



**Corporate Services Policy and
Performance Board**

**Tuesday, 3 June 2008 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**

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

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe (Vice- Chairman)	Labour
Councillor John Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Peter Browne	Conservative
Councillor Ellen Cargill	Labour
Councillor Mark Dennett	Labour
Councillor Susan Edge	Labour
Councillor Diane Inch	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Paul Nolan	Labour
Councillor Ulfar Norddahl	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 471 7395 or e-mail
gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 9 September 2008*

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
<p>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.</p>	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	1 - 3
4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	4 - 18
5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES	
(A) DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008	19 - 77
(B) THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT – THE NEXT STEPS	78 - 89
6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
(A) WORK PROGRAMME 2008 – 09	90 - 97
(B) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS	98 - 198
(C) ANNUAL REPORT	199 - 203
(D) REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL’S CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS	204 - 239
(E) CORPORATE SERVICE PPB COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REVIEW	240 - 246

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: Corporate Services Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 3rd June 2008

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

- Please keep 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 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None

6.4 A Safer Halton

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 4th June 2008
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
SUBJECT: Executive Board and Executive Sub Minutes
WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Corporate Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Sub since the last meeting of this Board are attached at Appendix 1 (link) for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to update the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

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

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

Executive Board – 24th January 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB82 HALTON 2000 SURVEY ON THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy outlining the results of a Halton 2000 Survey. It was advised that, in November 2007, 2367 members of Halton's citizens' panel were sent a questionnaire on their opinion about a range of Council services: 992 people responded - a response rate of 42.5.

A number of key questions and the responses were outlined for the Board's consideration. It was noted that the survey had sought the public's views on:

- their overall priorities for the Borough;
- their spending priorities; and
- their views on the impact on Council tax levels.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the results of the survey be noted;
- (2) the results be taken into account when considering the 2008/09 budget proposals; and
- (3) the results be drawn to the attention of the Policy and Performance Boards.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

EXB83 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2008-2009

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy setting out a proposed calendar of meetings for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2008-2009 Municipal Year, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

EXB84 POLLING DISTRICTS/POLLING STATIONS REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive outlining the results of the formal Polling District, Places and Stations Review; highlighting recommended changes to the polling scheme; and putting forward a revised polling scheme for approval.

It was noted that the Electoral Administration Act

2006 required the Council to carry out a review of all its polling stations every four years. The main purpose of the review was to ensure that all residents had reasonable facilities for voting.

The consultation process was outlined for the Board's consideration. It was advised that comments had been required by 12th November and those received had been taken into account by the Polling Station Review Working Party on 18th December 2007 and 17th January 2008.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to adopt the amendments to the scheme detailed in the appendix to the report for the period 2008-2011.

Executive Board – 7th February 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

(NB Councillor D. Cargill declared a personal interest in respect of Appendix B of the following item of business, in relation to Community Care Services, as a relative was awaiting a care package.)

EXB91 DRAFT BUDGET 2008/09

The Board considered a draft report outlining the proposed recommendation to Council regarding the budget, capital programme and council tax for 2008/09.

It was reported that the Fire Authority had now set its precept at 2.8%: the Cheshire Police precept was awaited. A further report would be made to Council to include the precept when it became known.

Members noted that the Government had recently announced the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 – the first three-year settlement in alignment with the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007. The proposed growth and savings were shown in Appendices B and C and it was advised that, after taking account of these and the use of reserves set out in the report, the budget totalled £101.895m.

The Board was advised of the process undertaken in arriving at this proposed budget including the survey taken in November 2007 using the Halton 2000 Citizens' Panel. The results of the survey had been considered by the Area Forums and a list of comments arising from the discussions at these meetings was tabled for information. In addition, it was reported that the Liberal Democrat Group had submitted a document entitled "Proposed Additional

Savings". It was suggested that both these documents be considered by Full Council at the special budget meeting on 5th March 2008.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A, which includes setting the budget at £101.895m and the Band D Council Tax for Halton (before Parish, Police and Fire precepts) of £1,079.97.

EXB92 NEW PARISHES OF HALEBANK AND SANDYMOOR

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy regarding the Halton (Parishes) Order 2007 and the Halton (Parish Electoral Arrangements) Order 2008, requesting that a recommendation be made to Council that the Halebank Parish Council Order 2008 and the Sandymoor Parish Council Order 2008 be made.

It was noted that, following receipt of petitions under Section 11 of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had made an Order under Sections 14 and 23 of the Act that the Council establish Parish Councils for the new Parishes of Halebank and Sandymoor.

Following that Order, the Electoral Commission had now made an Order under the same Sections setting out the electoral arrangements, requiring elections to be held on the ordinary day of election for Councillors in 2008, ie 1st May 2008. The next election for Halebank would take place in 2010, to bring it into line with the neighbouring Parish of Hale. Thereafter, elections would take place every four years. In the case of Sandymoor, the election would take place in 2008 and every fourth year thereafter, again in line with its neighbouring parishes. There would be five Councillors elected for each Parish.

The Board noted that the new Parish Council issued its official precept at any time from the May 2008 elections up to October 2008 but could not exceed the precept anticipated by the Authority, which was to be calculated by the Council and included in the Section 16 Order. It was recommended that the specified amount be £5,000 in the case of each Parish.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the making by the Secretary of State for Communities

and Local Government of the Halton (Parishes) Order 2007, and by the Electoral Commission of the Halton (Parish Electoral Arrangements) Order 2008, be noted; and

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

- (2) the Council be recommended to make the Halebank Parish Council Order 2008 and the Sandymoor Parish Council Order 2008.

Executive Board – 20 March 2008

QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO

EXB110 CORPORATE DATA QUALITY STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy regarding the development of a draft Corporate Data Quality Strategy that had been produced in response to recommendations made by the Audit Commission following its most recent review of the Authority's Data Quality Management Arrangements.

It was advised that the Audit Commission's Review had used a three staged approach with the first stage concentrating upon the Authority's management for securing data quality from the following perspectives:

- governance and leadership;
- policies and procedures;
- systems and processes;
- people and skills; and
- data use and reporting.

The results of the Commission's most recent review in 2007 were outlined. It was noted that the review recognised that there were a number of demonstrable strengths within the present arrangements, although opportunities existed for further developing and strengthening of some aspects of the Council's approach. Therefore, an action plan had been developed and endorsed by Management Team on 4th December 2007.

From 2008, arrangements to secure data quality were explicitly referenced within the value for money Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE's) that were used by the Commission to form a judgement concerning the Authority's use of resources. This development was reflective of the Government's view that the quality of data being used by authorities was fundamental to its success in managing claims on competing resources to provide and plan the delivery of services and its ability the properly account for its activities to service users, partners and central government

departments and regulators.

In addition, the implementation of the new comprehensive area assessment framework, and the further development of local area agreements, would also bring greater responsibilities to, and expectations of, local agencies and partnerships to ensure that good quality data was acquired, used and shared in a timely and effective manner. Therefore, officer and member leads had been identified to take the data quality agenda forward, being the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy and the Quality and Performance Portfolio Holder respectively.

RESOLVED: That the Data Quality Strategy be adopted.

Executive Board – 10th April 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB120 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy outlining the proposed changes to the Council's Constitution. It was noted that the revised version picked up the changes to the Council's working arrangements that had taken place during the year as well as other amendments which would hopefully assist the Council to operate more effectively.

The proposals for change had been considered by the Chief Executive and the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services in accordance with Article 16.02. Those that were considered to be of significance, and not just purely technical, were listed in Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the changes to the Constitution as set out in the amended version.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB123 APPROVAL OF HALTON'S LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy outlining a draft Local Area Agreement, the three-year protocol setting out the priorities for the local area.

It was advised that the Local Area Agreement had to be agreed between Central Government and the area itself, as represented by the lead local authority and other key partners through Local Strategic Partnership.

The new Local Area Agreement would be part of the whole performance systems for Local Government as set out within the Act, aiming to be far more streamlined and significantly reduce the burden on the Local Partnership. Some existing performance indicators and reporting systems had been swept away and replaced with a new, single set of indicators, limited to 198. The Local Area Agreement would include two sets of indicators and targets, which were outlined for the Board's information. The expectation was that the totality of public funding in any area would be focused on achieving the key outcomes enshrined in the Local Area Agreement.

In Halton, partners had been working in recent weeks to produce an initial Local Area Agreement document in line with Government requirements. A copy of the narrative – “The Story of Place” – was attached at Annex 1 to the report. A series of negotiation meetings were to be held with the Government in coming months and it was important to establish a consensus within Halton about the direction and focus of the Agreement. The timetable dictated that ministers must sign off the final version by June 2008.

It was noted that, in the core of the Local Area Agreement, was the outcomes framework; a copy was attached at Annex 2 to the report. This would be the focus of the negotiation process with Government Office North West (GONW). Although the Agreement lasted for only three years, the overall ambitions for Halton were set out in the Community Strategy/Corporate Plan and consistent effort behind the priorities would be needed for 15 – 25 years for them to be realised. The Local Area Agreement formed just one part of the delivery chain for the overall priorities.

Members were requested to consider the outcomes framework on which negotiation with Government Office was to take place. The Agreement was then to be brought back in its final form to the Board for approval in May.

Reason for Decision

Under the new Local Government Act 2007, there was a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce a Local Area Agreement to the format and timetable set down by Government.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No other options had been pursued. The agreement process was a prescriptive one and Halton had followed Government guidance.

Implementation Date

The Local Area Agreement would come into force when the Agreement in its final form was agreed and signed by the Minister for Local Government. This was expected to take place in June 2008.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the progress made to date be noted and "The Story of Place" welcomed; and
- 2) the Outcomes Framework attached at Annex 1 to the report be endorsed as the starting point for negotiation with Government.

EXB124 APPLICATION FOR TWINNING GRANT

The Board considered report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy outlining an application that had been made to the Twinning Grant Fund.

It was advised that the application had been received from Wade Deacon High School requesting support for a visit to No' 12 Middle School in Tong Ling. Eight pupils, four teachers, a head teacher and a Mandarin speaking School International Co-ordinator had visited the Tong Ling School during 23rd March to 1st April 2008 and examined the two rivers Yangtze and Mersey in the Music and English Department. They had visited sites of cultural, historical and geographical interest in Tong Ling and had taken two interactive wipe boards so that teachers from Wade Deacon could train colleagues in Tong Ling in the use of this technology. The visit was to provide a platform for the students to cement relationships with their pen pals and create friendships between each other.

The applicant had identified total costs of £20,260. Guidance given to applicants was that any grant awarded would not usually exceed £3,000: grants normally supported up to a maximum of 75% of the total cost of the project.

Members noted that Wade Deacon had been

awarded a grant of £3,000 in May 2007 in order to visit Tong Ling No' 12 Middle School in June 2007. The maximum grant that a group could be awarded each year was £3,000, which was why the applicant had waited until the new financial year (2008/2009) to apply. The applicant was asking the Board to make a special exception on this occasion and award retrospectively.

RESOLVED: That £3,000 be awarded to the Wade Deacon High School.

Executive Board Sub Committee – 7th February 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES74 SPENDING AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2007

The Sub-Committee considered a report which summarised the overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31st December 2007.

In overall terms, revenue expenditure was below the budget profile. The budget profile was only a guide to eventual spending and spending was historically higher in the latter part of the financial year.

In addition, the financial implications of the recently announced pay and grading review would only come through towards year-end. Within the overall position, there were some significant variances and details of these were outlined in the report.

It was noted that investment returns were currently better than expected despite the volatility of the financial market. As a result, investment income was expected to exceed the budget target by year-end. In addition, following a review of the balance sheet the capital financial requirement had been amended, resulting in a reduction of the minimum revenue provision.

Overall, spending was expected to below budget by year-end, which was mainly due to the investment returns and the review of the balance sheet. Therefore the 2008/09 budget proposals currently being considered by the Council included making provision within the 2007/08 final accounts for items of time limited expenditure relating to Building Schools for the Future and the Mersey Gateway. Work was also ongoing to assess the financial implications of potential equal pay claims. Similarly other key reserves such as the Insurance Reserve would be reviewed at year-end to ensure

their adequacy.

With regard to capital, it was reported that spending to 31st December 2007 totalled £16.9m, which was 83% of the planned spending of £20.3m at this stage. However, this only represented 46% of the total capital programme of £36.6m. Although historically capital expenditure was significantly higher in the latter part of the financial year, it was important that project managers maintained pressure to keep projects and spending on schedule and in particular to ensure that all external funding was maximised.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) reserves are established as set out above.

Operational
Director Financial
Services

Executive Board Sub Committee – 21 February 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES80 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION)
ACT 1985

The Committee considered:

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

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information,

members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES81 ST. MICHAEL'S GOLF COURSE AWARD OF ADDITIONAL WORK TO CURRENT CONTRACTOR, LAND AND WATER REMEDIATION LTD

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval to waive Standing Orders in order to add defined work to an existing contract for the remediation of St. Michael's Golf Course, Widnes. Following lengthy statutory processes, work was now at a stage where Land and Water Remediation Limited needed to undertake assessment actions. These were required by the Environment Agency and DEFRA to support the final remediation technique selection and they would facilitate its implementation following approval by the Environment Agency.

In waiving standing orders and allowing Land and Water to proceed with an extension to their existing contract, the process would not be further unduly delayed. Also, as the contract was a design and build it would be advantageous for the existing Contractor to carry out these actions to ensure continuity of design and to enable the liability for the remediation solution to be retained by Land and Water Remediation Limited.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Operational Director, Major Projects Department, be authorised to approve the addition of work to the existing contract for the remediation of St. Michael's Golf Course for the sum of £188,012 (this being the sum received in grant for this work from DEFRA) to the existing appointed contractor, Land and Water Remediation Limited. This is in the interests of efficiency, continuity and ensuring the clarity of design and work responsibility which would derive from extending the current contract with Land and Water Remediation Limited;

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

- (2) in accordance with Procurement Standing Order 1.6, Standing Orders 3.1, 3.7 and 3.10 be waived as necessary on this occasion in view of Procurement Standing Order 1.6 reasons (b), (c), (d) and (e); and
- (3) the Operational Director, Major Projects, in consultation with the Chair of Executive Board Sub-Committee and the portfolio holder for Environment, Leisure and Sport be authorised to approve any other unforeseen work necessary for the delivery of the remediation, subject to the availability of approved funding.

ES78 ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR

The Sub-Committee was requested to recommend to the Council the appointment of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the year 2008/09 Municipal Year.

The Council's Mayoral Selection Guidelines provided for the Councillor appointed as Deputy Mayor in one Municipal Year to succeed as the Mayor in the subsequent Municipal Year. It was therefore suggested that Councillor K. Loftus be recommended to Full Council for appointment as Mayor for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

With regard to Deputy Mayor, the Council's Mayoral Selection Guidelines provided that it be based on the length of service with the Council (and its predecessor authorities). This year, there were a number of Members with the same length of service. Councillor F. Fraser had been approached as the most senior. It was therefore suggested that Councillor F. Fraser should be recommended to Full Council for appointment as Deputy Mayor for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

It was noted that there were Members with a longer period of length of service who did not wish to be considered as Deputy Mayor at the present time.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended:

- (1) that Councillor Loftus be appointed as the Mayor for the 2008/09 Municipal Year; and
- (2) that Councillor F. Fraser be appointed as the Deputy Mayor for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

Executive Board Sub Committee – 6th March 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

ES83 HALTON VILLAGE YOUTH CLUB PREMISES

The Sub-Committee considered a report regarding the future of the site of Halton Village Youth Club building at Camelot Walk, Castlefields. At a previous meeting of the Sub-Committee held on the 13th December 2007 (Minute No. ES63) Officers were asked to provide further information on which Members would be able to make a clear decision on the future of the building and on possible alternative uses and also to report at a later date on other pieces of land in the Borough. The report highlighted additional information with regard to lease documentation, occupation of the building, rental income, restriction of use of site and the gross sale value of the site in its present state for the prescribed community use.

RESOLVED: That

(1) in respect of the Halton Village Youth Club building the Strategic Director Corporate and Policy be authorised to invite organisations to express an interest in the future use; and

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

(2) an update report be brought to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee as soon as possible.

Executive Board Sub Committee – 20th March 2008

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES99 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2008/09

The Sub-Committee considered the Council's Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2008/09.

The Strategy covers the treasury limits in force which would limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council, prudential indicators, the current treasury position, the borrowing requirement, prospects for interest rates, the borrowing strategy, debt re-scheduling, the investment strategy and any extraordinary treasury issues.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to adopt the policies and strategies outlined in the report.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

ES100 LAND EXCHANGE DITTON ROAD

The Sub-Committee considered a request to vary the approval given under Minute No. ES 115 for a small increase in the area of land to be exchanged with a private developer as part of the proposed new Mersey Gateway. This would allow the developer to secure a development for a 130 bed hotel development with offices (B2) on this site.

RESOLVED: That

(1) approval be given to exchange the land identified on Plans B4027/4PC/82 and B4027/4/PC/87, the area edged in red is transferring to Council ownership whilst the area edged in blue will transfer from the Council to the developer; and

(2) authority be given to the Operational Director Property Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Corporate Services to conclude the deal.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

ES103 HALTON VILLAGE YOUTH CLUB PREMISES

At a previous meeting of the Executive Board Sub Committee held on 20th March 2008, a decision was made regarding the future use of the site of Halton Village Youth Club building at Camelot Walk, Castlefields. Following the meeting officers wrote to both Halton Voluntary Youth Club and HAMS. Subsequently a letter was received from HAMS setting out the impact of the decision on them, on the service they provide to the community and on HAMS' investment in the premises. In view of that position and the fact that there was no current other interests registered for the building, the Sub Committee agreed the following:

RESOLVED: That

(1) no new lease be offered to the trustees of the Halton Village Youth Club; and

(2) the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy be authorised to enter into negotiations and conclude terms of a lease for the building between the Council and HAMS.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

Executive Board Sub Committee – 10th April 2008 CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

ES108 PURCHASE OF PROPERTY AND BUSINESS AT 59 HIGH STREET, RUNCORN

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought approval for the acquisition of the property and business of R. C. Withington and Sons trading from premises at 59 High Street,

Runcorn, in order to create additional frontage land to the proposed Canal Quarter development.

In addition, it was reported that Mr. Withington had been using the garages to the rear of the property for over 60 years and would pursue a claim for possessory title of these important storage buildings. If successful these properties would transfer to Halton Borough Council at nil cost other than to indemnify Mr. Withington for his legal costs involved in securing title.

The funding would be provided by Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (Town Centre Improvements) (£325,000) for the acquisition of key buildings to deal with difficult/derelict properties in town centres and/or the acquisition of sites that were key to the generation of town centres.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) approval be given to purchase the property situated at 59 High Street, Runcorn and the furniture business trading as R. C. Withington and Sons; and
- (2) authority be given to the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy in consultation with the Corporate Services portfolio holder to conclude the purchase.

REPORT TO: Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 3 June 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Draft Asset Management Plan 2008

WARDS: Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek the Board's views on the attached Draft Asset Management Plan prior to its formal submission to the Executive Board.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Board consider the Draft Asset Management Plan and make comment, prior to its consideration by the Executive Board.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council is required (and needs) to have an Asset Management Plan to ensure that its asset base is suited in terms of quality, location, fitness for purpose and cost effectiveness to facilitate the achievement of the Council's corporate goals and objectives.

3.2 Attached is a Draft Revised Plan, which will require formal adoption by the Executive Board but has been brought to this Board for comment prior to the Executive Board's consideration.

3.3 The Strategy looks at the current asset base of the Council and its estimated value. That value is some £258,733,573 and therefore demonstrates that effective utilisation plays a significant role in the delivery of the Council's objectives. The Plan gives some indication as to the role the Council's assets play in delivering each of the five priorities.

3.4 The plan shows the organisational arrangements the Council has in place to deliver its Corporate property function. The process is overseen by an Asset Management Working Group, whose work programme is identified at page 29 of the plan. Recommendations arising from this programme which impact on Council policy would be brought to the Board for consideration. Indeed, the Board have undertaken, and plan to undertake,

a number of topics in and around the Property Management functions of the Council.

3.5 It is clearly important that the Council's assets are managed on a Corporate basis to ensure that the maximum benefit is derived from its utilisation.

3.6 The views of the Board are welcomed.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 An up to date and effective Asset Management Plan plays a key role in assisting the Council to achieve its overall objectives.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The risk is not having an up to date plan would mean that the Council would not be able to assess whether it was using its assets to maximum advantage.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 As part of its asset planning the Council needs to ensure that its buildings meet the standards required by the Disability Discrimination Act. A separate topic group is looking at this issue.



It's all happening in Halton

Asset Management Plan 2008

Managing property as a resource for the Borough



TABLE OF CONTENTS

To be completed.



FOREWORD

Provided by Executive Board Member: Corporate Services



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To be completed following consideration of the draft report.



PROFILE OF HALTON

Halton Borough Council is a Unitary Authority providing the full range of local government services within the Borough. The Borough of Halton covers 7,937 hectares and incorporates the towns of Widnes and Runcorn in addition to the villages of Hale, Moore, Daresbury and Preston Brook.

Location

Located within the M62 and M56 corridors and straddling the River Mersey, the borough has superb communication links by road, rail, sea and air. Situated between Manchester International and Liverpool John Lennon Airports and close to the Port of Liverpool, all major European and international markets are within easy reach of the Borough of Halton.

People

The 2006 mid-year population estimates show the combined resident population increasing from 118,800 to 119,500 who live in 54,859 households, giving an average house occupancy of 2.17.

An estimated 287,400 people live within a twenty minute drive of the centre of the Borough of Halton. This equates to 116,600 households of which 72% are owner occupiers and 14% are engaged in professional or managerial occupations. Within 30 minutes the population increases to 868,000 individuals or just over 252,100 households.

Within the Borough of Halton 65.8% of households are owner occupied (2001 Census). 19.7% of the population are engaged in professional or managerial occupations whilst a further 24.1% of people work within manufacturing or elementary occupations (Annual Population Survey 2006).

The Halton unemployment rate in May 2007 was 2.9%, down 0.3% on the previous year's figure of 3.2%. This compares with a figure of 2.5% in the North West and 2.1% in Great Britain. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2007 ranks Halton as 30th highest out of 354 local authorities, in the previous IMD 2004 Halton ranked 21st, showing an improvement over the intervening years. The IMD 2007 ranks all the Census Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Halton, giving an overall impression of the depth of deprivation for a district.

The 2001 Census showed that 21.5% of the resident population of Halton has a limiting long-term illness (LLTI), lower than the Greater Merseyside figure of 23.4%, but higher than the North West (20.7%) and Great Britain (18.2%) figures.

20.2% of the population in Halton have no qualifications (13.8% in Great Britain) whilst 16.8% of people hold a Level 4 Qualification (Equivalent to a degree) compared to 27.4% nationally.

Business

Halton has a diverse, dynamic and growing economic base. International companies such as Diageo, O2, Ineos Chlor Group, Atos Origin, YKK, AEGON, BNFL and Yokogawa power the economy of Widnes and Runcorn.

With plenty of affordable space to grow, a superb workforce and a brilliant location between Liverpool and Manchester, the area is one of the North West's major business hubs.

- Over the last five years over 150 new companies have created more than 6,000 new jobs. Recent investors include BNFL, TNT, Lidl UK and international insurance group AEGON.
- The call centre industry is thriving within Halton. O2 (formerly BT Cellnet) employs over 1,700 people in Runcorn.
- 26% of all exports originating from Greater Merseyside are produced in Halton. Halton is by far the largest exporter in the sub-region.
- Halton has the highest proportion of businesses in the knowledge driven production sector in the North West and 9th Highest in Great Britain.
- In terms of GVA per head productivity, Halton is the most prosperous area in Greater Merseyside and the 4th most prosperous in the North West, above the Cheshire, regional and national averages.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Strategic Asset Management

The purpose of this plan is to put a process in place that ensures that the land and buildings that the Council owns or occupies (its asset base) are optimally structured in the best corporate interest of the Authority.

An effective strategy ensures that the asset base is suited in terms of quality, location, fitness for purpose and cost effectiveness to facilitate the achievement of the Council's corporate goals and objectives.

The Asset Management Plan supports the delivery of Council services, has clear and direct links to the Council's five priorities from its Corporate Plan, together with departmental priorities driven by these priorities in accordance with Departmental Service Plans.

The Asset Management Plan (AMP)

Property assets require a structured, long term approach to their management for three key reasons:

1. They are expensive both in terms of their capital value and their annual running costs.
2. They require careful management throughout their whole lives to ensure that they provide best value in terms of maintenance, income generation and effective use
3. It takes time to properly determine new accommodation needs, to procure them and to bring them into use.

Through the Corporate Asset Policy, this AMP identifies the Council's strategy for maximizing the potential of its asset base. It also describes the Council's organisational arrangements for implementing its Corporate Asset Policy and identifies critical success factors and assess current performance.

Asset Management has to:-

- Consider and regularly review the sufficiency, suitability, condition and cost of existing property.
- Consider and regularly review the use of administrative buildings having particular regard to developments in technology and the potential for introducing innovative and flexible working arrangements, actively pursuing those opportunities arising when considering support services and service delivery arrangements.
- Seek ways of supplementing the limited resources available within the Capital Programme.
- Challenge the reasons for retaining non-operational property.
- Identify on an ongoing basis properties that are surplus to requirements and how they might be dealt with.

In addition, the assets not held for direct service delivery, such as those let for commercial use or held for use by community groups should :-

- Produce maximum income for the Council or otherwise, through their usage, make a contribution to the social, economic or environmental aspects of the borough by promoting and aiding development of new or fledgling businesses.
- Be retained if they have strategic importance, such as the potential to influence physical and economic regeneration within the borough.

By providing a strong approach to asset management significant support is provided to the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives. The Asset Management Plan (AMP), therefore, supports the delivery of Council services and has clear and direct links to the priorities set out in key strategic documents and departmental service plans.

This plan provides the driving force to ensure the council continually assesses, refines and improves the asset base, as a vital component in the delivery of improved services. It is more than just a property issue, by providing adequate resources to its implementation it has the capacity to be the catalyst for change and a major influence in the delivery of service objectives.

Accurate and current data on the asset base, supported by performance indicators and benchmarking information, identifies those properties which fall short of required standards and which should be disposed of or refurbished. This information will also help improve property performance and inform the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The AMP provides the Council with the opportunity to challenge its traditional approach to the extent and use of its asset base. It also provides the means by which a more imaginative approach can be brought to dealing with existing problems, in order that the property portfolio becomes a positive and valued asset.

Corporate Planning Framework, Goals & Objectives

A number of key strategies and strategic documents direct the delivery of services to the people of Halton and these include the following :-

A Community Strategy For A Sustainable Halton 2006 – 2011

this is an overarching strategy aimed to enhance the quality of life of local communities through actions to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the area and its inhabitants.

The Corporate Plan 2006 – 2011

outlines goals the Council and the Borough aim to achieve to help build a better future for Halton. It concentrates on the challenges and priorities planned over the next five years to help improve the quality of life for people in Halton. The vision remains constant, that Halton will be a thriving and vibrant Borough where people can learn and develop their skills; enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality, sustained by a thriving business community; and safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.

Relating to each of the corporate plan objectives, the asset management plan contributes as shown:-

Healthy Halton	Promotes the vision to create ready access to a wide range of social, community, cultural, social and sporting assets.
Halton Urban Renewal	Encourages the creation and sustainability of a 21st century business environment with the required variety and quality of sites, premises and infrastructure that can support high levels of investment and economic growth.
Halton's Children and Young People	Advances a culture where property assets are central in providing safe environments and communities in which the young person's future is given positive focus through lifelong learning and potential employment opportunity.
Employment Learning & Skills in Halton	Central to fostering enterprise by identifying potential development opportunities.
A Safer Halton	Contributes to the processes of design and delivery of well built, well maintained and safe neighbourhoods which in turn provides the opportunity to deal with anti social behavioural hotspots.
Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency	Confirms the council wide ethos of property assets being central to the quality and efficiency of all services.

Procurement Policy & Improvement Plan

places procurement in the overall context of the Council's Corporate Plan and demonstrates the links to strategic priorities, identifying and implementing practices that will ensure continuous improvement in procurement through challenge, comparison, collaboration and partnering.

The Best Value Performance Plan 2007 – 8

is an important element of the Council's approach to improvement planning and delivering best value. It is an integral part of the organisation's corporate planning arrangements, as such the plan provides an assessment of the Council's overall performance in relation to those statutory indicators that form the national Best Value Performance Indicator data set.

Departmental Service Plans

inform this plan, by reference to the accommodation requirements necessary to deliver and improve each individual service, allowing the corporate strategy to address, holistically the corporate objectives and vision.

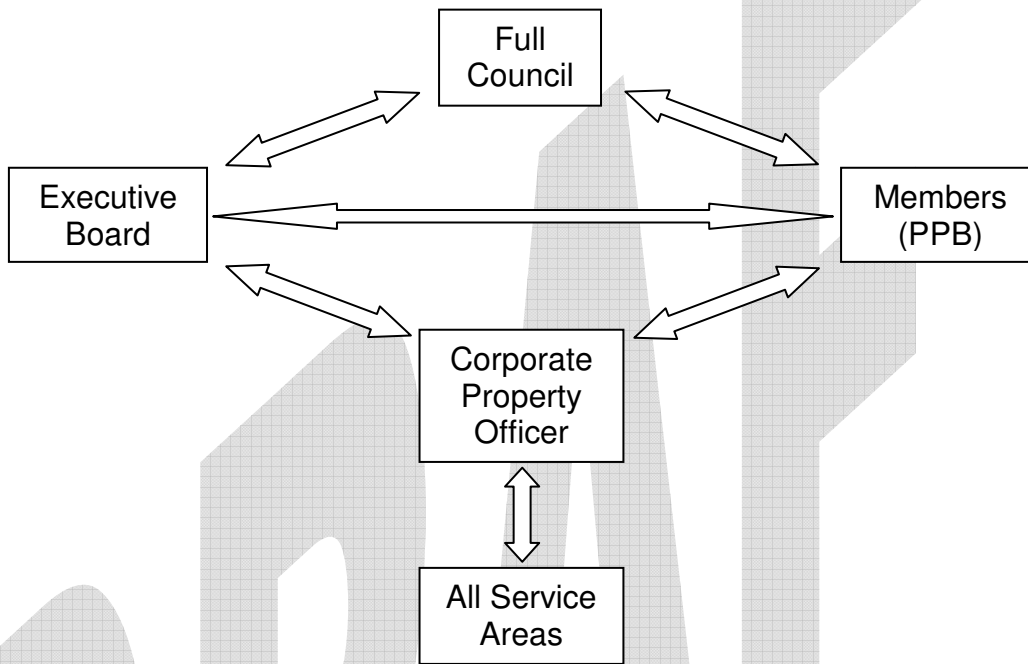
Organisational Framework

The corporate asset management planning process was established in the Council's Corporate Asset and Capital Strategy Management Plan (2002). In essence the Strategic Director – Corporate & Policy, as Acting Corporate Property Officer (CPO), is the focal point of the process. Each directorate, through their respective service

plans, provide input to the plan via the CPO, there is then a clear accountability to the Management Team reported directly to that body through it's weekly meetings. Reports are then made, at Member level, to the Executive Board held fortnightly and the Policy & Performance Board (PPB) on a six week cycle.

The terms of reference relating to asset planning issues have been adopted by the Management Team and are attached as Appendix 1.

The present asset management organisational arrangement is indicated below:



Current Asset Base (excluding highways)

Detailed below is the Council's current asset base together with its estimated value. It totals in excess of 3250m further emphasising the importance of managing it effectively.

The Boroughs Assets	Number	Value (£)
Car Parks (off street)	15	561,295
Cemeteries / Crematoria	3	499,000
Community / Youth Centres	10	2,894,925
Depots / Workshops	3	1,911,500
Entertainment Centres	1	7,771,650
Farms (Tenanted)	1	379,600
Housing (HRA) Property	1	813,600
Industrial Estate	4	7,149,300
Industrial Unit	1	627,450
Land & Building(s)	26	4,448,828
Land Only	51	32,243,489
Land Only (CRA1)	3	0
Land Only (CRA3)	12	0
Libraries/Museums/Galleries	3	2,118,500
Lifelong Learning Facility	1	5,424,550
Markets	2	5,934,277
Mooring / Fishing	1	200,250
Office/Admin Buildings	16	6,924,929
Offices - Commercial	2	594,000
Other Land (Direct)	39	153,705
Other Land (In Direct)	2	1,770
Parks	8	0
Playing Fields (Inc. Changing)	11	3,015,549
Public Conveniences	2	176,800
Residential Homes/Day Centres	13	9,003,300
Schools	62	148,148,806
Shops - Commercial	5	719,000
Sports Centres/Swimming Pools	5	16,800,000
Waste / Recycling	1	217,500
TOTALS	304	258,733,573

CORPORATE ASSET POLICY

Corporate Asset Objectives

In addition to the corporate asset management objectives that are drawn from the documents and strategies outlined in the section headed Corporate Planning & Organisational Framework the following objectives exist that relate purely to the asset management function.

- to develop and deliver an Asset Management Plan annually
- to develop and secure a corporate approach to the use, management, procurement and 'ownership' of property assets
- to further develop and maintain a strong organisational framework for corporate asset management
- to commission, oversee and implement a regular review of all property assets (Property Review), reporting back with recommendations and decisions including identifying surplus assets suitable for reuse or disposal
- to challenge the existing use of, need for and performance of all property assets and to monitor and report on performance in support of continuous improvement
- to identify and secure efficiency gains and savings through the strategic management of all property assets
- to ensure that corporate asset management information is effectively communicated to all stakeholders
- to consider and promote new ways of working and incentives for the more efficient use of space, property and energy
- to form clear linkages between strategic asset management and the Medium Term Financial Plan
- to work with existing partners and identify new partner opportunities to jointly use each others property assets
- to deploy assets in support of partnerships which maximise opportunities for Halton and its people
- to improve buildings and other assets in accordance with the needs of the Disability Discrimination Act and to ensure equality of access to services and employment opportunities for all
- to deploy assets in support of partnerships which maximise opportunities for Halton and its people
- Report on performance of property assets against key National Property. Performance Management Initiative Performance Indicators – (NaPPMI)
- Make property information more available through extended access to the P2.net property system using the Council's intranet.

Data And Performance Management Systems

The Council recognises that modern local government requires a highly integrated approach to knowledge management, the Council's approach continues to evolve for various reasons such as the publication of new research, guidance, legislation and performance indicators; alongside improvements in technology.

The asset management information database (Concerto P2.net) is the major part of the property management information structure. The software has been developed in conjunction with a number of local authorities. There is an emphasis on communication within the software, with the capability to automatically generate performance indicator information to the appropriate areas. It is fully web based allowing secured access for consultants, clients and users direct from site.

The system includes:-

- a site module, providing comprehensive information on each property, its condition and with regard to schools suitability and sufficiency detail. In addition this module is used to maintain all information relating to leases, rents, ownership, responsibilities, asset valuations and rates of return.
- extensive project planning tools, allowing full import and export facility with Microsoft Projects, enabling the full range of projects to be effectively managed including risk analysis capability, relating to property management
- an energy module enabling all energy costs and usage to be recorded, monitored and managed
- full work ordering, invoicing and payment system with integral interface to the council's financial package, Agresso, providing commitment budgeting facility, and by dynamic linkage to site information providing greater control of programmed maintenance
- performance indicator measurement and automated notification, incorporating links to other software packages where appropriate, including those located outside Property Services
- complete property oriented helpdesk function
- mail tracking system
- equipment register
- case register linked to legal service function
- incident log
- visit log
- time recording

Future development of the system will include an asbestos register, a legionella monitoring and register function, a document management system and automated links to the MapInfo system of GIS that the council uses.

The Computer Aided Design (CAD) database is presently being expanded, the intention is to create a complete record of "intelligent" drawings for the property portfolio which can then be linked to the Concerto P2.net system providing a seamless interface between graphical and data systems. A CAD viewing system is currently being developed as a module of Concerto P2.net.

Whilst the information in the database is extensive, there are still areas of data that require updating and verification This creates a number of resource issues associated with maintaining the system. Additionally the development of further reports, which again will have resource issues, is necessary in order to best utilise the data held to provide 'business intelligence' and apply it to the making of informed decisions.

With the changes in legislation and the requirements of e-government it is essential that our consultants/partners and client departments share access to the database(s) used by the department, allowing both read and write access, by maintaining the Concerto P2.net suite of software this facility can be made available.

The ability to pull together data from various sources allows for more meaningful performance indicators to be devised at a local level and the potential for increased benchmarking with other users. This will allow Property Services to provide a more efficient and robust analysis of data. The commitment of the Council to move forward

with the e-procurement requirements of the government make it essential that all property related issues can be directly integrated with minimum interfacing.

Communication, Consultation And The Stakeholder

Senior Level

The Executive Board Member for Corporate Services has the specific responsibility for all property related issues within his portfolio, the CPO communicates via the Management Team through it's weekly meetings, reports are then made, at Member level, to the appropriate board held at regular intervals and the Policy & Performance Board (PPB) on a six week cycle.

Internal

Property Services consults with stakeholders at a number of levels. The priority objectives of each service department are identified in the relevant service plan and reflected within Property Services' Service Plan. Regular meetings with service departments, throughout the year, deal with other management and asset management issues as and when they arise.

The Accommodation Review was carried out by Property Services in 2006, adopted as the strategy for the Council it will be reviewed at regular intervals and will form the basis for future occupancy discussion and agreement for all property occupied by a service. The present arrangement, where all recruitment involving increasing accommodation need has to be approved by the CPO. This arrangement will be reviewed during 2008/9 as more progress is made towards hot-desking / home-working.

Additionally, Property Services communicates with occupiers of buildings, providing copies of reports and advising on how to resolve any issues raised by building audits, surveys and other performance monitoring.

External

The Council has embraced the provision of the "one stop shop", with four Direct Link offices serving the borough. Centralising the telephonic service of the council through the Contact Centre has enabled the communication process to be streamlined with many calls being satisfactorily resolved at this first point of contact.

Suitability & Sufficiency

The system in place for school suitability and sufficiency surveys, which forms part of reports to The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF previously DfES) is well-established. Assessments cover location, security, accessibility, space, fixtures and fittings, image, environment, health & safety and particular service requirements. A non-school suitability assessment, Framework For Determining Suitability And Sufficiency Of Assets (FDSSA) attached as Appendix 2, has been developed and recently approved by Management Team for use in the borough, and will be actioned during 2008/9 with the results fed back through the Asset Management Working Group.

Impact of Government Policy and Statutory Responsibilities

Service Transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer (Sir David Varney report December 2006)

Sir David Varney reported that the leading edge of the new service economy that has emerged is much slicker, more immediate, more convenient to the citizen and less intrusive on the busy citizen's time. The focus is increasingly on the 'totality of the

relationship' with the citizen. Public sector bodies are encouraged to deliver citizens and businesses a more joined up service.

The council is able to clearly demonstrate that it has been proactive in its approach to these challenges via its Direct Link (One Stop Shop) programme, which is transforming services for Halton's population and businesses. The Direct Link programme will deliver more joined up services across council departments and with key partners (e.g. Halton & St Helens PCT). The direct link centres already provide a face to face contact for council services across all directorates.

The Council is already in discussions with other public sector providers in the Borough to increase the use of shared buildings in order to both deliver efficiency savings and provide a better frontline service to the public.

The Quirke Review : Community Ownership and Management of Public Asset (May 2007)

The Review's terms of reference were to identify ways of overcoming barriers to the community management of assets. The theme was taken up in the Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' in the context and overall statement that "the aim is to give local people and local communities more influence and power to improve their lives".

The Quirke Review was published as 'Making Assets Work' in May 2007 and the Government's response 'Opening the Transfer Window' published the following week. The principal findings of the Review were that:

- asset transfer should take place where it can realise social or community benefits without risking wider public interest concerns;
- in appropriate circumstances, the benefits of asset transfer can outweigh the risks involved;
- risks can be managed by drawing on the experience of others.

The Government's response was to accept the Quirke Review in full and included five main actions:

- i.) publication of new guidance to Local Authorities on corporate asset management, with specific reference to guidance on the transfer of assets (likely to be published in April 2008);
- ii.) preparation of a toolkit on risk management involved in the transfer process;
- iii.) provision of greater access to expert advice and organisational development on the management of assets to community organisations, through local providers. The council could be such a provider, or agent;
- iv.) smaller investment of public funds through specialist financial intermediaries with the ability to achieve high leverage ratios. A demonstration programme is to be launched in selected areas as models for others to follow;
- v.) a major campaign to spread the word especially to community groups, taking a bottom up approach such as the proposed 'Community Call for Action'.

Although the Council has, over a number of years prior to of the Quirke Review, followed similar principles in leasing a number of its premises to the voluntary sector, with the acceptance of the review there is now need for a more formal approach. This forms part of the Policy and Performance Board's Topic Work for 2008/09.

Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (March 2007)

The need to reduce CO₂ emissions is widely accepted on both environmental and financial grounds. Far from being a threat, energy efficiency provides a huge opportunity for the council.

The objective of The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) 2002/91/EC is to promote the improvement of the energy performance of buildings within the European Community. Implementing the EPBD will encourage owners and tenants to choose energy efficient buildings when seeking new accommodation and to improve the performance of buildings they occupy. Implementation of the Directive is seen as an important contribution to reducing carbon dioxide emissions as part of the UK climate change programme.

From October 2008 public sector occupiers of larger buildings (exceeding 1000m²) will need to display an Display Energy Certificate (DEC) in a prominent place clearly visible to the public. The DEC shows the energy performance of a building based on actual energy consumption. The DEC must show the "asset rating" of the building, which is a numerical indicator of the amount of energy estimated to meet the different needs associated with a standardised use of the building.

With about 75 buildings (including schools) having a useable floor area of 1000m² or more, the impact on the council in financial terms has yet to be fully determined. It is hoped that the initial outlay of using an Accredited Energy Assessor (at approximately £1,500.00 per property) to produce the Certificates will be far out weighed by the greater level of awareness of energy use in the council's buildings and that any investment opportunities identified, if taken up, would recover the cost in most cases.

Health and Safety Legislation

Policies and procedures are in place that meet the requirements of legionella prevention, asbestos identification and management, fire regulation and DDA compliance. Risk assessments and surveys of all buildings have now been carried out and are used to progress schemes of management and reduction of risks and where schemes are carried out to remove or reduce risks as far as is practicable and economic. Ongoing management and review of risk assessments is built into regular work programmes.

In summary, Property Services keeps up to date with legislation and guidance on Government practice issued by a wide range of government and partner organisations. By doing so the use of the council's assets can be planned in such a way as to anticipate and quickly react to best practice for the benefit of Halton.

The Resource Context

The council has a track record of sound financial management. A culture of best value has been long rooted in service and resource planning. Today the council's strategies build on the successes, continuing priorities regarding savings and

efficiencies will be addressed. Two areas which, in the next three years, are to be considered are:

- *property*: savings in office space are being targeted including the introduction of suitability and sufficiency audit and continued accommodation review
- *procurement*: moving forward further efficiencies, firmly based on Gershon principles, that will allow the Council to release both finance & resources that can be redirected towards front line services. Partnering contracts for Runcorn Town Hall and John Briggs House are two examples of this new approach.

The strategy is incorporated into the council's overall approach to improvement and includes a number of initiatives that will deliver increased value for money – home/mobile working, process improvement, shared services and improved property management.

The council's medium term financial strategy considers resources over a three year period and is based upon:

- The Corporate Plan
- Departmental Service Plans and the financial impact of these strategies
- Financial factors that will affect the council over the next three years
- Cost of capital investment, in line with any Investment Strategy
- Anticipated levels of Government support
- Overall availability of resources
- Levels of Council Tax

Details of the capital programme can be found in the council's Capital Strategy which should be read in conjunction with this Asset Management Plan. The council has committed the following financial resources to its asset management priorities:

- £1.4m to address programmed maintenance
- £200k per annum for DDA related schemes

In addition to mainstream capital and revenue funds the council also bids for Challenge Funds (e.g. European Funds, Working Neighbourhood Fund etc).

CHANGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT & IMPLICATIONS FOR PROPERTY Market For External Provision

The Council has a good track record in making efficiency savings and has, over the past five years, redirected some £7.5m of those savings towards its priorities. However, it recognises that in a tight financial framework it needs to continually look for further efficiency savings. In order to ensure that the organisation remains focused on the need for greater efficiency, the Council has created a Business Efficiency Board of elected members with the following terms of reference:

- To draw up and oversee a programme of reviews aimed at securing continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of Council services.

- To promote partnership working and collaboration with other public and private bodies where that supports the Council's Efficiency Strategy.
- To oversee the Council's preparations for any CPA or subsequent corporate assessment process.
- To monitor performance against the Council's Efficiency Strategy, particularly in relation to the identification of cashable and non-cashable gains.
- To ensure the Council has processes in place to benchmark its activities and to learn from best practice to ensure continuous improvement in its performance.
- To monitor the implementation of the Council's procurement strategy.
- To act as the Council's Audit Committee.
- To act as the Council's Closure of Accounts Committee.

The Council continues to work with neighbouring Authorities in Merseyside and Cheshire on identifying collaborative programmes which identify potential efficiency savings, and is working closely with the Regional Centre of Excellence.

The Business Efficiency Board of members is mirrored by a corporate group of officers chaired by the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy, which is charged with co-ordinating and implementing the Council's agreed policy in this area.

The Council is currently considering the method of procuring its Property Service function and a final report detailing options and making recommendations will be published during 2008/9

Other Factors

There are a number of external influences for change which will affect the provision of council property and property services and include:

- The Building Schools for the Future programme
- Primary Schools Capital Programme
- The Government's Extended Services agenda-facilities fit for the future in local communities;
- Preparing for the governments mandatory Carbon Reduction Commitment in 2010
- Changes in legislation
- Government guidance on Asset Management in Local Authorities

SERVICE DELIVERY & ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

Overview

The Council has, over the years, carried out a number of reviews of its office accommodation needs, but this has always proved difficult, primarily because of the ever-changing landscape of local government and the public sector more generally. The Base Budget Review Working Party identified 'accommodation' as a possible area for savings / rationalisation and an accommodation review was carried out in 2006 (concentrating on the major administrative centres) and a strategy was adopted in 2007

The purpose of the strategy is to:

- Set some objectives around the future accommodation decisions the Council needs to make
- Look at the current make-up of the Council's office accommodation
- Make proposals for the rationalisation of that accommodation
- Assess the financial impact of those proposals
- Make efficiency savings

A major step forward in the way accommodation needs are met, is the introduction of the Accommodation Criteria Process (see Appendix 3) which requires accommodation impact to be considered before recruitment is undertaken.

Council Services

Council services are subject to constant review, an essential element of the process is the planning of individual projects within overall programmes and the consideration of the many support elements to services - Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Property Services, Human Resources, Communications & Marketing.

Recognition and incorporation of these elements within service plans has taken place at a micro rather than macro level. The preparation and review of Departmental Asset Management Plans, to inform and support corporate property strategy, will assist the process and identify opportunities for rationalisation at individual and wider service levels.

New Working Practices In The Council

The introduction of the Working Flexibly For You Strategy 2007 – 2010 sets out the business context for new working practices. Recognition of the potential for flexible and home working does not negate the need for detailed service consideration by managers prior to implementation, the consequential effects on accommodation requirements.

Increased adoption of remote working, using touch down facilities in offices shared with other services, will remove individual work spaces but require wider provision of adequate flexible shared facilities.

Agencies & Joint Accommodation

The council already has shared accommodation with two main partners, Halton & St Helens PCT and The 5 Boroughs Partnership (a large mental health trust providing specialist services to the boroughs of Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington, Wigan and Leigh) in addition to shared accommodation for the Community Safety Team, made up of Police and Council representation. The council also leases space in Halton Hospital, Whiston Hospital and Warrington Hospital to deliver services.

Examples of shared use are:

Halton & St Helens PCT

- Catalyst House – leased by HBC shared by PCT
- Pingot Centre – leased by HBC shared by PCT
- Runcorn Town Hall – owned by HBC shared by PCT
- Independent Living Centre – leased by PCT shared by HBC
- The Bridges – owned by PCT shared by HBC

The 5 Boroughs Partnership

- Vine Street Centre – owned by HBC shared by 5 Boroughs
- St John's Centre – owned by 5 Boroughs shared by HBC



EXISTING PORTFOLIO AND CURRENT PERFORMANCE

Statement of Portfolio

The council holds a diverse and widespread portfolio of land and property assets throughout the borough which includes operational property (e.g. offices, administration buildings, day centres, libraries, schools and youth centres etc.) and non-operational/investment property (e.g. shops, offices, industrial estates, farms, agricultural land and allotments etc.).

There are 305 property assets with a total asset value of £256.50m (2005 valuation) – See Appendix 4 . Operational properties, assets supporting front line service delivery, account for over 45% of the value of the asset base whilst 22% (67 assets) of the total property asset value comprises the schools portfolio. Non-operational assets account for only 33% of the total property assets.

Asset values are based on the book value of the Council's assets, for financial purposes. Approximately 25% of assets are re-valued each year, on a rolling programme.

Performance

In addition to the currently evolving set of asset management PI's (NaPPMI – previously COPROP), the Council has an Action Plan for Asset Management (APAM) 2008-11, see Appendix 5, for use as a tool to monitor performance. Whilst it's primary function is identification of all key actions and co-ordination of asset management activity, an emphasis on 'measures of success' has been introduced to enable a focussed annual review of activity to assess performance and feed the results into and improve future activity.

The Council also recognises the importance of actively managing its performance in reducing energy consumption generally, and specifically in all its operational properties. The council has signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and has established an action plan setting out measures to reduce carbon. Past experience from other authorities in the Carbon Management Programme suggests the biggest usage of carbon is from buildings therefore this area offers the greatest scope for carbon reductions and subsequent financial savings. For example, an Energy Audit was carried out at the Stobart Stadium Halton the results of which indicated that through a combination of good housekeeping and some technical improvements, savings of approximately £16,000 from the current £120,000 energy bill could be made. Given the Council's current spend on energy (excluding schools) is in the region of £1.5m, a similar reduction across the Council's buildings could save in the region of £150,000 to £200,000 per annum.

Runcorn Town Hall is presently being refurbished and as part of this exercise an Energy appraisal has been carried out in order that maximum efficiencies are achieved. Similarly the Building Schools for the Future Programme will also provide further opportunities to create more energy efficient school premises over the five-year life span of the action plan

Required maintenance information is compiled using the results of condition surveys. Funding is targeted at urgently required maintenance and significant success has been achieved in this category of work, however, there is still a considerable amount of less urgent work identified as requiring action over the next five years.

The resulting Required Maintenance figure across the council's portfolio of land and property assets stands at £4.9m (at 31/03/07) which compares to the 2005/06 out turn value of £5.2.

Looking ahead, the intention is to maintain a balance of 70% programmed maintenance to 30% response maintenance on the council's operational estate

The council continues to review various options with a view to addressing the required maintenance liability on its operational portfolio (excluding schools) within a period of 5 to 8 years.

The following approaches could be used to address these options:

- delivery of further office accommodation rationalisation opportunities
- disposal of property that is surplus to operational requirements
- re-investment of capital receipts from any disposals

The delivery of the council's Building Schools for the Future and Primary Capital Programmes will in the medium term play a key role in addressing the required maintenance on the schools portfolio.

See Appendix 6 for details of NaPPMI indicators.

Statutory & Regulatory Codes

Access to public buildings

The council's 2006/07 submission in respect of Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 156 reported that 59.38% (i.e. 38 out of its 64 existing public buildings [falling within the definition of BVPI 156] were fully accessible to and suitable for disabled people [in accordance with the 1991 Version of the Building Regulations Approved Document M]. For 2007/08 the target has been set at 63.00%.

Access Audits have been completed for the all corporate buildings and Accessibility Plans prepared, although it should be noted that some of these fall outside the Government's definition for BVPI 156. Capital funding in the region of £200k has been approved for the two year period to April 2010 and a programme to target DDA improvements is well under way.

REVIEW AND CHALLENGE

Gap Analysis

Gap Analysis is required to highlight the key property and asset management changes essential to progress from the existing circumstances and allow future property needs and Property Services requirements to be met.

This analysis will be developed through a workshop during 2008/9, involving the Corporate Property Officer, the Asset Management Working Group and Property Services. The analysis will, in summarising the key property issues and changes needed, indicate relative levels of priority in order that informed decisions can be made.

The CPO will examine the results in relation to the performance of the Council's assets and identify any gaps in asset service provision and likely forecasted requirements for the next 3 to 5 years. This will enable a structured consideration of the suitability of an asset, whether it is underused or has become surplus.

It is considered essential that the Council's complete property portfolio be reviewed in a strategic and pro-active manner. Therefore the CPO will develop a rolling review of all the Council's property assets. Each year, a review will take place alongside the annual valuation process. This will also involve consultation with the relevant Strategic Directors, Operational Directors and Portfolio Holder through the Asset Management Working Group, being the immediate stakeholders and users.

Review of Asset Strategy, Property Objectives & Delivery Mechanisms

The process of review is reliant on the gap analysis process, challenging the asset management practices can then provide a more streamlined approach to all property related matters.

Review Of Roles & Responsibilities For Property

Setting up the appropriate groups to carry out the gap analysis should be a priority but will require a genuine commitment to the asset management process with ownership at the most senior management and member levels.

Review Of Decision Making Process

The Asset Management Working Party is the principle decision making body for submission to Management Team and Members where appropriate. The CPO will strengthen the role taking a more prominent position within the council and enforcing the protocols established within the AMWG

Key Challenges In Asset Management Planning

Despite the fact that a formal review process relies on the correct hierarchy being in place, it is possible to identify our ongoing corporate challenges. These are: -

- Respond to the continuing challenge of the CPA Use of Resources requirements for 2008.
- Respond to the new challenges of the CAA requirements for 2009 onward

- Further embed asset management planning with business planning at corporate and service levels. The role and contribution of property needs to be more explicit in business plans by improving the engagement of service managers and Members in asset and capital investment planning.
- Link asset management performance with service delivery performance.
- Use our property portfolio as a driver and enabler of change in the organisation.
- Address the community asset transfer initiative, using it as an opportunity to engage with the community and deliver corporate and service objectives.
- Adequately resource major corporate initiatives, e.g. Office Accommodation Strategy, including home working policies.
- Measuring and benchmarking property performance.
- The development of the capital programme process needs further refinement.
- Further develop the mechanism for corporate prioritisation of all new capital investment needs irrespective of which of the Service Directorates claims precedence.
- Prepare for the impact that full asset depreciation will have when introduced as part of the Whole of Government Accounts agenda.
- Continue to develop an approach to asset management planning which will ensure the AMP is a “living” document that reflects organisational priorities and best practice.
- Use of annual report to review progress and influence programmes

ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

2007 Accommodation Strategy

As part of the asset management process the Council undertook a full review of its occupation of corporate office accommodation including costs, space utilisation and types of ownership. This provided the Council with sufficient information to produce an initial two phased development to accommodate Health and Community in Runcorn Town Hall and John Briggs House. The major refurbishment of Runcorn Town Hall will produce an efficient building in all respects for the next 25 years. A more minor refurbishment of John Briggs House, which is a much smaller traditional building has resulted in a re-organisation of accommodation to meet the needs for the foreseeable future. The principles adopted in the Strategy will be applied to all administrative buildings on a programme base.

Asset Transfer Policy

This will be developed through a Topic Group of the Policy and Performance Board during 2008/09.

Suitability and Sufficiency Surveys

The non-school suitability assessment, Framework For Determining Suitability And Sufficiency Of Assets (FDSSA) provides a pro forma that enables managers to assess, against set criteria the suitability / sufficiency of the space they presently occupy which will inform the AMWG to allow incorporation in future accommodation requirements.

Depot Reorganisation

Following on from the Accommodation Strategy a review of the Council's depot requirements will be undertaken in 2008/09.

Capital Programme

The council has a five year capital programme, detail of which is contained in the council's Capital Strategy. Prioritisation of schemes is also a part of that strategy. The current disposal strategy requires Property Services to dispose of 2½ million pounds of assets to support the capital programme

Revenue Programme

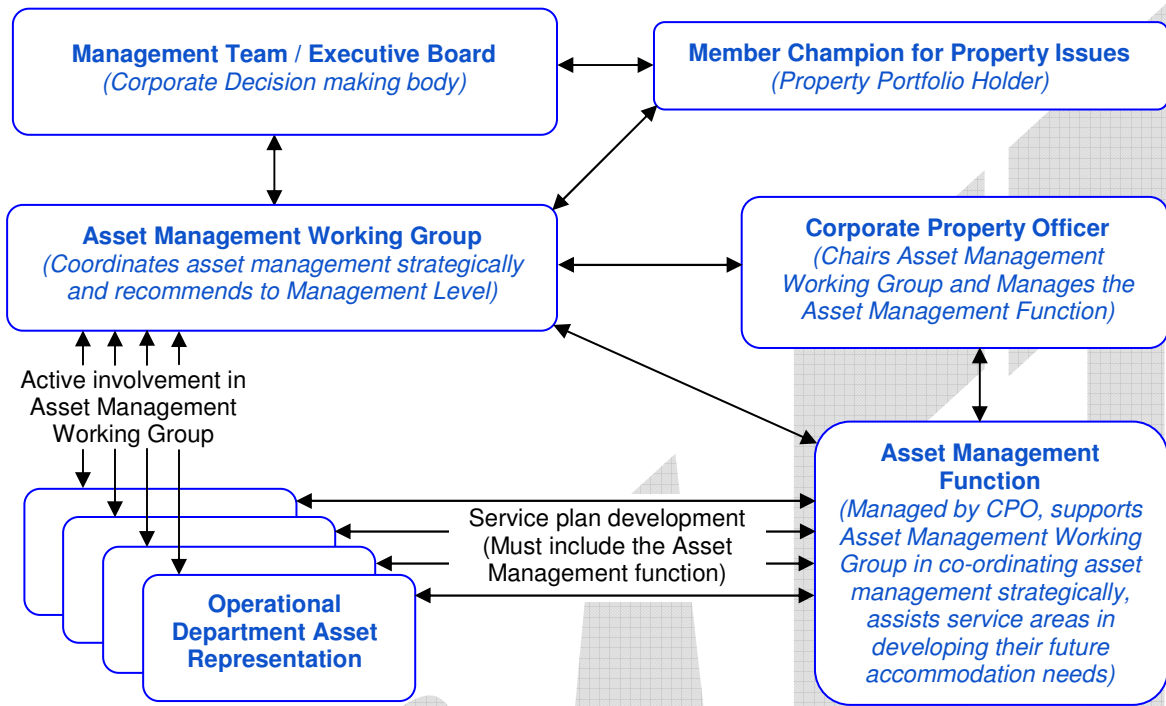
In the past it has not been shared throughout the organisation but will now be reported through the Asset Management Working Group. The programme is formulated from Condition Surveys, but in future will be further influenced by the results of the suitability / sufficiency surveys.

Responsibilities For Implementation

The Corporate Property Officer in conjunction with the Asset Management Working Group is responsible for implementing all actions. Policy decisions will be developed through the Policy and Performance Board with formal decisions being made by the Executive Board.

* RICS Public Sector Asset Management Guidelines – A Guide To Best Practice (January2008)





This simple structure identifies the key roles and responsibilities that need to be present to facilitate a successful corporate approach to asset management. Clearly there are also many other mechanisms that will need to be in place to enable this structure to succeed, such as consultation methodologies and decision-making structures in the wider organisation. The Council has substantial assets. It is essential that it uses those assets effectively to support its overall priorities.

Timetable For Implementation by the Asset Management Working Group

The following table is a summary of the actions required to deliver good asset management strategy within the council. This is a high level view, indicating priority and timing, of those actions identified in the Action Plan For Asset Management in addition to corporate goals which impact on asset management.

Asset Management Strategy And Plan Actions	Timing	Priority
Undertake a council wide review of property function with emphasis on delivery of service	Immediate	1
Investigate the role of Corporate Landlord (CL), carry out option appraisal for move to CL status. Report to MT	Immediate	1
Produce and implement detailed action plan for developing corporate asset management practices and procedures to meet with CAA compliance (2008/09)	Immediate	1
Incorporate existing and introduce Service Asset Management Plans which must include remaining accommodation efficiency statements	Short	1
Revise and update a council wide Office Accommodation Strategy with a view to make CSR savings of 3% year on year for the next three years	Short	1
Develop, introduce and ensure compliance with improved Capital Appraisal Priority Selection process, previously under utilised	Short	1
Develop and implement a corporately acknowledged maintenance programme for all assets where council has direct maintenance responsibilities	Short	1
Introduce systems to ensure proper maintenance of assets covered by delegated budgets, including schools	Short	1
Develop and deliver improved and extended property and property services performance management systems including data services	Short	1
Develop robust policies to address all environmental issues relating to assets	Short	1
Explore and develop opportunities for shared use with the Council's existing partners and identify other potential partnerships	Short / Medium	2
Undertake Strategic Review of Non-Operational Property	Medium	2
Undertake a programme of portfolio reviews and challenge the use of assets, reporting on their fitness for purpose in meeting corporate objectives.	Medium / Long	2

Link financial and asset planning at strategic and operational levels	Short	2
Develop a Community Buildings Strategy to further transfer of assets to the third sector	Short	2

Timing and Priority Key:

Timing	Definition
Short Term	< 3 years
Medium Term	3 – 5 years
Long Term	> 5 years

Priority	Definition
1	High Priority
2	Medium Priority
3	Low Priority

Overall Programme

Effectively this section of the plan is the next step in the business process and strictly speaking is not a part of the actual Asset Management Plan. If the plan is accepted as a strategy providing a clear statement of direction for the asset base then the programme will ultimately detail works required to move the council forward.

After reviewing the asset base in some detail, relating the practical implication of the plan, specific projects will have to be developed in order to fully implement the strategy. This may need to be in stages having assessed both the corporate objectives and affordability. In any event the programme must be financially robust and fully integrated into the council's overall budget planning.

CONCLUSION

This document is intended to show where and how the council has progressed the asset management function in its business processes, moving to a five year type of planning which is constantly monitored and updated.

Accordingly, the plan indicates organisational arrangements required to move the process forward over the next five year period. This plan must be subject to regular review to ensure that the council, throughout its hierarchy, maintains a strategic approach to the management of its assets. In addition, this will involve the council working with its partners to co-ordinate asset management actions to achieve shared objectives. This Annual Review will be brought to the Policy and Performance Board.

The 2008 AMP details many initiatives where the council's land and property assets contribute to the discharge of the council's strategic aims and objectives. It is about how the council's second most expensive resource (after staff) is managed and developed in such a way as to provide value for money and property that is both fit for purpose and relevant for the council's customers in the next five years and beyond.



It's all happening in Halton

Appendices To The Asset Management Plan 2008

Managing property as a resource for the Borough



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendix 1	Management Team Asset Planning – Terms of Reference	1
Appendix 2	Framework for Determining Suitability and Sufficiency of Assets	4
Appendix 3	Accommodation Criteria	12
Appendix 4	Summary of Assets [To be provided by Concerto Support]	13
Appendix 5	Action Plan for Asset Management (APAM) 2008-11	??
Appendix 6	NaPPMI Reports [To be provided by Concerto Support]	??
Appendix 7	Improved Planning for Property	??

ASSET MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

Purpose of Group

1. To ensure that the Council is operating effectively, it's Asset Management Plan.
2. To ensure that the Council is operating effectively, it's Capital Strategy - in conjunction with the Capital Development Steering Group.
3. To maintain and progress the Council's Land Strategy.
4. To maintain and progress the Council's Accommodation Strategy.
5. To maintain and progress the Council's Maintenance Strategy.

Objectives

- A. To ensure comprehensive and effective Asset Plans and Strategies are produced to enable Members to approve.
- B. To meet all statutory, Government and Council deadlines for the completion of asset and capital plans and strategies, to maximise income from the central government and other sources.
- C. To rigorously evaluate, in conjunction with all relevant bodies, the capital and asset plans, strategies and bids for capital funding and ensure they fulfil the corporate objectives.
- D. To ensure the Council is effective and efficient in the use and management of it's physical assets (including all operational property).
- E. To ensure that the Capital Programme is co-ordinated and delivered both on time, and within budget.
- F. To ensure that each significant capital project has a named project leader who will be accountable for the project from inception to completion.
- G. To provide reports to the appropriate bodies and Members.
- H. Review annually the Asset Management report prepared by Property Services

Membership of the Group

Strategic Director - Children & Young People
Strategic Director - Corporate & Policy
Strategic Director - Environment
Strategic Director – Health & Community
Corporate Property Officer
Operational Director - Legal, Organisation Development & Human Resources
Operational Director - Policy & Performance
Operational Director - Financial Services
Plus co-opted members to provide specialist input as appropriate

FRAMEWORK FOR DETERMINING SUITABILITY AND SUFFICIENCY OF ASSETS

Contents

Introduction	4
Principles Of The Framework	5
Assessment Categories:	5
1 Functional Suitability	5
2 Space Utilisation	7
3 Physical Condition	8
4 Compliance With Statutory Standards.....	9
5 Energy Performance	9
Proposed Overall Ranking Procedure.....	10
Scoring For Assessments	10
Overall Ranking System.....	11

Introduction

The Council has to ensure its estate is efficiently managed and brought to an optimum size and condition consistent with the need for present service delivery and planned future developments. If the Council is to develop an effective approach to asset management, resulting in realistic and cost effective capital programming and asset management planning, it needs its database detailing the extent, value, utilisation and condition of the estate to be as accurate as practicable

The Council has never undertaken a suitability and sufficiency survey of its non-educational property portfolio other than minor consideration as part of the accommodation review in 2006

This paper is not designed to set standards or priorities but rather, to outline an appropriate, objective methodology, bringing together various inter-related elements of property appraisal into a single system; the Asset Suitability Template.

This appraisal includes assessments relating to:-

- an asset's ability to provide the services required, measured as the functional suitability
- how the asset is occupied, measured as space utilisation
- the ongoing maintenance implications, measured as the physical condition
- the statutory requirements applicable to the asset, measured as statutory compliance
- how energy savings have been implemented, measured as energy performance

The collection of this data is designed to provide the Corporate Property Officer with an indication of the asset's future procurement options as well as its suitability for future investment. Where any category returns a ranking of C or D, regardless of overall ranking, this will be reported to the Corporate Asset Management Working Party.

An asset weighting (multiplier) will be a key tool in determining whether an asset is or should become surplus to requirements and is shown at the end of the document.

Principles Of The Framework

The various elements of one survey may interact with elements of another, thus it is essential that double counting is avoided. The following approach should therefore be applied: -

- i) If the physical condition and/or functional suitability assessments result in a breach of statutory or safety requirements, the defect should be recorded against statutory compliance;
- ii) If the physical condition is reasonable, but the functional performance is poor, the costs should be attributed to functional suitability;
- iii) If the poor physical condition leads to low functional performance the cost should be attributed to physical condition.

Consistency in assessment across the wide range of properties within the Council's portfolio is essential if useful comparisons are to be made, consequently The Communities & Local Government A-B-C-D appraisal system will be adopted.

The success of any property appraisal exercise will depend primarily upon establishing an effective team approach, involving representation for the service team responsible for the operational management of the asset, together with support from professional disciplines. Any survey should be carried out as objectively as possible. It is accepted however that in assessing function and space, the surveys may rely heavily upon subjective assessment.

Assessment Categories:

1 Functional Suitability

A 'whole site' assessment should be undertaken for each property/facility. Such an overview will provide the Council with valuable information that identifies which facilities are of vital importance to effective and efficient service delivery, and will enable a list of assets to be drawn up that require further investigation.

The following factors will need to be considered: -

- The location of the asset in terms of its relationship to the centres of population of it's customer base, local transport, amenities, etc
- Site characteristics and access
- Balance of service provision within facility
- Relationship of different service providers using facility

A **departmental** functional suitability assessment will determine how effectively a building (or part of a building) supports the delivery of a specified service.

Key factors that should be considered are: -

- *Space relationships* – the 'critical dimensions' for the function and the relationship of spaces within a facility should be satisfactory

- *Delivery of Services* – the range of services provided should be suitable for the function
- *Amenity (Customers)* – the level of service afforded to customers should be acceptable by modern standards, the public should gain a favourable impression of the facility and external features such as entrances, reception areas, etc should be appropriate to function
- *Amenity (Staff)* – the working conditions of Council staff should also be acceptable by modern standards, the ability to maintain services should not be compromised by poor accommodation
- *Location* – the location of the facility (i.e. in terms of its relationship to other service providers,
- *Environmental conditions* – internal aspects such as heating, lighting, ventilation, noise, etc, should be maintained to an acceptable level
- *Overall effectiveness* – the overall balance of service provision within the facility should not constitute an impediment to its function

Functional suitability ranking

The ranking, although essentially subjective, will be a hybrid of both the whole site and departmental assessments, and will indicate: -

- A High degree of satisfaction**
- B Acceptable / reasonable; no major changes necessary to facility**
- C Below an acceptable standard**
- D Unacceptable in its present condition**
- X An additional rating added to the D ranking should be used to indicate that the facility is so below standard (or so impossible or impractical to improve) that nothing but total rebuild or replacement will suffice**
- Y An additional rating added to either C or D ranking where Y is the time that situation can be tolerated**
- Z An additional rating added to either C or D ranking where Z is the cost to raise to rank of B**

Where a facility scores a C or D ranking, an assessment should be made to consider: -

- i.) how long conditions C or D can be allowed to continue (by determining this, the urgency to improve functional standards can be gauged)
- ii.) an indication of the costs that may be required in bringing the facility to a standard which would achieve a B ranking

Where this category returns a ranking of C or D, regardless of overall ranking, this will be reported to the Corporate Asset Management Working Party.

2 Space Utilisation

Space utilisation is a key contributor towards efficient asset management. The Council's objective has to be to hold no more space than is absolutely necessary to satisfy the reasonable demands of the present function of a facility with due regard to future planned requirements. (Up to 5 years).

The identification of under-used space and/or spare capacity and its costs, closely associated with appropriate feasibility and rationalisation studies, will enable potentially substantial revenue savings to be made. These savings should then be reinvested to enhance or extend other services. Because of the substantial savings that can be made through eliminating under-used space, and taking advantage of spare capacity, space utilisation exercises should be given a high priority in assessment of the council's asset base.

It must be appreciated that space utilisation is an area that is both complex and sensitive, as it may touch issues arising from territorialism and departmentalism within the authority. For this reason it is critically important that all users understand the true costs of the space they occupy and the benefits that can arise from space rationalisation. Space utilisation exercises usually require the expertise of those with necessary planning and design skills together with end-users' knowledge of service delivery requirements and constraints, in a close working environment.

For this reason, it is deemed appropriate that a 'broad brush' approach be used, based upon pragmatic observation and experience of service requirements. A space utilisation study constitutes a 'snapshot' in time. Any resulting works will be dependent of the nature of the service affected and completed within a tight timescale.

The results of on-the-spot observations are brought together on a plan of a facility and the areas of under-utilisation are then identified and agreed. From this, floor areas can be measured and potential savings in property overheads ascertained for reporting to the Corporate Asset Management Working Party.

At this stage, initial reaction to the plans may be an attempt to justify and defend the present situation. Indications may be offered as to just how impossible it is to release space because the areas are too small, too dispersed or locked due to the structure of the building, positioning of stairwells, and so on. In most situations, however, space can be 'unlocked' if functions are re-organised and brought into line with requirement for effective service delivery. A more determined and radical approach will often give greater rewards.

Space utilisation has shown it may be possible to relocate a function, service or whole department into the space released by another. It may also be possible to generate capital through the re-use or disposal of redundant sites, and additional revenue may be obtained from letting spare accommodation to other users or reducing the general costs associated with property. A case could be made for a spend to save solution.

The following scale will be used in the final ranking calculation:-

Empty	0
Underused	2
Overcrowded	3
Adequate	4

3 Physical Condition

A broad knowledge of the physical condition of the asset is an essential factor in the whole of effective asset management planning and has strong links to the Corporate Capital Strategy.

An appraisal should be carried out for each physical block (taken from data collated during the programmed condition surveys). The average overall condition of each element should be estimated to be in one of four categories, ranging from A to D, with a rating X applied where the condition falls into the categories C or D.

Broadly, the ranking is categorised as: -

- A The block can be expected to perform adequately to its full normal life**
- B The block is sound, operationally safe and exhibits only minor deterioration**
- C The block is operational but major repair or replacement will be needed soon, i.e. within three years (building elements) and one year (engineering-based elements)**
- D The block runs a serious risk of becoming unusable**
- X A rating added to C or D to indicate that it is impossible to improve without replacement**

Following categorisation of the asset, the costs of appropriate measures to upgrade a C or D condition to the B level minimum should be recorded. Condition B is deemed as an operationally acceptable standard for all building and engineering elements.

A vital outcome of this assessment is the need to realistically consider whole life costs within asset management and capital investment and apply the conclusions.

4 Compliance With Statutory Standards

To bring an asset up to an acceptable level of safety can often be both costly and disruptive. However a property assessment would be incomplete without any indication of the level of future investment required to comply with statutory standards such as fire safety or the Disability Discrimination Act.

A broad-brush approach should be applied in order to relate the existing condition of the property to the following classifications: -

- A The asset complies fully with all latest statutory requirements and BS guidance (invariably a new building)**
- B Existing buildings that comply with statutory requirements**
- C A building which falls short of A and B**
- D Areas within a building that are significantly below either A or B**
- X A further assessment to be added to C or D to indicate, because of the nature of the building, improvements to structural fire precautions and means of escape are either impracticable or too expensive to implement**

5 Energy Performance

Energy performance is an increasingly important factor in determining the overall efficiency of a property.

The part of the framework appraisal is designed to target attention to specific areas, using the following definitions: -

- A The asset is constructed in accordance with the requirements of latest Building Regulation documentation and Approved Document L – Conservation of Fuel and power**
- B A building which has undergone a co-ordinated conservation programme resulting in: -**
 - i) thermal insulation (including draught-proofing) to economic limits with effective modern controls of heating**
 - ii) all services examined and changed (where necessary) to maximise efficiency**
 - ii) equipment regularly maintained and a record of reasonable energy management**

- C A building in which some energy measures have been incorporated largely on an ad hoc basis. Only a low level of equipment maintenance and some energy management measures in place.**
- D A building in which no energy conservation has been carried out. Energy management is non-existent.**

Proposed Overall Ranking Procedure

Once the assets have been assessed under the above categories it is possible for the Corporate Property Officer to produce a relative indication of the assets overall suitability.

The method proposed is based on a “paired comparison” approach. This is where a team of decision makers consider the merits of any two items and compare the contribution each makes relatively to the overall objective.

Weighting factors will be applied in line with the needs and requirements of the council, most often these will be as identified within the corporate asset management plan.

Scoring For Assessments

For assessments of Functional Suitability, Physical Condition, Compliance with Statutory Standards and Energy Performance, scores are :-

Assessment	Score
A	5
B	4
C	3
D	2
C(X)	1
D(X)	0

For assessments of Space Utilisation, scores are :-

Assessment	Score
Empty	0
Underused	2
Overcrowded	3
Adequate	4

Suggested weighting, in line with the required prioritisation of the asset management plan would be as follows:-

Category	Weighting
Functional Suitability	0.49
Physical Condition	0.27
Statutory Standards	0.10
Energy Usage	0.08
Space Utilisation	0.06

(These weightings can be amended whilst retaining the principles outlined here, however the total must always be 1.00)

Overall Ranking System

By summing the five weighted scores, the overall ranking for the property may be ascertained: -

Overall Score	Overall Rank	Definition
> 4.50	A	High degree of satisfaction
3.50 – 4.50	B	Acceptable / reasonable; no major changes necessary to facility
2.50 – 3.49	C	Below an acceptable standard
1.50 – 2.49	D	Unacceptable in its present condition
0.50 – 1.49	C (Y/Z)	Below an acceptable standard, where separate assessment of Y/Z should be made. Y is the time that situation can be tolerated and Z the cost to raise to rank of B
< 0.50	D (X/Y/Z)	Unacceptable in its present condition, where separate assessment of X/Y/Z should be made. X to be used to indicate that the facility is so below standard (or so impossible or impractical to improve) that nothing but total rebuild or replacement will suffice or Y should be time that situation can be tolerated and Z the cost to raise to rank of B

ACCOMMODATION CRITERIA

In the event of a Directorate identifying a need for additional staff resources the following decision process should be followed. In doing so the aim is to identify the best corporate solution for accommodating the new requirement.

1. Are the functions of the new posts suitable for tele-working, home-working or hot-desking?

If Not

2. Are other teams within that Directorate suitable for transferring to one of the above working methods in order to free up the required space?

If Not

3. Are there any areas of accommodation within the Directorate that are yet to be opened out into an open plan environment which may produce the required space?

If Not

4. Is there space available in office accommodation currently owned and occupied by the Borough Council?

If Not

5. Is there space available in any other suitable Halton owned property?

If Not

6. Is there space available in premises already rented by the Council?

If Not

7. Is there an arrangement can be entered into with Partner organizations to jointly deal with mutual accommodation issues?

If not then premises of the most appropriate tenure will be sought as close as possible to existing centres of operation. The Executive Board Member for Corporate & Policy will have to be satisfied that the above process has been rigorously followed and will need to approve the proposed solution to all accommodation applications.

APPENDIX 4

To be provided by Concerto Support Services



ACTION PLAN FOR ASSET MANAGEMENT (APAM) 2008-11

Corporate Considerations

The Corporate Objectives			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Ensure the Asset Management Plan and all decisions relating to land and property concur with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Corporate goals and objectives of the Council ii) The Corporate Plan iii) The Council's Procurement Policy iv) Departmental Service Plans 	Co-ordination achieved through asset management processes and regulated by Council Standing Orders	AMP 2008 published in February 2008. All Council documents relevant to AMP addressed, all Departmental Service Plans to have the AMP section approved prior to publication	CPO OD AMWG DM
Develop policy response to third sector transfers	PPB Topic Group	Detailed appraisal of the required business plans as part of the Asset Management processes	CPO AMWG

Financial Context			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Ensure expenditure on all assets reflects Best Value. DCLG aims & objectives – value for money, financial return, service return	Regulated by Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.	New national PI's to be used to review.	CPO OD DM
Ensure asset management assists in achieving Comprehensive Spending Review savings	Identification of efficiencies as part of asset management processes	Continually identify efficiency targets and log achievements Concerto P2.net	CPO

Organisation			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Ensure asset management is understood at corporate level and that strategic input is received as required	Continuous involvement as part of asset management processes	Initiate quarterly Asset Management Working Group (AMWG) meetings during 2008/11.	CPO AMWG
Ensure that everyone involved in asset management planning is aware of their roles and responsibilities	Continuous involvement as part of asset management processes	Continue to ensure and enhance understanding of roles during 2008/11	CPO
CPO to make comment on all Executive Board and Management Team reports relating to land/property issues	Executive Board and Management Team minutes have been made available	CPO to attend all Executive Board and Management Team meetings where property issues are discussed	CPO EB MT

Performance Management			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Collect and report on local performance indicators (PI's)	Not previously collected	Local PI's to be developed and collected during 2008/11	CPO
Adopt the new NaPPMI indicators, where appropriate. Monitor continuing IPF consultation.	ODPM 'Best Value' indicators were discontinued. New NaPPMI national PI's evaluated.	Implement relevant NaPPMI indicators introduced in 2007/8 throughout 2008/11 Link new PI's through Concerto P2.net in 2008/11	CPO
Continue use of the Carbon Trust programme	Energy efficiency works carried out in capital programme for Runcorn Town Hall	Continue energy efficiency initiatives through the capital programme, extend study to programmed maintenance works through 2008/11 Detailed analysis to be carried out on turnout results at Runcorn Town Hall, John Briggs House and Catalyst House	CPO PS

Data Management			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Finalise development and roll-out of asset management software – Concerto P2.net. Ensure data entry accuracy.	Major modules of software in place, capacity problems have caused some delays in data entry.	Finalise data entry to existing modules. Thereafter develop modules to other asset management processes, e.g. DDA database, asbestos database links to GIS, CAD package.	CPO PS

Asset Planning			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Develop asset strategy for all operational buildings. Reflect shared service property, remote working, shared use of facilities, strategic partnerships and other possible crosscutting initiatives	Evolving strategy for accommodation of operational services.	Continue to monitor developments, including, and reflect evolving operational asset strategy during 2008/11	CPO MT AMWG
Review Depot requirements	Development from the Accommodation Strategy	Look at and appraise the various options during 2008/11. Carry out essential maintenance only in the meantime	EB MT
Refine policy with regard to Surplus Assets	Various properties identified	Carry out full option appraisal and publish results with regard to all surplus property. Continuous review to produce programme of disposal	CPO PS AMWG
Develop Asset Management Plan (AMP) and Action Plan For Asset Management (APAM)	AMP 2002 in place. Initial planning for AMP 2008/11 undertaken	AMP 2008 and APAM 2008/11 published in February 2008. APAM to be updated annually	CPO AMWG
Ensure that all internal stakeholders are aware of the AMP and how they in turn can contribute to the AMP	Develop through AMWG	Further embedding as part of asset management process during 2008/11	CPO MT AMWG
Ensure that the AMP is closely linked to financial planning and budgeting and integrates with the Capital Strategy	Continuous as part of asset management processes	Continuous as part of asset management processes	CPO MT AMWG

Communication & Consultation			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Ensure that a copy of the AMP is available for inspection on the Council's web-site. Ensure that hard copies are available for those who do not have access to a computer	The AMP 2002 was controlled issue, with both electronic and hard copies available.	The AMP 2008/11 published in February 2008. Thereafter to be made available on website and in hard copy	CPO C&M
Ensure consultation takes place with internal & external stakeholders and users regarding property-related issues	To be channelled through AMWG.	Attendance at various service groups etc through 2008/11	CPO

Implementation of Programme			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Implement Capital Programme	Ongoing as part of asset management processes	Ensure effective implementation in terms of budget and time. Management Team scrutiny	CPO PS MT EB
Implement Programmed Maintenance	Ongoing as part of asset management processes	Ensure effective implementation in terms of budget and time.	CPO PS
Implement items identified in this APAM during 2008/11	Development of Plan	Implement APAM items during 2008/11	CPO

Project Appraisal And Prioritisation			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Promote, where possible, shared use of facilities and partnership opportunities with other internal and/or external parties	Sharing with Halton & St Helens PCT and The 5 Boroughs Partnership	Continue to investigate any other possibilities with existing partners and pursue potential new partnerships during 2008/11	CPO MT EB

Project Appraisal And Prioritisation			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
When considering option appraisal and project design, take into account whole life costing and other prioritisation criteria	These items have been increasingly researched, considered and reported in recent capital appraisals	Improve consideration of whole life costing issues, developing a whole life costing protocol, and other prioritisation criteria during 2008/11	CPO PS

Monitoring And Review

General			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Quarterly review of APAM to ensure actions are being implemented. Annual review and update of APAM outturn and/or actions		Quarterly and annual review with consequent update of APAM as appropriate	CPO AMWG
AMWG to refer any identified issues of concern to the Management Team and Cabinet as necessary	AMWG only exists from 2008	AMWG to refer any issues of concern to Management Team and Executive.	CPO AMWG
Monitor and review both forward planning and prioritisation of investment in Council assets	Ongoing as part of asset management process	Continue to monitor during 2008/11	CPO AMWG
Capital Programme monitoring - monthly by Capital Development Steering Group (CDSG) and quarterly by Management Team / Executive Board		Reports delivered to Management Team and Executive Board quarterly. Continue to monitor during 2008/11	CPO CDSG AMWG MT EB
Monitor Programmed Maintenance and Response Maintenance including comparison of both	Costs of both are available at all times via the Concerto P2.net system.	Continue to monitor during 2008/11	CPO PS
Monitor all NaPPMI and other local PI's	New NaPPMI national PI's evaluated.	Introduce, where appropriate, local PI's and monitor NaPPMI during 2008/11	CPO PS

Property Reviews			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Implement a programme of Property Reviews	Property reviews now in place individually	Formalise Property Review Programme and present reports to AMWG	CPO AMWG
Carry out annual inspections of operational and investment properties (latter let on full repairing terms) to check condition / identify repairs, dilapidations, Health & Safety issues etc	Undertaken on informal basis only.	To become a specific element of the programme Undertake annually during 2008/11	CPO PS
Inspect all tenanted investment properties on lease expiry	Undertaken on informal basis only.	Inspect all investment properties on lease expiry as a specific element of the programme	CPO PS
Carry out project completion evaluations on all major capital projects 6-months after works complete	Undertaken on informal basis only.	All schemes to be formally evaluated 6-months after completion. Lessons learned to be recorded on Concerto P2.net	Project Officers PS(FM) CPO
Annual Inspection / Survey of all properties (excl. investment) to be undertaken to maintain an accurate medium term financial plan	Previous condition survey information used, costs not current	Develop module within Concerto P2.net during 2008 – Data to be used to formulate Programmed Maintenance Plan	PS CPO
Conduct and review Suitability and Sufficiency surveys on the corporate portfolio	Survey Procedure approved at MT in January 2008	Carry out surveys commencing in 2008, review as necessary.	PS CPO AMWG
Accommodation review	Last carried out in 2006, various relocations resulted and refurbishment of Runcorn Town Hall. Leases renegotiated.	Review success / impact of remote working, shared services and shared use initiatives during 2008/11	CPO MT
Transfer of Assets to the third sector	Policy to be developed by PPB.	Continuous assessment in conjunction with service departments, with regard to both the Asset Transfer Policy and the Surplus Asset Policy	CPO AMWG
Carry out appraisals of land / property licences to maximise income and identify surplus assets for disposal	Management of grazing licences, garage plots and the like., regularised	Continue rolling appraisal during 2008/11	PS

Property Reviews			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Monitor Investment portfolio in relation to performance / returns and to review land / property leases to ensure any returns are maximised	Performance / returns monitored as part of asset management processes	Continue to monitor returns during 2008/11. Review all leases during 2008/11	CPO PS
AMWG annual review of property portfolio, to include: 1) review of operational assets' condition, suitability & sufficiency etc 2) review of non-operational assets to check reasons for holding assets remain valid 3) analyse investment portfolio returns 4) identify vacant / surplus assets for disposal	Ongoing as part of asset management processes	Continue annual reviews in 2008/11. Identify surplus properties for disposal. Confirm that property holdings address the Corporate Objectives	CPO AMWG

Statutory Considerations			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Ensure DDA data is recorded and regularly reviewed; and any public complaints and other compliance issues resolved	DDA works five year programme now three years complete. Reviews ongoing as part of asset management processes	Final two year s of programme to be addressed 2008/10 Continue the monitoring of compliance recording any access issues / complaints. On-line reporting system to be developed to be considered	PS
Ensure Asbestos register is kept up to date and annual inspections are undertaken to meet statutory regulations	Inspections undertaken and paper based system in place. Review ongoing as part of asset management processes	Integrate asbestos register electronically as part of Concerto P2.net in 2008/11	PS
Ensure Legionella training, risk assessments and monitoring checks are carried out and records kept	Review ongoing as part of asset management processes	Continue all Legionella-related items during 2008/11	PS DM
Fire Risk Assessments for all operational buildings	Review ongoing as part of asset management processes	Continue review during 2008/11 as part of asset management processes	PS DM

Statutory Considerations			
<i>Asset Management Task(s)</i>	<i>Outturn Data 2007-08</i>	<i>Action - Assessing Success 2008-11</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Ensure that Health & Safety risk assessments are reviewed and updated as required (at least annually)	Ongoing as part of asset management processes	Continue review during 2008/11 as part of asset management processes	CPO DM

Key To Abbreviations

Internal organisation

AMWG = Asset Management Working Group

C&M = Communications & Marketing

CDSG = Capital Development Steering Group

CPO = Corporate Property Officer (Ian Leivesley)

DM = All Divisional Managers

External organisation

DCLG = Department for Communities and Local Government

NaPPMI = National Property Performance Management Initiative (formerly known as the COPROP initiative)

Other

AMP = Asset Management Plan 2008-11

DDA = Disability Discrimination Act 1995

MT = Council Management Team

OD = All Operational Directors

PS = Property Services

PS(FM) = Property Services Facilities Management

EB = Executive Board

IPF = Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA)

PI = Performance Indicator

UPRN = Unique Property Reference Number

APPENDIX 6

To be provided by Concerto Support Services



IMPROVED PLANNING FOR PROPERTY**Property Performance Factor Assessment**

All assets should meet or address corporate key themes detailed within The Corporate Plan 2006 – 2011 helping to deliver the council's priorities thus improving both efficiency and effectiveness.

The following factors must be addressed for each asset on an individual basis:

Condition

The condition survey for the asset gives an overall condition (category A-D), for the purpose of this procedure each category is given a score as follows:

Condition	Score
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1

Legislative

The various statutory requirements applicable to assets are given a score as follows:

Legionella

Factor	Score
Current Legionella Risk Assessment Survey	3
No Legionella Risk Assessment Survey	0
All actions in survey addressed	1
Any actions outstanding	0

Asbestos

Factor	Score
Current Type 2 Asbestos Survey	3
Current Type 1 Asbestos Survey	2
No Asbestos Survey	0
All actions in survey addressed	1
Any actions outstanding	0

Fire Risk

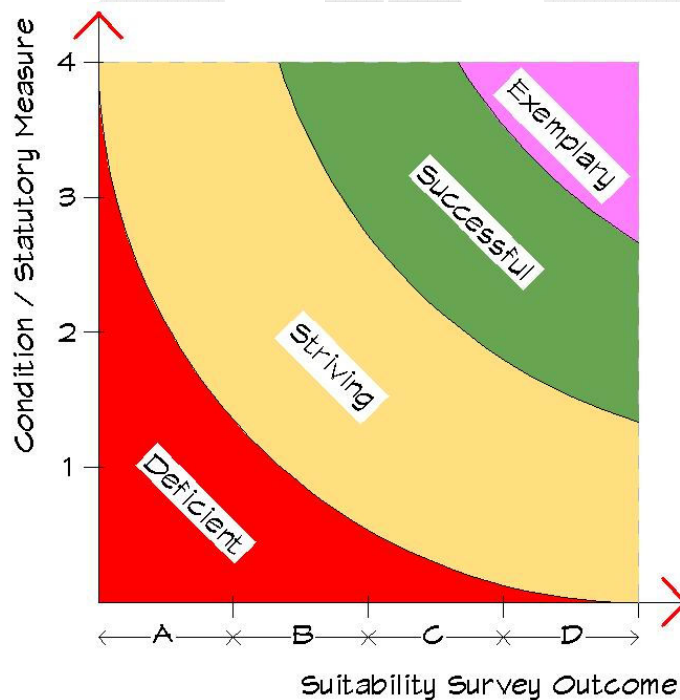
Factor	Score
Current Fire Risk Assessment	3
No Fire Risk Assessment	0
All actions in assessment addressed	1
Any actions outstanding	0

Access Audit (DDA)

Factor	Score
Current Access Audit	2
No Access Audit	0
All actions in audit addressed	2
Outstanding Priority A Items	0
Outstanding Priority B Items	0
Outstanding Priority C Items	1

The scores within each section are to be added together, each section total should then be added and averaged, this score will enable the asset to be placed in the Property Performance Factor diagram (see below), measured against the Suitability Ranking (Framework For Determining Suitability And Sufficiency Of Assets), which will allow future actions to be determined.

Property Performance Factor Diagram



Specific Considerations

The system is generic, it is appreciated that there may be specific comments or questions that will apply to some assets. Any comment regarding future plans, both for the service and asset should be noted and external influences such as leasing agreements detailed.

Grading Illustration

Deficient

Consider disposal, the asset will have poor suitability and both its condition and compliance with statutory duty would require large financial investment.

In considering disposal, due regard must be given to how the service will be delivered if the asset is disposed of. Additionally, covenants or other restrictions on alternative use must be accounted for or alternatively if there is potential for alternative use within the authority.

If it is not possible for the service to be delivered in an alternative manner then the investment will have to be made.

Assets should not be retained purely for political gain or sentiment.

Striving

If the service need is great enough to justify retention of the asset, then funding needs to be identified to allow improvement in condition and statutory compliance and/or suitability. Any investment should be measured against the value of the asset and the cost of replacement.

If service need cannot be demonstrated then the asset should be considered in the same way as a deficient asset.

Successful

These assets are providing good service and are performing well, however there may be scope for improvement and in any event should not be allowed to deteriorate. Investment will still be required to address condition and any changes in the council's business methods.

Exemplary

Exemplary assets can be considered as low priority for immediate action but should always be monitored to ensure that performance is maintained at a high level.

Essentially these properties will be less than five years old or will have been refurbished to meet need.

CORPORATE AND SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Any options appraisal exercise must have due regard to all the council's objectives and the individual service plans. Whilst assets can be measured the process must not be carried out in isolation.

REPORT TO:	Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	3 rd June 2008
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Directorate Corporate & Policy
SUBJECT:	The Disability Discrimination Act – The Next Steps
WARDS:	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The topic was chosen to consider whether the Council is adequately fulfilling its responsibilities under the requirements of the Disability Discrimination legislation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

The report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 On 2nd December 1996 the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 brought in measures to prevent discrimination against disabled people. The duties on service providers were introduced in three stages: -

- Since 2nd December 1996 it has been unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- From 1st October 1999 service providers have to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services; and
- From 2004 service providers have to make 'reasonable adjustments' to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access.

- 3.1.2 The Equality and Human Rights Commission states:

'An employer, education provider or service provider has a duty to make reasonable adjustments where a provision, criterion or practice, or any physical feature of premises occupied by them, places a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled. They must take reasonable steps to prevent that disadvantage. It isn't possible for them to justify not making adjustments that are reasonable.'

- 3.1.3 If the Council fails to undertake reasonable adjustments and an individual feels that they have experienced discrimination, then they

can use both the Human Rights Act and Disability Discrimination Act to bring a case before the courts.

3.2 Progress on DDA compliance

3.2.1 In 2002 the Council undertook access audits of all its buildings to establish the extent of their compliance with the Act. A range of remedial works were identified which were costed, programmed for completion according to their relative priority, and over £1.5 million in total was provided to finance the programme of works between 2004/05 and 2009/10.

Table 1 – Programme of DDA compliance works.

Note - The figures relate to actual construction costs and excluded associated professional fees.

Year	£
2004 - 05	£ 332,888
2005 - 06	£ 235,105
2006 - 07	£ 291,371
2007 - 08	£ 286,472
2008 - 09	£ 169,674*
2009 - 10	£ 234,510*
<u>TOTAL</u>	£1,550,020

* *Works currently being undertaken or scheduled for completion.*

2.2.1 The 2007/08 Halton Borough Council - Best Value Performance Indicator 156 set a target of 63% of buildings to be fully DDA compliant by 31st March 2008 and this figure was exceeded.

3.3 Major refurbishment or repair works

3.3.1 These invariably require Building Regulation approval which in turn require that such works are fully DDA compliant. Major schemes like the refurbishment of Runcorn Town Hall for example have thus involved significant modifications to the lifts, the provision of disabled toilet and washing facilities as well as ramped access to the building.

3.4 Findings of Site Visits and Interviews

3.4.1 Site visits were undertaken to review progress with DDA remedial works to buildings as well as to assess the effectiveness of local management of accommodation from a DDA viewpoint.

A number of management issues were identified, particularly concerning the safety of disabled persons during emergency situations. A full summary of the findings of these site visits can be found within Appendix 1,

3.4.2 Building modifications

From the properties inspected it was evident that investment had been made to remove physical obstacles. The refurbishment of Widnes Library was considered to be a good example of how an existing building can be adapted to allow access for disabled persons.

It was noted that a number of lower priority works had not yet been completed, an example of such works include the replacement of wall and floor coverings in order to create contrasting surface finishes.

In order to ensure value for money and to ensure that limited available resources are used in a cost effective manner, these works will be completed when the existing materials are deemed to have reached the end of their natural life span.

3.4.3 Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The safe evacuation of disabled persons during emergency situations needs to be improved and developed following approval on 7 June 2005 of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO). Concerns were identified during inspections and interviews concerning the ease by which disabled persons could safely and speedily evacuate some buildings.

As a result a meeting was organised with a representative from Cheshire Fire Authority and a number of key measures were identified for implementation:

- The installation of a final method of evacuating persons of limited mobility must be considered by the Council. This would ideally be in the form of evacuation chairs which should only be deployed by appointed fire marshals and operated by trained members of staff.
- The development of a 'buddy' system for persons requiring physical assistance. The 'buddy' must stay with the person requiring assistance until either, the emergency services arrive or specialist equipment is deployed. Any appointed person should be fully trained in the deployment and operation of any equipment to be used in an emergency situation i.e. evacuation chair.
- Consideration should be given for the use of two-way radios or mobile phones during any evacuation procedure. These should be on constant charge and again issued by appointed fire marshals in the event of any emergency procedure.

- The development of Personal Evacuation Plans for all disabled Council employees or regular disabled users of Council facilities.
- A methods should be in place to sweep any Council building in order to ensure that all persons are accounted for. During the sweep of the building all fire marshals must be reminded to undertake a final check of the refuge areas in order to establish if any persons require assistance.
- Appropriate signage should be erected to communicate to building users the location of safe refuge areas. These areas must be inspected during the final sweep of the building during emergency situations.
- A system of monitoring of people who may require assistance in public buildings such as libraries, community centres etc should be developed and implemented. The clear identification of refuge areas together with a search of the premises by appointed fire marshals will ensure that all persons are accounted for and appropriate assistance offered.

3.4.4 Disabled Toilet Facilities

The site inspections and discussions revealed that many of the Council's toilet facilities were not adequately monitored. Alarm systems were operated on a local sounder arrangement. This relies on appointed helpers being within close proximity of the facilities in order to identify a person requiring attention.

A system of remote monitoring needs to be developed in order that assistance can be made available at the earliest opportunity. We envisage that this will require all alarms being raised at a main reception or security office.

The maintenance of the alarm system also needs to be undertaken on a regular basis. In addition frequent inspections need to be completed to ensure that cords have not been tied up, sounders are fully functional etc.

3.4.5 Secondary Use of Council Owned Buildings

A typical example of a secondary use of a building would be its occasional use as a polling station during either local or national elections. All polling stations need to be reviewed for DDA compliance if this was not done in 2002.

It should be noted however that before the May 2008 local elections a total of 70 drop counter voting booths were purchased and installed at polling stations throughout the borough.

3.5 Recommendations

- 3.5.1 The £1.14 million investment made by the Council to 31st March 2008 has improved access and secured reasonable standards of health and safety for persons in or about 63% of the Councils buildings. The

Councils ongoing commitment will ensure programme completion by 31st March 2010.

- 3.5.2 All major refurbishment or maintenance works are automatically DDA compliant as they meet all Building Regulation requirements.
- 3.5.3 The development of appropriate emergency evacuation procedures are currently being developed and implemented for each council building.
- 3.5.4 The emergency alarms in disabled toilet facilities need to be checked to ensure that they will produce an immediate response when activated and that a regime of regular inspections and maintenance of equipment is implemented.
- 3.5.5 If not already undertaken in 2002, polling stations need to be surveyed for DDA compliance in order that any essential remedial works are prioritised and undertaken during the remaining two years of the programme.

3.6 Conclusions

- 3.6.1 As required by the Disability Discrimination Act, the Council is taking reasonable steps and investing substantial sums to ensure that no people with disabilities have substantially disadvantaged access to Council owned buildings. Furthermore, by 31st March 2010, all Council buildings are expected to be fully DDA compliant.
- 3.6.2 Local management of buildings however, particularly from the viewpoint of emergencies arising involving people with mobility difficulties, requires constant review, training of staff and general reinforcement.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Failure to make reasonable adjustments and improving accessibility to our building stock would be in breach of the Council's Equality and Diversity policies.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Failure to undertake reasonable adjustments to our building stock could lead to an individual bringing a case before the courts under the Human Rights and/or Disability Discrimination Act.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - Providing access to facilities to enable children and young people to achieve their maximum potential.
- 6.2 **Corporate Effectiveness and Efficient Service Delivery** - Delivery of services in a fair, equal, accessible way to all residents.

- 6.3 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - In providing access to employment opportunity.
- 6.4 **A Healthy Halton** - Removing the barriers for disabled people ensuring ready access to a wide range of social, community and housing services and cultural and sporting activities that enhance their quality of life.
- 6.5 **A Safer Halton** - Creating and sustaining better neighbourhoods that are well designed, built and maintained and valued by the people who use them.
- 6.6 **Halton's Urban Renewal** - To ensure that Halton designs and maintains high levels of accessibility to places and spaces.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 Halton Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in everything that it does and to eliminating inequality and discrimination wherever it can.
- 7.2 By ensuring that Halton's buildings are fully accessible will ensure that services can be delivered in a fair, equal and accessible way to all residents of the borough.

Property Inspection Summary Report

Purpose of Inspection: To gain an insight into the issues relating to accessibility together with management policies relating to persons with a physical, mental or sensory impairment

Attendees: Cllr C Loftus, Cllr B Bryant & John Gannon. Various building managers were interviewed to ascertain the level of consideration given to disabled persons using the building.

Date: Thursday 29th August

The purpose of the visit was to establish future priorities relating to the removal of physical barriers and development of management policies.

The persons undertaking the visits included Cllr C Loftus, Cllr B Bryant and John Gannon of Property Services. The properties were randomly selected and were chosen for their different usages, however all were available/accessible to members of the public. We must note that the changing rooms at Widnes Recreation Ground does not offer public toilet facilities and are only used by individuals using the pitch facilities.

None of the occupants/building managers were informed of the visits in order that a true reflection of all accessibility issues, together with the daily use of the building, could be established.

Properties Inspected

- Halton Lea Library
- Grangeway Community Centre
- Widnes Library
- Widnes Recreation Ground Changing Rooms

1.0 Key Findings and Areas of Potential Improvement

1.1 Physical Barriers

It was established that considerable building works have been undertaken in order to remove physical barriers and to improve escape in the event of an emergency. It was noted however that a number of works (identified as low priority) had not been completed.

There needs to be an ongoing review of the use, adaptation, change of use, reconfiguration etc of all council buildings in order that the creation of new physical barriers are avoided. During our inspection at Grangeway Community Centre it was apparent that an area of the building had been used as a secure teaching facility. This resulted in the introduction of heavy doors which lead to the disabled toilet facilities and therefore limits access. It was

also identified that fire exit routes had been congested following the internal alterations and storage of non-fixed items of furniture.

In addition it was noted that a number of areas were being used as temporary storage. The equipment being stored was identified as creating restrictions to circulation routes, emergency exits and disabled toilet facilities. If the facilities are to be used for storage purposes, the location of specific storage areas needs to be carefully considered. The practice of leaving equipment in the most convenient location for removal by contractors should not be tolerated.

It was established that the temporary change of use of a building e.g. Polling Station requires careful consideration in relation to accessibility. It is essential that separate access audits are undertaken and correct measures of removing physical barriers are adopted even though they are for a limited period, e.g. the use of approved ramping systems only, no temporary timber ramps. Such equipment could be subject to regular inspection and/or testing. It was suggested that an asset register indicating location and condition of the equipment needs to be developed.

1.2 Emergency Evacuation Procedures

It was agreed that a system of monitoring visitors within council buildings needs to be developed and strictly adhered to. Persons with limited mobility need to be informed about safe refuge areas along with details of persons appointed to assist them during an emergency situation. A system to record visitors would accurately indicate the number of persons within a building together with the likely location of persons requiring assistance. Two way communication to fire marshals appointed to assist within refuge areas would provide a secondary means of identifying such persons.

During the visits it was identified that evacuation of disabled visitors was not in place. The preparation of a personal evacuation plan could only be produced for persons visiting a public building on a regular basis. Therefore methods for searching for persons requiring assistance needs to be established and practised during routine practice evacuations. Persons must be able to communicate these procedures in order to gain the confidence of individuals requiring assistance. In the event of panic it must be clearly communicated to individuals that specialist equipment, i.e. an evacuation chair, is available.

It is essential that trained fire marshals be appointed to 'buddy' persons with limited mobility in the event of an emergency. Sweeps of the building will ensure the identification of persons of limited mobility, however staff should also be aware of the people using the facilities should an emergency situation develop. Appointed helpers/buddies should deliver accurate instructions, have practical demonstrations and appropriate training to ensure a safe evacuation.

A two way method of communication should be available together with contact numbers in order that the number and location of persons within refuge areas can be relayed to the emergency services. It has been agreed with the fire officer that mobile telephones are acceptable as a means of

communication. Within the fire risk assessment/evacuation plan there should be a list of mobile contact numbers of colleagues, local fire stations and neighbouring businesses or organisations which could relay messages to the attending fire service.

We identified that there were no evacuation chairs installed within any of the premises. Previous discussion with the Fire Officer has established that there needs to be a facility to evacuate a person with limited mobility in the event of smoke/fire threatening the refuge area. In order that evacuation chairs are used safely and effectively, specialised training needs to be undertaken and necessary procedures incorporated into emergency evacuation drills. It is essential that the person seated in the chair has complete confidence in the individual co-ordinating their evacuation.

It was established that due to possible vandalism and the relative low-rise nature of the council's public buildings, a centrally held evacuation chair would be preferable. It is advised that this should be stored on the top floor of the premises and moved to the required refuge area, if required. Again the control of this equipment needs to be appointed to a fire marshal who should be responsible for the equipment until the building is deemed fully clear of all persons.

During our visits it was noted that signage indicating the location of disabled refuge areas was only installed at Widnes Library and Learning Centre. The numbering of refuge areas should also be considered e.g. Refuge Area One (First Floor), Refuge Area Two (Second Floor) etc, this information should be visible on installed signage within the specified areas. Text should always be used in order to avoid the introduction of additional digits resulting from vandalism.

Personal evacuation plans should be developed for all members of staff who may have a physical, mental or sensory impairment. The focus of the plan should be to make the individual aware of the policy, procedures and facilities available in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building.

1.3 Disabled Toilet Facilities

The monitoring of disabled toilet facilities needs to be clearly communicated to all staff members including flexible or temporary members in order that response times are not compromised. During our site inspections it was identified that the alarm should be relayed directly to a constantly staffed central location e.g. reception, CCTV room etc.

Pull cords within the toilets should not be tied up to assist in cleaning duties. Such actions will render the facilities worthless if required by an individual who could be lying on the floor.

Personal protection equipment should be available to all appointed persons for use in the event of an individual in need of assistance. Gloves, aprons etc

should be contained within a mobile kit which should accompany appointed helpers during an emergency situation.

The alarms within the toilet facilities need to be tested on a weekly basis in order to identify defective equipment.

1.4 General First Aid/Appointed First Aiders

There appeared to be a mixed response to the need to provide basic first aid to members of the public. Representatives from both library facilities stated that Risk Management had instructed that basic first aid should not be given to the general public and that the emergency services should be contacted immediately. We understand that the legislation relating to this area is currently being reviewed by government, therefore the council's policy could be subject to change.

2.0 Issues Identified During Site Visits

- 2.1** Identify refuge areas within buildings and incorporate these within the fire risk assessment,
- 2.2** Installation of evacuation chairs in appropriate locations (if deemed necessary),
- 2.3** Prioritising remaining works (identified within the original Access Audits as Priorities C, D, E.....M) associated with the removal of physical barriers,
- 2.4** Consider reviewing all refurbishment works, reconfiguration works with an accessibility officer/consultant,
- 2.5** Consider the instruction of a 'mystery' visitor to access council buildings and provide feedback regarding major issues relating to physical barriers and management policies e.g. toilet assistance response times,
- 2.6** Undertake access audits relating to temporary facilities including polling stations, storage areas within unused areas of buildings etc,
- 2.7** Develop a complaints handling procedure relating to individual requirements e.g. acknowledgment letter issued within 5 days, investigate and provide feedback within 4 weeks, action (if necessary) within 3 months,
- 2.8** Ensure only approved/compliant signage is erected, no paper/pen signs. This should also extend to all temporary equipment associated with removing physical barriers e.g. do not use timber constructed ramps,

2.9 Ensure that all equipment is tested & maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions/recommendations,

2.10 Extend the in-house testing regimes to include alarms within toilet facilities. This should be undertaken on a weekly basis. Testing results should be entered into the building's logbook and defects reported to Property Services helpdesk.

REPORT TO: Corporate Services
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 3 June 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director (Legal,
Organisational Development and
Human Resources)

TITLE: Work Programme 2008 – 09

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To confirm the work programme for 2008/09 and agree topic briefs.

2.0 RECOMMENDED That:

- (1) **the work programme proposed at the meeting of the Board on 26 February 2008 is confirmed;**
- (2) **the membership of the Topic Teams is agreed; and**
- (3) **the Topic Briefs attached to this report are considered and approved.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 At its last meeting the board agreed the following work programme:

Topic	Lead Officer
Access to Services	To be agreed
Transfer of Assets	P Searing
Performance Monitoring	R Mackenzie
Customer Complaints	R Mackenzie

The Performance Management Topic will be reported elsewhere on this agenda. Draft Topic Briefs for Access to Services and Customer Complaints are attached. A Topic Brief for Transfer of Assets will follow shortly.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None at this stage.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None at this stage.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There is a risk that the work programme is not completed on time, or does not deliver the expected outcomes. This will be mitigated by agreeing a clear topic brief, developing a project plan, and making progress reports to the board in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Toolkit.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 All reviews will include consideration of equality and diversity issues. The review of disabled access will help to improve equality of access to Council buildings and services.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Scrutiny Toolkit	2 nd Floor Municipal Building	Alex Villiers

TOPIC BRIEF

TOPIC TITLE

Access to Services

PPB(s) responsible: Corporate Services Officer Lead: Tel...

Planned start/end dates...May 2008 – March 2009.....

Target PPB meeting

Topic description and scope

The Employment Learning and Skills PPB received the final report of the Community Cohesion Topic Group in September 2007. One of the recommendations was that the Corporate Services PPB be alerted to emerging concerns about perceived barriers to accessing services. These were stated to include opening hours, disabled access, transport, difficult locations, information and communication, bureaucracy, quality of response and perceived attitudes to certain client groups. Corporate Services PPB were invited to consider whether the issue was worthy of investigation or scrutiny.

At a basic level, community cohesion requires services that are sensitive to the needs of individual users and accessible to everyone who wants to use them. Discrimination can happen indirectly, for example when a particular facility is placed far from a community which may want to use it, or is inappropriate for their use. Services should not just avoid discrimination, but they should actively encourage interaction and provide opportunities for local people to meet others. They can also provide opportunity for the Council to reach hard to help communities. As a minimum, any public service should meet its duties under the whole range of equalities legislation, and have in place arrangements to monitor provision for adverse impact on sectors of the community.

The Community Cohesion Topic Group found that the core values at the heart of community cohesion were widely accepted by all people, ie the need for greater respect and tolerance, for mutual understanding and for a greater fairness and equity in all that happens in Halton. In evidence gathering, it was clear that communities believed that across Halton there was a wide range of services and facilities on offer. However, given the geography and topography of the Borough, low levels of car ownership and poor public transport (especially after 6.00 pm), many found it difficult to access the services available. In addition, the different life styles people now lead are sometimes out of kilter with the 9.00-5.00 availability of many services. It was also suggested that for some groups –

especially young people and vulnerable people –there were a range of other barriers that prevented people accessing services. These findings lead to the recommendation that Corporate Services PPB be alerted to the issues.

Why this topic was chosen

The topic was chosen to look into the perception of barriers to accessing services.

Key outputs and outcomes sought

To examine the way people currently access Council services and might prefer to access them in the future, explore the impact and opportunities for better service access provided by changing technology and media and pay special attention to people who were hard to reach and failing to access services they want and need.

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

The topic touches upon all of the Council’s 5 strategic priorities. It is important that the Council considers the provision of its services across all of its areas to ensure that they are provided as fully as possible to all sectors of the community.

Nature of expected/desired PPB input

To look into the provision of services and consider whether the needs of the community as a whole are being met in the best possible manner.

Preferred mode of operation

By carrying out investigations and discussions with persons affected and looking at a sample of reports.

Media/communication implications

None at this stage

Agreed and signed by:

PPB Chair **Officer**

Date:.....

Date:.....

Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

Topic: Asset transfer to the third sector

Officer Lead: P. Searing (Property Services Dept - Tel Ext 2227)

Planned start date: June 2008

Target PPB meeting February 2009

Topic description and scope

To examine whether the Council should have an Asset Transfer Policy, how that policy should operate, the criteria to be applied when considering Council assets for transfer, post transfer monitoring and Council step in arrangements if the transfer fails to deliver agreed outcomes

Why this topic was chosen

Asset Transfer is a means whereby the Council transfers a property asset to the voluntary sector to deliver a service to the Council at a more advantageous cost thus providing better value.

The Quirke review produced by the Chief Executive of Lewisham Council concluded in May last year that there are no substantive barriers to the transfer of Council owned assets to the voluntary sector, that risks can be managed and that when done properly, the benefits outweigh the risks.

The Government has accepted the Quirk recommendations and provided capital funding from the Communities Fund to assist such asset transfers to the voluntary sector.

The Council needs to assess the full implications of these developments for HBC, its voluntary sector partners and the residents of the borough.

Key outputs and outcomes sought

A clear policy for submitting to full Council for implementation and subsequent incorporation into the corporate Asset Management Plan

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

Most voluntary sector bodies contribute to one or more of the Councils Priorities, examples including:

- **Urban Renewal** by putting to full use, buildings which may otherwise become derelict, perhaps with necessary repairs being funded from sources to which only the voluntary sector has access.

- **Employment** in providing direct employment or training for employment.
- **Health** in providing venues that can provide services to improve the health of the residents
- **Children and Young People** by providing places to meet and activities to enjoy that may otherwise be unavailable because of a lack of mainstream Council funding.
- **A Safer Halton** by providing venues which may encourage people to take part in community focused and personal development activities.
- **Improving Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency** by facilitating the provision of additional new or supplementary low cost voluntary sector services to the public.

Nature of expected/desired PPB input

To participate in consultation with key stakeholders and contribute to the preparation of a new Asset Transfer Policy.

Preferred mode of operation

Working group overseeing consultation with HBC departments, voluntary sector representatives etc and research on the asset transfer experiences of other local authorities.

Media/communication implications

The approved Asset Transfer Policy and available surplus assets could be published to promote and encourage the provision of additional new or supplementary low cost voluntary sector services to the public.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB Chair **Officer**

Date: **Date:**.....

REPORT TO: Corporate Services PPB

DATE: 3rd June, 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports
Quarter 4 to year end 31st March 2008

WARDS: Boroughwide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of the 4th quarter performance management reports on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services etc. for:

- Exchequer & Customer Services
- Financial Services
- ICT Services
- Legal & Member Services
- Personnel Services
- Policy & Performance
- Halton Stadium

2. RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the 4th quarter performance management reports;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Policy and Performance Board.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The departmental service plans provide a clear statement on what the services are planning to achieve and to show 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.

3.2 The quarterly reports are on the Information Bulletin to reduce the amount of paperwork sent out with the agendas and to allow Members access to the reports as soon as they have become available.

It also provides Members with an opportunity to give advance notice of any questions, points or requests for further information that will be raised to ensure the appropriate Officers are available at the PPB meeting.

4. POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5. RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 Not applicable.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 Not applicable.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
-----------------	----------------------------	------------------------

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate and Policy Directorate

SERVICE: Exchequer and Customer Services

PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Monitoring Report covers the Exchequer and Customer Services fourth quarter period up to year end 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 5.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

There are no key developments to be reported at this time.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

There are no emerging issues to be reported at this time.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	10		9		0		1
--------------	-----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Only one of the key objectives for the service, relating to a new system in respect of mobile working, has failed to progress as planned. Additional details are provided within Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	2		1		0		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Of the two remaining objectives for the service one, concerning the introduction of a white mail workflow management system, has failed to progress as planned and further details are included within Appendix 2.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

There have been no service reviews during the period.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	7		5		0		2
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Two of the key performance indicators for the service have marginally failed to achieve their target. However all indicators have shown a level of performance that has been sustained (2) or improved (5) over the previous year with the majority attaining a level of performance within the top quartile band of all authorities. Additional details are provided within Appendix 3.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	-		-		-		-
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

There are no other performance indicators to be reported for the service.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS






During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.





No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.

10.0 APPENDICES



Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols

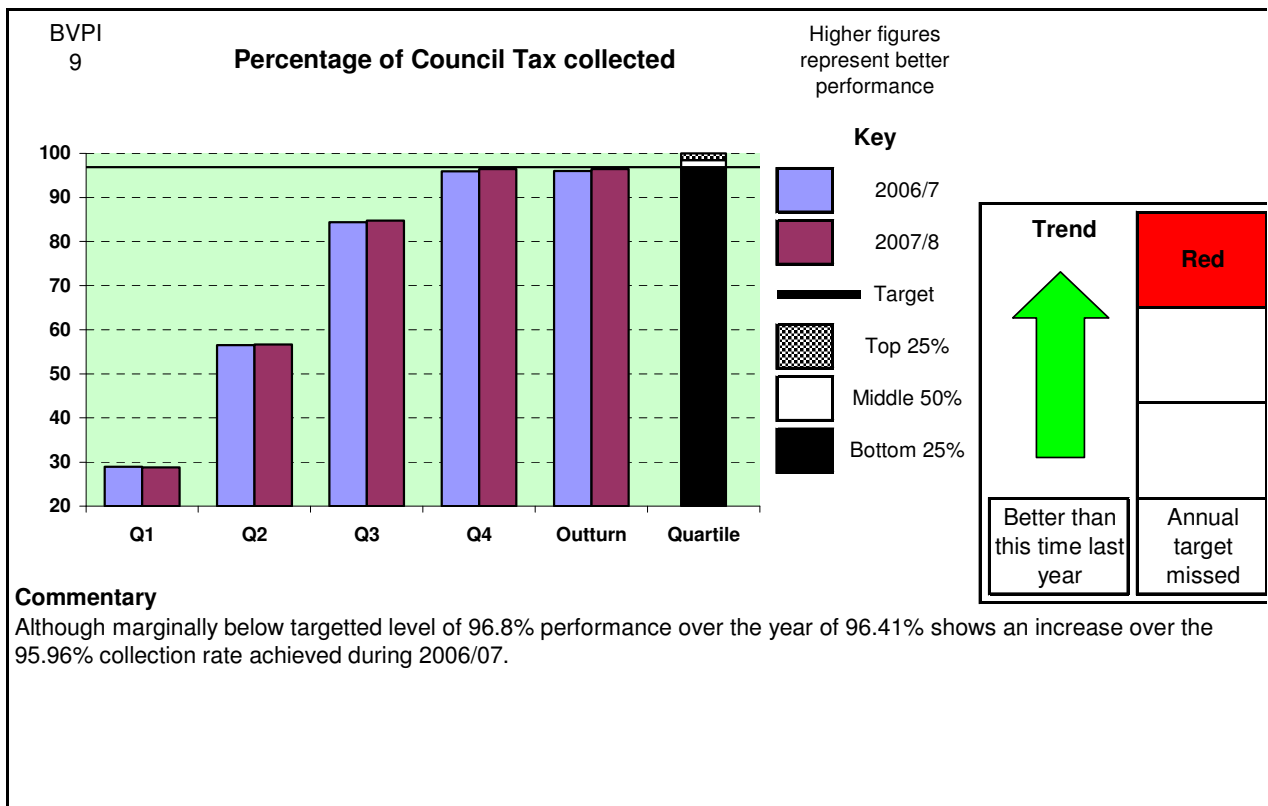
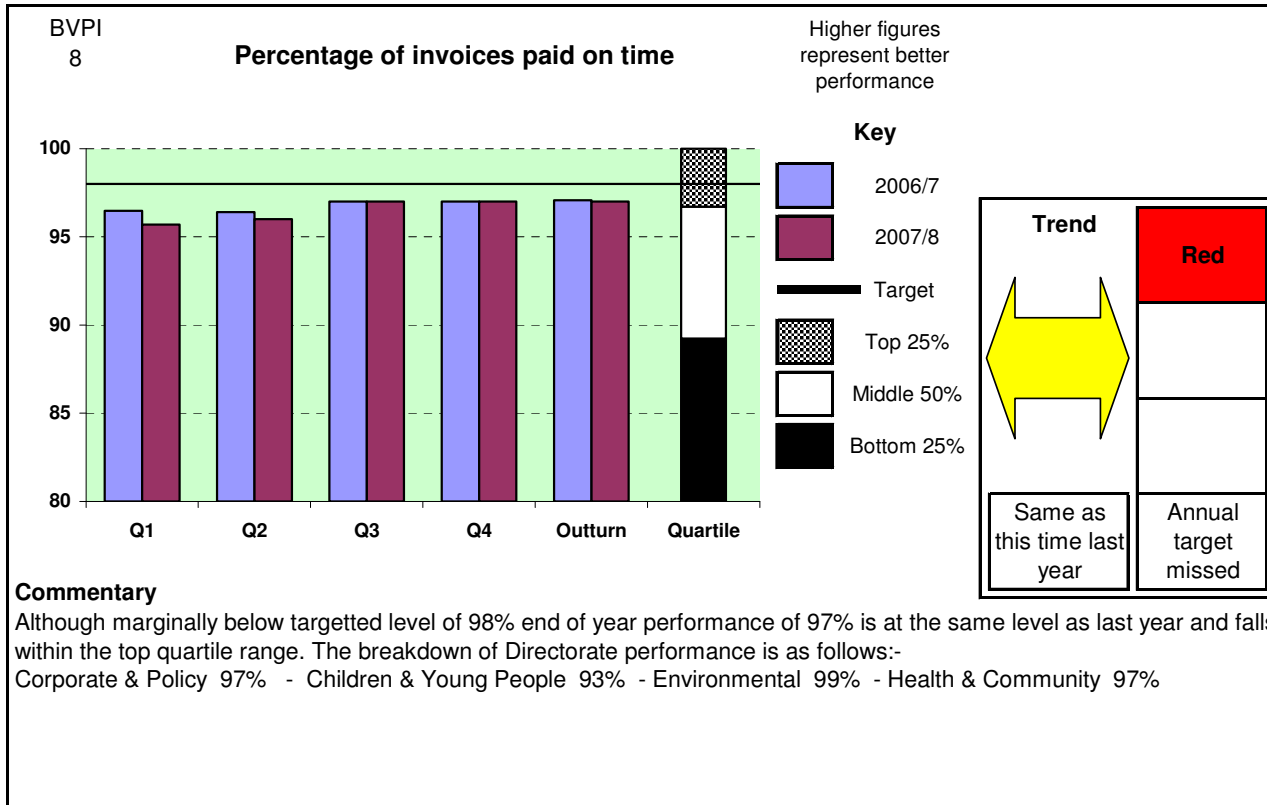
Progress against 'key' objectives

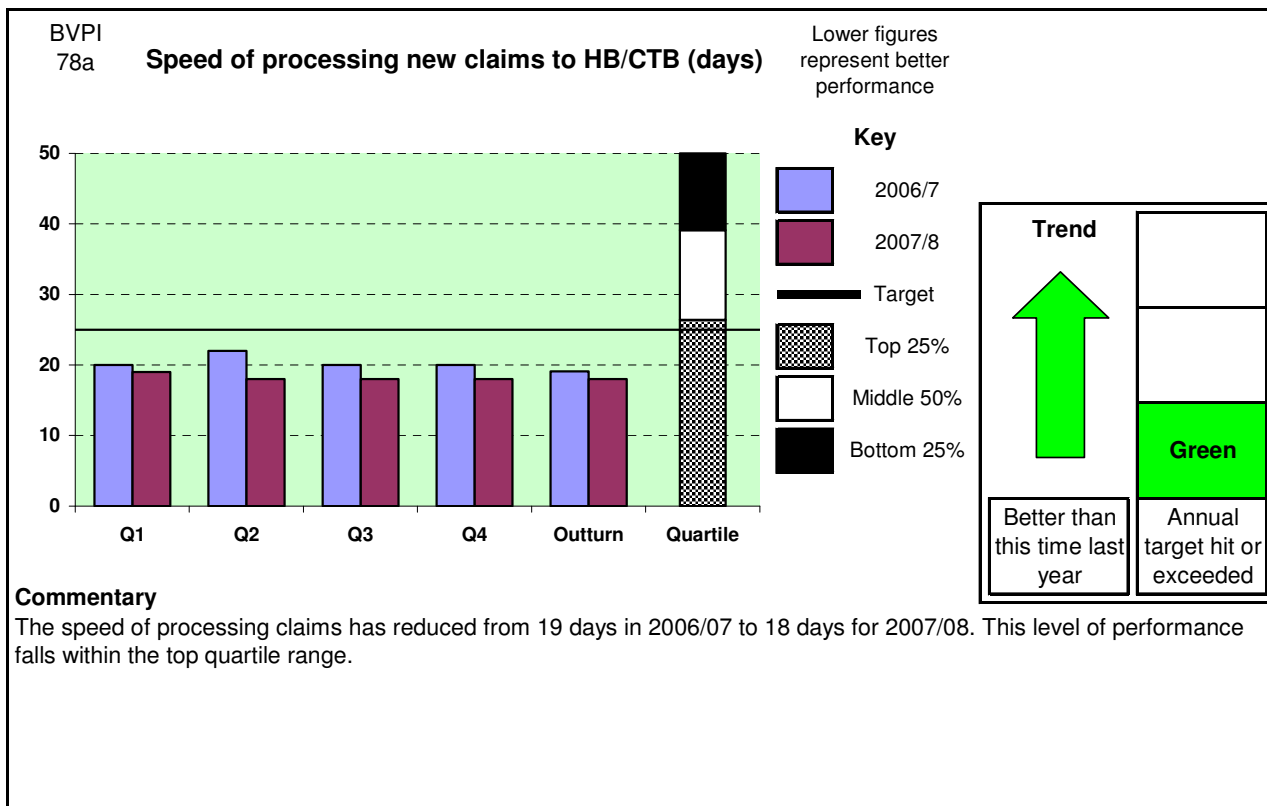
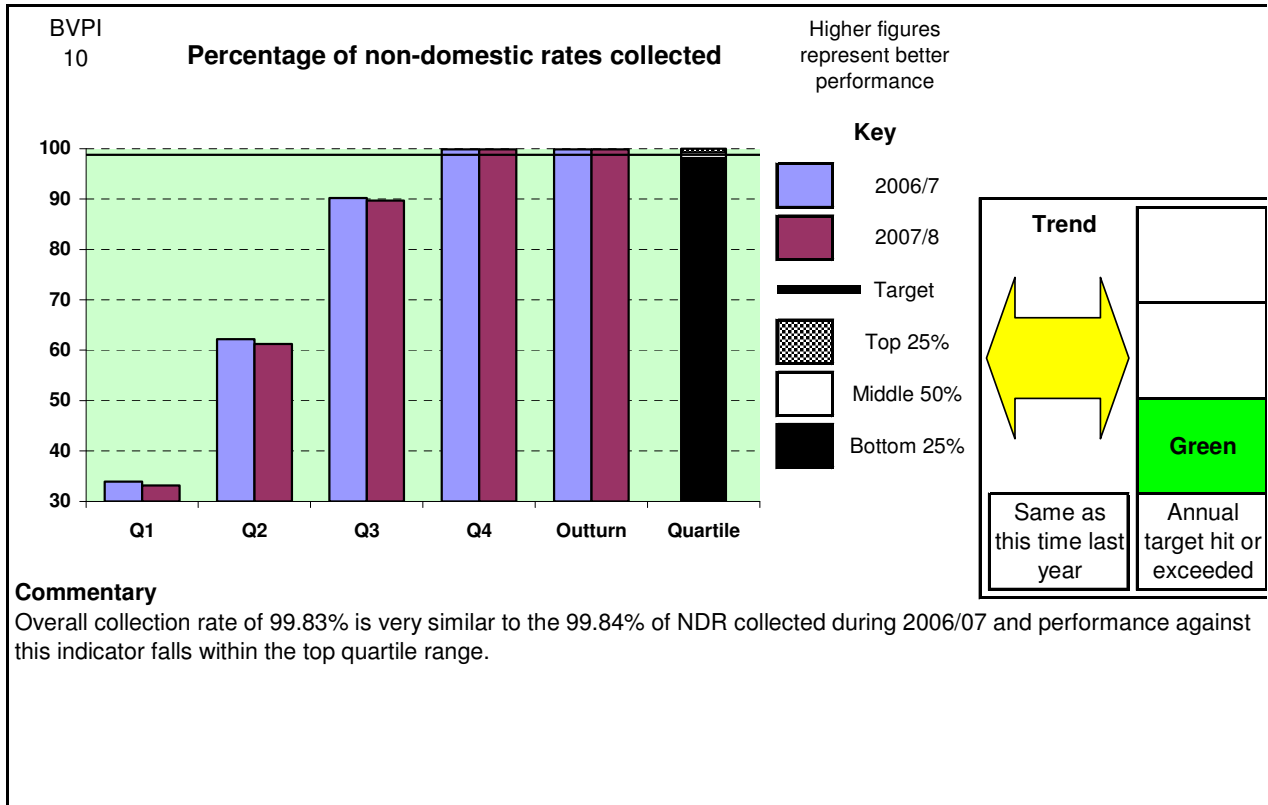
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone (s)	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ECS O1	Provide customers with open, accessible and accountable services through a single point of contact and explore and progress the opportunities to work in partnership with other agencies and bodies	Implement and develop a work plan in partnership with ICT to develop the new in-house CRM system to provide Directorates with key business data. April – March 2008		The new CRM system is now in place and Customer Services together with ICT are now evaluating all the options and technologies that are available to ensure that any future development is sustainable in rolling out a Desktop version of the CRM
		Implement the Emergency Duty Team monitoring system (HBC in partnership with St Helens) May 2007		The EDT partnership went live at the end of September 2007
ECS O2	To enhance the operational performance and delivery of the Revenues and Benefits service by extending the current use of ICT capabilities.	Further roll out of Home-working across the Department September 2007		A number of Visiting Officers are now home based. Additional staff have been identified that wish to take advantage of the scheme and plans are in place to extend this facility.
		Implement new system for mobile working in Benefits and determine opportunities for using the system in Revenues June 2007		As reported previously the implementation of this objective has been delayed as a result of software related issues. However as can be seen later in this report there has been no detrimental impact upon key performance within revenues and benefits.
		Examine implications of adopting the DWP initiative to receive Electronic Benefit Claims from Customers and determine policy June 2007		This project is still active but further work is required, and is ongoing, from our software supplier to accept the data into the Benefits system

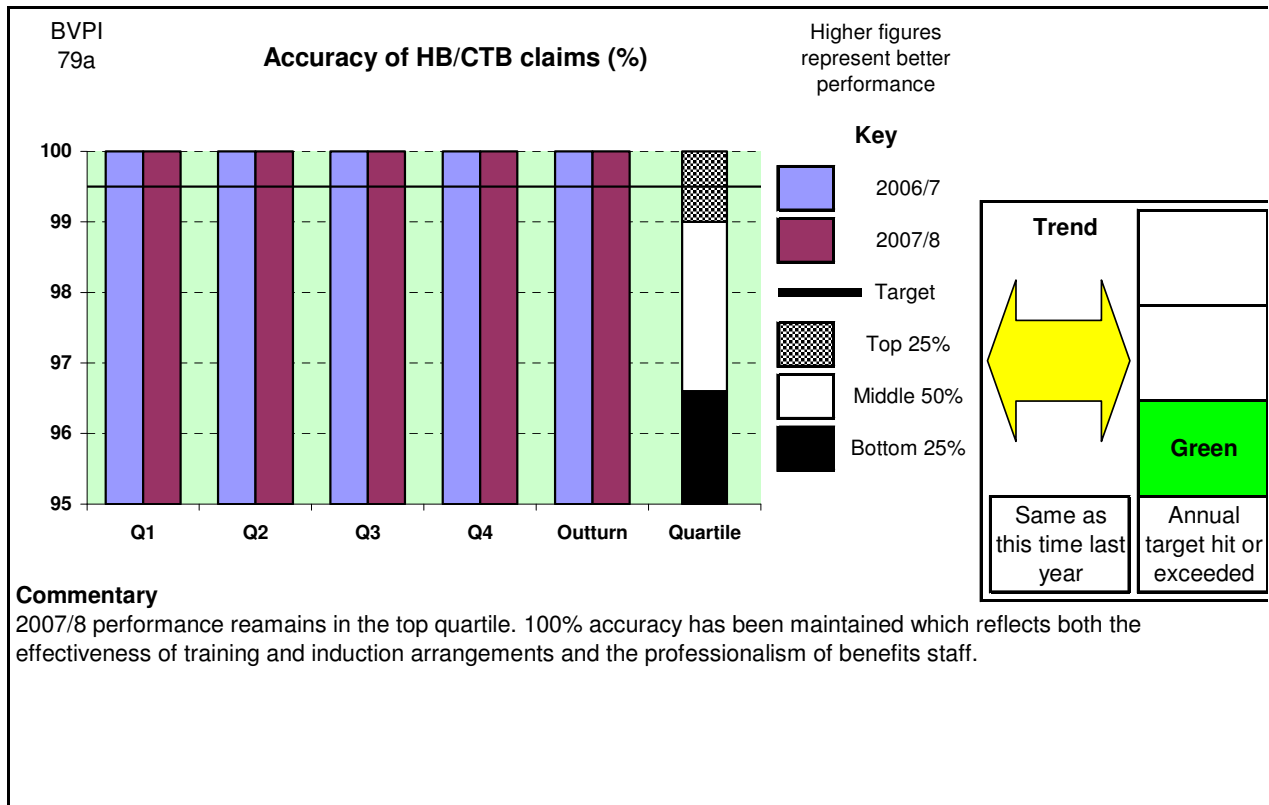
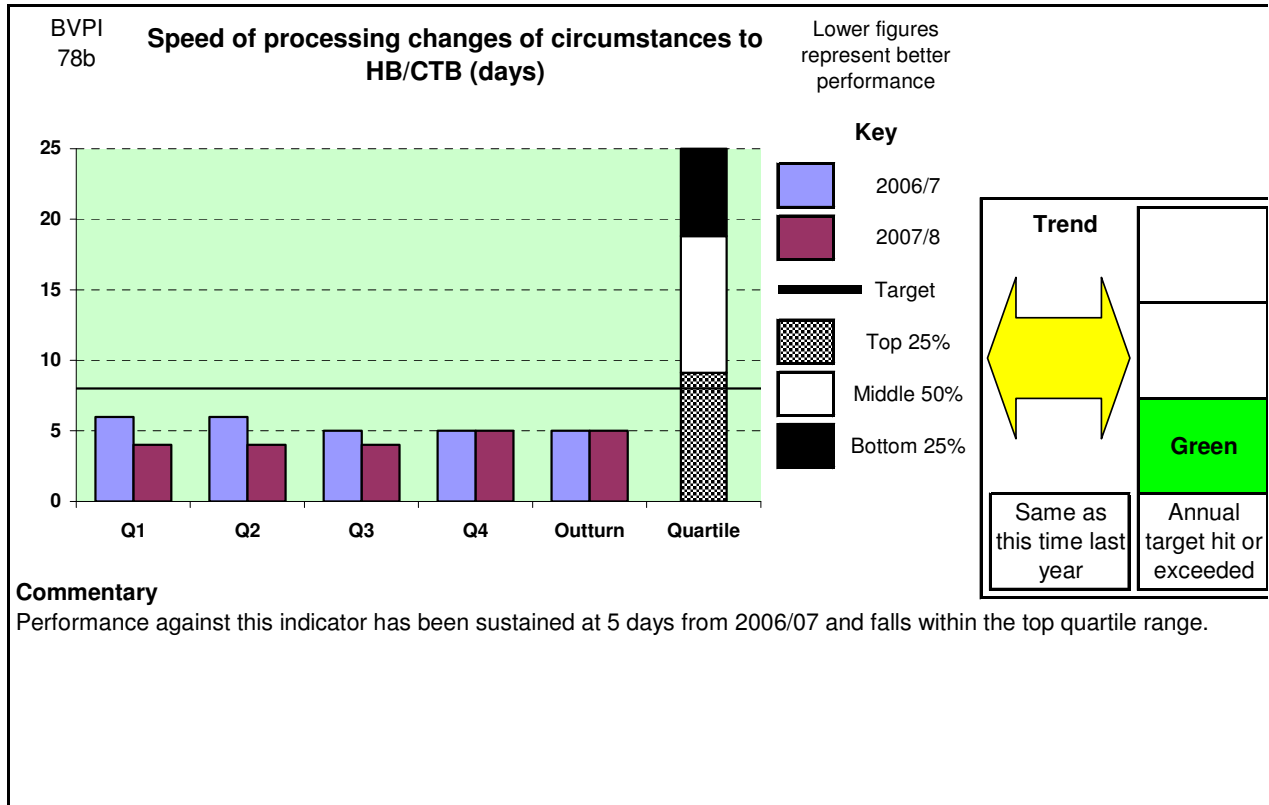
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone (s)	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ECS O3	To systematically acquire and utilise intelligence to inform the ongoing delivery of procurement related activity and through information and skills transfer increase and strengthen organisational capabilities.	<p>Develop a work programme that examines major areas of spend across the Council April 2007</p> <p>Develop and implement a Procurement Training Plan designed to improve procurement practices for those officers responsible for the procurement of goods and services September 2007</p> <p>Report findings and recommendations to Business Efficiency PPB October 2007</p> <p>Roll out the arrangements for document imaging for invoices across all directorates April - Oct 2007</p>	   	<p>The comprehensive analysis of Council spend has been completed and disseminated. Ongoing work is being carried out to cleanse/reclassify data into correct categories of spend.</p> <p>A number of training sessions have been held and have been well received. Future requirements are being considered</p> <p>Spend Analysis is now being looked at by a Business Efficiency PPB Topic Group and areas of spend are being identified to look at ways of finding savings and efficiencies.</p> <p>All Invoices for a Corporate & Policy and a number of corporate contract invoices are scanned and matched in Catalyst House. Plans are being formulated to include other Directorates.</p>

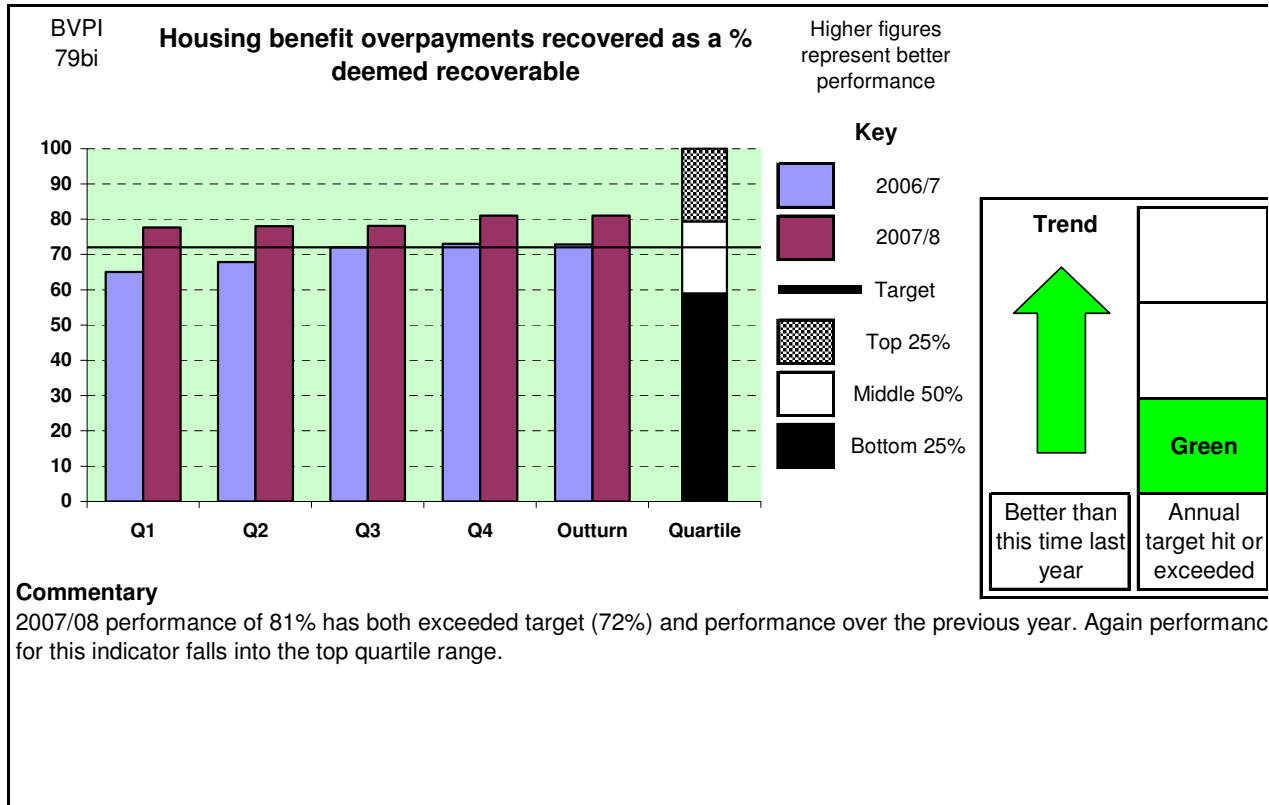
Progress against 'other' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ECS O4	To further enhance customer focus and service provision by integrating ICT solutions and working with other partners and agencies	Produce Volumetric data by integrating the CRM system and linking the data with other sources enabling the Council to make better use of its resources to improve service delivery to the customer July 2007		This objective was initially delayed whilst resources were deployed in developing the new in-house CRM system. Progress has now been made in this area with the ability to present certain information spatially Further work is being undertaken to establish the Council's requirements for information.
		Develop with ICT a workflow management system in order that all white mail can be dealt with through the new CRM system, this would achieve savings across the council December 2007		There has been some delay in fully completing this objective with ICT presently looking at alternative technologies to take the project forward. Pilots, undertaken in Integrated Children's Service and Planning, to develop an electronic document management solution are currently being evaluated.











Debtor Summary Statistics – Year End 31st March 2008

	Debtors	Social Services	Total	% Recovery
Arrears B/Fwd	6,465,509	797,604	7,263,113	
Debit to date	20,186,748	4,193,357	24,380,105	
Credit Notes	-1,821,513	-207,335	-2,028,848	
Write Offs	-312,394	-263,256	-575,650	
Total Debit **	24,518,350	4,520,370	29,038,720	
Payments	21,590,021	3,700,785	25,290,806	
Refunds	128,544	51,302	179,846	
Manual Adjustments	258,175	-44,700	213,475	
Total Receipts	21,203,302	3,694,183	24,897,485	
Balance	3,315,048	826,187	4,141,235	85.74%
**Includes Debit raised in March (limited recovery possible)	2,358,133	210,926	2,569,059	
Balance	956,915	615,261	1,572,176	94.59%

Explanation of the use of Traffic Light Symbols

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 06/07 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded</p>
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 06/07 target <u>has not been achieved.</u></p>

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate and Policy

SERVICE: Financial Services

PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Monitoring Report covers the Financial Services fourth quarter period up to year end 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 3.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Final Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 24th January 2008, with only very minor changes for Halton's Settlement.

The Council's 2008/09 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax were approved by Full Council on 5th March 2008.

The Audit Commission issued the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter in March relating to 2006/7 which confirms

- its assessment that the Council has continued to maintain its strong performance
- the direction of travel continues to be positive and has been rated as improving well
- an unqualified audit opinion on the accounts and
- the Council continues to manage its use of resources effectively and has been assessed as performing well.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES




Work continues to support the financial aspects of the Mersey Gateway development and the partnership with Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority for the procurement of waste treatment and disposal facilities.

Considerable planning has been put in place in preparation for closing the Council's 2007/08 year-end accounts, so as to ensure that statutory deadlines are achieved.

The first stage of the work with our efficiency partner (KPMG) to identify efficiency improvements is progressing well. These will help the Council to meet the Government target for local authorities to achieve 3% value for money improvements each year for the next three years.

The Government have issued new capital financing regulations which remove the statutory calculation of the minimum revenue provision and require the Council to make prudent provision. The implications are being assessed.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	4		4		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All four of the key objectives / milestones for the Service have been achieved and details are provided within Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	4		4		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All four of the remaining objectives / milestones for the Service have been achieved and details are provided within Appendix 2.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

Following the 2007 CPA Use of Resources assessment, an action plan has been developed which is being used as the basis for continued improvement across the Service and to assist in preparing for the enhanced requirements of the 2008 assessment.

The Audit Commission has undertaken its triennial review of Internal Audit and is expected to report shortly.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	2		2		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Both of the key performance indicators for the Service have been achieved and details are provided within Appendix 3

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	6		6		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All six of the remaining performance indicators for the Service have been achieved and details are provided within Appendix 4.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS



During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.



10.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols


Progress against 'key' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
FS O1	Setting the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and recommend Council Tax	<p>Report Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to Executive Board November 2007</p> <p>Report to Council in March 2008</p>		<p>MTFS was reported to Executive Board on 15th November 2007.</p> <p>Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax approved by Council on 5th March 2008.</p>
FS O2	To take steps to maximise the Council's share of the Formula Grant (RSG)	<p>Join with Merseyside authorities and SIGOMA to lobby for appropriate methodology changes September 07</p> <p>Check relevant data with Dept of Communities and Local Govt. September 2007</p> <p>Analyse provisional settlement November 2007</p> <p>Lobby MP's and DCLG following provisional settlement December 2007</p>		<p>Halton's response to the consultation on changes to the Formula Grant, was submitted on 10th October 2007. A major element of the response was the removal of Social Services double damping.</p> <p>Lobbying was also undertaken alongside SIGOMA and the Merseyside Authorities for the removal of double damping.</p> <p>The final Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 24th January 2008. This confirmed the removal of Social Services double damping, resulting in a grant increase for Halton of 4.1% compared to the national average of 3.6%.</p>




APPENDIX ONE – PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES (Financial Services)

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
FS 03	To effect financial prudence by assisting managers to control their budgets by monitoring spending and providing financial reports.	<p>Provide monthly financial reports to budget holders within 8 working days of month end.</p> <p>Provide quarterly financial monitoring reports to Operational Directors for inclusion in Departmental Service Plan Monitoring Reports.</p> <p>Provide quarterly monitoring reports on the overall budget to the Exec Board sub committee.</p>		<p>Reports issued on schedule to date.</p> <p>Quarter 3 reports were provided on schedule to Operational Directors.</p> <p>The overall quarter 3 position was reported to Executive Board Sub Committee on 7th February 2008.</p>
FS 04	To summarise and report the efficiency gains in response to the 'Gershon Review'	<p>Submit the 06/07 Annual Efficiency Statement (backward look) by June 2007 and report to the Business Efficiency Board.</p> <p>Submit the 07/08 Annual Efficiency Statement (forward look) by July 2007 and report to the Business Efficiency Board.</p>		<p>2006/7 Backward Look submitted by deadline and a summary report presented to the Business Efficiency Board in June 2007.</p> <p>2007/8 Forward Look submitted by deadline and summary report presented to the Business Efficiency Board in September 2007.</p>



**APPENDIX ONE – PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES
(Financial Services)**

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
FS 04 Cont'd	To summarise and report the efficiency gains in response to the 'Gershon Review'	Submit the Half Year Review by November 2007 and report to the Business Efficiency Board.		2007/8 Mid Year statement submitted in November 2007. The Council is on target to achieve the gains set out in the 2007/8 Forward Look.

Progress against other objectives / milestones



Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
FS 05	Provide for public accountability by reporting the Council's stewardship of public funds and its financial performance in the use of resources by preparing the final accounts as required by statute and in accordance with the latest accounting standards.	<p>Complete the draft Abstract of Accounts and report to the Business Efficiency Board by 30th June 2007</p> <p>Publish the Abstract of Accounts by 30th September 2007</p>		<p>The draft 2006/07 Abstract of Accounts was reported to the Business Efficiency Board on 28th June 2007.</p> <p>The 2006/07 Abstract of Accounts was published on 28th September 2007 along with a short Summary of the Accounts which has been made available via the Council's website, HDL, Libraries and information points.</p>
FS 06	Make best use of cash resources available to the Council and fulfil statutory requirements by setting and monitoring Treasury Management Policy	<p>Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to the Exec Board Sub Committee by 31st March 2007</p> <p>Provide monitoring reports to the Exec Board Sub Committee on a quarterly basis</p>		<p>The 2007/08 Treasury Management Policy was approved by Executive Board Sub-Committee on 15th March 2007.</p> <p>2007/08 Quarter 3 was reported to Executive Board Sub Committee on 24th January 2008 and Quarter 4 will be reported on 8th May 2008.</p>
FS 07	Ensure that the Capital Programme is affordable, prudent and sustainable by setting and monitoring prudential borrowing indicators.	Report Prudential indicators to Council March 2007		Prudential Indicators for 2007/08 were approved by Council on 7 th March 2007.

APPENDIX TWO – PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES (Financial Services)







Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
FS 07 cont'd	Ensure that the Capital Programme is affordable, prudent and sustainable by setting and monitoring prudential borrowing indicators.	Provide quarterly monitoring reports to Exec Board Sub Committee		Capital spending as at 2007/08 Quarter 3 was reported to Executive Board Sub Committee on 7 th February 2008.
FS 08	Provide an independent and objective opinion on the Council's Risk Management processes, control systems, accounting records and governance arrangements.	Report Audit Plan to Business Efficiency Board May 2007		The Audit Plan was approved by the Business Efficiency Board in June 2007.

**APPENDIX TWO – PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES
(Financial Services)**



Progress against 'key' Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
FSLI 5	Receive an unqualified Audit opinion on the accounts	Yes	Yes	Yes		An unqualified opinion on the 2006/07 final accounts was reported by the Audit Commission to Executive Board on 20 th September 2007.
FSLI 7	Complete at least 90% of the Annual Audit Plan	91%	90 %	92%		Internal Audit delivered 92% of the planned audit days for the year.

Progress against 'other' Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
FSLI 1	Issue 75% of draft audit reports within 15 days of completing the fieldwork	Yes	75 %	77%		127 draft reports were issued in 2007/8. 98 of the reports were issued within 15 days of completing the audit fieldwork.
FSLI 2	Maintain a high degree of user-satisfaction (measured via survey of Internal Audit work)	100 %	90 %	96%		Surveys are issued at the end of each piece of Internal Audit work. 96% of all respondents said that they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service provided.
FSLI 3	Maintain the number of schools buying back financial services	48	48	48		All existing SLA schools bought back from Financial Services for 2007/08.
FSLI 4	Achieve investment returns for the year higher than benchmark	4.80%	5.65%	5.72%		Despite the recent volatility in the financial markets, interest on investments exceeded the benchmark rate by year-end.
FSLI 6	Receive positive comments from District Audit relating to the financial standing of the Council and the systems of internal control.	Yes	Yes	Yes		The Audit Commission's Annual Governance Letter was presented to Executive Board on 20 th September 2007, which concluded that the Council has good systems of financial control and operates effective financial management.
FSLI 8	Maintain the scores achieved in CPA last year	3 out of 4	3 out of 4	3 out of 4		The Audit Commission has undertaken the 2007 CPA Use of Resources assessment and as a result the Council has maintained a score of 3 out of 4.

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the objective has been achieved within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 06/07 target has been achieved or exceeded</p>
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that that the objective has not been achieved within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 06/07 target has not been achieved.</p>

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate and Policy
SERVICE: I.C.T. Services
PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Monitoring Report covers the I.C.T. Services final quarter period up to period end 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 5.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The 07/08 programme of works was primarily about the completion of an extensive and complex set of projects aimed at redeveloping and improving the technology platform that underpins the delivery of services and additional directorate driven technology developments. The vast majority of this work has been undertaken with additional planned developments complimenting this approach for the 08/09 programme.

These necessary developments supported over 250 directorate based technology, software and BPR projects delivered and project managed during 07/08 by the in-house team.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

As an authority over the last 2 years we have needed to focus the majority of the technical developments around the core infrastructure areas and maintain a number of large project developments.

The 08/09 programme of works will retain a directorate project focus but will also allow the service over the next 2 years to take advantage of a number of positive developments within the desktop environment; as the replacement programme for existing PC's and Citrix terminals will be complimented by a number of initiatives planned with Microsoft. Allowing the authority to initiate an upgrade of all desktop and mobile devices using the latest software tools available and introduce a number of innovative corporate communication and corporate data storage opportunities over this period, all supported by the process development opportunities that can be leveraged by the BPR team in conjunction with directorate developments and the deployment of the CSD solution across the authority.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	25		23		-		2
--------------	-----------	---	-----------	---	---	---	----------

The emergence within the period of the new Government Code of Connect Standards has meant that 2 of the key objectives for the service could not be delivered as planned. Additional details are provided within Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	5		4		-		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	---	---	----------

With the exception of the implementation of phases 2 and 3 of the new HR/Payroll software system all other objectives for the service have progressed as planned. Additional details are provided within Appendix 2.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW


There are no issues relating to service review to report at present

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	3		3		-		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	---	---	----------

All key performance indicators are presently at, or near, their ceiling of 100% and additional details are provided within Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	7		3		-		4
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

A number of the remaining performance indicators for the service have failed to achieve their target due to the level of demand for ICT services across the authority. Additional details concerning progress are included within Appendix 4.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS







During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.








No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.

10.0 APPENDICES







Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
 Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
 Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
 Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
 Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols

Progress against 'key' objectives







Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ICT 01	Constantly evaluate and improve the usability, resilience, control and flexibility of the Council's Data Communications Network Infrastructure	Full segmentation (V-Lan) of the corporate, libraries and schools networks July 2007		Project now fully completed with all SLA's in place.
		Increase network capacity utilising dark fibre, and standardise using CISCO networking equipment throughout the corporate and Schools networks. September 2007.		This aspect of the network development is now complete, with further developments for the corporate network planned for 08/09.
		Corporate, Schools and Public access Internet upgrade July 2007		All internet connections are in place with the schools making use of their own bandwidth connectivity.
		Switch over to fibre link for Grosvenor House May 2007		Completed
		Switch Internet providers from tier 3 to tier 1 developing a scaleable 3-node approach. May 2007		Completed
		Decommissioning of PDC and BDC's July 2007		Completed

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ICT 01 Cont'd	Constantly evaluate and improve the usability, resilience, control and flexibility of the Council's Data Communications Network Infrastructure	<p>Introduce network resilience September 2007</p> <p>Implement quality of service provision December 2007</p> <p>Implement secure wireless to corporate network within council meeting rooms December 2007</p>	  	<p>Completed</p> <p>Project completed with phase 2 of this development planned for the 08/09 development programme.</p> <p>Wireless connectivity in place, the use of the service will commence with the provision of new laptop devices under the PC replacement programme.</p>
ICT 02	Satisfy the business needs of the Council's Corporate and Directorate requirement by providing a scalable and robust hardware infrastructure	<p>Complete exchange server upgrades (e-mail facility) September 2007</p> <p>Introduce data encryption to all laptop and tablet devices September 2007</p> <p>Complete annual technology replacement programme (Elected Members) December 2007</p> <p>Complete annual PC / laptop replacement programme (377 devices) March 2008</p>	   	<p>Completed</p> <p>Project stopped due to developments with the PC replacement and Government Connect programme, project will be carried over to 08/09 as part of the software upgrade project for all desktop devices.</p> <p>Completed, with the additional requirement of the Citrix upgrade programme being brought forward to rectify members printing issues.</p> <p>Completed in line with the 95/98 replacement and upgrade project.</p>






APPENDIX ONE – PROGRESS AGAINST ‘KEY’ OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES (ICT Services)

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ICT 02 Cont'd	Satisfy the business needs of the Council's Corporate and Directorate requirement by providing a scaleable and robust hardware infrastructure	Complete planned upgrades to CITRIX software systems March 2008		Completed, with plans to be set for 08/09 related to the replacement and upgrade of aspects of this service.
ICT 03	Satisfy the business needs of the Council's Corporate and Directorate requirement by providing a scaleable and robust software platform	<p>Rollout of Microsoft Windows XP and decommissioning of Windows 95 / 98 September 2007</p> <p>Implement Corporate web reporting tools September 2008</p> <p>Complete provision of intranet services to all secondary and primary schools March 2008</p> <p>Implementation of corporate spyware for servers and PC's September 2007</p> <p>Complete planned operating system upgrades March 2008</p>	    	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Project stopped due to developments with the PC replacement programme and new licensing opportunities, project will be carried over to 08/09 as part of the software upgrade project for all desktop devices.</p> <p>Completed</p>

APPENDIX ONE – PROGRESS AGAINST ‘KEY’ OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES (ICT Services)




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
ICT 04	The implementation of a range of new corporate wide facilities including Web services, records & document management, business process workflow, corporate desktop portal	Implementation of document imaging supporting adoption records March 2008		Completed
		Planning and Building Control document imaging October 2007		Completed
		Pilot workflow, internal ICT processes November 2007		Completed with the pilot underway in planning.
		EDT delivery through HDL- in partnership between H & C CYP and St Helens MBC September 2007		Completed with additional work requests to be considered as an ongoing requirement due to the sensitive nature of this service
		Staff Harassment system- corporate wide system meeting legislative requirements April 2007		Completed
Mayrise Highways and Streetworks integration into HDL September 2007		Completed in line with the provision of services from the supplier, additional developments will continue.		

Progress against 'other' objectives







Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Quarter 4 Year end	Commentary
ICT 05	Improve service efficiency and improvement through the use of Business Process Re-engineering	Adoption of record scanning project (document management using CSD)- arising from legislative requirement March 2008		Completed
		Publication of BPM diagrams via corporate intranet to facilitate communication of business transformation efficiencies March 2008		Completed with additional projects under development for the 08/09 work programme.
		Deliver business transformational projects identified by the corporate BPR programme March 2008		Completed with additional projects under development for the 08/09 work programme.
		Complete phases 2 and 3 of Trent software application December 2007		Part completion achieved due to the workload placed upon the HR team, a resourcing issue rather than a technical issue has slowed this development.
ICT 06	Evolve, improve and redevelop customer contact and reactive fix services, access channels and availability	Replacement of helpdesk software solution March 2008		Project ceased as the ICT helpdesk will be integrated with the HDL call Centre and its software solution, a project will be initiated for 08/09 to cover this change



Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Quarter 4 Year-end	Commentary
ICT 06 Cont'd	Evolve, improve and redevelop customer contact and reactive fix services, access channels and availability	Improved Self Help Web Services March 2008		Additional services such as the members' portal were added during 07/08 with an ongoing programme of works for 08/09 linked to the development of the CSD application.

Progress against Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
ITCLI 4	Member Support: % of calls responded to within 1 working day.	87	80	100		An exceptional result
ITCLI 10	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.59	99	99.82		Exclusive of planned and agreed down time the results have shown considerable improvement
ITCLI 11	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	99.27	99	99.62		Again an excellent service level following the considerable changes that have been undertaken.




Progress against 'other' Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
ITCLI 1	% Of all calls received that were resolved at the Help Desk.	66	60	88.9		Further to the service changes and the option to use the call centre.
ITCLI 2	% Of all responsive repairs completed within 2 working days.	87	80	84		It must be noted that installs are also hitting 79% within 1 day
ITCLI 3	School Support SLA: % of calls responded to within <u>agreed</u> target*. Priority 1 Priority 2 Priority 3 Priority 4	100 100 100 100	85 90 95 100	100 100 100 100		These results indicate the highest services levels in the last 4 years
ITCL1 5	% Of E-mail accounts set-up within 3 working days of receipt.	100	79	100		Following the service upgrades service and process improvements service levels have increased
ITCL1 6	Average working days from order to completion of a new PC	17	10	20.9		Performance has been adversely affected by competing demands for ICT provision across the authority. Steps such as the deployment of contract staff, have been taken to ensure that timeframes remain within acceptable levels.
ITCL1 7	Average working days from delivery to completion of a new PC	6	5	13.6		Please refer comment above.

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
ITCL1 8	Average working days from order to completion of a thin client device	6	7	13.4		Please refer comment above.
ITCL1 9	Average working days from delivery to completion of a thin client device	5	2	9.2		Please refer comment above.

Explanation of the use of Traffic Light Symbols

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that the <u>target is on course to be achieved</u> .
<u>Amber</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>unclear</u> at this stage, due to a lack of information or a key milestone date being missed, <u>whether the objective will be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that it is either <u>unclear</u> at this stage or too early to state <u>whether the target is on course to be achieved</u> .
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>highly unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that the <u>target will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate & Policy
SERVICE: Legal and Member Services
PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Monitoring Report covers the Legal and Member Services fourth quarter up to year end 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Department was again successful in its Lexcel and ISO 9001 inspections.


Orders creating two parishes were successfully implemented.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

Preparations continue for the local election in the next quarter.

New Standards Committee legislation is expected to come into force in May and preparations to implement the changes are presently being made.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	5		5		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All of the key objectives and milestones for the service were successfully achieved. Additional information is provided within Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	3		2		0		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Only one of the remaining objectives for the service, relating to the implementation of a case management system, has not been achieved and additional details are provided within Appendix 2.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW


The department has in place a continuous system to measure customer satisfaction which has continued to remain high throughout the year.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	2		1		0		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Only one of the key indicators for the service, relating to debts recovered, has failed to achieve target. Additional details concerning progress are provided within Appendix 3.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	12		9		0		3
--------------	-----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Of the remaining 12 indicators for the service three, relating to conveyancing transactions, child care cases and sickness absence, have failed to achieve their annual target. Additional information is provided within Appendix 4.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS






During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.




10.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols



Progress against 'key' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
LMS 01	To provide a high quality legal service to the Council and its departments to ensure that the Council is able to deliver its services effectively and is not deflected from the achievement of its objectives and priorities.	Secure renewal of Lexcel & ISO Accreditation January 2008		Accreditations secured as planned.
LMS 02	Ensuring that we are properly structured organised and fit for purpose and that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information.	Review Constitution May 2007		Constitution was reviewed as planned.
LMS 03	To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that give the members, as key decision makers, the information and support necessary to ensure that the authority is properly managed so as to achieve the council's objectives and priorities.	Introduce Revised Member Code of Conduct May 2007		Revised Code of Conduct introduced with two training sessions delivered to members.
		Ensure all members have received training on the New Code September 2007		Legislation brought into force 8 th May 2008 and a training exercise has now been arranged.
		Train standards Committee in relation to the switch to a local regime for complaints March 2008		








Progress against 'other' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
LMS 04	To continue to provide innovative and effective members development and support services to enable the elected members to fulfil their key role in the management and governance of the authority	<p>To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a MAP meeting</p> <p>To induct all new members October 2007</p> <p>Implement Case Management System December 2007</p>	  	<p>MAP interviews continue to take place as planned.</p> <p>Induction training completed.</p> <p>As reported previously, the department has been unable to implement a case management system as a result of financial pressures from other aspects of the department's operations.</p>

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
LMLI 9	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans	42	50	51		Target achieved
LMLI 12	Payments received on debts with Legal as a proportion of debts referred to Legal ^{NB}	93 %	70%	49%		Figure below target due to continual influx of new debts although customer satisfaction with services has, however, been high.

Other Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
LMLI 1	Time Taken to process Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences (from receipt to issue/refusal) in working days	10	15	12		Annual Target has been exceeded.
LMLI 1b	Time Taken to process Private Hire Vehicle Licences (from receipt to issue/refusal) in working days ^{NB}	8	8	6		Annual target has been marginally exceeded.
LMLI 1c	Time taken to process new Single Status Drivers Licences (from receipt to issue/refusal) in working days	38	50	50		Annual target has been met.
LMLI 1d	Time taken to process Single Status Drivers Licence renewals (from receipt to issue/refusal) in working days ^{NB}	29	30	30		As above
LMLI 2	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of instructions (working days)	8	10	7.3		Annual performance level has exceeded target.
LMLI 3	Percentage of Prosecutions Resulting In convictions	94%	N/A	97.5%		A considerably high number of prosecutions resulted in conviction during the period.
LMLI 4	Average Time Taken to Complete Conveyancing Transactions	265	200	321		Although annual performance is below target this has been adversely affected by several very complex cases.



Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
LMLI 5	Average Time Taken to Complete Child Care Cases (calendar days) ^{NB}	191	210	222		Annual target has been marginally missed which is the result of a large volume of cases. This situation will remain under review to ensure that performance remains within acceptable timeframes.
LMLI 6	Members of Public attending Council Meetings (Council, PPBs, Exec Board, Exec Board Sub, Area Forums)	621	350	686		The number of people attending public meetings is encouraging and efforts will be made to sustain these levels of attendance over the coming year.
LMLI 7	No. of Questions asked by Members of the Public at Council Meetings (Council, PPBs, Exec Board, Exec Board Sub, Area Forums)	107	120	138		the number of questions being asked by members of the public has again increased over the previous year. Accepting that this measure can be affected by the nature of agenda items efforts will be made to sustain public engagement with the democratic processes of the Council over the coming year.
LMLI 8	Proportion of working days lost to sickness absence	3.4%	4.0%	5.2%		Whole year average is marginally below target level. As indicated within the report from Personnel work is underway to further develop the capability of the new HR software system to provide a greater degree of intelligence to Managers concerning sickness absence in order that appropriate actions can be taken to improve performance across the organisation.
LMLI 10	Percentage of Members attending at least one organised Training Event	100%	100%	100%		Annual target has been achieved.

APPENDIX FOUR – PROGRESS AGAINST ‘OTHER’ PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Legal and Member Services)

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
LMLI 11	Value of Debt with Legal for Recovery (£ m)	1.313	N/A	1.535	Refer Comment	The value of debt for recovery has increased by 17% from the period 2006 / 07.

Application of Traffic Light Symbols

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 06/07 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded</p>
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the annual 06/07 target <u>has not been achieved.</u></p>

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate & Policy
SERVICE: Personnel Services
PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Monitoring Report covers the Personnel Services fourth quarter period up to period end 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against 'all' objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 5.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS




Following completion of the initial Job Evaluation (JE) process the majority of staff have now received back pay entitlements, with a small number of leavers who will receive payment during the course of June. Premium payments are the subject of ongoing negotiation between North West Employers and the Unions.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

The pay award for 2008 – 09 is presently under negotiation with the latest offer being 2.45%.



It is anticipated that the review of the existing National Agreement will be completed by December 2008 as will the NJC agreement on pay settlements for 2009 and 2010. Additional information will be provided as and when this becomes available.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	6		5		0		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

With the exception of implementing additional modules of the payroll software system all key objectives for the service were achieved as planned. Additional details are provided within Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES




Total	3		3		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All of the remaining objectives for the service have progressed as planned and additional details are provided within Appendix 2.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW


There are no issues relating to service review to be reported at this time.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	8		5		0		3
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Three of the key performance indicators have not achieved their forecast and additional details are provided within Appendix 3.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	4		4		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All of the remaining indicators for the service achieved their annual target and additional details are provided within Appendix 4.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS






During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.


No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.

10.0 APPENDICES




Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols

Progress against 'key' objectives




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
PS01	To ensure the Council's strategic approach to the management of Human Resources is reviewed and is consistent with best practice and reflects a modern, excellent authority.	Implement Priority Actions identified within the new Human Resources Strategy by March 2008		As a result of emerging issues, and to ensure synergy and consistency with best practice, the Human Resources Strategy has now become an integral part of the Peoples Strategy currently under development.
PS 02	To ensure that the Council rewards staff in accordance with legislation through a modern pay and grading system	Implement the outcomes of the completed Pay and Grading Review and undertake any appeal hearings that may arise by March 2008		As reported in Quarter 3 the implementation of the outcomes of the pay and grading review has progressed as planned. All appeals have now been lodged and work has commenced in prioritising applications for review.
PS 03	To ensure that the Council has a modern and effective Human Resource management IT system to improve the relevance, availability and use of HR information	Implement a full merger of the existing payroll and personnel functions September 2007		As reported previously all major components of the system have been installed
		Implement remaining modules of the Trent IT system. December 2007		As reported previously, and as a consequence of technical and staffing issues the completion of the remaining modules will now continue into late spring / summer.
PS 04	Ensure that School Governors, Heads and teachers are fully equipped and competent to undertake their roles, and as required by legislation, in relation to performance management of schools	In partnership with colleagues from the Children's and Young Peoples Directorate, devise, develop and deliver an appropriate training programme. March 2008.		As reported in quarter 3 this objective was achieved as planned with training being delivered throughout the year.






Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
PS 05	Ensure that Managers are equipped with the skills to manage projects competently and in an effective and efficient manner	Develop and introduce an on-line support tool to augment the Council's in-house project management training and encourage and facilitate consistent organisational good practice. December 2007		As reported previously an on-line support tool is now available to assist managers in effective project management delivery.

Progress against 'other' objectives





Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
PS 06	Ensure a pro-active approach on the part of the Council Managers to the health, safety and welfare of employees	Implement procedural changes arising from the review of the management of sickness absence and devise and deliver appropriate training for managers. March 2008		As reported previously a number of procedural changes have now been implemented as planned. Further work is now being undertaken to make better use of the data that can be generated from the Trent payroll software system in order to enhance the quality of the intelligence available to managers in relation to sickness absence.
PS 07	To ensure that the Council employs best practice in maintaining employee records and complies with CSCI requirements	In partnership with Senior Managers in Health & Community Services, carry out an audit of personnel files for staff in this Directorate and reconfigure files according to CSCI requirements. August 2008		As reported in quarter 3 this work has now been completed successfully.
PS 08	To expand and improve the extensive range of development opportunities provided by the Corporate Training section and to ensure that managers, both existing and potential, are equipped with a skills and knowledge base that optimises their performance	Devise, develop and implement a Management Induction Programme for all new Managers joining the Council. July 2007		As reported previously this objective has now been achieved with the programme being extended to all managers. The programme has proved extremely successful with demand for places remaining extremely high with evidence of positive feedback from participants.

Progress against Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
BVPI 11	The percentage of top 5% of earners that :-					
	Are women	38.39	39.00	46.86		'Performance' for the year is ahead of that projected. Although it is too early to say at this stage this may have been influenced by HR issues such as the development of the authority's family friendly policies.
	Are from black and ethnic minority communities	1.00	1.50	1.84		Again 'performance' against this measure is ahead of projected level.
	Have a disability	3.13	3.20	3.05		The number of staff declaring disability has fallen marginally below annual targeted level. Through the Council's equality and diversity work this situation will be kept under review to ensure that are policies and processes in relation to employment encourage and facilitate application from all minority groups.




Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
BVPI 12	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness	11.76	11.50	12.46		The number of days lost to sickness has increased since last year. As noted earlier in this report further work is now being undertaken to utilise the data from the new HR/Payroll system to provide more informative intelligence regarding underlying trends to enable appropriate actions to be developed to respond effectively to this situation.
BVPI 14	Early retirements (excluding ill-health) as a percentage of the total workforce.	0.24	0.22	0.08		The number of early retirements has fallen considerably since the previous year which to some extent is reflective of more efficient structural arrangements being implemented.
BVPI 15	% Of employees retiring on grounds of ill-health as a percentage of total workforce	0.13	0.11	0.15		There has been a marginal increase in ill-health retirements since 2006 – 07.
BVPI 16a	No of staff declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act as a % of the total workforce	1.29	1.40	1.41		There has been a marginal increase in the number of employees declaring that they meet DDA.
BVPI 17a	Minority Ethnic community staff as % of total workforce	0.60	0.70	0.79		Although there has been a rise in the number of employees from BME communities and the annual target has been achieved the figure is proportionally low in relation to the most recent population estimate of 1.8%. Work will continue to ensure that the authority's equality and diversity policies facilitate the opportunity for all groups and individuals to access and sustain employment with the Council.

Progress against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
PS LI 1	Percentage of requests for advertisements received by Tuesday noon in any week will be advertised internally by Friday of the same week and if required by Friday of the following week in external newspapers etc.	100 %	100 %	100 %		Levels of performance have been maintained throughout the year with the annual target being achieved.
PS LI 2	Percentage of candidates attending interview who are unsuccessful informed within five working days.	100 %	100 %	100 %		As above
PS LI 3	% Of enquiries for work answered in writing within one week.	100 %	100 %	100 %		As above
PS LI 4	Percentage of requests to amend the establishment received from Operational Directors considered by the Executive Board member for Corporate Services on two specific days in the same month if received 10 days prior to these days (second and last Wednesday of each month).	100 %	100 %	100 %		As above

Explanation of the use of Traffic Light Symbols

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that the <u>target is on course to be achieved</u> .
<u>Amber</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>unclear</u> at this stage, due to a lack of information or a key milestone date being missed, <u>whether the objective will be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that it is either <u>unclear</u> at this stage or too early to state <u>whether the target is on course to be achieved</u> .
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>highly unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that the <u>target will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate and Policy

SERVICE: Property Services

PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Monitoring Report covers the Property Services fourth quarter period up to year ending 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 6.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Several high value, high profile major projects have reached the stage where significant Property Services' involvement is now essential if they are to proceed successfully and this additional workload is placing a strain upon the department's limited staff resources.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

The loss of the Operational Director, Property Services late on last year presented both a challenge and a valuable opportunity. The performance of the department and its structure has thus been reviewed since and opportunities have been identified to make more efficient and effective use of the Council's limited resources. This will be critical if we are to meet our clients' property-related needs to the high professional standard that they deserve and we intend to provide.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	4		3		0		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Increased commitment to major projects from existing resources has resulted in a delay to the annual review of assets for disposal. The impact of this for the Council is very limited and mitigating actions have now been developed.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	2		2		0		0
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------


Property asset values are to be reviewed throughout the year in future, rather than at the year end.

The refurbishment of Runcorn Town Hall is on target and preliminary end-user feedback about the new accommodation is very complimentary.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW




Staffing recruitment and retention problems throughout the year have put both service delivery and individual officers under pressure, but this was recognised early on and steps taken to address the resourcing deficiencies are already proving their value.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	4		3		0		1
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Only one of the key performance indicators, relating to rent collection for industrial units, failed to achieve their annual target. Additional details are provided within Appendix 1.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	6		2		0		4
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Four of the remaining indicators for the service, concerned with project cost and time performance and market occupancy levels, have failed to achieve their annual target. Additional details are provided within Appendix 3.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS





During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.



10.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols





Progress against 'key' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
PYS O1	To complete review of property assets for disposal	Annual review to produce disposal programme complete March 2008		Not completed due to reducing resources being directed to other higher priority works. This exercise will be completed once resources allow, early in 2008/09.
PYS O2	Reduce backlog of maintenance on property portfolio	To £4.9 m by March 2008		The backlog of maintenance has been reduced as planned.
PYS O3	Fulfil requirements of asbestos Audits and Management Regulations	Confirm 100% compliance		Compliant, now looking to enhance operational effectiveness by updating and digitising the register with a view to providing real time web access for end users and contractors
PYS O4	DDA Works Corporate (Non Schools) subject to funding (currently £200k per annum)	Complete 60% of Priority 2 works by March 2008		Priority works have been completed as planned.







Progress against 'other' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4	Commentary
PYS O5	Review value of property assets for Council accounts	Annual review complete by March 2008		The annual review of property assets has been completed as planned.
PYS O6	Rationalise accommodation requirements through the refurbishment of Runcorn Town Hall office accommodation.	Return staff to RTH by July 2008		Progress remains on track to achieve completion by July 2008

Progress against Key Performance Indicators




Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
BVPI 156	% Of Authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	50	60	61		Achieved and will increase when RTH is completed. Annual target has been exceeded with performance being further enhanced upon the completion of Runcorn Town Hall.
PYSLI 4	% Of rent collected as % of rent due (Excluding bankruptcies and the like) – industrial units	93	95	92.5		Whilst target has marginally failed to be achieved this is the result of the bankruptcy of one tenant. However at such time that this debt is collected performance will rise to 96%.
PYSLI 6	% Of rent collected as % of rent due (Excluding bankruptcies and the like) – Widnes market	95	95	98		High collection rates have been secured for the second consecutive year.
PYSLI 8	% Of rent collected as % of rent due (Excluding bankruptcies and the like) – Runcorn market	99	95	89		As reported previously poor trading conditions are impacting upon rent collection. A number of initiatives remain ongoing and dialogue is entered into with tenants at the earliest opportunity.

Progress against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
PYSLI 1	% Of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days	100	100	100		It was reported at Quarter 3 that 99% of all invoices were paid on time. However an analysis at year end reveals that only 0.27% of invoices were not paid within 8 weeks.
PYSLI 2	% Cost Performance on projects over £50k (Contract Let to Practical Completion) (within 5% of the allotted cost) % (excluding Client changes)	90	90	81		Of the 16 projects 13 were completed within 5% of budget. Of the remainder all were within 5 – 10% under budget.
PYSLI 3	Occupancy of Industrial Units %	85	78	83		Occupancy levels remain strong despite the bankruptcy of a significant tenant.
PYSLI 5	Occupancy of Market (Widnes) %	82	93	86.5		Figure distorted by performance of open market, which currently runs at less than 40% occupancy. Options are currently being looked at with a view to bidding for capital to improve the situation
PYSLI 7	Occupancy of Market (Runcorn) %	70	90	50		As reported previously trading conditions in Runcorn market have remained difficult. Although a number of initiatives have been delivered during the course of the year occupancy has remained relatively low.
PYSLI 9	Time performance on projects over £5K (Contract let to practical completion within a margin of 5% - excluding Client changes)	73	90	63		Six of the annual projects have been subject to delay, primarily as a result of poor weather conditions.

Explanation of the use of Traffic Light Symbols

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target is on course to be achieved</u>.</p>
<u>Amber</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>unclear</u> at this stage, due to a lack of information or a key milestone date being missed, <u>whether the objective will be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that it is either <u>unclear</u> at this stage or too early to state <u>whether the target is on course to be achieved</u>.</p>
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>highly unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</p>

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Corporate and Policy

SERVICE: Policy and Performance

PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2008.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This monitoring report covers the Policy and Performance Department fourth quarter period up to year end 31st March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The CPA Corporate Assessment was undertaken over a 2 week period commencing 31st March 2008. The inspection report will be published in July 2008 and the score will contribute to the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment Star rating.

A peer review of the authority's equality and diversity arrangements and practices was recently undertaken by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). The review confirmed our self assessment that we are at level 3 of the 4 levels within the Equality Standard for Local Government.




3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

An external review of Halton Neighbourhood Management Partnership's first year of development has been undertaken which has provided a range of issues and options.

The Corporate Assessment undertaken in March will identify a number of issues where it is considered that opportunities for improvement exist.

With the exception of place surveys and one or two other measures the new National Indicator Data Set (NIS) has now been finalised. The new measures, to be implemented from April 2008, will be much more reliant upon effective arrangements being in place to acquire and share data amongst local agencies. In order to ensure the robustness and potential development of such arrangements the corporate performance management team are presently developing a template to support a mapping exercise which will capture the various sources of data and identify the key individuals with whom information will need to be exchanged.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	22		18		-		4
--------------	-----------	---	-----------	---	----------	---	----------

A small number of key objectives for the service have not progressed as planned and additional details are provided within Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	3		3		-		-
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

All of the remaining objectives for the service have been achieved as planned and further details are provided within Appendix 2.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

A review of performance management arrangements is now nearing completion and additional details are provided within Appendix 1 (Objective ref PP01)

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	3		3		-		-
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Due to the availability of information a number of Key indicators have not been assigned traffic lights and additional information is provided within Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	16		13		-		3
--------------	-----------	---	-----------	---	----------	---	----------

A small number of indicators, relating to payment of invoices, sickness absence and LLA outputs, have failed to achieve their annual target. Additional information is provided within Appendix 3.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA Targets related to the service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

None of the Key Service Objectives for this service were assessed as having associated High Risk, there is no progress to report.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS




During 2006 / 07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against any actions identified during that assessment with associated High priority, is to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.







No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.








10.0 APPENDICES







Appendix 1 - Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
 Appendix 2 - Progress against 'other' Objectives/ Milestones
 Appendix 3 - Progress against Key Performance Indicators
 Appendix 4 - Debtor Summary Statistics
 Appendix 5 - Use of traffic light symbols

Progress against 'key' objectives




Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4 Year end	Commentary
PP O1	<p>Improve the effectiveness of the support, intelligence and advice provided to the Council and its partners to review policy, resource planning, service delivery and performance.</p>	<p>Review the format of the 2007/08 quarterly monitoring reports to ensure the performance data is in a form that meets the requirements of the primary audience by 30 April 2007</p> <p>Coordinate the implementation of the action plan recommended by the Audit Commission in its report on Halton's management arrangements for securing data quality by 30 September 2007</p> <p>Undertake a fundamental review of the service planning process and the performance reporting arrangements and make recommendations for improvement by 30 September 2007</p> <p>Monitor performance against Community Strategy targets and review plans June 2007</p>	<p>Refer comment</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>As previously reported no amendments were required to the reporting format for the current year. However in light of changes to the national framework and the review of corporate performance management arrangements this situation will be kept under review the coming financial year.</p> <p>Progress against this objective has progressed as planned with a Corporate Data Quality Strategy being implemented with a Data Quality Lead Officer Group being established to provide directorate support and representation.</p> <p>A report has now been prepared for the June Policy and performance Board meeting which will make recommendation as to how existing arrangements could be improved.</p> <p>All SLAs actioned by 31 May deadline, and action plans adopted by LSP for all five priorities. Annual performance review published in April 2007.</p>

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4 Year end	Commentary
PP O1 cont'd	Improve the effectiveness of the support, intelligence and advice provided to the Council and its partners to review policy, resource planning, service delivery and performance.	<p>Review Community Engagement Strategy and agree Annual Action Plan March 2008</p> <p>Monitor and review Local Area Agreement progress with partners March 2008</p>	 	<p>Practitioners group operational and has adopted action plan. Review of audit plan for engagement took place, and satisfactory report received from Internal Audit Sept 2007. IDeA peer review has made some recommendations on refreshing the approach – to be carried forward in 2008/09.</p> <p>Training on Local Area Agreement (LAA) Performance Management Framework (PMF) taken place with partners. Attended GONW training session on monitoring procedures in advance of mid-year review. New LAA being developed for implementation in 2008-11 – includes similar PMF to current.</p>
PP O1 Cont'd	Improve the effectiveness of the support, intelligence and advice provided to the Council and its partners to review policy, resource planning, service delivery and performance.	<p>3 Neighbourhood Management Boards established June 2007</p> <p>Establish virtual neighbourhood teams June 2007</p> <p>Prepare Neighbourhood Action Delivery Plan July 2007</p> <p>Monitor performance against targets and review plans March 2008</p>	   	<p>Boards all now up and running with a range of sub-groups developing.</p> <p>Operational in a range of formats and closely linked to sub-groups.</p> <p>Last of the three NAP's completed February 2008.</p> <p>All three plans endorsed at March 2008 meeting of HNMB. Subject to six-monthly review by HNMB</p>



Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4 Year end	Commentary
PP O2	Improve the quality and effectiveness of the Council's external communication at a local, regional and national level and internal communication with staff	<p>Review and re-tender for Inside Halton September 2007</p> <p>Implement phases 2 and 3 of intranet site upgrade by September 2007</p> <p>Conduct review of website and produce strategy and action plan January 2008</p> <p>Investigate establishment of Neighbourhood newsletters and community website for 3 pilot areas September 2007</p> <p>Complete resident satisfaction surveys October 2007</p> <p>Produce partner 'NM Update' at least bi-monthly; consult partners & review by December 2007</p>	     	<p>Activity completed as planned.</p> <p>As above.</p> <p>Review completed. Web site health check commissioned to confirm actions required.</p> <p>Castlefields Community newsletter being developed. Key task for 2008/9.</p> <p>Field work completed January 2008 and reported to HNMB February 2008.</p> <p>Due to sickness no newsletter produced in Q4. 2007/8</p>
		Produce NM communications & marketing strategy and action plan January 2008		Done.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4 Year end	Commentary
PP O3	Improve the effectiveness of the service improvement, and overview and scrutiny corporate framework for the Council to deliver efficient, effective and high quality services through a programme of continuous improvement.	<p>Implement the annual service / business review and efficiency improvement programme by 31 March 2008</p> <p>Review reconfigured overview and scrutiny arrangements and make recommendations for improvement December 2007</p>	 	<p>As reported previously the efficiency strategy work streams approved by the Business Efficiency Board have progressed as planned.</p> <p>Review completed. Overview & Scrutiny Improvement Plan implementation in progress. Proposed review of corporate governance arrangements in 2008/9 may have O&S implications.</p>
PP O4	To ensure that the organisation remains fit for purpose through the ongoing development of Business Continuity and Health & Safety arrangements	<p>Test and review arrangements for business continuity in Directorates by December 2007</p> <p>Investigate external accreditation for Health & Safety by July 2007</p> <p>Review and amend systems as required by accreditation criteria by December 2007</p> <p>Apply for accreditation by March 2008</p>	   	<p>Management Team exercise/test held 8th May. Plans being reviewed in the light of outcomes</p> <p>Accreditation will now focus on two major service areas of the council</p> <p>As above</p> <p>This will now take place during 2009</p>


Progress against 'other' objectives

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	Key Milestone	Progress Quarter 4 Year-end	Commentary
PP05	Work with the Policy and Performance Boards to develop and review policy proposals and hold Executive to account.	Complete 06 – 07 Work Programme by 30th June 2007 Agree 07-08 Work Programmes for each PPB by 30th June 2007	 	With the exception of two topics reliant upon information from central government and third parties, which has yet to be received, the 06-07 programme has been completed. 07/08 Topic work programme agreed for each PPB
PP 06	Exploit external funding channels to increase the Council's capacity to deliver on Halton's strategic priorities	Complete follow-up benchmarking activity Autumn 2007		Activity Completed




Progress against Key Performance Indicators





Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
BVPI 2a ¹	The level of Equality standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms	2	2	3		As stated earlier within this report the Council's level 3 self assessment has now been validated through an external peer review.
BVPI 2b	The duty to report Race Equality (Does the authority have a Race Equality scheme in place (%))	63	68	84		The annual target has been exceeded as further initiatives in relation to equality and diversity have been developed over the year.
BVPI 3	% Of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by their authority.	58	N/a	N/A	Refer comment	This indicator is derived from a triennial survey last undertaken in 2006. the introduction of the new national Indicator Data Set will see a requirement to undertake Place Surveys twice per year from 2008 although details have yet to be finalised by the Communities for Local Government.
PPLI 4	Overall satisfaction with the communications of the Council (%)	48	N/a	N/A	Refer comment	Again this measure forms part of a three year BVPI survey.
PPLI 5	Satisfaction with internal communications of the Council (%)	78	75	N/A	Refer comment	Two yearly survey due next April.

¹ For Quarter 1 these indicators were contained within the Legal and Member Services Monitoring Report.







Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
PPLI 6	% Of residents in Halton's NM pilot areas reporting an increase in satisfaction with their neighbourhoods as a place to live.	50	55	47	Refer comment	The 2006/07 baseline is derived from the Best Value Postal Survey. This years outturn is based upon a telephone survey and the results are not directly comparable. Satisfaction in neighbourhood management areas of 47% compares to a borough wide figure of 39.1%
PPLI 9	% Of BVPI's showing improvement and / or achieving target.	67.8	69	N/A	Refer comment	Final returns are presently being compiled. Dependant upon information becoming available it may be possible to verbally report at time of PPB meeting,
PPLI 15	% Of floor targets with positive direction of travel	98	97	100		Annual performance review showed all targets moving in the right direction.

Progress against 'other' Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
PPLI 1	Press releases per annum	594	500	790		The annual target has been exceeded.
PPLI 2	Local media take-up (%)	78	72	73.5		Take up was slightly higher than forecast for the year.
PPLI 3	Value of external funding bids supported (£000,s)	930.7	220	£1,722		It is clear that the original target was set too low. Initially, 2007/08 was expected to be a year of consolidation. However, there have been a number of large projects that the division worked on in 2007/08, and there was an introduction of several new funding streams introduced through the National Lottery which because of specialist expertise within the team and good relations with the funding providers, we were able to tap into and benefit from immediately
BVPI 4	% Of those making complaints who were satisfied with the handling of those complaints	31	N/A	N/A	Refer comment	This is a three-year measure as part of the BV User Satisfaction Survey. The PPB is currently conducting a review of complaint and compliment handling to develop actions that can begin to address this low level of satisfaction.

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
PPLI 7	% Of NM pilot area residents who feel that they can influence decisions affecting their local area	14.2%	18%	Refer comment	N/A	The baseline for this indicator is derived from the three yearly Best Value postal survey. However a telephone survey in 2007, although not directly comparable, found that.....
PPLI 8	% Of residents in NM pilot areas aware of Neighbourhood Partnership.	New for 07/08	To be confirmed	Refer comment	N/A	No survey has been undertaken to date but is included within a draft development plan.
PPLI 10	% Change in the number of BVPI's in the top quartile as compared to 04 / 05 baseline	-9.8	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	Final returns are presently being compiled. Dependant upon information becoming available it may be possible to verbally report at time of PPB meeting,
PPLI 11	% Change in the number of BVPI's in the bottom quartile as compared to 04 / 05 baseline	14.6	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	Refer comment above.
PPLI 12	LAA Spend (%)	100	100	100		Spend in line with forecast
PPLI 13	LAA Outputs achieved (%)	95	95	See comment		Outputs are still being assessed because of delays in submission of year end returns. However some under achievement is apparent.
PPLI 14	Proportion of neighbourhood element funding committed / spent	New for 07 / 08	100	100		Commitment/ Spend in line with forecast
PPLI 16	Proportion of Departments with up to date Business Continuity Plans	100	100	100		Under review following exercise and test




APPENDIX FOUR– PROGRESS AGAINST ‘OTHER’ PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Policy and Performance)

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
PPLI 17	Proportion of Departments with up to date Risk Registers	100	100	100		All directorates have published registers on intranet
PPLI 18	Number of accidents resulting in injuries to staff	64	62	38		Significant reductions in accidents. The Council have more than met the reduction in accident targets set by government.
PPLI 19	Number of employees attending emergency planning training exercises (%)	100	100	100		The division has published a exercise schedule and this relates to the risks faced by the council and the LRF
PPLI 20	% Of Objective 2 Action Plan ERDF committed.	96	N/a	96		All funds were committed in line with forecast and requirements by December 2006.
PPLI 21	% Of Objective 2 Action Plan ERDF outputs achieved.	67	80	N/A	Refer comment	Whilst information is collated quarterly in arrears it is unlikely that the target will be achieved. Projects have struggled to achieve targets for a number of reasons; changes to grant criteria (loss of assisted area map); delays on site developments, a slow down in the property market as well as greater emphasis being placed on ensuring that projects were audit compliant.
PPLI 22	% Of invoices paid within 30 days	94	94	93		The annual target was missed marginally due to the late payment of 4 invoices.
PPLI 23	% Of working days lost due to sickness absence within Department	3.6	3.0	4.5		Sickness absence has risen mainly as the result of two cases within the year. The situation continues to be managed through the application of the Council's sickness policy and procedures.

APPENDIX FOUR– PROGRESS AGAINST ‘OTHER’ PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Policy and Performance)

APPLICATION OF TRAFFIC LIGHT SYMBOLS

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target is on course to be achieved</u>.</p>
<u>Amber</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>unclear</u> at this stage, due to a lack of information or a key milestone date being missed, <u>whether the objective will be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that it is either <u>unclear</u> at this stage or too early to state whether the target is on course to be achieved.</p>
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain that the objective will not be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</p>

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Environment
SERVICE: Stadium & Hospitality
PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31 March 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Stadium & Hospitality Department fourth quarter period up to year-end 31 March 2008. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period, which will be made available in due course, has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained in Appendix 4.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

STOBART STADIUM HALTON

RFL Visit

As part of the criteria for eligibility to apply for a Super League Licence the Stadium must undergo a full inspection from representatives from the RFL.

This inspection has taken place and the Stadium passed all criteria, the inspector's final comment being "you have a superb ground with fantastic facilities".

A final decision is expected in July regarding the Licence application.

2012 Olympic Training Camp

The Stadium has been accepted as a suitable venue for both Table Tennis and Football training camps for the 2012 Olympics.

The Stadium is to be listed in both the official Northwest document and the LOCOG document, both documents will be distributed at the

forthcoming Beijing games.

During a post visit feedback session the inspectors described the Stadium as the only venue visited to date that has fallen into the “Excellent” category.

Marquee Suite

A number of events have been held and more planned for later this year.

The Charity “Pink Ball” held in February in aid of Breast Cancer Awareness was a huge success and raised over £5,000.

The feedback from all events has been excellent, the recent Wedding Fare attracted over 40 exhibitors and raised more than £4,000 in income.

Representative Matches

A number of representative matches have been held at the Stadium these include:- The National University Games, GB Lions versus France, the National Youth League Grand Final and the final of the Amateur Rugby League.

These matches continually raise the profile of the Stadium, this input is vital whilst the Vikings are in the lower league of the National game.

SCHOOL MEALS

Brokerage

The school meals service has gone through the brokerage process this year and has been approved by the Children and Young Peoples Directorate to be the only successful supplier.

The new service level agreement with schools includes a termly audit check in each school, to ensure a quality service is continually being provided.

School Meals Uptake

Primary

Primary schools are continuing to widen the variety of the food on offer.

After a very wide consultation exercise the menus comprise of all the children’s favourites in order to encourage them to enjoy their meals.

The introduction of semi skimmed milk in place of full fat milk has dramatically increased the consumption; also the compulsory wholemeal

bread served in addition to the main meals is also increasingly popular.

The fruit consumption also is increasing which is one of the benefits of the Free Fruit for under 7's initiatives that Halton has benefited from for the last 7 years.

High

High schools too are also continuing to widen the variety of food that they eat.

The introduction of pasta/ noodle bars, hot baguettes, wraps smoothies etc has proven popular as has the inclusion of free vegetables or salad with all main meals or sandwiches, therefore helping to increase their 5 a day intake.

The new government restrictions on food served at morning break has had an effect on the income in some schools.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

School Meals

Free Meal Registration

A new system introduced in January means that anyone registering for Housing Benefit with qualifying children automatically becomes registered for free school meals.

This has had a dramatic effect on the number of registered school meal pupils, increasing from around 2,400 to 3,600 with the possibility of a further 800+ to follow.

If these "new" registered pupils take up their entitlement then a significant overspend could occur on the free meal budget line.

Million Meals Initiative

In order to improve the uptake of school meals the school food trust has launched the Million Meals Campaign.

As part of the million meals campaign schools are asked to support the following pledge with regard to school food:

- Respect our pupils as customers
- Give them time and space to eat
- Teach them why good food matters
- Promote school food to parents

Million Meals –The policy drivers

1. National Healthy Schools Programme

Increasing school meal take-up will help schools achieve healthy school status.

Information on: - www.healthyschools.gov.uk

2. PSA12 Improve the health and well being of children and young people

Indicator 2 Percentage of pupils who have school lunches
Indicator 3 Levels of childhood obesity.

For information on the PSA 12: Improve the health and well being of children and young people visit:
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/C/F/pbr_csr07_psa12pdf

3. Every Child Matters

Information on www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

4. National Indicator Set

One of the 198 indicators is the take-up of school lunch

5. Choosing Health and Health Challenge England

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/dh4139514

5. The Children's Plan

Information on www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan

6. 5 A Day and the School Fruit and vegetable Scheme




Information on www.5aday.nhs.uk/sfvs/default.aspx

The million meals campaign looks at 10 areas which contribute to the uptake of school meals: -

1. Involve pupils
2. Engage parents and carers
3. Involve adults as role models
4. Make food and drink integral to the whole school day
5. Maximize take-up of free school meals
6. Take positive steps to reducing packed lunches
7. Promote and market food effectively




- 8. Make the food tasty and attractive
- 9. Make lunchtime a good experience
- 10. Manage Resources

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	17		16		0		1
--------------	-----------	---	-----------	---	----------	---	----------

Good progress this year towards objectives and milestones. The single red traffic light refers to the Stadium tour and gallery, the opening of which has been re-scheduled for later this year. For further details please refer to Appendix 1.

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	0		0		0		0
--------------	----------	--	----------	--	----------	--	----------

There are no "Other" objectives for this service.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

HOSPITALITY ASSURED

The School Meals Service was externally assessed on 8th and 9th October 2007, the criteria used is industry led and the same criteria is used to judge ALL catering services, public and private, only 12 Local Authorities have achieved the accreditation to date.

The Assistant Chief Executive from Hospitality Assured has informed us that the service was successful and a formal presentation took place Tuesday 5th February.

The challenge for the service is to now improve its score for the next visit by the assessors in November.

A full report from the assessors is available to view from either the Schools Meals Manager or Head of Service.

CUSTOMER CONSULTATION

School staff have been consulted to see if the catering provision could

be improved for them, 89% reported that they enjoyed their school meal.

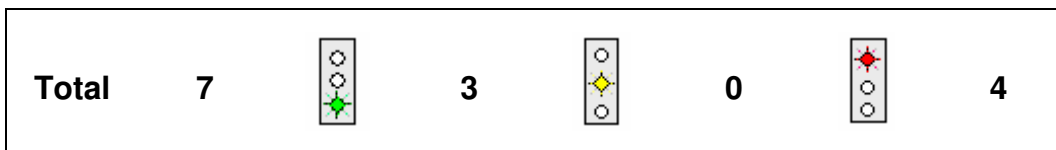
A customer satisfaction audit has also been undertaken in 20 schools.

The average satisfaction levels are currently 87.19% the target set by the service for this year was 86.66%.

GOOD EGG AWARD

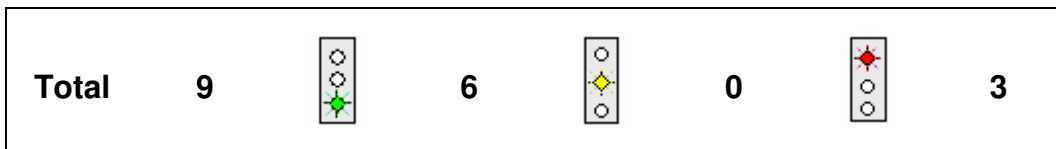
Halton Borough Council has received a “Good Egg” award; Halton was one of only 5 Local Authorities receiving recognition for introducing free-range eggs to all schools and council catering establishments.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Performance relating to the quality and preparation of school food has been successful in meeting targets, however, uptake of school meals and the financial performance of the Stadium has not. For further details please refer to Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



For further details please refer to Appendix 3.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

There are no LPSA targets for this service.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2007-08 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated ‘High’ risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

There are no Key Service Objectives for this service that have been assessed and found to have associated ‘High’ risks. Therefore, there is

no progress to report.





9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS





During 2006/07 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.






There are no High priority actions for this service; therefore, there is no progress to report.




10.0 APPENDICES


Appendix 1- Progress against Key Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators
Appendix 4- Explanation of traffic light symbols

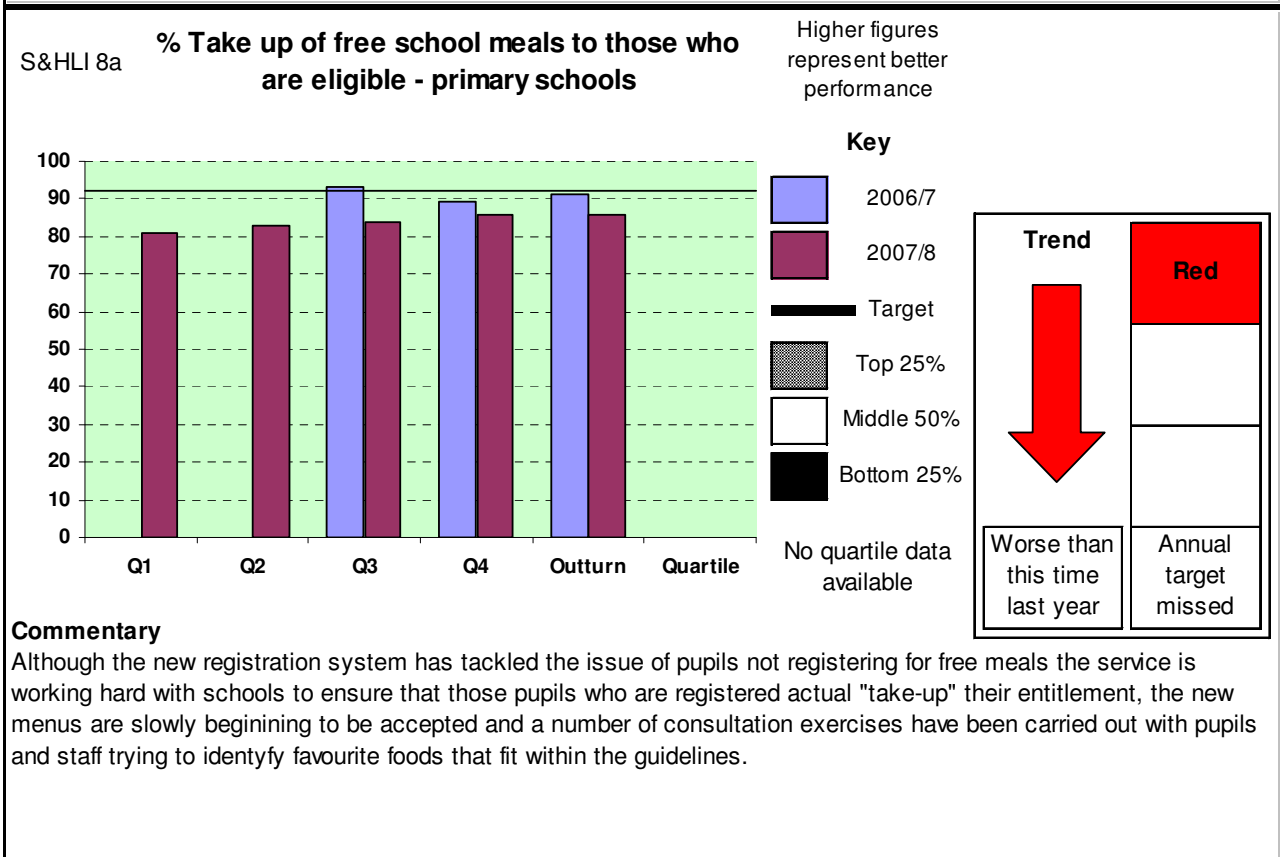
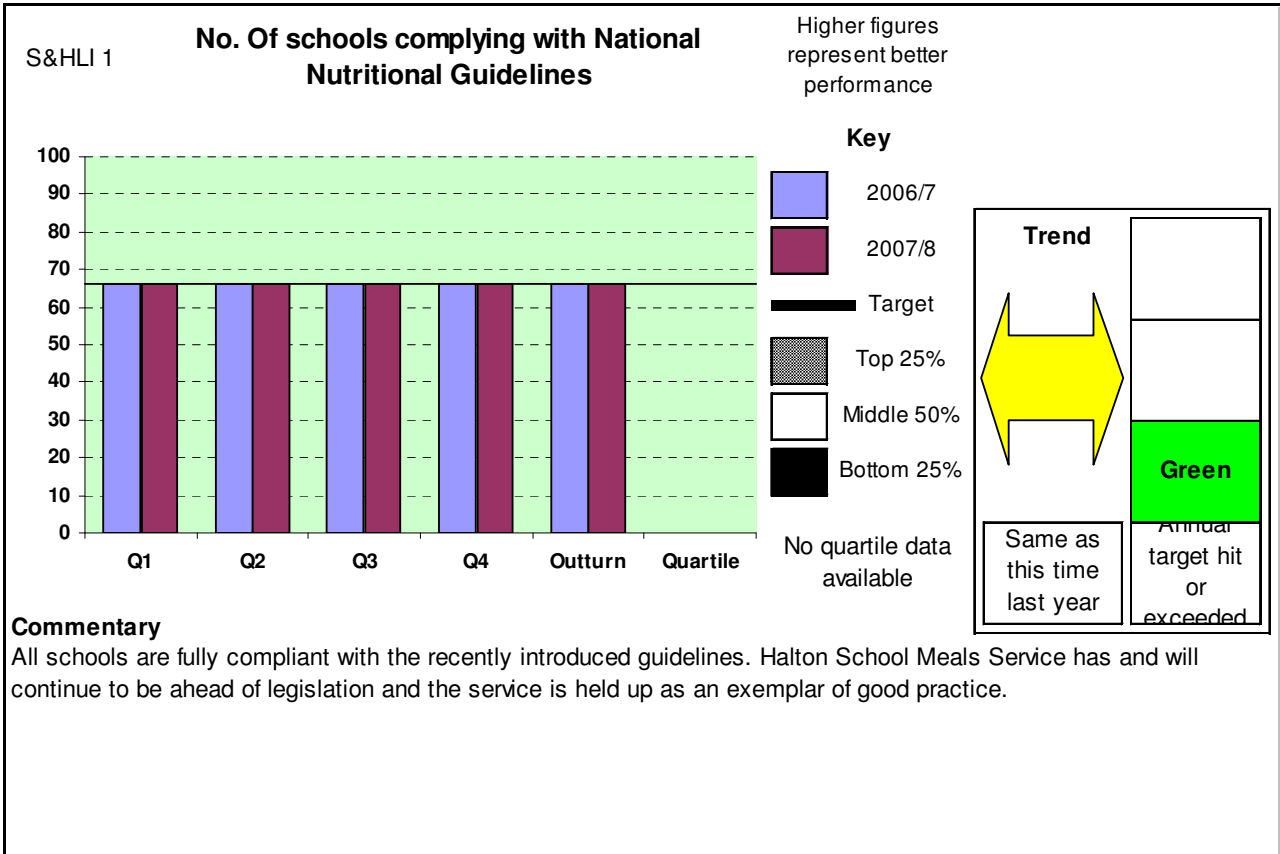
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2007/08 Key Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
SH 01	Increase the community usage of the stadium, encouraging healthier lifestyles and providing opportunities for learning	Review and develop annual community programme - April 07		The community usage of the Stadium has increased significantly this year. A youth event is planned for July that will potentially attract over 30,000 people to the Stadium over 2 days.
		Identify market gaps and develop annual plan for HLC scheme - April 07		Plan completed. The number of Leisure Card Holders has increased significantly this year, presently 208, due mainly to a more pro-active marketing campaign, this is the highest number of Leisure Card Users we have ever had registered.
		Promote monthly availability of IT suite to non corporate audiences - May 07		The programme of usage by Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) pupils started mid-October and further plans are being developed in partnership with the Vikings.
		Develop a list of targeted local volunteer, not for profit and public sector organisations to encourage uptake by		Completed.

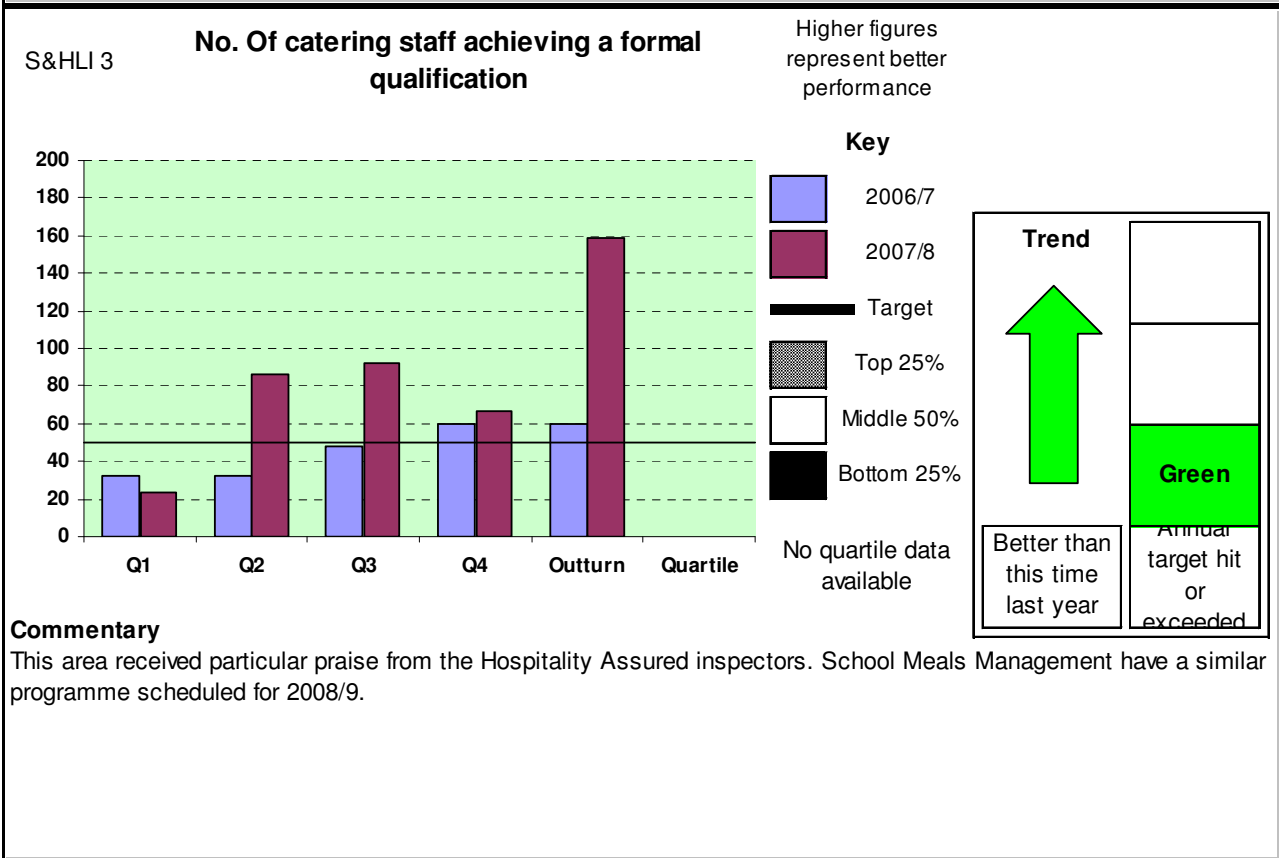
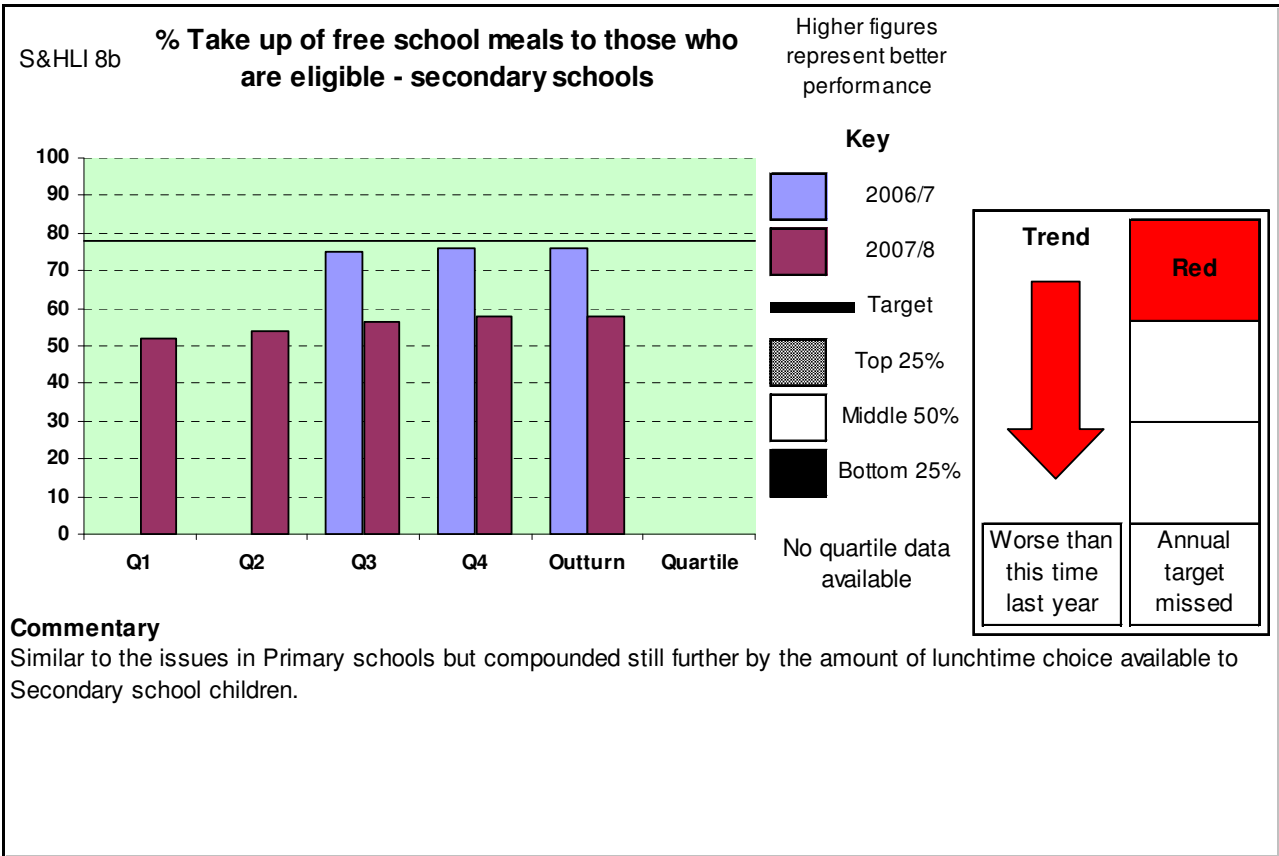
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2007/08 Key Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		<p>disadvantaged groups. Develop a plan for engagement of the identified groups to promote the Stadium facilities - August 07.</p> <p>Visit Riverside College Halton and local Sixth Forms at the start of each academic year September 07 to advise and promote to students the leisure facilities at The Stadium.</p> <p>Develop Stadium tour and gallery - December 07</p>	 	<p>A follow-up visit has been programmed for May with a view to offering a Summer promotion to the Students..</p> <p>Re-scheduled for 2008/09.</p>
SH 02	Increase the Stadium turnover and improve efficiency to reduce the level of Council contribution.	<p>Review and update database, identify new fields - April 07</p> <p>Review and identify areas for improvement in line with the Business Plan and Marketing Plan - April 07</p>	 	<p>Complete. This database forms the basis for all mail shots and promotional flyers.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

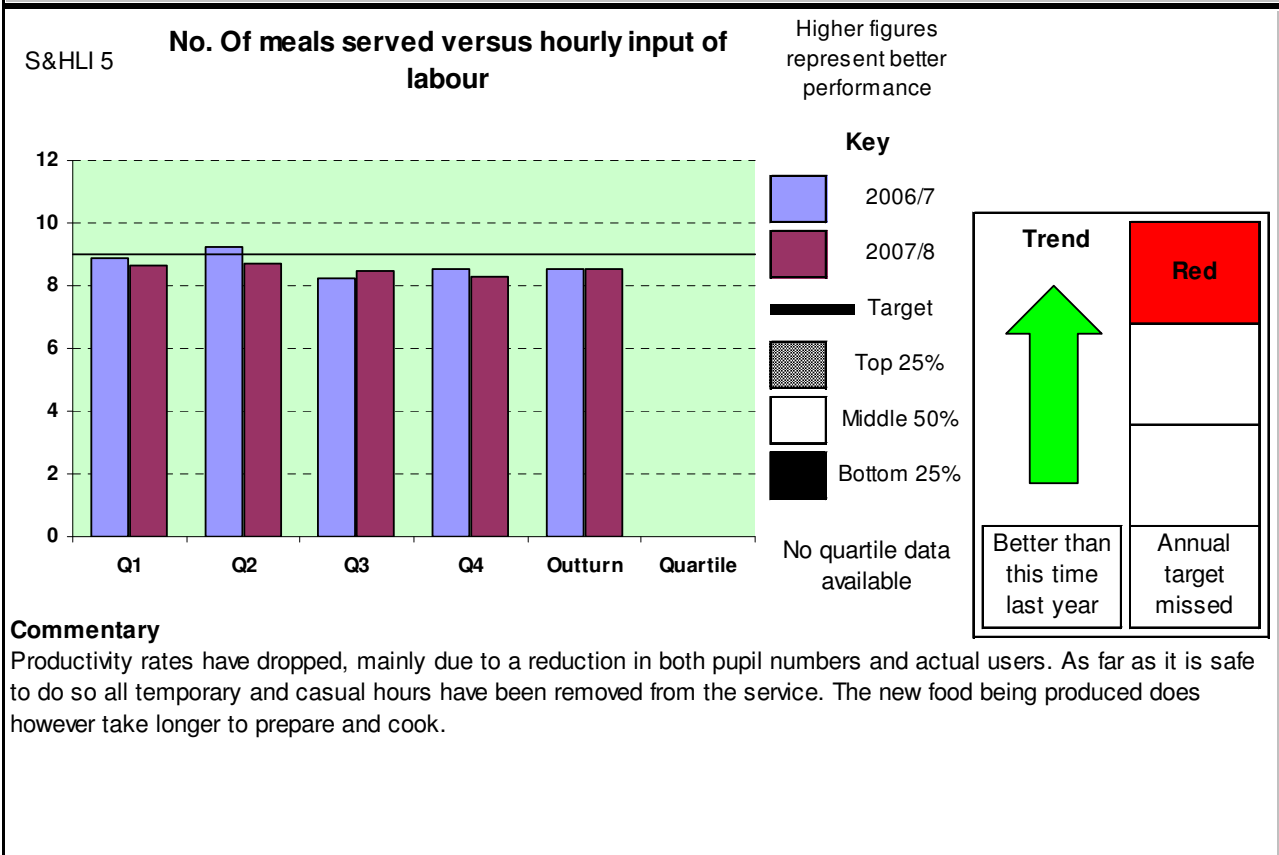
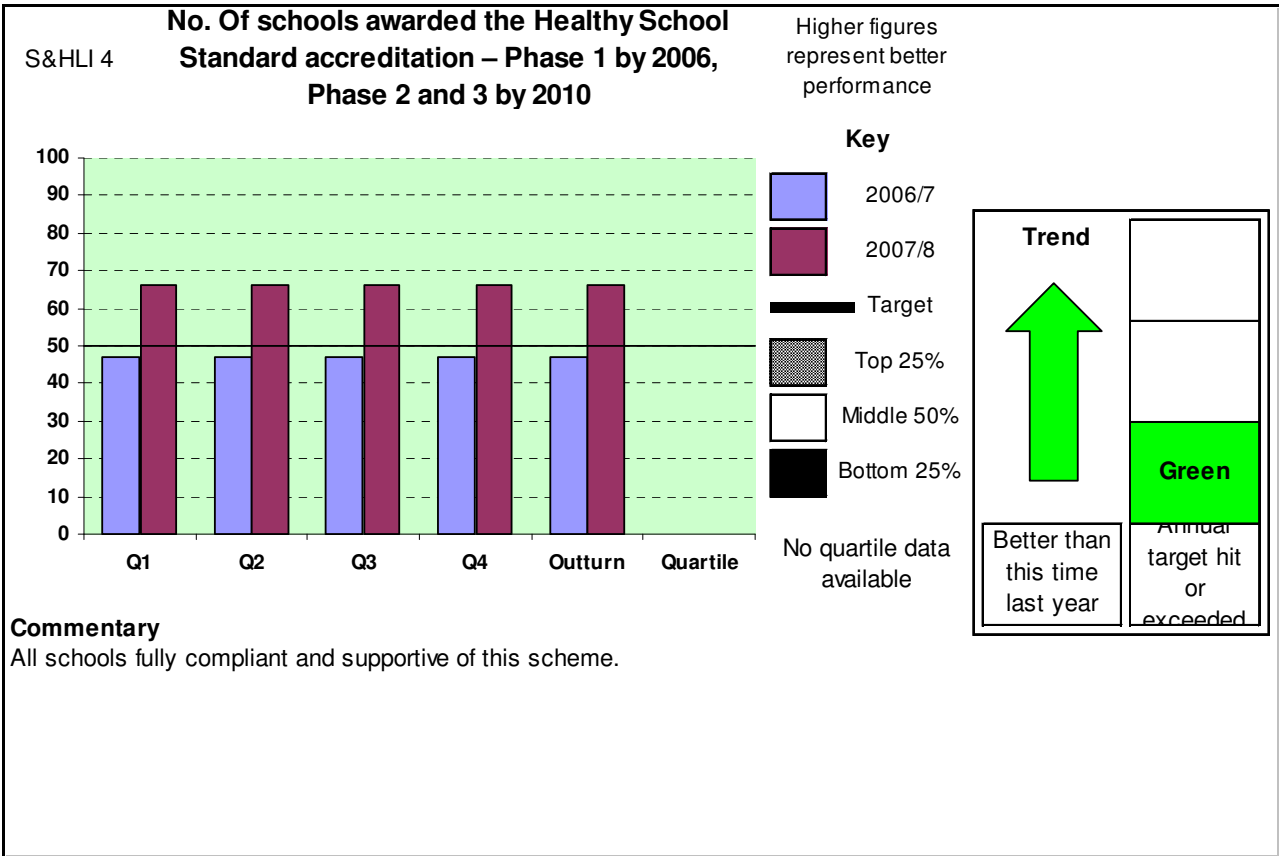
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2007/08 Key Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		<p>Trial additional food outlets during the forthcoming Rugby Season starting April 07 and Evaluate new food outlet points - September 07</p> <p>Conduct and complete a Stadium Benchmarking exercise - October 07</p> <p>Construct a business case - October 07, enabling the Stadium to hold a music concert</p> <p>Implement accepted recommendations of 2006 Energy Audit - March 2008</p>	   	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Completed. Analysis of data ongoing.</p> <p>Agreement for a Youth Festival, to be held July "08" which will incorporate on pitch musical activities.</p> <p>Ongoing, recent Invest to Save bid has been accepted and actions identified have been fully implemented, savings to date are showing an energy usage reduction of around 13%.</p>
SH 03	Increase the number of Pupils registering and regularly eating free school meals, maximising benefit entitlement to families	Conduct and complete a School Meal Benchmarking exercise		A number of Authorities have provided information enabling us to identify our areas of weakness, of

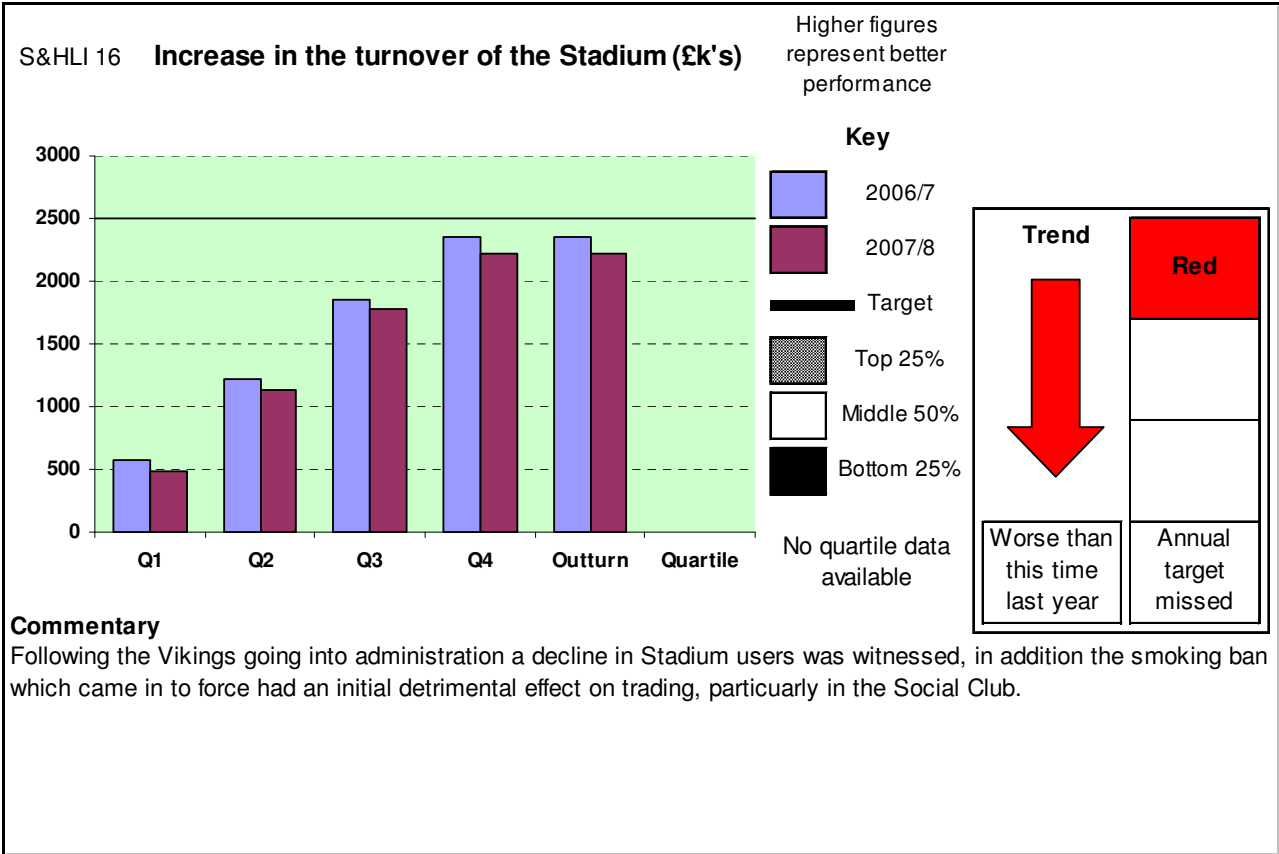
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2007/08 Key Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
	and improving dietary intake of pupils and carers.	<p>to identify and learn better practice - July 07</p> <p>Simplify registration for free school meals by incorporating registration as part of housing benefit application - September 07</p> <p>Identify and target families with children eligible for free school meals to educate and encourage uptake for the academic year starting September 07</p> <p>Develop a bespoke Action Plan for each Secondary School following consultation with Pupils - September 07.</p>	  	<p>particular concern was the present arrangement with Cheshire for food procurement. Following advice from HBC procurement unit we are to swap our food suppliers from HBC contracts to SNUPI contracts.</p> <p>Completed.</p> <p>An ongoing programme has been developed.</p> <p>Complete and actions being implemented.</p>









Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2007/08 Key Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Review, evaluate and amend plan – March 08		Ongoing












Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
Service Delivery Indicators.						
SH LI 02	No. Of: (a) Healthy food initiatives (b) Schools	6 66	6 66	8 66	 	Excellent progress made, all schools fully supporting the new healthy initiatives
SH LI 06	% Of children's intake of a variety of fruit an vegetables a day	67%	70%	72%		Target achieved.
SH LI 07	% Of healthier menu items in Council canteens	65%	70%	71%		Target achieved.
SH LI 10	No. of people accessing stadium facilities (1,000's)	561	597	568		Slightly down on target. The initial reaction to Widnes going into administration had a short-term negative effect.
SH LI 11	Increase in the uptake of the Halton Leisure card	155	170	208		Excellent progress made due mainly to a very pro-active marketing campaign, this is the highest ever figure achieved.
Fair Access						
SH LI 14	% of school children registered for free school meals	71%	75%	90%		The new registration system has proved very successful, final data awaited to confirm registration figure.
Cost & Efficiency						
SH LI 15	Unit cost per visit to the fitness centre	£1.27	£1.20	£1.27		The removal of the VAT exemption for Full Fitness members has resulted in a significant drop in Net Revenue.

Ref	Indicator	Actual 06 / 07	Target 07 / 08	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
SH LI 17	Total cost per school meal	£1.86	£1.75	£1.84		School meals has operated above budget, mainly due to the level of fixed costs and higher levels of food cost.

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 Indicates that the <u>objective has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the annual 06/07 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded
<u>Red</u>	 Indicates that that the <u>objective has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the annual 06/07 target <u>has not been achieved.</u>

REPORT TO: Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 3rd June 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Annual Report 2007/08

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive the Annual Report of the Corporate Service Policy and Performance Board for 2007/08 (attached), to comment in respect of the same, and to make any changes considered appropriate.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be approved.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

N/A

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

N/A

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit	2nd Floor Municipal Building	A Villiers



Chairman
Councillor
Gilligan

ANNUAL REPORT CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD APRIL 2007 – MARCH 2008

“ I would like to thank members of the Board for their hard work and the contribution they have made to its activities over the past year. This year key areas have included the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme which covers the impact of the Council’s energy use on the environment and the possibility of efficiency savings to reduce the cost of our energy bill which, if achieved, could lead to cost savings of £480,000 per annum. Job Evaluation and its implications on our staff was a concern and the Board, in making a number of recommendations, congratulated the Trade Unions and Management on their handling of the issues involved.

The Board received progress reports from the Neighbourhood Management Team, made suggestions relating to the timing and accessibility of its meetings, and will monitor progress twice yearly.”

Councillor Bob Gilligan
Chairman, Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2007/08 the Board comprised eleven Councillors – Councillors Gilligan (Chairman), Lowe (Vice Chair), Bradshaw, Bryant, Dennett, Edge, C Inch, Loftus, Nolan, Norddahl, and Wainwright.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to resources, personnel, ICT and e-government, property, committee and member services, legal services, communications and marketing, Stadium, civic catering, procurement, equalities (employment aspects), corporate complaints procedure and area forums. The Board also has responsibility for monitoring the performance of the reporting departments, namely Policy and Performance, Legal and Member Services and HR, Finance, Exchequer and Customer Services (revenues), Property Services and ICT.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met five times during the year, and set out below are some of the main initiatives that the Board has worked on during that time.

Local Authority Carbon Management Programme

The Board considered a report outlining the process for taking forward the Council’s involvement in the Carbon Management Programme. It noted that the Council had applied for and was accepted onto the Carbon Trust Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. This programme would guide the Council through a number of processes which were set out in the full report for the Board.

The final step was the development of a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan by March 2008 to reduce energy bills and carbon emissions over the next five years. The project plan agreed by Executive Board set a target of reducing the Council's carbon emissions by 33% by 2012. This was an ambitious target and if it were to be achieved, it would likely require some financial investment over the five year period.

At its February meeting, the Board supported the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plans and referred them to Executive Board for approval. The action plan set out measures and sought to reduce the Council's emissions by 20% over the next five years and indicated a cost saving of £480,000 per annum, if achieved once all measures were implemented. The plan also established an aspirational 33% reduction by 2013/14 and indicated that cost savings in the region of £1.6M might be achieved if those targets were met.

Neighbourhood Management

The Board considered the progress to date in the development of neighbourhood management in the borough, current work and issues, and future objectives and challenges. The key ingredients to neighbourhood management were as follows:

- Use of evidence to tackle local issues.
- Multi level partnership working.
- Listening to local communities.
- Tailoring public services to meet local need.
- Making public money work harder.
- Acknowledging that one size does not fit all.

The Director of Neighbourhood Management outlined initiatives including engaging with strategic partners, building neighbourhood partnerships, and delivering early interventions.

Future plans were to track progress against the baseline, implement the partnership delivery plan, commission further interventions, agree neighbourhood action plans, and further support small local community groups.

Progress against those targets was considered at the February meeting, when it was anticipated that during the ensuing six months, neighbourhood management would be involved in the following issues:

- Actions around the external evaluation report.
- Devolving the intervention fund to neighbourhood management boards.
- Providing support for Board members, training etc.

Communications and Marketing

The Board looked at the current context for local government communication, including details of the LGA's reputation campaign. The division's response to the core actions recommended by the LGA included:

- Effective media management.
- Providing every household with an A-Z guide to Council Services.
- Publishing a quarterly Council magazine.
- Branding – effective and consistent linkages of Council brand to services.
- Good internal communications.
- Integration of the Council website.

The Board considered statistics from recent surveys revealing a high proportion of residents and staff who felt informed and/or well informed about standards of service. A draft Corporate communications and marketing strategy was considered, and members asked for an action plan for delivery to be brought forward.

Runcorn Town Hall Refurbishment

Members examined the progress of the Runcorn Town Hall refurbishment project, and called for a presentation which outlined the main objectives, the extent of the works, the factors affecting the design, the overall programme, and the budget and progress to date. The newly refurbished building would include a number of environmental/sustainability factors, such as roof insulation, Brise Soleil, lighting controls/energy saving lights, heating controls and photovoltaic. The results of these factors would be energy efficiency savings to the Council. The works were expected to be completed by June 2008, with the building being fully operational by July 2008.

PERFORMANCE ISSUES

During the year the Board has focused a significant amount of effort on monitoring the performance of its reporting departments. Among the performance issues overseen by the Board during the year are:

- The implementation of job evaluation.
- The bringing together of Legal Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- The continuation of consolidation of the Council's training provision.
- The review of the operation of Area Forums.

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2008/09

The Board has decided that during the current municipal year (2008/09) it will carry out full reviews examining the following areas:

- Access to Services.
- Transfer of Assets.
- Performance Monitoring (rolled over from previous year's performance management work, to be reported early in the Municipal year).
- Customer Complaints.

	<p>Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work please contact Committee Services in the first instance, telephone 0151 424 2061 extension 1121 or email Lynn.Caims@Halton.gov.uk</p>
--	--

REPORT TO: Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 3 June 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate & Policy

SUBJECT: Review of the Council's Corporate Performance Management Arrangements

WARDS: Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report and its appendix summarises the evidence collected during a review of the Council's Corporate Performance Management arrangements, and presents the recommendations of the Topic Group.

2. RECOMMENDED That:

- (1) the Board considers and comments upon the report of the Topic Group and its recommendations;**
- (2) Executive Board be requested to approve the recommendations set out in Section 5 of the Executive Summary (subject to any amendments arising from (a) above);**
- (3) the Operational Director Policy and Performance prepare an action plan including financial implications;**
- (4) a further report be submitted to this Board summarising the response of Executive Board; and**
- (5) subject to the decision of Executive Board, regular progress reports be made to this Policy and Performance Board.**

3. BACKGROUND

A Topic Group of Board Members and Officers has conducted the review of the Council's Corporate Performance Management arrangements, involving interviews, surveys, a meeting with PPB chairs, and a visit to another local authority. The review has identified recommendations for further improvement.

The report of the Topic Group is attached (Appendix 1) and the recommendations are set out in Section 5 of the executive summary.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations in the topic report have some resource implications.

The development or acquisition of performance management software, and any associated infrastructure and support have yet to be fully investigated or costed, but there is a reasonable prospect that this can be met from within existing budgets.

The integration of partnership and Council performance systems, production of a range of tailored reports and additional quality assurance recommendations on top of the implementation of the Data Quality Strategy cannot be managed within the current resources of the Corporate Performance Team of 3 staff.

It is therefore recommended that the Operational Director Policy and Performance identifies more precisely the resource required to deliver these recommendations in conjunction with the preparation of an action plan. The speed of implementation will necessarily reflect the resources available.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications arising directly from this report. However, corporate performance management arrangements impact across the whole of the Council and therefore it is important that any recommendations should ensure that Halton is driving continuous improvement across its services that have a positive effect on the business and the Communities the Council and its partners serve.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None at this time.

7. RISK ANALYSIS

During the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment in 2005, whilst the conclusion was that Halton's strengths outweighed its weaknesses, with regard to the corporate performance management framework, there were still some areas for further improvement. Failure to have shown progress towards addressing these issues and incorporating new developments since 2005, such as the emergence of Local Area agreements, greater public engagement and the new National Indicator set, may impact negatively on any future CPA/CAA scores.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Notes of topic group meetings	2 nd Floor Municipal Building Kingsway Widnes	Rob Mackenzie

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW REPORT

MAY 2008

CONTENTS

TERMS OF REFERENCE	1
Aims of the Review	1
Objectives of the Review	1
Desired Outcome	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. Introduction	3
2. Background	3
3. Objectives of the Review	4
4. Conduct of the Review	5
5. Recommendations	6
5.1. The Role of Members	6
5.2. The Performance Management Framework and Service Planning	6
5.3. Risk Assessment	7
5.4. Monitoring and reporting arrangements/Use of information	7
5.5. New NI set	7
5.6. Local Area Agreements	7
1. INTRODUCTION	8
2. POLICY CONTEXT	9
2.1. National Policy	9
2.2. Local Policy	9
3. REVIEW METHODS AND FINDINGS	10
3.1. Overview of Review	10
3.2. Findings from the Desk Based Research	10
3.3. Findings from the consultations	18
3.4. Study Visit to Kirklees Council	23
4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	25
4.1. The Role of Members	25
4.2. The Performance Management Framework and Service Planning	26
4.3. The Impact of the New, Statutory, National Indicator Set (NIS)	29
4.4. The Emergence of Local Area Agreements.	30

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Aims of the Review

The main aim of this review was to examine Members' involvement in corporate performance management arrangements and to provide confidence to Members that they would be able to have input into a process that would continue to drive improvements that would benefit the individuals and communities served by the Council. It also involved looking at recent changes within the operational environment that might impact on future developments and looked to other agencies and authorities for models of good practice.

Objectives of the Review

The objectives of the review were to:

- Consult with Members about how they are currently engaged in the performance management process in order to establish whether and how the process could be improved.
- Undertake benchmarking exercises with other authorities to examine their corporate performance management arrangements in particular the involvement of Members in their performance management process to determine if there was any good practice that could be used in Halton's arrangements.
- Consult with officers of the council and partner agencies to determine their understanding and experience of the performance management process and establish ideas for its future development.
- Investigate the essential features of business planning and reporting processes from information provided by local government agencies, such as the Audit Commission and IDeA, and previous inspection comments, to determine how Halton's current plans compare and could be developed.
- Examine the current hierarchy of plans to establish the extent to which the "golden thread" is evident within the performance management framework and the extent to which service activity is aligned to and driven by corporate priorities and key areas of focus and how this could be improved.
- Determine the type and variety of performance information currently in use, how it is collected and analysed, and how this performance information is then presented to the different audiences to ensure it is relevant and easily understood
- Determine the impact on performance management requirements as a result of the new national performance framework.

- Investigate the implications of Local Area Agreements for the development of the Council's performance management framework and how they affect the involvement of Members.
- Establish whether or not there is any evidence that the current arrangements are having a positive impact on service delivery and improvement and ensure this learning can help improve future developments.
- Draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the above that will help develop a comprehensive corporate performance management framework for Halton that effectively engages Members and enables the Council to achieve its objectives to the benefit of individuals and communities in Halton.

Desired Outcome

The further development of the corporate performance management framework for Halton within which Members and others can develop their role and be confident that it will comprehensively and positively help to drive continuous improvement and create mutual benefits for the Council and the individuals and communities the Council and its partners serve.

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

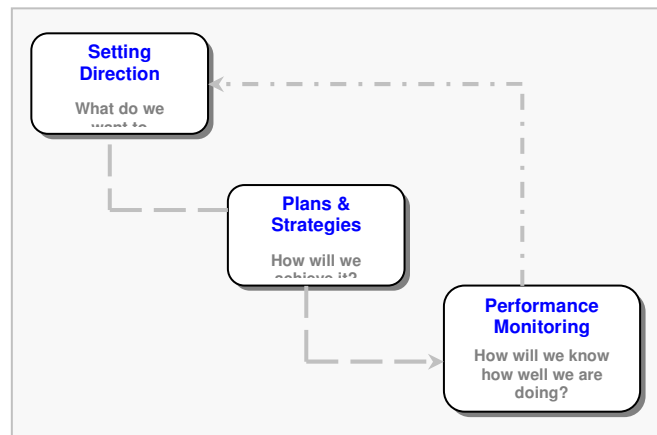
1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. At its meeting on 5th June 2007 the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board agreed to scrutinise the corporate performance management framework in order to review and further develop Members' role in performance management.
- 1.2. The review has looked at the roles of the Policy and Performance Board Members and the Executive Board Members in order to establish how Members are currently engaged in the process and how they want to develop their input in the future.
- 1.3. In addition, it has investigated the practical elements of the performance management framework such as the service planning process and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The authority has a well established and proven Corporate Planning Framework in place that ensures day to day operational activity is aligned to and supportive of the longer-term strategic goals of the organisation.

This framework recognises that performance information is a key element for planning, resource control, and performance review (as illustrated within diagram opposite) and that effective performance management systems and processes are used to support continuous improvement in locally delivered services.



Whilst established practices have served the authority well to date there have however recently been a number of changes within the external operating environment which have resulted in the need for current practices to be reviewed. Such changes most notably include: -

- The introduction of a new National Indicator Data Set (NIS) from April 2008.

- The strengthening of second round Local Area Agreements from April 2008.
- The evolution of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework into a new regime of Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) from April 2009.
- The duty to inform, consult and engage in the 2007 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, and the associated expectation that local authorities will publish performance information in an accessible form.

The primary purpose of the review was to evaluate the benefits of present arrangements, determine whether such arrangements would remain fit for purpose in the medium term, and identify where the potential for improvement may exist to generate added value in terms of what is produced and its impact and in enhancing the future utilisation of limited resources.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

3.1. The review had the following objectives: -

- Consult with Members about how they are currently engaged in the performance management process in order to establish how they might develop their roles in the future.
- Undertake benchmarking exercises with other authorities to examine their corporate performance management arrangements, in particular the involvement of Members in their performance management process to determine if there was any good practice that could be used in Halton's arrangements.
- Consult with officers of the council and partner agencies to determine their understanding and experience of the performance management process and establish ideas for its future development.
- Investigate the essential features of business planning and reporting processes from information provided by local government agencies, such as the Audit Commission and IDeA, and previous inspection comments to determine how Halton's current plans compare and could be developed.
- Examine the current hierarchy of plans to establish the extent to which the "golden thread" is evident within the performance management framework and the extent to which service activity is aligned to and driven by corporate priorities and key areas of focus and how this could be improved.

- Determine the type and variety of performance information currently in use, how it is collected and analysed, and how this performance information is then presented to the different audiences, to ensure it is relevant and easily understood.
- Determine the impact on performance management requirements of the new statutory national performance indicators.
- Investigate the implications of Local Area Agreements for the development of the Council's performance management framework and how they affect the involvement of Members.
- Established whether or not there is any evidence that the current arrangements are having a positive impact on service delivery and improvement and ensure this learning can help improve future developments.
- Draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the above that will help develop a comprehensive corporate performance management framework for Halton that effectively engages Members and enables the Council to achieve its objectives to the benefit of individuals and communities in Halton.
- Investigate the practical elements of the performance management framework such as the service planning process and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements. This was prompted by a CPA inspection in 2005, which whilst it concluded that the strengths of Halton's corporate performance management framework outweighed its weaknesses, it also suggested two areas for improvement. Firstly, the need to develop better links between service plan objectives and corporate priorities, and, secondly, that a further inspection of risk assessment was required, as it was too early to determine whether or not it was having a positive impact on service performance.
- Furthermore, since this time, a number of new developments have occurred that have implications for the way in which the authority manages the process of data collection, analysis and dissemination, these include: the emergence of Local Area Agreements, the increased need for public engagement and demonstrating that the public have helped to shape service delivery and, the introduction of a new, statutory set of 198 national performance indicators.

4. CONDUCT OF THE REVIEW

- 4.1. A working party was established, consisting of four councillors from cross party representation and four officers from the corporate policy and performance department.

4.2. A number of intelligence gathering and analysis techniques were adopted during the review that included:-

- An Elected Member 'away day' to facilitate discussion and feedback concerning existing and future challenges in relation to performance management.
- Desk top research to establish national good practice.
- On line survey of Service Plan and Monitoring Report authors.
- One-to-one interviews with key staff involved in the service planning and performance monitoring process.
- A visit by officers and members to Kirklees Council, an authority rated by the Audit Commission as 'four star' and 'improving strongly'.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. The Role of Members

- Establish clearer lines of responsibility from Member level through to strategic directors, managers and down to individuals (this would also strengthen the understanding of the links between the Community/Corporate Plan and various levels within the Council).
- PPBs should develop their role in monitoring performance against their priority (Health, Safer Halton etc), receiving six monthly reports on progress against relevant LAA and Corporate Plan Targets and developing scrutiny of SSP performance.
- Service Plan Monitoring reports will be made available to members on the intranet and exceptions (over or under performance) will be reported to the PPB. Members may also request that aspects of the reports be discussed at the PPB.
- With regard to the Executive Board, Strategic Directors should brief their portfolio holders.

5.2. The Performance Management Framework and Service Planning

- Continue to refine the process of objective setting to strengthen the golden thread, through training and improved communication
- Develop the quality assurance process for Divisional Plans
- Ensure the EDR process results in personal work plans that reflect the corporate priorities
- Revise Service Planning timetable to allow greater input by Members at the planning stage.

5.3. Risk Assessment

- Include risk assessments in the quality assurance of service plans to ensure that they are prepared at the same time as the plans..

5.4. Monitoring and reporting arrangements/Use of information

- Tailor the volume of information reported to different audiences by (1). Re-assessing content of service plan (2). Separating out some areas of the plan to be reported on at different times/frequencies.
- Investigate IT options that will enable different types of reports to be created to cater for the varying audiences that access performance information.
- Management Team will continue to see all 19 quarterly monitoring reports for the Service Plans. These will also continue to be made available to all the PPB's electronically.

5.5. New NI set

- Use the Observatory as a repository for information relating to the set of National Indicators for use by partners to ensure consistency of information amongst the partners.
- Involve the corporate performance management team work with the LSP performance groups/officers so that a single reporting framework is developed.
- Implement the new Data Quality Strategy.

5.6. Local Area Agreements

- The performance reports from the SSPs/LSP/LAA should be shared with the PPBs.
- The Executive Board should receive the same reports that go to the LSP, a quarterly balanced score and six monthly performance summary.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. At its meeting on 5th June 2007 the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board agreed to scrutinise the corporate performance management framework in order to review and further develop Members' role in performance management.
- 1.2. The topic addresses Corporate Effectiveness and Efficient Service Delivery (priority 6 in the Corporate Plan), and in particular the key objectives C and E, to translate vision and priorities into action and delivery, and to improve continuously the quality of services. Area of focus 33 in the plan is "Ensuring that we are properly structured and fit for purpose, and that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate information".
- 1.3. The review has looked at the roles of the Policy and Performance Board Members and the Executive Board Members in order to establish how Members are currently engaged in the process and how they want to develop their input in the future.
- 1.4. In addition, it has investigated the practical elements of the performance management framework such as the service planning process and performance monitoring and reporting arrangements. This was to check progress since the CPA inspection in 2005, which whilst it concluded that the strengths of Halton's corporate performance management framework outweighed its weaknesses, also suggested two areas for improvement. Firstly, the need to develop better links between service plan objectives and corporate priorities, and, secondly, that a further inspection of risk assessment was required, as it was too early to determine whether or not it was having a positive impact on service performance.
- 1.5. New developments since 2005 have implications for the way in which the authority manages the process of business planning and performance monitoring. These include: the emergence of Local Area Agreements, the increased need for public engagement including in shaping service delivery and, the introduction of a new set of 198 statutory national performance indicators.
- 1.6. We need to have confidence that we have a performance management system that effectively engages Members and others in order to enable the Council to achieve its objectives will continue to drive improvement and ensure continuous improvement that benefits the communities the Council and its partners serve.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

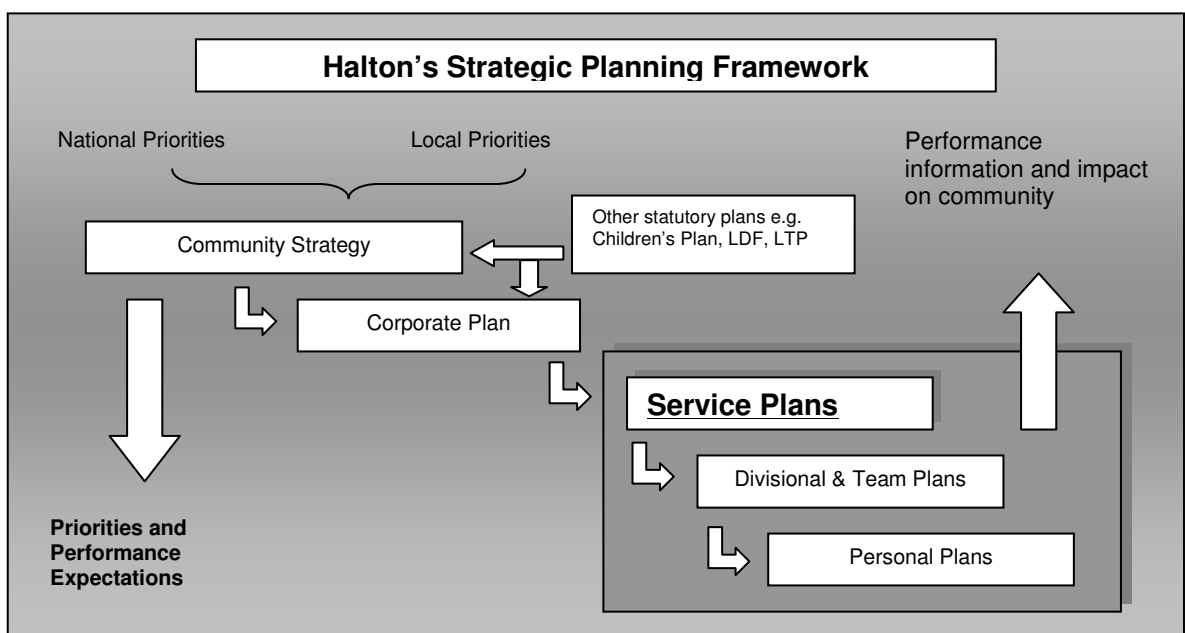
2.1. National Policy

As part of the Local Government White Paper ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’, October 2006 the Government set out a new way of managing performance between central and local government and its partners, to meet the needs of their communities and tackle complex cross-cutting issues like climate change, social exclusion and anti-social behaviour. A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three-year agreement, based on local Community Strategies, which sets out the priorities for a local area agreed between Central Government and a local area through its Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), led by the Council. LAAs will be the core mechanism by which Government assesses local performance against key targets.

As part of this process the government has brought in a new set of 198 National Indicators to measure performance for the area as a whole. The intention was to reduce the burden of reporting on Councils and encourage them to engage more effectively with partners and the public in the delivery of local service.

2.2. Local Policy

The Corporate Plan presents the Council’s response to how it will help to implement the agreed Community Strategy. The Corporate Planning Framework consists of a hierarchy of plans that are directly aligned to ensure the corporate priorities and strategic objectives of the Council are cascaded down the organisation through properly outcome-focused targets. This is known as the ‘Golden Thread’.



The Community Strategy outlines how the Halton Strategic Partnership, led by the Council, intends to transform Halton over the next five years.

The Corporate Plan sets out how the Council will deliver its contribution to achieving a community strategy. The Plan provides focus for all that the Council will do over the next five years.

Departmental Service Plans set out how the Council's Directorates intend to deliver their particular responsibilities and address the key challenges facing them to help deliver the Corporate Plan.

Divisional Plans outline the key tasks needed to help deliver the Directorate Plans and ensure that tasks are properly managed and delivered.

The Personal Development Plans of individual employees ensure that every employee has an identified a set of key tasks that will help to deliver the corporate objectives, and that their training and development is focused on corporate aims.

Integrating service planning with resource planning is essential to make sure we can achieve our vision. Essential complements to of the Corporate Plan are the Council's medium-term Financial Plan and the Workforce Development Plan which from part of the framework for managing the resources that will help to deliver the Corporate Plan. Service Plans provide the focus for the Council's current performance management system whilst the Community Strategy and LAA are the focus for the HSPB's performance framework. The introduction of the National Indicators and LAAs require us to review the way this relationship works.

3. REVIEW METHODS AND FINDINGS

3.1. Overview of Review

A working party was established, referred to as the 'Group'. The Group consisted of four councillors from cross party representation and four officers from the corporate policy and performance department. The approach taken by the Group was to employ a mixture of: desk research; consultations, in the form of one-to-one interviews, meetings and surveys; and comparison/benchmarking exercises, which included a study visit to another local authority.

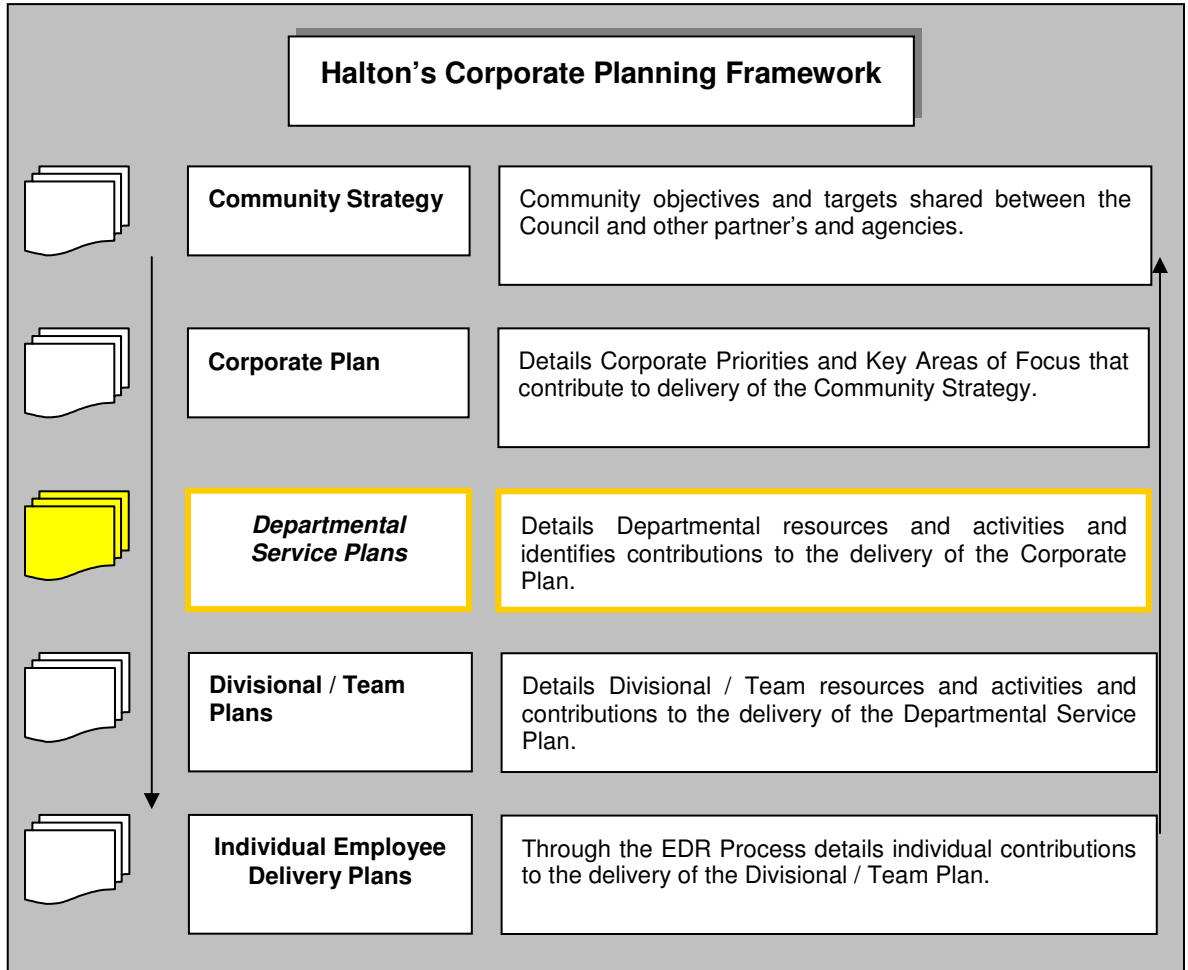
3.2. Findings from the Desk Based Research

a. Map of existing links between service and corporate plans

The desk research revealed that the current Corporate Planning Framework consists of a hierarchy of plans that are directly aligned to ensure the corporate priorities and strategic objectives

of the Council are cascaded down the organisation through properly outcome-focused targets. This is known as the '**Golden Thread**' and is demonstrated in table 1 below:

Table 1: Halton's Corporate Performance Management Framework



The term 'the golden thread' is one that was adopted by the Audit Commission to describe the way in which the activity of departments, divisions, teams and individuals, can be linked to the achievement of organisational goals as illustrated within the diagram above.

The 2007 – 08 Departmental Service Plans interrogated to determine the extent to which service objectives and performance indicators have been referenced to, and aligned with, the authority's Corporate Priorities and their associated Key Areas of Focus.

The findings were very positive in that there were only a small number of objectives and indicators that were not directly referenced to corporate priorities. But, whilst most service

objectives were linked directly to one Corporate Priority and Key Area(s) of Focus there were a number of exceptions.

Within a number of departmental service plans a small number of service objectives have been identified which have been linked to a number of different priority areas. Whilst this approach does not mean that the 'golden thread' has necessarily been broken it does make it more complex and less visible.

Whilst there is extensive evidence that departmental activity is being referenced to corporate priorities there is a need to ensure that such links are meaningful and that corporate priorities are driving service activity as opposed to service activity being retrospectively linked back to priorities.

Although this initial examination did not extend to the level of Divisional Plans and Individual Personal Action Plans the examination of performance management arrangements by external auditors (2005) stated that:

Staff objectives, targets and performance are now linked into the overall performance management framework; the EDR process links to service plans which in turn link to service objectives and council priorities. This is a clear improvement since 2002.

As there are presently no indications that this situation has changed at this stage it is not considered necessary to undertake an audit of documentation below departmental level.

b. Research into the essential features of service planning and reporting of information

The desk-based work in relation to examining the advice of the various professional organisations indicates that there is no one right way to structure a service plan, but they are all in agreement that every service plan should have in some form:

- Current performance
- Objectives and needs
- Means of achieving objectives
- Ways of measuring success

And that these can be addressed by asking the following basic questions.

- **Why are we here?** (What is the purpose of our service?)

- **Where are we now?** (Establish the context of the service and how well the service is currently performing)
- **Where do we need to be?** (In order to achieve the councils objectives and customer expectations)
- **How do we get there?** (Establishing a clear plan for closing the gap between where the service is now and where it wants or needs to go)
- **How do we know we are there?** (The need for performance information and monitoring to maintain progress and provide real improvements for local people)

H M Treasury in conjunction with the Cabinet Office, National Audit Office, Audit Commission and Office for National Statistics have produced a Framework for Performance Information called 'Choosing the right FABRIC'. It sets out the general principles behind producing high quality performance information, that is information used to measure an organisations progress towards its objectives.

Whilst the guide is not a set of hard and fast rules it emphasises the importance of performance information as part of a good business or service plan. It states that a good performance management system should be:

Focused	on the organisations aims and objectives
Appropriate	to, and useful for the, the stakeholders who are likely to use it
Balanced	giving a picture of what the organisation is doing, covering all significant areas of work
Robust	in order to withstand organisational changes or individuals leaving
Integrated	into the organisation, being part of the service planning and management process and,
Cost Effective	balancing the benefits of the information against the cost

Good performance information can also help to inform management decisions and is therefore a vital part in helping an organisation to set strategies and policies to meet its priorities. It also states that if the various stakeholders, such as the public and partners are able to understand the performance information, this will empower them and enable them to be more involved in

decision making or delivery of local services. It also makes the Council more credible because accountability can be clearly seen.

The key aspect of this is that information should focus on the Council's priorities. In addition, consideration should be given as to who will view the information. Information of value to Members may be different from that of value to Managers. Similarly, information of interest to customers is likely to differ again. Different stakeholders will have different needs for the performance information and possibly a different perspective on what 'good' performance is so the performance information needs to be well balanced.

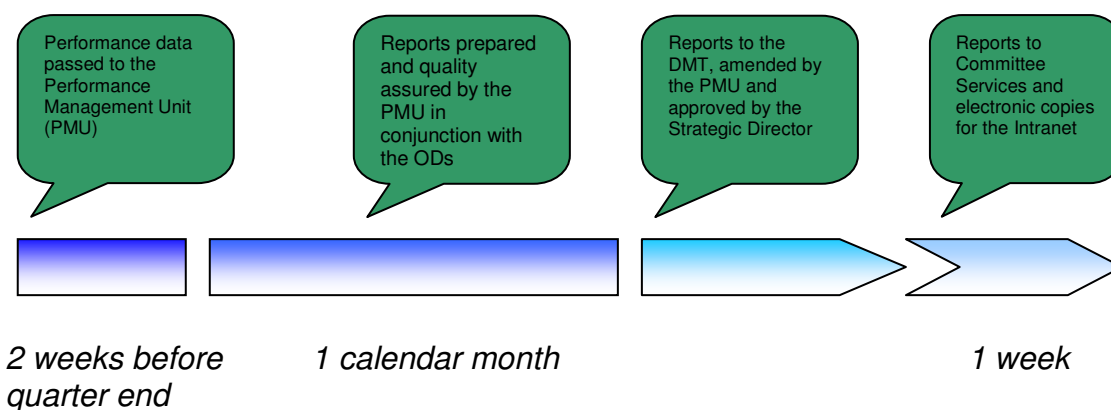
Performance measures need to be established in partnership with stakeholders to prevent a bias and should use a range of economic, efficient and effective measures. Issues of timeliness, quality and cost also play a part. As with the service planning aspect creating the plan or performance measure is one thing, using it, and using it effectively is another. The effectiveness of both depends on the culture and values of the organisation and requires good leadership and communication.

c. Examination of the range of performance information gathered and used in the production of Halton's quarterly monitoring reports.

Each service department is required to prepare and submit a quarterly monitoring report to both Management Team and the relevant Policy and Performance Board that identifies both key issues for the department and the progress that is being made in terms of the achievement of service objectives and performance targets.

The reporting system is based upon relatively simple templates formulated from Microsoft word applications. However, for the 2008 -11 suite of plans, service objective and performance indicator data will be collated using EXCEL spreadsheets that will facilitate a greater degree of flexibility in data analysis and presentation.

Quarterly monitoring report arrangements are as follows:



The deskwork revealed that the volume of information contained within the existing suite of service plans in relation to objectives, key milestones and targets was considerable.

Table 2:
Illustration of Objectives, Key milestones and PIs in relation to Priority Areas

Priority Area	Objectives / Key Milestones	Performance indicators	Total
Health Halton	57	51	108
Urban Renewal	50	64	114
Children & Young People	46	61	107
Employment learning & skills	26	23	49
A Safer Halton	13	26	39
Business Efficiency / effectiveness	178	141	319
TOTAL	370	366	736

Table 2 above also illustrates the extent of information, which has been linked to each of our priority areas.

This confirmed that there was a vast amount of information being recorded and also that nearly half of the objectives and milestones and the associated indicators were inwardly focused, that is concentrated on organisational business efficiency and effectiveness. Far fewer were directed at the individual priorities.

What was also significant is that this information is only available in one format, the quarterly monitoring reports. However there is a variety of primary audiences who might want to receive and use such information, as summarised in table 3 below.

Table 3:
Potential audiences for Performance Management Information

<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Primary use</i>
Operational Directors	To ensure that the day to day operations of the department are performing as planned and where necessary make the necessary interventions.
Strategic Directors	To hold Operational Directors to account.
Management Team	To ensure that the organisation is progressing satisfactorily in terms of meeting its strategic objectives and to use such information in advising Council on the future allocation of resources
Executive Portfolio Holders	To manage performance in their portfolio area
Executive Board	To ensure that strategic objectives are being met and that services are providing value for money
Policy and Performance Boards	To scrutinise performance to ensure that planned activities are being carried out and that performance is being managed effectively.
Regulators	Monitoring performance and the use of resources of local bodies and publishing comparative performance information at a national level.
Service users and the community	Understanding what is being achieved and holding the authority to account.

The range of different audiences suggests there may be a need for a variety of different reports.

In addition, and as discussed earlier, in a relatively small number of cases departmental objectives/ key milestones are linked to a number of different Corporate Priorities. Within existing arrangements this may mean that PPB's receiving reports may be provided with unnecessary information whilst those who may expect to receive it do not.

d. Risk Assessment

The corporate approach to managing departmental risks is that all Departmental Service Plan objectives are subject to risk assessment in order to ensure that the factors, which may influence their achievement, are, as far as possible, mitigated against. These assessments are recorded in departmental and directorate risk registers and action plans implemented to combat any problems that are identified. However, the following issues were identified through the consultation process.

Risk assessments are not always carried out at the time of writing the objectives, with informal assessments being made initially, followed by formal documented assessments at a later date.

A review of Risk Management last year found that some risks in directorate risk register were not clearly linked to service objectives.

e. The impact of the new, statutory, National Indicator Set (NIS)

Central Government recently reduced the numbers of PIs collected to 198 to reduce the burden of reporting. The set of 198 is a mixture of new indicators and existing ones (including some former BVPIs) which are generally outcome focused and relate to Halton as whole, extending beyond Council service outcomes. The current set of BVPIs will no longer be reported (except for a small number included in the new NI Set). However, the Council may wish to continue to collect some of these indicators, and set targets for them, for its own purposes.

The LAA will include up to 51 indicators drawn from the national indicator set for which targets will be agreed with Government and which will be subject to performance management by central government. The results against all 198 indicators will be published annually as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

In addition, Strategic Directors will need to ensure that whoever is responsible for collecting data relating to an indicator takes into account the fact that the LSP will be required to use up to 51 of these indicators in their Local Area Agreement and this information needs to be drawn together.

Halton has invested in a Data Observatory to provide a central repository for statistical and performance information. This is a joint approach between LSP partners. The Research and Intelligence Unit of the Council act as the gatekeeper for information.

Some information outside the 198 NIs will still be required by Inspectors and Regulators, for example, OFSTED and DCFS who have previously carried out annual performance assessments, using a large basket of indicators. They have stated that although they will no longer be carrying out these annual assessments they will still require information for what they call 'activity data'.

This type of 'data harvesting' is also likely to take place in other areas and in many respects may be more onerous to collect in that it will be called for on an uncoordinated basis, rather than as part of a planned programme. Information of this nature may also still

be required for the 'Use of Resources', 'Direction of Travel' and 'Risk Assessment section of the Comprehensive Area Assessment

f. The impact of Local Area Agreements

There is a clearly defined link between the targets and outcomes of the LSP/LAA and the Council, and a sharing of responsibility with regard to the management of performance information. The advent of the new LAA provides an opportunity to explore the scope for rationalising partner's roles.

3.3. Findings from the consultations

In recognising the benefits of stakeholder engagement in reviewing current practice a number of consultations took place with Members, officers and partners, as follows:

a. Performance Management Team

Key comments and findings:

- Officers believe that strong links now exist between the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan and the Departmental Service Plans and that quality assurance and control has improved. Divisional Team Plans are not quality assured centrally due to lack of capacity but it has been suggested that they are put on the intranet for peer and Member scrutiny and, if possible, to develop the capacity in the future to select Divisional Plans for quality assurance on a rolling programme basis over several years.
- Officers commented that Service Plans contain a considerable amount of information. However, because this is presented departmentally it is not always possible to see the bigger picture. That is, it is not always possible to see how the Council is planning to deliver its corporate priorities. It was suggested that the resulting amount of performance monitoring information was overwhelming. Because some services contribute to the delivery of more than one of our five priorities, their performance is reported in full to several PPBs even though not all of the report is relevant to each individual Board. More targeted reporting was suggested as an alternative. It was also suggested that the service plans should be more strategic in nature and the divisional plans could pick up more of the operational aspects, meaning that some of the information in the service plans could be dropped into the Divisional Plans. It was also suggested that alternative forms of reports should be created, such as thematic or exception reports, for the benefit of different audiences.

- It was noted that a number of services have other plans that they have to compile, such as the Children and Young Peoples Plan and the Local Transport Plan and therefore the production of the Service Plan, though necessary was seen as additional work.
- It was suggested that, where possible, plans and their targets should be as co-ordinated as possible in order to reduce the duplication of reporting.
- Whilst most objectives are now driven by corporate priorities it was felt that, in a few instances, the Service Plan objectives seemed to be linked to the corporate objectives as an after thought. Work needs to continue in relation to developing objective setting in order to eliminate this.
- Objectives have become more outcome focused but sometimes it is still difficult to evidence tangible outcomes (eg objectives to review or write strategies).
- Risk assessment has improved but could improve still further.
- The new national indicator set is supposed to reduce the burden of reporting but there is no real evidence of this. According to the performance officers the new set do not serve the service plans well in some instances, therefore a number of the old indicators may need to be retained as local indicators, or for other purposes such as to use for the Use of Resources.

b. Chairs Away Day held on 6th December 2007

As part of the review it was essential to consult with the PPB Chairs to ascertain their views on their involvement with the corporate performance management process. To provide an independent approach to this, a Principal Consultant from the Improvement and Development Agency, (North and Midlands), was called in to provide background information relating to performance management, examples of good practice, and details of the new challenges facing local government through the new performance management framework in order to help compare these to Halton.

The key comments and findings arising from the ensuing discussion were as follows:

- Councillors acknowledged the importance of partnership working in relation to developing performance information, and this raised the importance of working more closely with the Local Strategic Partnership on the Local Area Agreement.

- The Members also discussed the role of the PPBs and Executive Board. Members felt that there was a need for more involvement from the Executive Board and for more strategic rather than operational information.
- It was commented on that a number of the targets at a higher level are long term, for example improving mortality rates, but there was a need to ensure that there are shorter-term goals so that people can see some realistic improvements in the short and medium term.
- One Councillor emphasised the need to have local indicators for local issues, not just the national set of indicators, in order to respond more readily to things of issue to local residents.
- There was a mixed response to the amount of information produced for quarterly monitoring reports. Some found it problematic because much of it was not relevant to their particular PPB. However, others to look at all the information. One suggestion was to continue to make the service plan quarterly reports available to PPB Members on the intranet, and provide exception reporting to the PPBs, but there was still concern by some Members that the quarterly monitoring reports lost sight of the day-to-day issues that were important to residents.
- Timing was also an issue. Some Members felt that information was out of date when they received it and wanted quicker access to the information.

c. Local Strategic Partnership

A meeting was held with the Performance and Standards sub-group of the LSP to advise them about the nature of the review. Following this an individual interview was set up with the LSP co-ordinator, regarding the impact of the LAA and the new set of National Indicators. The main comments and findings were as follows:

- The LAA will have up to 51 National Indicators in their LAA. 16 of these are compulsory and relate to Children and Young People. The remaining 35 will be selected from the new national indicator set. Each of the SSPs are looking at the indicators they want to use and possible targets. This process is due to be signed off in conjunction with the Government Office North West in June.
- Local Indicators may also be created but not necessarily reported by the same means as the national indicator set.

- Until recently, one of the LSP co-ordinators has collected the performance information from the various projects. However, this has led to some duplication of performance information with the Corporate Performance Management Team.
- In future it is intended that the LSP officer responsible for performance issues will work more closely with the corporate centre to ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of performance information.

d. Head of Research & Intelligence

This was an investigative interview to determine how the Data Observatory might play a role in the compilation of information for the new National Indicator set.

The Observatory was designed as a legacy that would help all partners beyond the period of NRF money. It is an interactive information service accessible via the Internet, which holds information on many of the targets in Halton's Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

There are five data sharing protocols. The Council act as gatekeepers for the site.

The ability to store information that will assist in the compilation of the 198 national Indicators is currently being looked at.

e. Management Team

The key comments from the Management Team were as follows.

- The production of Directorate Plans to sit between the current Service Plans and the Corporate Plan is not favoured because of the additional burdens this would create.
- Management Team will continue to see all 19 quarterly monitoring reports for the Service Plans. These will also continue to be made available to all the PPB's electronically.
- With regard to the Executive Board, Strategic Directors should brief their portfolio holders.
- The detailed service plan monitoring reports do not need to be reported routinely to PPBs, but PPBs should receive reports on exceptions (performance significantly exceeding or falling short of its targets). Members of the PPB's should inform their Chairs if they have any specific issues arising from the monitoring reports that they wish to be discussed at a PPB

meeting.

- Provision should be made to ensure that the performance reports from the SSPs/LSP/LAA are shared with the PPBs.
- The Executive Board should receive the same report that goes to the LSP, with a form of balanced scorecard.

Whilst the quarterly monitoring reports to Management Team will remain essentially the same, this does not necessarily preclude the option of reporting by theme or priority to PPBs.

f. Operational Directors

- When asked 'What do you perceive to be the overall purpose of the service plan?' 80% of those that responded said it was to establish links between the corporate plan and service areas and to establish accountability for a service. Only 40% said that the purpose was to use it as a management tool or to help inform their own staff what the service is trying to achieve. Significantly though 80% felt its purpose was to inform Members about the services.
- 100% of respondents said it was possible to link service plan objectives with corporate objectives either fairly or very well.
- In terms of the types of monitoring reports 80% stated that they would like to be able to see a variety of reporting, such as 'themed' or 'exception' reporting as well as the existing service reports.
- 80% of respondents said that they carry out risk assessments.
- In relation to target and milestone setting none of the respondents said it was very easy and 20% said it remained very difficult.
- 100% of respondents stated that they took remedial action if quarterly monitoring reports showed that targets had not been met.
- Quarterly monitoring was still the most favoured frequency by 80% of the respondents, but 60% felt there was too much information in the quarterly reports
- 100% felt that Strategic Directors should see all the quarterly reports but only 40% felt Operational Directors needed to see all the quarterly reports.

- 80% stated that the Executive Board, PPB Chairs and their Members should see the quarterly reports and 20% felt they were relevant to partners, such as the SSP or LSP Board.
- 80% of respondents currently have some involvement with the LSP and SSPs with 40% having had input into the new Local Area Agreement.
- 100% were aware of the Data Observatory with 60% having used it.
- 80% of respondents were able to give tangible examples of where service planning has helped to deliver progress against the corporate priorities

3.4. Study Visit to Kirklees Council

In their Comprehensive Performance Assessment in October 2007 the Audit Commission stated that Kirklees were “performing strongly” in relation to performance management and they received a score of 4, the highest rating possible. In addition to this, the issues they had faced in the previous 3 to 4 years were similar to those being faced by Halton. Therefore, it was deemed useful to visit the authority and discuss how the various improvements had been made and to learn from both the good and bad practice. The Chair and another Member from the Topic Group attended along with three of the Topic Group officers. During the course of the day several presentations and discussion sessions took place. The attendance from Kirklees included the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Governance, (who had previously had a lead scrutiny role), the Director of Corporate Services, the Assistant Head of Performance and Improvement, 2 other Performance Officers, 2 Service Managers, the Risk Management Manager and the Kirklees Partnership Manager. The key learning points from the visit were as follows:

- It had become clear to Kirklees that there was a lot of different practice across the Council. As a result the Authority created PEAK – Performance Excellence Across Kirklees - which consisted of a series of guidance documents and training and promotional material bringing together the good practice that already existed and sharing it across the authority. This made it possible to move forward without total change.
- Plans are seen as important but are flexible and the main aim is to achieve the outcomes. Keeping things simple was the key.
- Service Heads were encouraged to create objectives from the corporate priorities rather than creating objectives then making them fit the priorities. Relationships with Service Heads were important in achieving this.

- Consistency is important. Using the same words.
- Communication is also key. In particular, 'storyboards' were created encouraging staff to come forward with good practice in their areas of work. This helped provide evidence of good practice and positive outcomes
- There was also a focus on the customer.
- Team planning was given a priority because it was felt that staff who understand why they are doing what they are doing deliver better services. Therefore, training and development is driven by the skills and competencies required for the service and specific jobs within that service.
- Reporting is done by exception. That is key items that give an overview of performance. This included poor performance that needs remedying and good performance to provide a balanced picture.
- The Council has its own in house IT system called PERFORM. Performance information is provided in various formats e.g. by service, by theme, BVPIs only NIs only and so forth, which can be mixed and matched. The information is available via the Council intranet. Passwords are provided to all Councillors and relevant officers who can then access the site and create their own reports.
- The political dynamic was seen to be key. The scrutiny lead and the Cabinet Lead have good links. Scrutiny Chairs receive selected versions of what they consider to be key indicators, as does the cabinet portfolio holder.
- Lead officers share information between the Councillors and the officers.
- Meetings are held on a quarterly basis to discuss the indicators and address areas giving cause for concern. Budgetary issues are also discussed at these meetings.
- If issues are corporate they are put in the Corporate Review Programme.
- Originally there was too much information but this has been progressively reduced to reach the position of reporting by exception (with additional information still available via the intranet).
- Members are involved early on in the planning stage.

- With regard to working with the LAA they describe it as “A trick we have got to get better”. Things are progressing with more information being collected jointly with partners using the one performance management system. And there is now more involvement with the LSP, if not directly through the Board then through sub-groups.
- Reporting from the LAA involves LSP and Councillors and is based around the LAA themes/blocks

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. The Role of Members

From the findings it can be concluded that Members appreciate the need for regular performance monitoring and their responsibility for it. During the course of the review two distinct views were expressed. Some Members wish to continue to be able to see the detailed departmental service plans, whilst others would prefer to receive less information, but of a sufficient nature to allow them to determine the level of progress being made against the priority area for which they have responsibility.

Overloading Members with information discourages some from investigating the information because it is too time consuming. Even those who do have time can miss important information because of the sheer volume of it. The potential exists, although with some implications for resources, to present the information in different formats for discrete audiences. Service plans could still be made available electronically, to all Members on a quarterly basis. For those who do not have the time to access all the information a further range of reports could be created. For example information could be reported by priority or by exception. In other words, information would be made available by adopting a “drill down”, approach creating various layers of reports from the very basic to the more detailed. Reporting information this way would allow Members of the PPBs to mix and match information and choose what depth they want to go into. As a minimum however, it is suggested that the chairs of the PPBs meet with the Operational Directors to discuss emerging issues and key targets. Ultimately this may help Members of the PPB to focus on the areas they wish to investigate and the type of report they require.

Responsibility for the frequency and level of planning, monitoring and development should be spread more widely across the Executive Board, PPBs, and the various levels of management to cater for issues such as the volume of information and strategic and operational level information, as noted above.

The introduction of the new national indicator set also has implications for Members. The NI set looks beyond the performance of Council

services, in contrast to most BVPIs. As a result it will be necessary to formulate a process for holding partners to account.

One possibility is that the Policy and Performance Boards become more involved with the Specialist Strategic Partnerships at an early stage in the planning process to allow them to agree thematic plans and targets, which could then be reported on a six monthly basis to both the PPBs and the SSPs.

Greater involvement by the Executive Board may help to spread the burden of responsibility. The Executive Board could also adopt the balanced scorecard and exception reporting approach currently adopted by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS – The Role of Members

- PPBs should develop their role in monitoring performance against their priority (Health, Safer Halton etc), receiving six monthly reports on progress against relevant LAA and Corporate Plan Targets and developing scrutiny of SSP performance.
- Service Plan Monitoring reports will be made available to members on the intranet and exceptions (over or under performance) will be reported to the PPB. Members may also request that aspects of the reports be discussed at the PPB.
- With regard to the Executive Board, Strategic Directors should brief their portfolio holders regularly and record the outcomes.

4.2. The Performance Management Framework and Service Planning

The current corporate planning framework consists of a hierarchy of plans directly aligned to ensure the corporate priorities and strategic objectives of the Council are cascaded down the organisation. This is referred to as the 'Golden Thread'. The findings report that officers consider that this has been strengthened, especially since the recent introduction of 'Key Areas of Focus'.

In addition an examination of the suite of 2007-2008 Departmental Service Plans revealed that the link between service objectives and performance indicators and corporate priorities was very positive. However, there were a small number of exceptions where there were no links and a few examples where one objective was linked to several priorities, which has the effect of weakening or distorting the 'golden thread', but these issues are not major and are being dealt with as part of the quality assurance of the service plans.

It is important to ensure that corporate priorities are driving service activity rather than the other way around.

The Service Plans are quality assured by the corporate performance management team. Guidance has been developed against essential features of service planning and performance information based on the research of key organisations, such as the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and Local Government Association (LGA). These organisations support local authority learning and it confirms that Halton has robust service planning guidance.

There is insufficient capacity to quality assure Divisional or Team Plans, but a set of Divisional Plan Guidelines have been created and recently updated. It is proposed that the plans will be made available on the intranet for peer and Member observation and at some point in the future it is hoped to develop a rolling programme of quality assurance. The potential for this capacity to be created may come about as a result of improved IT systems, making monitoring and reporting quicker and easier. This would also free up time for the performance management officers to help to manage performance rather than just monitor it.

Consultations with various individual Members and groups reveal that many Members would like to be more involved in the development of the Service Plans themselves, as much as performance monitoring. This may then allow them to more clearly identify any specific areas that they wish to receive reports about. This will involve bringing the timeframe for the Service Plan development forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Performance Management Framework and Service Planning

- Continue to refine the process of objective setting to strengthen the golden thread, through training and improved communication
- Develop the quality assurance process for Divisional Plans
- Revise the Service Planning timetable to allow greater input by Members at the planning stage.

Risk Assessment

The Council's risk management framework has become embedded through a system of departmental, directorate and corporate risk registers. However, full risk assessments are sometimes completed after the plan is written rather than as part of the process.

RECOMMENDATION
Risk Assessment

- Develop risk assessments at an earlier stage in the preparation of service plans and build a process check into their quality assurance.

Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

Managers supply performance indicator information to the corporate performance management team on a quarterly basis throughout the financial year. From this the performance management team prepares a total of 19 monitoring reports for Management Team and Policy and Performance Boards.

The amount of information contained within quarterly monitoring reports can be significant and can lead to reports from a single department for example being over 30 pages long. In addition the same reporting format is used in presenting information to each of the discrete audiences receiving it i.e. management team, PPB's, and potentially the general public. At present each of these discrete audiences receive information that is presented in a service based as opposed to a themed format. This may result in some difficulty when trying to establish organisational as opposed to departmental performance.

The findings of the various consultations acknowledge that collection methods, reporting and quality assurance have improved since the CPA inspection in 2005, however, there is also recognition that opportunities for further improvement may exist as follows:

One of the key issues concerns the volume of information being disseminated. There is a consensus from those engaged in the review to date that the quarterly monitoring reports currently contain too much information. As an example of the volume of this information at half-year and year-end monitoring reports collectively contain information concerning over 430 service objectives and performance targets.

Additionally, this 'one size fits all' approach may suggest that all users and recipients of performance data have the same information needs. However it is clearly recognised that the information needs of different audiences, will be governed by their primary roles and responsibilities and will require different forms of reporting.

It may be necessary to purchase an IT system to assist in the gathering and manipulation of performance information. This may help to overcome some capacity issue in relation to creating different forms of reports for different audiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring and reporting arrangements/Use of information

- Tailor the volume of information reported to different audiences by (1). Re-assessing content of service plan (2). Separating out some areas of the plan to be reported on at different times/frequencies.
- Investigate IT options that will enable different types of reports to be created to cater for the varying audiences that access performance information.
- Management Team will continue to see all 19 quarterly monitoring reports for the Service Plans. These will also continue to be made available to all the PPB's electronically.

4.3. The Impact of the New, Statutory, National Indicator Set (NIS)

Central government has recently proposed to reduce the burden of reporting by reducing the number of PIs collected to around 198. There will no longer be a requirement to report against the current BVPIs but the Council should not just discard these without consideration.

The Council will be required to take overall responsibility for the reporting on the 198 new indicators. The Operational Directors have been provided with information about these and advised which indicators the Corporate Performance Management Team feel would be most appropriate for them to use in their service plans. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Operational Directors to determine this for themselves.

In addition, Strategic Directors will need to ensure that whoever is responsible for collecting data relating to an indicator takes into account the fact that the LSP will be required to use up to 51 of these indicators in the Local Area Agreement and this information needs to be drawn together.

Halton has invested in a Data Observatory to provide a central repository for statistical and performance information. It is important that this is seen to be a joined up approach between all partners. The Research and Intelligence Unit of the Council act as the gatekeeper for information, but there are still issues that need to be addressed.

As the sum of nationally prescribed indicators reduces it is likely that there will be a need for more support with local indicators. The existing indicators have generated a considerable amount of information, which may still be of use locally, therefore may need to be retained.

Some of the existing information will still be required by some of the inspection regimes, for example, OFSTED and DCSF who have previously carried out annual performance assessments, using a large basket of existing indicators. They have stated that although they will no longer be carrying out these annual assessments they will still require the information for what they call 'activity data'.

This type of 'data harvesting' is also likely to take place in other areas and in many respects may be more onerous to collect in that it will be called for on an uncoordinated basis, rather than as part of a planned programme. Information of this nature will also still be required for the 'Use of Resources', 'Value for Money' and 'Direction of Travel' sections of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and its replacement the Comprehensive Area Assessment

The range of different data sources and reporting requirements means that we will need assurance as to the reliability of performance information. Executive Board has approved a corporate data quality strategy and its recommendations need to be implemented.

RECOMMENDATION

New NI set

- Use the Observatory as a repository for information relating to the set of National Indicators for use by partners to ensure consistency of information amongst the partners.
- Involve the corporate performance management team work with the LSP performance groups/officers so that a single reporting framework is developed.
- Implement the new Data Quality Strategy.

4.4. The Emergence of Local Area Agreements.

There is a clearly defined link between the targets and outcomes of the LSP and the Council and a sharing of responsibility with regard to the management of performance information, with the Council needing to take a lead on all the 198 new indicators, including those in the LAA. This will require collators and responsible officers to be appointed for each of the indicators from within the Council. Ideally the IT systems for the Council and partners need to be matched up in some way.

It will also be important for Members to become more involved with the planning and development of the LAA targets and indicators.

RECOMMENDATION
Local Area Agreements

- The performance reports from the SSPs/LSP/LAA should be shared with the PPBs.
- The Executive Board should receive the same reports that go to the LSP, a quarterly balanced score and six monthly performance summary.

REPORT TO: Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 3rd June 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Corporate Service PPB Compliments and Complaints Review

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To inform the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board of the findings of the scrutiny review undertaken in relation to compliments and complaints, and to provide an opportunity to consider the proposed recommendations.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board consider the contents of the report and in particular the recommendations that have been formulated to take into account of the findings identified by the scrutiny review;**
- (2) subject to any amendments the Board wishes to make, the report and recommendations be forwarded to Executive Board for approval; and**
- (3) the Operational Director Policy and Performance prepare an action plan and analysis of financial implications for inclusion in the report to Executive Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board agreed for the review topic to be included in its programme at its meeting on 5 June 2007. Since then there have been two meetings of the topic group, and work has proceeded in accordance with the original project plan. Details of the key findings and proposed recommendations are attached at Appendix 1 for consideration.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications arising directly from this report at this stage. However compliments and complaints impacts on the service provision of all council directorates and therefore the recommendations contained in the report should have a positive effect on the way the Council interacts with its customers.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The proposed recommendations are designed to bring about improvements to the way the Council deals with compliments and complaints. Therefore for each recommendation a responsible officer will be identified to ensure its implementation by a set date.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

CORPORATE SERVICES PPB COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board agreed for the compliments and complaints review to be included in its programme at its meeting on 5 June 2007. This report informs the PPB of the findings of the scrutiny review undertaken, together with the recommendations that will bring about improvements to the way the Council handles compliments and complaints.

1.2 There were two strands to the scrutiny topic:-

- To explore how to improve outcomes for complainants and as part of this, how to improve their satisfaction with the way the Council's deals with and responds to complaints.
- To explore how the information gained from compliments and complaints can be used to continuously improve service delivery. This has involved reviewing the current systems in place throughout the organisation, benchmarking current practice with other local authorities and researching examples of best practice.

1.3 It is essential that our complaint systems allow us to learn from complaints and improve our services. We must ensure that we learn the lessons by:

- Having a clear picture of customers' views of the services we provide and the improvements they want
- Recording complaints consistently in sufficient detail and analysing the results
- Reporting information to those who can take action to prevent problems happening again
- Giving feedback to customers who complain, other service users and employees on what action has been taken

2.0 FINDINGS

The scrutiny review has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to secure improvements to the way that the Council deals with compliments and complaints. These are discussed below.

2.1 A benchmarking exercise was undertaken with those Local Authorities which demonstrated the greatest improvement (up to +17%) between 2003 and 2006 in relation to BVPI4 (the percentage of complainants satisfied with the handling of their complaint).

Authorities Demonstrating Significant Improvement In BVPI 4 Performance				
	2003/04 (%)		2006/07 (%)	Increase
Cambridgeshire County Council	20		32	12.00
Devon County Council	27		39	12.00
Oxfordshire County Council	20		37	17.00
Staffordshire County Council	29		40	11.00
Suffolk County Council	28		43	15.00
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	22		32	10.00
Nottingham City Council	25		37	12.00
Coventry City Council	30		43	13.00
Bexley	27		38	11.00
Wandsworth Borough Council	32		49	17.00

The information received identified:

- Similar practice to Halton in trying to resolve complaints informally before treating them as a formal complaint.
- Numbers of formal complaints received are significantly higher than Halton's.
- The other Councils provide training for officers responsible for investigating complaints.
- The other Councils actively publicise their Complaints Procedures and report on how well they perform.
- The majority of benchmarked Councils conduct annual surveys of complainants to measure satisfaction levels with their approach.
- Two Local Authorities use their Contact Centre and One Stop Shops to record all complaints, before electronically sending them on to the relevant service department for investigation and response. This reduces response times and also the chance of documents going astray.
- All of the other Council's see their Complaints Procedures as just one part of an overall Customer Care Policy or Customer Strategy.

In relation to this final point Halton does not have an overarching Customer Care Strategy. The government has recently developed a Customer Service Excellence model to offer public services a tool for driving customer-focused change within their organisation. This would appear to offer Halton an opportunity to improve its performance in this area and therefore it is proposed that the Council uses the Customer Excellence Model to help drive improvement. The findings of this scrutiny topic will be fed into the process.

- 2.2 A survey was undertaken of all complainants who had made a corporate complaint during 2006/07 to gather their views and opinions of the Council's current complaint handling procedure. There were a total of 55 corporate complaints received during the year, and in order to improve the survey response rate, half of the complainants were surveyed by telephone and half by postal questionnaire. The survey questions took into account best practice in

complaint handling. Whilst this survey only considered the views of people that had made a corporate complaint during 2006/7, it nevertheless provides a useful picture of their views on how the Council responds to complaints.

The survey indicated relatively low satisfaction levels with the quality of response from relevant service departments under stage one, which corroborated the results of the Best Value General Survey 2006/07 relating to BVPI 4. Therefore if the current arrangements are to remain for replying under stage one, there is a need for training of key staff in order to ensure a greater consistency when investigating and replying to complaints. The other alternative would be to have a similar arrangement to that currently in place for replying to Ombudsman complaints whereby replies are made by one single officer using information provided from relevant departments. However at this moment in time the first option is the preferred choice, and this conforms to the approach adopted by the majority of the benchmarked Local Authorities.

With almost three quarters of complainants satisfied with response times to their complaint, it would appear that the Council's target time of 14 days is sufficient, yet there is room for improvement by some directorates in consistently meeting the target. The Members Working Group thought it would be helpful if the Council offered complainants an opportunity to discuss their complaint with a Council officer as part of the investigation into their complaint. Whilst this may not be necessary with all complaints, it would help with more complex complaints and also it would demonstrate the Council's commitment to resolving complaints. Therefore the investigating officer should contact the complainant to establish if they would like an opportunity to discuss the complaint.

Two thirds of complainants either had their complaint resolved satisfactorily or at least accepted the Council's decision. However with a third remaining dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, it is important that directorates remember to offer complainants a right of appeal, which at the moment only happens in half of complaints according to the survey.

A final area of concern was the low level of confidence complainants had in the Council's ability to improve services as a result of their complaint. It is felt that this issue will be addressed by training of investigating officers together with the proposed work using the Customer Excellence Model.

- 2.3 The current definition of a corporate complaint means that the first complaint from a customer is treated as an informal complaint or service request to give the relevant department an opportunity to resolve the issue. Similarly, HDL/Contact Centre CRM systems classify the majority of customer contacts as service requests rather than complaints. However this means that there is no clear picture of the level of service failure across the organisation. Therefore the potential to learn from such instances is reduced which makes it more difficult to improve service provision, and ultimately enhance customer satisfaction. Whether a customer contact is classed as complaint or service request, the important point is that all instances involving service failure are recorded and where necessary learnt from, so that measures are put in place to try and prevent similar occurrences from happening again. Whilst HDL/Contact Centre staff try to take ownership of service requests, in some instances their systems are unable to communicate with back-office systems to verify resolution / completion in a number of service areas. Therefore HDL/Contact Centre staff are sometimes reliant on relevant service departments when progressing complaints and this can lead to a degree of inconsistency that can have a

detrimental effect on customer perceptions. Consequently this reinforces the need for an overarching Customer Care Strategy across all directorates.

- 2.4 Monitoring and analysing complaints and evaluating outcomes is vital if the Council wants to learn from its mistakes and close the loop of service failure. At the moment there is no system in place to ensure this happens with all complaints. Whilst this is clearly the responsibility of each directorate it would seem sensible to introduce a requirement for quarterly reporting to directorate senior management teams. The Member Working Group suggested that information about complaints received and the action taken to avoid such complaints being repeated in future, should also be provided to relevant Policy and Performance Boards. Policy and Performance Boards may wish to set up a sub-group to review policy where they feel that lessons from complaints have not been fully absorbed. (Note that Children and Young People and Health and Community already report annually on compliments and complaints to the relevant Policy and Performance Board).
- 2.5 There are three separate complaint systems currently in operation; Corporate Complaints, Children and Young People, and Health and Community. This can be explained by the fact that Children and Young People, and Health and Community are statutorily required to have a complaints procedure in place following strict procedural guidelines. Nevertheless ITC services have started to undertake a business process review to consider the feasibility of using existing CRM systems to support the three separate processes.
- 2.6 It is important that customers know how to complain and that the Council welcomes complaints and takes them seriously. Whilst complaint forms are available at all Council establishments and online, customers need to be aware of the Council's service standards in the first place so that they know whether they have grounds for making a complaint. This should be addressed by the Council working towards the adoption of a Customer Care Strategy as discussed earlier in the report. The Council should also publish information about the complaints that it receives so as to demonstrate performance against standards. It is envisaged this would include the number and category of complaints received, performance against response target times and customer satisfaction with complaint handling. This would also provide an opportunity to publicise the improvements the Council has introduced as a direct result of listening to its customers. An annual survey of complainants should be undertaken so as ensure that improvements which are put in place are achieving the desired outcomes.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The scrutiny review has highlighted a number of areas where improvements need to be made to improve the way the Council responds to compliments and complaints. It is anticipated that the proposed recommendations will lead to increased customer satisfaction and enable the Council to close the loop of service failure.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Council should use the Customer Excellence Model to develop an overarching Customer Care Strategy to help drive improvement in consistency across the organisation and the findings of this scrutiny review will be fed into the process.

- 4.2 All staff involved in investigating and replying to complaints should be provided with relevant training in order to ensure a greater consistency with the quality of investigation and ensuing response to complainants. As part of their role in dealing with complaints, investigating officers should contact complainants to see if they would like an opportunity to discuss their complaint. They should also ensure that all complainants are notified of their right of appeal so that they are aware of their options should they remain dissatisfied.
- 4.3 Each Directorate should ensure they have in place a system to monitor, analyse and evaluate instances of service failure, whether they occur through a formal complaint or other form of customer contact. These details should be reported to Directorate Senior Management Teams and the relevant Policy and Performance Board on a quarterly basis. Policy and Performance Boards may decide to set up a sub-group where they feel that lessons involving instances of service failure have not been fully absorbed.
- 4.4 Once the business process review of existing complaints procedures has been completed by ITC, the outcome should be reported to the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board.
- 4.5 The Council should publish information annually about the complaints that it receives so as to demonstrate performance against standards. The information should include the number and category of complaints received, performance against response target times and customer satisfaction with complaint handling. This would also provide an opportunity to publicise the improvements the Council has introduced as a direct result of listening to its customers.
- 4.6 A survey of complainants should be undertaken on an annual basis so as to ensure that the improvements which are put in place are helping to achieve the desired outcomes of improving customer satisfaction and reducing instances of service failure.