

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 2 April 2009 2.00 p.m.
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

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

Chief Executive

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

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and, with personal and prejudicial interests (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members), to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
3. CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO	
(A) ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER 2007/08	1 - 22
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*Please contact Caroline Halpin on 0151 471 7394 for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 9 April 2009*

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(A) LIVERPOOL CITY REGION TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE REVIEW AND THE DRAFT LIVERPOOL CITY REGION MULTI AREA AGREEMENT	179 - 196

PART II

In this case the Sub Committee has a discretion to exclude the press and public, but in view of the nature of the business to be transacted it is **RECOMMENDED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

7. PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**(A) ST MICHAEL'S GOLF COURSE: AMENDMENT TO THE EXISTING CONTRACT FOR THE REMEDIATION OF THE GOLF COURSE**

197 - 206

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

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

TITLE: Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/08

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To receive a presentation from the Council's Auditors on the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be received.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council, drawing on audit inspections and performance assessment work. A copy of the annual letter is attached as Appendix 1. Mike Thomas, the District Auditor, will be in attendance.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 None.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 None.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

8.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Ensuring the Council takes action on recommendations from the Auditor will assist in the delivery of its priorities.

8.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Ensuring the Council takes action on recommendations from the Auditor will assist in the delivery of its priorities.

8.3 A Healthy Halton

Ensuring the Council takes action on recommendations from the Auditor will assist in the delivery of its priorities.

8.4 A Safer Halton

Ensuring the Council takes action on recommendations from the Auditor will assist in the delivery of its priorities.

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Ensuring the Council takes action on recommendations from the Auditor will assist in the delivery of its priorities.

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

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

Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

Halton Borough Council

Audit 2007/08

March 2009



Contents

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Status of our reports

The Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission explains the respective responsibilities of auditors and of the audited body. Reports prepared by appointed auditors are addressed to non-executive directors/members or officers. They are prepared for the sole use of the audited body. Auditors accept no responsibility to:

- any director/member or officer in their individual capacity; or
 - any third party.
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Key messages

- 1 Halton Borough Council has retained its four-star status and continues to improve well. Improvements have been made in a number of priority areas which are contributing to overall improvement in the quality of life for local people.
- 2 Key achievements include strong improvements in GCSE attainment and more adults being helped to gain qualifications. Crime levels are falling with reductions in the number of burglaries, car crimes and violent crime. The urban environment is better, transport services have improved and there are cleaner streets. Services for vulnerable adults and children and young people continue to improve. Access to services for the local community is good. Some progress has been made in terms of increasing the numbers of young people not in employment, education or training and in reducing health inequalities in some communities but these remain significant challenges.
- 3 There are ambitious and robust plans for further improvement. These include plans to improve the health of local residents and better neighbourhood working. The Council provides good value for money and has a clear focus on making efficient use of its resources. Its capacity to deliver further improvements for the community is good.
- 4 The Council received a positive Corporate Assessment during 2008. Progress since the assessment was covered as part of the direction of travel assessment above. The Corporate Assessment stated that Halton Borough Council is performing strongly in tackling the borough's significant local challenges. Visionary leadership, strong partnership working and a track record of delivering major projects has led to good outcomes for local people. Areas highlighted for improvement included procurement, asset management, human resources management and the performance management of the LSP.
- 5 During 2007/08 we carried out a number of risk based reviews across Cheshire and Merseyside; health inequalities, community cohesion and waste management. These reports and the accompanying action plans have been agreed with the council and will be followed up as part of future work.
- 6 The Council's abstract of accounts was prepared on time and we were able to issue an unqualified audit opinion on 25 September 2008. Our value for money conclusion confirmed that the Council had effective arrangements in place for ensuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources except for the management of its assets.
- 7 The development of the second Mersey crossing, the Mersey Gateway scheme, is one of the Council's key priorities and is of significant regional importance. It has made good progress to date, with the public enquiry scheduled during 2009. In line with the project plan the scheme has incurred substantial development costs so far. During this year's audit we queried the accounting treatment adopted by the Council. As a result the Council has reviewed the accounting treatment and has applied for a capitalisation direction from the government. The outcome of this application is awaited.

- 8 The public service inspectorates are currently developing a new performance assessment framework, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). During 2009 CAA will provide the first holistic independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there.

Action needed by the Council

- 9 The following actions are required by the Council.
- Continue to review capacity to ensure the areas identified for development in the corporate assessment inspection are actioned effectively and enable the Council to sustain improvement. Key areas for continued attention include procurement, human resource management and performance management of the LSP.
 - Ensure arrangements are in place to implement and monitor the recommendations identified in our reviews of health inequalities, community cohesion and waste management.
 - Strengthen asset management arrangements with particular regard to corporate management and reporting.
 - Review the outcome of the capitalisation direction application for the Mersey Gateway scheme and develop an action plan to respond as required.

Purpose, responsibilities and scope

- 10 This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council. It draws on the most recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council for 2007/08 and from any inspections undertaken since the last Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. It also includes the results of the most recent corporate assessment.
- 11 We have addressed this letter to members as it is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business and that it safeguards and properly accounts for public money. We have made recommendations to assist the Council in meeting its responsibilities.
- 12 This letter also communicates the significant issues to key external stakeholders, including members of the public. We will publish this letter on the Audit Commission website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk. In addition the Council is planning to publish it on its website.
- 13 As your appointed auditor I am responsible for planning and carrying out an audit that meets the requirements of the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice (the Code). Under the Code, I review and report on:
 - the Council's accounts;
 - whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (value for money conclusion); and
 - whether the Council's best value performance plan has been prepared and published in line with legislation and statutory guidance.
- 14 This letter includes the latest assessment on the Council's performance under the CPA framework, including our Direction of Travel report and the results of any inspections carried out by the Audit Commission under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999. It summarises the key issues arising from the CPA and any such inspections. Inspection reports are issued in accordance with the Audit Commission's duty under section 13 of the 1999 Act.
- 15 We have listed the reports issued to the Council relating to 2007/08 audit and inspection work at the end of this letter.

How is the Council performing?

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

Figure 1 Overall performance of councils in CPA



Source: Audit Commission (percentage figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding)

How is the Council performing?

Our overall assessment - the CPA scorecard

Table 1 CPA scorecard

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

(Note: * these aspects have a greater influence on the overall CPA score)
(1 = lowest, 4 = highest)

The improvement since last year - our Direction of Travel report

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

What evidence is there of the Council improving outcomes?

- 18** The Council has maintained and improved performance in areas such as housing benefits which remain excellent, adult services which is now excellent and services for vulnerable children and young people which remain good.
- 19** The Council has made good improvements against its own priorities. There is also a good awareness of the areas requiring improvement and the Council is seeking to address these.

Healthy Halton

- 20 There has been adequate progress against this priority area. The Council continues to promote the personalisation programme through projects such as the 12-month pilot service, 'Social Care in General Practice' and joint working between Social care staff and District Nurses and Community Matrons to reduce hospital admissions. There is strong evidence the Carers' Strategy Action Plan is making a difference to the lives of carers within Halton. Areas for improvement include continuing to promote and progress volunteering as a means of improving services to communities and ensuring there is a wide choice of pathways to employment and volunteering opportunities to meet the needs of people with a learning disability.
- 21 Health inequalities continue to be an issue for the borough. More adults are giving up smoking, However, the incidence of circulatory diseases in wards where it is highest compared to the rest of Halton is not improving and health inequalities compared to the rest of England still persist.

Urban Renewal

- 22 The priority of 'Halton's Urban Renewal' shows good progress. There has been an increase in the proportion of major planning applications being dealt with on time – an area in previous years where performance had deteriorated. Transport services have been improved including better access for hard to reach/vulnerable groups as well as getting people to places of work. There are cleaner streets across the borough and recycling targets have been met. However there are still some challenges to be addressed such as the cost of waste collection and disposal, the condition of footways and reducing the number of planning appeals.

Children and Young People

- 23 There is a positive range of improvements in relation to the 'Children and Young People' priority. The improvement in the number of young people gaining A-C* passes at GCSE was the second highest in England in 2008. The proportion of young people attaining GCSEs continues to improve. There was a positive increase in achievement at key stage 2 for Mathematics and English. The number of children killed or seriously injured on Halton's roads has decreased. A reduced proportion of looked after children and young people have been moved three or more times during the year. There are challenges still to be addressed. For example whilst the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training has reduced, the target set by the council is not being achieved.

Employment, Learning and Skills

- 24 The 'Employment, Learning and Skills' priority shows good progress. More adults are being helped to gain educational qualifications. There has also been a reduction in the number of people in receipt of benefits across priority wards and more people with a disability are being helped to find work.

How is the Council performing?

Safer Halton

- 25 Achievements against this priority are positive. There has been a reduction in a range of crimes such as burglary, robberies, violent crime and vehicle crime. Incidents of anti-social behaviour are decreasing. More people are completing their course of drug treatment.

Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency

- 26 The Council can demonstrate that there is a balance between costs and performance showing that value for money is provided. The Council invests in services that are underperforming and require further improvement and as a result services have improved. The Council has a good understanding of costs in relation to local circumstances. The use of information on performance and costs and how this compares to others is being used systematically and is informing the Council's overall approach to becoming more efficient. Efficiency targets are being exceeded.
- 27 There has been good progress on improving access to services. The Council met level three of the Equality Standard in May 2008, in advance of its own timetable. There is a clear and sustained focus on tackling deprivation by meeting the needs of hard to reach / vulnerable communities more effectively. Neighbourhood management areas (NMAs) have benefited from targeted work; for example the consumer protection service have undertaken work in NMAs and have seen a trebling of enquires from these areas. The Council have also developed a range of services to meet the needs of black and minority ethnic residents more effectively as well as work with the traveller community. Services have also been developed for women in deprived areas. An 'Active Ageing Programme' targeted and engaging with older people in the types of activity they would like to undertake has been developed.

How much progress is being made to implement improvement plans to sustain future improvement?

- 28 We also assessed the Council's progress against implementing its improvement priorities and concluded there are good arrangements in place. The Council has developed, with its partners, clear and challenging ambitions for Halton for the medium to long term. These reflect the needs of the borough as well as the views and aspirations of local people. Clear priorities have been developed covering the short to medium term in terms of health, crime, jobs and skills, urban renewal and children and young people. A range of plans and activities underpin the priorities which have been developed in a clear deliverable framework. There is a clear emphasis on 'transformational issues' that would help deliver priorities namely health inequalities (particularly alcohol misuse); worklessness, skills and enterprise; community safety (particularly reducing anti-social behaviour); and poverty of place – addressing the need to close the gap for the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

- 29** Good progress is being made in delivering priorities. Over 80 per cent of service plan milestones are on target to be achieved. A strategy to address the levels of young people who are not in employment, education or training has been agreed and actions have already been undertaken. The Council is working to improve its waste management arrangements with work undertaken locally and in partnership with Merseyside councils. There is a clear recognition of the scale of the challenges in respect of health inequalities and the Council is working with its partners to address this. Neighbourhood management is being rolled out to other areas. Plans to develop the Mersey Gateway are also progressing well.
- 30** The Council has invested in a number of areas in order to increase capacity and sustain future improvements. In its service areas this is reflected in external assessments that the Council now has of 'excellent capacity' to improve services for children and young people and the capacity to improve in adult services again being judged as 'excellent'. The Council manages its financial capacity well and has been creative in seeking external funding to meet its priorities. It also works well with other organisations, such as the PCT, to pool resources to provide better value for money. The Council's approach to efficiency is well embedded and recent work has identified further efficiencies that could be made, enabling it to reduce the risk of future financial challenges. Strategic application of HR policies across the authority is inconsistent. The Council is currently working on updating the HR strategy with a wider focus on organisational development and clearer links to future local and national influences on workforce planning. There are concerns on sickness absence, which increased in 2007/08. It is important that the Council continues to review its capacity to ensure priorities are more effectively addressed and sustain future improvement.
- 31** The Council's arrangements for sustaining future improvements remain robust. The Council has a well established track record of addressing areas for improvement arising from previous reports and inspections and this has been brought into a more coherent framework. Councillors and officers work well together to sustain improvements in a climate of mutual trust and respect. The Council is working with its partners to understand the impact of the global financial challenges on the delivery of the Borough's priorities. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to deliver its priorities.

Inspections

- 32** An important aspect of the role of the Comprehensive Area Assessment Lead (CAAL) is to work with other inspectorates and regulators who also review and report on the Council's performance. CAAL's share information and seek to provide 'joined up' regulation to the Council. During the last year the Council has not received any assessments from other inspectorates other than the annual performance assessments referred to in the direction of travel assessment.

How is the Council performing?

- 33** The Council also received its Corporate Assessment in 2008. Progress since the assessment was covered as part of the direction of travel assessment. The Corporate Assessment stated that Halton Borough Council is performing strongly in tackling the borough's significant local challenges. Visionary leadership, strong partnership working and a track record of delivering major projects has led to good outcomes for local people. It highlighted areas for improvement including procurement, asset management, human resources management and the performance management of the LSP.

The audit of the accounts and value for money

- 34** As your appointed auditor I have reported separately to the Business Efficiency Board on 25 September 2008 on the issues arising from our 2007/08 audit. I have issued:
- my audit report, providing an unqualified opinion on your accounts and a conclusion on your value for money arrangements to say that these arrangements are adequate except in the area of asset management: and
 - my report on the Best Value Performance Plan confirming that the Plan has been audited.

Audit of the Accounts

- 35** Once again the Council met the submission deadline for its 2007/08 abstract of accounts. CIPFA's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2007 introduced a number of changes in accounting requirements for 2007/08. The draft accounts were not fully compliant with the SORP and I requested a number of amendments to the accounts prior to issuing my audit opinion. I am aware that the finance team are strengthening their accounts preparation and quality assurance processes for 2008/09.
- 36** The most significant issue identified during the accounts audit related to the capitalisation of expenditure on development costs for the Mersey Gateway. In 2007/08 these costs amounted to £4.8m. In my view the financial reporting standards point towards the up front costs of such a development falling to revenue rather than capital expenditure. Whilst these costs were not material in the 2007/08 financial year they will become so in 2008/09. We have asked Council officers to obtain professional advice on the accounting basis for capitalising the Mersey Gateway development costs. I understand officers have obtained this advice and that the Council has subsequently applied to the Department for the Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for permission to capitalise the spending via a capitalisation direction. The outcome of this application is awaited. I will continue to review this issue and its impact on the Council's ongoing financial health during 2008/09.

Use of Resources

- 37** The findings of the auditor are an important component of the CPA framework described above. In particular the Use of Resources score is derived from the assessments made by the auditor in the following areas.
- Financial reporting (including the preparation of the accounts of the Council and the way these are presented to the public).
 - Financial management (including how the financial management is integrated with strategy to support council priorities).

The audit of the accounts and value for money

- Financial standing (including the strength of the Council's financial position).
- Internal control (including how effectively the Council maintains proper stewardship and control of its finances).
- Value for money (including an assessment of how well the Council balances the costs and quality of its services).

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

Table 2

Element	Assessment
Financial reporting	2 out of 4
Financial management	2 out of 4
Financial standing	3 out of 4
Internal control	3 out of 4
Value for money	3 out of 4
Overall assessment of the Audit Commission	3 out of 4

Note: 1 = lowest, 4 = highest

The key issues arising from the audit

39 I am required to conclude whether the Council has put in place adequate corporate arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources - my value for money conclusion. I assessed your arrangements against 12 criteria specified by the Commission and my conclusion was informed by our work on use of resources.

Financial reporting

40 The Council's arrangements for promoting external accountability continue to be consistently above minimum requirements but its arrangements for financial reporting were less good this year. The processes for compiling the 2007/08 accounts were not as effective as they have been previously. We identified several areas where the Council's accounts were not compliant with the SORP and we requested a number of significant changes to the draft 2007/08 accounts. We have agreed an action plan of recommendations with officers to help strengthen the accounts preparation process in future years.

Financial management

41 The overall score for financial management reduced from a 3 to a 2 this year. Whilst arrangements for medium term financial planning and budgetary control remain good we found the Council's asset management arrangements to be less effective. We identified elements of the Council's arrangements that did not meet minimum requirements in 2007/08.

- 42 We reported last year that the Council did not have an up to date asset management plan and that more corporate reporting was needed on the Council's asset base and its use. The Council has acted upon these issues. A draft asset management plan was presented to members in June 2008, and an asset management working group was established in summer 2008 to help strengthen the corporate framework for asset management and reporting. Whilst these initiatives demonstrate a positive direction of travel unfortunately they were not in place in 2007/08 and as such were too late to impact upon our assessment of the Council's arrangements for 2007/08.
- 43 In addition, and as reported by Internal Audit in April 2008, the Council did not have a comprehensive up to date asset register in place during 2007/08. Property services updated its asset register at the end of August 2008. It is important that this momentum is maintained and that the asset register is properly maintained during 2008/09 and used to help manage the Council's assets. The Council has some performance indicators that evaluate asset use in relation to corporate objectives but this now needs to be reviewed across all assets in line with the newly developed asset management plan and other outcomes from the asset management working group.
- 44 To strengthen its arrangements the Council needs to:
- develop a corporate asset management strategy and an annual asset management report that covers all assets and their performance;
 - ensure that the property services software is fully utilised as an asset register, is properly maintained and is reconciled to financial records;
 - explicitly allocate member responsibility for strategic asset management; and
 - establish a set of performance indicators for assets that link to the Council's strategic objectives and the asset management plan, and report on these regularly throughout the year.

Financial standing

- 45 The Council's arrangements for ensuring its financial standing is sound are effective. It has a history of setting balanced budgets and a proven track record of maintaining spending within overall budget with no major surprises in terms of over/under spends being reported. Early indications for 2008/09 are that the Council is once again on track to deliver within its approved budget.
- 46 The Council's policy is to 'maintain an adequate level of reserves to provide resilience to the financial consequences of unforeseen events' but as highlighted last year there is scope to better formalise and integrate these arrangements by producing a balances and reserves strategy. We understand that the Council's updated medium term financial strategy, approved by the Executive Board in November 2008, now includes a balances and reserves strategy. Whilst arrangements are in place for the monitoring and reporting of the financial position these could be further enhanced by more specific monitoring of performance against reserves and balances.
- 47 The Council will need to review and revise its medium term financial forecast when the outcome of the capitalisation direction is known.

The audit of the accounts and value for money

Internal Control

- 48 The Council has maintained its overall score of 3 for internal control. Risk management continues to develop and become embedded within the Council. Systems of internal control are generally good and arrangements for promoting and ensuring probity and propriety in business conduct are robust.
- 49 Internal control arrangements could be further strengthened by:
- reviewing and updating the risk management policy;
 - reporting the key corporate risks to full Council at least annually;
 - implementing the recommendations made by Internal Audit in its 2007/08 review of risk management arrangements; and
 - undertaking further review of the scrutiny function across all Policy and Performance Boards to identify best practice and promote consistency.

Value for money

- 50 The assessment for the Council's value for money arrangements strengthened this year with both key lines of enquiry, achievement and managing and improving value for money, receiving a score of 3. Further improvements could be made through:
- developing a stronger relationship between relative performance and cost in some service areas;
 - further improving the role of scrutiny in challenging value for money;
 - developing a corporate service review programme to enable the Council to assess value for money in a more systematic and consistent way; and
 - developing a corporate approach to procurement and commissioning to minimise the risk of inconsistency and missed learning opportunities.

Health Inequalities

- 51 As part of our 2007/08 audit, we undertook a high level review across Cheshire and Merseyside to identify the main issues facing the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in addressing health inequalities.
- 52 Both Halton LSP and St Helens LSP have a clear sense of what needs to improve within their respective boroughs, and both have established positive working relationships between their constituent organisations to address these opportunities. To capitalise on these strengths, we identified that more work could be done to share good practice between the two partnerships. Both partnerships also need to ensure that a robust strategic framework is in place for addressing the many factors affecting the health of their local populations. The Council has a key role to play in facilitating these improvements.

Community cohesion baseline assessment

- 53 We carried out a baseline assessment of Halton Partnership's approach to community cohesion in late 2007. This work involved a document review, in-depth questionnaire and a series of meetings, culminating in a workshop with partners.
- 54 The review found a clear commitment to community cohesion and a good awareness of the issues. The key community cohesion issues identified were:
- poverty and wealth;
 - access to services;
 - antisocial behaviour;
 - intergenerational myths; and
 - pace of demographic change.

Whilst we found that the community strategy has clear aspirations for community cohesion these are not yet consistently reflected in partners' key corporate documents and there are few community cohesion success measures. The partners, through the LSP, are seeking to address this.

Waste Management

- 55 Waste management continues to be a high profile issue. As part of our 2007/08 audits of the five Merseyside councils and the Waste Disposal Authority we agreed to review waste management arrangements across Merseyside. Halton BC asked to be a part of this review.
- 56 We assessed the progress made by the Merseyside Waste Partnership to:
- meet its obligations for the management of household and municipal waste; and
 - procure long-term treatment and disposal facilities for such waste.
- 57 The authorities are now making good progress by increasing recycling and composting of household waste. All authorities have diverted more municipal waste from landfill. They are making steady progress on the procurement of new facilities for waste handling and treatment. However, comparative performances are variable and are still worse than most other authorities - based on the latest published figures - and result in high landfill tax payments. The amount of municipal waste on Merseyside continues to grow despite a fall in population, and the amount of household waste collected per head of population is still comparatively high on Merseyside and is increasing in Halton. Furthermore, disagreements over the potential location of disposal facilities are resulting in slower progress than planned for the Waste Partnership, resulting in a significant risk of delay to the procurement process that could potentially incur additional costs of over £400 million.
- 58 Our report included a number of actions for improvement which have been discussed and agreed with the Merseyside Waste Partnership.

Advice and Assistance work

- 59 We have not undertaken any advice and assistance work at Halton Borough Council during the period covered by this report.

Looking ahead

- 60 The public service inspectorates have developed a new performance assessment framework, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). CAA will provide the first holistic independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It will put the experience of citizens, people who use services and local tax payers at the centre of the new local assessment framework, with a particular focus on the needs of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. It will recognise the importance of effective local partnership working, the enhanced role of Sustainable Communities Strategies and Local Area Agreements and the importance of councils in leading and shaping the communities they serve.
- 61 CAA will result in reduced levels of inspection and better coordination of inspection activity. The key components of CAA will be a joint inspectorate area assessment and reporting performance on the new national indicator set, together with an organisational assessment which will combine the external auditor's assessment of value for money in the use of resources with a joint inspectorate assessment of service performance.
- 62 The first results of our work on CAA will be published in the autumn of 2009. This will include the performance data from 2008/09, the first year of the new National Indicator Set and key aspects of each area's Local Area Agreement.

Closing remarks

Closing remarks

- 63** This letter has been discussed and agreed with the Chief Executive. A copy of the letter will be presented at the Executive Board on 2 April 2009. Copies need to be provided to all Council members.
- 64** Further detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations on the areas covered by audit and inspection work are included in the reports issued to the Council during the year.

Table 3 Reports issued

Report	Date of issue
Audit and inspection plan	March 2007
Annual governance report	September 2008
Opinion on financial statements	September 2008
Value for money conclusion	September 2008
Opinion report	October 2008
Corporate Assessment Report	June 2008
Data quality review	October 2008
Use of resources report	November 2008
Annual audit and inspection letter	February 2009

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- 65** The Council has taken a positive and constructive approach to audit and inspection work, and I wish to thank the Council's staff for their support and cooperation during the audit.

Availability of this letter

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

Peter Forrester
CAAL

March 2009

Mike Thomas
District Auditor

The Audit Commission

The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog, driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local public services to deliver better outcomes for everyone.

Our work across local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services means that we have a unique perspective. We promote value for money for taxpayers, auditing the £200 billion spent by 11,000 local public bodies.

As a force for improvement, we work in partnership to assess local public services and make practical recommendations for promoting a better quality of life for local people.

Copies of this report

If you require further copies of this report, or a copy in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0844 798 7070.

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REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Annual Review of Constitution: 2009

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek the approval of the Council to a number of changes to the Constitution.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 That Council be recommended to approve the changes to the Constitution as set out in the amended version enclosed herewith.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A revised version of the Constitution is enclosed (see disc) for Members' consideration. The revised version picks up the changes to the Council's working arrangements that have taken place during the year, as well as other changes which are intended to assist the Council to operate more effectively.

3.2 The proposals for change have been considered by the Chief Executive and the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services in accordance with Article 16.02. Apart from the purely technical changes, the proposed amendments that are considered to be of particular significance are listed in Appendix 1 to this report.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 As with the 2008 review the implications of the Local Government and Improvement in Health Act 2007 have been considered as well as other changes in the law. However, no further amendments, over and above those already outlined in the revised version circulated, are required at the present time. Sections of the 2007 Act have still to come into force but we have no firm dates for those changes being introduced. Required changes during the period 2009/10 will be the subject of further reports when dates and details are available.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton.

5.3 A Healthy Halton.

5.4 A Safer Halton.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal.

All of the Council's priorities will be better served by the proposed changes. They are designed to enhance economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's functions.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The Council needs to ensure that its Constitution is regularly updated so that it continues to support efficient, transparent and accountable decision-making by the authority.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix 1 – Proposed Significant Changes to the Constitution

CHANGES

Local Code of Corporate Governance

National Standard document which Council needs to adopt. Further enhances the Council's integrity framework.

Warrington BC Trading Standards arrangements

Delegated powers changes to reflect joint working with Warrington BC

Mental Health functions – officer delegation

A separate report seeking additional officer delegations in relation to the council's Mental Health functions. To the extent approved by Council these will be added to the final printed version of the 2009 Constitution.

Urgent Decisions

It is important that the Council is able to respond promptly within an accountable framework. For this reason an urgent measures delegation is proposed for approval in the Scheme of Delegation.

Procurement Standing Orders

Improvements have also been proposed to the Procurement Standing Orders to ensure that the reasons for decisions are documented. This will enhance accountability and transparency.

Call-In

Changes have also been made to the Call-In Procedure to allow withdrawal where Members initiating the Call-In wish to discontinue the process.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Sustainable Communities Act 2007

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report:

- i. Informs members of the provisions of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007, and;
- ii. Reports on a consultation on local spending reports pursuant to the Act.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION That:

- (1) a seminar be held for all Members to consider how the Council might respond to promoting sustainability within the framework of the Act;**
- (2) the matter be discussed at the Halton Strategic Partnership Board; and**
- (3) agrees the draft response to the consultation on local spending reports in the Appendix.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 was introduced to Parliament as a Private Members Bill. In summary:

- i. Local authorities are invited to make suggestions to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government aimed at improving the sustainability of local communities. Suggestions must promote economic, social, and environmental well-being.
- ii. Local authorities will be able to request Local Spending Reports to help them to prioritise actions. These reports should show all of the government spending in their communities from government

departments and their agencies.

- iii. The Act formally changes the name of “Community Strategies” (as set out in the Local Government Act 2000) to “Sustainable Community Strategies”.

4.0 PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITIES

Under the provisions of the Act the Secretary of State has invited local authorities to make proposals which they consider would contribute to promoting the sustainability of local communities. By “promoting the sustainability of local communities” the act means encouraging the economic, social and environmental well-being of the authority’s area or part of its area, including participation in civic and political activity. The expectation is that most proposals will originate from community organisations, parish and town councils, neighbourhood forums, residents and tenants associations, local strategic partnerships and other partnership bodies. Such proposals are not submitted direct to government but are submitted to the local authority for consideration and if supported onward transmission. Proposals can also be developed by Councils themselves.

There is no limit on the types of proposals that local authorities can make to the Secretary of State. They can include a request for a transfer of functions from one body to another (for example, from a national to a local body or from one local body to another). This may be accompanied by a request for transfer of funding linked to that function. In making such a proposal a local authority would have first to consult with both bodies concerned. There is no specific budget associated with this Act. Proposals could be made requiring new funding, but generally they will need to be resourced from existing public funds.

Before submitting a proposal to the government for consideration the local authority must first establish and consult with, a panel of “representatives of local persons”. Statutory guidance requires that persons from under-represented groups are included on such a panel. For the purposes of the Act “representatives of local persons” means a balanced selection of individuals, groups or organisations likely to be affected by or have an interest in the proposal. It does not refer to formally elected or nominated members of the community. It is in effect a citizen's panel.

In considering proposals the Council will need to distinguish between those which could happen anyway agreed at a local level and those which need central government action or intervention of some sort. Only the latter category should be submitted to government. In addition to consulting with a panel of representatives, and where appropriate with parties affected by the proposal where transfers of responsibilities from one body to another are proposed, the Council must also have regard to a list of matters set out in a

schedule to the Act. This list includes preserving local jobs, services and facilities, energy conservation, sustainable transport and food production. The Council must make a formal decision on whether to forward the proposal onwards.

Once it has been decided to submit a proposal it is forwarded to the "Selector" (the Local Government Association (LGA)) which will work with the government to reach agreement on a short list of proposals for implementation. The government then has to respond to all of the proposals on the short list and set out an action plan explaining how they will be taken forward.

The deadline for submission of proposals to the LGA is 31st July 2009. The LGA plans to consult on some draft criteria for shortlisting proposals in March 2009 and to publish a final proposal form in April, allowing 3 months for local consultation and decision making before the submission deadline. There will be further rounds for submission of proposals but no timetable has yet been set.

5.0 LOCAL SPENDING REPORTS

The Act requires the Secretary of State to make arrangements for the production of Local Spending Reports. These reports provide information about public spending in relation to a particular area. This is intended to "promote the sustainability of local communities by providing access to high quality information about the public funding that is spent in the area". The government expect this provision to provide greater transparency and accountability.

The government has recently published a consultation on proposals for local spending reports. The consultation period ends on 15th May 2009. The consultation points out that the statutory requirement is potentially complex and expensive and suggests that the "first arrangement" makes use of information currently available, and through the consultation it can be assessed how reports should be developed over time.

The government proposes that the "first arrangement" should comprise a list of items of expenditure for all local authorities, police authorities, fire and rescue authorities and primary care trusts. Where bodies do not share boundaries with local authorities, which in Halton's case applies to police, fire and PCT, it is not proposed to disaggregate down to the local authority boundaries. It is proposed that the items of expenditure will be broken down into service areas such as education, highways social care, housing, culture, environment, planning, police, fire and other services. It is then proposed that each of these service blocks be broken down into more detailed tables as currently set out in the revenue out-turn returns made to central government.

This is largely recycling of existing information which will be of no added

benefit in Halton, and in fact the only figures available on a Halton boundary will be the Borough Council's own expenditure. It is therefore recommended that a response be sent to the consultation indicating that to be of any use, the reports must set out what is spent by agencies and government departments. Proposed responses to the consultation questions are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications for Council policy. Should it be decided to submit proposals to Government, the policy implications of those proposals will be considered at that time.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

If it is decided to promote the opportunities afforded by the Act and to consult upon any proposals that come forward, there will be some financial implications. It is not possible to quantify these at this stage.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

This report does not have any direct implications for the Council's five priorities.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The risks associated with the provisions of the Act as far as Halton are concerned are:

- i. A good deal of time and expense could be incurred in developing proposals which are ultimately not accepted by Government.
- ii. Failure to take up the opportunities provided by the Act could result in missed opportunities.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

If proposals are given consideration, the consultation process requires that hard to reach groups are involved.

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

Document	Place of inspection	Contact officer
Sustainable Communities Act 2007	2 nd Floor Municipal Building	Rob MacKenzie (0151 471 7416)
Consultation on Local Spending Reports	2 nd Floor Municipal Building	Rob MacKenzie (0151 471 7416)
Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities – Statutory Guidance	2 nd Floor Municipal Building	Rob MacKenzie (0151 471 7416)

APPENDIX 1

Draft Response to Consultation on Local Spending Reports

Q1. We would welcome comments on the proposed first arrangements (and the proposed form of the first local spending reports).

Response

The proposed first arrangements will recycle existing information and will not add to transparency or help to develop proposals for sustainable communities.

Q2. Bearing in mind the discussions above and that there will be further local spending reports in due course, is there any additional information which you would like to see added to the proposed first arrangement (and the first local spending report?)

Response

The report should include information on expenditure by government departments and agencies such as the Regional Development Agency, Learning and Skills Council, and Job Centre Plus.

Q3. How could local spending reports help you and how would you use this information?

What information should the reports contain?

Response

If the reports contain information about all public spending in an area it will be possible to compare value for money with other areas and so drive up performance in all public services, not just those subject to the CAA process.

Q4. Specifically which approach to specifying bodies, expenditure, areas and period would be useful and likely to represent value for money. Can you prioritise within the information which you propose is provided?

Response

All public bodies should be included on a local authority area basis, providing annual spend (where applicable divided between capital and revenue). Major cross boundary infrastructure schemes such as railways can be excluded as it is difficult to attribute costs and benefits, but if other public bodies do not know where they spend their money it is time to put that right. Reasonable estimates would be perfectly acceptable.

Q5. Have you mapped local spending in your area? How did you do this?

Response

No

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Corporate & Policy

SUBJECT: Preparation for Comprehensive Area Assessment
– CAA

WARD(S) Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To inform Executive Board of the key features of the new CAA framework that takes effect on 1st April 2009.

Annex 1 of this report provides, or signposts to, specific information on the following aspects of CAA;

- a) The scope and architecture of CAA
- b) The Area Assessment
- c) The Organisational Assessment
- d) Timeline for assessment
- e) Actions being taken to prepare for CAA

A version of this report will be circulated to all members of the Halton Strategic Partnership Board, Specialist Strategic Partnerships and Sector Based Partnerships in the near future.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) The Board approves the initial actions to prepare for the Comprehensive Area Assessment set out in section e) of Annex 1 to this report; and**
- (2) The Board supports and engages with activities to prepare for CAA, across relevant areas of the Council, and the Halton Strategic Partnership.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 3.1 A number of publications are available that provide more detailed information on all aspects of CAA. Web-links are provided in the report where appropriate.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None identified at this stage

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None identified at this stage

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 As the report outlines, CAA has been designed to evaluate the impact of wider local public service delivery across the Borough of Halton. CAA will therefore provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's priorities, and the contribution that they make to the community at large, along with a longer term steer around how those priorities should evolve to continue to meet community needs and aspirations.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 CAA is now the primary assessment framework for local public services. Failure to adequately prepare for the assessment (at both Council and LSP levels) could result in an annual report that does not truly reflect quality of life in the Borough of Halton.

7.2 An adverse report on the area could foster a negative influence on the decisions of potential residents, businesses and visitors to move into, invest in, or visit Halton.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no specific Equality & Diversity issues associated with this report, however it should be noted that the CAA framework seeks to ensure that satisfactory outcomes for are being delivered to vulnerable people in the area.

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

9.1 Not applicable

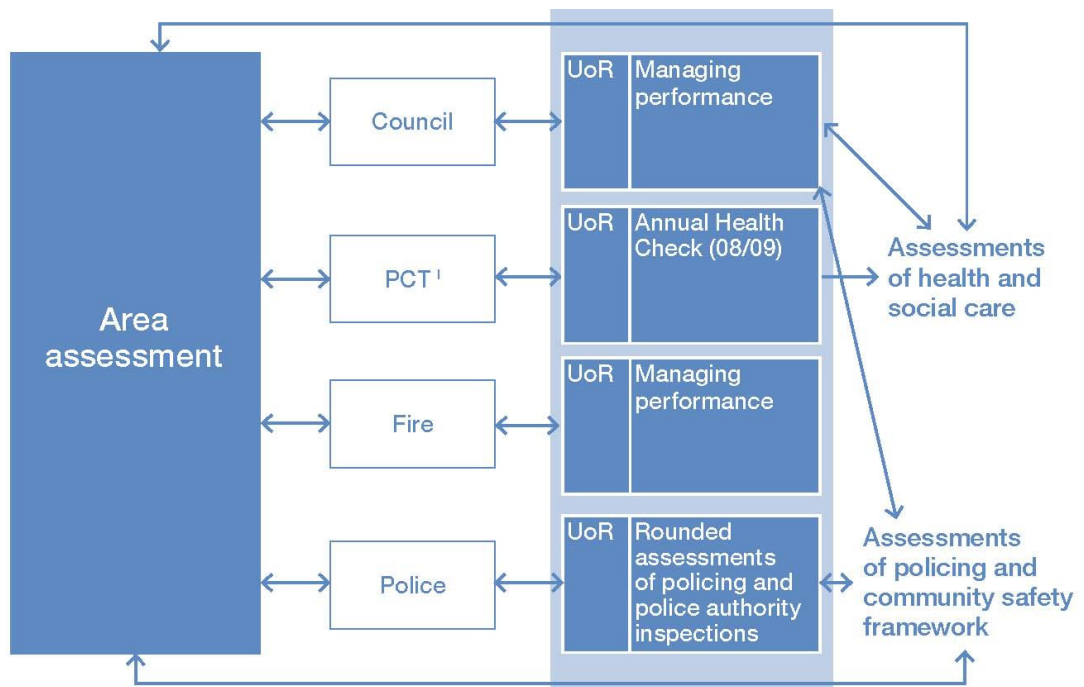
a) THE SCOPE AND ARCHITECTURE OF CAA

Local Government is no stranger to audit and inspection however, having driven the implementation of the first Community Strategies, LPSA's, LAA's, Sustainable Community Strategies, Local Development Frameworks, and more recently MAA's, the Government has implemented a new assessment regime that will take an all encompassing view of public service delivery in a given area, rather than the tight organisational view that CPA provided.

CAA is designed to provide an independent assessment of how well people are being served by their local public services. It focuses on how well service providers are achieving improvement and moving towards the achievement of long term goals through partnership working. This assessment will be provided by an 'Area Assessment', which is described in further detail below. The Audit Commission will lead the assessment, but will be supported by other relevant inspectorates, such as OFSTED and CQC, who will have detailed input to the assessment process.

Although CAA is primarily focussed on partnership achievement in the local area, there remain elements of organisational audit and inspection in the new regime. The Organisational Assessment will be comprised of two blocks – 'Use of Resources' and 'Managing Performance' and will relate specifically to the Council. This is described in further detail below. It should also be noted that the PCT, Police and Fire and Rescue services will also be subject to Organisational Assessment, with the findings feeding into an overall assessment of the area.

The diagram below illustrates the framework, and the linkages between the different components and organisations involved.



Other local organisations such as housing associations and probation boards and trusts are also subject to inspection and assessment but do not receive use of resources assessments.

The full CAA guidance document is available on the Audit Commission website and can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

b) THE AREA ASSESSMENT

Using the LAA and Sustainable Community Strategy as a starting point, this will be an assessment of achievement against priorities across the local area, as well as a view on whether those priorities are the right ones for the area. The Area Assessment will also encompass the statutory education and attainment targets that sit in the LAA.

The assessment is framed around three key questions;

- **How well do local priorities express community needs and aspirations?**
A view will be taken about how well local partners understand their community, and to what extent engagement with local people, including children and vulnerable groups, has been used to form priorities.

- **How well are outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?**
The approach to this question will be around performance, and the extent to which outcomes are being delivered, and whether the meeting of targets is having a tangible impact on the community.

There will be a focus in this question on the disaggregation of data to highlight the differences between neighbourhoods and to make sure that an overall indicator return is not masking under-achievement in deprived areas.

It is important to note that the assessment will not be contained specifically to outcome areas covered by the Sustainable Community Strategy and the LAA.

- **What are the prospects for future improvement?**
CAA is a forward looking regime, and this question reflects the main purpose of the Area Assessment. Reporting and judgements will be based mainly on prospects to improve.

Underpinning the three questions are four themes that will be considered at all stages of the area assessment, with the focus being on whether the themes are embedded across the public service delivery arrangements, rather than being specific criteria that are measured in isolation;

- **Sustainability;**
A broad theme which is set out in the guidance to seek long-term social and economic benefit, to build a strong healthy and just society, whilst respecting environmental limits

- **Inequality;**
A focus on partners knowing and understanding the nature and extent of inequalities and disadvantage within their community, along with demonstrable evidence of tackling inequalities within and between communities (namely age, disability, race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, but may also include efforts to reduce child poverty or other inequalities)

- **People whose circumstances make them vulnerable;**
There is a recognition that inspectorates have specific responsibilities in relation to people whose circumstances make them vulnerable, for example those suffering from illness, homelessness, those requiring care or support, or persons who are at risk of harm, marginalised or discriminated against. Inspectorates will ensure that as part of CAA, the needs of vulnerable people are being considered and met, and report accordingly.
- **Value for Money (VfM);**
This is an inherent part of the Organisational Assessment through the Use of Resources component that will be applied to the council, PCT, Police and Fire & Rescue Service. This broad view across key delivery agents will enable a view to be formed across the area. The guidance states that where there are significant issues relating to the wider use of resources that may impact on the delivery of outcomes, these will be highlighted in the Area Assessment report.

How will the Area Assessment take place?

The Audit Commission will prepare assessments using evidence from their own inspection work and information that is available both nationally and locally. This will include performance information from the National Indicator set and local performance frameworks, findings from inspection and audit, briefings from other public agencies, and the views of local people, businesses and third sector organisations.

There is an assurance given that any information or evidence that exists in the inspection domain will not be the subject of a new request.

There will be two stages of analysis, the first being undertaken by individual inspectorates, with the second being a cross cutting analysis that brings all the inspectorate views together. At both stages, inspectors will jointly assess evidence against national and local priorities using the themes below;

- How safe is the area?
- How healthy and well supported are people?
- How well is adult social care meeting people's needs and choices?
- How well kept is the area?
- How environmentally sustainable is the area?
- How strong is the local economy?
- How strong and cohesive are local communities?
- How well is housing need met?
- How well are families supported?
- How good is the well being of children and young people?

All of these themes feature in Halton's LAA however, as stated above, the inspectors will draw evidence from a wide evidence base across the whole range of themes.

As a start to this process, the Commission have recently provided a document containing 'background notes' that is essentially a contextual summary of life in Halton. This has been widely circulated and it has been noted that there are some inaccuracies along with some out of date statements within the notes. A response to this document will be collated and passed back to the CAA lead in due course.

There will not be an on-site inspection approach as there was with CPA, instead the approach will be one of opening up a dialogue when necessary to plug gaps, or validate information being used.

There is the potential for the Area Assessment process to be much quieter and less concentrated than CPA was, however the Area Assessment is not a one off event. Although it will be reported only in November, the Commission will revisit the assessment every quarter and will have an ongoing dialogue with the LSP to monitor progress against outcomes, as well as flexing and responding to prevailing conditions and influencing factors within the area.

Reporting the Area Assessment;

The Area Assessment will be reported annually in November. The assessment is not scored, but a 'flag' convention will be used as follows;

- Red Flag – indicates significant concerns about future improvement.
- Green Flag – highlights exceptional performance or improvement.

The Area Assessment will be published on-line. An example is available by clicking [here](#).

c) THE ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The Organisational Assessment will be made up of two components – a 'Use of Resources' assessment and a 'Managing Performance' assessment. These are specific to the Council.

Use of Resources

Use of Resources remains an assessment against published Key Lines of Enquiry. As under CPA, it will attract a score on a scale of 1 to 4, however the requirements are now generally more stringent and in the first year or so scores are anticipated to be lower.

At the end of 2008, an evaluation of Halton Council's position was made against the Key Lines of Enquiry, an action plan is in place, and is being progressed. An active dialog is in place with local Audit Commission representatives around this assessment.

Managing Performance

Although a new component introduced with CAA, this assessment has some similarity to parts of the CPA Corporate Assessment.

The Managing Performance assessment will be scored on a scale of 1 to 4. It will look at how the Council supports the achievement of community outcomes, assessing how effective it is at;

- Identifying and delivering priority services, outcomes and improvements
- Improving the services and outcomes for which it is responsible
- Contributing to improving wider community outcomes, including those set out in formal agreements such as LAA's or MAA's
- Tackling inequality and improving outcomes for people whose circumstances make them vulnerable; and,
- Providing the leadership, capacity and capability it needs to deliver future improvements.

The Managing Performance Assessment will contain an explicit statement on the performance of key Council services, for example services for children & young people and adult social care.

OfSTED and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will continue to have responsibility for assessing the performance of services for children & young people and adult social care. Findings will feed into CAA, but more detailed findings will be published separately.

As was the case in CPA, should an OfSTED or CQC rating be low, this will have a significant effect on the overall managing performance score, but this effect is not rules based – it will be determined by local context and the significance of findings.

Reporting the Organisational Assessment

The Organisational Assessment score will be derived from the Use of Resources and Managing Performance scores, will be on a scale of 1 to 4, and published alongside the area assessment in November each year.

d) **TIMELINE FOR ASSESSMENT**

Each January, March & June

- Stage 1** Individual Inspectorates to review outcomes,
Initial identification of possible flags for Area Assessment
- Stage 2** Joint inspectorate analysis of outcomes in relation to local and
national priorities,
Joint consideration of flags and evidence for Organisational
Assessment
- Stage 3** Draft findings agreed and shared with area (LSP) and GONW
Peer Quality Assurance in June

September

Stages 1 - 3 as above

- Stage 4** Draft report shared
- Stage 5** Final quality assurance
- Stage 6** Share report with area (LSP) and GONW

November

- Stage 7** Final Report published

e) ACTIONS BEING TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL AND THE HALTON STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

An analysis of the guidance, along with feedback from authorities involved in the CAA trials, and dialog with colleagues in the North West region, has indicated that it would be useful for the Council and the Halton Strategic Partnership to take the following actions in the immediate term;

- i. Work with the Audit Commission CAA Lead to ensure that the evidence used in the assessment reflects the true position of the area of Halton.
- ii. Ensure that robust delivery plans are in place for each of the LAA outcomes, and that regular monitoring of progress is undertaken to establish impact (including the monitoring of proxy measures, and risk)
- iii. Compile a position statement that details the current audit and inspection ratings of all public services in the Halton area. This is not only an awareness raising exercise, but may also serve as a signpost to areas of good practice that may be shared, or conversely to poor performance that may need wider improvement support.
- iv. Compile an area evidence base to demonstrate impact, achievement and programmed remedial actions, across the Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA Outcomes Framework, with the full cooperation of all partners.
- v. Identify and capture disaggregated data to ensure that an awareness and appreciation of the gap between neighbourhoods can be demonstrated.
- vi. Develop a communications strategy to ensure that the CAA framework is effectively communicated across all stakeholder groups in order to engender a full understanding of the assessment. (management, staff, members and all levels of the partnership).

f) CONCLUSION

It is very clear that CAA is not a rework of CPA, although elements of CPA have been carried over and remain key features of the Organisational Assessment, and the Council will need to retain a focus on this.

The Audit Commission have designed a framework that is not rigid, and as such can be relaxed or strengthened as required, to evaluate and drive improvement against priorities in a given area.

There will be a need to coordinate and resource activity in response to the CAA framework once in operation, but at this stage it is too early to say exactly what form that response will take.

It is clear that the flexible approach to this overall assessment has been designed to respond to, and move with, prevailing conditions. This is demonstrated in the following extract from the guidance, where the Audit Commission acknowledge that the current economic conditions will have an effect on local public service delivery,

but maintain that they will seek evidence to show that the challenges are being addressed;

CAA will come into effect at a difficult time for the global and national economy and the effects are already being felt in local areas across England. With its emphasis on sustainable development, CAA has been designed to be flexible and adapt to such changes. We will judge how well councils and their partners understand the local impact of the recession and how well they are responding using the tools and influence available to them to mitigate the impact on their communities and prepare for the upturn. We will highlight examples of effective partnership working on the local economy as a source of learning for others, as well as highlight areas where inadequate action is being taken.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director
Health & Community

SUBJECT: Equality & Diversity Progress Report

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Executive Board on the current position on the equality and diversity agenda in Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive Board:

- i) **Note the report and endorse the actions outlined in section 4 in order for the Council to move forward to Excellent Status within the new Equality Framework for Local Government.**

3.0 CO-ORDINATION

3.1 The Council is making progress towards creating a culture whereby equality and diversity are part of the mainstream planning and service provision process. The Council has developed a specific structure around equality and diversity duties. At its core is the Corporate Equality and Diversity group, currently chaired by the Strategic Director of Health & Community. This has representation from officers from across the Council. Underpinning this are Directorate groups. In addition there is a Members Equality And Diversity Group, chaired by Councillor Wharton, Executive Board Member, Corporate Services. Its role is to give a strong political foundation, champion equalities issues, and provide the necessary degree of monitoring and challenge on the Council's pursuit of its equalities aspirations. These groups now interlink with the Local Strategic Partnership, Equality, Community Cohesion and Engagement Group.

4.0 PROGRESS UPDATE

4.1 Equalities are a dynamic area of public policy. There have been major recent legislative changes in this area. The Equality Bill, *A Framework for a Fairer Future*, was presented to Parliament in June 2008 and will be launched in April 2009.

The Bill provides for: -

- A new streamlined single Equality Duty on public bodies which brings together the three existing duties (race, disability and gender) and extends to gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief;
- A requirement to report annually on rates of pay by gender and employment of people from ethnic minorities and disabled people;
- A framework to make clear the outcomes that the Bill is designed to achieve.

The legislation has strengthened the requirement to not only tackle discrimination but to actively promote diversity. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has been established to bring together the activities of the three former organisations, these being the Equal Opportunities Commission, Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. The EHRC has a statutory enforcement role and it will be possible for individuals and organizations to seek judicial review of the actions or lack of action of public bodies.

4.2 The Council is currently at Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. However in April 2009 the Equality Standard will be replaced by the Equality Framework for Local Government.

4.3 The Framework differs from the Standard in a number of ways. Firstly the current five levels of the Standard will be simplified by consolidation into three levels, these being: -

- Developing
- Achieving
- Excellent

Authorities currently at Levels 1 and 2 of the Standard will be classified as **Developing**, those on Level 3 as **Achieving** and those currently at Level 5 as **Excellent**. Authorities on Level 4 will be classed as 'Moving towards Excellence', on an interim basis' as this is not one of the main Framework levels and these authorities will be expected to demonstrate that they will start working towards and have achieved Excellent status within two years.

4.4 Accordingly at its last meeting the All Party Members Equality and Diversity Group agreed to recommend that the Council should now start working towards excellent status within the Standard by the end of 2010. This will build upon work which is already being undertaken, and which is described in paragraph 4.6 below.

- 4.5 The Equality Framework is also designed to assist authorities to working within the new performance framework, as outlined in the 2006 White Paper 'Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities', and particular CAA which also comes into effect from April 2009. Whilst the CAA does not use specific Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) there will be an assessment in how the Council responds to the community's needs in providing all its services, in particular the specific areas of 'Inequality; and 'People whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The new Framework reflects this.
- 4.6 To support the process in working towards excellence progress has been made in the following areas: -
- A template has been produced to form the basis of a self assessment. This will be completed by all Directorates and will be pulled together by the Corporate Equalities Group to form a comprehensive document.
 - A working group to review the Corporate Equality Scheme has been established, with a view to producing a revised Scheme which encompasses the Council's duties and ambitions for 2009 – 2012 and will reflect the requirements of the single Equality Bill and this will be widely consulted upon.
 - A working group has been established to review the guidance for, and effectiveness of, Equality Impact Assessments and to recommend appropriate improvements to the service planning and performance monitoring guidance;
 - A newly constituted Equality, Community Cohesion and Engagement Group has been established within the Halton Local Strategic Partnership, which consists of representatives from partner and stakeholder organisations. This is chaired by Councillor Swain and has widened its remit to consider a range of community cohesion issues.
 - The Council's Personnel Department are in the process of producing a template which will be used to conduct a comprehensive staff survey for Equal Opportunities monitoring purposes.
- 4.7 Departments are being asked to demonstrate the mainstreaming of impact of equality and diversity issues in their service plans to develop smarter targets and to ensure that equality and diversity impact assessments are undertaken for all policies and services. It will be important that these are done regularly and to the standard required, quality assured and challenged through Directorate Equality and Diversity Groups, and used to inform revised Directorate Action Plans and Departmental Service Plans.

4.8 Halton engages in an equalities forum with other Merseyside authorities. This has been very helpful in allowing us to benchmark ourselves against best practice locally. Some of the key messages from these exercises are around visible leadership and championing of issues by Chief Executives and Leader/portfolio holders; addressing issues collaboratively with other partners in the LSP and having joint approaches to strategies and plans; and, very clear equalities outcomes and targets embedded in the community strategy and Local Area Agreements.

5.0 POLICY & FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Equality and diversity has an impact on how we deliver all our services. The equality and diversity agenda will also help us to lead the way forward in delivering our sustainable community strategy and corporate plan. The equality and diversity policies of the Council, and their implementation, are key to the fulfilment of the Councils statutory duties.

5.2 The Equality Standard for Local Government will come into effect in April 2009. The Council will therefore have to fund a further peer review in order to progress to the 'Excellent' level but the resource implications of this are not yet clear.

5.3 There are no other direct financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

To continue to enhance equity of access to high quality services for children & young people in Halton.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

To continue to enhance equity of access for employment and learning opportunities.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

To continue to promote and enhance access to support, services and activities for the people of Halton.

6.4 A Safer Halton

To continue to promote equality and diversity for a safer Halton.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The equality and diversity agenda cuts across all of the work that the Council is now included in all major inspections. A poor judgment within this area will impact on our CAA rating. Another key risk to consider is that non-compliance could result in legal action.

8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Council is currently at Level 3 of the Equality Standard and the progress which has been made in recent months will be built upon as the Council works towards Excellent status within the new framework.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Executive Board Report 16/10/08	Municipal Building Widnes	Dwayne Johnson Strategic Director Health & Community

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 09

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Review of Safeguarding Children and Young People in Halton

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline the findings of the Joint Area Review of Haringey Council and their statutory partners.
- 1.2 To set out an analysis of current strengths in Safeguarding and Child Protection Services in Halton.
- 1.3 To identify service trends in Safeguarding and Child Protection Services in Halton along with a Development Plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That Executive Board

(1) endorses the 'Development Plan' enclosed as Section '4' of this report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION - BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The significant weaknesses identified by the recent Joint Area Review (JAR) of Haringey Council and its statutory partners services to vulnerable children has caused a wave of both political and public concern about the protection of Children in our Society. It has also had a significant impact on those who deliver Safeguarding services.
- 3.2 The Haringey JAR in November 2008 judged the Borough as "inadequate"; and gave a damning verdict of the management and application of Child Protection Services across much of the public sector.
- 3.3 Lead Statutory responsibility for Child Protection Services rests with the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children and Young People. In Haringey both lost their jobs; and the Council, its reputation. Most importantly a child lost its life.
- 3.4 Halton Council and its partners were judged in April 2008 by the OFSTED Joint Area Review as 'Outstanding' in its Safeguarding and Child Protection Practice. That 'Outstanding' judgement was confirmed in the Annual Performance Assessment by Ofsted Published on the 17/12/08 of the Council's Children and

Young People's Directorate. This is one of only a few 'Outstanding' ratings nationally.

3.5 As a Four Star Council and outstanding Children's Services Authority, our immediate response to events such as those of baby 'P' is always to be reflective and challenging of our current practice. This was how the 'Outstanding' Judgement was achieved and the only way it can be maintained. Halton's goal is always to seek to improve practice. This report summarises the result of that 'reflective' process.

3.6 **HARINGEY**

3.6.1 In summary, Haringey's JAR had the following principal findings:

3.6.2 Failure to identify children at immediate risk and act on evidence

3.6.3 Social Workers, Health professionals and Police did not communicate well

3.6.4 Poor gathering, recording and sharing of information

3.6.5 Inconsistent frontline practice and supervision by senior management

3.6.6 Insufficient management oversight by the Assistant Director of Children's Services by the Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive

3.6.7 Over-dependence on performance data which was not always accurate

3.6.8 Poor Child Protection Plans

3.6.9 Failure to ensure all requirements of the inquiry into Victoria Climbiés murder in 2000 were met

3.6.10 Failure to speak directly to children at risk.

3.6.11 An inadequate Serious Case Review into Baby P's death

3.6.12 High turnover of Social Workers resulting in heavy reliance on agency staff

3.6.13 Heavy workloads and case allocation for Social Workers, with true numbers of children allocated to them not always accurately counted.

3.7 **HALTON'S STRENGTHS:**

3.7.1 The Review of Halton's Safeguarding and Child Protection Services found the following:

3.7.2 Systems and processes are compliant with Lord Laming's recommendations following his Climbié Report in 2004.

- 3.7.3 Comprehensive and rigorously applied Halton Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency policies and procedures with regard to protecting safeguarding children and young people.
- 3.7.4 Performance was judged as 'outstanding' by an on site OFSTED inspection following a rigorous analysis of front line services including the Social Care Duty system. 'Safeguarding is everybody's business in Halton' (Ofsted July 2008)
- 3.7.5 There is clear evidence of strong partnership working across agencies; with robust challenge and scrutiny. This has been central to attaining the 'Outstanding' judgement.
- 3.7.6 The Halton Safeguarding Children's Board was externally validated as providing clear leadership on Safeguarding.
- 3.7.7 Halton has an open culture where Managers, including the Strategic Director and Operational Director for Specialist Services are close to front line delivery.
- 3.7.8 Direct involvement of the Chief Executive and Lead Member in the work of the Halton Safeguarding Children Board through regular reporting.
- 3.7.9 Comprehensive and extensive multi-agency quality auditing of frontline practice.
- 3.7.10 Excellent performance data systems
- 3.7.11 Performance on all critical Safeguarding and Child Protection indicators rated as excellent.
- 3.7.12 Strong political leadership and support in ensuring that the safeguarding of children is one of the Council's highest priorities. This is also reflected in partner agencies governance arrangements.
- 3.7.13 An excellent calibre of staff, committed to high standards
- 3.7.14 Relatively low levels of staff turnover in Social Care in comparison with many other Council areas.

3.8 HALTON'S CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE:

- 3.8.1 There are, however, significant challenges that need to be addressed if Halton is to maintain its Outstanding rating for Safeguarding and improve outcomes for children in need.
- 3.8.2 Halton has a high prevalence, in some communities, of deep seated familial problems that drive demand for safeguarding and particularly child protection interventions.
- 3.8.3 There are challenging levels of compromised parenting*, often inter-generational. This is where 'poor' parenting can become a threat to the safety and well being of children. Sometimes this is life threatening.

- 3.8.4 Compromised parenting is most apparent in the levels of reported domestic violence, substance misuse, adult criminality, and mental health problems. There is a higher prevalence of these factors in vulnerable and unsupported families.
- 3.8.5 Child Protection Plans will often be in response to one or more of these factors; often all are apparent.
- 3.8.6 Low rates of breastfeeding, high rates of obesity and poor dental hygiene can be indicators of low level parenting skills. High rates of childhood mental ill health, alcohol misuse, teenage parenting and pregnancy and of young people not engaged in Education Employment or Training can in some cases be linked to poor parenting capacity.
- 3.8.7 The result of such 'compromised' parenting is increasing demand for social work support and assessment services. This is increasing year on year.
- 3.8.8 In 2006 there were 1000 assessments of such circumstances. The projection for year end April 2009 is that this figure will rise to 1400. In the same period the number of allocated social work cases has risen from 640 to 780. This increase is partly as a result of better identification of need, and more effective interventions. However, as a result of this Halton has a higher rate of children with a Social Worker than many other Council areas.
- 3.8.9 During the period 2006 to 2008, the number of Children in Care has slightly declined from 152 to 148. However during the same period there has been a significant increase in the cost of foster care and residential care caused by an increasing reliance on, and cost of, Independent Sector providers. The Out of Borough placement budget is projected to overspend.
- 3.8.10 A full analysis of the demand for and supply of fostering and residential care has been completed and has identified a number of significant trends that need to be addressed.
- 3.8.11 The reduction in the supply of local foster cares is as a result of retirements, deregistration, higher national standards and competition from the Independent Sector.
- 3.8.12 The increase in demand for foster care is the result of an increase in the number of babies and younger children coming into Care and an increase in the length of time children stay in Care and in the same placement.
- *Compromised parenting refers to inadequate or dangerous parenting with limited scope for substantive improvement
- 3.8.13 The increase in cost of foster care and residential care is as a result of charging policies by the Independent Sector and significant regional and national supply issues that make this a providers market.

- 3.8.14 There are some infrastructure issues within the Council that impact on the capacity of child protection services, particularly social work deployment, that needs to be addressed.
- 3.8.15 This first is the implementation of Electronic Social Care Records (ESCR) and the Integrated Children's System (ICS). These will result in a total dependency on ICT systems for the recording of social care interventions and care plans. Implementing these systems is complex in that they require a fundamental review of business processes, the implementation of new software and data collection systems and the retraining of the workforce. ICS is a nationally prescribed system but there is no national procurement programme or central data system. Halton is on track for implementing these systems and is considered an exemplar of good practice.
- 3.8.16 Secondly, the difficulties in recruiting social workers and social care managers have highlighted issues with regard to some Human Resource processes. The Council will need to reflect on how it can better respond to market conditions in terms of Social Worker and Manager recruitment.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4.1 In order to maintain its 'Outstanding' performance, the Council will need to implement a 'Development Plan'. This is the Council's Development Plan.
- 4.2 The following actions are recommended on the basis of an analysis of the strengths and areas for development in local Safeguarding arrangements, and in anticipation of Governmental requirements, which are being strengthened.
- 4.2.1 The establishment of a Safeguarding Unit hosted by the Children and Young People's Directorate. This will integrate lead officers for Safeguarding in Halton from Social Care, the NHS, Education and potentially the Police; co-located into a united Safeguarding Unit. A separate report will outline this proposal for consideration at the Halton Safeguarding Children Board. This is a realignment of multi-agency resources and not an additional cost.
- 4.2.2 To address supply issues in the fostering service it will be necessary to recruit up to an additional 30 foster carers over the next 2 years. In the first instance this will require measures to ensure that the fostering team is fully staffed. A number of attempts over the last 2 years to recruit a Principal Manager for Fostering have failed and it has been impossible to recruit to Fostering Officer posts. In order to address this, it will be necessary to restructure the service to make these positions more attractive and competitive. This will be actioned immediately.
- 4.2.3 The recruitment of foster carers is problematic and will require a fundamental rethink about the package of support and remuneration offered. Independent Sector providers are able to offer sufficient remuneration to make fostering a career choice. The cost of this is already met by the Council in the fees it pays for each placement. If the Council were to match these fees it would require considerable additional investment. In the longer term this investment would significantly reduce the demand on the Out of Borough budget. It would also make

a contribution to creating local employment. This will be the subject of a full review during 2009 with proposals emerging in October 2009 for consideration as part of the 2010/11 budget.

- 4.2.4 In order to bring down the number of cases allocated to individual social workers there will need to be an increase in capacity. Based on an average of 16 children per Social Worker, this is calculated as equating to 6 FTE Social Workers. It is proposed to re-designate 3 FTE current posts in social care for this purpose, with a proposal to increase the establishment by the addition of 3 further posts. There are currently seven social work vacancies covered by agency staff. The first priority will be to recruit to these vacancies. The Council will need to consider how it can make these posts as attractive as possible to potential applicants.
- 4.2.5 To meet the requirements of the Children's Work Force Development Council and to address local retention issues it will be necessary to establish a position of Professional Development Manager for Children's Services Social Workers. This will be done through the re-designation of a current Social Care post, and at no further cost.
- 4.2.6 Such an increase in social work capacity is bound to lead to increased pressures on the Legal team. This team provides legal advice in respect of Children and Adult Social Services and Education. There is already a need for greater capacity in the group as it seeks to enhance the services that it provides, and it is therefore proposed to recommend that a new solicitor post is established, given the increased demands.
- 4.2.7 In the longer term the Council, through its Children's Trust, needs to develop different structures to support children in need and their families. This will be Locality based, and take the form of multi-disciplinary teams serving children and families in a local area, working closely with local schools.
- 4.2.8 This proposal will require the refocusing over time of a range of Council and statutory Partners Services; it will also impact on Neighbourhood Management, YOT, Youth Service, and Children's Centres. In the longer term this will be based on the co-location of services, where appropriate, in multi-disciplinary teams. Whilst the multi-disciplinary teams will focus upon targeted case work with families coming together under the banner of Halton's Children's Trust, it will also focus upon the wrap around of services for the family, and the broader community. A separate paper and proposals for a pilot Locality model will be available in April 2009. If such an approach to tackling the underlying causes of poor and compromised parenting outlined earlier in this report is to succeed, it will require the support of the whole Council and Local Strategic Partnership.
- 4.2.9 Such a 'preventative' approach to supporting families in need at a local level will support the wider community and reduce number of children requiring more specialist services.
- 4.2.10 The DCSF have recently announced an invitation to bid for support from a 'Cross Government Co-Location Fund' for capital projects that will enable the co-location of two or more services for children, young people and families. These can be

either small new projects or combined with projects already planned. Projects need to be in place by 2011; with bids submitted by 6th April 2009.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is both challenging and optimistic in terms of Halton Council's ability to respond to the Safeguarding and Child Protection needs of its children and young people. Detailed work is already in hand to address the immediate challenges of ensuring that all children and young people in the Safeguarding and Child Protection system and all children in need in the Borough are properly safeguarded. However, it is clear that the capacity of the fostering system and social work establishment needs strengthening.
- 5.2 The net additional cost of creating an additional 6 FTE Social Work position is £120k in 2009/10. This is for 3 posts; the other 3 Social Work posts will be developed from the current staffing establishment and at no extra cost. In addition, the cost of creating a new solicitor post would be approximately £49,000 plus car allowance in 2009/10.
- 5.3 The pressure on the Out of Borough budget and over-spend of £900k is being dealt with by changes to a number of budget lines and efficiencies. Some £600k re-adjustments have been made to address the over-spend. This leaves a net additional cost of £300k in 2009/10.
- 5.4 It is proposed that part of the Council's contingency should be set aside to cover those initial costs for 2009/10; and reviewed thereafter.
- 5.5 The 'Locality' model for the future delivery of services (not including clearly identified Child Protection cases) will be self-financing by using current resources differently. This will be the subject of a separate report for a pilot in April 2009. A bid will be made to the DCSF for capital from the Cross Government Co-Location Fund by the 6.4.09.
- 5.6 The additional costs associated with the recruitment of an additional 20 to 30 foster carers will be the subject of a separate report in October 2009 for consideration in the 2010/11 budget setting process. This is currently not reflected within the Efficiency Programme.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Safeguarding of children and young people is fundamental to improving their outcomes in all aspects of their lives.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Effective safeguarding is required ensure children, young people and their families are able to succeed in learning and achievement.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Effective safeguarding will improve the general health and well being of children and young people as well as tackling health inequalities such as obesity, drug and alcohol dependency and mental ill health.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Effective safeguarding will improve safety in communities by reducing parental criminality, anti-social behaviour as well as reduce the risk of abuse and neglect in children.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The safeguarding of children and young people is critical to the well being of all citizens in the Borough and to the effectiveness of the Council. Failure to adequately safeguard children and young people will severely impact on the Councils performance and reputation.

The key control measure to mitigate these risks are set out in the Development Plan in Section 4 of this report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

These proposals will result in greater equality and opportunity for vulnerable groups in the Borough.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

To ensure that children and young people are effectively safeguarded and the Council is compliant with the requirement set out in Lord Lamings Review of Progress Report.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

10.1 None applicable

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

2nd April 2009

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Every Child Matters “Change for Children”	Municipal Buildings	Paul Boyce
Climbié Review	Municipal Buildings	Paul Boyce
Lord Laming Progress Report	Municipal Buildings	Paul Boyce
Ofsted Joint Area Review: Haringey	Municipal Buildings	Paul Boyce
Ofsted Joint Area Review: Halton	Municipal Buildings	Paul Boyce

11.0 CONCLUSION:

- 10.1 Safeguarding children well requires the Council to routinely evaluate the effectiveness, capacity and safety of the current system. This report brings together the full range of issues impacting on the Council in its principal objective of keeping children safe.



department for
children, schools and families

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09 February 2009

To Chief Executives of all unitary and upper tier authorities and Chief Executives of Primary Care Trusts

INVITATION TO BID FOR SUPPORT FROM THE CROSS-GOVERNMENT CO-LOCATION FUND

The Children's Plan: One Year On document announced the creation of a dedicated fund of £200m to support the co-location of services. I am writing to you to invite bids for support from the Cross-Government Co-location Fund (the "Fund") for capital projects that will enable the co-location of two or more services for children, young people and families.

Co-location can make it easier and simpler for people to access the services they need and assist those services in working together more effectively and efficiently for the benefit of their users. There are also potential savings to be made from using facilities to the full and bringing together assets and functions. The Government expects agencies and authorities working within local areas to consider options for co-locating services when designing their capital strategies, in particular where such approaches will underpin more integrated models of service delivery. This is beginning to happen in some areas and in some sectors, but local partners report problems in persuading

stakeholders and in timely marshalling of funding from diverse sources. To encourage co-location, the Government proposes to invest in between 50 and 100 projects across the country. The supported projects will both benefit local people and enable others to learn from their innovation and practice.

We are now inviting bids from local areas for co-location capital projects, either small new projects or co-location developments within projects which are already being planned. The criteria for this funding are set out at Annex A; a key criterion is that projects must be deliverable during the financial years 2009-2010 and 2010-11 and co-located services should be in place in the new or refurbished facilities by September 2011. Beyond 2011, it is expected that co-location of services will be embedded in future capital programmes.

Applications should be able to provide evidence of how the proposed co-located services will contribute to improved outcomes for children, young people, families and local communities. Proposals should demonstrate how they can ensure sustainability and how the Fund's contribution will provide extra value to service delivery and local infrastructure which could not have been supported from other funding streams.

The Fund is intended to support a range of projects of two types. We expect that most of the Fund will be deployed to projects which have funding from other sources (including Government capital programmes); in such projects the extra resources from the Fund will encourage and enable co-location by, for example, unlocking investment or providing funds for cases where timetables for capital support do not coincide. We also expect some of the Fund to be deployed to small-scale stand-alone projects. We do not intend to use it as a sole resource for large-scale co-location projects.

We need to be sure that projects are the outcome of strategic analysis and decision-making across different services, so we ask for proposals to be submitted having been agreed by the Children's Trust Board or relevant organisations on the Children's Trust Board.

The background and criteria for the Fund and the arrangements for application are set out in the attached Annexes.

Applications received by 6th April 2009 can expect to receive notification of the Fund's decision on support at the latest by the end May 2009. Depending on the level of early demand, we expect that there will be a further round or rounds of invitations to apply to the Fund. In the event of over-subscription, however, the Fund will seek to support a range of projects that fulfil the criteria and provide a spread of diverse partners, locations and characteristics to ensure we maximise learning from the resources available.

I am copying this letter to all Directors of Children's Services, Finance Directors of Local Authorities, Government and Regional Offices,



Peter Houten

Director School Formation and Investment Group

Annex 1

Criteria and background information for applicants to the Cross-Government Co-location Fund

To all local authority Chief Executives and Chief Executives of Primary Care Trusts in England

Summary

1. This letter sets out the scope, background and criteria for applications from Children's Trusts to the Cross-Government Co-location Fund (the "Fund") for support for innovative local capital projects which enable the co-location of two or more services. Proposals should be sent to DCSF, the Government Department supporting and administering the Fund, at the address given below.

Purpose and scope of the Fund

2. The Cross-Government Co-location Fund is intended to support capital projects that enable the co-location of services.

3. This Fund will be specifically to assist local areas, where there is evidence of local partnership working, to move ahead rapidly on capital investment projects where the co-location of services will promote better outcomes for children and young people, their families and the wider community. The Fund will support projects that improve access for service users and assist integrated working between professionals which would not have happened without additional funding in 2009-2011.

4. The Fund will also seek to build the capacity of the "system" to enable similar projects to be developed in the future, and capture and disseminate the lessons learned from these projects in order to provide ongoing support to future co-location projects beyond the lifetime of the Fund. Projects supported by the Fund will be expected to actively contribute to capturing lessons and disseminating learning from their experience. They will also be required to provide a report to the Fund on the impact of the co-located services.

Background

5. Local partners and agents have reported on the complexity of accessing different funding streams, diverse sources of finance and differing requirements and timescales to support co-location projects. In addition, whilst agencies express support for the principle of co-location of services, their individual accountabilities drive them to decisions focused on service-specific targets, which tend to lead to single service solutions, rather than facilities that provide access to a range of services.

6. We know that a number of areas have experience in delivering such multi-agency facilities, on both a small and large scale. Capital investment in local health facilities has, for example, resulted in some groundbreaking examples of co-location. But there is not yet a culture of joint and shared planning amongst local partners. Through this Fund, the intention is to encourage co-location of services by offering appropriate financial incentives and supporting culture change.

7. By working in a cross-Government manner, this Fund also demonstrates central Government's commitment to bring about more integrated working between professionals supporting children and families, and also respond in innovative ways to the needs of local stakeholders to remove barriers to effective multi-agency working. It also complements existing central Government department investment programmes such as Building Schools for the Future and the NHS LIFT programme which have already proved to be valuable mechanisms for bringing partners together to develop co-located facilities.

8. In the longer term, Government will look to use the process underpinning the Fund to support the development of more coordinated and coherent capital programmes for the next spending review period so that this Fund is not required beyond April 2011.

Projects supported by the Fund

9. In general we expect partnerships to be centred on services for children, young people and their families, with involvement from two or more partners from education and wider children's services, early years provision, sport (including swimming and the Olympic legacy) health, youth support services, local housing, police, justice, play, recreation and leisure services. This is not a prescriptive list, however, and decisions on supporting applications will depend on the evidence provided of contribution to local need matched with Government priorities, partnership working, community involvement, regeneration and sustainability.

10. We would expect to see co-location projects on sites where universal service are already located (such as schools and primary health care services) helping children and families to access a range of services simply and directly. We expect many areas will wish to prioritise the co-location of those services that work on a face-to-face basis with children, young people, families and communities, either through adaptation of existing spaces in schools, health centres, youth centres or other community facilities, through development of new "one stop shop" type facilities¹, or through investment in mobile facilities (where such facilities will be regarded as a capital asset).

11. Existing DCSF capital programmes support a range of initiatives such as all-age schooling. The Fund will not, therefore, support co-location of primary and secondary schooling, the co-location of early years and primary education, early years education and childcare or secondary education and young people's FE. Projects which, however, bring in an additional cross-service input can qualify for support depending on their merits. Independent schools (except Academies) will not be eligible for support.

12. The intention instead is to provide an additional impetus to existing or planned projects where local partners are contributing or pooling their own funds. In practice, it is likely that projects will range from small refurbishment projects at neighbourhood level to significant contributions towards larger scale strategic / area wide investments.

¹ For further advice on models of "one-stop shops", applicants are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the Cabinet Office Service Transformation Team (bob.kamall@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk) and/or refer to IDeA's Front Office Shared Service project www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=6440077

Proposals for larger projects will, however, be considered on their merits. The Fund is unlikely to provide significant sums of funding for strategic area-wide investments that should be funded from other sources unless there are exceptional reasons to do so. Developments which are already receiving support from Government capital programmes are eligible although priority will be given to projects with co-funding from Children's Trust partners. (There will be no revenue funding available and local partners will need to assure themselves – and the Fund - of the long-term sustainability of proposals.)

13. Given that the timescale for delivery is limited, local areas should use established delivery mechanisms such as LEPs, LIFTCos (where these are in place) or other arrangements developed through mechanisms such as Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs). This will avoid lengthy procurement processes.

14. Sustainability is an environmental and social aim that should be considered throughout the process of planning and developing any build or refurbishment project, including those that will provide co-located services. DCSF requires all major school capital projects to achieve a minimum BREEAM Schools rating of "very good" and will expect significant building work to provide co-located services to achieve this standard.

Criteria for projects supported by the Fund

15. Applications /proposals supported through this Fund will be expected to demonstrate:

- likely impact of the capital investment in terms of providing a contribution to improved outcomes for children, young people and families in the local area as supported by the Local Area Agreement and reference to statutory indicators;
- evidence that proposals are sustainable, including partnership working and community involvement; and
- ability to deliver to the specified timescale:

16. There is no 'one size fits all' model of co-location – it must be driven by local decisions, informed by existing multi-agency working, local population demographics, local needs and community involvement. Experience shows that impact and sustainability are greatest where a co-located initiative is the product of a coherent wider area strategy.

17. Applications will need to demonstrate that the investment in facilities will contribute to improving outcomes for local children, young people and families (including reducing inequalities) and more integrated delivery of services as identified in the Local Area Agreement or through the agreement of local Children's Trust partners. These will be based on the area's response to Government priorities in the light of local needs and these links should be referenced in the application.

18. Applications should also demonstrate sustainability of the proposals. Evidence of this will include evidence of need, agreement by partners on strategic priorities and community involvement in the development of proposals. We would wish to see that

overall decisions on infrastructure have been taken with a view to both service improvement and value for money considerations (such as preventative impact and multi-use of facilities). This should be related to the specific contribution to be made by the Fund and should be accompanied by a cost/benefit analysis. Successful applications will provide both quantitative and qualitative evidence to support their case.

19. The final key criterion will be deliverability of the project – the intention is for facilities to be ready so that services can be up and running in those facilities by September 2011.

20. Proposals need also to be accompanied by details of the level of co-funding for projects and an explanation of how support from the Fund would overcome specific difficulties in achieving co-location. The level of co-funding will be taken into account when making judgements on the sustainability of the investment proposed and preference will be given to proposals that draw in funding from other sources.

21. Depending on the level of demand and the quality of bids submitted, the Fund may run a further bidding round later in 2009. If the Fund is over-subscribed, then subject to fulfilling the threshold criteria described above, then individual projects will be selected to provide a “portfolio” of Fund exemplars in order to maximise the breadth of learning derived from projects. Relevant characteristics are expected to include:

- urban, suburban and rural areas
- geographical coverage
- diversity of partners
- small, medium and large developments
- contribution to a range of Government priorities, such as reducing inequalities
- particularly innovative or ground-breaking projects.

Applications to the Fund

22. In order to ensure that proposals contribute to the key strategic aims of the locality we ask that proposals have the backing of their Children’s Trusts or relevant members of their Local Strategic Partnerships and are submitted through Children’s Trusts. The proposals should be submitted under the signature of relevant senior officials and their explicit endorsement for the project. The Fund is not able to accept applications direct from individual prospective partners such as schools or GP practices but proposals involving individual schools, including Academies, are welcome, or from Trusts and Federations, routed through Children’s Trusts. Similarly, approaches from third sector and private organisations should be backed by relevant Children’s Trust partners.

Payments etc

23. In the majority of cases we expect to release funds to the relevant top tier local authority through the Standards Fund mechanism as a capital grant payment. Local

authorities will be expected to make the necessary arrangements with partners to cover the costs of the agreed project. If necessary, pooled budget arrangements through s10 of the Children Act 2004 or s31 of the Health Act 1999 should be used. Local authorities are also required to make arrangements to ensure that a) it can be demonstrated that funds have been used for the agreed purpose, and the use of funds complies with the principles of regularity, propriety and value for money, and that b) where assets funded by public money are subsequently disposed of, then a fair proportion of the value is returned to the local authority for further capital use. Arrangements to ensure compliance are likely to include enforceable contracts or grant conditions and, particularly for larger schemes, perhaps a charitable trust or similar legal framework. In the case of non-delivery of the project, we reserve the right to reclaim the funding, following discussion.

Project management

24. Project management arrangements that ensure the delivery of the project to time are the responsibility of local partners. The Fund will implement monitoring arrangements appropriate to the risk and level of investment. For projects receiving more than £1m in support the Fund reserves the right to specify further arrangements to ensure deliverability.

Monitoring and evaluation

25. The Fund will put in place arrangements to monitor the progress of all projects approved for funding to ensure they deliver to time, and good practice developed through each project is routinely captured and made available to others on an ongoing basis. Additionally, evaluation arrangements will be established to identify the impact of the capital investment on improved outcomes for children, young people and families.

Involvement of other Government Departments

26. Other government departments, including the Department of Health, Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, support the aims of this Fund. Officials from other Departments and representatives from relevant agencies will be providing advice and expertise in evaluating the proposals submitted to this Fund. They will be working with DCSF to remove barriers to joined up working at local level as necessary so that the Fund can provide a single source of additional capital investment to drive rapid co-location of services.

Annex 2

Proposal to bid for support from the Cross-Government Co-location Fund

Applications should be submitted electronically to Mark Hayward mark.hayward@dcsh.gov.uk with the necessary local endorsements by **6 April**. We may contact key officers to request further information on the project during the weeks following 20 April. We will inform you whether your project has been selected for support by the end May 2009.

For queries, please email info@dcsh.gov.uk, putting "Co-location fund" in the "subject" line.

Section 1 – contact details and basic project information

LA Name	
Names of principal partners	
Project name	
Lead contact name for project	
Position and organisation	
Email	
Telephone	
Address	
Postcode	

Description of project Please summarise the project below setting out the partners involved, the services that will be co-located as a result of this investment in facilities and its key characteristics including relevant local context and any innovative or unusual features.
(500 words maximum)

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Total amount of funding requested from the co-location Fund during 2009-2011	
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Section 2 – eligibility criteria

All applicants should complete this section of the form, providing relevant evidence and key data to strengthen the application where applicable. Supporting documentation should be attached either as a clearly marked annex, or included as appropriate weblinks.

Eligibility criteria (1) – Please set out **how** the project (i) contributes to improved outcomes for children, young people and families; (ii) relates to the strategic priorities agreed by Children’s Trust partners and/or referenced in the Local Area Agreement, including also the fit with wider capital strategies; and (iii) contributes to relevant Government priorities.
(500 words maximum not including supporting evidence)

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Eligibility criteria (2) – Please set out the evidence of sustainability for the project concerned. This should include the need and demand for co-located services including community surveys, needs analysis, evidence of established partnership working and community engagement and other data as necessary. Please also provide evidence of partners’ commitment to ongoing service delivery through the co-located facilities which should include agreement on any revenue funding arrangements.
(500 words maximum not including supporting evidence)

--

Cost /benefit analysis

Successful applications will include both qualitative and quantitative evidence to support their case. Please set out the set out the assessment of value for money (cost /benefit analysis), for this proposal including consideration of the benefit accrued from multiple use of facilities, prevention of negative outcomes, use of established facilities and/or expertise and so on. .

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Eligibility criteria (3) – The project is ready to deliver between 2009-2011

Projected construction start date	
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Projected construction end date	
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Projected date that facilities open for use	
---	--

Preferred procurement and/or delivery mechanism eg LEP, LIFTCo, RIEP	
--	--

Applications should clearly show that they are in a position to deliver the facilities for co-located services so that these are up and running by September 2011. This should include evidence of the delivery mechanism from start to finish and include a project plan and discussion of the key risks to the success of the project.	
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Eligibility criteria (4) – Why additional resources are required	
Expected costs of project (as set below)	
Other funding committed to project	
Sources of other funding	
% of total project costs being funded through this application	
Preference will be given to proposals that draw-in funding from other sources so as to maximise the impact of this limited pot of funding. Exceptional stand-alone projects will be considered. Please set out below how resources from the Fund will make a difference to this project (including leverage over other sources of funding) and what particular barriers to co-location issues this funding will address. (Maximum 500 words)	

Project Costs – please provide estimates of the costs of the project under the following headings	
New Build costs	
Refurbishment or Improvement work costs	
Fixtures and Fittings including ICT	
Professional Fees	
Other costs	
VAT	
Total Gross Capital Cost for project	

Section 4 – Support of Children’s Trust Partners

All applicants should provide the following details for each of the senior representatives of relevant Children’s Trust partners who support this application.

Senior Children’s Trust representative - name	
Position and organisation	
Email	
Telephone	
Address	
Postcode	
Endorsement	

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2nd April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Accelerated Capital

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides an update on the capital programme for 2009/10 following the offer to local authorities by the DCSF to accelerate capital funding.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) To note the additional capital funding available for 2009/10; and**
- (2) To recommend submission to Full Council for approval of the additional works to be carried out from the Capital Programme 2009/10**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In November the DCSF offered to release in 2009/10 some of the capital grant programmed for release in 2010/11 with the aim of stimulating the local economy, especially for small and medium sized enterprises.

In order to support this initiative the Directorate has confirmed to the DCSF that it wishes to bring forward £500,000 from the grant scheduled to be released in 2010/11. In addition, £120,000 of LCVAP has been brought forward for use on schools in Shrewsbury Diocese.

It is proposed the accelerated capital funding available to Halton will fund the following works:

- Moore Primary School – removal of mobile classroom and provision of new build classroom.
- Lunts Heath Primary School – re-roofing.
- West Bank Primary School – new boiler.
- Hillview Primary School – new boiler.

- Cavendish School – furniture and equipment required to complete the building project at the school.

3.2 Moore Primary School – Removal of mobile classroom.

The promotion of inclusive learning and primary enrichment through replacing unsuitable temporary accommodation and remodelling main school buildings is a key issue that has been identified in Halton's Asset Management Plan Statement of Priorities.

Pupils and staff working in mobile accommodation are disadvantaged by being separate from the main school activities and facilities and having inadequate learning environments which suffer from extreme weather conditions.

The project will give pupils access to a purpose built, well equipped teaching environment and access to whole school facilities and activities.

Estimated cost of works - £280,000.

3.3 Lunts Heath, West Bank and Hillview Primary Schools – Capital Repair Works.

The capital repairs programme 2009/10 was approved by Executive Board on 29 January 2009 (Minute No. 96 refers) and included a reserve list of works to be carried out in the event that funding became available. It is proposed the following works be brought forward from the reserve list of works:

- Lunts Heath Primary School – Re-roofing works. Estimated cost - £57,500
- West Bank Primary School – New boiler. Estimated cost – £92,000
- Hillview Primary School – New boiler. Estimated cost - £57,500

3.4 Cavendish School – Furniture and equipment.

The school has recently had extension and remodelling works carried out in order to be able to deliver the secondary curriculum. Furniture and equipment is required to kit out the new specialist and general teaching areas.

Estimated cost - £35,000.

3.5 School contributions to capital works.

It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of capital works. Based on the estimated cost of these works it is estimated this contribution will be around £81,000. As the costs are currently only estimated once final costs have been established it may be possible to bring forward other projects from the reserve list of capital repairs.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

These capital works will allow the Council to continue to meet its requirement to enhance the learning environment through capital projects allocated in accordance with the priorities identified in the Asset Management Plan.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The capital repairs programme and the removal of mobile classrooms will contribute to Halton's Carbon Management Programme by producing more energy efficient buildings.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The capital repairs programme and the removal of mobile classrooms will address condition and suitability issues within school buildings and will improve the learning environment for children and young people.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 It is current practice for schools to contribute towards the cost of works. This consultation with schools has yet to take place therefore if schools are not willing to contribute these projects will not be carried out in 2009/10.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Consideration to access issues is given in all building projects and in particular access arrangements will be improved by the removal of mobile classrooms.

9.0 REASON FOR DECISION

To deliver and implement the capital programmes.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Capital Programmes to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2009.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Schools Capital Letter – DCSF 29/11/2008	Finance & Resources	Phil Dove
Reply to DCSF – CYPD 6/2/2009	Finance & Resources	Phil Dove

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2nd April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children & Young People

SUBJECT: School Admission Arrangements 2010

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report fulfils the requirement under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, the Education Act 2002, The Education & Inspections Act 2006, and associated regulations, to determine Halton Local Authority's (LA's) School Admissions Policy for LA maintained community and voluntary controlled schools, and coordinated admission schemes for all primary and secondary schools for September 2010 following statutory consultation. The LA also consulted on the admission arrangements to its maintained nursery schools for the September 2010 intake.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) **The Board approves the School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and co-ordinated schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools including the adoption of catchment zones for admission to Widnes community high schools, and admission arrangements to Nursery schools and LA Maintained Nursery classes. All of which apply to the 2010/11 academic year**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In January 2009 Halton LA issued a statutorily required consultation paper on the proposed admission arrangements and coordinated admission schemes for the September 2010 intake (attached as Appendix 1). Details of the consultation were published in the local press, made available on the Council's website, and issued to the head teachers and governing bodies of all nursery, infant, junior, primary and secondary schools, the four Diocesan Authorities responsible for voluntary aided schools in Halton, and neighbouring authorities. Following prior consultation and agreement with the four Diocesan Authorities, the LA also facilitated an on-line admissions consultation process for all Church of England and Catholic Voluntary Aided Schools, enabling them to consult on their proposed admission arrangements for the 2010 academic year along with the LA's proposed arrangements.

- 3.2 The consultation paper proposed no changes to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to LA maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools, and no change to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to LA maintained community schools in Runcorn. However, changes were proposed to the allocation of places at LA maintained community secondary schools in Widnes through the introduction of catchment zones as detailed in Appendix 1 paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2.
- 3.3 The proposal to introduce catchment zones in Widnes (Wade Deacon High School serving the East, The Bankfield serving the West, and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic College continuing to serve Catholic pupils and those who wish to seek a Catholic education), arose following statutory consultation during 2007 and 2008 regarding the Building Schools for the Future Programme which, at the initial stages, indicated that some pupils in the East of Widnes would be required to circumvent two high schools to access educational provision. The LA agreed that alternative solutions should be considered and agreed to consult on the implementation of catchment zones to alleviate this issue. The LA options proposed by the LA are attached as Appendices 2 and 3.
- 3.4 The consultation commenced on the 5th January 2009 and closed on 28th February 2009. 22 responses were received to the consultation. A summary of the responses is attached as Appendix 4. The Halton Admissions Forum met on 3rd March 2009 to consider the Admissions Policy, co-ordinated schemes, proposed catchment zones and the responses to the consultation. The Admissions Forum approved the Policy and co-ordinated primary and secondary schemes, considered the catchment zone options proposed by the LA and considered the responses received to the consultation, including the responses from the Governing Body at Wade Deacon High School who made representations about the LA's proposals. The consensus from the Admissions Forum was that both Options 1 and 2 proposed by the LA should be put to the Executive Board for consideration.
- 3.5 The LA as commissioner of school places must ensure that the admission arrangements are fair, not complex, and fully comply with all statutory requirements. In considering the introduction of catchment zones the LA wishes to reflect the diversity of the community served by both The Bankfield School and Wade Deacon High School, and does not wish to exclude particular housing estates or addresses in a way that might disadvantage particular social groups. In the LA's view Option 2 best meets those needs.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Admissions Policy has been drawn up to maximize parental preference for Halton LA maintained community and voluntary controlled schools, and responds to parental representations from the initial

Building Schools for the Future consultation. The oversubscription criteria contained within the Policy reflect the criteria which are considered good practice and acceptable by the Department for Children Schools and Families.

- 4.2 The proposal to implement catchment zones does not remove the right of parents to express a preference for any school. Parents must complete an application form regardless of which catchment zone they live in, where they will have the opportunity to express a preference for any school. If the school of preference is undersubscribed then all applications will be successful. If the school is oversubscribed then the oversubscription criteria will be applied and places allocated in accordance with the criteria.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As a result of the introduction nationally of the equal preference scheme, admissions authorities (the Local Authority for community and voluntary controlled schools and governing bodies for aided schools) have seen a significant increase in the volume of work undertaken in managing and administering the equal preference admissions process. In real terms the workload for admission authorities has trebled. Local Authority officers have worked collaboratively with school governors to ensure the admissions process and admissions criteria are compliant with the revised Department for Children, Schools & Families School Admissions Code of Practice, and that places are allocated in accordance with the published criteria.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The proposed policy complies with statutory requirements in ensuring that the admission arrangements are fair and do not disadvantage, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with disability or special educational needs, thereby ensuring that the educational provision for children & young people in the borough is inclusive and accessible.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Educational achievement is critical to the life chances of all children and is at the heart of the Government's Every Child Matters strategy. The School Admissions Policy detailing school admission arrangements in Halton underpins the requirement to promote fair access to educational opportunity.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The School Admissions Policy is aligned to the Council's Sustainable School Travel Policy which promotes and supports measures that encourage local communities to use environmentally sustainable forms of travel, especially walking, cycling, and public transport.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The alignment of the School Admissions Policy and the Sustainable School Travel Policy promotes the safe travel and transfer of pupils to school.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The proposed admissions policy reflects the school reorganisation programme intended to ensure that 21st century provision is in place across both the primary and secondary sectors.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The admission arrangements and coordinated schemes are proposed to maximise parental preference for Halton schools. Any amendment to the current arrangements at this time may reduce parental preference and lead to an increased number of admission appeals, adversely affecting the intake at some schools. Furthermore, any amendments may affect the LA's School Place Rationalisation Strategy currently being undertaken in both the primary and secondary sector.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 The proposed admission arrangements reflect the equality and diversity requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, and the Equality Act 2006

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

- 9.1 The decision is statutorily required and any revision to the proposed arrangements may adversely affect school place planning as detailed in 7.1 above.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 10.1 As detailed in paragraph 3.3, if the LA remained with the current oversubscription criteria for admission to Widnes community high schools i.e. Children in Care, Siblings, and then straight line distance measurement, some pupils living on the East of Widnes would be

required to circumvent two high schools to access educational provision, therefore this option was rejected. The representations submitted by the Governing Body at Wade Deacon High School were considered by the Halton Admissions Forum and rejected, and the LA would support that view. Other options considered and rejected include the allocation of places through random allocation (lottery) as this method could be seen as arbitrary and random.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

11.1 The Policy applies for the September 2010 academic intake and will apply for 3 years unless further central or local government changes are required.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
School Admissions Code of Practice	Children & Young People's Directorate	Martin West
School Standards & Framework Act 1998	Children & Young People's Directorate	Martin West
Education Act 2002	Children & Young People's Directorate	Martin West
Education & Inspections Act 2006	Children & Young People's Directorate	Martin West

Response to Admissions Consultation – September 2010 intake

A consultation paper on Halton's proposed admission arrangements for September 2010 was issued on 5th January 2009. Details were published in the local press and a consultation page was available on the Halton Borough Council website. An email detailing the consultation process was sent to the Head Teachers of all infant/junior/primary and secondary schools in Halton, and the email was copied to all neighbouring authorities and the 4 diocesan authorities. The consultation closed on 28th February 2009.

No changes were proposed to the admission arrangements to Halton primary schools, no changes were proposed to the admission arrangements for Runcorn secondary schools. However, the Local Authority were proposing the introduction of catchment zones for The Bankfield School and Wade Deacon High School in Widnes, with Saints Peter & Paul Catholic College continuing to serve the catholic community and other pupils seeking admission to the school. Two options were put forward by the Local Authority detailed in the attached maps (Appendix A and Appendix B).

In total 22 on-time responses were received to the consultation.

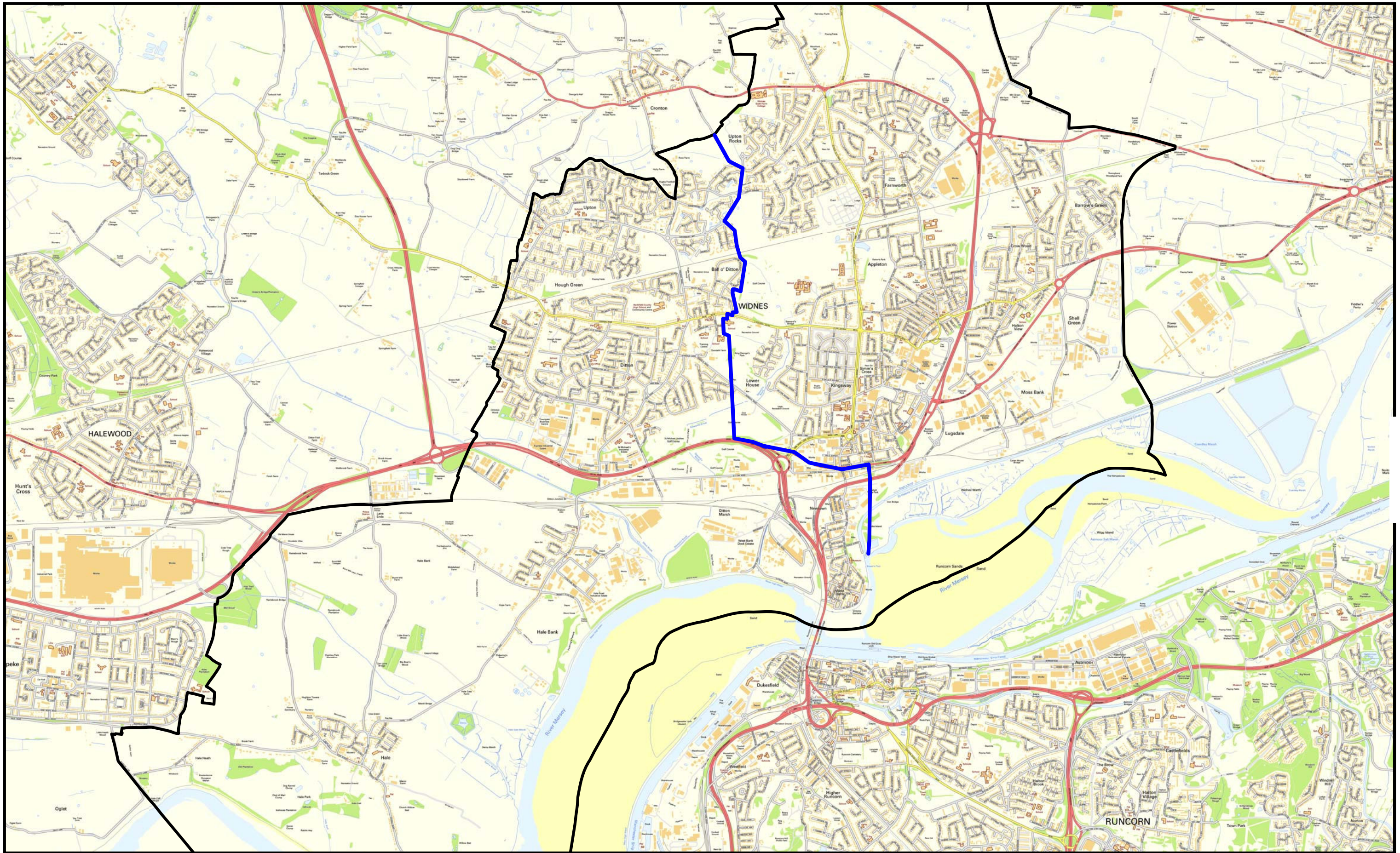
a) Identical responses were received from 10 individual governors at Wade Deacon and Fairfield High School Federation advising that the preferred Option was Option 1 proposed by the LA with an amendment (See Appendix C). A further letter was received from the clerk to the governing body at Wade Deacon and Fairfield High School Federation confirming the Resolution of the Governing Body preferring Option 1 as amended.

b) Two additional responses were received from other Governors at Wade Deacon and Fairfield High School Federation, one supporting Option 1 as amended but with the Sibling Criteria receiving a higher ranking than catchment zones, the second requesting that admissions commenced at the East side of Widnes and places should be allocated moving East to West across Widnes until the admission limit of 300 was reached.

c) Five further identical responses were received from the Management Team at Wade Deacon and Fairfield High School Federation detailing the same preferred option as detailed in point (a) above.

d) Four further individual responses to the consultation were received. One objected to the introduction of catchment zones but offered no alternative, one supported Option 1 as amended by the Governing Body at Wade Deacon and Fairfield High School Federation but objected to those living within the catchment zone taking precedent over siblings should the school become oversubscribed i.e. making the sibling criteria the second oversubscription criteria, and two objected to parts of the Upton Rocks estate in Widnes not being included in the catchment zone for Wade Deacon – but neither of the respondents confirmed that they preferred Option 2 as proposed by the LA.

A response was received from The Bankfield School favouring option 2, however this response was received after the closing date and after the Halton Admissions Forum had met so could not be considered.

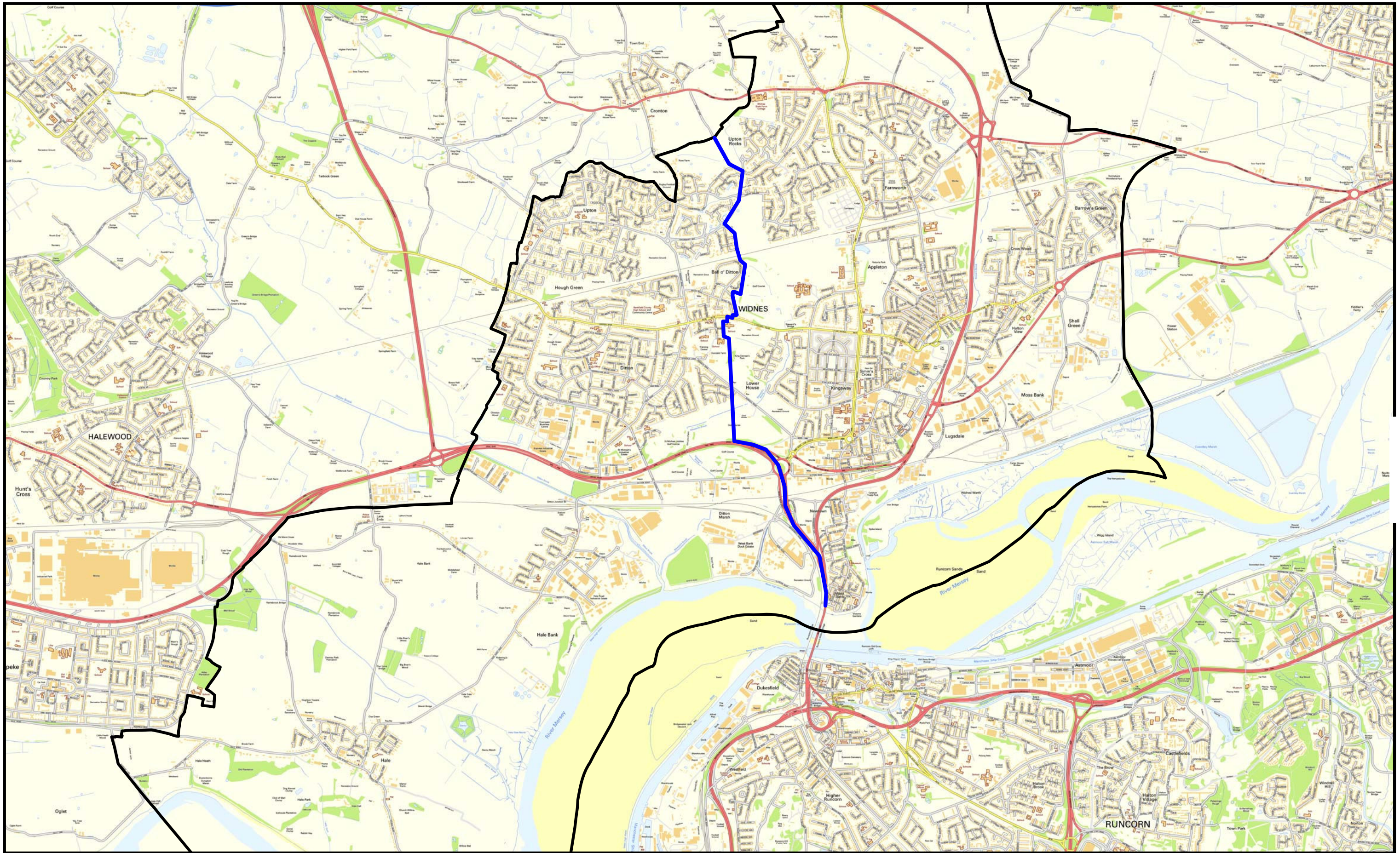


New Widnes Split Line - Option 1

Date : December 2008
 Scale : Non-Standard Scale



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New Widnes Split Line - Option 2

Date : December 2008
 Scale : Non-Standard Scale



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**CONSULTATION DOCUMENT
ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY
MAINTAINED COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED NURSERY,
INFANT, JUNIOR, PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS
ACADEMIC YEAR 2010/11**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for annual consultation by the Local Authority (LA) on school admission arrangements. Included in this document are the proposed (statutorily required) Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes for the 2010/11 academic year for primary and secondary schools, together with the LA's proposals for admission to LA maintained nursery schools.
- 1.2** In addition to fulfilling the above statutory requirements, Halton Borough Council's School Admissions Policy complies with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Acts 1976 and 2000, Human Rights Act 1998, Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 & 2005, and the Equality Act 2006 and does not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality or national or ethnic origin.
- 1.3** Section 89(2) and (9) of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, and the associated Regulations require admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools) to undertake consultations by 1 March 2009 before finalising admission arrangements by 15th April 2009 for the school year commencing in September 2010.

2.0 NURSERY ADMISSIONS

- 2.1** Following meetings and discussions in December 2008 with the Nursery Head Teachers, and to address emerging issues from the Every Child Matters Agenda, the LA is proposing to amend the oversubscription criteria for LA Maintained Nursery Schools and LA Maintained Nursery Classes at Community & Voluntary Controlled Schools to better reflect the needs of the community.
- 2.2** Children normally attend a maintained nursery for 12 months (three terms) prior to the year in which they start reception class at school. In

some cases places may be available for longer and a child may be offered a place from their third birthday.

- 2.3** For admissions to nursery school/nursery classes in September 2010 applications will be considered first from parents whose children were born between 1st September 2006 and 31st August 2007 (i.e. reaching their 4th birthday between 1st September 2010 and 31st August 2011).
- 2.4** If the number of applications from eligible children for places at a nursery school/nursery class is below the nursery school/nursery class admission limit then all applicants will be offered a place.
- 2.5** If the number of applications for a place exceeds the number of places available then places will be allocated in accordance with the criteria detailed below:

- 1) Children in Care - children who are subject to a care order or are accommodated by the local authority
- 2) Children in need as defined by the Children Act 1989* (see note below)
- 3) Children aged 4 (i.e. children who will have reached the age of 4 by 31st August)
- 4) Children aged 3 (i.e. children who will have reached the age of 3 by 31st August)

Where there are more children in any one of the categories above than there are places remaining, the following tie-break will be used:

- a) Halton resident children, with the oldest child having highest priority.
- b) siblings – children with an older brother or sister expected to be attending the nursery class at the time of admission
- c) Where more than one child has the same birth-date, those living nearest the school, as measured using an Ordnance Survey Address Point system which measures straight line distances from the address point of the nursery to the address point of the place of the child's permanent residence will have priority
- d) Children resident in other authorities, as described above.

*Children Act 1989 Section 17 (10) - For the purposes of this Part a child shall be taken to be in need if-

- (a) s/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or

development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this Part;

(b) his/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or

(c) s/he is disabled,

In considering applications within this criteria supporting documentation must be provided by the relevant professional.

2.6 Waiting List - A waiting list will be maintained and if a place becomes available it will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above.

2.7 All places should be allocated up to the admission number if there are sufficient applications and schools must not keep places available if there are applicants waiting.

3.0 PRIMARY ADMISSIONS

3.1 The Secretary of State for Education and Skills has defined compulsory school age under the Education Act 1996 as follows:

Child's 5 th birthday	Term of Admission
1 st April to 31 st August	Autumn
1 st September to 31 st December	Spring
1 st January to 31 st March	Summer

In Halton, however, children will continue to be admitted to school earlier than the required admission date. This reflects the commitment of the LA to secure the best possible start for children within the Borough of Halton.

3.2 Children reaching the age of five between 1st September and 31st August may be admitted full time on the first day of the Autumn Term before their fifth birthday. Schools may phase their intake over the first four weeks of the term. As recommended in the Code of Practice the LA will allow parents to defer their child's entry to school until the child is of compulsory school age, providing the parent applies, is offered, and accepts the place within the normal admissions timetable, and the place is taken up within the same academic year. It should be noted that if a child is presently attending a nursery class they do not have automatic right to transfer to the primary school to which the nursery class is attached. Parents are required to indicate a preference for a primary school along with all other parents. Attached as Appendix A is the proposed co-ordinated admissions scheme for all Halton LA maintained primary schools.

4.0 SECONDARY ADMISSIONS

- 4.1** Children transfer from primary to secondary school in the September following their 11th birthday. Attached as Appendix B is the proposed co-ordinated admissions scheme for all Halton LA maintained secondary schools.

5.0 ON-LINE ADMISSIONS

Parents/Carers can apply on-line for a place at a primary or secondary school. The on-line admissions portal is available on the Halton Borough Council website at the commencement of the application process at – www.halton.gov.uk.

5.0 HALTON ADMISSIONS FORUM

- 5.1** Any recommendations and responses to this consultation paper will be considered by the Halton Admissions Forum and will be included in the report to Halton Borough Council's Executive Board.

6.0 VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS – CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1** Regulations allow governing bodies who are the admission authority for their school not to consult in certain circumstances. To qualify for a suspension of consultation an admission authority must have consulted all appropriate bodies in the previous determination year, and its admission arrangements must not have been the subject of an objection to the Schools Adjudicator in the previous five years. In addition, the admission authority must not be seeking to change their admission arrangements from the previous year. They will, however, still have to consult every alternate year thereafter even if there is no change in their published admission arrangements.

7.0 SCHOOL PLACES RATIONALISATION STRATEGY

- 7.1** The Local Authority is committed to undertaking a rationalisation of its school premises, the outcome of which is likely to impact upon the current admission numbers.



**HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME:
CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR
PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2010/11 ACADEMIC YEAR
CONSULTATION**

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into reception classes in maintained infant and primary schools.
- 2.0** This Co-ordinated Primary Scheme applies to those schools detailed on pages 10, 11, and 12.

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

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

also supply additional information on a supplementary form and must contact the Church of England voluntary aided school direct for this form which should be completed and returned to the appropriate Church of England voluntary aided school. VA schools will need to inform parents of their requirements within their school's published admission arrangements.

5.0 Admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code. In Halton an Equal Preference Scheme is operated. Within the equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (see paragraph 7.0).

6.0 APPLYING FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACE IN HALTON FOR SEPTEMBER 2010

6.1 Halton LA publishes an "Admission to Primary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). The preference form will be contained within this booklet and the booklet will be issued to all Halton Primary Schools and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the council's website, and upon request from the Student Services Team. The booklet will be issued in **September 2009** and the on-line form will be available at the same time.

6.2 The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order. The preference form must be returned to the Student Services Team within the Children & Young People's Directorate no later than **Friday 11th December 2009**. On-line forms must also be completed by this date.

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

6.4 The Student Services Team will load all preferences onto the database and, week beginning **Monday 18th January 2010**, will forward all first, second, and third preference forms to all Voluntary Aided Schools where admission is being sought, whose governing bodies will be required to meet and determine which pupils will be admitted against their admission criteria. Governing bodies must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admissions criteria. Voluntary Aided schools will then be required to notify the Student Services Team

on **Monday 1st February 2010** which pupils have been offered places and which have been declined.

6.5 When all preferences have been considered Halton LA will notify parents of their child's allocated Halton LA community, voluntary controlled or voluntary aided school. This notification letter will be sent on **Friday 12th March 2010** together with details of the appeal process if applicable.

7.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

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

- 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight-line distances in miles from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of permanent residence of the pupil.

For admission to community and voluntary controlled schools the following notes apply:

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

b) If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria, places will be allocated on distance grounds as described within the distance criteria above.

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

d) The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility the LA will use the address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. It may be necessary for the Council to carry out

checks that the address given is genuine and parents may be requested to produce further documentary evidence of the child's address. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

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

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

8.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools received after the closing date, but received in time for the initial allocation will be included where possible. However, as the exact date of allocation cannot be predicted, the LA cannot guarantee that any late application will be included in the initial allocation, therefore parents/carers are strongly urged to ensure their application is received by the closing date. If the late application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeals process are given in paragraph 10.0 below.

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

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

8.2 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list as paragraph 8.5 below.

8.3 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 11th December 2009 parents must notify the LA and request a new preference form. The preference form must be completed and returned to the LA immediately. If there is a place available at the school of preference a place will be offered. If the year group is oversubscribed then parents will be offered the right of appeal and any other preferences will be considered. The child will also be placed on the waiting list. The Local Authority will require documentary evidence to confirm a change of address.

8.4 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

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

8.5 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for oversubscribed LA maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received upto the end of the Autumn Term will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as a mid-year admission and the application should be made direct to the school.

9.0 MID YEAR ADMISSIONS

At the time of writing the DCSF have advised that mid-year admissions will need to be co-ordinated from September 2010 and that this must be part of a separate consultation exercise which must be completed by 1st January 2010. A separate consultation paper will be circulated during 2009.

10.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred LA maintained community, voluntary controlled or voluntary aided schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be

submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. The Chairman of the appeal panel will be a lay-person having no connection with the LA. Other members of the panel will be suitably experienced persons.

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

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

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

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

11.0 RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION

The closing date for response to this consultation is 28th February 2009. Comments on any of the proposals should be submitted either by email to martin.west@halton.gov.uk or in writing to: Martin West, Student Services Team, Children & Young People's Directorate, Grosvenor House, Runcorn WA7 2WD. All correspondence should be headed "Admissions Consultation 2010".

You will not receive an individual response to any comment you submit regarding this consultation, but any comments you do submit will be considered when determining the final admission arrangements for 2010.

12.0 COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

The figure in brackets denotes the school's proposed Published Admission Number for 2010 but may later as a result of the School Reorganisation Programme.

All Saints Upton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
Astmoor Primary (25)
Beechwood Primary (15)
Brookvale Primary (40)
Castleview Primary (20)

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

VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

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

CATHOLIC:

Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary (30)
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary (30)
St Augustine's Catholic Primary (15)
St Basil's Catholic Primary (60)
St Bede's Catholic Infant (60)
St Bede's Catholic Junior (60)

St Clement's Catholic Primary (30)
St Edward's Catholic Primary (20)
St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary & Nursery (25)
St John Fisher Catholic Primary (30)
St Martin's Catholic Primary School (30)
St Michael's Catholic Primary (35)
The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary (20)

Appendix B



**HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME:
CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR
SECONDARY SCHOOLS – 2010/11 ACADEMIC YEAR
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into year 7 at secondary schools.
- 2.0** The Co-ordinated Secondary scheme applies to the following schools in Halton. The number in brackets denotes the proposed Published Admission Number for 2010, but may alter in the light of the Secondary Reorganisation Programme. Parents requesting further details should contact the LA direct.

Halton High School (180)	Community
Saints Peter & Paul Catholic College (289)	Voluntary Aided
St Chad's Joint Faith Catholic & CE High School (190)	Voluntary Aided
The Bankfield (190)	Community
The Grange Comprehensive School (180)	Community
The Heath School (210)	Community
Wade Deacon High School (300)	Community

Halton Local Authority (LA) is the Admission Authority for the five community high schools, and for the two voluntary aided schools the Governing Body is the admission authority.

- 3.0** Halton residents will be given the opportunity to complete a common preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 secondary schools using this form. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DCSF School Admissions Code of Practice. This form is also available on-line and parents are encouraged to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk. Parents/carers should only complete one application form and preferences may include Halton schools and schools maintained by other LAs.

4.0 Admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the DCSF Code. All admission authorities must operate an Equal Preference Scheme. Within an equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered, if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place, the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place, parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (see paragraph 6.0).

5.0 APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2010

5.1 Halton LA publishes an "Admission to Secondary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). The preference form will be contained within this booklet and the booklet will be issued to all year 6 pupils attending Halton Primary Schools and Halton resident pupils who attend schools in other LAs, and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the council's website, and from the Student Services Team. The booklet will be issued at the start of the Autumn Term, **September 2009**, and the on-line form will be available at the same time.

5.2 The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order (regardless of which LA the school preferences are for). Halton residents whose child(ren) attend a Halton Primary School must return the form to the child's primary school no later than **23rd October 2009**. Halton residents whose children attend primary schools in other authorities must return the form direct to Halton LA no later than **23rd October 2009**. On-line forms must also be submitted by this date.

5.3 Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring LAs but **must** complete their preferences on the Halton form. Halton LA will work with its neighbouring authorities: Cheshire, Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley, St Helen's, together with any other admission authority where a parent has applied for a school place.

5.4 On-Line Admissions: LAs are required to have a facility for parents to apply on-line for a secondary school place. This facility is in place for Halton residents via Halton Borough Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk and on-line applications will be dealt with along with all other applications.

- 5.5** Halton LA will record all preferences on the admissions database and will forward, week beginning **23rd November 2009**, details of all first, second, and third preferences for admission to aided schools or schools in other authorities to the relevant admission authority, for consideration in accordance with their published admission criteria.
- 5.6** The governing bodies of all Voluntary aided schools should note that they must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admission criteria and must notify the Student Services Team on **Monday 14th December 2009** which pupils have been offered places and which have been declined.
- 5.7** When all preferences have been considered Halton LA will notify parents of their child's allocated Halton LA community or voluntary aided school place (and if parents have requested a school in another authority the maintaining authority will notify parents). These notification letters will be sent on **1st March 2010** together with details of the appeal process if applicable.

6.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

- 6.1** Halton Local Authority is proposing changes to the way in which places will be allocated to the community secondary schools in Widnes for the September 2010 intake. Attached to this consultation paper are two maps detailing two alternative proposals for catchment zones for The Bankfield School and Wade Deacon High School. Views are sought on which of the two options should be implemented, either Option 1 or Option 2.
- 6.2** In implementing catchment zones in Widnes if a community school in Widnes becomes oversubscribed it is proposed that places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:
- 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority
 - 2) Children who are resident within the designated catchment zone of the school
 - 3) Siblings - pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
 - 4) Pupils living nearest to the school measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight line distances in miles from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of permanent residence of the pupil

Parents living within a particular catchment zone are not necessarily guaranteed a place at the school within the catchment zone. Generally there are enough places for all children living in a school's catchment zone. However, parents must still complete a preference form and express a preference (or preferences) along with all other parents. If the school is oversubscribed then the criteria detailed above will be applied.

6.3 There are no proposed changes to admission arrangements in Runcorn and if a community school in Runcorn becomes oversubscribed places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight line distances from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of child's permanent residence of the pupil.

For admission to community schools in Widnes and Runcorn the following notes apply:

- a) Children who have a statement of special educational needs will be allocated a place at the school named in the statement.
- b) If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria, places will be allocated on distance grounds as described within the distance criteria above.
- c) Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated.
- d) The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the LA will use the address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. It may be necessary for the Council to carry out checks that the address given is genuine and parents may be requested to produce further documentary evidence of the child's address. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

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

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

7.1 EARLY AGE TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

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

7.2 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton LA maintained community schools received after the closing date, but received in time for the initial allocation will be included where possible. However, as the exact date of allocation cannot be predicted, the LA cannot guarantee that any late application will be included in the initial allocation, therefore parents/carers are strongly urged to ensure their application is received by the closing date. If the late application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeal process are given in paragraph 9.0.

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

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

7.3 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the LA may not be able to meet the change of preference and the child's name will be added to the waiting list as paragraph 7.6 below.

7.4 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 23rd October 2009 parents must notify the LA and request a new preference form. This form must be completed and returned to the LA immediately. If there is a place available at the school of preference a place will be offered. If the year group is oversubscribed then parents will be offered the right of appeal and any other preferences will be considered. The child will also be placed on the waiting list. The LA will require documentary evidence to confirm a change of address.

7.5 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

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

7.6 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for oversubscribed LA Maintained Community Secondary Schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until the end of the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received upto the end of the Autumn Term will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as a mid-year admission and the application should be made direct to the school.

8.0 MID YEAR ADMISSIONS

At the time of writing the DCSF have advised that mid-year admissions will need to be co-ordinated from September 2010 and that this must be part of a separate consultation exercise which must be completed by 1st January 2010. A separate consultation paper will be circulated during 2009.

9.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

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

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

10.0 RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION

The closing date for response to this consultation is 28th February 2009. Comments on any of the proposals should be submitted either by email to martin.west@halton.gov.uk or in writing to: Martin West, Student Services Team, Children and Young People's Directorate, Grosvenor House, Runcorn WA7 2WD. All correspondence must be headed "Admissions Consultation 2010".

You will not receive an individual response to any comment you submit regarding this consultation, but any comments you do submit will be considered when determining the final admission arrangements for 2010.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Children's Oral Health in Halton

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To receive the report on Children's Oral Health in Halton recently endorsed by both the Children and Young People, and Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Boards, and support its recommendations

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Executive Board be requested to approve the recommendations contained in 2.1 to 2.3 below**
- (2) Halton and St Helen's PCT should, subject to parental consent and outcomes of the 'Lancashire Trial', support the administering of fluoride varnish to children, to take place in school settings;**
- (3) Halton and St Helen's PCT should take steps to support the take up of dental services by vulnerable young people who may not have regular access to dental services or be registered with a dentist; and**
- (4) The Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board should keep under review the implementation of the Oral Health Strategy.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 On the 27th November 2007 the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board agreed that children and young people's oral health should provide the focus for scrutiny during 2008. The Council's Annual Performance Assessment of services for children and young people Halton reported that "The local authority's performance on oral health is weaker than national and remains an area of development". It recommended that the local authority should "accelerate plans to improve oral health".

3.2 The Oral Health Scrutiny Group was a joint scrutiny topic comprising the following Members from both the Healthy Halton and Children and Young People's Policy Performance Boards: Cllr M Dennett, Cllr P Wallace, Cllr R Gilligan, Cllr E Cargill, Cllr M Lloyd-Jones and Cllr M Horabin.

3.3 It was agreed that the Scrutiny Group would:

Receive and consider evidence presented on the state of children's oral health in the Borough;
Consider the information in relation to statistical neighbours and national and regional benchmarks; and
Consider future strategies for securing improvement

3.4 The Scrutiny Group met on a few occasions and considered evidence presented by Dr K Milsom, Consultant in Dental Public Health, regarding the state of dental health experienced by children and young people in the Borough. Members interrogated the evidence presented. Detailed below is a summary of the Group's findings.

3.5 Dental health in Halton is poor. Using data from epidemiological studies of child dental health we know that in 16 of the 21 electoral wards that comprise Halton Local Authority, dental health of 5-year-olds is worse than the national average. In England, 34% of children aged 5 years have experienced tooth decay, the figure in Halton is 51%, with each Halton 5-year-old having, on average 2 decayed, missing or filled teeth. There are only 4 Halton electoral wards in which the proportion of 5-year-olds with tooth decay is lower than the national average (Beechwood, Birchfield, Daresbury, Farnworth). The position is similar amongst the 12-year-old population. (Appendix 1)

3.6 Detailed dental health data on the adult population is not readily available. However, the decennial adult dental health surveys repeatedly confirm that the Northwest has the worst dental health in England.

3.7 Against this background Halton and St Helens PCT have developed a dental commissioning strategy that aims to:

Reduce population prevalence of dental disease;
Reduce inequalities in dental caries prevalence;
Ensure that access to NHS services for urgent, out of hours and elective care is available for all; and
Ensure evidence based services according to need

3.8 The dental commissioning strategy was accepted by the PCT Board in March 2008 and funding was provided to ensure that key dental health

objectives identified within the strategy were addressed. In 2008-9 The PCT elected to focus on the priority issues:

1. Improving child dental health and reducing dental health inequality
2. Improving access to primary dental care

3.9 Improving child dental health and reducing dental health inequality

- 3.9.1 The Department of Health document *Delivering better Oral health: An evidence-based toolkit for prevention* has identified a number of evidence based interventions that, if implemented, will prevent dental decay in the child population. Of significant importance is the use of fluoride varnish. There is robust evidence to indicate that if fluoride varnish is painted twice/three times per year onto the biting surfaces of teeth, a reduction of 30%-40% in prevalence of tooth decay can be achieved.
- 3.9.2 In 2008, Halton and St Helens PCT are purchasing fluoride varnish for dentists to use in their surgeries and dentists are being asked to apply the varnish three times a year to all children aged 3-17 years. Given that approximately 70% of children attend a dentist on a regular basis, there is an expectation that this primary care based intervention will have a major impact on child dental health.
- 3.9.3 However, thirty per cent of children in Halton do not attend a dentist regularly. Often these children come from communities that have the poorest dental health.
- 3.9.4 Clearly dental practice based initiatives are unable to reach these children and other strategies have to be considered. One possibility is to take the fluoride varnish into the school setting. By applying the fluoride varnish to the teeth of children in schools, the most disadvantaged children in our community will have the opportunity to benefit. The evidence base for this school based intervention is not strong, although a large randomised controlled trial currently ongoing in Lancashire is likely to provide definitive evidence of effectiveness (or otherwise). The results of this study will be known in spring 2009. Health authorities in Scotland have already begun to roll out school based fluoride varnish schemes. Should the research evidence prove school based fluoride varnish to be effective in the school setting, then implementing such programmes would be a priority for Halton and St Helens PCT.
- 3.9.5 In addition to stimulating the use of fluoride varnish, Halton and St Helens PCT is preparing to distribute fluoride toothpaste (1450 ppm) and a tooth brush to every child aged 3-11 years, living within the PCT boundary. It is anticipated that twice yearly distribution will take place

for the next 3 years. Fluoride toothpaste is effective at reducing the prevalence of tooth decay and this initiative, in conjunction the fluoride varnish programme, is expected to have a significant impact on the dental health of local children.

3.10 Improving access to primary dental care

3.10.1 Access to NHS dental care is a major priority both nationally and locally. Whilst only 50%-60% of the population of England attend a dentist on a regular basis, changes to the dental contract in 2006 have put pressure on the NHS primary dental care service, with many of those wishing to secure access to an NHS dentist being unable to do so. Central government recognises the problem and has provided additional funding for PCTs to expand their dental services. Halton and St Helens PCT, as part of its dental commissioning strategy, has well developed plans to increase the number of dentists working locally. These developments have a necessary lead in time, (extra surgeries have to be built and equipped, dentists have to be recruited etc), but the PCT is confident that in 2009, the equivalent of 6 new dentists will be available locally to provide NHS dental care.

3.10.2 The PCT is also currently reviewing the role of the 2 Dental Access Centres (DACs) one in Halton and one in St Helens. The DACs offer an NHS dental service to those that do not wish to seek long term care with a 'High Street' dentist. The service includes relief of pain, dental extractions and simple fillings.

3.10.3 In 2008, the PCT commissioned a piece of work that confirmed that the DACs were seeing and treating disadvantaged groups. Building on this review, a more detailed review of activity has been commissioned, the results of which are expected to pave the way for service developments within the 2 DACs. Whilst it is premature to guess at what the review's outcome will be, there is an expectation that the review will lead to enhanced NHS dental services for the disadvantaged in our community. (On this point it is worth noting, that in another scrutiny topic, focussing upon access to services by homeless young people in the Borough access to dentists has emerged as a recurring theme).

3.11 Halton and St Helens PCT's dental commissioning strategy is the driving force for the improvements in dental health that are needed locally. In its first year, key objectives contained within the strategy have been addressed and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that the expected progress is delivered. The outcomes of interest-improved dental health, reduced dental health inequality and improved access to NHS care are difficult to achieve, yet the PCT is confident that by building its dental commissioning strategy on evidence based intervention, improvements are possible. The strategy is now almost

one year old and will be reviewed over the next 3 months. The review will reflect upon what has been achieved, and what more is required in order to sustain the forward momentum.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None. The Oral Health Strategy has been approved by Halton and St Helen's PCT. The recommendations contained in this scrutiny report would support the implementation of that Strategy.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Parental consent would need to be secured to enable the administering of fluoride varnish to pupils in school settings.

5.2 The recommendations contained in this report should inform the future dental commissioning strategy of the PCT.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Securing good dental health of **all** of the children and young people in Halton would be a positive step in reducing the health inequalities in the Borough.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Reducing poor dental health of all members of the community is a priority contained within the Dental Health Commissioning Strategy for Halton and St Helen's PCT.

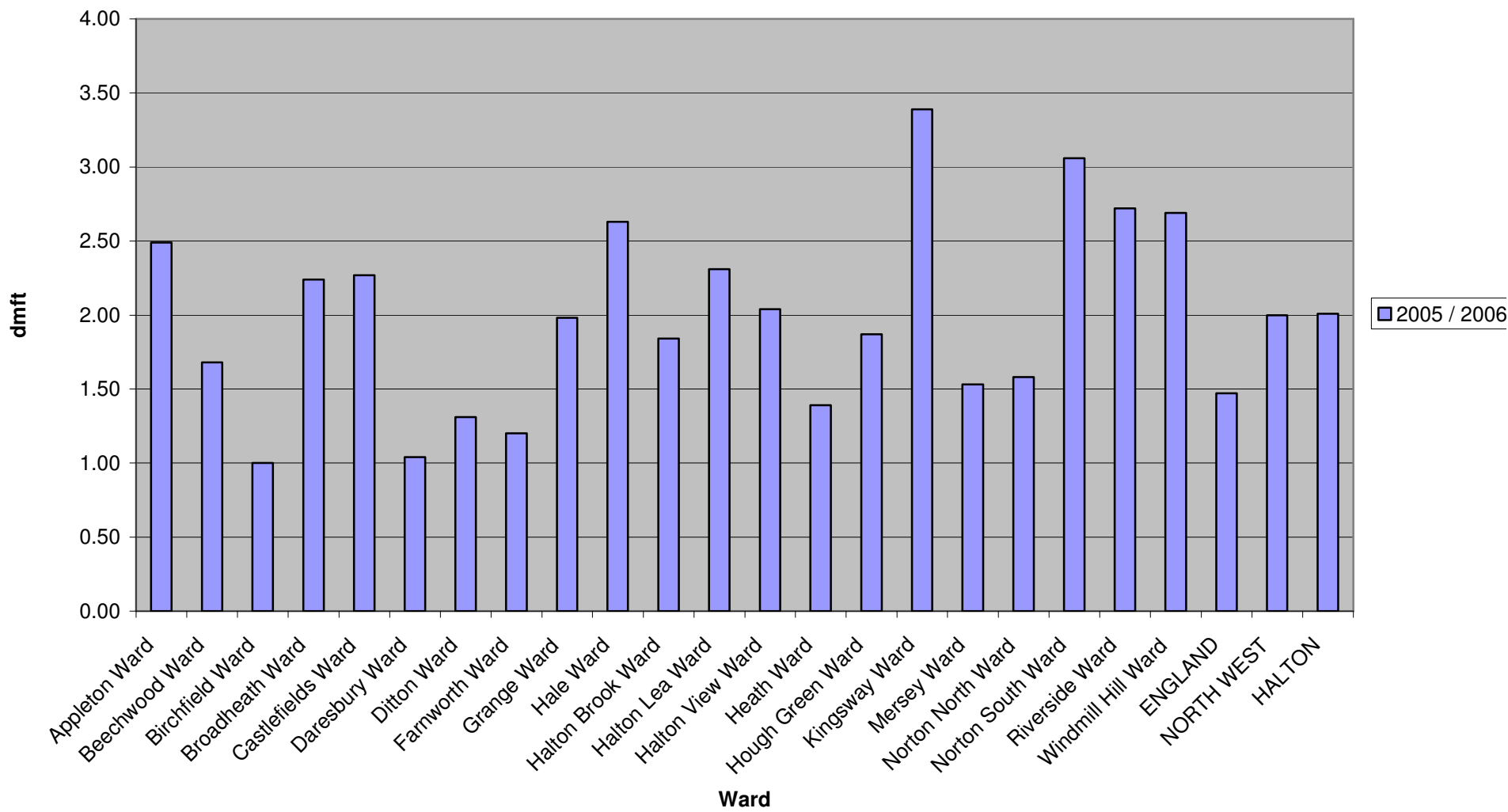
6.4 A Safer Halton

None

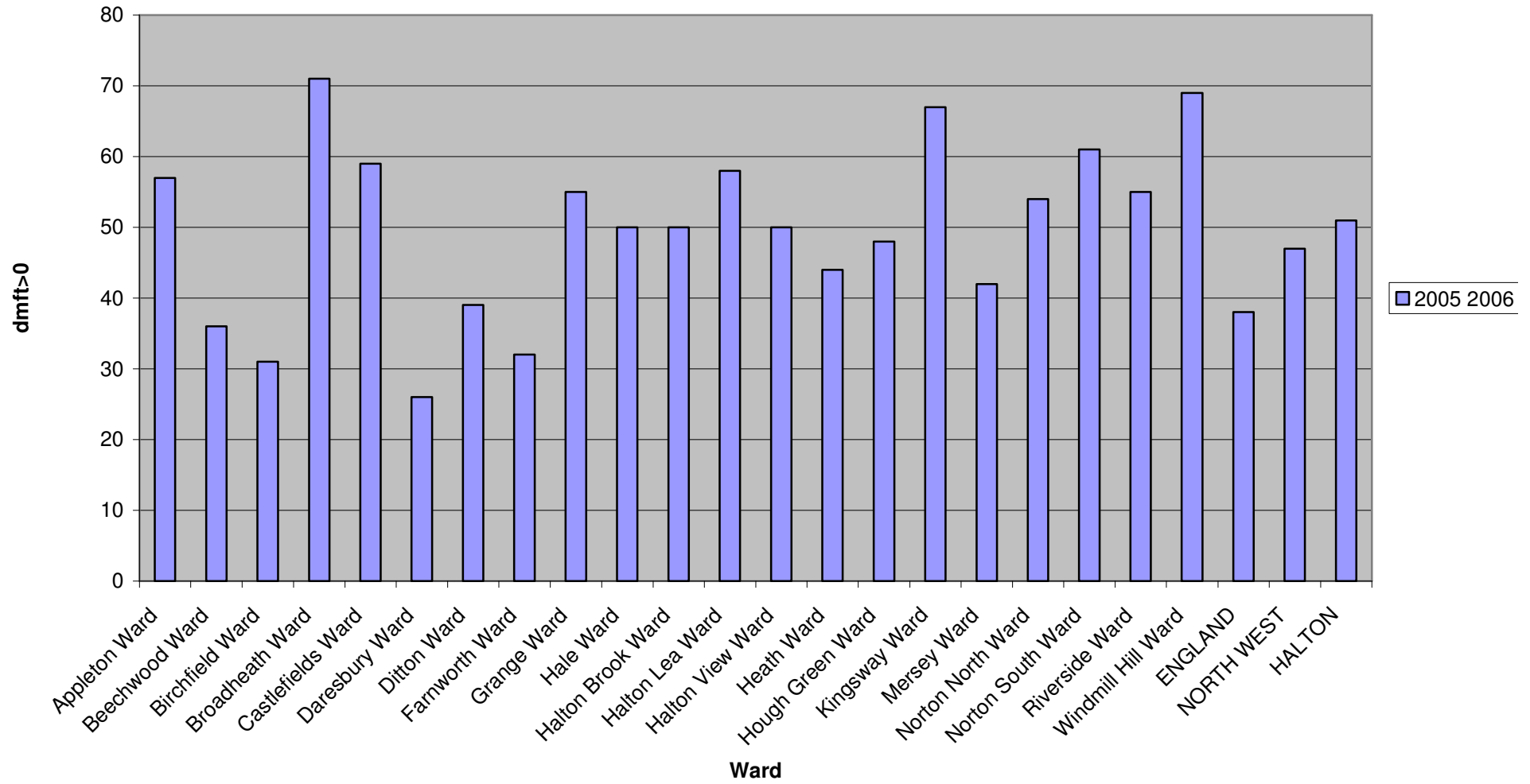
6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

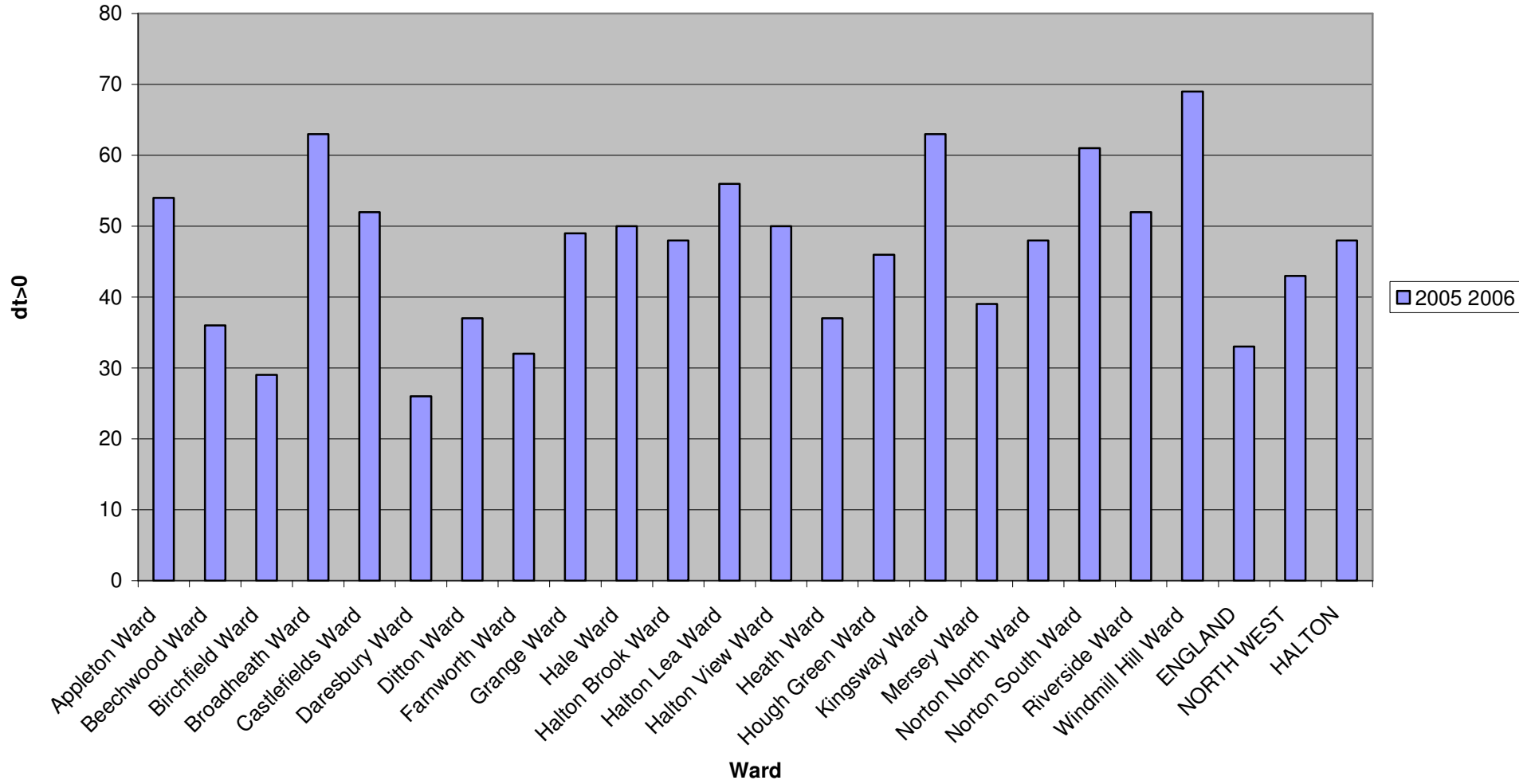
5yr old BASCD survey 2005 / 2006
Mean decay experience (dmft) in Halton by electoral ward



5 year old BASCD survey 2005 / 2006
Proportion of children with decay experience (% dmft>0) in Halton by electoral ward



5yr old BASCD survey 2005 / 2006
Proportion of children with active decay (% dt>0) in Halton by electoral ward



REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Health & Community

SUBJECT: Consultation on Application for NHS Foundation Trust status

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide members of the Halton Executive Board with information on the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust's consultation regarding its application for Foundation Trust status and its organisational proposals.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) **The Executive Board supports the application for Foundation Status and the opportunities this will bring for the people of Halton.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 NHS Foundation Trusts are established under the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards Act) 2003 ('the 2003 Act'). They have grown out of the wider NHS reform programme, offering greater autonomy and freedoms for NHS organisations within a national framework of standards and inspections.

3.2 All NHS Provider Trusts have been tasked with achieving the position at which they can be considered as potential Foundation Trusts. A Foundation Trust is an NHS organisation that operates on the principle of working with its members for public benefit. A Foundation Trust remains part of the NHS and maintains the principles and standards of the NHS, such as delivering services without charge.

3.3 Foundation Trusts are subject to NHS standards, performance measures and inspection processes. Foundation Trusts are overseen by an independent regulator, Monitor, and inspected by the Healthcare Commission (to be replaced by the Care Quality Commission in April 2009), which is the body that ensures that Foundation Trusts meet their obligations.

3.4 NHS Foundation Trusts are:

- accountable to local people, who can become 'members' of the Foundation Trust and be elected to the Council of Members;
- free to retain and build up surpluses that they generate and decide how to use these funds for the benefit of patients, service users and the communities they serve;
- able to borrow from commercial sources within limits set by Monitor;
- able to more easily restructure and modernise in order to increase service capacity and efficiency.

Trusts must be able to demonstrate that they are:

- Legally Constituted
- Financially viable
- Well Governed

3.5 5 Boroughs is now ready to be considered for Foundation Trust status. Significant improvements have been made over the last twelve months in managing our finances and in improving services. During the last year the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust has been successful in achieving Level 2 of the NHS Litigation Authorities' assessment of its ability to manage risk. The Trust is one of only four mental health trusts that have achieved this position. In addition, the Trust's submission for the Annual Health Check was assessed by the Healthcare Commission as achieving a rating of 'Excellent' for the Quality of Services, having been assessed as 'Fair' in the previous year.

3.6 The Trust's consultation document describes its proposals for the future organisational arrangements for governance, which comprises three main components:

- a membership community made up of local people, service users, their carers and staff (enhanced local accountability)
- a Council of Members, comprising elected members of the public and staff along with people appointed from partner organisations and chaired by the Trust's Chairman
- a Board of Directors made up of a Chairman and Non-Executive Directors appointed by the Council of Members, a Chief Executive appointed by the Non-Executive Directors with the approval of the Council of Members and Executive Directors appointed by the Chief Executive and Non-Executive

Directors.

3.7 A copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix 1.

3.8 The Healthy Halton PPB considered the application at its meeting on 10 March 2009 and supported the proposals.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Foundation Trust will be able to have more autonomy in making decisions about how services are provided locally.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Foundation Trusts are accountable to their local membership and the communities they serve. Part of that accountability is the inclusion of nominated representatives of partner organisations on the Council of Members. Representation of Halton Borough Council is included in the Trust's proposals for the construct of the Council of Members.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None identified.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Please see 'Healthy Halton' below.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

In supporting the 5BP's proposal to become an NHS Foundation Trust, this clearly demonstrates the Council's commitment, as a major stakeholder, in recognising the needs of the local community in promoting their health and wellbeing.

Foundation Trust status will mean that the 5BP will involve the local community more in the development of services at Halton Hospital through local people being elected as Governors etc, allow things to get done faster by having greater financial freedom, be able to invest more in local services and secure the long term future of Halton Hospital.

7.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The Trust's proposals provide an opportunity for the Council to be directly involved in the governance of the organisation through its nominated representative in addition to the existing Partnership processes and the Overview and Scrutiny function.

8.2 Foundation status will increase the exposure of the Trust to a competitive market.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 It is a requirement of Foundation Trusts that their membership reflects the demography of the populations they serve. The Trust will actively recruit members, in a targeted manner if this is required, to ensure that its membership is diverse and that opportunity for election to the Council of Members is equitable.

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

None.



shape our future...

Tell us your views
Public consultation document
January 2009

a better view...



This document describes what a Foundation Trust is and why 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust is applying to become one. It explains our plans and describes the improvements that we want to make to deliver even better mental health and learning disability services to the people of the five boroughs of Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington and Wigan, plus those beyond these geographical boundaries who may use our services now and in the future.

It describes how, as a Foundation Trust, we plan to operate and how we will involve local people and become even more accountable to the communities that we serve.

It gives you the information you need about our future plans so that you can give us your feedback.

We want to know what you think about these plans so we are consulting with the public, service users, carers, staff, colleagues from partner organisations and the voluntary sector. The consultation will take place over a twelve week period starting on 26 January 2009 and ending on 19 April 2009.

We are also inviting you to become a member of the future Foundation Trust.



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welcome...

“ The Trust is delighted to be in a position to apply for Foundation Trust status. This position recognises the progress that has been made over the last eighteen months and credit must be given to the hard work and dedication of our staff who constantly strive to make improvements.

We have improved our standing with our service users and partners by being open and straightforward; passionate about our drive to improve mental health services; listening to and acting on the feedback of the experiences of those who need and use them; and doing what we say we will.

This is an exciting time for the Trust and an opportunity for local people to have a say in how our future services are developed.

Becoming a Foundation Trust means that local people can have greater influence in shaping the future of the Trust and helping us to deliver even better services.

Foundation Trusts remain part of the National Health Service (NHS) and are based on the same principles and values of public service. They are, however, run differently, enabling the Trust to respond more readily to the needs of the population it serves. We think that Foundation Trust status will bring real benefits to the people we serve but we need to know what you think of these plans.

It is very important to us that our partners, service users, carers, staff and local communities have the opportunity to get involved and give their views, so we encourage you to respond using our Consultation Response form on page 16 of this document.

We look forward to hearing from you and after the consultation is completed we will make a summary of your comments publicly available via our website. ”



Simon Barber, Chief Executive



Bernard Pilkington, Chairman

who we are...

and what we do

We provide treatment, support and guidance for people of all ages affected by mental ill health, and for people with learning disabilities.

The 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust was established on 1 April 2002.

Our services are mainly provided to people who live in the boroughs of Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington and Wigan. Our services are locally sited, though we also provide some very specialised services that are available to people from all the boroughs.



We believe in providing a better view of mental health – for our service users and carers, our commissioners, our partners, our employees and our communities.

Our services are commissioned mainly by four Primary Care Trust commissioners: NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan, NHS Halton and St Helens, NHS Knowsley and NHS Warrington.

We deliver the majority of our services through integrated teams with our local authority partners. These working arrangements are formally recognised in Partnership Agreements to ensure that our service users receive co-ordinated care and support.

caring

professional

service quality

listening

Some facts and figures

We provide mental health services to a population of 938,005 across our five boroughs.

We provide:

- 290 acute adult in-patient beds
- 16 psychiatric intensive care beds
- 35 low secure beds
- 18 learning disability beds

We also have 49 Community Teams.

We spend approximately £97 million each year providing health and social care services.

Our performance

In the 2008 Annual Health Check, carried out by the Healthcare Commission, we were rated 'Excellent' for the quality of services that we provide. We fully met the three main components:

- the Core Standards set by the Department of Health known as 'Standards for Better Health'
- the existing National Targets
- the new National Targets for Mental Health.

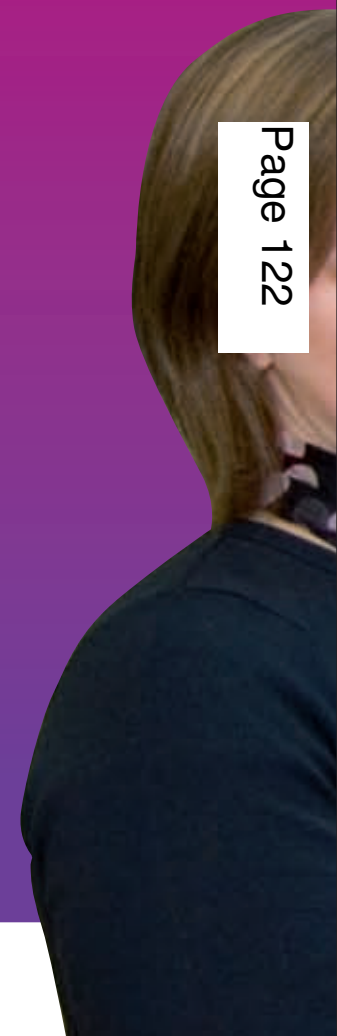
Reports from our service users, based on the National Patients' Survey, conducted independently from the Trust, have shown a marked improvement over the last four years.

Overall in 2008 the Patient Survey shows our service users rate the Trust in the top 20% of mental health trusts nationally.

The Healthcare Commission rated our use of resources (economy, efficiency, and effectiveness) as 'Fair' and said that we were performing 'adequately' with regard to our financial targets for the past four years.

our vision...

Our vision is to be a leading provider of world-class mental health services with a reputation for innovation and excellence.





our vision...

To achieve this vision we have set out the following strategic intent:

1. To be the provider of specialist services in our current boroughs (Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington, and Wigan) and to seek opportunities to further expand our provision catchment.
2. To be the 'provider of choice' for caring for children, adults and older people with a range of psychological and mental health problems and/or learning disabilities.
3. To provide services that are focused on achieving positive outcomes and provide information that demonstrates that the services deliver value for money and are in the top 25% of mental health trusts for quality.
4. To provide services that will support and improve the mental health and well-being of the population we serve.

5. To provide care in the most appropriate and least restrictive setting through partnership working with primary care, local authorities, the independent sector and the criminal justice system.

Our corporate objectives

Our vision and strategic intent is underpinned by a number of corporate objectives which enable us to drive the organisation towards success. A programme of change and improvement is focused on each objective area:

- service delivery and patient experience
- effective and efficient organisation
- service innovation and business development
- engagement and partnership working

- well governed
- financially viable
- organisational development
- workforce management and experience.

Our track record of delivery

We have a significant record of delivery.

We have:

- improved our adult services by moving from an in-patient led service to a community led service model with a recovery focus
- re-designed and re-furbished our in-patient facilities with advice from service users to increase the quality of the environments, increase safety and increase the proportion of single sex accommodation in en-suite rooms

- increased levels of patient satisfaction year on year for the last four years
- introduced a payment scheme to reward our service users and carers who get involved in many areas of the Trust's business, including recruitment panels, Serious Untoward Incident investigations and service improvements.

The experience of successfully managing and growing our services provides a firm basis on which to build our Foundation Trust and continue to develop services over the next five years. All our services will be responsive to the needs of our local communities.

Our key priorities

Access

We will provide simple and quick pathways to enable service users and professionals to access our services. We will direct you to other services where required and provide referral onwards where appropriate.

Quality

We will continue to strive towards excellence through service improvement and redesign to ensure that quality service provision is at the heart of what we do.

Patient experience

We will work with service users and carers to better understand what it is like to receive our care. We will use this information in service redesign and pathway improvement.

Efficiency

We will work to become an efficient organisation with streamlined processes and uncomplicated pathways. We will fight against bureaucracy as an excuse for waste and delay.

Integration

We will work closely with our partners to ensure that our care pathways are delivered in ways that suit our service users rather than our own organisational structures. We will work with partners for mutual rather than individual success.

Value for money

We will achieve sustainable growth in income and add value to the communities we serve. As a Foundation Trust we will make decisions locally in partnership with our service users on how to best use the resources we receive.

what?

The word 'mpats' is written in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font, positioned below the 'what?' text and partially overlapping the blue header bar.

What is a Foundation Trust?

A Foundation Trust is an NHS organisation that operates on the principle of working with its members for public benefit. A Foundation Trust remains part of the NHS and maintains the principles and standards of the NHS, such as delivering services without charge.

Foundation Trusts are subject to NHS standards, performance measures and inspection processes.

They are overseen by an independent regulator, Monitor, and inspected by the Healthcare Commission (to be replaced by the Care Quality Commission from April 2009) which is the body that ensures that Foundation Trusts meet their obligations. The main difference is that a Foundation Trust is run locally, with local people as its members who have a say in how the organisation responds to the specific needs of the population it serves.

A Foundation Trust must continue to meet all the duties and responsibilities required by the NHS, but it does so with the involvement of its members who elect people to sit on its Council of Members.

NHS Foundation Trusts are different in a number of key ways, they:

- are established as public benefit corporations and therefore are governed in a similar way to co-operatives and mutual building societies
- are more accountable to local people who can become members and have a say in how the Trust is governed
- have more freedom to decide their priorities in response to local need
- have greater financial freedom that gives them greater flexibility in how services are provided.

why?

What are the benefits of becoming a Foundation Trust?

Becoming a Foundation Trust will provide a number of benefits. It will:

- enable greater involvement of our local communities and staff in the development of services
- allow the Trust to respond to what local people want and need from their local mental health and learning disability services
- give local freedom to develop enhanced mental health and learning disability services and respond to local priorities
- provide the opportunity for greater financial flexibility
- reduce the burden and bureaucracy of central monitoring while still ensuring high service standards are maintained.

We aim to maximise the benefits of becoming a Foundation Trust and will use this as the key driver to continue improving our services over the next five years. We have been successful in achieving a rating of 'Excellent' for quality of our services in the Annual Health Check, but will continue to improve and develop.



and how?

How will we be governed?

As a Foundation Trust our governance structure will comprise three main components:

- a membership community made up of local people, service users, their carers and staff
- a Council of Members, comprising elected members of the public and staff along with people appointed from partner organisations and chaired by the Trust’s Chairman
- a Board of Directors made up of a Chairman and Non-Executive Directors appointed by the Council of Members, a Chief Executive appointed by the Non-Executive Directors with the approval of the Council of Members and Executive Directors appointed by the Chief Executive and Non-Executive Directors.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors will have responsibility for ensuring that the Trust is properly run, meets the requirements of Monitor (the independent regulator) and provides good services. Initially, its membership will include Executive and Non-Executive Directors who transfer from the current NHS Trust. In the future Non-Executive Directors would be appointed through a panel and approved by the Council of Members.



The Council of Members

We plan to have 48 people in the Council of Members, which will be made up of members of the public and our staff and people who have been nominated by partner organisations. People who are elected to sit on the Council of Members will be called Member Councillors.

Member Councillors will make sure that the views of the community are contributed when the Board of Directors develops strategies and plans for the Trust. They also make sure that the Board carries out what it has agreed to and upholds the Trust’s values.

Member Councillors will give the Board ideas and views from the members they represent on how to provide services that the local community needs. They act as a link between members and the Board of Directors. They let the members know about any changes that

are going to take place and report back to the Board of Directors about what people think.

Member Councillors' responsibilities include:

- appointing the Chairman
- appointing the Non-Executive Directors
- approving the appointment of the Chief Executive
- removing the Chairman and Non-Executive Directors
- agreeing Non-Executive Directors' terms and conditions
- appointing and removing auditors
- receiving the annual report and accounts
- consulting on proposed changes and providing guidance on the future direction of the NHS Foundation Trust.

The following diagram illustrates the proposed make up of the Council of Members.



we're listening...

Consultation process, timetable and response

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust invites you to let us know your views on the proposals regarding our vision and proposed governance arrangements set out in this consultation booklet.

The consultation period runs from Monday 26 January 2009 for twelve weeks to Sunday 19 April 2009.

Details of events will be published on our website www.5boroughspartnership.nhs.uk



Tell us your views

There are several ways in which you can participate in this consultation; options are as follows:

By post

Fill in the opposite consultation questionnaire and return it to us at:

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust
Hollins Park House
Hollins Park
Hollins Lane
Winwick
Warrington
WA2 8WA

If you wish to send more detailed comments you may wish to write to Emma Parkes, Head of Communications at the above address.

By email

Email your comments to communications@5bp.nhs.uk

In person

We will be holding consultation sessions at various events around the boroughs where you may wish to give your comments directly to Trust staff.

Consultation response form
 Please provide your comments on our consultation questions by Sunday 19 April 2009 by tearing out and returning this form. We look forward to receiving your views.

(Please tick Yes or No as applicable to your views)

Q.1 Do you agree with our proposals to become a Foundation Trust?
 Yes No (If No – please state why you do not agree)

Q.2 Do you agree with the proposals for the make up of the Council of Members as part of our governance arrangements?
 Yes No (If No – please state why you do not agree)

Q.3 Do you agree with our proposals regarding the number of public Member Councillors? Yes No (If No – please state why you do not agree)

Q.4 Do you agree with our proposals for the number of staff Member Councillors?
 Yes No (If No – please state why you do not agree)

Q.5 Do you agree with our proposals for Appointed Member Councillors from partner organisations? Yes No (If No – please state why you do not agree)

Q.6 Do you think that our plans for the future will help to improve local services for local people? Yes No (If No – please state why you do not agree)

Any other comments?

.....

About you (Please tick Yes or No as applicable)

Do you live in an area served by the Trust? Yes No

Do you work for the Trust? Yes No

Do you work for one of our partner statutory organisations? Yes No

If you answer yes to either of the following questions, we will need your name and contact information.

I am interested in becoming a member of the Foundation Trust and will return a completed membership form Yes No

I am interested in standing for election as a Member Councillor Yes No

Name:

Address:

.....

Postcode:

Email:

(Please tick your preferred means of contact)

Post Email

Please fold along this line.

A Better View



listen

ready to...

Tell us your views.

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust



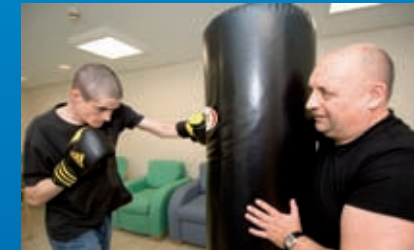
Freepost RSAC-GRCE-LEXC
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust
Warrington
WA2 8WA

“ I truly believe the move towards Foundation Trust status will enable us to successfully manage and grow our range of services over the next five years, whilst achieving our aim that our service users and carers are at the heart of everything we do.

By joining us you can help us to achieve this, we look forward to working with you in the future. ”



Simon Barber, Chief Executive



working together...

Would you like to join us as a member?

Foundation Trusts enable people to play a part in the running of the organisation by becoming members and being involved in and informed of the activities of the Trust. Public membership is open to all residents of the communities we serve aged 14 years and over (with the exception of anyone who has been identified as a 'vexatious complainant' as defined by Trust policy, anyone who has been the subject of official action for acts of violence and aggression or, is registered as a sex offender).

We encourage you to consider becoming a member and getting involved with the Trust so that the diversity of our communities is fully represented. Trust staff will become members unless they choose to opt out.

We hope that you will want to become a member, especially if you or someone you know uses our services, you have an interest in mental health and learning disabilities, and you want to help shape future services and the way that people think about mental health and learning disabilities in the community.

You can get involved as little or as much as you want

Membership is free and means you can:

- become actively involved in the work of the Trust and shape our future plans
- get a better understanding of mental health services
- help to stamp out stigma and discrimination about people who have mental health problems
- elect people to the Council of Members

- stand for election yourself
- make sure that your views and those of your community are heard
- participate in working groups and reference groups regarding development and changes in services
- receive information about the Trust and how it is performing.

To register to become a member, please complete and return the opposite membership application form, or visit our website

www.5boroughspartnership.nhs.uk



Membership application form

General Information

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust is applying for Foundation Trust status. If you would like to become a member please complete the required details below and return the form (Trust staff members do not need to complete an application form). Please note that you must be 14 years or older to become a member.

Thank you for your support.

About you

Title:

Full name:

Date of birth: / /

Address:

.....

.....

Postcode:

Tel no:

Email:

(Please tick your preferred means of contact) Post Email

Ensuring equal access (Please tick the box that indicates your ethnicity)

- | White | Black or Black British | Asian or Asian British | Mixed | Chinese/other ethnic group |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> British | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> White & black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> White & black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to disclose |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed background | |

Do you have a disability?

Yes No

(If you answered yes please indicate your disability and any special needs you have)

Sensory disability Physical disability Mental health problem Learning disability

My alternative support needs are:

.....

.....

.....

Level of engagement with the Trust

(Please tick the box which describes the level of engagement that you would like to have with the Trust)

- Gold** for example receiving regular updates, invitations to workshops and events, information about being a Member Councillor to sit on our Council of Members
- Silver** for example taking part in surveys, commenting on services and plans
- Bronze** for example receiving the newsletter and other updating information

Interested in being a Member Councillor?

Members have the opportunity to elect and to stand for election as Member Councillors who sit on the Trust's Council of Members as part of the way the Trust is organised and managed.

Would you like to know more about the role of a Member Councillor?
Yes No

Are you interested in standing for election as a Member Councillor? (you must be aged 16 or above)
Yes No

Declaration

I would like to become a member of the Foundation Trust, when authorised.

Signed:

Date: / /

You can also complete this form online at www.5boroughpartnership.nhs.uk

Freeport RSAC-GRCE-LEXC
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust
Warrington
WA2 8WA



5 Boroughs Partnership **NHS**
NHS Trust



ready to...

join us?

Membership application form.

A Better View



“ We feel involved in the services offered here, we have a voice and we feel respected. ”

Service User Group

“ I will always be grateful for the help and support you provided to my relative. You were a constant caring presence in their life. ”

Carer

“ I would like to thank my psychiatrist for his continued care of myself. He is very understanding and easy to talk to. ”

Service User

5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust

Hollins Park House

Hollins Park

Hollins Lane

Winwick

Warrington

WA2 8WA

Tel: 01925 664000

Minicom: 01925 664094

Email: communications@5bp.nhs.uk

<http://www.5boroughpartnership.nhs.uk>

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health and Community

SUBJECT: Health & Community Capital Programme 2009/10

WARD(S): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of the likely provisional carry forward to 2009/10, and to seek approval for the draft 2009/10 capital programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board recommend that the Council approve the proposed capital programme for 2009/10 as set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Supporting Information

This report details the provisional outturn for Health & Community's 2008/09 capital programme, the provisional carry forward to 2009/10 and the draft programme for 2009/10. The table below details the 2009/10 allocations from grants.

	£
Provisional Housing Grant	622,000
Disabled Facilities Grant	453,000
Mental Health SCP	101,000
Social Care SCP	60,000
Total	1,236,000
	0

3.2 Appendix 2 details the provisional outturn for Health & Community's 2008/09 capital programme. A further report will be presented to Board when the final outturn is available.

3.3 Unavoidable delays, for example, contractors being delayed on other projects, have caused expenditure to be less than programmed, although it should be noted that some of the schemes were planned over a 2 year period. Details of the individual projects are shown in Appendix 2.

However, of the £825,180 carry forward, £397,000 relates to 2 and 3 year projects due to finish in 2009/10 (Skate Park - £50,000; Multi-Use Games Area - £60,000; Halton Lea Library - £267,000; and Facilities at Runcorn Town Hall - £20,000) and £356,180 is fully committed in 2009/10.

3.4 Appendix 1 details the draft Health & Community capital programme for 2009/10. It should be noted that:-

- the carry forward figures are subject to variations and will not be finalised until year-end.
- at the time of writing, there had been no formal announcement of the 2009/10 housing capital allocation, and therefore an estimated figure has been used in order to get a budget approved in time for the new financial year.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Government, as detailed in 'Our Health Our Care Our Say' (2006), has clear expectations that councils will support vulnerable people by promoting independence and wellbeing. Capital projects detailed in this report support these objectives, and also promote social inclusion through sport and leisure.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications are as set out in the body of the report and Appendices.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Improved housing conditions funded through this programme will benefit any children and young people living in those dwellings, and particularly benefit those who need housing adaptations.

Culture & Leisure schemes provide play opportunities for young people.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Halton Lea Library will promote formal and informal learning opportunities for all.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

DFGs will help the chronically sick and disabled to maintain a better lifestyle at home rather than in residential care, and energy efficiency grants will help vulnerable households with fuel poverty issues.

Culture & Leisure schemes offer sport and recreation opportunities to increase the health and well being in Halton.

Refurbishment at Oakmeadow residential home will improve quality of life for vulnerable adults.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Culture & Leisure schemes provide diversionary activities for young people.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Helping vulnerable individuals to maintain/improve their homes will help minimise the incidence of dilapidated housing that can blight an area.

Runcorn Town Hall Park will improve the green environment

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The allocation for adaptations is anticipated to reduce year-on-year but the demand and complexity will continue to rise.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The proposed programme of work will help tackle the housing problems of some of those in greatest housing need.

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

DOCUMENT	PLACE OF INSPECTION	CONTACT
Executive Board Report Independent Living Services 18 th December 2008	Municipal Building Widnes	Ruth McDonogh 0151 906 4847

Appendix 1 - Health & Community's Draft Capital Programme

Project	Existing 2009/10 Capital Programme	Carry Forward	New Allocation	Total 2009/10
Health & Partnerships				
IT Costs			28,000	28,000
Screened Tip Area - Runcorn Cemetery			25,000	25,000
Headstone Safety Programme	25,000			25,000
Total	25,000		53,000	78,000
Adult Social Care				
PODS utilising DFG		17,000		17,000
ILC Market Garden Canopy			16,000	16,000
Re-design Oakmeadow Phase 2			60,000	60,000
Bridgewater Refurbishment			2,000	2,000
Major Adaptations for Equity Release/Loans Schemes		72,000		72,000
Total	-	89,000	78,000	167,000
Culture & Leisure				
Show Pitches		20,180		20,180
Skate Park	50,000	50,000		100,000
Halton Lea Library Refurbishment HLF	430,000	267,000		697,000
Installation of 5 Multi Use Games Areas	40,000	60,000	100,000	200,000
Installation of Electronic Access Bollards to 6 Parks			66,000	66,000
Dev of Facilities at RTH Park	445,000	20,000		465,000
Improvement to Allotments			65,000	65,000
Total	965,000	483,180	165,000	1,613,180
Housing Strategy				
Housing Grants/Loans		40,000	314,000	354,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	249,000	72,000	365,000	686,000
Joint funding - RSL Adaptations	130,000	137,000	183,000	450,000
Modular Buildings	45,000			45,000
Stair lifts	27,000		93,000	120,000
Traveller Transit Site		1,000		1,000
Energy Promotion			100,000	100,000
Refurbishment of Riverview Gypsy site		3,000		3,000
Contingency			50,000	50,000
Total	451,000	253,000	1,105,000	1,809,000
HEALTH & COMMUNITY 2009/10 TOTAL	1,441,000	825,180	1,401,000	3,667,180

Appendix 2 - Health & Community 2008/09 Capital Programme (Provisional Outturn)

	Revised Capital Programme 2008/09	Projecte d Spend	Requeste d Carry Forward
Health & Partnerships			
Headstone Safety Programme	25,000	25,000	-
Health & Partnerships Total	25,000	25,000	-
Adult Social Care			
Direct Door Access	24,000	24,000	
MH SCE 04/05 - 06/07 Womens Centre	19,000	6,417	
PODS utilising DFG	40,000	23,000	17,000
Re-design Oakmeadow Communal Spaces & Furnishings	72,000	72,000	
Major Adaptations for Equity Release/Loans Schemes	100,000	28,000	72,000
Adult Social Care Total	255,000	153,417	89,000
Culture & Leisure			
Sports Pitches	27,000	6,820	20,180
Skate Park *	50,000	-	50,000
Sports Facilities	30,000	30,000	
Halton Lea Library Refurbishment HLF *	1,140,000	873,000	267,000
Installation of 5 Multi-Use Games Areas **	60,000	-	60,000
Installation of Electronic Access Bollards to 6 Parks	72,000	6,000	66,000
Lewis Carroll HLB	50,000	50,000	
Dev of Facilities at RTH Park *	50,000	29,981	20,000
Improvement to Allotments *	65,000	65,000	
Culture & Leisure Total	1,544,000	1,060,801	483,180
Housing Strategy			
Renovation/Home Repairs Grants	354,000	314,000	40,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,052,000	873,000	209,000
Adaptations Initiative	92,000	92,000	
Homelink	10,000	10,000	
Energy Promotion	100,000	100,000	
Refurbishment of River View - Gypsy Site	55,000	84,000	3,000
Belvedere	-	4,692	
Temporary Travellers Site Runcorn	668,000	623,000	1,000
Housing Strategy Total	2,331,000	2,100,692	253,000
HEALTH & COMMUNITY 2008/09 TOTAL	4,155,000	3,339,910	825,180

Note - The capital programme available for Housing Strategy is £23,000 more than reported to Board in April 2008. The underspend in Housing Strategy £230,000 plus £23,000 = £253,000 (additional carry forward)

* 2 year project due to finish in 2009/10

** 3 year project due to finish in 2009/10

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Health & Community

SUBJECT: Scrutiny Review of Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service

WARDS Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To follow up recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults service, carried out in 2008.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive Board:

- i) endorse the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board, with the exception of 5.4.3 and 5.6.1.**
- ii) Receive a further report on the 2 recommendations identified in 2.0 (i)**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 A review of Halton's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults service was commissioned as a joint scrutiny topic between the Safer Halton and Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Boards, and was carried out during 2008. The full report (with its recommendations highlighted) is attached to this report as Appendix A.

3.2 The Report was commissioned because referrals of alleged abuse of vulnerable adults in the category of "older people" received by Halton Borough Council have risen year on year, with Halton having the highest level of referrals in the North-West. The Boards wished to understand the reasons for this and consider if appropriate procedures were in place to safeguard vulnerable adults.

3.3 The scrutiny review addressed a comprehensive range of safeguarding arrangements, addressing policies, systems and processes and both Policy and Performance Boards have endorsed the recommendations of the scrutiny review.

3.4 The group concluded that although the Halton figure for referrals seemed high in comparison to other local authorities, this could not be relied upon as a true like-with-like comparison and therefore

could not be validated. No evidence was found to suggest that levels of abuse are higher in Halton than other areas.

- 3.5 Currently there is no provision within the existing residential and nursing care contracts for Elected Members to undertake lay assessments of residential and nursing care homes. The Council is currently reviewing its residential and nursing care contracts and it is anticipated that this will provide an opportunity to consider recommendation 5.4.3 “Lay assessment of residential and nursing homes, by Members, be considered, taking into account the necessary protocols, training and resource issues that would arise”. It would appear appropriate therefore to put this recommendation on hold until the Council has consulted with Independent Providers.
- 3.6 Since the final scrutiny report was presented to the Policy and Performance Boards, a number of National reviews and investigations have been undertaken for example, a Review of the Safeguarding Procedures for Adults captured in the “No Secrets” Guidance and Lord Lamings review of the “Baby P” case. Councils anticipate changes to existing guidelines and in this context it is recommended that recommendation 5.6.1 – “Full Council to consider if Member representative on the Safeguarding (Adults) Board would be appropriate”, is put on hold.
- 3.7 Halton Borough Council officers responsible for the safeguarding service have followed up on other recommendations made in the report and progress will be reported within the Annual Report of the Safeguarding Adults Board and updates to the Safer Halton Partnership, as well as the two Policy and Performance Boards.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Regular update reports on safeguarding adults are brought to the Safer Halton Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board’s Annual Report is also brought to the Safer Halton and Healthy Halton PPBs, where Members have the opportunity to question and comment on the local strategy, policy and service provision.
- 4.2 As a member of the Safeguarding Adults Board, an elected member would be required to contribute to debate and decisions about the local strategy for safeguarding vulnerable adults. Members would need to consider the interface between this and their other duties and responsibilities and the possible implications of being part of the decision making process.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Lay assessment of residential and nursing homes, by Members, and the preparation needed should it be possible, would have resource implications.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

None identified.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

These are identified within the Review.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The Scrutiny Review provides a comprehensive overview of the safeguarding vulnerable adults service and actions arising from its recommendations make a significant impact on developments.

6.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Failure to address a range of safeguarding adult issues could expose individuals to abuse.

7.2 The scrutiny report makes recommendations to mitigate risks for vulnerable adults in Halton.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 It is essential that the Council addresses a range of equality issues, in particular those regarding race, gender, sexuality and disability when considering its safeguarding policies.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
No Secrets’ is underpinned by Local Authority Circular [LAC] (2000) 7, which constitutes guidance under section 7 of the Local authority Social Services Act of 1970.	Municipal Building Widnes	Dwayne Johnson Strategic Director Health & Community



*Scrutiny Review of Safeguarding Vulnerable
Adults*

Draft Report
August 2008

CONTENTS

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1.0 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report, as outlined in the initial topic brief, is to:

- Form an understanding of the local data and information as to what that signifies about Halton;
- Examine the effectiveness of the local Adult Protection policies, procedures and processes, including multi-agency working;
- Form an understanding of the outcomes for vulnerable adults following investigations;
- Consider national best practice and research;
- Consider the resources available;
- Agree a set of recommendations for consideration by the Halton Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Partnership Board;
- Consider the Respect and Dignity in Care policy initiatives in relation to adult protection

2.0 Structure of the Report

This report is structured with the introduction, a brief summary of the methodology followed by evidence, analysis with findings/conclusions and recommendations. The annexes include; topic brief and methodology detail.

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Reason the report was commissioned

3.1.1 Referrals of alleged abuse of vulnerable adults in the category of “older people” received by Halton Borough Council (HBC) have risen year on year. Halton has the highest level of referrals out of all North West authorities, and is among the highest in the UK. Without further investigation, this rise in referrals could be a cause for significant concern; therefore the scrutiny review was commissioned. The *Topic Brief* contains further statistical data and general information and can be found at *Annex 1*.

3.1.2 During quarter one of 2007/08, Halton Adult Social Services had 3909 service users with an open package, with 128 referrals of alleged abuse. This equates to 3.65%. This is a 59% rise in referrals over the same period during 2006/07. These figures are also higher than comparator authorities.

3.2 Policy and Performance Boards

This report was commissioned as a joint scrutiny working group between the Safer Halton and Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Boards.

3.3 Membership of the Topic Team

Membership of the Topic Team included:

Members	Officers
Cllr Shaun Osborne – Chair Cllr Pamela Wallace Cllr Ellen Cargill Cllr Peter Murray Cllr Linda Redhead Cllr Kath Loftus	Howard Cockcroft – Operational Director for Culture and Leisure Services Peter Barron – Operational Director for Older People Services Emma Mookerji – Service Development Officer HR

4.0 Methodology Summary

This scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means:

- Monthly meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Interviews with various key members of staff (detail can be found in *Annex 2*);
- Interviews with officers from other organisations who work closely with Halton Borough Council on safeguarding vulnerable adults;
- Documentation and statistical information from internal and national sources (detail can be found in *Annex 2*); and
- Findings from a research project undertaken by the University of Liverpool on “The investigation process into an allegation of abuse from the viewpoint of the service user and/or carer”.

5.0 Evidence (summary of evidence gathered) and Analysis with findings/conclusions

5.1 Performance Monitoring (Statistical data)

- 5.1.1 The interpretation of definitions of referrals of alleged abuse in respect of data collection varies considerably across the country. There is no standard system to record referrals. Halton has a ‘low threshold’ in its interpretation and is diligent with its collection and recording of referrals in general and in terms of categories that other authorities do not record, for example mal-administration of medicines and referrals from

care homes (the category with the highest number of referrals). Numbers also include referrals that, when investigated, show there is no case to answer. Due to this, it was concluded that comparisons across all agencies could not be relied upon to be accurate comparisons.

- 5.1.2 Within the Public Protection Unit (PPU) of Cheshire Police it was noted that in the categories for crime reporting there is no specific category for vulnerable adult abuse (Domestic Violence has it's own category so is recorded separately). There have been 32 cases investigated over the past 12 months, but only 6 that went forward to CPS for advice, mainly due to the lack of sufficient evidence. The PPU only investigate financial abuse cases where the amount in question is over £5,000 (unless it is persistent abuse). The PPU are in the process of developing a more robust Quality Assurance process and safeguards to monitor the outcome of their investigations to seek improvements to the overall outcomes for victims of alleged abuse.
- 5.1.3 Age Concern reiterated that the recording of information across all agencies, both locally and nationally is extremely inconsistent, especially in cases involving older people who may not want to report cases when family members are involved in the abuse. To aid this process, it was suggested that specialists in the form of advocates could be identified to support victims through the process.

Conclusion

The group concluded that although the Halton figure for referrals seemed high in comparison to other local authorities, this could not be relied upon as a true like-with-like comparison and therefore could not be validated. No evidence was found to suggest that levels of abuse are higher in Halton than in other areas.

Recommendations:

- (i) To support the implementation of a national data collection/recording system for all agencies to use and more legislation in place to ensure procedures are compulsory for all agencies involved in safeguarding vulnerable adults;***
- (ii) The Police to complete the development of a Quality Assurance process monitoring the outcomes of their investigations; and***
- (iii) Advocacy support to be considered internally to support victims of alleged abuse through the process.***

5.2 Publicity

- 5.2.1 HBC distributed two publicity leaflets during 2007, in parallel with the basic awareness training that was delivered; "No Secrets – Don't Turn Your Back on Abuse" for the general public and "What to do if you

Suspect Abuse” for workers in the community (the basic awareness training runs every six weeks). The leaflets were distributed to all staff within HBC, along with all provider services. Following this publicity, the referrals rate increased, in particular in older people from within care homes.

- 5.2.2 Halton has had an active policy of encouraging referrals and publicises all the available trigger mechanisms as widely as possible – raising awareness of vulnerable adult abuse and procedures to follow to report allegations.

Conclusion

The group concluded that the timing of the publicity correlated with the increase in referrals for older people and that raising awareness of the procedures had encouraged people to look out for the signs of abuse and report their concerns, which the group highlighted as very positive. The leaflet is a simple, but effective way to create an accessible trigger mechanism for all to use.

Recommendations:

- (i) ***To ensure there are trigger mechanisms in place, regularly distribute the promotional leaflet (in particular to domiciliary agencies) explaining what to look out for in terms of abuse and what steps can then be taken; and***
- (ii) ***Launch and promote the findings from the scrutiny review, including an article in Inside Halton and on the website.***

5.3 Training

- 5.3.1 Basic awareness training in safeguarding vulnerable adults is co-ordinated by Halton social care on a regular rolling programme of training and offered freely to all providers, both domiciliary and residential. The training is delivered in conjunction with the Police. Following the training during 2007, the number of referrals increased. The table below shows which agencies attended from 2006 to 2008.

Attendees 2006 – 07	Attendees 2007 – 08
Halton & District Women’s Aid	Woodcroft
Inglenook (CIC)	Smithy Forge
Creative Support	Creative Support
CIC (Various Locations)	Ferndale Mews
	Ferndale Court
	1st Choice Support Services
	Cartref
	Trewan House
	The Croft
	Beechcroft
	M-Power

	Holly Crest
	Norton Lodge
	William Sutton Homes
	Caring Hands
	Dh Homecare

5.3.2 Currently the delivery of the training only involves HBC and the Police, but it is offered out on a multi-agency basis. To assist with linking up with other agencies in the whole process discussions took place regarding the involvement of Age Concern within the delivery of the training, or other agencies that work closely with HBC.

Conclusion

As with the publicity above, the group concluded that the timing of the training that was directed at provider services correlated with the increase in referrals for older people (in particular from care homes) and that raising awareness of the procedures had encouraged staff to look out for the signs of abuse and report their concerns, which the group highlighted as very positive.

Recommendations:

- (i) ***HBC to continue providing/co-ordinating a rolling programme of basic awareness training in safeguarding vulnerable adults involving both the Police and Age Concern for all agencies and monitoring this training on a regular basis; and***
- (ii) ***HBC to organise specific safeguarding vulnerable adults training for Members through a Seminar Day during 2008/09.***

5.4 Vetting Procedures in Provider Services

5.4.1 Through the monitoring of contracts within the Contracts and Supporting People Team of HBC, specifically in terms of recruitment, evidence of certain documentation is required from independent providers of residential and domiciliary care and processes need to be in place. Within the documentation items such as CRB disclosure, proof of ID, references, etc. are required. When providers use agency workers, these are generally required at short notice, but are still covered under the contract. As well as checking the relevant documentation, the provider also has to be confident about the agency worker going into the home to provide care. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) also inspect the agencies and other bodies regulate them (unless HBC have concerns about an agency, then a spot check would be undertaken).

5.4.2 The contracts team also monitor the level of risk. Monitoring takes place annually, is robust and focuses on areas that may have required

improvements from the previous year. Intelligence is also gathered from family members, Regulation 37 forms and from staff within the home. There are strong links with families and service-users and procedures in place within homes to encourage concerns to be raised in various different ways.

- 5.4.3 The standard contract was last reviewed during 2004 and had specific amendments made in terms of adult protection/safeguarding. The contract is regularly reviewed and updated and is next due to be reviewed during 2009. Safer Recruitment will again be a key feature and procedures will be made more robust.

Conclusion

Having trigger mechanisms readily available within independent care homes, along with robust contract monitoring procedures and documentation checks is very positive in terms of protecting vulnerable adults. Some members of the topic group felt that Members carrying out lay-assessments within residential and nursing homes would be advantageous and assist with the contract monitoring procedures.

Recommendations:

- (i) Lay-assessment of residential and nursing homes by Members be considered, taking into account the necessary protocols, training and resource issues that would arise; and**
- (ii) Ensure the standard contract continues to be regularly reviewed, taking particular note of standards affecting safeguarding of vulnerable adults.**

5.5 Police Protocol

- 5.5.1 Since their establishment at the end of 2006, operational management meetings take place quarterly between HBC and the Police. Through this arrangement, initially a letter of understanding was agreed, setting out the roles and responsibilities of both parties in terms of safeguarding vulnerable adults, which has subsequently been developed into a joint protocol. This has greatly improved communication and joint working, although the Police are extremely keen to work much closer with HBC, but they are limited with their resources with only 1 ½ people dealing with safeguarding vulnerable adults.

- 5.5.2 HBC have also developed a similar protocol with four NHS Trusts, along with a regular meeting forum.

Conclusion

Since the creation of the regular joint meetings with the Police and the development of the joint protocol, good progress with joint working and communication have been made. This is a positive step forward for the

authority, but at times can be frustrated by the limitations of the Police resources resulting in meetings not having Police representation. This could be an area to investigate further in the future.

Recommendation:

- (i) Continue with the regular quarterly operational management meetings, reviewing the Police Protocol on an ongoing and annual basis.***
- (ii) Review the current resource allocation within the Police focussing on safeguarding vulnerable adults.***

5.6 Member Representation on Safeguarding Board

- 5.6.1 The Safeguarding Board is a multi-agency board that meets on a quarterly basis. There is currently no Member representation on the board.

Conclusion

The topic group felt that Member representation was important on a group such as this, especially in light of this scrutiny review.

Recommendation:

- (i) Full Council to consider if Member representation on the Safeguarding Board would be appropriate.***

5.7 Role of Adult Protection Co-ordinator

- 5.7.1 All involved in the scrutiny review valued the role of the adult protection co-ordinator, and felt that this role was paramount to many aspects of safeguarding vulnerable adults including the continued improvement of communications across agencies.

Conclusion

In an ideal world the scrutiny review group felt that the role of co-ordinator could be enhanced further.

Recommendation

- (i) Consider how the staffing structure for safeguarding vulnerable adults could be enhanced at HBC.***

5.8 Dignity in Care

- 5.8.1 During a meeting where the topic group interviewed the Contracts Officer discussions ensued around dignity in care within provider services and how certain situations can cross over into “abuse”. All agreed the vital importance of ensuring the dignity in care agenda was implemented consistently across Halton.

- 5.8.2 The HBC Dignity Board was established during 2008 chaired by Doreen Shotton (first meeting took place on 10th June) and is linked to the Older People's Champion Group.

Conclusion

Dignity in care must be high on the agenda at all times, and it is paramount that it is implemented consistently across all agencies within Halton.

Recommendation

- (i) Monitor the work/success of the Dignity Board.*

5.9 Research Project

- 5.9.1 The University of Liverpool undertook an independent research study on behalf of Halton Borough Council (adult social care) to establish the views and opinions of service users/carers involved in an investigation of alleged abuse and their perspective of the processes used.

- 5.9.2 The group read the executive summary of the research project, along with responses from both HBC and the Police, and noted a number of similarities with the findings of the scrutiny review emerging from the report. For example, in a significant number of interviews the interviewees had stated that advocacy would have been beneficial if it had been available and offered; the training provided by Halton social care is free and judged to be of a very high standard by those receiving it; many service-users, carers and relatives involved in the investigation process frequently had an unrealistic perception of the role, responsibilities and parameters of the Police in the field of Safeguarding Adults, connected with the fact that there is no specific legislative framework in place for vulnerable adults (unlike Child Protection) often makes their task much more difficult.

Conclusion

The similarities within the research report strengthen some of the points highlighted within the scrutiny review report. Having first hand feedback from service-users who have been involved in investigations of allegations of abuse is extraordinary, giving the very sensitive nature of the situations. Halton has been fortunate to have gained this valuable information and must ensure that the recommendations from the research are given full consideration.

Recommendations:

- (i) Support the recommendations within the research project.*

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.0.1 There will be some financial implications to the implementation of all recommendations within this scrutiny review report. A number of recommendations are for services to continue, such as the basic awareness training, distribution of the leaflets, and these will already be budgeted for.
- 6.0.2 Other recommendations, such as the implementation of internal advocacy support and exploring a different staffing structure, would require further investigation, including projected costs, responsibilities, etc.
- 6.0.3 The recommendation in 5.4 for Members to be involved in the lay-assessment of residential and nursing homes would have financial and resource implications for the development of remit, protocols, roles and responsibilities, training for Members, awareness training for all providers so they understood the function/role, etc. If agreed, further work would be required to set out the implications in detail.

Topic Brief

TOPIC TITLE ...ADULT PROTECTION IN HALTON

PPB(s) responsible: ...Safer Halton and Healthy Halton

Officer Leads: Peter Barron - Tel: 3507 and Howard Cockcroft - Tel: 4031

Planned start/end dates September 2007 / March 2008

Target PPB meeting April 2008

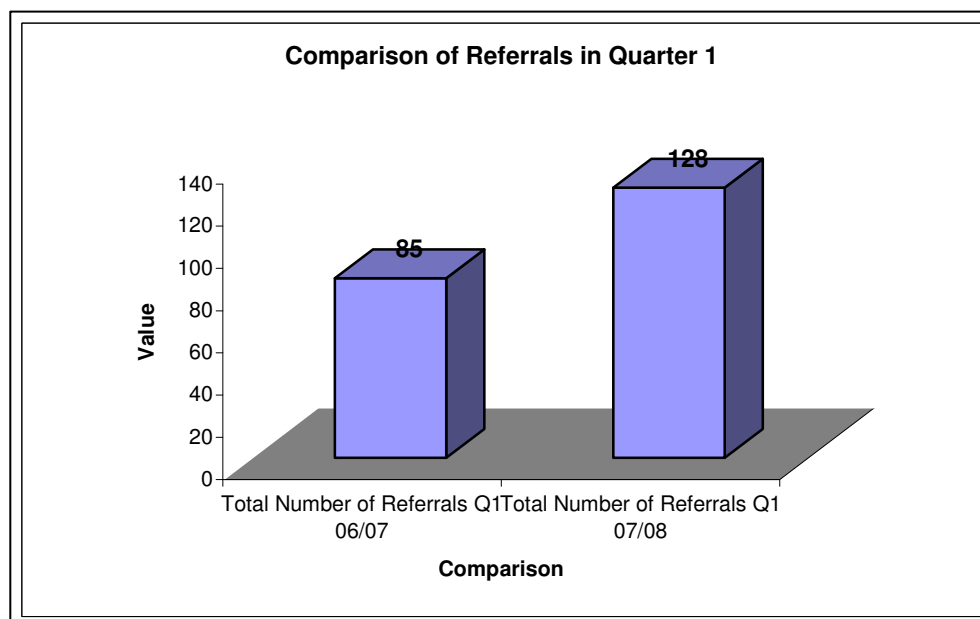
Part I of this template should be completed for ALL topics. Completion and agreement of this brief is designed to ensure that the PPB and the Members and/or officers commissioned to work on the topic are clear from the outset about the issue(s) to be examined, the nature/timing of expected outcomes, and the approach to be taken.

An initial project plan will also be required where an in-depth look at more complex topics requires a project management approach (see Part II). A guidance note is provided.

Topic description and scope

The Health Select Committee Inquiry into elder abuse noted that most abuse remains unreported, as people are 'too frightened, ashamed or embarrassed to speak out'.

Referrals of alleged abuse of vulnerable adults received by Halton Social Services have again risen, a trend that has continued year on year. Quarter 1 of the current fiscal year saw a 59% rise over the same period last year, as follows



3909 service users had an open service package with Halton Adult Social Services during this period, of which the 128 abuse allegation referrals would constitute 3.65%. National prevalence figures suggest a likely rate of 4%, however Halton has the highest level of referrals out of any other North West Local Authority, and is among the highest in the UK.

On the face of it this rise in referrals could be a cause for significant concern. Of course it is not good that there is abuse, but comparable information from the development of child protection, which is several years ahead of the adult agenda, shows that high reporting levels do not necessarily mean higher prevalence and is more a reflection of local action on raising the profile.

Social services have a lead coordination role, but the system is multi-agency and dependent on effective communication and shared understanding as outlined in No Secrets. All agencies retain their own statutory responsibilities.

TARGETS

Why this topic was chosen

The rates of referral in Halton are higher than comparator authorities, in so far as direct comparisons can be made. It is important to understand what this means about either the level of abuse in Halton or the operation of Adult Protection policies and procedures.

Key outputs and outcomes sought

- An understanding of the local data and information as to what that signifies about Halton;
- To examine the effectiveness of the local Adult Protection policies; procedures, and processes, including multi-agency working;
- An understanding of the outcomes for vulnerable adults following investigations;
- Consider national best practice and research;
- Consider the resources available;
- An agreed set of recommendations for consideration by the Halton Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Partnership Board.
- To consider the Respect and Dignity in Care policy initiatives in relation to adult protection.

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

Safer Halton

- Key Objective A: To investigate and tackle the underlying causes of crime and disorder and respond effectively to public concern by reducing crime levels

- Key Objective B: To create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained, safe and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting the priorities of residents
- Key Objective D: To understand and tackle the problem of domestic abuse in all its forms

Healthy Halton

- Key Objective C: To promote a healthy living environment and lifestyles to protect the health of the public, sustain individual good health and well-being, and help prevent and efficiently manage illness

Children and Young People

- Key Objective B: To ensure all children and young people in Halton grow up and thrive in safe environments, communities, homes and families

Nature of expected/desired PPB input

Scrutinise service.

Preferred mode of operation

Joint Scrutiny Working Group between Safer Halton and Healthy Halton PPB, involving secondees from partner agencies and hearing evidence from relevant professionals.

Media/communication implications

There is likely to be some media interest in this topic.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB Chair **Officer**

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

Methodology Detail**a) Interviews Conducted**

The following officers were interviewed as part of this scrutiny review:

Sally Clarke	Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Integration team, Halton Borough Council
John Downes	Divisional Manager Consumer Protection, Halton Borough Council
Peter Barron	Chair of Halton's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Partnership Board and Operational Director Older People Services, Halton Borough Council
Julie Hunt	Adult Protection Co-ordinator, Halton Borough Council
Dwayne Johnson	Chair of the multi-agency Safeguarding Adults National Reference Group, Lead Director for the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services (ADASS) Protection of Vulnerable Adults Committee, and Strategic Director Health and Community Directorate
Mike Andrews	Community Safety Co-ordinator, Community Safety Team, Halton Borough Council
Dawn Kenwright	Halton Age Concern
Benitta Kay	Contracts Officer, Halton Borough Council
Simon Blackwell	Cheshire Police
Nigel Wenham	Detective Inspector, Northern Area Public Protection Unit, Cheshire Police

b) Documents considered and established groups

Current legislation in relation to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults that has been referred to includes:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- “Safeguarding Adults” – National framework of standards for good practice and outcomes in Adult Protection
- “No Secrets” March 2000 – Department of Health and Home Office
- “Better Safe than Sorry – Improving the system that safeguards adults living in care homes” – a bulletin published by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).
- “Working Together to Safeguard Children” – Department of Health, Home Office, DfES 1999.

Local Policies and Procedures include:

- Adult Protection in Halton – Inter-agency Policy, Procedure and Guidance (currently being updated)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Protocol between Halton Borough Council, North Cheshire Hospital NHS Trust, St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust, Halton and St Helens PCT and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust, December 2007
- Protection Of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA) - Referring Current And Ex-Employees For Inclusion Onto The PoVA List (Health and Community Directorate), January 2007

Research

- Safeguarding Adults Research Project – Liverpool University, July 2008
- Cheshire Police response to the above
- HBC response to the above

Established Groups

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Partnership Board (SVAPB)
- Multi-agency Practitioner’s Group
- Various sub-groups and task groups for specific purposes.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Health Strategy &
Strategic Director, Health & Community

SUBJECT: National Support Team for Health Inequalities

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board with the key messages arising from the visit by the National Support Team (NST) for Health Inequalities during the week beginning 9th February 2009. The paper also proposes the next steps that the PCT and its partners need to take in response to the recommendations arising from the visit.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

That the Executive Board:

- i) Receive and comment on the feedback reports from the NST Health Inequalities Team;**
- ii) Approve the next steps in responding to the recommendations as outlined in section 7;**
- iii) Receive a further report in July 2009.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 National Support Teams (NSTs) have, in the past, provided tailored support to local NHS organisations facing the greatest challenge to achieve key delivery areas. The Department of Health determined that such a process may be beneficial for public health, and has set up seven public health NSTs – sexual health, tobacco control, health inequalities, teenage pregnancy, childhood obesity, alcohol harm reduction and infant mortality.

3.2 The NST for Health Inequalities is one of a number of support teams established by the Department of Health to help PCTs and Local Authorities designated as spearhead areas deliver on public health priorities and targets. The NST for Health Inequalities focuses on the public service agreement (PSA) targets aimed at reducing the gap in life expectancy and mortality from the major causes of death.

- 3.3 The Health Inequalities NST offers support to PCTs and local health partnerships in their efforts to reduce inequalities in health and achieve the PSA targets addressing health inequalities as outlined in relevant documents such as Choosing Health, Department of Health national priorities and the NHS Operating Framework for 2007/08.
- 3.4 An NST visit is **not** an audit, nor is it part of performance management; rather it is designed to support the local health economy to improve performance.
- 3.5 The NST seeks to understand the local context and assess barriers to and opportunities for making progress at a population level. While a systematic process of enquiry is employed using frameworks of key questions, these are designed to be free/open and frank discussions rather than formal interviews.
- 3.6 The NST has provided a report, based on the findings of the interviews and the workshops. The report outlines the key strengths of the local health economy, and other areas with potential for improvement. The NST has also identify areas where support can be provided – be this human or, in some cases, a small financial resource.
- 3.7 The visit focused on the Halton & St Helens primary care trust and local authority areas, and took place over four days. A team of reviewing officers conducted a series of one to one interviews with selected individuals from NHS Halton & St Helens, Halton Borough Council, St Helens Council, Warrington & Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, St Helens & Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust. In addition to a Community Engagement Focus Group, they also ran six workshops covering cardiovascular disease (CVD) secondary prevention, Acute CVD & Strokes, Alcohol, Cancer, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Seasonal Excess Deaths. These workshop themes are areas that have been identified nationally as offering the greatest opportunity for change and positive impact on health and life expectancy in the short term. Feedback was provided at a plenary session, and a follow-up meeting is scheduled for June 2009 for reflection and a discussion of proposed actions in response to the findings.

4.0 KEY ISSUES

4.1 Strengths:

The NST team commented that they had found the visit to be a very positive experience and had enjoyed meeting with all the participants. Some of the strengths highlighted in their report include the following:

- Leadership across all partners is committed and

passionate to narrow the gap and reduce health inequalities.

- The NST perceives that there is genuine commitment to partnership across the PCT and the two Boroughs with apparent high levels of trust and willingness to share responsibilities for action. There would appear to be, to a large extent, a shared vision for the area and a good measure of agreement about priorities.
- There are well informed and passionate champions for health inequalities among Elected Members in both LAs.
- The Voluntary Sector is well developed in both Boroughs with good infrastructure support from CVS St. Helens and Voluntary Action Halton. The sector is well represented on both Local Strategic Partnerships and their significant sub-groups.
- The NST has been impressed by the extent to which health inequalities has been brought to the centre of the agenda in the main partnership organisations in Halton and St. Helens and the understanding and passion brought to the subject by the executive leadership.
- Health Inequalities has been identified as a priority in the main vision and planning statements of the key organisations. It runs as a golden thread through the Sustainable Community Strategies, the LAAs, the corporate plans of the LAs and the Commissioning Strategic Plan (CSP) of the PCT.
- The priority for health inequalities has been reinforced through elements of the many consultative processes across the Boroughs.
- As part of the World Class Commissioning assessment process the PCT received two green and an amber rating overall, and has been deemed good in terms of partnership working and governance.
- Warrington & Halton NHS Trust recently turned round a major financial deficit and achieved Foundation Trust status. St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospital NHS Trust is one of few non-Foundation Trusts nationally to achieve “double excellent” assessment from Health Care Commission.
- The 5 Boroughs Partnership Trust (mental health) was also congratulated for engagement of service users in service development.
- At the highest level, there is perceived to be a cadre of strong clinical leaders who engage well with each other and share a common understanding and vision of the wide health and service agenda, including health inequalities.
- The conversion of the Director of Public Health post into the Director of Health Strategy is seen to be an important move. It brings Public Health / Population Health

perspectives and competencies into the centre of the organisational strategic and planning process.

- Examination of the strategic plans has established that there is an excellent basis for addressing the wider determinants of inequality which will impact on mortality in the longer-term. Also, there is the basis of excellent programmes to address middle-term objectives around lifestyle and behavioural issues, which are built on knowledge of the need for systematic and scaled up approaches. The basis for action in the short-term has been established, although some of the detail is still under development.

4.2 It was also recognised that Halton has a good record of community engagement and that the following were identified as good practice by the NST team:

4.2.1 ***Neighbourhood profiles and action plans***

Neighbourhood Management profiles describe neighbourhoods, set baseline, include 6 monthly statistical update and update of facilities and services.

4.2.2 ***Community Consultation***

An active programme of community consultation. Creative and active forms of consultation e.g. 'Praise and Grumble Walks' (Environmental Audits or Neighbourhood Inspections).

4.2.3 ***Staffing for Community Engagement***

Neighbourhood Managers in three areas. Employment and Engagement workers are Working Neighbourhood funded. The PCT has funded Mental Health Community Development workers. Children's services post for engagement with young people. Halton Borough Council Community Development team working across the Borough, youth workers attached to area forums.

4.2.4 ***Neighbourhood Service Centres***

Extended schools have teams who link community groups into schools.

4.2.5 ***Service Organisation for Community Engagement***

Halton Strategic Neighbourhood Management Board is part of the LSP structure including PCT, Police, Fire & Rescue, Adult Social Care, Children and Young People, Environment, Urban Renewal and sits above the 3 Neighbourhood Boards.

5.0 MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The NST has advised that achieving a percentage change in life expectancy can be pursued in three main ways:

5.1.1 *Population Health Level*

Direct input at population level through legislation, regulation, taxation, mass media etc. (eg preventing smoking in enclosed public spaces)

5.1.2 *Personal Health Level (Frontline Services)*

Applying effective personal health interventions (eg. cholesterol management with statins, affordable warmth) so systematically, and at a scale that improvements add up to population level change

5.1.3 *Community Health Level (community engagement)*

Engaging, developing and empowering communities effectively and systematically enough that resulting health improving and health seeking behaviours result in percentage change at population level.

6.0 IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 In general terms, achieving improvement in health inequalities through a combination of these factors will depend on 'the organised efforts of society'. The whole must be driven by committed leadership fostering engagement, effective local strategic partnership, and locally owned, coherent vision and strategy. Interventions must be provided effectively with system and scale by frontline services pro-actively pursuing health outcomes.

6.2 Community development should be addressed in a systematic, rather than ad-hoc approach, targeting engagement and support to the weakest, and least capable of responding alone. A range of processes should connect frontline services into the heart of communities, reaching out to 'seldom seen, seldom heard' groups and individuals.

6.3 Some of the key recommendations in relation to vision and strategy relevant to the Local Authority are that:

1) The two boroughs both have relatively high rates of unemployment. The statutory sector in general employs 30-40 % of the workforce. While there are a number of small schemes which harness the employment potential to address worklessness, the NST would recommend the partnerships develop a much more systematic and scaled-up approach to

exploiting that potential.

- 2) There is a recognition that the CSP at present is regarded largely as an NHS document and efforts should be made to broaden ownership across partnerships. This could be achieved by engaging partners early in the development and implementation phases. It would also help to mainstream within the partnership if Programme Boards from CSP had established links across to the appropriate points in the health partnerships.
- 3) In commissioning and procurement of 3rd sector inputs and activity, the NST would endorse moves towards increased collaborative working, (e.g. between the two local authorities and PCT) – developing common standards and procedures, sharing knowledge about contractor capacity, ensuring bids do not duplicate service provision – all ultimately achievable through a common application process.
- 4) There is a need, as Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) develops, to integrate it better into partnership structures, and to involve the Local Authority.
- 5) There is a perception that within the partnerships overall performance management processes could be strengthened. The development of programme management and delivery planning systems should establish a framework to address this.
- 6) The information within community profiles, which is slightly differently aggregated in the two boroughs currently has not been updated with health information for a significant period. It will be important to use this opportunity to populate community profiles with health data that is meaningful at the level of small populations and relevant to current agendas. The NST can point to good practice in this area.
- 7) The NST recommends the development of a **Health Gain Schedule** for all provider services, making at least tobacco, alcohol and weight management everybody's business. This should involve:
 - key screening questions for frontline staff to use
 - brief intervention training and updates
 - referral pathways
 - an activity monitoring system
- 8) A version of this, as a **Health and Wellbeing Schedule** could also be used by Local Authority commissioners with respect to their providers in relation to the contribution that can be made by front line staff.

- 9) The NST recommends that in the longer term, 'natural neighbourhoods' are used as the building blocks for area-based service delivery. A structure of natural neighbourhoods can be particularly important to:
- Ensure that the geography of service provision does not ignore the perceptual boundaries that have meaning for local residents. This can prevent serious errors in locating community facilities close to a perceptual boundary that residents will not cross.
 - To help service providers to gear their services to local need, i.e. calibrating the intensity of service to the intensity of deprivation, and gearing the mix of services to local need.
- 10) The quality of local Neighbourhood Management work appears to be excellent. However, because there can be serious issues in areas which lie outside the most deprived, the NST supports the thinking that a borough-wide structure for Neighbourhood Management should be an important aim. This will allow the intensity and mix of service provision to then be calibrated to local need.
- 11) There needs to be a clear mechanism for reporting progress against targets to improve health and reduce health inequalities between partner agencies. This should have a clear 'golden thread' from the inequalities strategies, partnership and organisational plans to performance management systems in all organisations.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 A response to the recommendations is being collated, which will include actions to deliver agreed areas for improvement. These will be submitted to the Executive Board by the end of July 2009.
- 7.2 Further workshops on Infant Mortality and Diabetes will be run in April, which may result in further recommendations for local action.
- 7.3 The PCT is proposing to develop its Commissioning Strategic Plan by supplementing it with a cross-cutting "eighth" stream – Health Inequalities 2010, which would be responsible for providing oversight delivery of the systematically applied, and industrially scaled, actions identified in the feedback reports. This would ensure appropriate leadership, timelines and linkages with the other seven CSP streams. Cross partner engagement and leadership will be critical to the delivery of this programme. Particularly important will be the development of the roles of frontline staff and effective care pathways.
- 7.4 It is proposed that the action plan for Health Inequalities 2010

should be owned by the Local Strategic Partnership, and that oversight of delivery should be carried out within the Borough via the Health Specialist Strategic Partnership.

8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Failure to address the Health Inequalities of the Borough will lead to a deterioration in the health needs of individuals living in our communities.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 To be determined after further consideration of the recommendations.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

10.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The feedback makes reference to a wide range of education and prevention work being undertaken with Children & Young People and a local approach needs to be taken to address issues such as under age drinking and obesity.

10.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Reducing the psycho-social and economic impact of depression will enable more people to enter the job market.

10.3 A Healthy Halton

In order to improve health outcomes and to improve people's experience of health services, the Council will continue to work in close partnership with Halton & St Helens PCT and St Helens Council towards the re-shaping and re-direction of health services.

10.4 A Safer Halton

The NST feedback advises that a well co-ordinated, multi-agency approach (Police, PCSO's, Youth Services) would help ensure that vulnerable people are identified early and are provided with advice and support on a range of services.

10.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

11.0 RISK ANALYSIS

11.1 Without concerted effort by the Council and its NHS partners,

patterns of health and equality are likely to continue.

12.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The successful delivery of the outcomes set out in the Health Summit will result in greater consistency of health outcomes across the Borough.

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

None.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health & Community

SUBJECT: Urgent authorisation of extension of Contracts for the provision of Minor Adaptations and Stair Lifts.

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To notify the Board of the decision by the Chief Executive in awarding two contracts as a matter of urgency due to unforeseen circumstances.
- 1.2 To seek authorisation from the Board for further extension of the two contracts in the light of the exceptional circumstances and urgency of the situation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- 1) **It be noted that on 18 March 2009 the Chief Executive under Standing Order 1.7 Procurement Standing Orders authorised:**
- i) **the extension of contractual arrangements with JC Construction Limited until 2 April 2009 in order that a report can be submitted to the Executive Board requesting an extension until 31 March 2010 to enable the Council to complete a competitive tendering exercise for the Minor Adaptations Service contract commencing 1st April 2010.**
 - ii) **the extension of contractual arrangements with Lift Able Ltd until 2 April 2009 in order that a report can be submitted to the Executive requesting an extension until 31 March 2010 to enable the Council to complete a competitive tendering exercise for the stair lift service with the new contract commencing no later than 1 April 2010;**
- 2) **With effect from and including 2 April 2009 and for the purposes of Standing Order 1.6:**
- i) **In the exceptional circumstances – namely the**

need to allow time to explore the extent to which this and other contracts can be combined with other low level preventative services to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness - set out below, Procurement Standing Orders 3.1-3.7 be waived to allow the existing contractual arrangements with JC Construction Limited to be extended until 31 March 2010 in order that during the period of extension the Council is able to complete a competitive tendering exercise for the Minor Adaptations Service contract commencing 1st April 2010;

- ii) In the exceptional circumstances – namely the need to explore and finalise a central purchasing arrangement for this service with Northern Housing Consortium, Procurement Standing Orders 3.1-3.7 be waived to allow the existing contractual arrangements with Lift Able Ltd to be extended until 31 March 2010 so that during the period of extension the Council is able to complete a competitive tendering exercise for the stair lift service with the new contract commencing no later than 1 April 2010;**
- 3) The Operational Director (Older People and Independent Living Services) in consultation with the relevant portfolio-holder be authorised to take such actions in respect of the above contracts as may be necessary to consolidate arrangements with other low level preventative services, to tender and to award the above contracts individually or on a consolidated basis; and**
- 4) In relation to the above it be resolved that these matters require immediate action.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The powers of the Chief Executive have had to be utilised for a period of 48 hours between the contract expiry (31 March 2009) and date of the Board meeting (2 April 2009). This occurred because the Department of Communities and Local Government notification of the successful bids for funding for the Handyperson Service was delayed. In addition it is attributable to capacity issues within the service and the team having to prioritise the domiciliary care and residential care contracts.

4.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF MINOR ADAPTATIONS

- 4.2 A contract for the provision of minor adaptations has existed between Halton Borough Council and JC Construction Limited since April 2006. The awarding of the contract followed a full tendering process and a contract awarded for £52,000 per annum. The contract was due to expire on 31 March 2009.
- 4.3 Since the contract has been in place a responsive service has been provided for disabled people requiring minor adaptations, negating the need to obtain prices for individual jobs and improving service performance for the provision of minor adaptations within 7 days.
- 4.4 The service has provided an average of 1,500 minor adaptations per year at an average unit cost of £35. These include mainly handrails and stair rails but floor fixed toilet frames have also been provided. Some people only require a single minor adaptation but in other cases several pieces of work have been carried out.
- 4.5 Feedback from people using the service has been extremely positive with comments about the speed of provision, the courtesy of the provider, satisfaction with the work carried out and the improvement this has made to independence.
- 4.6 Over the last 3 years, JC Construction Ltd has provided additional services to the value of a maximum of £20,000 per annum. As part of the tendering process the new specification for the provision of minor adaptations will be expanded to provide a more comprehensive service and will include external adaptations such as half steps and external rails.
- 4.7 It is proposed that the new contract will last for a period of 3 years and will offer an option to extend beyond that for a further 2 years, subject to specified outcomes being delivered and specified targets being met.
- 4.8 The cost of the contract for 2009/10 and subsequent years will be met from existing available budgetary provision.
- 4.9 The absence of a contract would delay provision of minor adaptations and have a detrimental impact on service performance.
- 5.0 CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF STAIR LIFTS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE**
- 5.1 A contract for the provision of stair lifts has existed between Halton Borough Council and Lift Able Limited since 1 April 2008. The awarding of the contract followed a full tendering process. The contract was due to expire on 31 March 2009. This contract is on a non-exclusive basis. If required, for flexibility purposes, the Council can go to other suppliers if for example Lift Able are not able to provide a lift.

- 5.2 Since the contract has been in place a responsive, timely service has been provided for disabled people requiring stair lifts. Stair lifts have been removed from the Disabled Facilities Grant process as a result and this has simplified and reduced the time-scales involved in the process for installing stair lifts. This has improved the service for users including those with palliative care needs.
- 5.3 The service has provided 73 stair lifts to date in 2008/09. These have ranged in price from £1,500 to £4,000 depending on complexity. In palliative care cases it has been possible to install stair lifts within 10 days and more complex lifts have taken between 6-8 weeks to install. These figures compare with several months for stair lifts provided through the Disabled Facilities Grant process.
- 5.4 Feedback from people using the service has been positive with comments about the speed of provision and the helpfulness of the Lift Able representative. Initial problems in the early stages of the contract have been resolved and regular monitoring arrangements are in place.
- 5.5 The new specification for the provision of stair lifts will provide the opportunity to consider taking advantage of the framework agreement for the provision of stair lifts that has been negotiated by the Northern Housing Consortium with a number of providers. This would offer greater flexibility and choice.
- 5.6 It is proposed that the new contract will last for a period of 3 years and will offer an option to extend beyond that for a further 2 years, subject to specified outcomes being delivered and specified targets being met.
- 5.7 The cost of the contract for 2009/10 and subsequent years will be met from existing available budgetary provision.
- 5.8 The need to explore and finalise the option of a central purchasing arrangement for this service with Northern Housing Consortium has proved more complex than anticipated as this is a new service developed by the Consortium but one that could lead to improved efficiencies and flexibilities.
- 5.9 The absence of a contract for the provision of stair lifts would result in these being provided through the Disabled Facilities Grant process with the associated delays of that system.

6.0 BUSINESS CASE FOR WAIVING STANDING ORDERS

6.1 Value for Money

The current services having been awarded following full tendering processes represent value for money and are recognised as providing a quality service. However, by undertaking a competitive tendering exercise in 2009 the authority will be retesting the market to ensure continued value for money.

6.2 Transparency

The quality of the services will continue to be reviewed by the Operational Director for Older People and the proposed tender processes will be open to public scrutiny under the Freedom of Information and Local Government Acts. The processes will also be subject to scrutiny by internal audit.

6.3 Propriety and Security

The usual anti-corruption/integrity clauses are built into the contract documents and only staff with a need to know will have information about the contract.

6.4 Accountability

Accountability for the report and recommendations would remain with the relevant Operation Director. The decision is a matter for the Sub-Committee but would appear to be consistent with the Council public stewardship duties in relation to use of resources. The process and paperwork is open to the annual audit process, internal audit and access by other regulatory and enforcement bodies.

6.5 Position of the contracts under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006

The contracts are exempt as their value is below the financial threshold. They remain subject to the fundamental transparency and non-distortion of competition requirements.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Handyperson Service will provide an opportunity to explore the extent to which the development of this service and the contract for the provision of minor adaptations can be combined to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Contract for provision of minor adaptations – The estimated cost of the 12 month extension of the contract for the existing service is £72,000.

8.2 Contract for provision of stair lifts – The estimated cost of the 12 month extension of the contract for the existing service is

£92,000.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

9.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Minor adaptations and stair lifts will continue to be provided for children under these contracts.

9.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None identified.

9.3 A Healthy Halton

Provision of minor adaptations and stair lifts will improve the independence of vulnerable people, enabling them to continue to bathe, improve access within the home, use other facilities safely and reduce the risk of falls.

9.4 A Safer Halton

Provision of minor adaptations and stair lifts will reduce the risk of falls both within and immediately outside the properties of vulnerable people.

9.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

10.0 RISK ANALYSIS

10.1 As more people with increasingly complex needs are enabled to continue to live at home independently there is a risk that the level of service required will expand beyond existing capacity. Monitoring demand will assist in planning for and managing this eventuality.

11.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

11.1 These services will be provided to all service user groups.

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

None

REPORT: Executive Board

DATE: 2 April 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Environment

SUBJECT: Liverpool City Region Transport Governance Review and the Draft Liverpool City Region Multi Area Agreement.

WARDS: Boroughwide

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To report on the current status of the Liverpool City Region Transport Governance Review and the development of the Liverpool City Region Multi Area Agreement (MAA), Transport Platform.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (1) The proposal to engage transport consultants Atkins to carry out the study on Liverpool City Region Transport Governance be endorsed;**
- (2) Members endorse the intention of the Transport Working Group to explore the potential for producing a joint Local transport Plan for Merseyside and Halton i.e. the Liverpool City Region; and**
- (3) Work to continue to develop the draft Liverpool City Region MAA; Platform 4 – ‘Transport for a Growing City Region’ and the ‘Asks’ of Government contained therein, be endorsed.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Liverpool City Region Transport Governance Review

3.1 The Local Transport Act (LTA) was given Royal Assent on the 26th November 2008 and subsequently became the Local Transport Act 2008. The Act is a co-ordinating and enabling Act designed to provide additional powers relating to buses, transport governance and delivery and Road User Charging (RUC).

3.2 On the 9th February 2009, the existing six Passenger Transport Authorities (PTA) in England, were renamed Integrated Transport Authorities (ITA). One such PTA was Merseytravel. At this point, the ITA immediately assumed:

- A duty to take a lead on developing Local Transport Plans (LTP's) rather than doing so jointly with the districts - these now become more flexible documents with no fixed periods for renewal;

- A power to promote well-being equivalent to that given to local authorities by the Local Government Act 2000; and
- A power, jointly with local authorities, to make road charging schemes.

3.3 The ITA can also work with local authorities to put forward proposals to Government to:

- Extend its boundaries;
- Extend its influence over the highway network (subject to Governance review);
- Extend its powers over the local heavy rail network; and
- Change its name.

3.4 The LTA presents new opportunities to English local authorities outside London to improve the governance of transport, and hence to improve the provision of transport and highway services to all who use and depend upon them every day. In reviewing governance arrangements, it is important to consider the broader objectives and priorities for the improvement of the LCR area, in particular, how transport can be planned and managed in a way which best supports sustainable economic growth. The ITA changes will be locally determined to meet local circumstances.

3.5 Halton is now part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) along with Knowsley, Liverpool City, Sefton, St Helens, Wirral and Merseytravel. City Region Leaders agreed to the establishment of a Transport Working Group (TWG) to begin examining potential new governance arrangements for the ITA. A draft Governance Study Brief (Annex 1) has been developed by the TWG, and it is intended that this will be issued to transport consultants Atkins when all necessary approvals are in place.

3.6 The study will be conducted in three stages:

- Stage One – Problem analysis and identification:
 - Current delivery arrangements;
 - Current governance arrangements;
 - Funding;
 - Potential geographic extent of the LCR; and
 - Stage one conclusions and options for stage 2;
- Stage Two – Identification and assessment of options:
 - What is required to achieve the LCR transport objectives? and
 - What governance arrangements follow from this analysis?
- Stage Three – Conclusions and recommendations.

3.7 Work already completed by the Transport Working Group, has identified 7 possible options (the Discussion Model), these include:

- ITA takes existing Merseytravel powers, with Halton Borough Council retaining transport authority powers. Highway and traffic authority powers remain with districts;

- ITA takes existing Merseytravel powers, plus Halton’s transport authority powers. Highway and traffic authority powers remain with districts;
- ITA takes existing Merseytravel powers, plus Halton’s transport authority powers, plus highway and traffic authority powers for whole City Region, but without designated highway network;
- ITA takes existing Merseytravel powers, plus Halton’s transport authority powers, with ITA and districts having highway and traffic authority powers for separate designated highway networks;
- ITA takes existing Merseytravel powers, plus Halton’s transport authority powers, with ITA and districts having traffic authority powers for separate designated highway networks. District councils retain all highway authority powers for their areas;
- ITA takes existing Merseytravel powers, plus Halton’s transport authority powers, plus all highway and traffic authority powers for the whole City Region; and
- ITA takes existing Merseytravel Powers, plus all traffic authority powers for the whole City Region. District Councils retain all highway authority powers for their areas.

The Governance Review may also identify other possible options that would be explored.

3.8 There is a very strong emphasis on wide stakeholder involvement within this process; this will need particularly strong Member engagement.

3.9 Evidence from others suggests that the study, which will be commissioned through the TWG, via Merseytravel, could take up to 2 years to complete from consideration of final recommendations through to implementation.

3.10 As indicated above, issues concerning governance of the LCR are actively under consideration. To help inform this process and with advice from the Department of Transport (DfT), the Transport Working Group has proposed that the Merseyside authorities and Halton will work together to produce a joint Local Transport Plan (LTP3) to ensure that transport issues across the LCR are effectively and efficiently addressed. Members are recommended to note that the Transport Working Group intend to explore the issues and potential for preparing a Joint Local Transport Plan in the future with any final recommendation being brought back to Members for their consideration.

Liverpool City Region MAA

3.11 A LCR Multi Area Agreement (MAA) is in preparation which will create a framework within which the six city region local authorities, Merseytravel (now an ITA), government and its agencies, and other partners can cooperate to deliver improved economic performance.

3.12 The first stage of the MAA incorporating the ‘Story of Place’ and Employment and Skills Platform has been agreed and is now being developed to include Housing, Economic Development and Transport Platforms. The

Transport Platform of the MAA, Platform 4 – ‘Transport for a Growing City Region’, has the following overall aim:

‘Our aim is an efficient and sustainable network that supports the Liverpool City Region’s aspirations across economic growth, skills and employment and housing. In doing this we will seek to assist business and regeneration, reduce our carbon output and provide all members of the community with equal opportunity to access jobs, training and other opportunities.’

3.13 Some very helpful discussions have been held with GONW in developing the MAA. There have been some key messages, over and above our previous guideline not to seek additional funding or promote particular schemes:

1. The MAA should be seen as a ‘something for something’ approach i.e. what can we offer DfT and Government in helping the national and regional agendas.
2. We should pitch our proposals on an ‘ask and offer’ basis i.e. if DfT agree our ‘Ask’ we need to clearly set out what that will mean in terms what we are able to ‘offer’ through better delivery; and
3. DfT has suggested that a very important part of the process was to identify where additional help could come from areas than just Government.

3.14 The MAA proposals are designed to integrate the key LCR priorities with responsibilities for delivering the shared national transport priorities. In particular, it is intended to work with the DfT, to take forward ‘Delivering a Sustainable Transport System’ (DaSTS) which outlines the Government’s five goals for transport, focusing on the challenge of delivering strong economic growth while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

3.15 Finally, the proposals will help to deliver against appropriate Public Service Agreements (PSA) targets, and will link with Local Area Agreements (LAA) to help deliver their transport targets.

3.16 The Transport Platform of the MAA is still in the development stage; however, it is intended for it to be incorporated into the full LCR MAA in early summer. As indicated above key components of the document are the ‘Asks’ of Government, which if agreed, would enable barriers to the implementation of transport strategies to be addressed. In return, the LCR has to indicate what it can offer to enable benefits to be realized. The current proposed Asks are described below:

- **ASK 1- Improving access to employment and opportunities**

Synopsis – Access to employment and education opportunities are essential for the City Region. All evidence supports the view that this is not simply a transport issue and that land use/location choice are critical, as are the policies and funding of key agencies such as DWP through Job Centre Plus.

Summary

Government Departments and its agencies agree to work with the LCR Transport Partnership to facilitate a package of measures to secure a long term planning and funding framework that provides clear equality of opportunity to those without access to private transport.

- 1.1 Government to re-affirm their commitment to accessibility planning and ensure priorities are set out in clear lines of responsibilities for all stakeholders.
- 1.2 To underpin this approach, Government and local partners to map funding streams and timelines and to agree how synergy between different funding streams can be achieved to enable a single accessibility strategy to be offered and delivered
- 1.3 In order to establish long term funding for this approach, the LCR and Government examine the cross sector benefits of transport interventions to create a clear understanding of costs and benefits across the different delivery and funding agents.
- 1.4 Examine clearer guidelines on locational choice at both home and destination.

Offer

- (i) The LCR will build on its position as a Beacon Authority to work with the Accessibility and Equalities Unit to develop proposals for establishing a new national forum on access issues with a view to developing a longer term strategy for improving accessibility.
 - (ii) The LCR will use the new City Region structures, in collaboration with the LSPs, to secure cross sector integration to help deliver stretch targets on accessibility indicators.
- **ASK 2 - Improving capacity and connectivity in the LCR network.**

Synopsis – The geographic location of the LCR means that connectivity to the regional and national networks is critical. Its importance as a major port and centre of an extensive logistics sector reinforces this importance. The LCR have agreed to build on this strength in developing ‘Superport’ as one of its transformational programmes. This is seen as a potential key area in the future economic recovery of the LCR post recession. DaSTS has confirmed this by its recent upgrading of port access to national/international status. Linking with Ask 1 and Ask 3 is

critical and there are concerns about capacity constraints on the local rail network.

Summary

Government Departments and its agencies agree to work with the LCR Transport Partnership to examine and develop improved national, regional and local connectivity, addressing network capacity issues. Government and its agencies agree to the following enabling measures:-

Ask

- 2.1 Extend local rail franchising to cover the LCR and implement Full Local Decision Making for Merseyrail electrics
- 2.2 Full policy and financial commitment to, and delivery of, the Manchester Rail Hub Solution(s) in the Control Period 4 (2009-2014).
- 2.3 Full policy and financial commitment to, and delivery of, the Liverpool City Centre Stations (Central and James Street) Solutions in the Control Period 4 (2009-2014).
- 2.4 Optimising the management and maintenance of the strategic national and local highway network through a package of measures including, enhanced infrastructure and integration of national and LCR highway network Variable Message Signing.
- 2.5 Support the newly designated national port access route by developing short and longer term measures to help strategic access to the Port of Liverpool ,. (This forms part of the transformational Superport project).

Offer

- (i) Improved reliability of the local rail network leading to increased patronage and reduced congestion levels.
- (ii) Improved accessibility to the Port supporting its enhanced role as a Port of national significance.

- ***ASK 3 - Low Carbon Transport City - Reducing emissions and addressing climate change***

Synopsis – Supporting national economic competitiveness and growth whilst reducing transport's carbon dioxide

emissions and tackling climate change is identified in DaSTS as the single greatest challenge facing transport. The LCR Transport Partnership is committed to meeting these twin goals and the requirements of the Climate Change Act and supporting the LCR transformational programme around a low carbon economy. The outcome is clear, but developing the options and most cost-effective solutions is the next stage.

Summary

DfT and its agencies agree to work with and fund the LCR Transport Partnership to examine and develop the options that will deliver the DaSTS challenges of supporting economic growth and tackling climate change.

Ask

- 3.1 Clarify the role of Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) and examine the scope for greater flexibility in using TIF to support wider DaSTS priorities
- 3.2 Designate and fund the City Region as a 'Sustainable City' rolling out the lessons of the 'Sustainable Towns' on a much larger scale. Explore new means of funding smarter choices and put in place an evidence base to support their greater application.
- 3.3 Work with the LCR Freight Quality Partnership to promote further the opportunities for best practice in balancing the needs of freight and communities and examine priority areas for consideration. We will also look to how to incentivise behaviour change and carbon reduction. This is clearly linked as well to Ask 2 and Access to the Port.

Offer

- (i) A modern and innovative approach to a transport network supporting the aims of DaSTS and the LCR carbon economy.
- (ii) Development of a clear evidence base capable of being applied to other large conurbations.

As a package our proposals will deliver:-

A network designed to ensure the efficient movement of people and goods, addressing congestion and accessibility through:-

- (ii) A comprehensive package of measures to ensure that nobody is excluded from the economic and social life of the City region because of lack of transport.

- (iii) A reliable and efficient transport network that supports economic growth and productivity based on an enhanced local rail network responsive to local demands, and able to offer real alternatives to the car.
- (iv) A long term comprehensive package to support the City Region's strengths around the port and logistics.
- (v) A network designed to support the City Regions strengths and priorities based on best practice in addressing transports contribution to climate change, and securing a healthy natural environment for the future

As a package the proposals will deliver:-

A network designed to ensure the efficient movement of people and goods, addressing congestion and accessibility through:-

- (i) A comprehensive package of measures to ensure that nobody is excluded from the economic and social life of the City region because of lack of transport;
- (ii) A reliable and efficient transport network that supports economic growth and productivity based on an enhanced local rail network responsive to local demands, and able to offer real alternatives to the car;
- (iii) A long term comprehensive package to support the City Region's strengths around the port and logistics; and
- (iv) A network designed to support the City Region's strengths and priorities based on best practice in addressing transports contribution to climate change, and securing a healthy natural environment for the future.

3.17 Government Office North West has commented positively on the draft Transport Platform, but has suggested a number of areas that require improvement. These comments are now in the process of being addressed and will inform the next draft of the MAA.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The cost of the Transport Governance Review Study is expected to be in the region of £120,000, £50,000 of which will be funded through the Regional Efficiency and Improvement Partnership (REIP). The remainder is to be covered by each of the six districts and Merseytravel. Halton Borough Council's contribution will be £3100, which will be funded from existing revenue resources.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 There are no risks directly associated with this report. However, in determining LCR Governance arrangements, consideration will be given to any associated risks, at the appropriate time.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 A decision to produce a Joint Local Transport Plan for the LCR area will impact on the development of transport policy in Halton. In addition, decisions taken on the LCR Governance Review could also impact on this area of work and on areas of service delivery. These impacts will be assessed in greater detail in the review.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

As this report is concerned with a review of existing Transport Governance arrangements, and 'Asks' of Government, with all outcomes still to be determined, there are, at this stage, no direct implications for any of the Council's priorities.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 As this report is concerned with a review of existing Transport Governance arrangements, and 'Asks' of Government, with all outcomes still to be determined, there are, at this stage, no direct implications for equality and diversity.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Information held in the Transport Policy and Performance Section, Environmental Services, Rutland House, Halton Lea, Runcorn. Contact Steve Eccles Ext 3127.

ANNEX 1

Final Version
20 March.2009.

Liverpool City Region

Proposed governance review for transport

Study Brief

Introduction

1. The Liverpool City Region, (LCR), wishes to undertake a comprehensive review of current arrangements for the governance and management of its transport functions. This is within the context of the Local Transport Act (LTA), and wider changes being made within the overall governance of the City Region.

The Liverpool City Region

2. This proposal is being issued on behalf of the Merseyside Transport Partnership, (MTP) and Halton Borough Council. The MTP is currently made up of the five Merseyside local authorities, Liverpool City Council and the District Councils of Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral, and Merseytravel, which is the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and Passenger Transport Executive for Merseyside.
3. Both Merseyside and Halton LTP's are rated excellent for both the quality of the current LTP, and for delivery of the first LTP. In addition, acting jointly, the MTP and Halton have been awarded Beacon status for work on accessibility.
4. Although there are two separate LTP's, the MTP and Halton coordinate activities at officer and Member level.
5. This arrangement is mirrored at the wider City Region level, where shadow City Region Cabinet arrangements are now in place. It is proposed that the Cabinet should be formally constituted and operational in Autumn 2009.
6. In January 2009 the City Region signed the first stage of the Multi Area Agreement, (MAA). A second stage, embracing transport, economy and housing will be submitted in June 2009.

The Transport Working Group.

7. The City Region has so far decided that there will be six main Platforms under the Cabinet. Transport is one of these. Within the current arrangements, each portfolio is led by a Cabinet Member supported by a Chief Executive. Under the current shadow arrangements, the transport platform is led by Halton.

8. In anticipation of the Local Transport Bill, City Region Leaders agreed the establishment of a Transport Working Group, (TWG) to begin examining potential new governance arrangements. This is co-Chaired by the Chief Executives of Halton and Merseytravel. The Terms of Reference and Membership of TWG are contained in Annexe One.
9. Beside the two LTP's described above, the TWG has a working draft City Region Transport Vision and Strategy, which has been endorsed by Leaders. It is also taking responsibility for the transport elements of the proposed City Region Multi Area Agreement, (MAA) which is due to be agreed in June 2009.
10. The TWG is the commissioner of this brief and will act as the Steering Group for the work. This is described in greater detail later in this brief. The Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive will act as the partnership's accountable body for contractual purposes.

Work already undertaken.

11. The TWG has undertaken an internal review of possible governance arrangements and has examined emerging proposals from other Metropolitan areas.
12. Leaders have agreed the following as an interim position, pending the full review.
 - (i) An Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) should be established building on the existing PTA.
 - (ii) The ITA to consist of 20 LA Members (18 allocated to the 5 LAs currently members of the PTA as per the current PTA allocations plus two from Halton).
 - (iii) Scrutiny of the ITA would be through the City Region Cabinet and the new LCR Scrutiny Board to be established under the City Region Prospectus. (The LCR Scrutiny Board to consist of elected members from all 6 LA's led by the Scrutiny Chairs from across the LCR – details to be confirmed).
 - (iv) From time to time Stakeholders will be co-opted onto the LCR Scrutiny Panel.

The proposed review

13. The LTA presents new opportunities to English local authorities outside London to improve the governance of transport, and hence to improve the provision of transport services to all who use and depend upon them every day. In considering governance arrangements it is important to base the work on a clear view of the broader objectives and priorities for the improvement of the area. In particular, how transport can be planned and managed in a way which best supports sustainable economic growth.
14. We are determined that new governance arrangements are based firmly on the principle of form following function.

General principles for the review

15. It will be clear from the foregoing that the LCR has made considerable progress in examining potential governance arrangements for transport. In addition new wider governance arrangements for the City Region are well advanced. The starting point for this review is therefore:-
 - (i) The powers contained within the LTA are well understood and do not require any further in depth analysis;
 - (ii) Wider City Region governance arrangements are established and transport's place within those broadly understood;
 - (iii) The Local Authorities and the ITA have produced a range of potential options for detailed examination within the context of i) and ii) above; and
 - (iv) In addition to the particular demands made within this brief, the work should be carried out within the context of the DfT's 'Guidance on Governance Reviews and the Publication of Governance Schemes'.(DfT Dec 2008).

NB In relation to 15 iii) above, the TWG have produced a Discussion Model. This is attached as Annexe Two and is referred to more fully in paragraph 29 below.

16. In setting out the key functions of the review, the over riding concern is to ensure that it is acknowledged as independent and transparent, and that its findings will be examined by a broad range of stakeholders. It is therefore critical that a step by step process establishes a knowledge base for final decision making. We will expect a clear framework for consultation to be set out at the earliest stage of the review. This should take account of the DfT guidance and any subsequent discussions with DfT and GONW on likely requirements in this area.
17. The Review should take the draft LCR Transport Vision and Strategy, along with the emerging MAA, and ensure a 'read across' between the two sets of proposals. The Liverpool City Region Development Plan

and Merseyside Action Plan are additional strategic frameworks that need to be taken account of in undertaking the Review.

Proposed phasing of the Review

18. The proposal is broken down into three stages identified in the DfT guidance.
- Stage One: problem analysis and identification of objectives
 - Stage Two: identification and assessment of options
 - Stage Three: conclusions and recommendations

Stage One - problem analysis and identification of objectives

The LCR context.

19. This phase will establish a clear understanding of the context for transport within the LCR. It will affirm the aims and objectives for transport within the context of :-
- (i) The LTP's and Progress Reports
 - (ii) Draft LCR Transport Vision and Strategy
 - (iii) LCR Development Plan and Merseyside Action Plan,
 - (iv) MAA, and LAAs
 - (v) North West Operational Programme
 - (vi) National priorities;
 - (vii) Regional strategies does this include Northern Way?
 - (viii) Future challenges emerging from guidance on LTP3, 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System,' (DaSTS) Regional Strategy and other relevant guidance or legislation.
 - (ix) The Merseytravel Best Value Performance Plan.

Current delivery arrangements

20. This will examine the current delivery arrangements for implementation of policy and programmes taking account of;-
- (i) The respective responsibilities of the ITA/PTE and LA's.
 - (ii) The existing situation in Halton which is a single transport authority covering all aspects of transport.
 - (iii) How the current provision of two LTP's impacts on serving a single LCR.
 - (iv) The strengths and weaknesses of delivering transport, highway and traffic functions/services via the different authorities.
 - (v) Examine the links between transport and land use planning and the current divisions in responsibilities and potential weaknesses in the Merseyside system, as opposed to the perceived strength of the unitary system in Halton.

21. At this stage there should be an acknowledgement of the issues surrounding the possible extension of ITA/PTE operations into Halton.
22. A particular concern in this element of the work will be to address the issue of the current 'excellent' status of the two LTP's and clearly establish the rationale for any change given that status.

Current governance arrangements

23. This phase will examine the current arrangements for managing policy and implementation it will examine;
 - (i) The current operational structure of Merseytravel, taking account of the responsibilities of the ITA and PTE;
 - (ii) Current operational structures of the Merseyside local authorities in terms of transport responsibilities
 - (iii) The current operational structure of Halton taking account of its responsibilities as a joint highways and transport authority:
 - (iv) Taking account of the above the respective roles of the ITA, PTE and LA's in policy, planning and implementation.
 - (v) Current joint working arrangements including the role of the Local Transport Plan Coordination Group, (LTPCG) and Merseyside Strategic Transport and Engineering Group, (MSTEG).
 - (vi) The relationship of the transport management arrangements to the wider City Region LA structure including Regeneration, Chief Executives, and shadow City Region Cabinet.
 - (vii) The relationship with wider City Region bodies such as the Sub Regional Partnership, (SRP), Local Strategic Partnerships, (LSP) and regional bodies;
 - (viii) The role of the Merseyside Strategic Transportation and Planning Committee, (MSTPC) in relation to the above.
 - (ix) The role of other key stakeholders involved in both the maintenance of the asset and use of the asset including
 - Improvement of the asset – public realm
 - Management of the asset - road safety; NRSWA; Highways Development Control, (DC); Traffic Management events/ co-ordination; parking; co-ordinating utilities work.
 - Use of the asset – Bus operators; rail- Merseyrail and national; Highways Agency, (HA Airport; Port and; freight.)

- (x) It must also consider connectivity/linkages with other policy areas including, housing; planning; quality of life (neighbourhoods agenda and quality of life); economic growth; and, health.

Funding

- 24. Within the context of wider considerations, current transport funding arrangements, for both capital and revenue in terms of accountability and funding flows should be examined. Account must also be taken of proposals for the Integrated Transport and Maintenance blocks to become part of the Regional Funding Allocation, (RFA), and what these arrangements may have on any proposals arising from this review.

Potential geographic extent of the LCR.

- 25. Account should be taken of possible extensions to the current LCR boundaries into Cheshire, Lancashire and potentially, having influence over LCR's travel to work area, extending into North East Wales. We would anticipate discussion on these issues being evidenced by current travel to work patterns in the LCR. In the first instance possible extensions should be confined to consideration of LA's invited to be associate members of the LCR, Cabinet Details are contained within Annexe Two.

Stage One Conclusions and options for stage two.

- 26. Completion of the four phases identified above will mark the completion of Stage One. Discussion and decisions reached on issues identified in this stage will form the platform for Stage Two.
- 27. Stage One will have:-
 - (i) Gained a full understanding of current governance and delivery mechanisms, including those between the transport sector and wider LCR structures and governance;
 - (ii) Identified the key LCR priorities,
 - (iii) Identified strengths of the current system;
 - (iv) Identified weaknesses where the system can be improved;
 - (v) Against this analysis, recommend a set of prioritised objectives against which proposals for change may be evaluated to ensure transport delivers against LCR requirements.
 - (vi) Make recommendations for Stage Two that set out the critical features that revised governance arrangements will deliver.
- 28. Debate and agreement at this stage, with a wide range of stakeholders will be crucial in determining the next stage.

Stage Two - Identification and assessment of options.

What is required to achieve the LCR transport objectives.

29. Stage one will have established the agreed transport objectives and the context within the wider LCR priorities. As well as the strengths and weaknesses of the current methods of transport delivery this phase examines the best ways to plan, manage and implement transport strategy, policy and plans. This will require analysis of both governance and support structures. It will examine the options already identified in the Discussion Model and set these alongside the objectives identified from Stage One.
30. A clear analysis of how each option performs in terms of meeting the objectives agreed in Stage One will be required. This will include a detailed assessment of costs associated with each, taking account of the most effective support systems required for each option.
31. Examination of the possible role of the ITA becoming Highway Authority and an assessment of the implications that this could have in relation to the land use planning system. Conversely, this should also assess the land use planning implications of the ITA's transport powers passing to the district councils or to (an) alternative body(ies). This element should also assess the value of the ITA's "power of direction" provision outlined within the LTA, from both an infrastructure planning potential and a planning development control perspective.
32. Depending on examination of issues such as the potential geographic reach of the LCR, recommendations on a phased or incremental approach may be required. This will also apply to the form of the ITA set out below.
33. Stakeholder debate will be required throughout this stage.

What governance arrangements follow from this analysis.

34. Based on analysis set out above, this phase examines the preferred options for the form, membership and constitution of the ITA. This should take account of any need for an incremental approach based around possible future changes in area covered.
35. This phase will need to take account of the developing wider City Region governance and requirements emerging from the City Region Cabinet. The relationship between the ITA and City Region Cabinet, and other City Region Boards must be clearly examined and clear lines of authority and communication established.
36. The review must take account of the proposals to facilitate more formal sub -regional collaboration through the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill, (LDEDC); this provides the means to establish a formal Economic Prosperity Board, (EPB), The shadow City Region Cabinet have indicated that they wish pursue a model of statutory sub-regional governance. The potential implications for this in terms of the ITA should be examined.
37. The role of scrutiny within this framework will be important. Particular reference to the current role of MSTPC will be needed at this stage.

38. There will be a particular need to examine any implications arising from the Merseyside MAA. This will not relate solely to the final set of proposals that may be set out in the MAA, but also the lessons learned from the overall MAA process, in terms of how transport at the City Region level can best be stitched into the wider policy agenda, at a working level, and at City Region Board level. This will need to take account of the responsibilities of the other Boards in terms of ensuring transport implications of their proposals are accurately reflected.
39. In examining the above, account must be taken of the prospects set out in the SNR and reiterated in the letter from Government sent on 22 December, 2008, ' *Pre Budget Report: City Regions*', setting out the criteria, for the establishment of Economic Prosperity Boards, for the City Region. This proposition holds out the possibility of such a body absorbing the ITA's role and responsibilities. Full details of this and the City Region response are attached as Annexe Three.
40. The Review must take full account of the implications of these proposals and offer recommendations in terms of future transport governance. This is a critical stage of the Review, and close adherence to the DfT guidance is required. In particular we would expect the following:-
 - (i) The implications of the ITA taking responsibility for developing policies and planning leading to LTP3 –The DfT Guidance paragraph 5.33 notes the 'statutory duty' to implement the policies of the ITA. We will require a full understanding as to the best means to make this happen in practice. There are two particular implications that will need examination:-
 - (a) There are currently two LTP's covering the City Region. Although there is an acceptance in principle of the advantages of a single LTP, the possible continuation of a separate LTP for Halton will need to be considered, including the working relationships with the ITA; and
 - (b) There will need to be an in depth examination of the working arrangements between the ITA and the Highways Authority in areas such as the duties and responsibilities under the Traffic Management Act, (TMA), and how strategic networks may be defined and managed.
 - (ii) Within this context, the possible advantages of implementing proposals contained within paragraph 5.43 and 5.44 must be examined.
 - (iii) It follows that a critical examination of delivery of the ITA's proposals must also take account of the respective roles of the ITA and its PTE, as set out in paragraph 5.22 and 5.23 of the guidance. Issues arising from the District Audit report relating to the Merseyside report on the Merseytram governance arrangements will need to be taken account of here

41. This detailed analysis will lead to clear recommendations on the proposed constitutional arrangements for the ITA. The review must also identify those recommendations for which it looks likely there will be a requirement for changes in legislation, and for which early engagement with the DfT is advised.
42. There will also be a need for recommendations for support and staffing arrangements, taking account of the analysis carried out above. The overall costs of options must be clearly spelt out.

Stage Two – conclusions and options for Stage Three

43. The end of this stage will:-
 - (i) Provide a detailed assessment of best forms of delivery;
 - (ii) Based on the above a clear assessment of the best form for the ITA; and
 - (iii) Provide clear costs and benefits for the options chosen.
44. Further stakeholder engagement will be required at this stage.

Stage Three – Conclusions and recommendations

45. This stage provides a final set of recommendations with full costs and benefits.

Stakeholder engagement

46. Extensive stakeholder engagement will be required. The DfT will produce guidance on this and this will be used to better inform this element of the work.

Timescales

47. There is a working assumption of 3 months per Stage. Within Stage One we anticipate agreement on the overall scope and structure of the review to be completed within the first two weeks.
48. There is a very strong emphasis on wide stakeholder involvement within this process; this will need particularly strong Member engagement. It is recognised that this requirement may well influence overall timescales and the timing of particular stages of the review. We would expect the Consultants experience from elsewhere to guide assumptions on likely timescales, and for early warning of potential delays during the Review itself.
49. However, TWG are anxious that the Review is completed as quickly as possible, and ideally by the end of 2009.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted