land and any objectors to the confirmation of the Order setting out the terms for the withdrawal of objections to the Order including, where appropriate, seeking inclusion in and/or exclusion from the Order of land or new rights.

1.3.6 In the event that a question of compensation be referred to the Lands Tribunal to take all necessary steps in relation thereto including advising on the appropriate compensation payable and to appoint appropriate consultants if necessary to assist and advise in this regard.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The detailed background and justification for the compulsory purchase Order are set out in the Appendix to this report.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The proposed scheme is in accordance with national planning policy for town centres, which seeks, amongst other things, to increase the vitality and viability of existing centres. The proposals further accord with the Regional Planning Guidance for the North West, which seeks to protect, maintain and enhance town centres and encourages retail development within existing town centres. The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West identifies Widnes

as a Regional Town/City, where it encourages retail investment that will assist in regeneration and economic development.

- 4.2 The Halton UDP was adopted in 2005. The adopted UDP identifies Widnes as one of the Borough's town centres and the Windmill Centre as being contained within the Primary Shopping Allocation, where retail development is permitted. The UDP also seeks to identify new locations within Widnes Town Centre for additional non-food retail provision.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The main financial implications of any compulsory purchase order relate to the obligation to pay compensation to existing landowners. In addition compulsory purchase orders can give rise to substantial administrative, legal and technical costs. The Council must demonstrate that financial implications have been addressed and that funds are available to finance a successful compulsory purchase.
- 5.2 Stadium (Widnes) Limited ("the Developer") will indemnify the Council's costs in seeking to obtain the Order. In addition, if as a result of objections to the Order being made, there is a Public Inquiry then the Council will recover all costs relating to the Inquiry from the Developer. Compensation payable to occupiers/owners as a result of the Order (including possible blight notices and acquisitions by agreement) is a development cost and, as such, will be borne in its entirety by the Developer as part of the Indemnity Agreement. The Developer has demonstrated that it has ample funds (including access to funding) to discharge its indemnity. The Developer has agreed to fund all capital payments in advance. This means that the Council does not have to make any capital provision in its capital budget.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The primary risk to the Council is financial. This has been addressed in section 5 above. There is also a risk associated with not acting. This relates to the possible non-implementation (or least, indefinite delay) of the development without the existence of the Order.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Planning File	Rutland House	Liz Beard/Phil Watts
CPO File	Legal Services	John Tully

Borough of Halton (Windmill Centre Widnes) Compulsory Purchase Order 2007 Background and justification

Redevelopment Background

Widnes Town Centre has over recent years experienced decline as a result of changing shopping patterns and increased competition from other centres. The Town Centre does, however, remain an important focus point for the local community, providing essential shops and services and a range of community and leisure facilities.

The Windmill Centre occupies a sizeable and prominent location within Widnes town centre. However, as currently configured it is poorly integrated with the town's retail core, and as a consequence, fails to take advantage of the opportunities this gateway site presents for significantly enhancing the retail offer within the town centre and improving pedestrian and visual linkages between the town centre and Widnes Shopping Park, in particular, creating a 'sense of entrance' to the town centre.

The Windmill Centre currently provides approximately 11,505sqm (123,844 sq ft). The majority of the site is currently vacant however some units are still occupied. Some of the remaining occupiers include Halfords, Instore and Gala Bingo Club. Smaller retail units are occupied by local independent traders or regional chains and are largely non-food retail or service related uses. A KFC restaurant is located within the car park.

If the Town Centre is to maintain its role as one of the main centres of Halton, it requires comprehensive redevelopment and reinvestment in its retail offer.

Redevelopment Site

The purpose of seeking to acquire land compulsorily is to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the Order Land, which comprises a part of the Site within Widnes Town Centre. The proposed scheme would provide a modern retail environment with units of sufficient size to accommodate the needs of retailers and the ability to introduce an anchor retailer. This would enable the qualitative and quantitative improvement of shopping provision of Widnes Town Centre and a necessary step change in the status of Widnes in the retail hierarchy.

The Site extends to over 3.64 hectares (9 acres) and is situated in a strategic part of the Town Centre and its redevelopment presents an opportunity to provide a step change in qualitative and quantitative provision of retail for the Town Centre and its environs and greater linkage to transport.

The Developer holds a long leasehold of the majority of the Site and the Council holds the freehold. The Developer has made reasonable enquiry and taken opportunity to determine lesser leasehold interests within the redevelopment area. The Council and the Developer will continue to seek to acquire the interests by negotiation.

Planning Status

A resolution to grant planning permission for erection of retail units (Class A1) with 80,000 sq ft of mezzanine floorspace was made by the Council on 12th February 2007. The grant of planning permission is subject to referral to the Secretary of State and to the Developer entering into Section 106 Agreements, which cover a range of planning obligations. Whilst Planning Permission has not been granted at the time of this report this is not required to be in place before the CPO is made. The advice in Circular 06/04 is that in such circumstances there should be no obvious reason why it will be withheld. The fact that a resolution for planning permission is in place and the negotiations on the Section 106 Agreement have been advanced is considered to satisfy this element of the guidance.

Justification for Making a Compulsory Purchase Order

In summary the reason that the Order is required is to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the Order Land, which comprises a part of Widnes Town Centre. The Windmill Centre currently suffers from poor overall design and low quality retail accommodation, which fails to meet modern retailing requirements. Externally the appearance of the Centre is poor.

The aims and objectives for the improvements to the Town Centre are contained in the adopted UDP. In addition, the March 1997 Widnes Town Centre strategy goal is for Widnes Town Centre to be developed and enhanced by further retail, leisure and commercial investments so that it fulfils its role as a Town Centre. The proposed scheme which, necessitates the Order is in line with and seeks to deliver the policy objectives of National, Regional and Local Development Plan policy. The scheme promotes a retail redevelopment on previously developed land in the Town Centre, which will promote the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.

The Local Plan Policies identify a need for improvements to Widnes Town Centre which this scheme can provide. The benefits that the redevelopment will provide accords with the following:

i) Strategic Aims of the UDP

- a) to increase the vitality and viability of Halton's town centres;
- b) to increase the range and quality of the shops and improve the shopping environment;
- c) to ensure that new retail development reinforces the strength of the retail core of each centre and does not weaken it; and
- d) to ensure that the location, scale and nature of retail developments reflect the hierarchy of shopping centres in the Borough.

ii) Shopping and Town Centres

- a) the Windmill Centre is designated as falling within Widnes Primary Shopping Areas; and
- b) retail development proposals within Primary Shopping Areas will be permitted provided that they are of a size and scale appropriate to the character and function of the centre and contribute to the centre's vitality and viability.

The justification for making the proposed Order must meet tests set out in Section 226 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the compulsory acquisition of land. Those tests are that the acquisition will

facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land and that the Council thinks the development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the Council area. The ODPM Circular 06/2004 provides guidance to acquiring authorities on the use of the compulsory purchase powers. The Council is satisfied that it has met the Section 226 tests and that its proposed actions are in accordance with the Circular.

The current position is that whilst there have been acquisitions of third party interests by the Developer and these will continue to be actively pursued, it has not been possible to secure agreement or acquire all the necessary land interests and rights in land by agreement to date. Accordingly, it is considered appropriate and proportionate for the Council to use its compulsory purchase powers to facilitate the assembly of land and rights in land required for the redevelopment with certainty and in a reasonable timeframe and this approach is in line with the guidance in Circular 06/04 referred to above.

Human Rights

The rights of owners of interest in the Order lands under the Human Rights Act 1998, in particular the rights contained in Article 6, Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol, need to be taken into account by the Council when considering whether to make the Order and when considering the extent of the interests to be comprised in the Order.

Any objections to the Order will be considered by an independent Inspector at a Public Inquiry. It is necessary, having regard to the Human Rights Act 1998 and in particular the specific rights referred to above, to take into account the interference with private property rights protected by the European Convention on Human Rights and ensure that the interference is proportionate and in the public interest. In this context, the Council must carefully consider the balance to be struck between individual rights and the wider public interest.

The Council is satisfied for the reasons set out in this report that any interference with Convention rights will be justified in order to secure the economic, environmental and social benefits that the redevelopment will bring. Appropriate compensation will be available to those entitled to claim it under the relevant statutory provisions. Consequently, if the Order is confirmed, it would strike an appropriate balance between public and private interests such that there is no breach of any human rights.

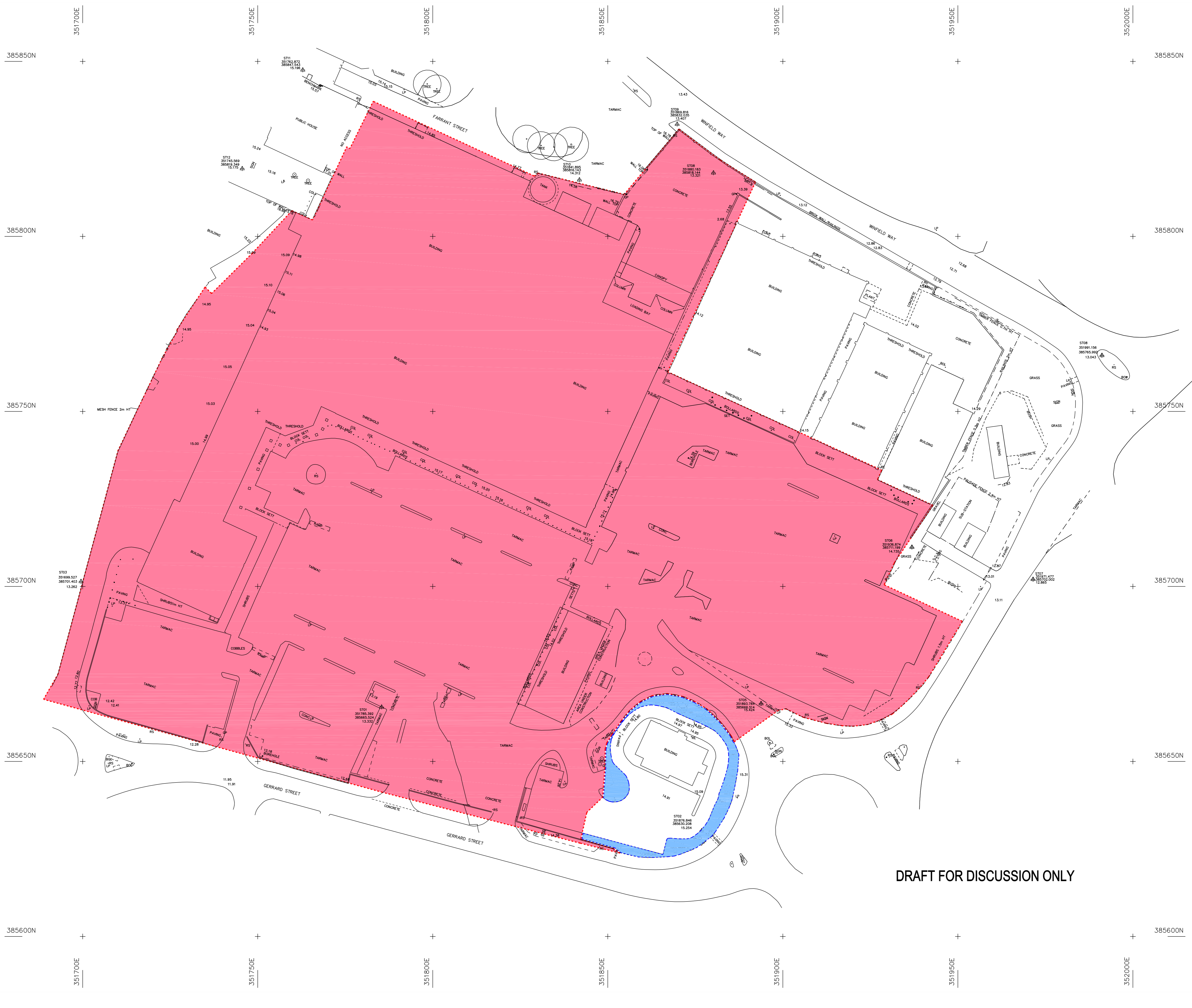
Other Matters

The Developer was founded in 1982 and is a private family owned business specialising in retail development, investment and management. The Developer has successfully completed many projects totalling over 5,000,000 sq ft of retail floorspace. The Developer has wide ranging experience in all aspects of the project requirements and has a history of producing high quality retail development having recourse to its experience and financial backing/capability. The Council is therefore satisfied that such attributes coupled with a suitable indemnity will lead to the delivery of the Scheme and that the Scheme is economically viable.

The proposed CPO is not understood to affect any special category land (for the purpose of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981) but will be subject to further review as part of the preparation of the Order.

The proposal will necessitate the stopping up of existing adopted public highway by an associated Order. Any objections to the associated Order will be heard at a concurrent or co-joined public inquiry.

The Developer is in discussion with statutory undertakers for the relocation of their apparatus as a consequence of the proposals. Save as otherwise identified in this Report, the Council is not aware of any other material or insurmountable legal or physical impediments.



DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY



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PROJECT
 WIDNES SHOPPING PARK

TITLE
 CPO SITE PLAN

SCALE 1:500 DATE 14/02/07

DRAWN BY PT REVIEWED

DRAWING NO 2005-300/CPO plan sheet REVISION

DWG PATH

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health and Community

SUBJECT: Capital of Culture

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To update Members on Halton's involvement in Liverpool's Capital of Culture celebrations.
- 1.2** To endorse Halton's programme of activities, in particular the proposal to host a major Youth Cultural Festival in 2008, and its budgeting implications.

2.0 Recommended that:

- (1) Executive Board approves Halton's approach to its involvement in Capital of Culture.
- (2) Approval is given to hosting a major Youth Cultural Festival in Halton in 2008, and that the cost of such an event is underwritten by the Council.

3.0 Supporting Information

- 3.1** The Employment, Learning and Skills PPB, at its meeting of 12 March 2007 endorsed Halton's approach to its involvement in Capital of Culture. The Board recommended to Executive Board that support should be given to a major Youth Cultural Festival being hosted in Halton in 2008, and the cost of such an event be underwritten by the Council.
- 3.2** A Capital of Culture Working Group has been co-ordinating opportunities for involvement in Liverpool's Capital of Culture celebrations.
- 3.3** Recent progress has been made in putting together a headline programme of activities that is both achievable and deliverable.
- 3.4** The following outlines the possible areas of major activity
- 1) All Halton's twin towns to be invited to Liverpool's 800th Birthday Celebrations in August 2007. Our Twin Towns have made a positive response, and Leiria are sending a group of musicians to be part of the pageant.
 - 2) Halton to organise a Youth Cultural Festival in 2008 at which all Merseyside Authorities and their twin towns will be invited to participate. The event will focus on performance opportunities for young people, and the idea is supported by the Merseyside Cultural Forum. This would be Halton's major event for 2008.
 - 3) Produce a Capital of Culture Enterprise Game for 2008 as endorsed by the Merseyside Cultural Forum.
 - 4) Utilise the Brindley as a venue for hosting events, including multi-authority community arts. Possibility of a youth drama festival.

- 5) Develop sports programme in Halton. In January 2007 Halton staged a very successful National Students Rugby League Championship. The European Student Rugby League Games will also be held in Halton in April 2007. Seek to replicate this in future years. It is anticipated that Halton will host events for the World Fire-fighter Games in 2008 (based in Liverpool). There are opportunities for the new tennis centre, the table-tennis centre, athletics track, and the Stadium.
- 6) Develop a programme for Theatre in the Parks.
- 7) Develop youth music opportunities with involvement in Liverpool's 'Streetwave' initiative.
- 8) Lead on development of Arts Mark, sharing Halton's good practise with other authorities.
- 9) Host annual Literature Festival. Programme for May 2007 now complete. Repeat in 2008.
- 10) Promote Shakespeare in Schools Festival. Already staged in February 2007 with huge involvement through schools. Repeat in 2008.
- 11) Participate in Pan-Merseyside arts initiatives;
 - Community singing festival
 - Open Arts Competitions
- 12) Host business meetings with local industry to promote the '08 Business Club. 49 Halton companies have now signed up to the Business Connect scheme.
- 13) Develop volunteering opportunities for residents of Halton.
- 14) Catalyst and Norton Priory involved in 2007 year of heritage. Local groups involved in local history fair.
- 15) Participate in Community Education Programmes (e.g. drug/alcohol awareness initiatives).
- 16) All schools to receive an educational pack.
- 17) Sponsorship of the Widnes Vikings extended for 2007/08.
- 18) Produce brochure for 2008 listing events.

3.5 This programme is not exhaustive; other opportunities will arise as 2008 approaches, for example the launch of a Merseyside 08 Travel Card for culture and leisure activities featuring incentives and premium offers.

3.6 With the exception of the Capital of Culture Enterprise Game and the Youth Cultural Festival all activities listed in paragraph 3.3 above are deliverable within existing budgets. There is a real opportunity for the Enterprise Game to be funded through the Mersey Partnership and an outline bid has been submitted.

3.7 The Youth Festival is more difficult. It is envisaged that this would be Halton's major event for 2008, and that all Merseyside's Authorities would be invited to participate in a two day show which highlights youth performance, but also offers cultural trade opportunities or exchanges of local cultures (e.g. costume, food, etc). All Merseyside's twin towns would be invited to participate in the event.

3.8 The concept has been supported by the Merseyside Boroughs through the Cultural Forum. It is anticipated that the event would be held in June/July 2008, and would allow a real opportunity for the young people of Merseyside to get together to celebrate what they do. For Halton it would be an opportunity to show-case all the ongoing work that happens in schools, The Youth Service, Arts Development Team, the Ranger Service, Sports Development, etc.

3.9 Such an event will require a budget akin to the Halton Show. Capital of Culture have already indicated that £40k is available to Halton to support events. If this were to be utilised for the Youth Cultural Festival there would still be a shortfall of £110k. This sum should be significantly reduced through sponsorship or admittance fees but ultimately this cannot be guaranteed. Such an event needs a one-year lead in and organisers need to be assured that they can commit budgets to allow the event to go ahead. A decision, therefore, is required as to whether Halton would underwrite the shortfall to a maximum of £110k so that the promotion and events team in conjunction with other Directorates, can start its organisation.

4.0 Policy and other Implications

4.1 A decision in principle to support Capital of Culture has already been approved.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 The potential budget issues are identified in 3.8 above. This represents a maximum figure which would be sought to be reduced by contributions from other partners and through sponsorship. It does not, however, include any costs associated with bringing delegates and parties from our twin towns to Halton, which would be covered by existing Town Twinning budgets. Further details, including financial estimates will be presented to the appropriate PPB(s) nearer the time.

6.0 Risk Analysis

6.1 Involvement in Capital of Culture offers Halton the opportunity to raise its profile and provides a number of cultural and business opportunities. By implication, these could be lost by non-involvement.

7.0 Equality and Diversity Issues

7.1 None identified.

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

8.1 None.