



Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**Wednesday, 21 March 2007 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David WR'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Ron Hignett (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Dave Leadbetter (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Ellen Cargill	Labour
Councillor Keith Morley	Labour
Councillor Paul Nolan	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Tim Sly	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Dave Thompson	Labour
Councillor Pamela Wallace	Labour
Councillor Ian Whittaker	Conservative
Councillor Philip Worrall	Liberal Democrat

*Please contact Caroline Halpin on 0151 471 7394 or e-mail caroline.halpin@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board to be confirmed.*

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
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.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 33(5).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Standing Order 34(11) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows: -
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
 - (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
 - (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be submitted by 4.00 pm on the day prior to the meeting. At any meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
 - (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
 - (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

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

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

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

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 21 March 2007
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes
WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Urban Renewal Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board, Executive Board Sub and Executive (Transmodal Implementation) Sub Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 None.

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

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board, Executive Board Sub Committee and Executive (Transmodal Implementation) Sub Board Minutes Relevant to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 7th DECEMBER 2007

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB63 North West Homelessness Strategy

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community regarding a Regional Homelessness Strategy that had been produced by the North West Regional Housing Board for consultation. The appendix to the report outlined the legislative and policy context. Statistical evidence was also presented to highlight the regional position in comparison to the position in England as a whole.

The North West Regional Housing Board advocated that prevention was better than a reactive response to homelessness. The Housing Board believed that a Regional Homelessness Strategy should focus on the main causes of homelessness in the North West where local authorities and the voluntary sector could make a difference by adopting changes in policies and practices. The Housing Board suggested that the issue of homelessness could be addressed partly by looking at the processes adopted to administer housing stock and partly by looking at the needs of groups who were vulnerable to homelessness.

Members considered:

- the difficulty of establishing an accurate number of people homeless in Halton;
- the many reasons for homelessness;
- the success of Blackpool in eradicating the need to house families in bed and breakfast accommodation as a result of the preventative work being undertaken;
- repeat homelessness, in particular with respect to young people;
- mediation work that could be carried out between young people and their parents to prevent long-term homelessness, subject to the home place being a safe environment;

- the offer from Halton Housing Trust (HHT) to work with the Council on this issue and the possibility of HHT contributing financially.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the response detailed in Appendix B be agreed.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21 DECEMBER 2006

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB73 Approval of the Formal Adoption of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (Forward Plan Item)

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment seeking approval for the formal adoption of “Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions” as part of the Halton Local Development Framework.

It was noted that the production of this SPD was included within the Local Development Scheme (LDS), which set out the spatial planning policy priorities for the Council for the next three years. The purpose of the SPD was to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments met the standards described.

The report set out the process and the consultation procedure undertaken.

Reasons for Decision

The SPD had been produced to ensure that, through its function as a Local Planning Authority, the Council:-

- (a) was in accordance with national and regional planning policy and advice; and
- (b) wherever possible, met the priorities of the community it served, as set out in the Halton Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The alternative options considered and rejected with regard to the preparation of the document were set out within the Sustainability Appraisal report.

Implementation Date

With immediate effect.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and part of the Halton Local Development Framework;
- 2) the responses to the representations received at the public participation stage, as set out in the statement of consultation, be agreed; and
- 3) further editorial and technical changes that do not affect the content or intended purpose of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, if necessary, before the document is published.

EXB74 Highway Skidding Resistance Policy

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment outlining the current position regarding the measurement and treatment of highway skidding resistance and proposing the introduction of a policy for analysing skid resistance data to produce programmes of treatment. A copy of the policy was attached to the report for information.

It was noted that the Council had approved an overall policy document in relation to Highway Maintenance Strategy in 1998, incorporating the method by which the measurement of skidding resistance of highway surfacing was to be carried out. However, national guidance on skidding resistance had changed significantly since then and a specific policy was now required.

The Board was advised that the new policy had been prepared to take account of developments, meeting current requirements and recognising the contribution of accident analysis to the assessment process. The policy had been presented to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on 15th November 2006 where it had

been agreed that the policy should be recommended for approval.

RESOLVED: That the Skidding Resistance Policy, submitted as an appendix to the report, be adopted.

EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2006

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

ES58 Acceptance of tender for Widnes Waterfront EDZ Link Road

The Sub-Committee was advised that 8 tenders had been received for the construction of an access road at Widnes Waterfront EDZ. The tenders were assessed both on a price/quality basis in a ratio of 60/40 in accordance with the instructions for tendering. The most economically advantageous tender, taking into consideration both the quality and price submissions, for the construction of the access road was that submitted by Birse Civils Limited at a tendered cost of £298,129, which was not the lowest tender received.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ES59 Proposed Zebra Crossing – Cronton Lane, Widnes

The Area Forum for Birchfield, Farnworth and Halton View had previously received a request from the residents of the new houses recently built and being constructed off Norlands Lane to install a pedestrian crossing on Cronton Lane outside the shops. Following informal discussions, it was decided to investigate a zebra crossing. A possible location was found and the proposal was advertised in the local press and on site for a period of four weeks leading up to 31st May 2006.

Subsequently, comments were received from the Post Office about the difficulties a pedestrian crossing would cause to the operation of their business. In addition, a number of comments were received both in favour and against the proposal from residents in the area, and also from the owner of Cronton Fish Bar, No. 2 and Bargain Booze. A petition in favour of the crossing was also submitted via Councillor Cross. The number of people who had written supporting the crossing was 8, plus 88 people included in the petition. The number objecting was 102 including the 3 businesses

above.

It was reported that a pedestrian/traffic survey was carried out on 12th September 2006. Although a controlled crossing was not justified under the former national criteria, there were a significant number of pedestrians crossing Cronton Lane. This indicated that the busiest time for pedestrians was between 18.00 and 19.00, which was unusual and the surveyors indicated that it was people using the chip shop and off-licence.

At present, there were double yellow lines on Cronton Lane outside the shops, which prohibited parking, but there was an exemption for the delivery of goods to the adjacent shops, and this was particularly important for deliveries to the Post Office. The installation requirements of a zebra crossing included zig-zag lines which would prohibit parking, loading and unloading. Contravention results in the driver being prosecuted for an endorsable offence and therefore delivery drivers would not stop on them to deliver to the shops. This would cause operational problems for the shops.

It was reported that in the last five years there had been two reported injury accidents in the vicinity and neither of them involved pedestrians. Both the accidents involved parked cars. Therefore in view of the comments received, it was clear that the zebra crossing proposal, however desirable, would be divisive.

An alternative improvement for pedestrians had therefore been developed. This would widen the refuge island and provide an additional length of footway outside the barbers shop. This would help to reduce the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles and provided, it was hoped, an acceptable compromise.

The Committee heard representations from the ward councillor, Councillor Cross, who addressed Members in support of the zebra crossing proposals.

RESOLVED: That the report be referred back to the Highways Department for further information on the original proposal to install a zebra crossing, the possibility of installing an additional refuge island and the alternative proposal of widening the refuge island and providing an additional length of footway outside the barbers shop.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21
DECEMBER 2006**

**PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND
RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

**ES63 Provision of Open Space Supplementary Planning
Document - 2nd Revised Draft Public Consultation**

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval for the publication of paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9 of revised draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); Provision of Open Space, for the purposes of an additional four-week public consultation to accommodate material changes to the document in light of responses received at the previous consultation stage.

Paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9 in the draft version of the SPD related to a very specific set of development circumstances for the repayment of commuted sums. This was not an issue that was highlighted during the first internal partnerships consultation period by any of those consulted. As a result of the comments made at the public consultation stage this policy had been simplified and may be perceived as a material change to the text.

Following consultation with the Government Office and the Council's Legal Services Division it was agreed to take forward the proposed changes by undertaking an additional four-week public consultation on the two paragraphs.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the relevant section of draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); Provision of Open Space be approved for the purposes of Statutory Public Consultation for a period of four weeks;
- (2) the comments received at the public consultation stage, as set out in the statement of consultation and responses to them are noted; and
- (3) the results of the public consultation exercise and consequent recommended modifications to the draft SPD be reported back to the Executive Board for resolution to adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11
JANUARY 2007**

**PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND
RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

**Approval of publication of Draft Town Centre Strategies for
Halton Lea and Runcorn Old Town for Public Consultation**

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval for the publication of the draft Town Centre Strategies for Halton Lea and Runcorn Old Town as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) for the purposes of statutory public consultation. The purpose of the SPD's was to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for those involved in the planning of new developments within Halton to:

- (i) enable the Town Centres to prosper without adversely affecting the health of any other;
- (ii) safeguard and strengthen the individual role of each town centre as a safe and accessible place to shop, work and enjoy;
- (iii) co-ordinate public and private investment decisions;
- (iv) improve the economic prosperity of the Borough through the creation of employment opportunities; and
- (v) ensure the highest standard of design and architecture within each town centre.

Consultation which had taken place regarding the SPD and was outlined for consideration.

In addition, a scoping exercise had been undertaken to determine whether or not a strategic environment assessment (SEA) was required to assess the environmental effect of the SPD. The conclusion was that an SEA was not required.

The Sub-Committee was also advised that a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was in the process of being produced and would be consulted upon at the same time as the respective Town Centre Strategies. Both the Halton Lea and Runcorn Town Centre Strategy SPD's would also be subject to an appropriate assessment screening assessment.

A further report would be submitted to the Executive Board

seeking formal adoption of the Halton Lea and Runcorn Town Centre Strategy Supplementary Planning Documents. However, if comments were received during the public consultation process, which required alterations to be made to one or both of the SPD's that materially affected the contents of the documents, a further period of public consultation may be required regarding those proposed alterations.

It was suggested that authority be delegated to the Operational Director Environmental and Regulatory Services to approve any further statutory periods of consultation, on the SPD's should they be required.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the two draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's): Halton Lea Town Centre Strategy and Runcorn Old Town Centre Strategy be approved (subject to being amended to reflect this Boards comments in relation to climate change) for the purposes of Statutory Public Consultation;
- (2) authority be delegated to the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services to determine all matters relating to the method, extent and content of the public consultation;
- (3) the comments received at the partnership consultation stage are noted;
- (4) further editorial and technical amendments that do not materially affect the content of the two SPD's be determined by the Operational Director Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, if necessary before the document is published for public consultation;
- (5) authority be delegated to the Operational Director Environmental and Regulatory Services to approve any further period of statutory public consultation, on the Halton Lea and Runcorn Old Town SPD's should they be needed as a consequence of material changes being required to the documents as a result of comments received during the period of public consultation approved under recommendation 1;
- (6) the results of the public consultation exercises and consequent recommended modifications to the draft SPDs be reported

back to the Executive Board for resolution to adopt as Supplementary Planning Documents; and

- (7) particular attention was brought to the need to include climate change issues as part of the SPD's.

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director-Policy & Performance

SUBJECT: Performance Monitoring Reports for the 3rd quarter (2006/07)

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The departmental service plans set out what the services are planning to achieve and demonstrate how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. The service plans are central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.
- 1.2 The 3rd quarter monitoring reports for the services that come within the remit of this Policy & Performance Board are available in both electronic and hard copy formats. These reports enable Board Members to scrutinise progress towards achieving the service objectives, milestones and performance targets contained in the 2006/07-service plans for the following:

Environment Directorate

1. Highways & Transportation
2. Environment & Regulatory Services
3. Economic Regeneration
4. Major Projects

Health & Community Directorate

5. Culture & Leisure

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy & Performance Board

- 1) scrutinise service performance and progress towards achieving objectives and targets and raise any questions or points for clarification in respect of the information contained in the quarterly monitoring reports; and**
- 2) highlight areas of interest and/or concern that require further information or action to be reported at a future meeting of the Policy and Performance Board where appropriate.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 At previous meetings, the Board received performance briefing papers that were intended to highlight aspects contained in the full versions of the monitoring reports (available electronically) that Members might wish to consider further. Although, the Board has requested that hard copies of the quarterly monitoring reports be available to Members prior to meetings, the performance briefing papers will still be provided for the remaining two quarters of this year. *(See Appendix 1)*

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Any policy implications arising from emerging issues or key developments that will impact upon the service or any action required to address performance issues, will be identified in the respective quarterly monitoring report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Any other implications associated with issues connected with the service will be identified in the respective quarterly monitoring report.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The risk control measures associated with the service objectives that were initially assessed as having 'HIGH' risks are summarised in the quarterly monitoring reports to monitor their implementation.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The actions identified arising from the Equality impact/needs assessments that are regarded as 'HIGH' priority for each service are in the Equality Action Plans and progress on their implementation is included in the respective quarterly monitoring reports.

8.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

8.1 Not applicable

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

9.1 Not applicable

10.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

10.1 Not applicable

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
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Quarterly monitoring reports for:

1. Highways & Transportation	Municipal Building 2 nd floor	Martin Holland Performance Management Officer
2. Economic Regeneration		
3. Major Projects		
4. Environmental & Regulatory Services		
5. Culture & Leisure Services		

PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

(3rd Quarter 2006/07)

SERVICE: Highways & Transportation *(excluding Road Safety)*

Overview

All but one of the 5 key objectives are on course to be achieved and with the Local Transport Plan and Delivery Reports being assessed as excellent by the DfT, the outlook for the service is good. There are no quarterly figures reported for the majority of performance indicators and therefore, an overall assessment of progress towards achieving the performance targets by the year-end is not available.

Areas of Further Consideration

- The monitoring report comments that very few of the performance indicators can be reported quarterly therefore, it will not be known if the vast majority of performance targets have been achieved until the annual figures have been provided at the end of the year. However, it might be appropriate at the next PPB meeting if there was a preliminary indication given of where there is a higher risk than expected of any performance targets being missed.
- The DfT have delayed their consideration of the Silver Jubilee Bridge Maintenance Major Scheme, which was submitted in March 2006. The target deadline of 31 March 2007 will not be achieved and therefore, any time critical implications for the bridge maintenance works as a result of the delay will need to be highlighted.
- There has been a significant increase in the average number of days to repair street lighting faults due to deterioration in performance of the Council's maintenance contractor through the year. Although it is unlikely that the target will be met it is critical that the assurances given by the contractor are successful in reversing the current trend in performance.

SERVICE: Economic Regeneration *(excluding Enterprise & Employment and Adult Learning)*

Overview

These comments relate to those elements in the Economic Regeneration service plan that fall within the remit of this PPB. 2 of the 4 key objectives and the 2 performance targets in respect of the Urban Renewal priority are on course to achieve their targets. At this stage it is unclear if the remaining key objectives will be met. However, overall the outlook for the service is good although there are some aspects that might be worth further consideration.

Areas of Further Consideration

- Halton is one of three pilot areas in the North West for the launch of a new free environmental business support service available to all companies in Halton. The pilot will operate up to the end of March 2007 but there are no further details in the report about what happens after March 2007 in terms of the service continuing or alternative funding possibilities.
- A series of town centre surgeries to be located in the borough's Direct Links to discuss concerns and suggestions about the town centres have been planned. However, it is not clear in the monitoring reports when the surgeries are expected to be on stream.

- There is a review currently underway to consider the viability of the existing site used for the fireworks display and to highlight alternative sites for the 2007 fireworks display. However, it is not clear in the monitoring reports when the review is expected to reach any conclusions and report back.

SERVICE: Major Projects

Overview

The monitoring reports shows that all 14 objectives and 9 performance targets are on course to be achieved and outlines the progress made across the range of developments and initiatives currently underway. Therefore, the prospects for the service delivering on its commitments appear to be very good.

SERVICE: Environmental & Regulatory Services (*Landscape Services, Planning Services and Building Control ONLY*)

Overview

These comments relate to those functions in the service plan that comes within the remit of this PPB. The monitoring report show that all the key objectives are on course to be achieved and therefore the prospects are good. However, at this stage the picture is less clear with achieving the performance targets and so an overall assessment of progress is not available.

Areas of Further Consideration

- This year's targets of completing up to date character appraisals and producing management plans for 10% of the Borough's conservation areas are unlikely to be achieved (*See Note 1*). The report states (but makes no recommendation) that to speed up the processes and improve the chances of the targets being met particularly with regards to the management plans, will result in financial implications. Therefore, whether or not this is a realistic option worthy of further discussion in the current climate should be considered

Note 1: 10% equates to 1 conservation area per year over a ten-year period.

- The budget summary refers to the lower than expected level of income from Building Control fees due to increased competition from the private sector. Therefore, consideration of what the implications and risks to the service could be in the future if the situation remains unchanged maybe necessary. Furthermore, any options that could improve the service's ability to compete in the market place might be appropriate for the 4th quarter monitoring report.

SERVICE: Health & Partnerships (*Private Sector Housing and Housing Strategy inc Homelessness ONLY*)

Overview

These comments relate to those elements in the Health & Partnership service plan that fall within the remit of the Urban Renewal PPB. The majority of the objectives and all the performance targets look set to be achieved and therefore, the prospects for the year appear to be good. However, there are a number of developments and aspects highlighted in the monitoring report that may benefit from further consideration.

Areas of Further Consideration

- Funding has been secured for the refurbishment of the Gypsy site, which is scheduled to start in March 2007. However, an indication of what the refurbishment work will involve and when it is expected to be completed would be appropriate.
- There is a significant overspend forecast in respect of the Bed and Breakfast accommodation budget due to a steep increase in the demand for the service. However, the reasons for the steep increase in demand or whether it is a temporary or more sustained fluctuation are not clarified in the report.
- The review of the Homelessness and Housing Advice Service by Halton Housing Trust has produced an action plan to deliver improvements to the service. Therefore, an indication of the key implementation dates and the sort of service improvement outcomes that the Council can expect is suggested.

SERVICE: Culture & Leisure (*Parks & Countryside ONLY*)

Overview

There are no key objectives or performance indicators specific to Parks & Countryside highlighted in the monitoring report and therefore, an overview of progress is not available for the 3rd quarter.

REPORT: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Widnes Waterfront EDZ Performance Plan

WARDS: Kingsway, Riverside and Halton View

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To agree the Widnes Waterfront Economic Development Zone (EDZ) Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) Performance Plan for the financial year 2007/08.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members agree the annual Widnes Waterfront NWDA Performance Plan for 2007/08.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 For NWDA schemes that last more than 1 year it is a requirement of the scheme approval that the delivery organisation, in this case Halton Borough Council (HBC), prepares an Annual Performance Plan. This is attached as an appendix.

3.2 This Performance Plan is for the second year of a three-year programme. The plan has been rolled forward from last year and must be agreed with the NWDA before new expenditure is incurred for which grant will be claimed.

3.3 The Performance Plan summarises what the Widnes Waterfront Scheme is intending to achieve in the year 2007/08.

3.4 It provides output detail and clarifies how HBC intends to deliver and achieve them.

3.5 The Performance Plan will also enable the EDZ Programme Manager to review the progress and activity in the EDZ as a key part of the monitoring and evaluation process.

4.0 LOCATION

4.1 The Widnes Waterfront is situated between the conurbations of Liverpool and Manchester. It has excellent road links to both cities with the M62 and M56 bisect the borough.

4.2 The proposed Mersey Gateway will run from the Central Expressway in Runcorn to the Eastern bypass in Widnes and ultimately Speke Road.

It will be located immediately to the west of the EDZ improving access to the area for car owners and users of public transport.

- 4.3 The Widnes Waterfront programme area is situated between Widnes Town Centre and the waterfront environment. Since the construction of large-scale factories, plant and infrastructure in the mid 19th Century, the riverside environment has been cut off from the remainder of the town. Proposals for the EDZ will help improve the link between the waterfront and the Town Centre.

5.0 KEY PROJECTS IDENTIFIED FOR 2007/08

Projects approved in 2006/07 and continuing into 2007/08

- HBC Langtree Access Road
- HBC Tanhouse Lane Improvements (phased)
- Forward Construction Office Development
- Forward Construction Industrial Development
- WRL Heron Phase 2

Projects rolled forward from 2006/07 to 2007/08

- Gyrotory Improvements
- Linear Park
- Landscaping Improvements

New Projects for 2007/08

- Arts Strategy
- Croda Colloids site
- Utilities

- 5.1 These projects are detailed in Appendix 1, the Draft Performance Plan. There will be a presentation of the Plan and an update on the progress of the Widens Waterfront programme to Members at the meeting.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None at this stage.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The performance plan needs to be agreed by Halton Borough Council, the Urban Renewal SSP and the North West Development Association before projects can be appraised and the allocation spent.

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

- 8.1 There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.

DRAFT

**WIDNES WATERFRONT ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ZONE**

PERFORMANCE PLAN 2007/2008

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE MANAGEMENT BOARD

We, as members of the above mentioned Board, give our approval to the Widnes Waterfront Economic Development Zone Performance Plan, which was approved at the meeting of the Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership on Tuesday 24th April 2007.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Cllr. Ron Hignett	Halton Borough Council	
Ms Christine Fallon	PLUS Housing Group	
Ms Michelle Taylor or Mr Richard Bakes TBC	St Modwen Properties	
Mr Ed Burrows	Peel Holdings	
Ms Jackie Bowley	Environment Agency	
Ms Suzanne Carr	Groundwork Mersey Valley	
Dr Liz Towns-Andrews	CCLSP/Daresbury Laboratories	
Ms Janitha Redmond	English Partnerships	
Carole Lythall TBC	NWDA	
Mr Steve O'Connor	O'Connor Group Management Ltd	
Cllr. Dave Leadbetter	Halton Borough Council	
Cllr. Marie Wright	Halton Borough Council	
Mr Dick Tregear	Halton Borough Council	

Widnes Waterfront EDZ

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the mechanisms by which Halton's Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership (Urban Renewal SSP) will implement the New Widnes Waterfront Economic Development Zone (EDZ) as the Economic Development Zone Management Board. There are 2 years remaining in the current ERDF programme, which is targeted at the deprived wards of Kingsway, Riverside and Halton View but because of its size could impact on the whole of Halton.

This Performance Plan commits Halton's Urban Renewal Partnership as the Economic Development Zone Management Board to deliver a set of projects. The results of the programme review will be submitted to the Northwest Development Agency for approval when the year's final performance figures will be agreed in detail.

The Performance Plan was approved by Halton's Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership on Tuesday 24th April 2007

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME AND TARGET AREA

The Widnes Waterfront EDZ is a regionally significant Merseyside gateway development. It has a substantial role to play in the delivery of a quantum economic uplift of economic activity for the North West region (Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006) and for Merseyside (Liverpool City-Region Economic Strategy & Action Plan 2005-2025) as well as Halton.

The EDZ has the potential to contribute towards many targets including increasing GDP and employment, deliver positive change, reversal of the regions negative image and will attract support and investment from the private sector.

The EDZ specifically addresses Actions 82, 83 and 84 in the Regional Economic Development Plan. Due to its proximity to the New Mersey Crossing it has been recognised as an important sub-regional employment site which aims to attract good quality business accommodation on brownfield land.

Halton Borough Council's (HBC) vision, as set out in the EDZ Masterplan and Delivery Strategy, is to produce a regionally significant, high quality environment for commercial and industrial development, accompanied by a major visitor attraction potentially of

national importance. We will transform an 80-hectare low quality industrial area in southern Widnes into a major regional gateway development, that will be highly visible from the New Mersey Crossing and will take advantage of its excellent waterside location.

Underpinning the programme is the need to target the underlying problems of Widnes and its Waterfront area. These are the environment, unemployment, the business community, skills shortages and health. Out of 354 English Local Authorities for 2004, Halton is ranked the 21st most deprived area and 3rd on Merseyside after Liverpool and Knowsley.

1.3 PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The programme objectives are:

- To create a development of truly regional significance;
- To bring significant areas of brownfield land back into beneficial use;
- To open up the untapped amenity of the canal and river frontage;
- To generate sustainable employment in sectors identified as sub-regional priorities;
- To improve access to and from Widnes Town Centre and between the New Widnes Waterfront EDZ and the town's population, particularly those in the deprived wards of Riverside and Kingsway;
- To improve the take up of public transport options;
- To improve the competitiveness of exiting employers in the area, retaining and sustaining employment;
- To improve the environmental quality of the whole project area.

1.4 KEY PROJECTS FOR 2007 / 2008

The key projects for 2007 / 2008: -

Project	Anticipated Start date	Anticipated Completion date
Langtree Access Road	Feb 2007	August 2007

Gyratory Improvements (completion subject to land acquisition)	May 2007	December 2007
Linear Park (subject to land acquisition)	August 2007	June 2008
Tanhouse Lane Improvements (completion subject to land acquisition)	Jan 2007	June 2008
Landscaping Improvements (completion subject to land acquisition)	August 2007	June 2008
Forward Construction office & industrial development	May 2007	June 2008
Heron Phase 2	June 2007	June 2008
Heron Phase 3	On hold due to land acquisition	
Implementation of arts strategy	April 2007	March 2009
Croda redevelopment	May 2007	December 2008
Utilities upgrade	Dependant on negotiations	
Land Acquisition	Dependant on negotiations	

Some of the above projects have been carried over from the previous years Performance Plan. Reasons for the delays are detailed in Section 2 Progress Report.

Five key infrastructure projects are listed for 2007/2008. They will directly relate to the programme objectives through improving access between the Town Centre and the Waterfront Area as well as improving access to the Widnes Warth and River Mersey. The projects combine cycling options to improve sustainable transport and landscaping to continue improvements to the areas image.

The two Forward Construction developments and Heron Phase 2 will contribute to bringing significant areas of brownfield land back into beneficial use. Heron Phase 1 was completed in the summer 2006 setting a high standard for the rest of the business park and other

EDZ developments.

During the past year an Arts Strategy for the Widnes Waterfront EDZ has been produced by Public Arts. Implementing this strategy will add value to the programme area.

The Croda site has recently been acquired by Widnes Regeneration Ltd (a partnership between Halton Borough Council and St Modwen Developments). Before any redevelopment of the site can take place site investigations and monitoring will be carried out to design a remediation strategy in agreement with the Environment Agency.

Together all the projects will contribute towards creating a development of truly regional significance.

1.5 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

A dedicated team of three full time employees has been established to oversee programme delivery.

The team is supported by a steering group comprising of officers from various Council departments including Highways, Planning, Finance, Landscape Services, Major Projects, Property Services, and is chaired by Derek Sutton, Operational Director of the Major Projects Department. The steering group meets once every 2-3 months to discuss project progress, resolve issues and to ensure that the programme is on target.

Monthly update meetings between the programme team and NWDA contract manager, Carole Lythall, will take place to ensure the NWDA is kept up to date with the delivery of individual projects and the programme as a whole.

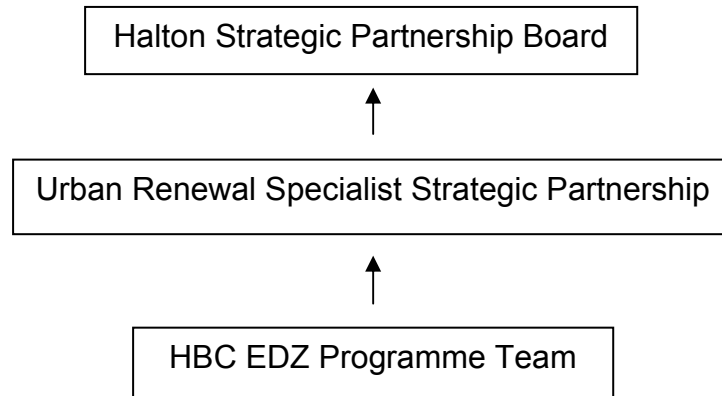
Several projects led by HBC, relating to the key strategic objectives listed in 1.3, have already been established. They include: Marketing; Phase 1 Landscaping Works; Infrastructure Improvements; Site Investigations; Heron Phase 1; Halton people into Jobs; and the Business Improvement Area Grant Scheme. Ongoing projects are discussed in detail in the Progress Report.

A number of projects will be delivered externally by developers and landowners.

1.6 GOVERNANCE OF THE SCHEME & ITS OPERATION

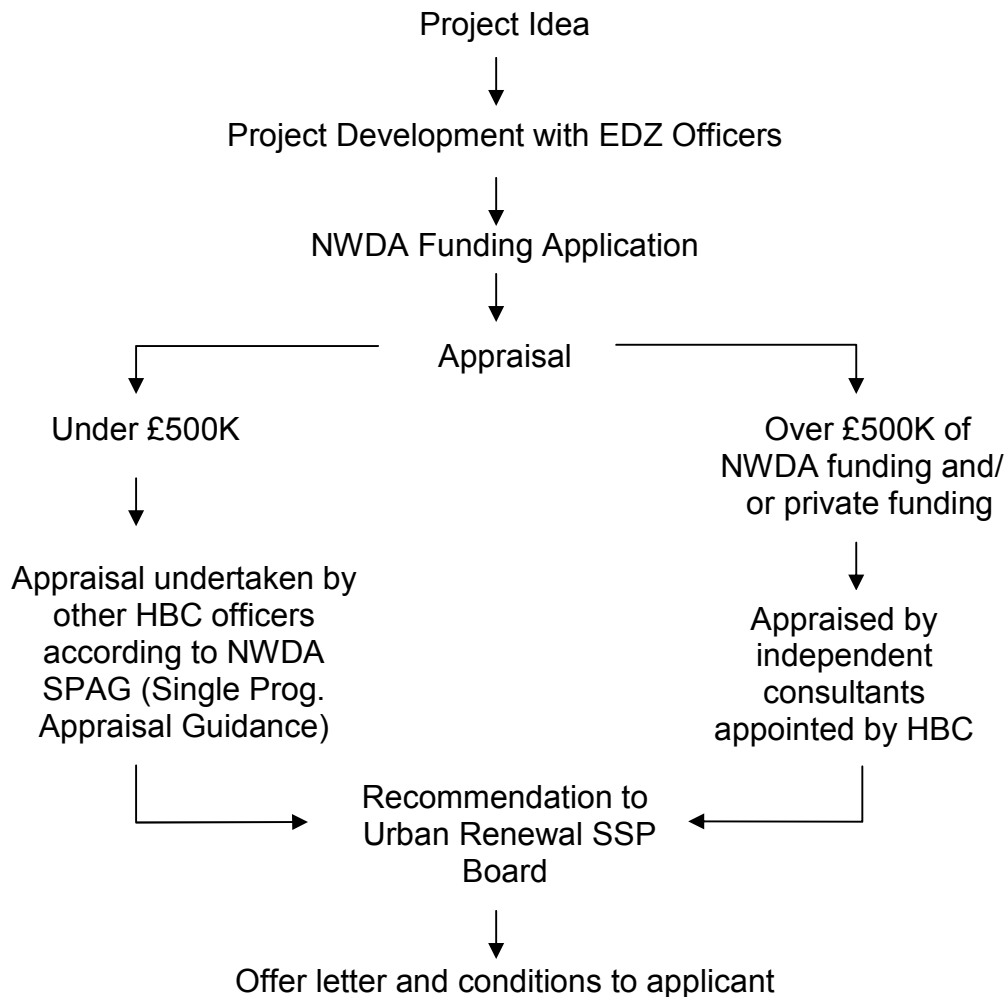
Halton Borough Council is the Accountable Body and lead partner for the Widnes Waterfront EDZ programme. The programme

management arrangements for its administration are summarised in the diagram below:



The Urban Renewal Specialist Strategic Partnership (Urban Renewal SSP) meets on a quarterly basis and is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of all regeneration activity. The Board is specifically responsible for: -

- The overall management of the Widnes Waterfront EDZ programme, reporting annually to the Halton Strategic Partnership Board as the Parent Organisation.
- The approval of projects for the Widnes Waterfront EDZ within the agreed plan, after detailed project appraisal set out in the flow chart.
- The overall preparation and approval of the Performance Plan each year, together with recommendations for the future resource requirements to parent funding bodies.
- Monitoring the implementation of the projects within the Performance Plan.

Project Appraisal Flow Chart

The Urban Renewal SSP takes its direction from the Halton Strategic Partnership, which is responsible for five thematic sub-groups. Each sub group oversees projects relevant to its theme and sets priority objectives relating to the future direction of those priorities. Sub groups present formal reports to the Partnership Management Board on a quarterly basis, detailing recent activities and the status of their projects.

1.7 PROJECT APPRAISAL, MONITORING AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

APPRAISAL

This will be undertaken by a selected body, independent from the project, either within HBC or by an external consultant appointed by HBC in accordance with NWDA procedure.

Halton Borough Council has set up an appraisal system to consider projects within the EDZ programme. The Urban Renewal SSP Board acting as the Economic Development Zone Management Board will oversee the appraisal of projects up to a delegation level of £0.5M. This board, Chaired by Cllr Ron Hignett, is made up of representatives from the NWDA, English Partnerships, Environment Agency, Groundwork Mersey Valley and private sector businesses and is supported by senior HBC officers.

MONITORING

The EDZ programme team carry out project monitoring in accordance with NWDA guidelines.

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

The programme team, under the direction of the Major Projects Department Operational Director, undertakes day-to-day management of the programme. The team has put a Management System in place to monitor the progress, project spend, outputs and outcomes of the programme.

The Council ensures proper accountability, propriety and regulation of all payments and handling of public funds through the effective provision of detailed financial management and payment systems as well as stringent audit procedures.

Some of the key steps in the Financial Control process are detailed below:

- All strategic programme themes for the coming year are indicated in this Annual Performance Plan, following discussion and approval at the Urban Renewal Partnership Board.
- All applications for funding are submitted on a standard Application Form.
- Project appraisal is to be undertaken by or on behalf of the Urban Renewal SSP Board by HBC Officers or external consultants as per a set of standard guidelines based upon NWDA best practice.
- Certification of appraisal and recommendation for approval is by the Urban Renewal SSP Board.
- Formal approval for expenditure on all EDZ funded schemes is

the responsibility of the Urban Renewal SSP Board.

- Grant Claims and Monitoring Reports are submitted by Project Managers on a quarterly basis.
- Claims are certified for payment by the EDZ Manager and authorised by the Operational Director.

Monitoring and evaluation of projects will take place to ensure that:

- ✓ Outputs are verified and in line with performance plan projections
- ✓ Payment of grant is linked to performance
- ✓ Projects are cost effective and demonstrate value for money.
- ✓ Propriety and regularity in the use of public funds is evident.
- ✓ Project's administrative procedures meet the conditions set out in EDZ grant offers and are available and are auditable as such.
- ✓ All other information is verifiable in line with the requirements of the Urban Renewal SSP Board.
- ✓ The Major Projects Operational Director issues Grant Offers on behalf of the Urban Renewal SSP Board.
- ✓ Halton Borough Council (Resources Directorate) is the Accountable Body and is responsible for paying claims and seeking reimbursement from the Northwest Development Agency.

2. PROGRESS REPORT

The European funded element of the Widnes Waterfront EDZ programme, supported and matched by Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, has now been in operation for four years.

Key successes over the last year of the programme (06/07) are:

- ★ First NWDA Management System established for the Widnes Waterfront Programme. Urban Renewal SSP Management Board, roles allocated to EDZ Team members

for project development, funding procurement, project monitoring and reporting.

- ★ The Widnes Waterfront EDZ Northwest Development Agency and Halton Borough Council funding Legal Agreement was signed on 25th August 2006.
- ★ Full planning for Heron Business Park phase 2 has been approved and ERDF is secured for the scheme. The project will commence once NWDA funding is in place significantly expanding this high quality light-industrial development.
- ★ Tan House Lane Landscaping and Cycleway scheme phase 1 has secured NWDA funding and the contractor, Casey, has started on site. When completed the project will have provided a much-needed aesthetic uplift to one of the EDZ's main spinal roads.
- ★ ERDF and NWDA funding secured for the Langtree Access Road and associated combined footpath/cycleway. Site work commenced 19th February 2007.
- ★ Improvements to the busy Ashley Way / Fiddlers Ferry / Earle Road junction started summer 2006. Phase 1 has been completed with further stages to follow, once further funding is secured, to improve access between the town centre and the Waterfront area.
- ★ Forward Construction has planning permission for 4,595 sq m of office and distribution space. Permissions is for three two-storey modern, flexible office buildings with glass façades, providing a dramatic gateway at Tan House Lane and for two linear rows of double-height single storey industrial buildings, on land adjacent to Heron Business Park. ERDF is secured with NWDA match funding likely to be awarded in April 2007.
- ★ Arts Strategy for the Widnes Waterfront EDZ has been completed by Public Arts. An arts steering group has also been established to help focus the thoughts of interested parties towards the arts aspect of the EDZ programme. An application will be submitted for a high quality art project to implement the strategy.
- ★ Advanced plans for a leisure complex have been announced for the Venture Fields site. Plans include a cinema, ice rink, climbing wall, bingo, bowling alley,

restaurants, family pub and possibly a hotel. An outline planning application has been submitted.

Management, financial and monitoring arrangements for the programme have yet to be fully tested as the NWDA legal agreement for the scheme was not signed until late August 2006 with the first EDZ project receiving approval for NWDA funds in December 2006 and starting on site January 2007. An initial set up has been established which can adapt to ensure the programme, projects and funding streams run as efficiently and effectively as possible.

A key success of the last financial year is the completion of the former Clariant site without the need for NWDA funding. The market was able to support this development without public intervention. Relocation of businesses to this site from other areas of the Borough has helped facilitate regeneration in other parts of the Borough.

Construction of the first phase of Heron Business Park has been finalised. Two of the eleven units are now occupied with a new marketing regime to be implemented over the coming months.

The delay in signing the funding agreement has meant that several of last year's key projects have experienced setbacks in their delivery. A summary of these delays is provided below: -

Langtree Access Road - Start delayed by 4 months mainly due to the funding agreement delays.

Gyratory Improvements - Start date achieved however phase 2 dependant in securing NWDA funding.

Linear Park - Anticipated start date has been altered by 1 year due to delays in the land acquisition from network rail.

Tanhouse Lane Improvements – Start delayed by 5 months mainly due to the funding agreement delays.

Structural Landscaping Improvements – Start delayed by 1 year due to the funding agreement and land acquisition delay's.

Forward Construction Developments – Start delayed by 9 months. As this is an external project the applicant waited for programme funding to be secured from the NWDA before completing the NWDA Development & Appraisal form for the project. They began on site last year to remove the highly invasive plant Japanese Knotweed to prepare the site for the planned development.

Heron Phase 2 – Start date delayed by 6 months. Delays due to late signing of the programme funding agreement and initial uptake of Heron phase 1 not being as strong as expected. Marketing of the business park is set to change to attract further investment.

Heron Phase 3 – This project has been put on hold due to difficulties with the land acquisition.

Discussions are constantly taking place to ensure the successful completion of land acquisitions as soon as possible. Halton Borough Council's Executive Board approved the use of its CPO powers on 8th February 2007 in the EDZ area so if land acquisition negotiations are unsuccessful it is possible this could be implemented.

Due to these delays, spend and targets anticipated for the last financial year will now be carried over to 07/08 for nearly all of last year's key projects.

3. **FUNDING**

This programme has ERDF grant available until December 2008. An element of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding is also available until March 2008. NWDA funding is available until March 2009 – in some cases this will be used to match fund approved ERDF applications. The New Widnes Waterfront Vision is aimed at transforming a run down, in parts derelict and contaminated, part of Widnes into a regionally significant major development site. It is anticipated that this pump priming will generate greater self-belief and confidence amongst investors, businesses and the local community together with a willingness to commit both effort and resources to realise the full potential of the opportunities that exist. A rise in land values should ensure viability of further projects and private sector operations should become self sustaining. Where appropriate, the Council and other partners will continue with services, as part of mainstream programmes.

The anticipated quarterly profiles for NWDA spend and claims are below.

	Q1 April – June 07	Q2 July – Sept 07	Q3 Oct – Dec 07	Q4 Jan – March 08
Project Appraisal Costs	7000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Langtree Access Road	100,000	65,000	20,000	Nil

Widnes waterfront Economic Development Zone
Performance Plan 2007/2008

Gyratory Improvements	Nil	200,000	200,000	Nil
Linear Park	10,000	10,000	50,000	50,000
Tanhouse Lane Improvements (phased)	57,250	57,250	Nil	Nil
Landscaping Improvements	10,000	20,000	220,000	150,000
Forward Construction office & industrial development	100,000	148,858	148,858	148,858
Heron Phase 2	Nil	164,029	164,029	164,029
Art Works	Nil	Nil	50,000	50,000
Croda Remediation	25,000	Nil	150,000	100,000
Land Acquisition	Unknown at present			
Utilities	Unknown at present			
Total NWDA spend per Quarter	£309,250	£677,137	£1,014,887	£674,887

Information relating to funding levels and sources of the individual projects is in Section 6 Project Information.

4. **Milestones**

This section outlines the key activities required to achieve the programme outcomes. It also lists the major milestones, with individual project milestones being included in Section 6: Project Information, which also includes information relating to project risks.

Key programme activities include: -

- Complete Langtree's Access Road
- Complete the Gyrotory Improvements (subject to land acquisition)
- Complete site investigations, design, land acquisition and implementation work for the linear park.
- Complete construction of the first phase of Tanhouse Lane Improvements.
- Start phase 2 of the structural landscaping improvements (subject to land acquisitions).
- Forward Construction start on site with Tanhouse Lane office development.
- Widnes Regeneration Limited start construction of Heron Phase 2.
- Secure land required for Heron Phase 3.
- A piece of art work completed within the programme area.
- Site investigations on Croda site to prepare for remediation design and site redevelopment.
- Securing sufficient utilities.

The major milestones for the year 2007/08 are:-

Quarter 1 April-June	Start Forward Construction development Start implementation of arts strategy Start Linear Park site investigation Start Croda Site investigations
Quarter 2 July-Sept	Start Heron Phase 2 construction Start phase 2 structural landscaping improvements Complete Langtree Access Road Start Linear Park landscaping
Quarter 3 Oct-Dec	Complete gyrotory improvements Complete Heron Phase 2

Quarter 4 Jan-March	Complete implementation of arts strategy Completion of Forward Chemical office development
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5. Outputs

The programme will create a development of truly regional significance and a gateway into Merseyside. It will not only initiate a step change in the area known as the Widnes Waterfront but also Halton and Merseyside in general, due to its prominent position adjacent to the proposed New Mersey Crossing.

It seeks to tackle some of the worst industrially contaminated sites within the Borough: to break out of the brownfield dereliction of the area and replace it with a high quality development, as set out in the design guideline in the Masterplan and the Widnes Waterfront Statutory Planning Document (SPD).

Infrastructure improvements within the EDZ area will facilitate and safeguard new sustainable jobs in office, tourism and industrial developments for local people and open up the untapped amenity of the Sankey Canal and the Upper Mersey Estuary nature reserve.

The programme will also improve access to and from Widnes Town Centre, improve the take-up of public transport options and will help to keep local people within the borough.

The greater EDZ programme of work will: -

- Create 1,600 job opportunities
- Improve links to and through the site
- Encourage the use of sustainable transport i.e. bus, walking and cycling
- Promote other initiatives within the new developments i.e. Halton People Into Jobs and Workforce Development
- Maximise public investment in the area

Individual project outputs are detailed in Section 6 Project Information. This information will be collected on a quarterly basis and reported to the NWDA as set out in the monitoring and evaluation plan.

6. Project Information

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>LANGTREE ACCESS ROAD</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	OFF EARLE RD ROUNDABOUT

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

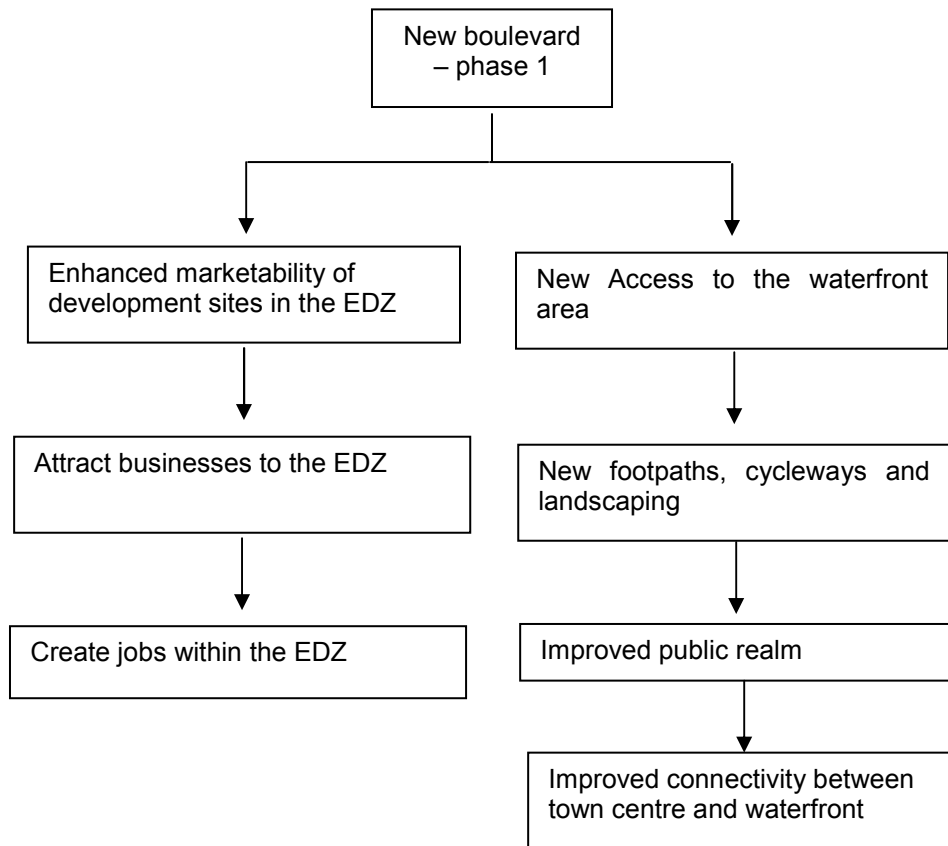
Source	Amount
ERDF	£205,000
NWDA	£185,000
HBC Capital	£20,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	£410,000

MILESTONES

Submit planning application	02/02/06
Gain Planning Approval	02/03/06
Submit ERDF Funding Application	27/05/06
Feedback from Environment Agency	19/06/06
Finalise Road Design	30/07/06
Tender Road	01/10/06
Secure NWDA Funding	02/01/07
Start Construction	19/02/07
Complete construction	19/08/07
Adopt Road / Project complete	19/08/08

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created	104				104	
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment	410,000	185,000			410,000	185,000
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road	0.22ha				0.22ha	
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES**RISKS**

- Contamination Issues and reaching agreement with the EA over remediation within the time scales
- Estimated costs may increase due to remediation costs
- Co-ordination with Langtree's development to ensure that vertical alignment meets Langtree's requirements
- Tender returns may exceed the estimates used for the funding applications
- The final contract costs may exceed the tender figure due to unforeseen circumstances such as discovering unknown utilities or inclement weather.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>GYRATORY IMPROVEMENTS</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	A577 / FIDDLERS FERRY / EARL RD JUNCTION

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Source	Amount
Greenways project	£200,000
LTP	£150,300
NWDA	£400,000
Private (potential Section 106 monies)	£231,000
HBC Capital	£420,421
<u>TOTAL</u>	£1,401,721

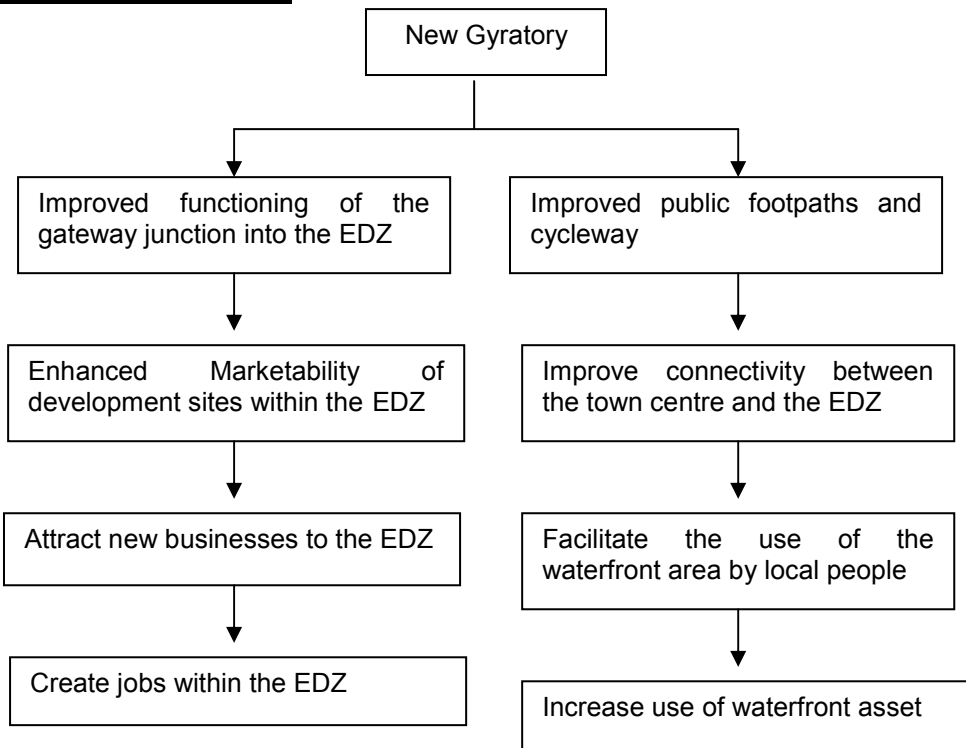
MILESTONES

Phase 1 start on site	05/06/06
Phase 1 finish on site	13/08/06 – Phase 2 to follow
Finalise Design	When funding package secure
Submit NWDA Funding Proposal	April 2007
Tender works	Early 2007 (Note separate tender periods for Civils and Signals)
Start on Site (phases 3 to 9)	Pending funding (Summer 2007)
Complete Construction	November 2007
Gyratory Complete	November 2008

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment	1,340,000	400,000	61,721	Nil	1,401,721	400,000
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

Note For output justification see Final Proposal Document

INDIRECT OUTCOMES**RISKS**

Risk	Addressed through ...
Traffic impact assessments and design modelling could reveal capacity problems, particularly with regard to the New Mersey Crossing.	Continuous liaison with management board for the second Mersey crossing. Necessary traffic assessments have been commissioned.
Remediation costs could increase depending on levels of contamination	Early consideration of available desktop data.
Utility constraints could force design modifications, which could delay construction and increase costs	Early consultations with Utilities companies required. Phase 1 encountered delays to construction in tracing and dealing with traffic light and street lighting cables; electricity cables not as shown on drawings, etc.
Private Sector Funding Package delayed (S106)	Discussions with finance department to see if HBC can provide this funding upfront.
Private Sector Funding reduced level (S106)	Discussions with planning to ensure that project manager has the most up to date information
Tender Sum exceeds estimate	Allow for contingencies in funding package
Outturn Sum exceeds Tender Sum due to unforeseen costs such as utilities outlined above or adverse weather conditions	Allow for contingencies in funding package
Requirement to maintain existing traffic flows delays construction	
Delays in acquiring the land required for the improvements	Back up possibility of CPO
Land values for the acquired land increase	Start negotiations ASAP

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>LINEAR PARK</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	LINKS EARLE RD AND TAN HOUSE LANE

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Source	Amount
ERDF	120,000
NWDA	120,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	240,000

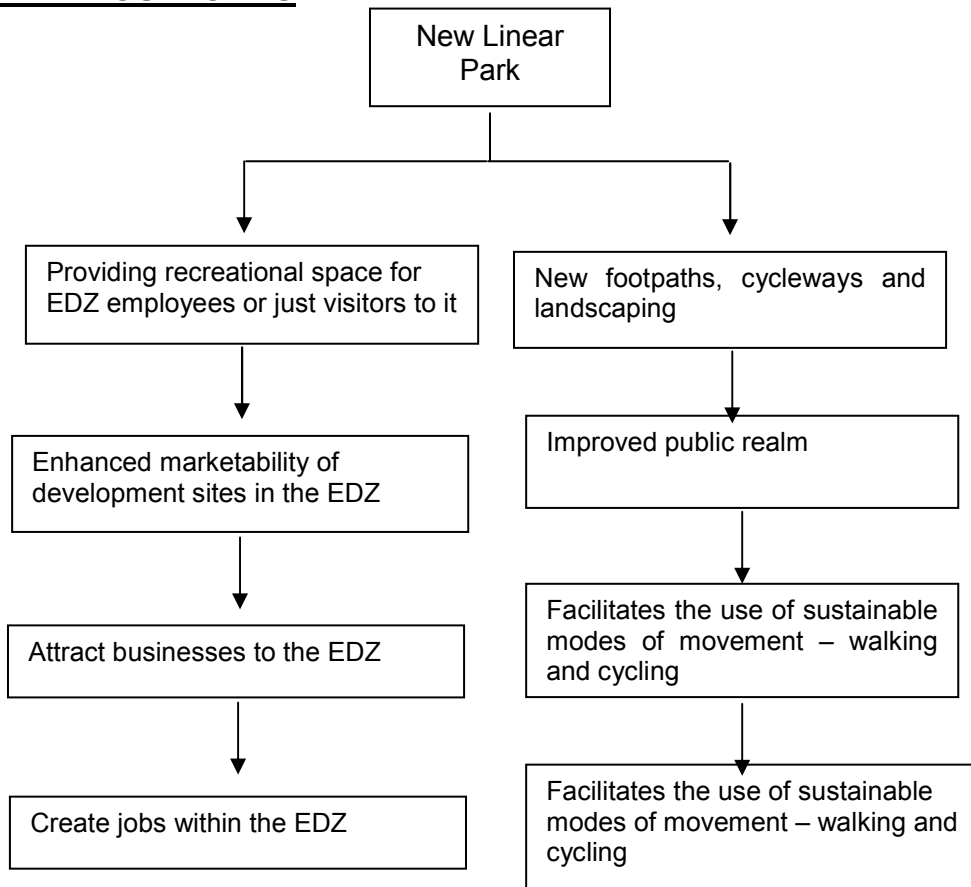
MILESTONES

Secure Footpath Temporary Diversion	30/09/05
Implement Temp Diversion	01/06/06
Secure ERDF Funding	10/06/06
Start site investigations	
Acquire Network Rail land	
Secure NWDA Funding	Date of land acquisition + 0 months
Start design work	Date of land acquisition + 1 months
Secure Planning Permission	Date of land acquisition + 2 months
Start on site	Date of land acquisition + 5 months
Complete Linear Park	Date of land acquisition + 12 months

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment						
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm			2.5ha		2.5ha	
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES



RISKS

Risk	Addressed through ...
Remediation costs could increase, depending on levels of contamination, as former railway line was used to transport chemical waste to ICI tip at Johnson's Lane.	Early consideration of available desktop data. Undertake Site Investigation and discuss results with Environment Agency.
Utility problems.	Consideration of utility plans and discussions with UU and Waterman Gore has revealed no foreseeable problems given the end use.
Land Acquisition from Network Rail has already been costly in terms of time due to their numerous re-organisations.	Early valuations, discussions / negotiations with landowners. Commencement of preliminary CPO procedures.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>TAN HOUSE LANE IMPROVEMENTS</u> <u>(phased)</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	TAN HOUSE LANE

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Source	Amount
ERDF	£396,000
HBC	£396,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	£792,000

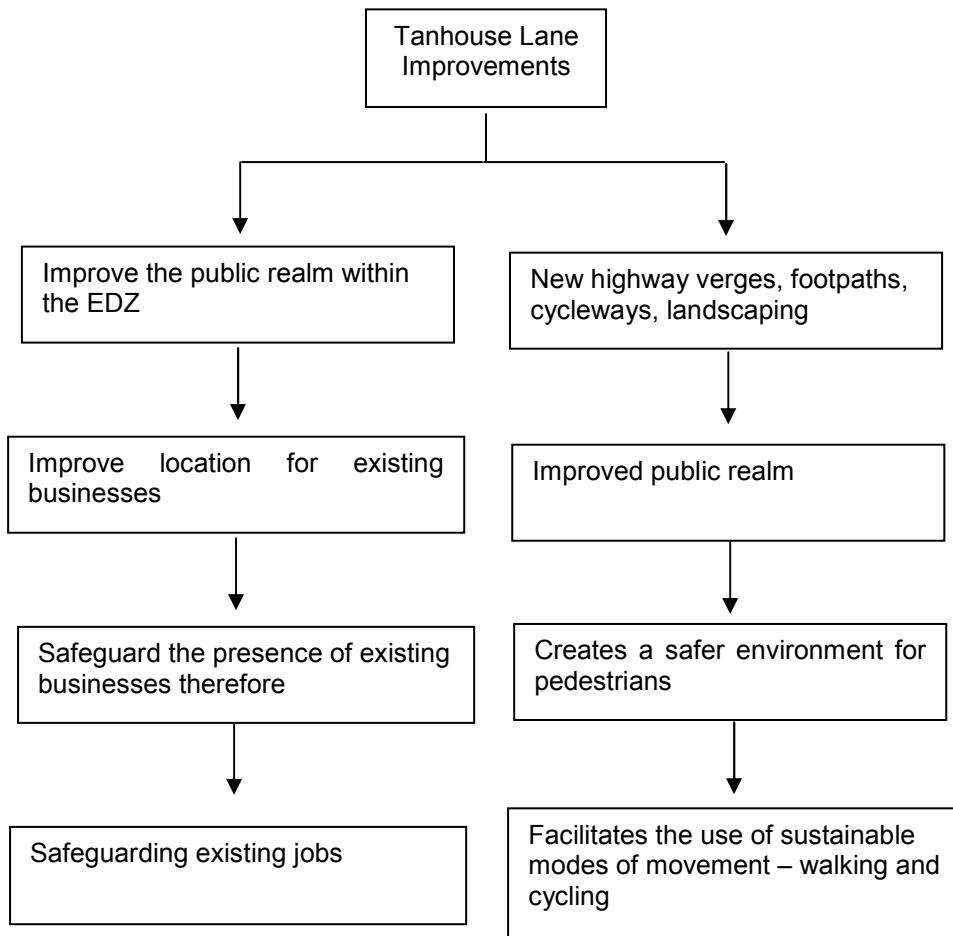
MILESTONES

Undertake Site Investigations	08/07/05
Start design work	14/12/05
Submit ERDF funding application	30/04/06
Submit planning application	31/05/06
Tender process works	06/07/06
Start Construction	22/01/07
Project Complete	30/06/08

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment	379,000	189,500	413,000	206,500	792,000	396,000
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm			0.56ha		0.56Ha	
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES



RISKS

Risk	Fall-back
Remediation costs could increase depending on levels of contamination	Site investigations have been undertaken which give a good indication of likely remediation methods and costs.
Obtaining necessary permissions could delay works & call for more expenditure on additional Site Investigations	Pre-application discussions with Planning, Highways & other relevant sections.
Discovery of unknown utilities on site	Try and identify utilities from service providers before starting on site.
Land Acquisition can be costly in terms of both time and funding	Early valuations, discussions / negotiations with landowners. May require a contingency.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	THROUGH OUT WIDNES WATERFRONT

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

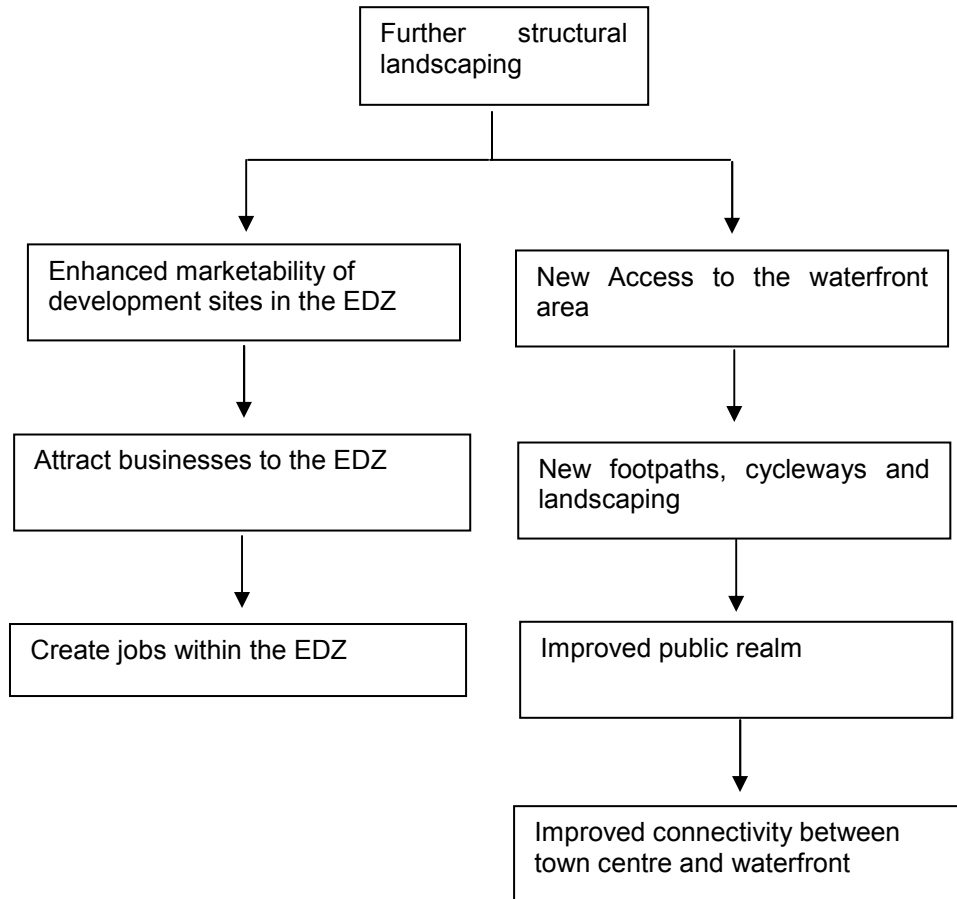
Source	Amount
ERDF	370,500
NWDA	370,500
<u>TOTAL</u>	741,000

MILESTONES

Submit ERDF Funding Application	31/04/06
Secure NWDA Funding	April 2007
Start Construction	August 2007
Complete construction	December 2008

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment	370,500	185,250	370,500	185,250	741,000	370,500
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm			0.25ha		0.25ha	
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES**RISKS**

- Contamination Issues and reaching agreement with the EA over remediation within the time scales
- Estimated costs may increase due to remediation costs
- Tender returns may exceed the estimates used for the funding applications
- The final contract costs may exceed the tender figure due to unforeseen circumstances such as discovering unknown utilities or inclement weather.
- Land acquisitions may cost more than estimated.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>FORWARD CONSTRUCTION OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	TANHOUSE LANE AND BROWN STREET

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Source	Amount
ERDF	542,857
NWDA	542,857
Private	3,257,148
<u>TOTAL</u>	£4,342,862

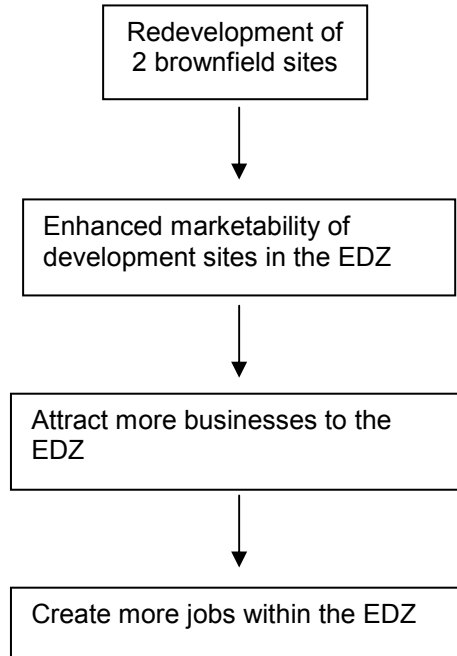
MILESTONES

Gain Planning Approval	27/04/06
ERDF Funding Application outline Approval	May 2006
Secure NWDA Funding	February 2007
Start Construction	May 2007
Complete construction	June 2008

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created	57		100		157	
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment	1,085,714	542,857			1,085,714	542,857
5(a) Private investment	3,257,148				3,257,148	
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment						
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial	0.966ha				0.966ha	
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m2 of floor space –or upgraded business premises	4435				4435	

INDIRECT OUTCOMES



RISKS

- Contamination Issues and reaching agreement with the EA over remediation within the time scales
- Estimated costs may increase due to remediation costs
- Tender returns may exceed the estimates used for the funding applications
- The final contract costs may exceed the tender figure due to unforeseen circumstances such as discovering unknown utilities or inclement weather.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>HERON PHASE 2</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	TAN HOUSE LANE

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

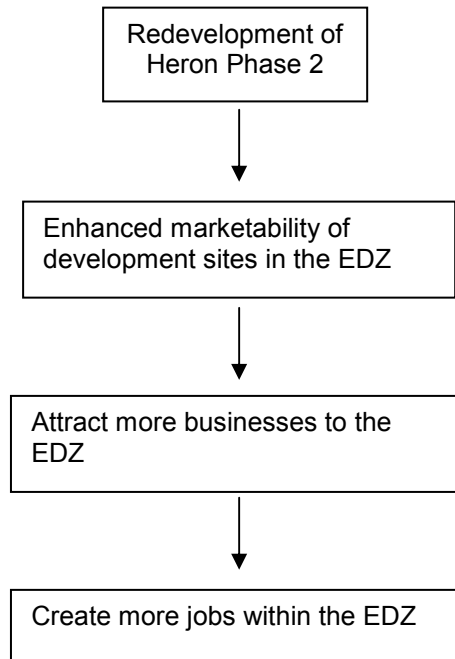
Source	Amount
ERDF	533,714
NWDA	533,714
Widnes Regeneration Ltd	3,202,282
<u>TOTAL</u>	£4,269,710

MILESTONES

ERDF approved	30/05/06
Planning approved	01/08/06
Secure NWDA funding	01/02/07
Start on Site	01/06/07
Complete construction	30/06/08

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created	78				78	
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded	116				116	
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment	1,067,428	533,713			1,067,428	533,714
5(a) Private investment	3,202,282				3,202,282	
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment						
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial	1.2 Ha				1.2 Ha	
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises	X				X	

INDIRECT OUTCOMES**RISKS**

Risk	Addressed through ...
Remediation costs could increase depending on levels of contamination	Early consideration of available desktop data. Undertake further Site Investigations. Appreciation of remediation costs.
End users for developed premises not guaranteed	Partnership aware of local market and marketing and promotion expertise.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	WIDNES WATERFRONT PUBLIC ART PROJECT
<u>LOCATION:</u>	WIDNES WATERFRONT PROGRAMME AREA

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Source	Amount
NRF	£25,000
NWDA	£75,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	£100,000 plus developer contributions

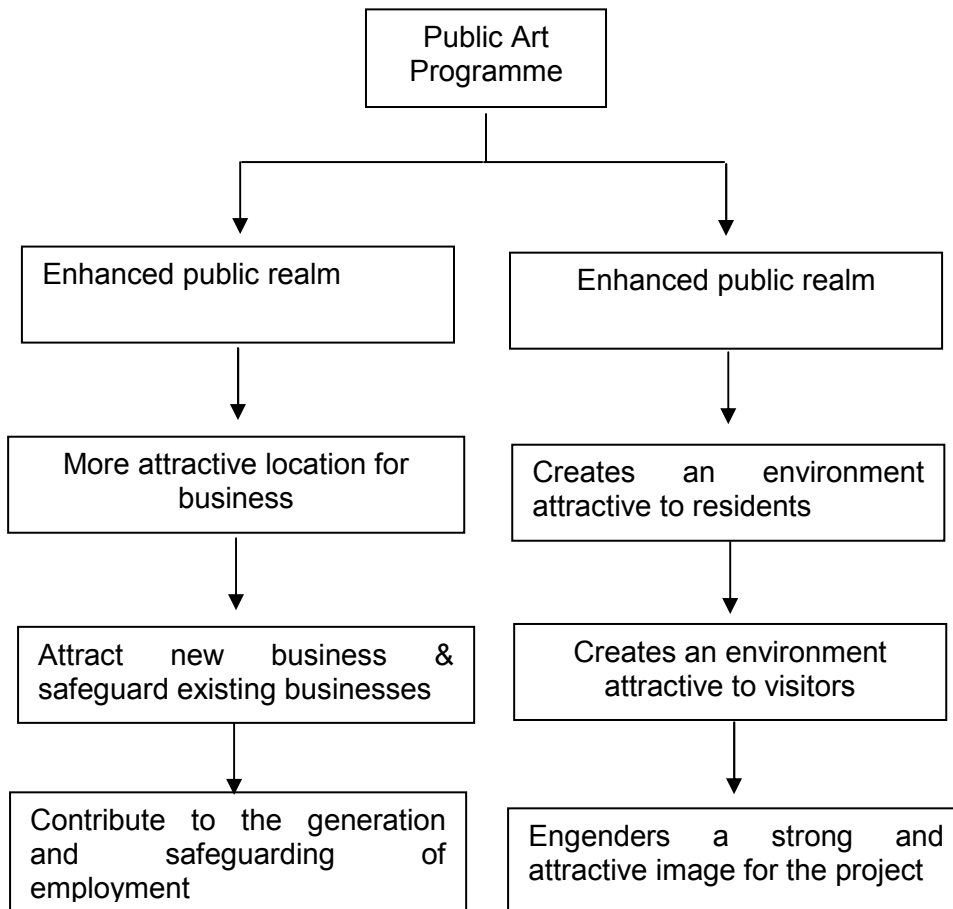
MILESTONES

Complete Widnes Waterfront Public Art Study	Autumn 2006
Constitute Public Art Steering Group	January 2007
First Meeting of Steering Group	15\01\07
Development of an Integrated Art & Design Strategy	January\February 2007
Develop Implementation Strategy	January\February 2007
Appoint lead artist or arts agency	March 2007
Develop a rolling programme of artist's residencies	April 2007
Implement a maximum of three temporary commissions	April 2007
Develop individual site specific schemes	April 2007
Apply for necessary permissions and implement site specific schemes	Summer 2007
Integrate public art project into other on-going Waterfront projects e.g. Linear Park, Riverside Park, environmental uplift etc	Summer\Autumn 2007
Integrate public art project with Mersey Gateway project	Summer\Autumn 2007
Project Complete	31/12/2007

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded						
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure						
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment	100,000	£75,000			100,000	£75,000
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:						
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m ² of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES



RISKS

Risk	Fall-back
Important to ensure buy-in by all stakeholders	Constitute a strong and inclusive steering group with clear strategic objectives and a transparent and realistic delivery programme.
Commissioning can be complex and time consuming	Establish a clear commissioning strategy from the outset

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>CRODA REDEVELOPMENT</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	Gorsey Lane

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

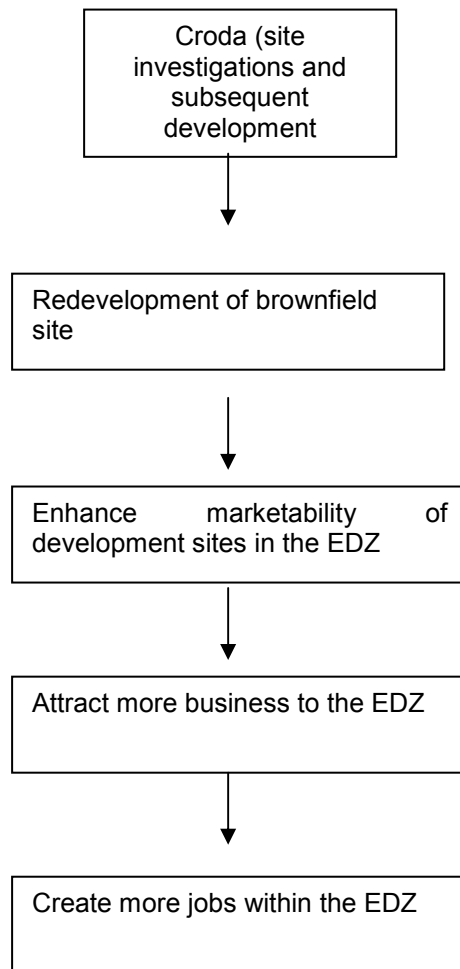
Source	Amount
NWDA	£250,000
	Total remediation costs unknown as Site Investigation is required
<u>TOTAL</u>	£250,000

MILESTONES

Start site investigation works	May 2007
Start design work	July 2007
Submit planning application	August 2007
Tender process works	November 2007
Start Construction	January 2008
Project Complete	July 2008

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment						
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES**RISKS**

- Contamination issues and reaching agreement with the EA over remediation within the timescales
- Estimated costs may increase due to remediation costs
- Tender returns may exceed the estimates used for the funding applications
- The final contract costs may exceed the tender figure due to unforeseen circumstances such as discovering unknown utilities or inclement weather.

<u>NAME OF PROJECT:</u>	<u>UTILITIES UPGRADE</u>
<u>LOCATION:</u>	The Widnes Waterfront Area

FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Source	Amount
NWDA	
Private	
<u>TOTAL</u>	Total costs and extent of works still to be agreed with utility companies

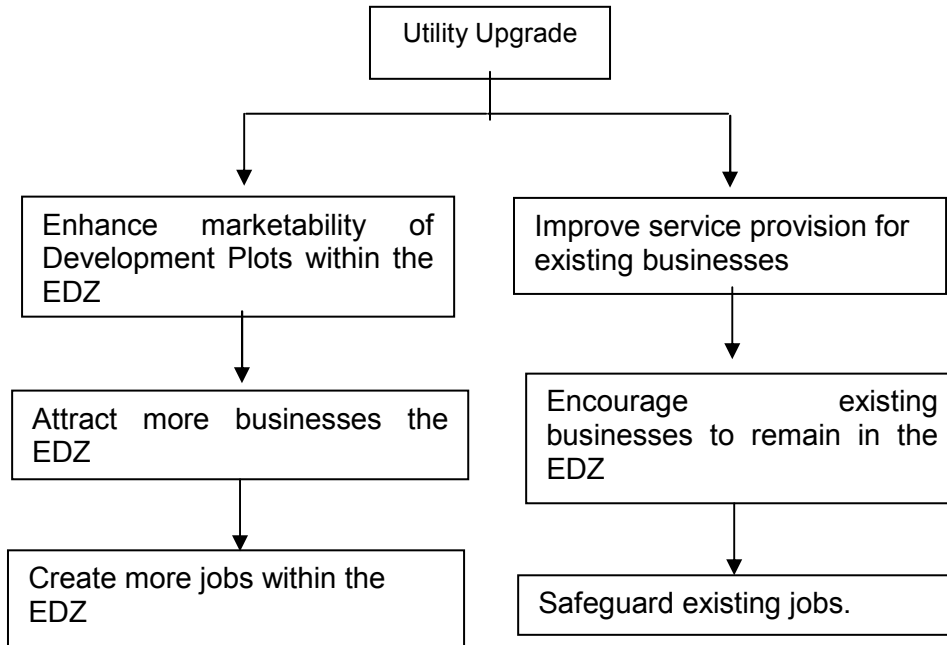
MILESTONES

Complete baseline utility study of programme area	19/07/2005
Out to tender	
Secure funding	
Complete phase 1	
Complete phase 2	
Complete project	

NWDA MANDATORY OUTPUTS

Output Indicator	2007/2008		2008/2009		Total	
	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA	Total	NWDA
Jobs created or safeguarded	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1(a) Jobs created						
1(b) Jobs Safeguarded						
3(d) Other businesses created						
5. Regeneration - investment levered for infrastructure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
5(a) Redevelopment of brownfield land – public investment						
5(a) Private investment						
5(d) New or upgraded business premises including incubators – Public Investment						
5(d) Private Investment						
5(e) Renaissance programmes including public realm – public investment						
5(e) private investment						
5(f) Ha. Brownfield reclaimed, by use:	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
(i) Industrial / Commercial						
(iii) other hard end uses – the road						
(v) Other soft end uses – public realm						
5(h) m2 of floor space – or upgraded business premises						

INDIRECT OUTCOMES



RISKS

Risk	Addressed through ...
In order to obtain a point of connection the regional supply company may have to upgrade the existing infrastructure. This could increase costs and duration of works.	The regional supply companies have been informed of the aspirations for the Widnes Waterfront and are underway with their investigations.
The granting of the necessary easements across private land is likely to take a considerable length of time.	Finalise routes of required works. Early consultation with affected land owners.

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment Services

SUBJECT: Scrutiny Topic - Exploring the options for sustaining and expanding the programme of regenerating Halton's employment sites

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on the programme of work undertaken, as part of the Policy Board's scrutiny programme, which explores the options for sustaining and expanding the council's business parks improvement programmes.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the Policy and Performance Board comments on the proposal to progress the development of Business Improvement Districts on Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estate**
- (2) the Policy and Performance Board comments on the proposal to expand the Business Parks Improvement Programme to cover the Widnes Waterfront and adjacent areas**
- (3) this report and the key recommendations of the Scrutiny Topic team set out in paragraphs 7.4 to 7.7 and paragraph 8.4 be forwarded for consideration and decision by the Executive Board at the next available meeting, and**
- (4) the Executive Board feedback their comments, decisions and proposed actions to the next available meeting of the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board and informally to the Policy and Performance Board Chair, as soon as possible, beforehand**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Context

The Business Parks Improvement Programme (BPIP) comprises a merger of the Business Improvement Area (BIA) Scheme and Greening Employment Areas (GEA) project, both of which have operated for the last three years.

- 3.2 The BIA Scheme provides grant assistance to all existing businesses located within the Widnes Waterfront and Gorsey Lane, and to new businesses moving into the area. The BIA grant is part-ERDF funded and is an integral part of the Widnes Waterfront Programme. The purpose of the grant is to assist businesses in enhancing the external appearance of their sites in order to contribute to the overall regeneration of the Widnes Waterfront and the approaches to the area.
- 3.3 The BPIP works with businesses and property owners located on Astmoor, Halebank and Riverview Industrial Estates. The industrial estates were selected to complement other regeneration projects that are taking place in the Borough:
- Astmoor due to its proximity to the Castlefields Project and the impact of the Mersey Gateway.
 - Halebank due to proximity and impact generated from new housing developments and 3MG Mersey Multimodal Gateway.
 - Riverview due to proximity to the Widnes Waterfront.
- 3.4 Business-led steering groups have been established in each of the target areas and are implementing jointly agreed action plans that are aimed at addressing the local needs and priorities of the resident businesses. The focus of attention covers a range of initiatives including: improvements to security and the physical environment; waste management and joint purchasing; inter-trading; local recruitment and training; improving access to jobs, improved environmental performance and links with community.
- 3.5 The Halton Economy sustains close to 53,000 jobs, with many of these jobs being located within Halton's 16 key employment sites. There is a danger that Halton's key employment sites could experience similar problems to those identified on Astmoor, Halebank and Riverview Industrial Estates, and which led to the establishment of the Greening Employment Areas project. It is considered prudent, therefore, to explore the options for extending the BPIP to other industrial estates in the Borough, as a preventative measure that will seek primarily to sustain businesses and jobs in these areas and counter economic and environmental decline, and secondly to attract new businesses and jobs into the Borough.
- 3.6 The BPIP is entirely funded by Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and Halton Council's Capital Priorities Fund. The current funding for the BPIP expires on 31/03/07, although a provisional allocation of NRF has been indicated for 2007/08. If the benefits gained from regeneration work and business engagement, as part of the BPIP, are to continue beyond 31/03/08, it is clear that other funding sources / opportunities need to be identified.

- 3.7 The process of economic and environmental decline is not exclusive to Halton's employment sites, there are many examples of other industrial estates in the Region where similar regeneration programmes operate. This Scrutiny Topic was used as an opportunity to benchmark the BPIP against a number of best practice examples in the Region. Moreover, as other Local Authority areas are likely to be in a similar position in terms of the availability of external funding to deliver such programmes, funding has been included in the benchmarking exercise.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Topic Group utilised a range of techniques to undertake the research work, including:

- Desk research and analysis of relevant Web-based data
- Gathering of evidence to determine the level of need to provide support to other employment sites in the Borough
- Visits and/or research designed to see what can be learnt from other Local Authorities, and how they deliver their programmes of industrial estate regeneration.
- Working group discussions to determine the most effective and sustainable methods to regenerate industrial estates, based on the best practice identified from other Local Authorities.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE BUSINESS PARKS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

- 5.1 The engagement with businesses located within the BPIP target areas has proven to be a success and popular with businesses, which is demonstrated by:

- Consistently well-attended Business Steering Group meetings.
- Businesses stating that the meetings are a high priority (Astmoor 77%, Halebank 71% and Riverview 85%).
- Businesses stating that they find the meeting useful (Astmoor 68%, Halebank 71% and Riverview 62.5%).

- 5.2 The Business Steering Groups are truly business-led; each having an elected Chairperson from the resident businesses, with businesses deciding on the nature of the estate priorities and agreeing their own action plans for improvement.

- 5.3 The BPIP has demonstrated to businesses the ability to deliver the estate-wide improvements detailed in the agreed action plans, with improvements including:

- Estate-wide CCTV system on Halebank
- Improved landscaping and maintenance
- Installation of company sign boards and colour-coded maps

- Installation of industrial estate welcome signs
- Upgrade in the provision of advance directional signage to estates
- Installation of bollards to prevent vehicular access to footpaths / verges
- Installation of speed activated signs and rumble strips on Astmoor Road
- Creation of Astmoor Website detailing company directory to promote inter-trading and latest news to keep businesses up to date on key developments and improvements
- Upgraded double yellow lines provision to improve traffic flow around the estate

5.4 Businesses covered by the BPIP have benefited from the Business Parks Officer as a resource for accessing business support and the resolution of problems and issues in their locality (e.g. environmental business support, training, recruitment of staff, fly-tipping, unauthorised encampments etc).

5.5 The area-based email alert system, operated by the Crime Reduction Advisor, from Cheshire Constabulary is an excellent low-cost resource available to inform businesses of crime trends in their immediate area so that they can remain vigilant and protect their business.

5.6 The BIA Scheme has generated significant improvements, both to the appearance and security of business sites and the general environs within the Widnes Waterfront.

6.0 IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICE FROM OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS

6.1 Background Information

The topic group explored best practice examples from two other Local Authority areas to identify mechanisms that are being used in these areas to implement sustainable industrial estate regeneration, given the current uncertainty about external funding beyond March 2008.

6.2 Visits to Winsford Industrial Estate and Bolton Industrial Estate Partnership, were undertaken to evaluate the role that Business Improvement District (BIDs) can play in implementing and sustaining estate-wide improvements.

6.3 What is a BID?

A BID is a partnership between a local authority and the local business community that develops and takes forward projects and services that benefit the trading environment and the public realm. BIDs are an investment in the local trading environment through the provision of added value services.

6.4 On industrial estates, BIDs provide a vehicle for drawing together partnerships to improve the local environment and to tackle problems like inadequate security, poor transport links, maintenance etc, all of which affect trade, staff retention and economic activity.

6.5 BIDs can be used to address a single issue (e.g. crime and security) or multiple issues (e.g. crime and security, image, estate management function and inter-trading). It can also be used to focus improvements on one or more industrial estates.

6.6 Who pays for a BID?

Non-domestic rate payers within a BID area pay for the BID through a supplement on their rates bill.

6.7 How does an area become a BID?

- Businesses will identify the area and the issues, and put together a proposal which should include delivery guarantees, performance indicators and a management structure.
- BID proposals are voted on by the non-domestic rate payers who will be responsible for paying the BID levy. Businesses must vote in favour of a BID in order for it to be established.
- They vote in a postal ballot conducted by the local authority.
- A successful vote for a BID must meet two tests. More than 50% of votes cast must be in favour of the BID and the positive vote must represent more than 50% of the rateable value of the votes cast.
- A BIDs mandate is for a maximum of 5 years. A BID wishing to continue beyond 5 years must reaffirm their mandate through another ballot, based on a further proposal.

6.8 Similarities between BPIP and the Winsford and Bolton examples

Industrial estates covered by the BPIP and the Winsford and Bolton examples operate business-led steering groups:

- As the driving force for industrial estate improvements.
- As the forum for agreeing action plans for improving the industrial estates.
- To communicate to businesses, property owners and partners.
- To provide periodic updates on project achievements and new developments.
- As a forum to highlight any pertinent issues and to agree and provide solutions.

6.9 Like the BPIP, the Winsford and Bolton examples received external funding to fund a small team to facilitate business-led steering groups and deliver industrial estate improvements. The Winsford and Bolton examples were also faced with the prospect of a loss of external funding.

6.10 At the time of considering BIDs as a way forward, Bolton were in a similar position as Halebank is today - the Council funded the purchase and installation of an estate-wide CCTV for the benefit of all businesses on the estate, with businesses voluntarily contributing to the on-going revenue costs.

6.11 Winsford and Bolton used the cessation of external funding as an opportunity to enhance the existing service provision and consolidate funding to deliver a 5-year programme. Halton presently has the same opportunity on Astmoor and Halebank, and could consider other industrial estates in the future.

6.12 Lessons learnt from the Winsford and Bolton BID Development Process

It is vital that there has been a programme of engagement with businesses in operation, with improvements implemented as this generates trust and demonstrates the ability to deliver.

6.13 Ensure that the ratepayers are identified and engaged early in the BID development.

6.14 A budget in the region of £15,000 is required to develop a BID implementation plan. A significant budget is also necessary to cover administration costs associated with implementing a BID(s).

6.15 It is crucial to record accurate baseline data to demonstrate to businesses the achievement and benefits associated with the BID.

6.16 The Local Authority may need to benchmark the current service provision if the BID will result in an additional frequency/quality of a particular service provided by the Council – e.g. litter picking, grass cutting, street cleansing etc.

6.17 To establish the views of resident businesses on Astmoor, Halebank and Riverview Industrial Estates, a survey was commissioned to ascertain to what extent businesses would be willing to support and contribute to the development of a BID within their respective areas.

7.0 BIDS SURVEY CONDUCTED ON ASTMOOR, HALEBANK AND RIVERVIEW

7.1 Key Findings

The study achieved an excellent response rate, with responses received from 44% of businesses and property owners (77 responses).

7.2 Businesses on all three estates identified security / crime, general estate improvements and Business Steering Groups as their top three priorities.

- 7.3 The survey established the willingness of businesses to consider paying a 'BID Levy' to sustain/or implement a range of estate improvements, which are detailed in Table A.

Table A

Industrial Estate	Response rate (%)	Number of responses	Business willing to consider BIDs (%)
Riverview	38	8	37.5
Halebank	37	17	65
Astmoor	47	52	61

7.4 Key Recommendations – Business Improvement Districts

Begin the process of formulating an outline business plan for a BID on Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estate as a succession strategy beyond the lifetime of the BPIP project.

- 7.5 Review the mechanisms available for delivering BIDs in Halton, either through the formation of a BID company, management by HBC or a 3rd party body.
- 7.6 Consideration be given to the development of a single issue or multiple issue BID.
- 7.7 A budget be established, using existing resources, to fund the production of selling tools (Business Plan, flyers, launch events Website etc).

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF NEED IN OTHER INDUSTRIAL AREAS

- 8.1 There are 16 major employment areas within Halton, of which the BPIP only covers three. From the analysis of need on other industrial estates in the Borough, the findings display the employment areas demonstrating the greatest need for intervention through the BPIP are:

- Widnes Waterfront (see below)
- Waterloo Road (image and proximity to the Mersey Gateway)
- Speke Approach (security and crime prevention)
- Bold Industrial Estate (access control and fly-tipping)
- Manor Park (security, unauthorised encampments and crime prevention)
- Whitehouse Industrial Estate (fly-tipping and crime prevention)

- 8.2 The Widnes Waterfront displays the greatest need for intervention by the BPIP, in order to:

- Complement the regeneration activities already being implemented by Major Projects;

- Create a business-led steering group for the existing businesses, landowners and developers;
- Improve communication between businesses, landowners, developers and HBC;
- Devise an agreed action plan for enhancing this key employment site;
- Resolve pertinent issues identified within the project area (e.g. unauthorised encampments, access problems during construction phases etc);
- Assess the feasibility of establishing a BID; and
- Maintain the operation of the BIA Scheme to provide contributory funding towards site improvements.

8.3 It is crucial that the BIA Scheme remains in operation beyond the current end date of 31/03/07, should a business-led steering group be established. If the BIA Scheme was not available beyond this date, the steering group is likely to be considered a 'talking shop' by the local business community, rather than a functioning group that achieves tangible benefits for the area.

8.4 Key Recommendation – Expansion of the Business Parks Improvement Programme

The Business Park Improvement Programme be extended to include the Widnes Waterfront area and a business-led steering group be established to determine priority actions focused on addressing the needs of the resident businesses.

9.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 One of the key objectives of Urban Renewal Strategic Priority is “to create and sustain a twenty first century business environment with the required variety and quality of sites, premises and infrastructure that can support high levels of investment and economic growth and increase Halton’s competitiveness”. The implementation of BIDs on Halebank and Astmoor, coupled with the expansion of the BPIP to cover the Widnes waterfront, will contribute towards providing the required business environment that will sustain existing businesses, attract new businesses and the provision of jobs for local people.

9.2 The proposals will assist in addressing the economic prosperity and employment objectives set out in the Corporate Plan, Community Strategy and the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

9.3 A contribution will also be made to the Creating a Safer Halton Strategic Priority, most specifically “to investigate and tackle the underlying causes of crime and disorder and respond effectively to public concern by reducing crime levels”. This will be achieved by improving security and designing out crime on Astmoor, Halebank and Widnes Waterfront.

10.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

11.0 RISK ANALYSIS

11.1 The risk of no action will result in a cessation of regeneration activities on estates covered by the BPIP, thus missing an opportunity to create a long-term delivery strategy for enhancing Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates and the Widnes Waterfront.

12.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

12.1 The BPIP is guided by Halton Borough Council's Equality of Opportunity in Employment Policy. This ensures compliance with the following Acts: The Equal Pay Act 1970 (updated 1983); The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (updated 1986); The Sex Discrimination Act (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999; The Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The services employed through BPIP activities are available, and will be marketed, to any business or employee located on the target industrial estates.

12.2 It is anticipated that the project activities will contribute towards the creation of jobs that are accessible by deprived communities.

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

13.1 None

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 22 February 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Topic Brief – Raising Additional Revenue From Existing Services

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To investigate ideas and available methods of raising revenue from existing services within the Environment Directorate.
- 1.2 This report details the ideas that have been reviewed, discussed and researched and provides recommendations for further action.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That approval be given to Council officers to further investigate the revenue - raising ideas recommended by the Topic Group as being worthy of consideration; the conclusions of this work to be brought to this Board.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Topic Brief has taken the form of meetings with representatives from different departments within the Environment Directorate and desktop research to source ideas from other Local Authorities. The research and meetings for the Topic Brief has been undertaken over a six-month period from August 2006 and the findings are outlined below.

3.2 The following ideas have been investigated and considered by the Topic Group.

- a) Fuel sales.
- b) Sponsorship.
- c) Advertising.
- d) Refuse services.
- e) Printing services.
- f) Franchising.
- g) Car parking charges.
- h) Procurement.
- i) Biomass.
- j) Bridge walks.
- k) Copyright charges.

3.3 From these ideas the following were considered worthy of further investigation by either Council officers or specialist consultants; for example, The Carbon Trust.

- a) Sponsorship.
- b) Advertising.
- c) Franchising.
- d) Biomass.

3.4 Sponsorship

Halton has a number of features and facilities which could be sponsored. These include:

- Halton Stadium.
- Brindley Arts Theatre and Arts Centre.
- Forthcoming Mersey Gateway.
- Silver Jubilee Bridge.
- Please see attached Topic Brief Paper (Appendix A) which provides detail of the different opportunities.

Set up costs	Relatively low, approx £5,000
	Low costs but Halton has relatively low commercial viability and would prove to be a “hard sell”
Profit margin	Income of approx £3,000/year

3.5 Advertising

This could be expanded via:

- Selling the space on security shutters at Halton Borough Council premises.
- Banner advertising on lamp posts.
- Further expansion of boundary, signage and roundabout advertising.
- Selling advertising space on Halton Borough Council payslips.
- Selling advertising space on documents produced by Council departments; for example, newsletters, maps, public transport timetables.
- Selling advertising space on the side of Halton Borough Council vehicles.
- It is recommended that there is a further investigation of both advertising and sponsorship opportunities through Immediate Solutions or a similar company in order to take a more proactive and long-term approach to expand and maximise opportunities.
- Please see attached Topic Brief Paper which provides detail of the different opportunities.

Set up costs	Relatively low, approx £10,000. Low running costs, advertising companies would pay for on-going maintenance costs
Profit margin	Small, approx £2,000 / year

3.6 Franchising

- Expansion of franchises across the borough; for example, coffee shops or cafes could take place in locations such as parks and Halton Borough Council premises.
- Specialist services could also be sold to external organisations; for example, translation services, project management expertise, staff training.

Set up costs	£10,000 in case of Starbucks but would vary depending on type of business
Profit margin	Rental of retail space

3.7 Biomass

- The sale of wood chippings and wood logs produced by the Landscapes Department to power stations or private companies would raise revenue.
- Larger wood logs produced from pruning of trees could be used as a sustainable fuel supply to Council buildings and lead to significant cost savings. It is suggested that a pilot study of such a proposal (possibly the Picow Road offices) be pursued, potentially through the Carbon Trust and its future review of Council properties.

Set up costs	£100,000, although grants may be available
Profit margin	Set up costs recouped over ten year period via savings

4.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Topic Brief Paper - Raising revenue within Environment directorate. This Paper details all the ideas discussed.
- 4.2 Meeting notes, attached as Appendices.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposals are in line with Council policy to reduce costs and increase revenue.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 All the proposals are sustainable.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 Set up costs, implementation, running costs.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 There are no Equality or Diversity implications.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
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Meeting Note

Meeting	Topic Brief – Investigating increased revenue-raising opportunities within Environment Directorate (Meeting 1)
Date	2 nd August 2006
Location	Runcorn Town Hall
Present	Cllr R Hignett (RH), C Cullen (CC), G Hazlehurst (GH), D Sutton (DS), M Curtis (MC), I Goodall (IG)

IG introduced the Topic Brief – Investigating increased revenue-raising opportunities within the Environment Directorate.

Initial ideas discussed:

- Sales of fuel – GH outlined the reasons why selling fuel to the public may prove problematic. Issues raised included the high cost of calibrating the weights and measures, cost of purchasing new pumps needed for public use (these cost approximately £20k). Health and safety would also prove to be an issue as the location of the pumps would need to be relocated and the layout of the petrol station altered. Furthermore, this site is already busy and increased people and traffic would inevitably compromise health and safety. Also, payment systems would need to be introduced as the petrol station/MOT station is currently not set up for bulk retail.
- Land Banks – The buying and selling of vacant land for future sale/development. IG spoke with Charles Goodall (Property Services) regarding land banking and possible recent changes in legislation. Charles not aware of any changes in the legislation.

Further development of ideas:

- DS raised the idea that Halton could sell services that currently undertake internally; for example, printing services.
- DS suggested that the Halton Direct Links could be used to sell products such as souvenirs or office products possibly.
- The expansion of advertising opportunities could be a further method of raising revenue; for example, information pods, street light banner advertising. IG to research.
- Car parking may be charged at the town centres in future. However, the capital costs would be very high; for example, the construction of a new-build multi-storey car park would cost between £4,000/space up to £7,000/space depending upon the quality of the facility built. IG to research.

- The invite of an external person to look at opportunities may bring in further ideas as they would provide a fresh approach to the issue of raising revenue.

Meeting Note

Meeting	Topic Brief – Investigating increased revenue-raising opportunities within Environment Directorate (Meeting 2)
Date	7 th February 2007
Location	Halton Stadium
Present	Cllr R Hignett (RH), I Goodall (IG), Sara Munikwa (SM), Steve Eccles (SE), Stephen Leng (SL), Paul Wright (PW)

IG welcomed all to meeting and summarised the notes from the first meeting and introduced Paper written since the first meeting. This Paper had been circulated previously to the 7th February meeting. IG introduced ideas from the Paper and encouraged group discussion on a variety of ideas:

Sponsorship – RH suggested that Everton Football Club could be encouraged to expand their retail operation to include a retail outlet at Halton Stadium as their reserve home games are played at the venue. The leasing of retail space would provide increased revenue to HBC.

Sponsorship of the Silver Jubilee Bridge would provide revenue via the leasing of advertising space. However, the use of large banner advertising would have an adverse effect on side winds and affect high-sided lorries. The use of illuminations to produce a logo feature may be the best method of advertising and raise the profile of the bridge and Halton as a whole.

Immediate Solutions are currently used by HBC to investigate and expand advertising opportunities across the borough. At present sponsorship of roundabouts and road signage has been introduced but there must be further opportunities to be taken advantage of. Streetlighting sponsorship could be introduced via the use of banners although there is the issue of how much load the columns can take. May be opportunity to purchase columns which can take higher loads when these are replaced. There is the potential to expand roundabout advertising via the introduction of art features. The design of all sponsorship is important and needs to look right.

Viewing points could be constructed where the public can gain a vantage point to observe the construction of the new bridge. Sponsorship opportunities of such points would create revenue and encourage tourism. Visitor figures would be provided to companies to encourage their sponsorship of these sites.

Advertising – Need to introduce selective advertising with partners for specific events; for example, Creamfields. This may take the form of banner advertising on lampposts and revenue would be raised by selling space. SL suggested that Immediate Solutions should take this forward. ACTION: SE to liaise with Immediate Solutions.

Advertising space could also be sold on documents produced by Transport; for example, within public transport guides and timetables, and on borough maps.

Advertising space could also be sold on HBC web site. The web cam on the web site shows the Silver Jubilee Bridge and sponsors would also receive publicity from this. The web cam could also show the building of the new bridge and associated sponsors.

Franchising – The expansion of franchising opportunities would raise revenue by the leasing of retail space. The coffee shop franchise has proved successful at Victoria Park and could be expanded at other locations; for example, Phoenix Park in Castlefields. A discussion took place around Immediate Solution's role – should their remit involve more than sponsorship of highways features? ACTION: SE to liaise with Immediate Solutions.

Car Parking – Steve Eccles led the discussion regarding car parking charges and began by stating that it was inevitable that charging for car parking would begin at some stage. However, this would create a number of problems. Many of the car parks are in private ownership and HBC would need to work in partnership with the private sector to create a strategy. Other Local Authorities have entered into such agreements and have gained 30% revenue. Also, each of the three retail centres have different peak parking times and an overarching strategy would be difficult to implement. Within Runcorn Town Centre it is intended to implement a managed car park at Somerfield. May be the right time to conduct a new study of car parking as the previous one took place in 2001. Further problems could arise as parking patterns alter as a result of the introduction of charging as demand may exceed supply in other areas of the town centres. This could lead to excess demand in residential streets and possibly the demand for a residents parking permit. There are also associated enforcement issues relating to the cost and method of enforcing car parking which may prove to be higher than the revenue raised.

Biomass Waste – Paul Wright led the discussion regarding the use of biomass waste. Paul Wright explained that currently biomass waste in the form of chippings from woodland and shrub bed pruning activities are put directly onto shrub beds which in turn reduces the need to buy pesticides. Paul Wright explained that this is the most efficient way of using the chippings. However, Paul Wright felt that the larger logs produced from woodland works could be used as an energy supply to fuel HBC buildings as fuel would no longer need to be purchased from external companies. Also this fuel would be from a renewable source and would reduce carbon emissions. However, capital costs would be high as heating systems would have to be installed along with equipment to break the logs into chips. Also extra operatives would be needed to ensure a steady supply of timber. There would be benefits in terms of the Council's woodland management especially on the Highway network where a

truly sustainable woodland could be created that directly met the Council's heating and other energy needs. Partnerships could be entered into with the Woodland Trust. Other Local Authorities have implemented similar schemes which have cost in the region of £100k but have managed to recoup the investment over a period of ten years. It may be worth investigating the availability of grants to assist with the start-up costs of such a scheme.

Bridge Walks – Stephen Leng presented a video to the meeting to illustrate the practicalities of climbing over the Silver Jubilee Bridge. The key issue is that of health and safety and introducing safety measures and infrastructure that would enable a safe crossing. Prior to crossing the bridge a short training session which need to be done for insurance purposes. A bridge walk has been successfully implemented in Sydney, Australia over the Sydney Harbour Bridge and has proved to be a popular tourist attraction. However, there are a number of differences between the two bridges. The bridge in Sydney has steps whereas in Runcorn the arch of the bridge has to be walked across. Also, the pedestrian walkway in Sydney is two metres wide compared to the curve of the Silver Jubilee being two feet wide. The Silver Jubilee Bridge takes 40 minutes to cross and a maximum of three people at any one time can make the crossing.

A further revenue-raising idea related to copyright charges for photographs of buildings and structures within Halton. A good example being the Silver Jubilee Bridge which is used by various organisations in publications. Such companies could be charged to use such images if HBC own the copyright.

Meeting Note

Meeting	Topic Brief – Investigating increased revenue-raising opportunities within Environment Directorate (Meeting 3)
Date	21st February 2007
Location	CR2, Municipal Building
Present	Cllr R Hignett (RH), I Goodall (IG), Stephen Leng (SL), Paul Wright (PW), Derek Sutton (DS), Mike Curtis (MC), Geoff Hazlehurst (GH)

IG welcomed all to meeting and thanked those who attended the previous meeting and their contributions. The notes from the second meeting were summarised and feedback invited along with any further expansion of the ideas. Apologies received from Phil Watts and Gary Collins.

Ideas discussed:

Bridge Walks – Discussion took place around the cost estimates and the practicalities of using Runcorn Bridge. Estimates of start up discussed and facilities required; for example, changing rooms, lifts. The bridge would need to be upgraded to allow a large number of people to cross. Physical changes would include steel walkways and safety features. There would also be the issue of the weather which would limit the times when the bridge could be crossed. Staff costs would also need to be considered.

Fuel sales – This was thought to be a non-starter due to the high set-up costs and health and safety issues due to the public being on site.

Sponsorship – The group discussed the role of Immediate Solutions in expansion of sponsorship opportunities. It was felt that they need to be more proactive in their approach. In their initial year of their contract they raised £150k, with Halton receiving £75k but this had decreased since. HBC receive 50% of sponsorship revenue that Immediate Solutions attract. There may be an opportunity to change the company which HBC use as the contract is close to ending. Other Councils have employed a dedicated Project Manager for sponsorship; for example, Taunton Council employed an officer for the Britain in Bloom competition who raised finance to fund their entry along with raising additional revenue.

A further sponsorship opportunity raised concerned the entrance gates to Victoria Park. The group felt that there was a marketing and economic development role to take forward but no obvious officer within HBC to do this. More effective management of this role would reap rewards in the long-term.

Printing Services – This was considered to be a non-starter due to competition from the private sector.

Franchising opportunities – A discussion took place regarding Phoenix Park and the possibility of adding a new building to house a franchise, possibly a coffee shop or café as the current building is too small to accommodate such a facility.

Car Parking charges – English Partnerships are about to begin a study in Runcorn regarding car parking in the town centre. The group felt that as the majority of the car parks in the borough are private-sector owned, any future charging policy would be led by the private sector. The group decided that the introduction of car park charging was a non-starter.

Biomass waste – PW led discussion. PW keen to use logs as fuel for HBC buildings as opposed to selling them to outside companies as we do not produce sufficient logs over the course of the year and subject to seasonal fluctuations. DS recommended that a pilot study be undertaken at Picow Farm, possibly as part of the Invest to Save policy. We could commission the Carbon Trust for this.

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Street Lighting Topic Review

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report back on the work of the Street Lighting Topic Review Group and the results of the bids for Capital Funding of Street Lighting.
- 1.2 Street lighting was chosen for a Topic Review due to the dramatic increase in energy costs for street lighting and the age of the street lighting equipment.
- 1.3 A number of Capital bids were made to mitigate the rising costs; of these only one was successful, which was the capitalisation of structural maintenance.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) The report be noted and forwarded to Executive Board and a report back be received at a future PPB;**
- (2) A trial is carried out to remove (initially switching off) high mast lighting on a section of the expressway;**
- (3) Include in the specification for new installations a requirement for equipment that can be dimmed and for lower maintenance columns;**
- (4) That new developments in solar power and LED technology are monitored and implemented when appropriate;**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Street Lighting Topic Review was established at the beginning of the PPB year and the Topic Brief is attached as an Appendix 1. The Topic Group comprised Cllrs Sly, Nolan, Morley, Thompson, Lewis, E. Cargill and Leadbetter. The Group discussed options to reduce the cost of street lighting whilst trying to maintain current high standards. These included the following:
 - Removal of high mast lighting on expressways
 - Trial dimming of street lighting
 - Change switching levels for columns (come on later and off earlier)
 - Switch off lights at midnight
 - Use of solar panels
 - Decorative lighting

- 3.2 The Expressway network in Runcorn is predominately lit with high masts. These are reaching the end of their design life and are suffering from structural defects and a programme of replacement with modern low-level lighting is underway. Funding is drawn from the LTP allocations at the level of £130,000 pa. The option of removing lighting from the Expressway Network was considered. The energy cost saving could be in the order of £40,000 p.a. To decommission and remove the lighting units would be relatively inexpensive however to remove the masts would cost around £2000 each. With 180 high masts left the removal costs would be about £400,000.
- 3.3 Leaving the decommissioned masts in situ for any length of time would bring serious safety liabilities and structural safety surveys would still be required at a cost of up to £50,000 p.a. Once removed the surveys would not be required. Removing lighting from all the high speed Expressway Network would mean abandoning some of new installations, increase road safety risks and in any event some lighting at junctions with local roads would need to be retained.
- 3.4 The Topic Group did not recommend the removal of general lighting on the Expressways but did consider that a trial on a specific section could be worthwhile e.g. the section of the Weston Point Expressway between Bankes Lane and Picow Farm Road.
- 3.5 Dimming of street lighting is relatively new and still in the early stages of development. The idea is to reduce lighting levels when traffic flows reduce (this is predominately in the early hours of the morning) and then use less electricity costs. However at the present time the electricity companies do not recognise the reduced energy consumption and therefore the energy cost saving cannot be realised. The option of dimming was one of the unsuccessful Capital bids, due to the cost savings not being achieved. The situation will continue to be monitored and when the savings can be achieved, the proposal will be investigated again.
- 3.6 In the meantime it is suggested that all new lighting installations whether in residential developments, regeneration sites or on existing roads such as the Expressways should be fitted with dimming equipment. The additional costs would not be high and would enable the effects of dimming to be monitored incrementally.
- 3.7 The idea of changing the switching levels for the lighting is to save energy. To implement the change the photoelectric cells need changing on the lanterns. The lanterns would be set to switch on slightly later and off slightly earlier and can save about 5% of energy costs. Unfortunately once again the electricity companies do not recognise the reduced energy consumption and therefore the energy cost saving cannot be realised. This option was also an unsuccessful Capital bid, due to the cost savings not being achieved.

- 3.8 Switching off street lighting between say midnight and 5.30 am, would require the installation time clocks in every column to be switched off. The energy savings could be realised, but there would be a high initial cost and increased maintenance costs, due to the extra equipment to maintain. It needs to be remembered that street lighting was originally provided for pedestrians not vehicles.
- 3.9 Use of solar panels is often thought of as an easy way to reduce energy costs. However there is a high initial cost and at the present time the technology does not produce enough power to light a street light. It would need to be supplemented by a wind turbine, which would be unacceptable in residential areas. There is also a higher risk of the equipment being stolen due to its perceived value. If the equipment is damaged then there is a higher maintenance cost.
- 3.10 At the present time solar panels are being used to power speed activated signs with mixed success. The use of solar panels to power sign lights is a possibility, but is only viable when stand alone units are required due to the cost of providing an electrical connection being similar to the additional cost of a solar panel. Four units are to be installed in Smith Road in Widnes as a trial as part of a new one-way system. The use of solar panels to power sign lanterns was another unsuccessful capital bid, due to the high capital cost and low pay back. It would cost about £1200 to convert an existing sign and the saving would be £9 pa.
- 3.11 Another option to save energy is the use of LED light units, which use less energy and last longer than conventional lamps. These are currently being used where equipment is available. The biggest use for these could be within traffic signals, but there are currently reliability problems due to the regular switching.
- 3.12 Within the Borough the main decorative lighting installations are the floodlighting of the Silver Jubilee Bridge and the Seasonal (Christmas) lighting in the town centres. These were considered by the Topic Review Group, but felt that they should be retained due to the feel good factor that is generated. Due to previous increases in energy costs and reductions in budget for the bridge floodlighting, the lights are now only on during the winter, outside the months of British Summer Time, between the hours of dusk and 2200.
- 3.13 A presumption against growth in street lighting provision is not possible due to new residential roads and high profile regeneration schemes. Also there could be a need to install new lighting for road safety reasons. A reduction in street lighting standards, such as turning off every other light, would leave the Council exposed to liability claims, because street lighting is provided to national industry standards. The removal of street lighting could have serious impacts on road safety, community safety and on performance against core BVPIs.

- 3.14 A suggestion to remove street lighting from Residential Areas would be more cost effective if carried out in complete areas. This would also avoid liability claims. To be most cost effective the oldest lighting units would be decommissioned first. As indicated above this would be in New Town estates such as Castlefields and Murdishaw and in Ditton and Hough Green in Widnes. It would cost around £700 to remove each column and this would need to be phased in over period of years.
- 3.15 Clearly none of the above measures will be popular and with the exception of the SJB flood lighting, will all have serious road safety and community safety consequences. There would be serious concern at the potential for reversing the very encouraging downward trend in road casualties. Many of the Council's key priorities would be adversely affected e.g. in areas of social inclusion and accessibility.
- 3.16 There is an unavoidable incremental growth in the street lighting stock through the adoption of streets in new residential areas and the construction of new roads e.g. the Peel House Lane link, the Upton Rocks distributor road and the Widnes Waterfront Boulevard. New additional lighting units are also funded through the Area Forum and an allocation of £80,000 in the capital budget. Annually this increases the inventory by approximately 500 units per year. The current stock is in the order of 23,000 units.
- 3.17 Whatever decisions are taken, action has to be taken to minimise future growth in energy consumption. This step change in energy costs requires a complete reassessment of lighting policies. It is proposed that there should be no net increase in the lighting stock other than for road safety reasons and the adoption of residential developments. There would be a presumption against new lighting schemes funded through an Area Forum or from the Council's and other capital budgets.
- 3.18 All improvement and safety schemes are being reviewed to reduce or remove any additional energy requirements. Lighting, including signal controlled junctions and crossings, will be provided only if a key element of a safety scheme, traffic signs will not be lit unless legally required, high reflective materials will be used for direction signs and bollards to obviate the need for lighting. Speed actuated signs will continue to be solar powered and maintenance costs closely monitored.
- 3.19 A Capital Bid to fund all structural maintenance of lighting columns from capital was approved. This has delivered a £100,000 saving to the Council's revenue budget for 2007/08 without reducing maintenance standards.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

5.1.1 None.

5.2 Social Inclusion Implications

5.2.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

5.3 Sustainability Checklist

5.3.1 None

5.4 Best Value

5.4.1 The key risks associated with a significant reduction in street lighting provision are an increase in the number of killed and seriously injured on Halton's roads, an increase in crime, reduced sense of community safety and undermining the promotion of Halton's evening economy. The key control measures proposed are to meet the energy cost increase through the combination of a growth bid and reductions in structural maintenance mitigated by redirection of capital budgets.

5.5 Legal Implications

5.5.1 Street lighting is not a statutory function and there is no legal requirement for roads to be lit. However street lighting contributes strongly to road safety, community safety and prevention of crime. Street lighting fits with the Council's strategic priorities. Since 1998 The Council is required by statute to exercise all of its functions with a view to prevent crime and disorder. It should be noted that the introduction of street lighting was originally a result of crime and disorder issues. It continues to be accepted as a major contributor to the prevention of crime and disorder or its perception. Whilst the Council may not be challenged under the Highways Act there may well be challenges under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

5.5.2 Providing lighting to reduced standards will increase the Council's exposure to liability claims. Increases in energy costs will impact across the whole Council.

5.6 Crime and Disorder Issues

5.6.1 None

5.7 Human Rights Act Implications

5.6.1 None

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

6.1	<i>Document</i>	<i>Available for inspection</i>	<i>Contact</i>
	None	Highways & Transportation Department Rutland House Halton Lea	Stephen Rimmer Ext. 3182

Appendix 1

TOPIC BRIEF

STREET LIGHTING

PPB responsible: Urban Renewal

Lead Officer: Alan West

Tel: 0151 471 7370

Planned start/end dates: July 2006/March 2007

Target PPB meeting: 21 March 2007

Topic description and scope

- To subject to scrutiny the street lighting and associated highway electrical equipment and examine the potential for energy saving
- Information on areas for improvement to be collated. Future revenue implications to be highlighted

Why this topic was chosen

- Energy costs have risen very steeply and options need to be considered to reduce energy consumption (including switching off and/or removal of lighting)
- Street lighting equipment is in need of replacement and funding is not available

Key outputs and outcomes sought

Outputs

- Reduce energy consumption and keep costs within available budget

Outcomes

- Lighting energy consumption to be reduced to keep costs within budget
- Unnecessary lighting removed (signs no longer illuminated, where permitted)
- Consider need for decorative lighting (Seasonal lights, Silver Jubilee Bridge, Buildings, River of Light)

Which of Halton's 5 strategic priorities this topic addresses and the key objectives and improvement targets it will help to achieve

This topic will help towards creating a **Safer Halton** by ensuring that any changes do not affect the safety of residents or are detrimental to the Street

Scene. It is recognised as part of the **Urban Renewal** strategy that the cost of energy will have an impact on the priority.

Nature of expected/desired PPB input

To provide overview and scrutiny of the issues raised by the Topic and to assess the potential impact of this review on the existing services.

Preferred mode of operation

The topic will be project managed by a working group of elected Members and officers (Cllrs Sly, Nolan, Morley, Thompson, Lewis, E. Cargill and Leadbetter).

The Group will utilise a range of techniques to undertake the work that will include:-

- Topic issue briefings from council officers
- Gathering of evidence of potential initiatives through desk research and analysis of relevant data.
- Visits and/or research designed to see what we can learn from other Local Authorities and Beacon Councils
- Cost/benefit analysis of identified possibilities

Media/communication implications

- There is considerable potential for the council to benefit from some positive PR from this topic It illustrates the Council’s willingness to listen and learn from others, to bring resources to bear on a significant issue, both from within the council and externally, and hopefully will be able to demonstrate a positive benefit for the Council.
- There are media opportunities to be exploited in using the exercise to inform the budget-making process and the effect on the Borough.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB Chair **Officer**

Date:..... Date:.....

Appendix 2



**STREET LIGHTING TOPIC REVIEW
NOTES of MEETING**

Held at Runcorn Town Hall on Thursday 28 September 2006 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Cllr D Leadbetter
Cllr D Thompson
Stephen Leng
Stephen Rimmer

Apologies:

Cllr R Hignett
Cllr P Nolan

Action

1.0 Chair to be Cllr Paul Nolan

2.0 **Topic Description & Scope**

The aim of the Topic Review is to examine Revenue Implications resulting from increasing Energy Costs, which will continue to rise

3.0

Outputs

The target is to consider options that will reduce energy consumption and consider capitalising future street lighting replacements.

4.0

Scoping Exercise

A Scoping Exercise document had been prepared and this was discussed. It was particularly noted the inventory increases, but the budget does not increase to reflect the increased quantities. This is a common problem within Highways. It was also noted that there is a desire for higher standards of lighting, which impact upon costs.

5.0

BVPI 215 and Standard of Service

The new BVPI 215 a and b were discussed together with the standard of service received from the contractors. It is noted that BVPI 215b is outside the control of the authority as Scottish Power or their sub-contractors carry out the work.

6.0

7.0 **Inventory details**

The inventory details for columns and control were circulated.

8.0

Agreed no visits to other authorities required

Possible Actions Discussed

- Dimming trials to be investigated (reduce level of lighting at quiet times)
- Change cell switching levels (switch on later and off earlier)
- Remove high mast lighting
- Decorative lighting (Feel good factor)

9.0

10.0

SRR

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 16 or 23 November 2006 at 5.00pm in Municipal Building, Widnes.

Appendix 3



**STREET LIGHTING TOPIC REVIEW
NOTES of MEETING**

Held at Marketing Suite, Widnes on Thursday 23 November 2006 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Cllr R Hignett
Cllr D Leadbetter
Cllr P Nolan (Chair)
Stephen Leng
Stephen Rimmer

Apologies:

Cllr D Thompson

Action

1.0 Review of Current Position

1.1 Twelve months ago there was a large increase in energy costs. Due to the increase it was agreed not to increase the inventory (except new developments) and to investigate energy saving options.

1.2 To reduce the increase in revenue costs, £100,000 of structural maintenance will be transferred to Capital next year.

2.0

Options

2.1

The group discussed options to reduce revenue implications and maintain a high standard of lighting. The following options are to be investigated further:

- Removal of high mast lighting on expressways (reduce maintenance costs)
- Dimming trials to be investigated (reduce level of lighting at quiet times), although reduction in energy consumption not yet recognised by electricity supply companies
- New developments to include equipment that will allow dimming and aluminium columns (NOTE Highway Maintenance Strategy will include new equipment)

- specification)
- Change cell switching levels (switch on later and off earlier)
- Switch off lighting at midnight (lighting was originally for pedestrians not drivers)
- 3.0 • Cost/Benefit analysis for solar panels
- 3.1 • Decorative lighting (Feel good factor). Investigate sponsorship options. SRR

Date of Next Meeting

Agreed no further meetings required, options report to be submitted to Urban Renewal PPB in March 2007. Report to be circulated in late January 2007.

REPORT: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Petitions Relating to Traffic Calming
Ditchfield Road & Halton Village

WARDS: Ditton & Castlefields

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report receipt of petitions relating to existing traffic calming on Ditchfield Road, Widnes and to proposed traffic calming on Norton Lane, Stockham Lane and Norton Village in Halton Village.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Board supports the conclusions of the report:

(a) that the existing traffic calming adjacent Trewan House Nursing Home (no. 335) Ditchfield Road, Widnes be retained and the situation monitored with the petitioners informed accordingly and

(b) that the Norton Village petition be considered as part of the Consultation Review panel evaluation of the proposed traffic calming scheme for the area.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Ditchfield Road. A petition carrying 142 names has been received requesting removal of the existing traffic calming on Ditchfield Road in the area of Trewan House Nursing Home, together with another petition of 15 names requesting retention of same. In the case of the former petition, the overwhelming majority of signatories are not Ditchfield Road residents, in the case of the latter, all are residents of the immediate area. The front pages of the petitions are attached as Appendix 'A'.

3.2 The scheme was introduced in 2002 as part of the Quality Corridor works in the area. In the four years prior to the project there was one road traffic accident within 50 metres of the site, and since completion there has also been one accident in four years. Whilst the build out/cushion unit does cause some peak time traffic delays, removal would probably lead to an increase in use of this route. It is therefore proposed that the traffic calming scheme be retained and that the situation be monitored.

- 3.3 Halton Village. Consultation has been undertaken on the installation of traffic calming on parts of Norton Lane, Stockham Lane and Norton Village in Halton Village and this has led to the submission of a 31 name petition. The future of the scheme will be considered by a Consultation Review Panel, and the petition will be passed to the Panel to assist in this process.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

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

- 8.1 Background information held in the Traffic Section, Environmental Services, Grosvenor House, Halton Lea, Runcorn. Contact S.Johnson, Ext. 3010.

Our Petition

Summary of Aim

To reduce congestion on Ditchfield Road at the area of Trewan House Nursing Home by removal of the build out and road cushion. Presently at peak times there is no break in the flow of traffic, making it almost impossible for pedestrians to cross Ditchfield Road and for residents to pull out of their driveways in this area. The build out causes further chaos at the times of funerals and weddings being held at St Michael's church, and it further exacerbated by visitors parking on pedestrian areas forcing pedestrians with prams or walking aids to have to use the road.

To: Halton Borough Council

I petition Halton Borough Council to remove the build out and road cushion from Ditchfield Road at the area of Trewan House Nursing Home and 206 to 204 Ditchfield Road.

(NB: Names have been removed due to Data Protection: 13 Signatures were included on the petition)

TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON DITCHFIELD ROAD

We have been informed that the Council may be removing the small traffic island at the top of Ditchfield Road. This is due to complaints by residents in the area of Hough Green and Widnes who would like it removed.

Before the island was put in place there were a number of fatalities and serious injuries. Since the island has been in place, there have been NO fatalities and no serious injuries in Ditchfield Road. We would like to keep it that way. It also provides a safe place for parents and children to cross during school time.

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR DETAILS IF YOU WOULD LIKE THE ISLAND ON DITCHFIELD ROAD TO STAY AND KEEP DITCHFIELD ROAD A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE.

(NB: Names have been removed due to Data Protection: 8 Signatures were included on the petition)

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Environment

SUBJECT: Commercial Property Review

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an overview and report on the conclusions and recommendations outlined in a commercial property study which assesses the supply of and demand for employment land and premises (industrial, office and retail) in Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDED That: the Board supports the recommendations in the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Overview

The report provides a holistic view of the current commercial property offering (office, industrial and retail) across the borough of Halton in 2006 and considers its fitness for purpose against both the existing and projected economic structure of the borough.

3.2 The reports identifies areas of surplus and shortfall in terms of capability to meet new and emerging business needs and considers the supply of development sites, both green and brown field to meet developers and end user requirements.

3.3 The review was undertaken using the following methodology;

- Desktop review of existing information from HBC departments
- Discussions with HBC staff
- Face to face and telephone interviews with property developers
- Face to face and telephone interviews with property agents
- Consultation with public sector bodies
- Survey of existing Halton businesses

3.4 Property Market Overview

Despite the shift in recent years to the service sector, from the more traditional manufacturing sector as the source of employment, demand for industrial accommodation still exceeds demand for offices.

Primarily the demand is for small space, up to 5000 sq ft for offices; up to 10,000 sq ft for industrial.

- 3.5 Although the Borough has a strong science sector, the need for specialist forms of accommodation, such as labs, is extremely small.
- 3.6 Runcorn is the more popular office location; industrial companies are split more evenly between the two towns. However, there remains a high degree of loyalty with businesses reluctant to cross the river if they are looking to relocate.
- 3.7 Freehold demand remains strong across all the sectors.
- 3.8 There is a shortage of certain types of properties: 0-1000 sq ft offices; 0-2000 sq ft and 5000-10,000 sq ft industrial. Conversely there is a surplus of 2000-5000 sq ft and 10,000-20,000 sq ft units, however these are predominately low quality, unfit-for-purpose accommodation built in the 1970s in Runcorn or in unattractive, mixed-use areas in Widnes.
- 3.9 With 40 percent of enquiries coming from outside the Borough, Halton plays an important role sub-regionally, attracting businesses from Liverpool, Cheshire and Warrington.
- 3.10 The borough is becoming more attractive to developers, with strong demand for sites supported by success at schemes such as Abbots Park and Speke Approach.
- 3.11 Emerging trends indicate a need for better quality property, both office and industrial, in terms of specification, image, environment and access.

3.12 Small Business Accommodation

Future trends of increasing numbers of businesses, decreasing sizes of businesses and a growth in self-employment serviced offices and managed workspace centres. Existing facilities in Halton require upgrade and refurbishment. Although more are needed, the phasing of them needs to be carefully planned to avoid unnecessary competition with Centrix, The Heath and Daresbury Innovation Centre.

3.13 Employment Land

The Borough appears to have sufficient employment land through to 2016. However the analysis is complicated by the amount of regional investment sites allocated and the specialist markets some of these areas cater for.

- 3.15 Of the 233 ha of employment land in the Borough, strategic investment/specialist sites ha take up 143 ha. This leaves only 90 ha for local needs. Local businesses are essentially limited to in-fill plots

on the Borough's existing industrial estates while most of the remaining land at Manor Park in the process of being sold to end-users.

- 3.16 According to analysis (based on historic take-up figures and considering how much land is actually, truly available) it is suggested that the Borough needs a further 60 ha of employment land to cater for the growth of the economy and provide sufficient range and choice through to 2016. Given that the economy and existing available resource is split relatively evenly between Widnes and Runcorn it is suggested that the land required is also divided evenly - 30 ha each.

3.17 Employment Areas

The only areas that provide a high quality image are Daresbury Park, Daresbury Science and Innovation Centre and, to a degree, Manor Park. All the other areas would benefit from environmental and landscape improvements to enhance their image – to counter one of the key perception problems with Halton as a business location – poor image.

- 3.18 There is only one location where there is serious market failure, Astmoor Industrial Estate has suffered from years of underinvestment, poor quality landscape maintenance, poorly designed and specified buildings and suffers in comparison with neighbouring areas
- 3.19 A survey of perception of the employment areas by property agents revealed the following comments from both national and regional agents;
- *Plenty of property in both Runcorn and Widnes. Manor Park is only good quality stock of premises, rest is relatively poor. Good demand for 10,000-20,000 sqft. Considering the excellent motorway connections to both towns demand should be stronger than it is. Area lags behind Warrington, but important area nonetheless.*
 - *Sufficient amount of property in both Runcorn and Widnes. Better quality available in Runcorn. Market quite slow at the moment. Units below 10,000 sq ft popular, those larger slow to let. No shortages but environmental improvements needed. Halton is poor relation to Warrington and neighbouring areas.*
 - *Strong demand for freeholds. Runcorn attracts the more discerning occupier. Shortage of options in surrounding areas pushing occupiers into Halton. More developer interest because of success in neighbouring locations now rippling into Halton. Workforce availability in the Borough good. Increasing demand from large distribution companies who cannot find solutions elsewhere. Astmoor Industrial Estate requires whole scale redevelopment; units do not meet modern needs.*

- *Office market is poor in Halton. Daresbury Park in does well which is close by. Preston Brook has attracted interest in the 4000-10,000 sqft size range. Very poor quality stock in Widnes. Anybody who has a business in Widnes will generally place their offices in Chester or Liverpool.*

3.20 Recommendations

- (a) Continue the regeneration of Widnes Waterfront to improve the environment and perceptions to encourage further investment. This will also bring forward employment land for local business needs, which is in short supply.
- (b) Pursue the Mersey Gateway Bridge, lobbying to bring it forward as soon as possible. Continue to view it as an economic development issue as well as a transport one. It could have a dramatic effect on the local property market providing the catalyst to regenerate major employment areas. It will support 3MG and improve West Bank Dock Estate and New Town in Widnes. It will also make Astmoor Industrial Estate more accessible and attractive.
- (c) 60 ha of more land should be made available for development in Halton, split equally between Widnes and Runcorn. This could be made up of low-density underused brownfield employment area, where regeneration is possible. The lack of office development in Widnes could be alleviated by the creation of a high quality North Widnes Business Park at some point in the future on a location to be identified through the planning process.
- (d) The serious issues at Astmoor Industrial Estate need to be addressed. Its poor image, poor specification buildings and years of under investment are concerns. The Council need to facilitate improved maintenance; ensure security is not a problem; work with property owners (where possible) to upgrade premises.
- (e) The Council should continue its support of Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus in association with NWDA and its other partners. This is a high quality development, offering a unique competitive advantage over many areas, with the potential to draw in significant inward investment.
- (f) To facilitate the link up Daresbury Park and Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus.
- (g) The Council should support the development and improvement of The Heath Business and Technical Park. It is a successful

business location that also provides important accommodation for the science sector and small businesses.

- (h) All employment areas except those at Daresbury and Manor Park could do with environmental improvements, e.g. landscaping, buildings maintenance, signage, etc.
- (i) The Council should encourage more small business accommodation, although care should be taken not to provide facilities that compete with the private sector. Existing public sector facilities should be upgraded, as many offer a poor image. Possible schemes include serviced offices at Widnes Waterfront; managed workspace at Astmoor; mixed-use scheme at Runcorn Old Town; plus small industrial units in both Runcorn and Widnes.
- (j) The Council needs to continue to work with investors to increase the size, range and quality of the shops in both Widnes and Halton Lea. This includes facilitating new development and working on other issues such as image, environment, marketing, transport, etc. The leisure economy needs to be enhanced in Widnes and the Council should progress with its plans for Victoria Square. The same is true for Runcorn Old Town, it has little future as a major retail centre and its reinvention will rely on leisure, residential and specialist, independent traders which the Council need to encourage and support.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 One of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy stated outcomes is “Encouraging Investment in Land and Property” with the goal of creating employment areas that are fit for purpose in the sense that they both meet business needs and help to produce an attractive and prosperous borough.
- 4.2 To ensure a long-term supply of employment land in Halton the UDP allocates employment land up to 2016. However the monitoring of take-up rates may require future reviews of UDP policy to ensure an adequate supply of employment land is available to meet future demand

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 Inadequate supply of suitable properties and development sites will hinder the objectives outlined in the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The supply of premises to aid job creation in locations that are accessible to our deprived communities is essential. The commercial property study has considered the need for further development of small units and managed workspace to help encourage employment in those groups that are presently suffering from high levels of unemployment.

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

8.1 None

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment and Development

SUBJECT: Public Rights of Way Milestone Statement
Progress Report 2006/07

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the progress made with regards to the works detailed within the Council's Public Rights of Way Milestone Statement 2003 and that it is intended to circulate the report to update the consultees who responded to the Milestone Statement consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the progress made.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Executive Board at its meeting on 8th January 2004 approved Halton's first Milestone Statement.

3.2 The Milestone Statement outlined Halton's position with regards to the three national targets for public rights of way. These are based on public rights of way being, Legally Defined, Properly Maintained and Well Publicised.

3.3 The three national targets were further broken down into component tasks and the Milestone Statement outlined Halton's position with regards to these tasks and identified the works required in order that they may be completed for Halton to achieve these targets.

3.4 The Milestone Statement has been used as a working document, which has provided a structured approach to these works and allowed good progress with the component tasks to be made.

3.5 A copy of the Draft Public Rights of Way Milestone Statement Progress Report 2006/07 is attached for information. It is intended to circulate the document to all interested parties to update them on Halton's progress to date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Not applicable

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

- 5.1.1 As previously reported the cost of carrying out improvements to the public rights of way network will continue to be met from Local Transport Plan funding, and the cost of maintaining the network from existing highway maintenance resources.
- 5.1.2 The cost of processing the necessary legal orders will also continue to be funded from existing revenue allocations.
- 5.1.3 The cost of producing a document for circulation will be met from within existing revenue resources.
- 5.1.4 It should be noted that the proposed reduction in core funding for Groundwork Mersey Valley (GMV) proposed for 2007/08 and the end of all core funding in 2009/10, will have a significant impact on the ability to address issues raised within the Milestone Statement. GMV currently assist with liaison, monitoring and maintenance of the RoW network, as well as securing additional funding to enable further improvements to be undertaken, over and above those facilitated by Halton's budgets. In future a number of these services will have to be procured from existing budgets, which will reduce our ability to maintain progress at current levels.

5.2 Sustainability/Social Inclusion Implications

- 5.2.1 Progressing the programme of tasks within the Milestone Statement to legally define, maintain and publicise the RoW network will ensure the continuing opportunity to encourage walking as a sustainable form of transport, which will be available to those who do not have access to a car.

5.3 Legal Implications

- 5.3.1 The Milestone Statement identified the work that was required to legally define the Public Rights of Way network. The Milestone Statement Progress Report 2006/07 advises on the progress made on these tasks to date, sets out the current position and identifies the outstanding tasks to be addressed.

5.4 Best Value Implications

- 5.4.1 The 'Milestone' approach to managing Public Rights of Way has assisted the authority in improving it's overall performance on BVPI 178.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 Not applicable

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 Not applicable

8.0 PUBLICITY

8.1 It is also proposed to make the original Milestone Statement along with this and any future progress reports available on the Council's website.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Halton Borough Council Public Rights of Way Milestone Statement 2003	Rutland House	J Whelan

HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY MILESTONE STATEMENT PROGRESS REPORT 2006/07



1. INTRODUCTION

The Council's Executive Board approved the Halton Borough Council Public Rights of Way Milestone Statement in 2003. The Milestone Statement sets out the work required to achieve the three national targets specified by the Countryside Commission, (formerly the Countryside Agency and now Natural England), that all public rights of way should be legally defined, properly maintained and publicised.

This review details the progress made towards meeting the targets set. The new duties and powers resulting from the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 have also been integrated into the review, where appropriate.

Following the introduction of the CROW Act 2000, Halton joined together with Sefton MBC, Knowsley MBC, Liverpool City Council, St Helens MBC and Wirral MBC to form the Merseyside Local Access Forum in 2001. Warrington Borough Council teamed up with Cheshire County Council to form the Cheshire and Warrington Local Access Forum, which was also established in 2001. Due to the geographic position of Halton, both of these forums will play an important role in advising on access strategies and developing Halton's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) is not about rights of way in isolation, it is intended to deliver an integrated network of routes in and between town and country. The rights of way network is undoubtedly a major element of access to the countryside and to services, but on its own does not show the full picture. There are many other routes and sites that are used by the general public for informal countryside access and every day journeys that are not legally recorded as definitive public rights of way. With this in mind, the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Halton will consider the whole network of non-motorised routes, public open spaces and sites, (including the potential of 'Open Country'), as well as definitive rights of way and highways. It will also look at the whole spectrum of users and journey purposes, from disabled access needs to routes to open access land. The ROWIP is a strategic document and forms a distinct strand of Halton's Local Transport Plan (LTP). It will assist in achieving some of the transport related targets within the LTP i.e. reducing congestion, safer roads and improved accessibility. It also has the potential to assist with other strategy aims by improving health (through promoting healthy walking and cycling), employment opportunities, the environment (reducing congestion by encouraging walking and cycling), social inclusion, tourism, and education.

Another impact of the CROW Act 2000 was to set a cut off date for the recording of pre 1949 footpaths and bridleways which will be automatically legally stopped up if not recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement of public rights of ways by the year 2026. As a result, the Countryside Agency launched a project called "Discovering Lost Ways" which aims to help surveying authorities to identify and record by 2026 all public rights not currently recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way. Cheshire and Wiltshire were chosen as the lead authorities for the project, which is being undertaken by Land Aspects. Land Aspects will be working through documents in archives such as those held by the Public Record Office. This work will help to build up a system of electronic maps, which will be used to overlay local authorities' existing Definitive Maps and Lists of Streets, to enable gaps to be identified and future claims made. Part of Halton's area was included within the boundaries of Cheshire before 1974 and therefore as the Cheshire Records Office covers the pre-1974 administrative boundaries part of Halton will also be included in this first wave of the project. To enable full use of the whole of the pre-1974 documentation, the Definitive Map, Statements and the List of Streets have been provided to Land Aspects in an electronic

format to provide a base for overlaying the data. The project is expected to provide case files which may result in the need for Definitive Map Modification orders to record currently unrecorded paths or paths recorded at too low a status. The latter scenario will probably be the more likely out come for Halton; either way there may be financial implications, which will need to be addressed as a result of this project.

A glossary of terms is provided at the back of the document, which explains the key terms referred to in the Statement.

1.0 NATIONAL TARGET 1 – “LEGALLY DEFINED”

1.1 Component Task 1.1 – Statement of Priorities Published

This component task is complete.

Current Position:

The Statement was approved by the Executive Board and published on 6th March 2003. The priorities within the statement still apply; however, they will be monitored to assess whether changes to the priorities are required.

1.2 Component task 1.2 – The Authority has considered the need to consolidate the map and take any necessary action.

Section 57(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides for authorities to prepare new maps and statements, updated to show the effects of modifications since the previous map and statement were prepared.

Projected Completion

Following the processing of five legal event modification orders in June, July and August 2006, covering the parishes of Preston Brook, Daresbury, Runcorn, Sutton and Norton, the digitised copy of the definitive map has been updated accordingly to show the changes to the network. It is intended that this updated digitised definitive map will be made available to the public as soon as possible. The target of March 2010 for a consolidated map and statement covering the areas managed by Halton is still appropriate, however, we will endeavour to decrease this timescale.

Indicators for monitoring

- i) Digitised copy of definitive maps completed.
- ii) Definitive Map and Statement prepared by Lancashire C.C Relevant Date 1st January 1953 consolidated and published.
- iii) Definitive Map and Statement prepared by Cheshire C.C Relevant Date 1st June 1953 consolidated and published.
- iv) Draft Map and Statement prepared by Whiston Rural District, Relevant Date 1st January 1953 consolidated and published.
- v) New Definitive Map and Statement for the whole of Halton including those areas inherited from other authorities produced.
- vi) No. of anomalies identified and addressed.

Current Position

- i) Digitisation of the Definitive Map prepared by Lancashire C.C. relevant date 1st January 1953 has been completed.

Digitisation of the Definitive Map prepared by Cheshire C.C. relevant date 1st June 1953 has been completed.

Digitisation of the Draft Definitive Map prepared by Whiston R.D relevant date 1st January 1953 has been completed.

- ii) Commenced.
- iii) Commenced.
- iv) To be commenced.

- v) To be commenced.
- vi) To be commenced.

1.3 Component Task 1.3 – No backlog of Legal Event Orders

To date 62No 'Legal Event Orders' affecting 42No paths have been located. Twenty seven of these orders which affect 20No paths have been included in Halton's omnibus Legal Event Modification Orders which were processed in June, July and August 2006. These Orders covered the parishes of Preston Brook, Daresbury, Runcorn, Sutton and Norton. It is the intention to continue to process as many Legal Event Modification Orders as possible, until the backlog has been addressed.

Projected Completion

It is still intended to complete this task by March 2010.

1.4 Component Task 1.4 – No backlog of Modifications to Definitive Map

It is estimated that there are 5No possible cases of 'Evidential Events', resulting from research carried out by Liverpool City Council, whilst preparing their Definitive Map. These may require the processing of an Evidential Map Modification Order to amend the Definitive Map. No formal applications have yet been received, although one information pack has been requested.

There have also been packs requested regarding three other paths, but again no formal applications have been received.

Projected Completion

The completion of this task is dependent on the receipt of formal applications.

1.5 Component Task 1.5 – No backlog of other cases that may result in a change to Definitive Map

It was estimated that there were 47No paths that required investigation, which might result in a Public Path Order (PPO) or Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO). To date 6No public path orders have been processed leaving 41 paths still to be addressed.

Table 1 – Public Path Orders that have been processed

Footpath No	Issue	Action	Order Type
Widnes No19	Section of path omitted from original order built over by development	Affected section of path Extinguished	HA 1980 sec 116
Runcorn No4	Expressway built over path	Path Extinguished	HA 1980 sec 116
Runcorn No5	Expressway built over path	Path Extinguished	HA 1980 sec 116
Runcorn No7	Expressway built over path	Path Extinguished	HA 1980 sec 116
Halton No14	Astmoor Industrial Estate built over path	Path Extinguished	HA 1980 sec 116
Halton No15	Astmoor Industrial Estate built over part of path	Part of path Extinguished	HA 1980 sec 116

Projected Completion

It is still the intention to complete this task by 2011, although every endeavour will be made to try and reduce this timescale.

1.6 Component Task 1.6 - Rights of Way Improvement Plans

The revised timetable for the production of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan can be seen below.

Table 2 – Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Programme

1	Assessment work to be completed by	March 2007
2	Draft statement of action prepared and consultation with the Merseyside and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Access Forums on the draft statement of action and the assessment report.	April - May 2007
3	Executive Board approval to wider public consultation on draft plan.	June 2007
4	12 week consultation on the draft plan as required by the Act (DEFRA guidance advises 12 week period)	July – September 2007
5	Consideration by officers of comments received on the draft plan and changes to be made as a consequence. Consult with the Merseyside and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Access Forums regarding changes.	October 2007
6	Executive Board approval of final version of plan	October - November 2007
7	Publication of approved Plan	November 2007

Projected Completion

It is expected that this task will be completed in November 2007.

2.0 NATIONAL TARGET 2 – “PROPERLY MAINTAINED”

2.1 Component Task 2.1 – All footpaths, bridleways and byways correctly signposted where they leave a metalled road

It is still the intention to improve the percentage of correctly signed paths to 91%. The total number of signs installed since 2003/04 is 30. In addition, a number of finger signs were re-fixed to existing posts.

Projected Completion

A sign audit to ascertain the percentage of paths signed is proposed to be undertaken in 2007/08. This survey will record those signs that are missing and locations where signs are required. The identified signing works will then be included in the following years works programme. It is recognised that this component task will always be ongoing due to vandalism.

2.2 Component Task 2.2 – All public rights of way clear of obstructions, misleading notices, other hindrances or impediments.

Only one report of an obstruction was recorded during 03/04 and 04/05 and this was resolved successfully.

Projected Completion

The Council will continue to be proactive in resolving these issues as well as responding to reports from the public.

2.3 Component Task 2.3 – Bridges, stiles gates etc are in place where required; are all safe and convenient to use.

Since the Milestone Statement was produced a total of 12 Kissing gates, 1 footbridge, 1 bridle access, a bike trap and 2 handrails have been installed, as part of the routine annual maintenance and improvements programme,

Projected Completion

This task is ongoing as part of the Council’s maintenance responsibilities.

2.4 Component Task 2.4 – Surface of every right of way in proper repair, reasonably safe and suitable for its expected use.

In addition to the annual maintenance and improvement works carried out to the network, advantage has been taken of other funding sources to enable the following works to be undertaken:

Footpath Runcorn No28 – Clearance and improvement works to this path have rendered it useable once again. Every attempt will be made to take advantage of any proposed development in this area to further improve this path e.g. open it up, widen, and light it.

Before





After



Footpath Widnes No77 – This path has been improved as a result of the New Widnes Waterfront regeneration works and associated funding. The improvements consisted of the replacement of the existing damaged flagged surface with a newly constructed tarmac surface, the widening of the footpath to 3m and the erection of street lighting.

Footpaths Runcorn No21 and Sutton No6 – Following an extensive consultation exercise, improvement works to this well used footpath have been undertaken. The improvements included widening to 3m, resurfacing and the conversion of the footpath to a cycleway. The erection of street lighting has been put on hold due to financial restrictions; however, ducting has been installed should this situation improve.

We will continue to explore new avenues of funding to implement the works previously identified within the Milestones Statement e.g. Widnes Footpath No69, Runcorn Footpath No24, Widnes No5 and Widnes No23. We will also continue to monitor the network to identify future requirements.

Projected Completion

It is not possible to indicate when this element will be completed as it is reliant on the availability of funding. However, every opportunity will be taken to improve the rights of way network through partnership working and linking to other initiatives.

2.5 Component Task 2.5 – All rights of way inspected regularly by or on behalf of the authority.

A random sample of approx 33% of the network is inspected annually as part of the Best Value Performance Indicators. This equates to approx 25km of the network 12.5km inspected in May and 12.5km in November. However, it is proposed to inspect the whole network at least bi-annually, in future years.

Projected Completion

Surveys for 05/06 and 06/07 have been completed.

Halton's Performance Indicator figures are shown below:

	ACTUAL 2002/2003	ACTUAL 2003/2004	ACTUAL 2004/2005	ACTUAL 2005/2006	ACTUAL 2006/2007
BVPI 178	85%	95%	95%	96%	94%

2.6 Component Task 2.6 – Authority able to protect and assert public's rights and meet other statutory duties (e.g. to ensure compliance with the Public Rights of Way Act 1990).

Fortunately the Council does not receive many complaints with regards to obstruction of the rights of way network and those that have been reported, have been dealt with successfully. However, it is still the intention of the Council to prepare and adopt an enforcement policy to enable the Council to deal effectively and efficiently with issues of ploughing and cropping.

Projected Completion

Due to the nature of this work, the Council is likely to be called up on, from time to time, to take action to protect the highway.

2.7 Component Task 2.7 – Way marks are provided at necessary locations and are adequate to assist users.

Way marking is carried out as part of the annual maintenance/improvement works programme and other maintenance works. We will continue to monitor the network and include any identified way marking requirements in the annual work programme or individual work projects, as necessary.

2.8 Component Task 2.8 – Other Structures e.g. steps, barriers, handrails, earthworks, drainage etc.

Limited progress has been made on this component task. The existing handrail on footpath Halton No2 has been repaired and a new section erected to continue the existing rail all the way down the concrete steps. Works are due to start on Runcorn No23 to repair the existing handrail and to erect a new section of handrail, which will continue down to the steps on Weston Road. However, there has been no progress on the works identified for footpaths Halton No6, Widnes No70 and Hale No5, as yet.

Projected Completion

It is not possible to indicate when this element will be completed as this is another component task that is reliant on the availability of funding. However, every opportunity will be taken to improve the rights of way network, through partnership working and linking into other initiatives.

3.0 NATIONAL TARGET 3 – WELL PUBLICISED

3.1 The Authority has a programme in place to develop and promote a range of routes, meeting the criteria set out in Paths, Routes and Trails.

The Council is in the process of producing a series of leaflets entitled 'Halton's Villages', which promote walks for varying abilities and use the existing rights of way network and other means of access. To date six leaflets have been produced in the series –

- No1 Walks around Moore,
- No2 Walks around Preston Brook,
- No3 Walks around Daresbury,
- No4 Walks around Hale,
- No5 Walks around Farnworth and
- No6 Walks around West Bank.

It is the intention to produce at least one of these leaflets every year until access on both sides of the river has been adequately promoted.

Projected Completion

This is an ongoing task and the Council will endeavour to improve the promotion of access through as many media as possible, as funding opportunities become available.

4.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Definitive Map

Is the Legal register of public rights of way. The showing of a path on the definitive map was and is conclusive evidence that it was a public right of way at the date the map was prepared (relevant date). However, although the map provides conclusive evidence of the existence of rights, the reverse is not true. If a footpath is shown on the definitive map, it is conclusive evidence that the lower rights exist, however, this does not preclude that higher rights may exist, or that a way not shown on the map could be a public right of way. The higher rights or status of the claimed right of way would have to be proved.

Statement

A written gazetteer and description of paths shown on the definitive map.

The Definitive Map and Statement are conclusive evidence in law of the particulars they contain.

The Relevant Date

This is the date decided upon by the surveying authority, after which it would not accept any further evidence to add to, or amend ways shown in the draft map. The relevant date had to be no more than 6 months before the publication of the press notices inviting public inspection of the draft map. This relevant date still holds for the current definitive map as regards the ways originally shown thereon.

The Map is therefore known to be correct as of that date. If a map has been amended by modification orders it will thus be subject to more than one 'relevant date'.

Public Right of Way (PRoW)

A way over which the public, have the right to pass and re pass. A right to pass from A – B by a defined route.

Public Footpath

Is a highway over which the public, have the right of way on foot only.

Public Bridleway

Is a highway over which the right of way is on foot, on horseback or leading a horse, possibly with a right to drive animals. Section 30 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1968 provides a right to ride a bicycle on bridleways but cyclists must give way to pedestrians or persons on horseback.

Public Path Orders (PPO)

This is the legal process, which alters or amends the rights of the public in relation to a specific public right of way. They make physical changes on the ground and do not change the Definitive Map and Statement.

They may be grouped into 3 categories:

- Diversions

- Creations
- Extinguishments

Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO)

This is the legal process by which the definitive map and statement are altered or amended following an 'event'. This could be a 'legal event' eg a PPO to divert a path or an 'evidential event' eg the discovery of evidence that a path is a right of way.

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Traffic Management Act & Utilities

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) and some of the responsibilities placed on the Authority.
- 1.2 To outline the powers the Authority currently have to direct the work of “undertakers” (which includes the public utilities such as electricity, gas, telecommunications and water companies, or their contractors) under the News Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) and Highways Act 1980.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) the report be noted; and**
- (2) a representative from the undertakers be invited to attend a future meeting, when appropriate.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The work that can be carried out on the highway by utilities is governed by the following legislation:
 - Highways Act 1980
 - News Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)
 - Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA)
- 3.2 On 22 July 2004 the Traffic Management Act received Royal Assent and is being implemented over the next few years. The Government has said it would like it to be implemented as quickly as possible. The aims of the Act are to tackle congestion and reduce disruption by:
 - Pro-active management of national and local roads and traffic
 - Better co-ordination and management of works and other activities on the road network
 - More effective powers and sanctions over Utilities street works
 - Wider civil enforcement powers for traffic contraventions
 - More strategic approach in London

- 3.3 There are seven parts to the TMA as follows:
- PART 1 - Highways Agency Traffic Officers
 - PART 2 - Network Management Duty
 - PART 3 - Permit Schemes
 - PART 4 - Street & Highways Works
 - PART 5 - Highways & Roads (London)
 - PART 6 - Civil Enforcement Powers
 - PART 7 – Miscellaneous
- 3.4 Initially the impact was on Trunk Roads (mainly motorways) with the implementation of Part 1 of the Act, with the aim to transfer duties from the Police to Traffic Officers. From 4 October 2004 Traffic Officers started work on the Midlands Motorways, with all motorways now covered
- 3.5 The implementation of Part 2 has an impact on Local Authorities, by placing new duties on them to reduce causes of congestion and it applies to all traffic including pedestrians. A Traffic Manager has been appointed in each local authority, who will be the focal point within the authority, championing the need to consider the duty in all areas of work. The person should work closely with other authorities (e.g. neighbouring authorities, the National and Regional Traffic Control Centres (NTCC and RTCC)) and partners such as the Police, utilities, bus operators, etc. They will also need to demonstrate that the person is independent of the Authority's Highway works. The existing traffic signal equipment will need to be monitored and the equipment and timings reviewed as necessary. The regulations on the Intervention Criteria have been published recently and will be implemented from 12 March 2007.
- 3.6 The Authority needs to manage the network as far as reasonably practicable to secure expeditious movement of traffic and determine policies for different classes of roads and monitor effectiveness. It must apply equal conditions to their own works and utilities.
- 3.7 Part 3 will introduce a permit scheme and utilities will apply and conditions can be attached, which could include directions and restrictions. The authority can charge fees to cover costs (but not make a profit). The regulations have been the subject of consultation and should be published later this year with implementation in 2008.
- 3.8 Part 4 will place more requirements on everyone, from restrictions on days and on routes and an embargo after major works (except for emergency repairs). There will be a requirement for whole lanes to be resurfaced rather than just the excavation. The Authority will have a duty to record the location of apparatus. Lane rental will be an option and include skips, scaffolds, etc. The regulations are the subject of consultation and should be published later this year with implementation in 2008.

- 3.9 Part 6 will bring enforcement duties to the Authority for such items as parking, waiting, bus lanes and possibly some moving traffic offences such as box junctions and banned turns using camera evidence. The regulations will be the subject of consultation shortly and should be published later this year with implementation in 2008.
- 3.10 Part 7 covers the inspection of Blue badges and gives direction on surplus income. The regulations will be the subject of consultation shortly.
- 3.11 The works carried out by the undertakers is subject to the provisions of the NRSWA, under which a utility is required to inform the relevant street authority (in this case Halton BC) of any street works which it is carrying out on their roads. In turn, the street authority are obliged to keep a register of works in their area, including their own highway works.
- 3.12 The undertakers have a statutory right and duty to carry out emergency, urgent, provision and restoration of customer service or routine works. Planned major works or maintenance should be carried out following discussions and co-ordination with other undertakers/street authority, however they have a statutory right to carry out these works. The Council cannot prevent them carrying out works, but can direct when the works are carried out.
- 3.13 Once the works are complete, the undertaker must carry out a permanent reinstatement within 6 months, unless agreed otherwise with the street authority and guarantee it for two/three years, depending on the depth of excavation. The standard of the reinstatement is set by national criteria.
- 3.14 Under the NRSWA there is an option (Section 74) to charge for prolonged occupation of the highway, which has not been agreed. This option has not been implemented due to a lack of resources and is likely to be changed following the TMA consultation on permits, when the new legislation is published then the situation will be reviewed.
- 3.15 United Utilities have been approached to send a representative to the meeting, but due to internal re-organisations they are unable to send anyone. A further invitation will be sent to them if it is felt necessary for them to attend.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At the present time, the implementation of the Act should be cost neutral, but this may change in the future as more duties pass to the Authority.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

5.1.1 Additional staff could be required to implement future regulations.

5.2 Social Inclusion Implications

5.2.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

5.3 Sustainability Checklist

5.3.1 None

5.4 Best Value

5.4.1 None.

5.5 Legal Implications

5.5.1 The Council has a duty to implement the Acts and the government could intervene if we are viewed not to be implementing the Traffic Management Act.

5.6 Crime and Disorder Issues

5.6.1 None

5.7 Human Rights Act Implications

5.6.1 None

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

6.1	<i>Document</i>	<i>Available for inspection</i>	<i>Contact</i>
	None	Highways & Transportation Department Rutland House Halton Lea	Stephen Rimmer Ext. 3182

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 21 March 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Alley Gates and Gating Orders

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report is presented to both Safer Halton and Urban Renewal PPB to advise of new powers now available to the Council to make Gating Orders and proposes a policy to be adopted that would respond to all future requests for alley gates.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Executive Board be asked to adopt a policy requiring all future proposed alley gates to be supported by a Gating Order made under the provisions of section 129A of the Highways Act 1980.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Section 2 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 introduced a new power that allows councils to make, vary or revoke gating orders in respect of highways within their area. This has been effected by inserting new sections 129A to 129G in the Highways Act 1980 that enable councils to restrict public access to any public highway by gating (at certain times of the day if applicable), without removing its underlying highway status. Local authorities are now able to make "gating" orders on grounds of anti-social behaviour as well as crime.

3.2 Powers to close alleyways were first introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act 2000); this enables alleyways, which are also rights of way, to be closed and gated for crime prevention reasons. But they do not enable alleyways to be gated expressly to prevent anti-social behaviour and they exclude many alleyways that are public highways but not recorded as rights of way. Also, under these provisions the removal of rights of passage is irrevocable.

3.3 The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 enables a council to gate a highway in a similar manner to the CROW Act 2000 power but it:

- a) Does not first require an area to be designated as a crime area by the Secretary of State,
- b) Enables gating to take place if the highway suffers from crime and/or anti-social behaviour,
- c) Enables the council to determine a gating order, if it is considered in the best interests of the local community to do so.

- 3.4 Section 129A of the Highways Act 1980 sets out these general principles, asserting that a council must be satisfied, before making an order, that the area surrounding the relevant highway suffers from crime or anti-social behaviour and would act as a useful crime/anti-social behaviour reduction measure.
- 3.5 Local authorities should also be satisfied that residents and members of the public who use the relevant highway would not be inappropriately inconvenienced by its gating, and should be satisfied that alternative access routes exist.
- 3.6 The health and sustainability implications of the order should also be considered as gating orders could potentially encourage the use of cars if the alternatives are too long or lack pedestrianised sections. This should be balanced against the health impacts facing pedestrians from the ongoing crime or ASB in the alleyway.
- 3.7 Before proposing an order, local authorities should give consideration as to whether there are alternative interventions that may be more appropriate (and cost effective) for tackling the specific problems they are facing without having to gate the highway.
- 3.8 Gating orders can have implications for various groups of people, such as walkers who may oppose the termination of certain rights of way. For this reason, it is essential that gating orders are satisfactorily publicised before they are made. Local authorities must publicise a notice to this effect in a local paper and on their website.
- 3.9 The notice needs to:
- include a draft of the proposed order;
 - identify alternative routes that members of the public may take; and
 - invite representations (in writing) as to whether or not an order should be made, within a period of notice that is at least 28 days.
- A similar notice, including all the information stated above, should also be placed on or adjacent to the relevant highway at both ends, in order that people who want to use the highway can see that it is to be gated.
- 3.10 A number of individuals and groups will have legitimate purpose or business to pass through gates. These can include, but is not limited to, property owners and occupants, statutory undertakers, such as telecommunication companies and utility companies, the emergency services and council officers on business. The consequent distribution of keys will require careful consideration in each case. Too wide a distribution could lead to the gating order becoming ineffective and unenforceable.
- 3.11 In the past the Council has implemented a number of alley gating schemes. These have generally been confined to passages that provide access to the rear of terraced properties in the more traditionally laid out streets of the Borough. The Council has taken a pragmatic approach to implementing such schemes as until now the legislation available has been cumbersome and inappropriate. This

approach has worked well but difficulties can arise when there is evidence of anti-social behaviour on pedestrian routes that are well used and provide access to wider areas. A recent example has been the footpaths that connect Addison Square in Widnes with Leigh Road and Highfield Road.

- 3.12 It is proposed that in future all gating proposals should be supported by a Gating Order made under section 129A of the Highways Act. A more formal approach will allow the proper consideration of objections and representations. Such objections would be considered by the Executive Board Sub-Committee as is currently the case with Traffic Regulation Orders. In certain circumstances a public inquiry, conducted by the Council, may be required. Under the new legislation an objection from certain bodies will automatically cause a public inquiry to be held, if the relevant highway passes through their area. These authorities include:
- the chief officer of a police force;
 - a fire and rescue authority;
 - any council (including parish councils); and
 - an NHS trust, NHS foundation trust or NHS primary care trust.
- 3.12 It is proposed that a procedure similar to that followed for Traffic Regulation Orders be followed. Following the receipt of a request for gating, there would be consideration given to the issues discussed in 3.1 to 3.10 above. This consideration would involve officers from Highways and Transportation, Planning, Community Safety and Legal. If a Gating Order would appear to meet the requirements of the legislation, there would be consultation with ward Councillors and the statutory bodies listed in 3.11 above.
- 3.13 If there is general support for the proposal a draft order would be drawn up and advertised by the Operational Director Highways, Transportation and Logistics under delegated Highway Authority powers. Any unresolved objections would be referred to the Executive Board Sub Committee unless a public inquiry becomes necessary. Planning consents would continue to be sought in the normal way.
- 3.14 A similar process would be followed should there at a later date be a request to revoke or amend the gating order.
- 3.15 A draft procedure is shown as an appendix to the report and this is being followed on a trial basis for the gating of the three footpaths that access Addison Square in Widnes.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The administrative cost associated with promoting Gating Orders should be met by the promoting body e.g. an Area Forum. The gates would be maintained as now by Property Services and Highways would maintain the highway from existing budgets. There will be on-going resource implications as the Home office guidance suggests that gating orders should be reviewed every 12 months; that notices describing the orders should be displayed for as long as the gates are in place; that the Highway Authority should keep a register of gating

orders and updated maps should be issued to statutory authorities/emergency services etc.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council has a number of conflicting policies and duties in relation to the issue of gating orders:

- A duty to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in the discharge of all Council functions - contained in section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- A duty as the Highway Authority to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which they are the highway authority;
- keep the highway free of obstruction for the safe passage of the general public;
- Policies and strategies adopted through the Local Transport Plan (and UDP): promote accessibility to bus services; maintain and promote Rights of Way; seek to safely reduce the number of people who travel to school by car; increase foot, cycle and public transport journeys; seek to reduce road casualties, develop and promote pedestrian routes that connect to facilities such as education and recreation.

5.2 It is clear that alley gating has been successful in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. However there will always be a balance to be struck when a proposed gating order affects a right of access for the general public rather than residents' rear access to a limited number of properties.

5.3 Each case will need to be considered on its own merits to avoid setting precedents that raise expectations for the gating of a large number of well-used paths across the Borough. This would significantly reduce accessibility on foot, whilst possibly just redistributing anti social behaviour.

5.4 Home office guidance states that the intention of the gating order is to restrict the highway temporarily whilst the crime or ASB is persistent. Once it is reduced the restrictions can be varied or revoked. It is therefore clear that under no circumstances should the existence of a gating order be used as a justification for a permanent closure of the highway on the grounds that it is "no longer necessary". To permanently close the highway on the grounds of crime, a Special Extinguishment Order (under the CROW Act powers) would be required.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There is a risk that if paths are gated the anti social behaviour may be redistributed elsewhere. However there is potentially a reduced risk for local residents resulting from anti social behaviour taking place on paths and alleyways. If there is not a safe and convenient alternative walking route there is a risk of an increase in car journeys, congestion and potentially road traffic casualties.

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

7.1	<i>Document</i>	<i>Available for inspection</i>	<i>Contact</i>
	Guidance Relating to the Making of Gating Orders	www.respect.gov.uk	Jonathan Farmer Ext 3018

DRAFT PROCEDURE FOR MAKING A GATING ORDER UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 (GATING ORDERS) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2006 (SI2006/537)

1. Before making a gating order, the Council must be satisfied that:
 - a) premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by crime or anti-social behaviour;
 - b) the existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of criminal offences or anti-social behaviour;
 - c) it is in all the circumstances expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime or anti-social behaviour;
 - d) reasonable alternative routes are available.
2. If the above pre-conditions are met, approval in writing is sought from Operational Director to prepare and advertise order.
3. Initial informal consultation is undertaken with Utilities, Police, Fire, NHS, Parish Council etc and occupiers adjoining or adjacent to highway.
4. Planning application is made (can run concurrent with Gating Order).
5. Preparation of plan, location, description, alternative routes and statement of meeting criteria. Determine dates and times of restriction, details of persons excluded, check with legal for added clause and any others as appropriate given an assessment of their needs. Name of person responsible for maintaining gates.
6. Forwarded to legal to prepare order/notice and carry out formal consultations (including those who requested to be consulted on all proposed orders).
8. Publicised for 28 days, objections must be received in this period.
9. Objections are referred to Exec Board Sub who may decide to hold a public inquiry – inquiry must be held if unresolved objections remains from Police, Fire, NHS or Parish Council.
10. The Public Inquiry can be held no earlier than 42 days after the notice of the proposals are first published. The Public Inquiry must be publicised and the process would be expected to be lengthy.
11. Once the Order is made a notice of the Order is maintained indefinitely on site and is available for inspection at Council Offices explaining why gate is there.
11. A register and map of gating orders is kept and orders are reviewed on an annual basis.
12. Orders may be varied or revoked as necessary using the same procedure.

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 21 March 2007
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment
SUBJECT: Autumn Leaf Sweeping Report 2006
WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members about the way in which the Autumn Leaf Sweeping was carried out on adopted footpaths and other amenity areas during the leaf fall period of 2006. To provide data to show how a co-ordinated approach with some additional resources from within the Landscape Services Division brought about a more effective clear up of leaves and led to a drop in calls from members of the public.
- 1.2 The report, attached as Appendix 1, makes some recommendations for 2007 based upon what was learnt in 2006, which Members may wish to endorse.
- 1.3 The report does not cover the leaf sweeping activities along the public Highway. This activity was carried out in close partnership with Landscape Services by the Waste Management Division.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted and the recommendations be endorsed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 See report attached as Appendix 1.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy implications

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no other implications

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 Reverting to the previous ad hoc approach to leaf clearing on footpaths and amenity spaces would result in a less effective service.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no equality and diversity issues.

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

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

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1 Introduction

This report evaluates the planning and scheduling of the winter leaf sweeping work, including the measurement of elements of efficiency and performance, in line with defined allocation of resources to meet those planned objectives. Findings of this report are to inform proposals and recommendations to bring about improvements to future service delivery.

1.1 Background

Following the realignment of the former Street Cleansing and Landscape Services and resulting creation of Streetscene in September 2005 the Streetscene Service inherited responsibility for the cleansing of winter leaf-fall on adopted footpaths throughout the borough. The resource commitment, initially provided by Waste Management, consisted of one mechanical brush on a contract-hire basis for a period of approximately 12 weeks.

Clearance of leaf-fall in 2005 consisted of a combination of reactive (complaint led) works and known “problem routes”. Completion of the 2005 works highlighted inefficiencies and the inability to provide meaningful statements to the public (Callers). The need for development was recognised and the specific recording of Calls in relation to leaf-fall commenced in December 2005.

As a result a schedule of sites was derived from the 2005 Calls data record and in consultation with all Landscape-Streetscene staff to produce a list of 190 streets (sites). (There is currently no capability to adequately record the length of routes covered.)

2 Purpose

This report provides a review of the winter leaf sweeping operation carried out by the Landscape-Streetscene Service, in the period 23 October 2006 - 22 December 2006.

All five headings of the report must be completed to contribute to the development of the winter leaf sweeping to commence in 2007.

The following issues are required elements for inclusion within this report:

1. presentation of completed data sets – including charts and tabular listings for:
 - machine productivity in relation to schedules. Presentation of data should distinguish between non-productive elements;
 - calls recorded in relation to leaf-fall (show pertinent input routes where possible);
 - distinction must be made between operational performance (in-line with the scheduled works) and Calls, unless a direct correlation can be evidenced;
2. identification and interpretation of Calls in relation to scheduled sites during the defined periods;
3. review of routes for: resources, frequencies applied, access;
4. proposals for improvements;
5. summary review and re-presentation of data and charts from Interim Report (Nov. 2006);

The Streetscene Leaf Sweeping Schedule is related to adopted highway footpaths; Streetscene has added ancillary surfaced areas, but does not include the main carriageways of the highway. This Report does not include any assessment or data in relation to the cleansing of the carriageways.

3 Findings

All data used in this report is derived from Mayrise (Grounds) and the Streetscene Leaf Sweeping Work Schedule 2006. Mayrise is used to record all Calls related to the service. The Leaf Sweeping Work Schedule provides the statement of planned operations and is updated to show planned works against actual works, using daily reports from the operatives in the sweepers.

3.1 Scheduled leaf sweeping Leaf Round - data review

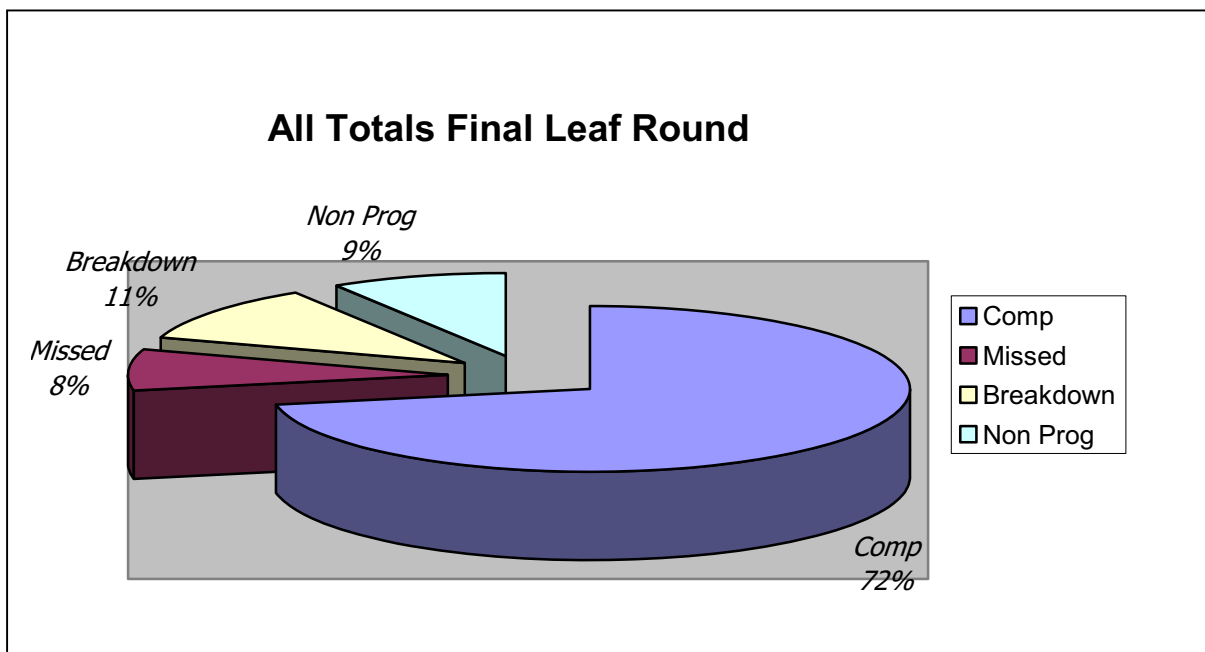


Figure 1 Chart showing total productivity over the entire scheduled period

This chart shows the work achieved as a combined total for Widnes and Runcorn areas.

The non-programmed work element represents additional sites completed during normal works time. In this case the total adjusted percentage of completed works is 81%.

3.1.1 Non-productive elements

The combined proportion of missed sites and breakdowns form 19% of the total figure, and is broken down further in Figure 2 to highlight the reasons.

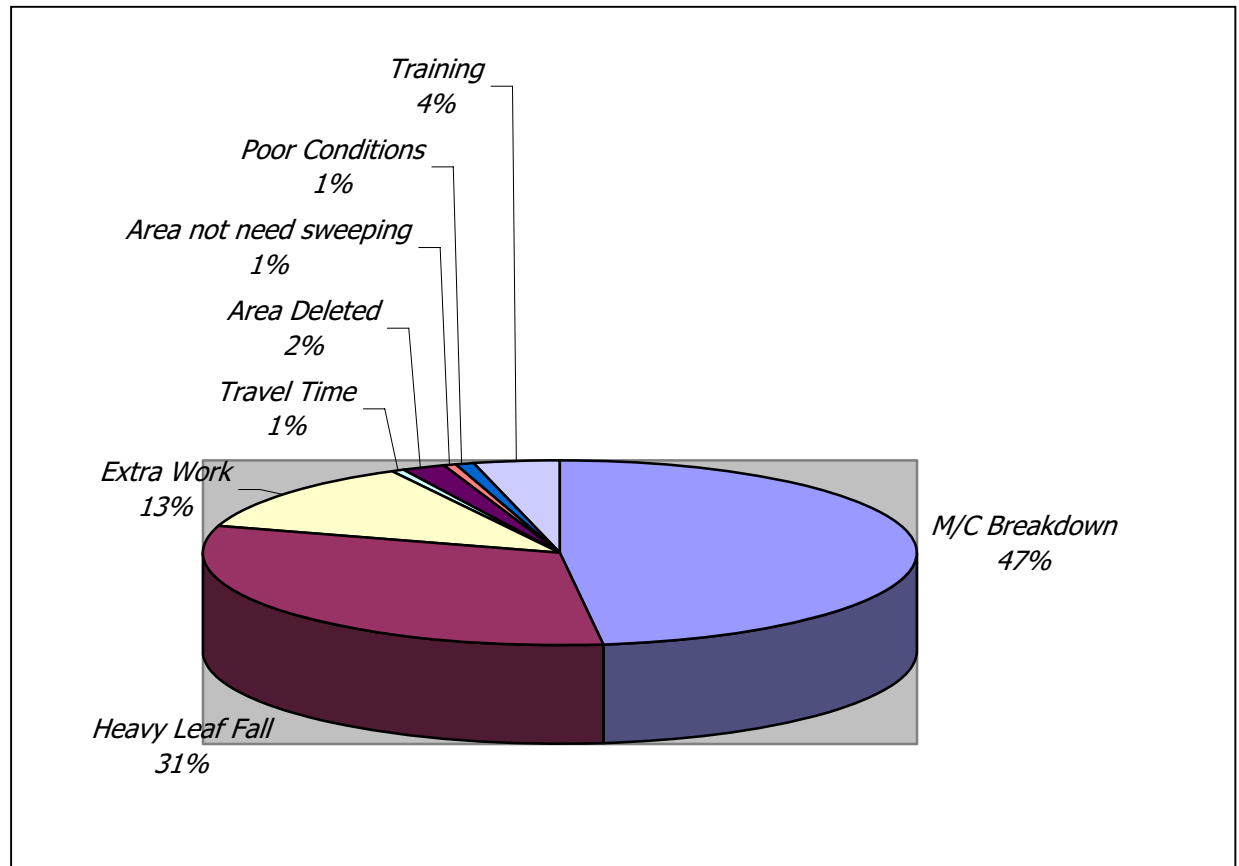


Figure 2 Chart breakdown of non-productive elements

Figure 2 (above) shows breakdowns accounted for just under half the lost time, and heavy leaf fall for one third of the time. Extra work (13%) was due to sites that had been missed on their scheduled day but were completed within the following day after and may, therefore, be included in the final completed total. This represents an extra 2% of the completed making a total of 83%.

Areas that could not be completed early in the round due to “heavy leaf fall” were completed at a later date but within the scheduled periods. Data shows that the significant elements responsible for this were machine breakdowns and training time (to drive the mechanical sweepers) ultimately delaying the start of certain routes.

The Widnes areas particularly suffered due to sweeper breakdowns - effectively delaying starting the round by 2 weeks. This led to the heavy build up of leaves on the Widnes sites that the machine struggled to deal with.

Table 1 shows the revised percentage of productivity for both Widnes and Runcorn completed during the entire period of the 2006 Leaf Sweeping Work Schedule.

Table 1 Table of Final Total

Completed	Missed	Breakdown
83%	6%	11%

This represents an overall improvement of 10% on the Interim Report, and the amount of missed totals has improved by 4%. (Appendix 2.)

3.2 Calls Relating To Leaf-Fall

Figure 3 contains data drawn from the Landscape Mayrise Database and includes all Calls taken by Halton Direct Link.

Data on winter leaf-fall was not recorded before December 2005 and so comparison is only made for that month. The following chart shows the comparison between the Mayrise Leaf Sweeping Calls taken during December of 2005 and 2006.

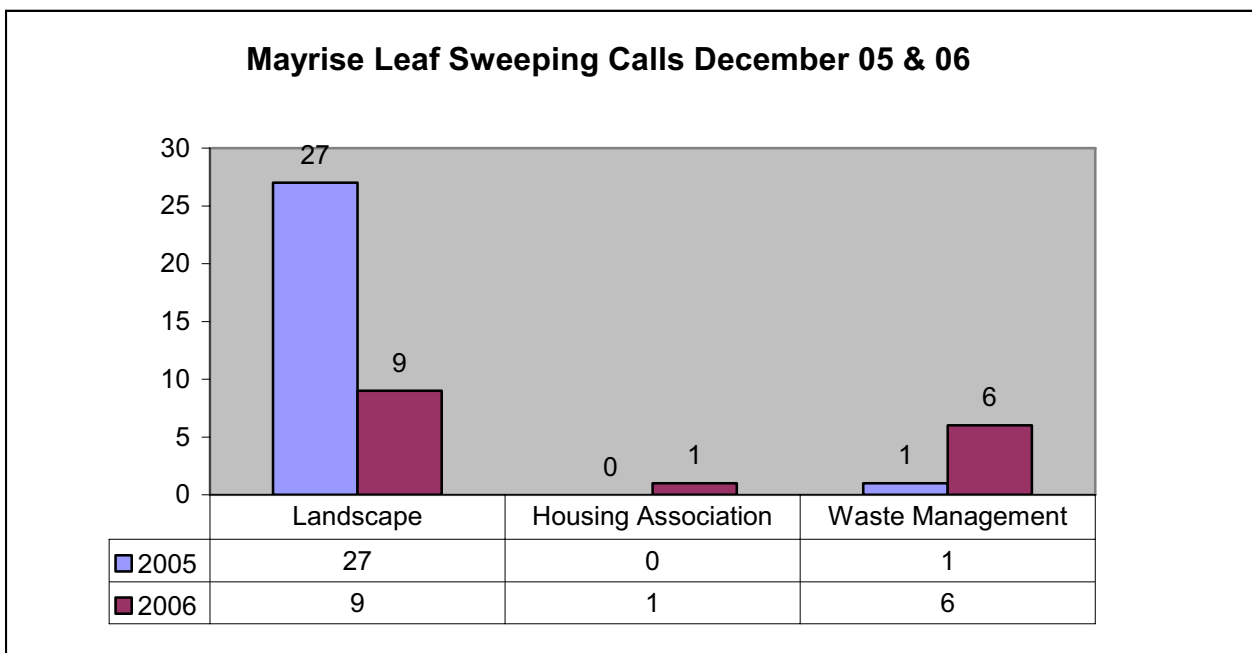


Figure 3 Calls for Dec 2005 - 2006

Whilst the total number of Calls to the Service fell by 42%, those calls taken in relation to the Landscape Section works alone were reduced by 66% compared with 2005. Over half of those calls were related to sites not included on the current Landscape Leaf Sweeping Schedule.

Where possible, Calls were compared to the planned Schedule but sweeping machines were not directed away from their planned routes. Calls represent an addition to the scheduled work. Table 2 shows how Calls were accommodated.

Table 2 Use of Resources

Resources directed to Calls	December 2005 Leaf Sweeping Calls	December 2006 Leaf Sweeping Calls
L-S Grounds Teams	15	5
L-S Scarab sweepers	4	2
L-S Shop Front Teams	2	0
L-S Beat Operators	6	2
Referred to Housing Association	0	1
Referred to Waste Management	1	6
Total No of Calls	28	16

Due to shortcomings in the capabilities of recording systems it not yet possible to adequately show any reliable relationship between the Calls and the scheduled routes.

3.3 Review of Scheduled Routes

During the Leaf Sweeping Round a number of additional sites for sweeping were identified through Mayrise Calls, ad-hoc site reports from managers and operators, and e-mails from local councillors in compiling an additional list of sites for inclusion on the 2007 schedule. A total of 44 additional streets/sites have been proposed, including affected routes within Halton Housing Trust (HHT) areas. (Appendix 1.)

Initial plans for the 2006 schedule included the use of multiple frequencies to manipulate "priority routes" and relative amounts of leaf-fall. This proposal was not carried through for logistical reasons.

3.4 Proposals for improvements

As seen in 3.2.1.1 Figure 4, non-productive elements of the final leaf round accounted for 19% of the total figure. This was an improvement of 9% on the November interim figures.

Breakdowns.

Breakdowns accounted for 47% of the non-productive total and were the highest contributor to lost time. More responsive approach to repair and reliability could improve productivity significantly. This is exacerbated, as drivers have no mobile phone or communication device to report breakdowns etc. Appropriate maintenance training for all drivers may assist in helping to prevent breakdowns.

Heavy Leaf Fall.

Heavy Leaf Fall accounted for a third of the lost time. The late start of the schedule in Widnes was due to machine breakdown and led to a heavy build up of leaves on these sites. However, by the end of the round operations had been recovered and additional sites completed. If breakdowns were responded to more quickly, the round would have started on schedule.

There were a number of sites noted that needed sweeping more frequently than the 12-day schedule. The hire of an additional Sweeper would cope with the additional frequency anticipated and would allow Mayrise Calls to be addressed without tasking neighbourhood teams. Increasing the frequency of sweep on high profile and problem areas and decreasing the frequency of other sites may address the issue within existing resources.

Training.

Time lost due to driver training was 4% of the final total. This could be avoided by training the operators before the round starts using existing Mechanical Sweepers from Waste Management.

Driver Training should not represent the same problem in 2007 as we have an existing pool of trained operators to use these machines, unless the number of machines is increased or a different model of machine used.

Extra work.

Non-programmed work (overtime) proved effective in dealing with work missed through breakdowns and made best use of resources.

Travel Time.

Travel time was highlighted as a problem when Mechanical Sweepers working in Runcorn had to fuel-up at the Lowerhouse Lane Depot in Widnes. As a result of heavy bridge traffic in the morning approximately 1 – 1-½ hours was lost travelling for fuel. Fuelling at the garage in Heath Road, Runcorn would avoid this (and by fuelling around lunchtime when the garage is less busy to avoid conflict with other domestic users of the garage).

A total of 75 journeys were made to the recycling centre to tip waste.

Miscellaneous.

Less than 1% of the total was lost for various reasons such as the Mechanical Sweepers getting stuck on wet paving. In practice odd mishaps will occur during any operation and as such are negligible. Unless they become more frequent they will not warrant further investigation.

4 Conclusions

A net reduction in leaf-fall related Calls has been achieved. Without historical data to contradict the apparent situation it is reasonable to accept that this is due to proactive scheduling and management based on planned routes.

The use of a scheduled approach to this operation has allowed more effective allocation and management of resources to the issue of winter leaf-fall. Routine recording and reporting has identified opportunities for improvement in the delivery and perception of the service, and contributed to the provision of information in response to Calls from the public and Council Officers (e.g. Highway Inspectors).

4.1 Resource Implications

All planned sweeping was completed within existing budgets. However, as no reliable historical data is available on this service, satisfactory comparisons (other than with the previous year) cannot be made.

Throughout November and December 2006, the two mechanical sweepers, tipped more than 290 tonnes of leaf waste at the Haddocks Wood Recycling Centre, Runcorn.

4.1.1 People

Drivers were seconded from within the existing Streetscene workforce. Due to machine access restrictions, and additional men were used in certain areas e.g. where paths could only be cleaned by hand (because of obstacles and/or where the mechanical sweepers were too heavy for the paved pathways). Beat operatives were used to address this where works coincided with their allocated routes/areas.

Overtime was used on some routes in order to complete a route within the day. This occurred almost exclusively when the machine was unable to complete due to heavy leaf fall or breakdown (a maximum of 2 hours). This avoided the need to revisit sites, making more effective use of staff and vehicle time.

4.1.2 Equipment

Two “Scarab Minor” Sweeping Machines were hired for an eight-week period and swept on a 12-day schedule. These required daily maintenance by the driver and a change of brushes approximately every two weeks.

4.1.3 Financial

Hire and operating costs for sweeping machines falls within the scope of existing budgets. Scheduling has clear implications for efficiency in the allocation and availability of resources and in reducing transit times. However, additional financial implications over and above those anticipated include:

- Repairs of breakdowns (spare parts etc.);
- Lost productivity due to breakdowns;
- One Agency employee - hired for 2 days to cover driver absence (the associated costs are negligible);
- 4 hours of overtime was incurred on particular routes. The neighbourhood teams completed 2 Saturdays, addressing additional areas highlighted during the schedule.

4.2 Legal Implications

Drivers need a valid driving licence and the hired vehicles may need separate or additional insurance cover.

The potential liabilities may be significant if winter leaf sweeping is not effective. However, no correspondence has been received from Insurance Services in relation to this type of claim.

5 Recommendations

1. Publish the 2007 leaf-sweeping schedule to Halton Direct Link;
2. Investigate effectiveness of response mechanisms to leaf-sweeping related Calls;
3. Examine the opportunities for operation of the mechanical sweepers at weekends;
4. Re-introduce multiple schedules, using varied frequencies, for priority and heavily affected routes/sites;
5. Introduce validated driver & maintenance training, before October 2007, to develop the pool of qualified staff;
6. Introduce vehicle contract hire clause to address breakdowns with mechanical sweepers;
7. Prepare a Business Case (IT) to examine viability and benefits of incorporating Route Planning facilities;
8. Determine extent of insurance cover provided under hire agreement for mechanical sweepers and lodge details with Insurance Services;
9. Investigate the use of tipping on-route;
10. Investigate optimum vehicle operating weights to reduce the number journeys to tip.

5.1 Risk Analysis

The following statements are made directly in relation to the above Recommendations.

1. Until a satisfactory method of correlating Calls with the scheduled works is developed (using accurate date parameters) then the effectiveness of the sweeping operations will remain predominantly subjective. Use of a published schedule would allow more effective recording in relation to complete and/or due (programmed) works.
2. Use of Neighbourhood Teams and beat-based operatives to respond to Calls represents more efficient use of resources, allowing the scheduled works to continue proactively. This needs to be actively monitored to ensure that competing demand does not impact negatively on landscape team plans.

3. Without flexible working arrangements, weekend working will have a significant impact on salaries/overtime. As the relative size and maturity of trees, and, therefore, the level of leaf fall, is difficult to assess in context, the increased sweeping frequencies should serve to reduce build-up on certain routes. This may not necessarily result in increased amounts of tipping.
4. Current practice of using the mechanical sweepers during weekdays only means that, over 12 weeks, machines are used for approximately 70% of the hire period. (No servicing takes place at weekends.) As leaf-fall occurs within a finite period, weekend working may represent the most effective means of increasing coverage in that period. Increased schedules will reduce the problems encountered with heavy leaf fall in 2006 by more frequent intervention. The 2006 schedule is considered to be at an optimum frequency, and any reduction would be likely to have adverse effects. Without additional mechanical sweepers (and drivers) or introducing weekend working then some existing routes would need to be removed. This would require a revision of all routes based on a priority - as yet undefined - and effectively represent a reduction in service delivery.
5. Validated driver training has not been researched and may have significant cost implications.
6. Hire contracts are procured through the councils Fleet Maintenance service. The most effective opportunities to reduce the "downtime" resulting from breakdowns must be put to the Fleet Maintenance service. Any potential increase in hire charges must be weighed against effects on service delivery.
7. Use of PDA devices and proprietary software may bring a number of benefits - primarily through more efficient route planning. The incorporation of GPS facility would allow real-time recording of activity and produce an accurate measure of the sites swept. Landscape Services has a successful track record and experience in using the type of device. The existing Vehicle Management System (Fleetmatics) would meet the real-time recording of activity element of this recommendation but not the route planning. Such devices would be applicable to other Streetscene operations and any cost implications could, therefore, be spread across the service.

8. Should current contract insurance cover be inadequate then HBC Insurance Services should be approached to identify opportunities to utilise corporate insurance cover in the first instance.
9. The ability to empty the mechanical brushes on-route formed part of the original proposal and would save a significant amount of non-productive travelling time currently incurred. This proposal was unable to be implemented in 2006 due to difficulties in trailer design. Any bespoke purchase would need to be carefully considered as to its "out of season" role.
10. A wide variation weights is noted from tipping records which may in part be justified by convenience in relation to the tipping site. From averaging the tipping weights it is clear that the number of visits may be able to be reduced by a significant amount. Potential risks may be present in relation to load bearing of surfaces, e.g. pedestrian paving.

6 Appendix

Additional Sites

Review summary of Interim Report – Nov. 2006

Appendix 1 Additional Sites

These areas were identified through a review of Calls and by consultation with Neighbourhood Spaces Managers, Councillors and members of the public. Sites are grouped by neighbourhood zones and HHT areas in Widnes and Runcorn.

Widnes West

Edinburgh Road
Clap Gate Crescent
Briarfield Avenue

Bridge View Close
White Street
Wrights Crescent

Widnes Central

King Georges Rec. MUGA & surrounding paths.
Victoria Park – Skate Park

Runcorn Central

Roehampton MUGA
Spennymoor
Halton Lodge – paths by shops
Halton Brook – No22 Penfolds
Barnfield Avenue
Leaside – pathway
Southampton – carpark
Windmill Hill – shops
Plymouth Close – carpark No's 15-25
Halton sports – pathway
Shepherds Row No 101
Norgrove Close – pathway

Widnes East

Elworth Avenue

Widnes HHT

Brentfield
Arley Drive
Afton
West Bank areas –
Irwell Street
Parsonage Road – around community centre
Pathways (2) to bridge including subway and bus stops
St Mary's Road – along promenade
Beaumont Street
Hurst Street
James Close
Davies Close
Alice Court
Church Street – new estate off

Runcorn East

Wigg Island – entrance
Haddocks Wood – drive

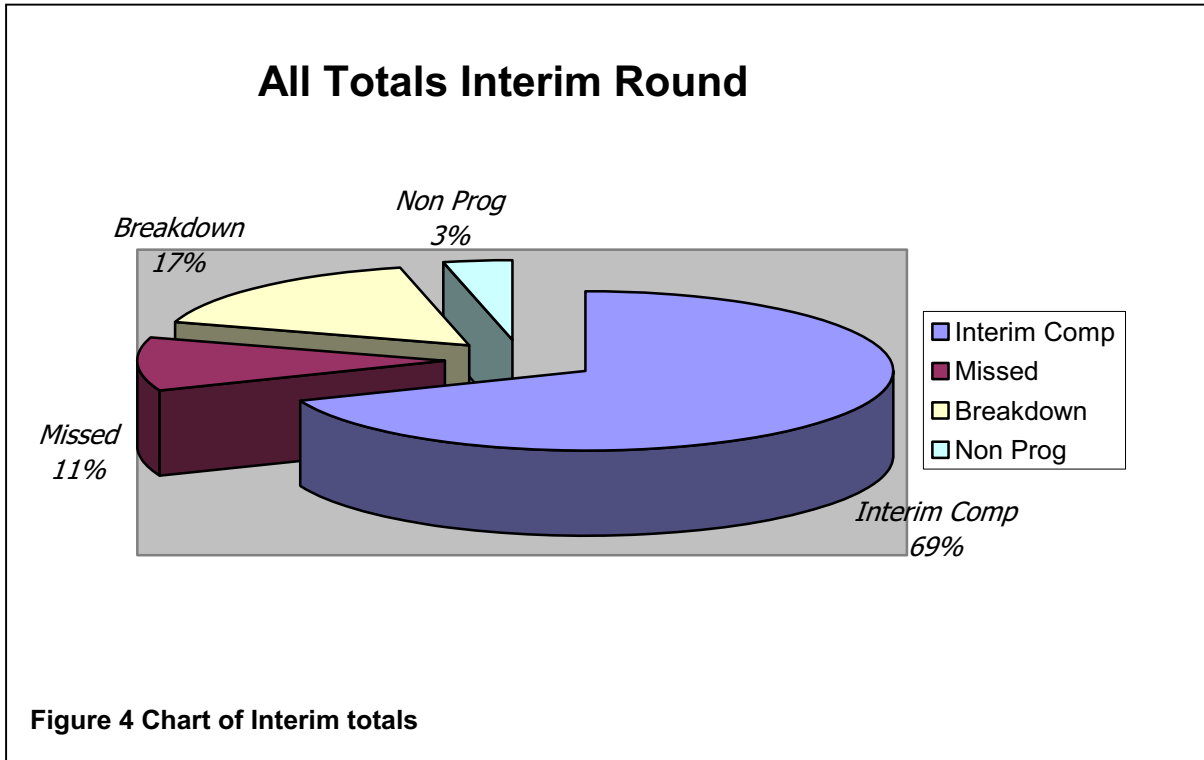
Runcorn West

Weston Point
Sandy Lane – school path
Weston Road
Wellington Street – car park
Castle Rise – No 120 pathway
Holloway

Appendix 2

Review summary of Interim Report – Nov. 2006

An Interim report was produced to review the early progress of the Landscape Leaf Sweep Round. The Total Results of this report are shown below for comparison with the final report figures shown in Section 3 of this report.

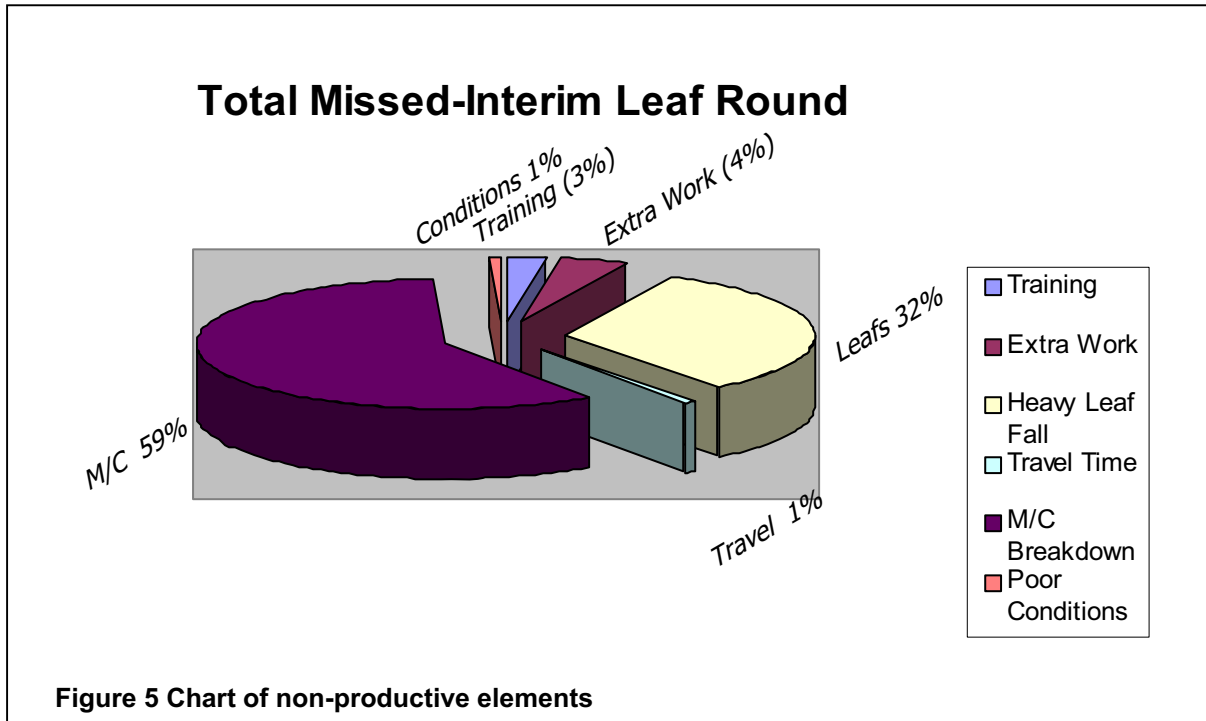


This chart shows the targets achieved as a total for both Widnes and Runcorn areas. Data is taken from the Landscape Leaf Round Schedule. This schedule was updated daily using daily work sheets completed by the operators of the Scarab Sweepers.

The target achieved should include the non-programmed work, as this represents additional areas completed during normal works time. The total adjusted percentage including non-programmed work is 72%.

Non-productive elements

Missed areas and breakdowns formed 28% of the total figure. This is broken down to highlight the reasons for this.



As can be seen from the chart above breakdowns accounted for over half the lost time and heavy leaf fall for a third of the time.

The extra work resulted from sites that had been missed on their scheduled day. These missed sites were accommodated within planned schedules on following days and should be included in the final completed total.

This accounts for an extra 1% on the completed total making it 73%.

Table 3 Interim Total

Completed	Missed	Breakdown
73%	10%	17%