

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 19 November 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

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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) GAMBLING ACT 2005 POLICY STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY	1 - 19
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*Please contact Angela Scott on 0151 471 7529 or
Angela.scott@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 3 December 2009*

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

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 November 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Council Solicitor

SUBJECT: Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Gambling Policy

WARDS: Borough wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To recommend the Council to adopt the statement of gambling policy attached to this report.

2. RECOMMENDED: That the Council be recommended to adopt the statement of gambling policy attached to this report.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Under section 349 Gambling Act 2005 the Council is required to adopt a three-year licensing policy. Such policies are known as statements of principles or, more commonly, statements of gambling policy

3.2 At its meeting held on 9th September 2009 the Executive Board approved a draft statement of gambling policy for consultation.

3.3 A public consultation exercise was then undertaken in respect of the draft statement. The consultation period ended on 16th October 2009.

3.4 A Response was received from The British Beer and Pub Association only. The response was stated to be supported by (1) BII the professional body for the licence retail sector (2) the ALMR, the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers which represents the interests of smaller independent companies within licensed retailing and (3) FLVA the Federation of Licensed Victuallers Association which represents self employed licensees in England. However none of the above organisations have written to confirm this or made separate representations.

3.5 The relevant elements of the response to the consultation exercise is summarised in Appendix 1 to this report. The response contained a number of other points which were not relevant to the Statement of Gambling Policy but which have been noted.

3.6 No changes to the draft statement (attached as Appendix 2) are proposed as a result of the consultation exercise.

3.7 Under the Gambling Act 2005 the statement of Gambling policy must be adopted by full Council (on 17th December 2009) and then advertised in the local press. All statements must be in place by the end of January 2010.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Once adopted, the statement of gambling policy will be used by applicants and the Regulatory Committee in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

N/A

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

N/A

6.3 A Healthy Halton

N/A

6.4 A Safer Halton

N/A

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

N/A

7. RISK ANALYSIS

N/A

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

N/A

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

9.1 This report is based on the Gambling Act 2005 and statutory registers held by the Council. In addition the DCMS and LACORS web-sites have provided background information.

Statement of Gambling Policy reply

British Beer and Pub Association

Apart from background information the following specific points were made

Request 1: Grant of additional permits

While there is no actual requirement under the Gambling Act 2005 for machines to be sited in the bar, we believe that supervision of machines is very important and this is again reinforced by our Code of Practice and staff training. Under the new regime when operators apply for additional machine permits and they are complying with the Gambling Commission Code of Practice (which will of course replace the BBPA Code) there is no reason why these should not be granted. It would be helpful if the Statement of Principles could reflect this.

Reply 1: The wording of this representation is rather unclear but it seems to be asking for automatic grant of additional permits provided that the applicants complied with the Commission code of Practice. The existing wording in Part C Section 2 of the Statement of Gambling Policy states that permits in addition to the automatic entitlement limits will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The choice is therefore for automatic grant or maintain the current position of dealing with applications on a case by case basis. It is not considered that the representation has made out a sufficient justification to alter the current position.

Request 2: Application procedures for more than two machines

The Association would welcome the inclusion in the policy of an outline of the application procedures for permits for more than two machines. We understand that some Council's are taking the view that they will grant up to four machine permits without the need for a hearing. We support such an approach in the interests of reduced administration and bureaucracy for both Councils and applicants and would encourage you to consider this possibility.

Reply 2 This representation was also made 3 years ago when the first Statement was being considered. In practice most licensed premises have restricted themselves to the automatic entitlement to 2 machines or only going as high as 3. As such no problem has been identified. The way that the representation has been worded is that they request that all applications not exceeding 6 machines (ie the two automatic entitled plus a further four machines) be dealt with under delegated powers and that this be set out in the Statement of Gambling Policy. The system adopted in Halton is that any number of machines may be granted under delegated powers but any refusal must be dealt with by the Regulatory Committee. This is felt to be a much more satisfactory arrangement. Depending on the layout of the premises it is quite possible that 6 machines would normally be considered to be

unacceptable. Nevertheless it is not appropriate to impose rigid rules on this. The current position is therefore more flexible than that being requested.

APPENDIX 2

Halton Borough Council STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY Gambling Act 2005

Approved by Halton Borough
Council on (Minute)

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PART A

1. The Licensing Objectives

In exercising most of their functions under the Gambling Act 2005, licensing authorities must have regard to the licensing objectives as set out in section 1 of the Act. The licensing objectives are:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling

It should be noted that the Gambling Commission has stated: "The requirement in relation to children is explicitly to protect them from being harmed or exploited by gambling".

2. Introduction

Halton Borough Council ("the Council") is situated in the County of Halton and is a Unitary Authority. Halton Borough comprises the towns of Widnes and Runcorn and surrounding villages of Hale, Daresbury, Moore, and Preston Brook. It is predominantly an urban area with a population of 118,208 (2001 Census).

Licensing authorities are required by the Gambling Act 2005 to publish a statement of the principles which they proposed to apply when exercising their functions. This statement must be published at least every three years. The statement must also be reviewed from "time to time" and the any amended parts re-consulted upon. The statement must be then re-published.

The Council consulted upon this policy statement before finalising and publishing it. A list of the persons we consulted is provided below. It should

be noted that comments were also received from a number of other persons who were not individually consulted but we have not listed all of these.

The Gambling Act requires that the following parties are consulted by Licensing Authorities:

- The Chief Officer of Police
- One or more persons who appear to the authority represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority's area
- One or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under the Gambling Act 2005

List of persons this authority consulted:

- Cheshire Constabulary
- Halton Borough Council Children & Young People Directorate
- Halton Borough Council Health & Community Directorate
- The Bingo Association
- Association of British Bookmakers
- British Amusement Catering Association
- Responsibility in Gambling Trust (U.K.)
- GamCare
- The general public through local advertisement and the Council's website
- Showboat Unit 29-33a Forest Walk Halton Lea Runcorn

It should be noted that this policy statement will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application, or apply for a review of a licence, as each will be considered on its own merits and according to the statutory requirements of the Gambling Act 2005.

3. Declaration

In producing this licensing policy statement, this licensing authority declares that it has had regard to the licensing objectives of the Gambling Act 2005, the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, and any responses from those consulted on the policy statement.

4. Responsible Authorities

The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under Section 157(h) of the Act to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm. The principles are:

- the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the licensing authority's area
- the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group etc

The Council designates the Halton Borough Council Children & Young People Directorate for this purpose.

The contact details of all the Responsible Bodies under the Gambling Act 2005 are available from Legal Services Licensing Section

5. Interested parties

Interested parties can make representations about licence applications, or apply for a review of an existing licence. These parties are defined in the Gambling Act 2005 as follows:

“For the purposes of this Part a person is an interested party in relation to an application for or in respect of a premises licence if, in the opinion of the licensing authority which issues the licence or to which the applications is made, the person-

- a) lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be

affected by the authorities activities,

- b) has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities, or
- c) represents persons who satisfy paragraph (a) or (b)”

The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Gambling Act 2005 to determine whether a person is an interested party. The principles are:

Each case will be decided upon its merits. The Council will not apply a rigid rule to its decision making. It will consider the examples of considerations provided in the Gambling Commission's Guidance to local authorities. Note that decisions though on Premises Licences must be “in accordance” with Gambling Commission Guidance.

The Gambling Commission has recommended that the licensing authority states that interested parties include trade associations and trade unions, and residents' and tenants' associations. This authority will not however generally view these bodies as interested parties unless they have a member who can be classed as one under the terms of the Gambling Act 2005 e.g. lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the activities being applied for.

Interested parties can be persons who are democratically elected such as Councillors and MP's. Other than these persons, this authority will require written evidence that a person 'represents' someone who either lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorities activities and/or business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities. A letter from one of these persons, requesting the representation is sufficient.

If individuals wish to approach Councillors to ask them to represent

their views then care should be taken that the Councillors are not part of the Licensing Committee dealing with the licence application. If there are any doubts then please contact the licensing department (*insert contact details*).

6. Exchange of Information

Licensing authorities are required to include in their policy statement the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under sections 29 and 30 of the Act with respect to the exchange of information between it and the Gambling Commission, and the functions under section 350 of the Act with the respect to the exchange of information between it and the other persons listed in Schedule 6 to the Act.

The principle that this licensing authority applies is that it will act in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 in its exchange of information which includes the provision that the Data Protection Act 1998 will not be contravened. The licensing authority will also have regard to Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission to Local Authorities on this matter, as well as any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State under the powers provided in the Gambling Act 2005.

7. Enforcement

Licensing authorities are required by regulation under the Gambling Act 2005 to state the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under Part 15 of the Act with respect to the inspection of premises; and the powers under section 346 of the Act to institute criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified.

This licensing authority's principles are that:

It will be guided by the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities and as per the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities, it will endeavour to be:

- Proportionate: regulators should only intervene when necessary; remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised;
- Accountable: regulators must be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny;
- Consistent: rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly;
- Transparent: regulators should be open, and keep regulations simple and user friendly; and
- Targeted: regulation should be focused on the problem, and minimise side effects

This licensing authority will endeavour to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as possible.

This licensing authority will also, as recommended by the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities, adopt a risk-based inspection programme.

The main enforcement and compliance role for this licensing authority in terms of the Gambling Act 2005 will be to ensure compliance with the Premises Licences and other permissions which is authorised. The Gambling Commission will be the enforcement body for the Operator and Personal Licences. It is also worth noting that concerns about manufacture, supply or repair of gaming machines will not be dealt with by the licensing authority but will be notified to the Gambling Commission. This authority also understands from LACORS that the Gambling Commission will be responsible for compliance as regards unlicensed premises.

This licensing authority will also keep itself informed of developments as

regards the work of the Better Regulation Executive in its consideration of the regulatory functions of local authorities.

8. Licensing Authority functions

Licensing Authorities are required under the Act to:

- Be responsible for the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing *Premises Licences*
- Issue *Provisional Statements*
- Regulate *members' clubs* and *miners' welfare institutes* who wish to undertake certain gaming activities via issuing Club Gaming Permits and/or Club Machine Permits
- Issue *Club Machine Permits* to *Commercial Clubs*
- Grant permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at *unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres*
- Receive notifications from alcohol licensed premises (under the Licensing Act 2003) of the use of two or fewer gaming machines
- Grant *Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits* for premises licensed to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where more than two machines are required
- Register *small society lotteries* below prescribed thresholds
- Issue *Prize Gaming Permits*
- Receive and Endorse *Temporary Use Notices*
- Receive *Occasional Use Notices*
- Provide information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued (see section above on 'information exchange')
- Maintain registers of the permits and licences that are issued under these functions

It should be noted that local licensing authorities will not be involved in

licensing remote gambling at all. This will fall to the Gambling Commission via Operator Licences.

PART B PREMISES LICENCES

1. General Principles

Premises Licences will be subject to the permissions/restrictions set-out in the Gambling Act 2005 and regulations, as well as specific mandatory and default conditions which will be detailed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State. Licensing authorities are able to exclude default conditions and also attach others, where it is believed to be appropriate.

This licensing authority is aware that in making decisions about premises licences it should aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it:

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and
- in accordance with the authority's statement of licensing policy

Definition of "premises" - Premises is defined in the Act as "any place". It is for the licensing authority to decide whether different parts of a building can be properly regarded as being separate premises and as the Gambling Commission states in its Guidance for local authorities, it will always be a question of fact in the circumstances. The Gambling Commission does not however consider that areas of a building that are artificially or temporarily separate can be properly regarded as different premises.

This licensing authority takes particular note of the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities which states that in considering applications for multiple licences for a building or those for a specific part of the building to be licensed, entrances and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of different premises is not compromised and that people do not 'drift' into a gambling area.

This licensing authority will also take note of the Gambling Commission's Guidance to local authorities that: Licensing authorities should pay particular attention to applications where access to the licensed premises is through other premises (which themselves may be licensed or unlicensed).

Location - This licensing authority is aware that demand issues cannot be considered with regard to the location of premises but that considerations in terms of the licensing objectives can. As per the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities, this authority will pay particular attention to the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, as well as issues of crime and disorder. Should any specific policy be decided upon as regards areas where gambling premises should not be located, this policy statement will be updated. It should be noted that any such policy does not preclude any application being made and each application will be decided on its merits, with the onus upon the applicant showing how the concerns can be overcome.

Duplication with other regulatory regimes - This authority will seek to avoid any duplication with other statutory / regulatory systems where possible, including planning. This authority will not consider whether a licence application is likely to be

awarded planning or building consent, in its consideration of it. This authority will though listen to, and consider carefully, any concerns about conditions which are not able to be met by licensees due to planning restrictions, should such a situation arise.

Licensing objectives - Premises licences granted must be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives. With regard to these objectives, this licensing authority has considered the Gambling Commission's Guidance to local authorities and some comments are made below.

Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime – This licensing authority is aware of the distinction between disorder and nuisance and will consider factors such as whether police assistance was required and how threatening the behaviour was to those who could see it.

Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way - This licensing authority has noted that the Gambling Commission in its Guidance for local authorities has stated that generally the Commission would not expect licensing authorities to become concerned with ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way as this will be a matter for either the management of the gambling business, and therefore subject to the operating licence, or will be in relation to the suitability and actions of an individual and therefore subject to the personal licence. This licensing authority also notes, however, that the Gambling Commission also states in relating to the licensing tracks the licensing authorities' role will be different from other premises in that track operators will not necessarily have an operating licence. In those circumstances the

premises licence may need to contain conditions to ensure that the environment in which betting takes place is suitable. This licensing authority understands that there may be further guidance from the Gambling Commission on this issue which it will have regard to, when available.

Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling -

This licensing authority has noted the Gambling Commission Guidance to local authorities states that the objective talks of protecting children from being “harmed or exploited by gambling, but in practice that often means preventing them from taking part in or being in close proximity to gambling.

This licensing authority will pay particular attention to any Codes of Practice which the Gambling Commission issues as regards this licensing objective in relation to specific premises such as casinos. It is understood that a Code for casinos must:

- specify steps that the premises licence-holder must take to ensure that children and young persons (that is those under the age of 18) do not enter casino premises, or in the case of the regional casino do not enter the gambling area;
- amongst those specified steps, ensure that each entrance to the casino or gambling area is supervised by at least one person (“the supervisor”) who is responsible for compliance with the code of practice; and
- require that, unless the supervisor is certain that a person seeking admittance is an adult, evidence of age must be required of all those seeking to enter the casino or gambling area.

As regards the term “vulnerable persons” it is noted that the Gambling Commission is not seeking to offer a

definition but states that it will for regulatory purposes assume that this group includes people who gamble more than they want to; people who gambling beyond their means; and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling due to a mental impairment, alcohol or drugs. This licensing authority will consider this licensing objective on a case by case basis. Should a practical definition prove possible in future then this policy statement will be updated with it, by way of a revision.

Conditions - Any conditions attached to licences will be proportionate and will be:

- relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility
- directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for;
- fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises: and
- reasonable in all other respects.

Decisions upon individual conditions will be made on a case by case basis, although there will be a number of control measures this licensing authority will consider utilising should there be a perceived need, such as the use of door supervisors, supervision of adult gaming machines, appropriate signage for adult only areas etc. There are specific comments made in this regard under each of the licence types below. This licensing authority will also expect the licence applicant to offer his/her own suggestions as to way in which the licensing objectives can be met effectively.

It is noted that there are conditions which the licensing authority cannot attach to premises licences which are:

- any condition on the premises licence which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition

- conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation;
- conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required (the Gambling Act 2005 specifically removes the membership requirement for casino and bingo clubs and this provision prevents it being reinstated and
- conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winning or prizes

Door Supervisors - The Gambling Commission advises in its Guidance for local authorities that licensing authorities may consider whether there is a need for door supervisors in terms of the licensing objectives of protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, and also in terms of preventing premises becoming a source of crime. It is noted though that the Gambling Act 2005 has amended the Security Industry Act and that door supervisors at casinos or bingo premises cannot be licensed by the Security Industry Authority. This licensing authority may therefore has specific requirements for door supervisors working at casinos or bingo premises.

2. Adult Gaming Centres

This licensing authority will specifically have regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the premises. Appropriate licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Door supervisors
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry

- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours

This list is not exhaustive.

As regards the protection of vulnerable persons, this licensing authority will consider measures such as the use of self-barring schemes, provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

3. (Licensed) Family Entertainment Centres:

This licensing authority will specifically have regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machine areas. Appropriate licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Door supervisors
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours

This list is not exhaustive.

As regards the protection of vulnerable persons, this licensing authority will consider measures such as the use of self-barring schemes, provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

This licensing authority will, as per the Gambling Commission's guidance, refer to the Commission's website to see any conditions that apply to operator licences covering the way in which the area containing the category C machines should be delineated. This licensing authority will also make itself aware of any mandatory or

default conditions on these premises licences, when they have been published.

4. Casinos

The Council did not make an application for new casinos under the Gaming Act 1968 (prior to the deadline of 26th April 2006). Consequently 'Section 4. Casinos' is not directly relevant to this Statement but is included for the sake of completeness.

No Casinos resolution - This licensing authority has not passed a 'no casino' resolution under Section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005, but is aware that it has the power to do so. Should this licensing authority decide in the future to pass such a resolution, it will update this policy statement with details of that resolution.

Casinos and competitive bidding - This licensing authority is aware that where a licensing authority area is enabled to grant a Premises Licence for a new style casino (i.e. the Secretary of State has made such regulations under Section 175 of the Gambling Act 2005) there are likely to be a number of operators which will want to run the casino. In such situations the local authority will run a 'competition' under Schedule 9 of the Gambling Act 2005. This licensing authority will run such a competition in line with any regulations issued under the Gambling Act 2005 by the Secretary of State.

Betting machines - This licensing authority is aware that, as explained in the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities: Section 181 contains an express power for licensing authorities to restrict the number of betting machines, their nature and the circumstances in which they are made available by attaching a licence condition to a betting premises licence or to a casino premises licence (where betting is permitted in the casino). When considering whether to impose a condition to restrict the

number of betting machines in particular premises, the licensing authority, amongst other things, should take into account the size of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable persons.

Credit - This licensing authority has noted that the Gambling Commission has stated in its Guidance for Local Authorities that section 177 does not prevent the licensee from permitting the installation of cash dispensers (ATMs) on the premises. Such machines may accept credit cards (and debit cards) and the arrangement is subject to a requirement that the licensee has no other commercial connection in relation to gambling (aside from the agreement to site the machines) with the service-provider and does not profit from the arrangement, not make any payment in connection with the machines. Guidance on the further conditions that may apply in relation to such machines will be included in the next version of this guidance

5. Bingo premises

This licensing authority notes that the Gambling Commission's Guidance states:

- Licensing authorities will be able to find information about the restrictions that apply in the codes of practice that will be published on the Commission's website.
- Further guidance will be issued in due course about the particular issues that licensing authorities should take into account in relation to the suitability and layout of bingo premises.

Once this information is available, this licensing authority will consider its application to premises licences for bingo premises.

6. Betting premises

Betting machines - It is noted that the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities states: "Section 181 contains an express power for licensing authorities to restrict the number of betting machines, their nature and the circumstances in which they are made available by attaching a licence condition to a betting premises licence or to a casino premises licence (where betting is permitted in the casino). When considering whether to impose a condition to restrict the number of betting machines in particular premises, the licensing authority, amongst other things, should take into account the size of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable persons."

Credit - It has also been noted that the Gambling Commission Guidance states: section 177 does not prevent the licensee from permitting the installation of cash dispensers (ATMs) on the premises. Such machines may accept credit cards (and debit cards) and the arrangement is subject to a requirement that the licensee has no other commercial connection in relation to gambling (aside from the agreement to site the machines) with the service-provider and does not profit from the arrangement, nor make any payment in connection with the machines. It is also understood that the Gambling Commission will be placing restrictions and requirements on Operating Licences for betting premises as regards credit and this licensing authority will consider the guidance when it is available.

7. Tracks

This licensing authority is aware that the Gambling Commission may provide further specific guidance as

regards tracks. We have taken note of the Guidance from the Gambling Commission which highlights that tracks are different from other premises in that there may be more than one premises licence in effect and that the track operator may not be required to hold an operator licence as there may be several premises licence holders at the track which will need to hold their own operator licences.

There may be some specific considerations with regard to the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling and this authority would expect the premises licence applicants to demonstrate suitable measures to ensure that children do not have access to adult only gaming facilities. It is noted that children and young persons will be permitted to enter track areas where facilities for betting are provided on days when dog-racing and/or horse racing takes place, although they are still prevented from entering areas where gaming machines (other than category D machines) are provided.

Appropriate licence conditions may be:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Door supervisors
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- The location of gaming machines

This list is not exhaustive.

As regards the protection of vulnerable persons, this licensing authority will consider measures such as the use of self-barring schemes, provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

Betting machines - Licensing authorities have a power under the

Gambling Act 2005, to restrict the number of betting machines, their nature and the circumstances in which they are made available, by attaching a licence condition to a betting premises licence. The Gambling Commission's Guidance will be noted in that it states: In relation to betting premises away from tracks, the Commission is proposing that licensing authorities should take into account the size of the premises and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by vulnerable people when determining the number of machines permitted. Similar considerations apply in relation to tracks, where the potential space for such machines may be considerable, bringing with it significant problems in relation to the proliferation of such machines, the ability of track staff to supervise them if they are scattered around the track and the ability of the track operator to comply with the law and prevent children betting on the machine. Licensing authorities will want to consider restricting the number and location of betting machines, in the light of the circumstances of each application for a track betting premises licence.

This licensing authority also notes that, In the Commission's view, it would be preferable for all self-contained premises operated by off-course betting operators on track to be the subject of separate premises licences. This would ensure that there was clarity between the respective responsibilities of the track operator and the off-course betting operator running a self-contained unit on the premises.

Condition on rules being displayed - The Gambling Commission has advised in its Guidance for local authorities that licensing authorities should attach a condition to track premises licences requiring the track operator to ensure that the rules are prominently displayed in or near the betting areas, or that other measures

are taken to ensure that they are made available to the public. For example, the rules could be printed in the race-card or made available in leaflet form from the track office.

8. Travelling Fairs

It will fall to this licensing authority to decide whether, where category D machines and / or equal chance prize gaming without a permit is to be made available for use at travelling fairs, the statutory requirement that the facilities for gambling amount to no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair is met.

The licensing authority will also consider whether the applicant falls within the statutory definition of a travelling fair.

It has been noted that the 27-day statutory maximum for the land being used as a fair, is per calendar year, and that it applies to the piece of land on which the fairs are held, regardless of whether it is the same or different travelling fairs occupying the land. This licensing authority will work with its neighbouring authorities to ensure that land which crosses our boundaries is monitored so that the statutory limits are not exceeded.

9. Provisional Statements

This licensing authority notes the Guidance for the Gambling Commission which states that it is a question of fact and degree whether premises are finished to a degree that they can be considered for a premises licence and that requiring the building to be complete ensures that the authority could, if necessary, inspect it fully.

In terms of representations about premises licence applications, following the grant of a provisional statement, no further representations from relevant authorities or interested parties can be taken into account

unless they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage, or they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances. In addition, the authority may refuse the premises licence (or grant it on terms different to those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters:

- (a) which could not have been raised by objectors at the provisional licence stage; or
- (b) which is in the authority's opinion reflect a change in the operator's circumstances.

This authority has noted the Gambling Commission's Guidance on not taking into account irrelevant matter: one example of an irrelevant matter would be the likelihood of the applicant obtaining planning or building regulations approval for the proposal.

10. Reviews:

Requests for a review of a premises licence can be made by interested parties or responsible authorities, however, it is for the licensing authority to decide whether the review is to be carried-out. This will be on the basis of whether the request for the review is relevant to the matters listed below, as well as consideration as to whether the request is frivolous, vexatious, will certainly not cause this authority to wish alter/revoke/suspend the licence, or whether it is substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review.

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and
- in accordance with the authority's statement of licensing policy

The licensing authority can also initiate a review of a licence on the basis of any reason which it thinks is appropriate.

PART C

Permits / Temporary & Occasional Use Notice

1. Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre gaming machine permits (Statement of Principles on Permits – Schedule 10 para 7)

Where a premises does not hold a Premises Licence but wishes to provide gaming machines, it may apply to the licensing authority for this permit. It should be noted that the applicant must show that the premises will be wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available for use (Section 238).

The Gambling Act 2005 states that a licensing authority may prepare a *statement of principles* that they propose to consider in determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit and in preparing this statement, and/or considering applications, it need not (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives and shall have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Commission under section 25. The Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities also states: In their three year licensing policy statement, licensing authorities may include a statement of principles that they propose to apply when exercising their functions in considering applications for permits...., licensing authorities will want to give weight to child protection issues. Further guidance on the information that should be obtained from the applicant and others will be provided in the next version of this guidance.

The Guidance also states: An application for a permit may be granted only if the licensing authority is satisfied that the premises will be used

as an unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre, and if the chief officer of police has been consulted on the application. Relevant considerations to take into account would include the applicant's suitability, such as any convictions that they may have that would make them unsuitably to operate a family entertainment centre; and the suitability of the premises in relation to their location and issues about disorder.

It should be noted that a licensing authority cannot attach conditions to this type of permit and that the statement of principles only applies to initial applications and not to renewals.

Statement of Principles = This licensing authority will expect the applicant to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Harm in this context is not limited to harm from gambling but includes wider child protection considerations. The efficiency of such policies and procedures will each be considered on their merits, however, they may include BRC checks for staff, training covering how staff would deal with unsupervised very young children being on the premises, or children causing perceived problems on / around the premises.

With regard to renewals of these permits, a licensing authority may refuse an application for renewal of a permit only on the grounds that an authorised local authority officer has been refused access to the premises without reasonable excuse, or that renewal would not be reasonably consistent with pursuit of the licensing objectives.

2. (Alcohol) Licensed premises gaming machine permits – (Schedule 13 Para 4(1))

There is provision in the Act for premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises, to automatically have 2 gaming

machines, of categories C and/or D. The premises merely need to notify the licensing authority. The licensing authority can remove the automatic authorisation in respect of any particular premises if:

- provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives;
- gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Gambling Act (i.e. that written notice has been provided to the licensing authority, that a fee has been provided and that any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine has been complied with)
- the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
- an offence under the Gambling Act has been committed on the premises

If a premises wishes to have more than 2 machines, then it needs to apply for a permit and the licensing authority must consider that application based upon the licensing objectives, any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission issued under Section 25 of the Gambling Act 2005, and "*such matters as they think relevant.*" This licensing authority considers that "such matters" will be decided on a case by case basis but generally there will be regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machines. Measures which will satisfy the authority that there will be no access may include the adult machines being in site of the bar, or in the sight of staff who will monitor that the machines are not being used by those under 18. Notices and signage may also be help. As regards the

protection of vulnerable persons this applicants may wish to consider the provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

It is recognised that some alcohol licensed premises may apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would need to be applied for, and dealt with as an Adult Entertainment Centre premises licence.

It should be noted that the licensing authority can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for. Conditions (other than these) cannot be attached.

It should also be noted that the holder of a permit to must comply with any Code of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine.

3. Prize Gaming Permits – (Statement of Principles on Permits - Schedule 14 Para 8 (3))

The Gambling Act 2005 states that a Licensing Authority may “prepare a statement of principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under this Schedule” which “may, in particular, specify matters that the licensing authority propose to consider in determining the suitability of the applicant for a permit”.

This licensing authority has not prepared a statement of principles. Should it decide to do so it will include details in a revised version of the policy statement.

In making its decision on an application for this permit the licensing authority does not need to have regard to the licensing objectives but must have regard to any Gambling Commission guidance.

It should be noted that there are conditions in the Gambling Act 2005 by which the permit holder must comply, but that the licensing authority cannot attach conditions. The conditions in the Act are:

- the limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with;
- all chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day; the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played;
- the prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize); and
- participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling.

4. Club Gaming and Club Machines Permits

Members Clubs and Miners’ welfare institutes (but not Commercial Clubs) may apply for a Club Gaming Permit or a Clubs Gaming machines permit. The Club Gaming Permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D), equal chance gaming and games of chance as set-out in forthcoming regulations. A Club Gaming machine permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D).

Gambling Commission Guidance for local authorities states: Members clubs must have at least 25 members and be established and conducted “wholly or mainly” for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is

permitted by separate regulations. It is anticipated that this will cover bridge and whist clubs, which will replicate the position under the Gaming Act 1968. A members' club must be permanent in nature, not established to make commercial profit, and controlled by its members equally. Examples include working men's clubs, branches of Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations.

The Guidance also makes it clear that before granting the permit the authority will need to satisfy itself that the premises meet the requirements of a members' club and may grant the permit if the majority of members are over 18.

This Licensing Authority is aware that: Licensing authorities may only refuse an application on the grounds that:

- (a) the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members' or commercial club or miners' welfare institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied;
- (b) the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons;
- (c) an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities;
- (d) a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
- (e) an objection has been lodged by the Commission or the police.

It should be noted that there is a 'fast-track' procedure available for premises which hold a Club Premises Certificate under the Licensing Act 2003. As the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities states: Under the fast-track procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Commission or the police, and the ground upon which an authority can refuse a permit are reduced and that

the grounds on which an application under the process may be refused are:

- (a) that the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming prescribed under schedule 12;
- (b) that in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- (c) that a club gaming permit or club machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled.

5. Temporary Use Notices

There are a number of statutory limits as regards Temporary Use Notices. It is noted that it falls to the licensing authority to decide what constitutes a 'set of premises' where Temporary Use Notices are received relating to the same building / site.

6. Occasional Use Notices:

The licensing authority has very little discretion as regards these notices aside from ensuring that the statutory limit of 8 days in a calendar year is not exceeded. The licensing authority will though need to consider the definition of a 'track' and whether the applicant is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 November 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

TITLE: Halton 2000 Survey on the Council's Budget

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to draw the Board's attention to the results of a recent Halton 2000 Survey. In October 2009, the 1,878 members of Halton's citizens' panel were sent a questionnaire on their opinion about a range of Council services. 1,008 people responded – a response rate of 53.5%. The full results are attached to this summary page.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the Board notes the results of the survey; and**
- (2) takes the results into account when considering the 2010/11 budget proposals.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Attached to the report is a full copy of the survey results. Outlined below is a summary of the findings.

3.2 Question 1

Asked respondents to select **FIVE** areas of priority spending (from a list of nineteen). The top five areas of priority spending were selected by over 40% of respondents:

- Health Services 66%
- The level of crime 56.3%
- Education provision 46.2%
- Job prospects 40.9%
- Affordable decent housing 40.8%

3.3 It should be noted that the priority area "Clean Streets" was selected by 39% of respondents, only marginally outside the top five.

3.4 Question 2

The survey asked which of the Council's priorities should see money invested or make savings. The responses were:

Top areas for investment

- Reducing crime and anti social behaviour
- Improving health
- Creating employment opportunities
- Running services effectively
- Supporting an aging population

Top areas of savings

- Increasing focus on community engagement
- Tackling contaminated land
- Furthering economic and urban regeneration
- Creating prosperity and equal opportunities
- Tackling the low wage economy

3.5 Question 3

The survey asked questions about how the Council should raise its money:

- Increasing charges (62.9%)
- Reduce services to keep Council Tax rises to a minimum (45.5%)
- Maintain services even if this meant an increase in Council Tax (40.4%)
- Increase services even if this means an increase in Council Tax (11.8%)

3.6 Question 4

The survey asked about increasing or introducing charge for services. The responses were:

- Pest control charges 59.8%
- Bulky items 45.9%
- Sports pitches 37.4%
- Bus passes admin charge 34.3%
- Car parking 25.1%
- Births, deaths registration 25%
- No charge for any service 14.9%

3.7 Question 5

The survey asked about the way in which they preferred to be consulted on the Council budget. The overwhelming preference (73%) was for a paper questionnaire with 52.4% preferring to receive financial information alongside the questionnaire.

3.8 Question 6

The survey asked whether a brief summary of how the Council spends its money is helpful, or access to the Council's full statement of accounts. An overwhelming majority (71.3%) responded a summary would be helpful.

3.9 Question 7

The survey asked the way they preferred to receive information on how the Council spends its money. The responses were:

- Council Tax leaflet 64.6%
- Inside Halton 60.6%
- Local press 38.5%
- Council website 31.1%
- Libraries/HDL 17.4%
- Public meetings 9.5%

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are many factors the Council needs to consider when setting its budget. The views of the public are a key issue in those deliberations. The survey provides a helpful picture of public opinion.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 How the Council uses its resources is key to delivering the priorities contained in the Corporate Plan.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Considering the views of the public is an important factor in delivering the improved outcomes described in the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Considering the views of the public is an important factor in delivering the improved outcomes described in the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Considering the views of the public is an important factor in delivering the improved outcomes described in the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Considering the views of the public is an important factor in delivering the improved outcomes described in the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Considering the views of the public is an important factor in delivering the improved outcomes described in the Council's Corporate Plan.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no direct risks associated with this report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Halton 2000 provides the views of a wide cross section of the Halton community.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Survey Results	Municipal Building	Richard Stevens



Research and Intelligence

Halton 2000 Citizens Panel
Council Budget Survey
October 2009



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Chapter One

Methodology

Members of the Halton 2000 Citizens Panel were sent copies of the Council Budget self-completion questionnaire (Appendix C), during October 2009 and asked to return them within a two-week period. The questionnaire designed by the Research and Intelligence Department (questions were derived from other Local Authority budget surveys), was aimed at gauging public opinion of Council spending on services.

The first set of questions were designed to set the scene by asking about the following topics; the top five priorities in relation to council spending (services taken from the 2008 Place Survey), and preferences of spending and saving money in relation to those priorities identified within the Community Strategy.

The second set of questions was to determine the following; opinion of Council tax payments in relation to service standards and introducing/ increasing charges for certain Council provided services; how the panel members would prefer to be consulted about the Council budget in future and the format of information available and preferred method of receiving information about the Council budget.

Response Rates

1008 completed questionnaires were returned from 1878 respondents, giving a response rate of 53.5%.

Key Results

Results of q1, which asked respondents to select FIVE areas of priority spending.

The top five priority spending areas selected by over two fifths of respondents were:

- Health Services 66%
- The level of crime 56.3%
- Education Provision 46.2%
- Job prospects 40.9%
- Affordable decent housing 40.8%

(Please see page 5 for a full table of results).

Results from q2, which asked respondents to pick top five areas of priority for spending and saving focused on crime and anti social behaviour and improving health (chosen by 669 and 558 respondents respectively for spending) and focus on community engagement and tackling contaminated land (chosen by 671 and 433 respectively for saving).

(Please see page 6 for a full table of results).

Q3 asked respondents about levels of services in relation to Council tax and views on this were divided. 45.5% of respondents stated that levels of some services should be reduced to keep rises in Council tax to a minimum and 40.4% of respondents stated that levels of service should be maintained even if this means a Council tax increase.

Three fifths (62.9%) of respondents also selected the option that more money could be raised by increasing charges for services that users have to pay for such as pest control.

Following on from this the results for Q4 which asked about charges for specific services, 59.8% of respondents stated that there should be increased charges for pest control e.g., bed bugs, cockroaches and mice and 45.9% of respondents suggested that prices should be increased for the removal of bulky items. 14.9% of respondents stated that the Council should not charge for any of these types of services.
(Please see page 8 for a full table of results)

Q5 asked respondents how they would prefer to be consulted about the Council budget in the future. 73% of respondents stated that they would prefer a paper questionnaire and 52% of respondents stated that would prefer financial information alongside the questionnaire to enable them to answer questions more fully. Following on from this Q6 asked respondents if they would like a full statement of accounts or a summary of accounts and 71.3% of respondents stated that would prefer a summary.

Respondents were also asked in Q7 how they would like to receive information on how the Council spends its money through other methods. The three preferred methods are:

- Via Council tax leaflet - 64.6%
- Via Inside Halton - 60.6%
- Via Local press - 38.5%

Chapter 2

Qa1. In the 2008 Place Survey, residents in Halton identified their top five priorities from the list below – do you agree with them? Which would you say are your top FIVE priorities in relation to Council spending?

When asked to choose FIVE priority areas in relation to Council spending, the top five areas chosen were: Health services 67.7%, the Level of crime 57.7%, Education provision 47.7%, Job prospects 40.9% and affordable decent housing 40.8%.

Table 2.1 Qa1. Which of the following would you say are your top five priorities in relation to Council spending?

Multiple response % will not equal 100

Priorities	Frequency	% of respondents
Health services	680	67.7
The level of crime	579	57.7
Education provision	476	47.4
Job prospects	411	40.9
Affordable decent housing	410	40.8
Clean streets	392	39
Road and pavement repairs	308	30.7
Activities for teenagers	278	27.7
Public transport	217	21.6
Parks and open spaces	171	17
Cultural facilities	166	16.5
The level of pollution	160	15.9
Shopping facilities	122	12.2
Facilities for young children	113	11.3
Sports and leisure facilities	99	9.9
The level of traffic congestion	90	9
Community activities	63	6.3
Access to nature	52	5.2
Race relations	6	0.6
Other	196	19.5

The table below illustrates the areas of priority specified by the panel members in the 'Other' option. (A full list of 'Other' responses can be found in Appendix A).

Table 2.2 Other

Priority Area	Frequency	Valid Percent
Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour	25	12.8
Waste and Recycling	23	11.7
Nature	21	10.7
Older People	13	6.6
Council related	10	5.1
Education	10	5.1
Public Transport	6	3.1

Qa2. Within the community strategy a number of priorities have been identified for Halton. Which are the top five priorities you would like to see money invested and which are the top five priority areas you would like to save money?

Figure 2.1 and 2.2 illustrate the top five priority areas of investment and savings selected by respondents. (Full tables of responses can be found in Appendix B).

Figure 2.1 Five top areas of investment

Multiple response frequencies will not equal 100

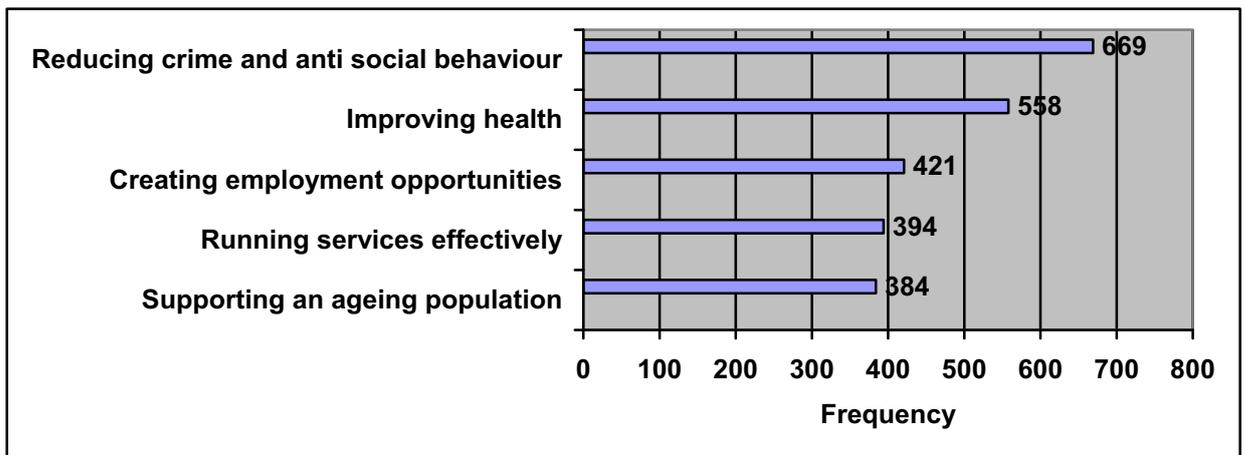
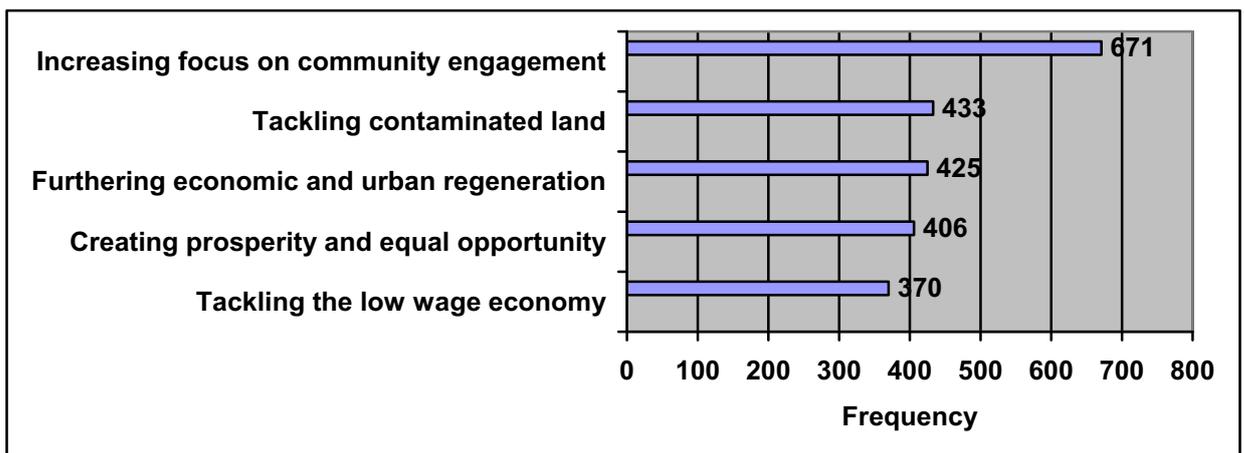


Figure 2.2 Five top areas of savings

Multiple response frequencies will not equal 100



Qa3. Which of the following statements do you most agree with? ‘When making decisions about spending plans for next year the Council should...?’

When asked about spending plans respondent views are divided. Just over three fifths (62.9%) of respondents stated that the Council should raise more money by increasing the prices of services such as pest control treatment.

Over two fifths (45.5%) of respondents stated that some services should be reduced to keep Council tax rises to a minimum, however two fifths (40.4%) of respondents stated that current levels of Council services should be maintained even if this does mean an increase in Council tax.

11.8% of respondents stated that current levels of service should be increased even if this does mean an increase in Council tax.

Table 2.3 Qa3. When making decisions about spending plans for the next year the Council should...?

Areas of priority	Multiple response % will not equal 100	
	Frequency	% of respondents
Raise more money by increasing the prices of Council services that users have to pay for e.g., pest control treatment	632	62.9
Reduce the levels of some services to keep any Council tax increase to a minimum	457	45.5
Maintain the current levels of service even if this means an increase in Council tax	406	40.4
Improve current levels of service, even if this means a greater increase in Council tax	118	11.8

Qa4. One way of helping contribute to the £6 - £7 million savings that the Council has to generate each year over the next three years is to introduce/ increase charges for services.

Which of the following services do you think it would be acceptable for the Council to introduce/ increase charges for?

Nearly three fifths of respondents (59.8%) stated that it would be acceptable for the Council to introduce pest control charges for bed bugs, cockroaches and mice which reflects results to the previous option in Qa3.

Over two fifths (45.9%) of respondents stated that it would be acceptable for the Council to increase charges for the removal of bulky items.

Table 2.4 Qa4. Which of the following do you think it would be acceptable for the Council to introduce/ increase charges for?

Areas of charges	Multiple response % will not equal 100	
	Frequency	% of respondents
Introduce pest control charges for bed bugs, cockroaches and mice	600	59.8
Increase removal charges for bulky items	461	45.9
Increase cost of hiring sports pitches	375	37.4
A small yearly charge for currently free bus passes	344	34.3
Introduce a payment for items that are currently free e.g., using public car parks	252	25.1
Introduce a payment for registering a birth or death	251	25.0
We should not charge for any of these services	150	14.9

Qa5. How would you prefer to be consulted about the Council budget in the future?

An overwhelming majority of respondents (73%) stated that they would prefer to be consulted about the Council budget through a paper questionnaire and over half (52.4%) of the respondents stated that would prefer to receive financial information alongside the questionnaire so that they are more informed to answer questions about the Council budget.

Table 2.5 Qa5. How would you prefer to be consulted about the Council budget in the future?

Future Consultation	Multiple response % will not equal 100	
	Frequency	% of respondents
Prefer a paper questionnaire	733	73.0
Prefer financial information alongside questionnaire to enable me to answer questions more fully	526	52.4
Prefer to respond via Council website/ internet	221	22.0
Prefer to attend a public meeting	120	12.0
Prefer to write to Council with my views	66	6.6

Qa6. Do you think a brief summary of how the Council spends its money is helpful or would you prefer to be able to access the Council's full statement of accounts?

Over 70% of respondents stated that that a brief summary of how the Council spends its money would be helpful. However, nearly 30% of respondents stated that they would prefer to see a full statement of accounts.

Table 2.6 Qa6. Do you think a brief summary of how the Council spends its money is helpful or would you prefer to be able to access the Council's full statement of accounts?

Account information	Valid respondents: 965 Missing: 39	
	Frequency	% of respondents
Brief summary	688	71.3
Full statement of accounts	277	28.7

Qa7. How do you prefer to receive information on how the Council spends its money?

Over 60% of respondents stated that they would prefer to receive information on how the Council spends its money via the Council tax leaflet and via inside Halton (64.6% and 60.6% respectively).

Nearly two fifths of respondents (38.5%) stated that they would prefer to receive information via the local press and 31.1% of respondents stated they would like to receive information via the Council website.

Table 2.7 Qa7. How do you prefer to receive information on how the Council spends its money?

Receive information	Multiple response % will not equal 100	
	Frequency	% of respondents
Via Council tax leaflet	649	64.6
Via Inside Halton	608	60.6
Via local press	387	38.5
Via the Council website	312	31.1
Via libraries/ Halton Direct Link	175	17.4
Via public meetings	95	9.5

Appendix A: Qa1. 'Other' Priorities

Priority - Nature	Frequency	Valid Percent
Parks and Open spaces	8	4.1
Over hanging weeds and brambles that obstruct paths	3	1.5
Toilets in public parks/ safe toilets in parks	2	1
Street lighting	2	1
Hedges lowered to aid lighting/ street lighting	2	1
Preserving areas of open spaces, woodland, hedgerows, etc between proposed new housing estates. Will there be any green space left.	1	0.5
Access to nature	1	0.5
More cycle paths and safe cycle areas	1	0.5
No dog fouling	1	0.5

Priority – Older People	Frequency	Valid Percent
Facilities for older citizens	9	4.6
Care/support for the elderly	4	2

Priority - Crime and Antisocial Behaviour	Frequency	Valid Percent
Level of crime	10	5.1
Anti social behaviour	7	3.6
Safer streets - community police controls/ visible CSO's/ police	6	3.1
Make 'plastic police' do more work	1	0.5
To feel safe in my neighbourhood	1	0.5

Priority – Waste/Recycling	Frequency	Valid Percent
Refuse collection/ St cleaning/ litter fly tipping/ waste disposal	8	4.1
Level of pollution	4	2
Recycling facilities	4	2
Alternative/ renewable energy/ climate change	2	1
Maintaining the drive to recycle waste	1	0.5
Providing skips for estates as in Runcorn	1	0.5
Increasing kerbside recycling	1	0.5
Raising energy efficiency by creation of employment by promoting modified wind turbine systems on buildings	1	0.5
Reduction of paper produced	1	0.5

Priority – Council Related	Frequency	Valid Percent
Extend Halton Forum grants	1	0.5
Increased council/ management efficiency	1	0.5
Local employers/ contractors should be used for council	1	0.5
Ensure that council workmen/ contractors do a proper days work for their pay. We often see them sitting in their cars doing nothing	1	0.5
Council owned offices, what are the costs of running these	1	0.5
Reduce salaries of senior offices and cllrs	1	0.5
Curtailment of future expenditure	1	0.5
Publicising and marketing Halton to outside through the media	1	0.5
Reduce spending on inessentials	1	0.5
Stop employing more staff and top level jobs/ invented titles	1	0.5

Priority - Education	Frequency	Valid Percent
Education provision	7	3.6
Education/cultural facilities	1	0.5
Affordable education opportunities for 50+	1	0.5
Education and shopping	1	0.5

Priority – Public Transport	Frequency	Valid Percent
Public transport	4	2
Travel pass to include trains (OAP as other authorities do)	1	0.5
Public transport to meet shift workers requirements (Liverpool do this)	1	0.5

APPENDIX B: Qa2. Priorities for investing/save**INCREASE**

Priority	Invest
(I) Reducing crime and anti social behaviour	669
(D) Improving health	558
(L) Creating employment opportunities	421
(H) Running services effectively	394
(N) Supporting an ageing population	384
(F) Increase employment	380
(C) Minimising waste and increasing recycling	302
(P) Improving amenities for all age groups	275
(B) Creating opportunities/facilities/amenities for children and young people	274
(A) Improving the local environment and how the area looks	266
(K) Improving educational attainment e.g., GCSE/NVQ	167
(J) Furthering economic and urban regeneration	153
(E) Improving skills such as numeracy and literacy	125
(M) Tackling the low wage economy	105
(O) Creating prosperity and equal opportunity	92
(G) Tackling contaminated land	82
(Q) Increasing focus on community engagement	37

SAVE

(Q) Increasing focus on community engagement	671
(G) Tackling contaminated land	433
(J) Furthering economic and urban regeneration	425
(O) Creating prosperity and equal opportunity	406
(M) Tackling the low wage economy	370
(A) Improving the local environment and how the area looks	306
(K) Improving educational attainment e.g., GCSE/NVQ	296
(P) Improving amenities for all age groups	268
(B) Creating opportunities/facilities/amenities for children and young people	234
(E) Improving skills such as numeracy and literacy	223
(C) Minimising waste and increasing recycling	205
(H) Running services effectively	168
(N) Supporting an ageing population	130
(L) Creating employment opportunities	105
(F) Increase employment	84
(D) Improving health	73
(I) Reducing crime and anti social behaviour	45

Appendix C - Questionnaire

9439177178	<p>Halton 2000 Citizens' Panel September 2009</p> <p>Council Budget Consultation</p>				
Section A: Council Budget					
<p>qa1. In the 2008 Place Survey, residents in Halton identified their top FIVE priorities from the list below - do you agree with them? From the list below which categories would you say are your top FIVE priorities in relation to Council spending for Halton?</p> <p>Please place an 'X' in FIVE BOXES ONLY</p>					
Access to nature	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Activities for teenagers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Affordable decent housing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Clean streets	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Community activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cultural facilities (e.g. libraries, museums, theatre)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Education provision	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Facilities for young children	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Health services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Job prospects	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The level of crime	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The level of pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The level of traffic congestion	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Parks and open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Race relations	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Road and pavement repairs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shopping facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sports and leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other, please specify ONE other priority in the space below	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <p>For office use only</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> </div>			

5409177171

qa2. Within the community strategy a number of priorities have been identified for Halton. Please read the list of priorities below and imagine you have £100 to spend on your FIVE most important priorities. But so as not to overspend, you will also have to save £100 on your FIVE least important priorities.

LIST OF PRIORITIES FOR HALTON

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Improving the local environment and how the area looks | |
| B. Creating opportunities/facilities/amenities for children and young people | |
| C. Minimising waste and increasing recycling | |
| D. Improving Health | K. Improving educational attainment e.g. GCSE/ NVQ |
| E. Improving skills such as numeracy and literacy | L. Creating employment opportunities |
| F. Increase employment | M. Tackling the low wage economy |
| G. Tackling contaminated land | N. Supporting an ageing population |
| H. Running services effectively | O. Creating prosperity and equal opportunity |
| I. Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour | P. Improving amenities for all age groups |
| J. Furthering economic and urban regeneration | Q. Increasing focus on community engagement |

All of these priorities are important to us however we would like to know your opinion. Please be honest with your choices as there are no right or wrong answers.

Please give your answers in the spaces provided on the next page.

2442177175

Priorities I would invest/spend money on

In table A please write in the boxes provided the LETTER of each of your FIVE priorities from the list opposite and the amount of money you would INVEST - spending £100 in total.

Table A - INVEST MONEY		
	Letter	INVEST
Priority One	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Two	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Three	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Four	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Five	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Total		£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

Priorities I would save/reduce spending money on

In table B please write in the boxes provided the LETTER of each of your FIVE priorities from the list opposite and the amount of money you would SAVE - saving £100 in total.

Table B - SAVE MONEY		
	Letter	SAVE
Priority One	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Two	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Three	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Four	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Priority Five	<input type="text"/>	£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Total		£ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

6405177178

**qa3. Which of the following statements do you most agree with?
'When making decisions about spending plans for next year the Council should...?'**

(Please place an 'X' in up to Two boxes only)

- Maintain the current levels of service even if this means an increase in council tax
- Improve current levels of service, even if this means a greater increase in council tax
- Reduce the levels of some services to keep any council tax increase to a minimum
- Raise more money by increasing the prices of Council services that users have to pay for
e.g. pest control

qa4. One way of helping contribute to the £6 - £7 million savings that the Council has to generate each year over the next three years is to introduce/ increase charges for services.

Which of the following services do you think it would be acceptable for the Council to introduce/ increase charges for?

(Please place an 'X' in all boxes that apply)

- Introduce a payment for items that are currently free, e.g. using public car parks
- Increase cost of hiring sports pitches
- A small yearly charge for currently free bus passes
- Increase removal charges for bulky items
- Introduce a payment for registering a birth or death
- Introduce pest control charges for bed bugs, cockroaches and mice
- We should not charge for any of these services

qa5. How would you prefer to be consulted about the Council budget in the future?

(Please place an 'X' in up to THREE boxes only)

- Prefer a paper questionnaire Prefer to respond via Council website/ internet
- Prefer to attend a public meeting Prefer to write to the Council with my views
- Prefer financial information alongside questionnaire to enable me to answer questions more fully

qa6. Do you think a brief summary of how the Council spends its money is helpful or would you prefer to be able to access the Council's full statement of accounts?

(Please place an 'X' in one box only) Brief summary Full statement of accounts

qa7. How do you prefer to receive information on how the Council spends its money?

(Please place an 'X' in all boxes that apply)

- Via the Council website Via Inside Halton (the Council magazine for the public)
- Via libraries/ Halton direct link Via Council Tax leaflet (that comes to every home)
- Via Local press Via Public meetings

Appendix D - Frequency Tables**Access to nature**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	52	5.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	916	91.2		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	952	94.8		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Activities for teenagers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	278	27.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	690	68.7		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	726	72.3		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Affordable decent housing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	410	40.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	558	55.6		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	594	59.2		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Clean streets

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	392	39.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	576	57.4		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		612	61.0		
Total		1004	100.0		

Community activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	63	6.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	905	90.1		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		941	93.7		
Total		1004	100.0		

Cultural facilities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	166	16.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	802	79.9		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		838	83.5		
Total		1004	100.0		

Education provision

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	476	47.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	492	49.0		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	528	52.6		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Facilities for young children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	113	11.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	855	85.2		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	891	88.7		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Health services

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	680	67.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	288	28.7		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	324	32.3		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Job prospects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	411	40.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	557	55.5		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		593	59.1		
Total		1004	100.0		

The level of crime

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	579	57.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	389	38.7		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		425	42.3		
Total		1004	100.0		

The level of pollution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	160	15.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	808	80.5		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		844	84.1		
Total		1004	100.0		

The level of traffic congestion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	90	9.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	878	87.5		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		914	91.0		
Total		1004	100.0		

Parks and open spaces

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	171	17.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	797	79.4		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		833	83.0		
Total		1004	100.0		

Public transport

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	217	21.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	751	74.8		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		787	78.4		
Total		1004	100.0		

Race relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	6	.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	962	95.8		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		998	99.4		
Total		1004	100.0		

Road and pavement repairs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	308	30.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	660	65.7		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		696	69.3		
Total		1004	100.0		

Shopping facilities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	122	12.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	846	84.3		
	Missing	36	3.6		
Total		882	87.8		
Total		1004	100.0		

Sports and leisure facilities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	99	9.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	869	86.6		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	905	90.1		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Other

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	196	19.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	772	76.9		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	808	80.5		
	Total	1004	100.0		

qa1other

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Parks and Open spaces	8	.8	4.1	4.1
	Care/support for the elderly	4	.4	2.0	6.1
	Street lighting	2	.2	1.0	7.1
	Activities for teenagers	10	1.0	5.1	12.2
	Safer streets - community police controls/ visible CSO's/ police	6	.6	3.1	15.3
	Over hanging weeds and brambles that obstruct paths	3	.3	1.5	16.8
	Education provision	7	.7	3.6	20.4
	Toilets in public parks/ safe toilets in parks	2	.2	1.0	21.4
	Job prospects	9	.9	4.6	26.0
	Public transport	4	.4	2.0	28.1
	Anti social behaviour	7	.7	3.6	31.6
	Make 'plastic police' do more work	1	.1	.5	32.1
	No toll on bridge/ road network	3	.3	1.5	33.7
	Education/cultural facilities	1	.1	.5	34.2
	Drug and alcohol abuser support/ rehab/ education and awareness	4	.4	2.0	36.2
	Sports and leisure	3	.3	1.5	37.8
	Extend Halton Forum grants	1	.1	.5	38.3
	Level of crime	10	1.0	5.1	43.4
	Road and pavement repairs	6	.6	3.1	46.4
	Alternative/ renewable energy/ climate change	2	.2	1.0	47.4

Preserving areas of open spaces, woodland, hedgerows, etc between proposed new housing estates. Will there be any green space left	1	.1	.5	48.0
Parking problems in the Holloway	1	.1	.5	48.5
Too many potholes in my close, all oap's	1	.1	.5	49.0
Level of pollution	4	.4	2.0	51.0
The building of council property to house dhss familys to keep private housing private	1	.1	.5	51.5
Prevention of binge drinking	1	.1	.5	52.0
Level of traffic congestion	2	.2	1.0	53.1
To remove benfits off people who have not worked if fit to do so	3	.3	1.5	54.6
Maintaining the drive to recycle waste	1	.1	.5	55.1
Youth employment	1	.1	.5	55.6
Providing skips for estates as in Runcorn	1	.1	.5	56.1
Cars and wagons wiuth 2 and 4 wheels on the pavement blocking them	1	.1	.5	56.6
Fcilities for older citezins	9	.9	4.6	61.2
Increasing kerbside recycling	1	.1	.5	61.7
Publicising and marleting Halton to outside through the media	1	.1	.5	62.2
Too much concern over our race relations	1	.1	.5	62.8
Free parking	2	.2	1.0	63.8
Shopping facilities in Halton	5	.5	2.6	66.3

Prevent children from having access to cheap drink	2	.2	1.0	67.3
Economic and urban regeneration	1	.1	.5	67.9
Community/ family activities	3	.3	1.5	69.4
Public transport to meet shiftworkers requirements (liverpool do this)	1	.1	.5	69.9
Painting of double yellow and white lines on roads	1	.1	.5	70.4
Education and shopping	1	.1	.5	70.9
Increased council/ management efficiency	1	.1	.5	71.4
To feel safe in my neighbourhood	1	.1	.5	71.9
Stop employing more staff and top level jobs/ invented titles	1	.1	.5	72.4
Curtailment of future expenditure	1	.1	.5	73.0
Refuse collection/ street cleaning/ litter fly tipping/ waste disposal	8	.8	4.1	77.0
Cultural facilities	4	.4	2.0	79.1
Affordable education opps for 50+	1	.1	.5	79.6
Recycling facilities	4	.4	2.0	81.6
Hedges lowered to aid lighting/ street lighting	2	.2	1.0	82.7
Reduction of paper produced	1	.1	.5	83.2
Mental health services	1	.1	.5	83.7
Loss of pension provision is a burden	1	.1	.5	84.2
Local employers/ contractors should be used for council	1	.1	.5	84.7
Travel pass to include trains (OAP as other authorities do)	1	.1	.5	85.2

Dropped pavements for wheelchair access	1	.1	.5	85.7
Road safety in built up areas	1	.1	.5	86.2
Raising energy efficiency by creation of employment by promoting modified wind turbin systems on buildings	1	.1	.5	86.7
Reduce spending on inessentials	1	.1	.5	87.2
No dog fouling	1	.1	.5	87.8
Affordable housing	1	.1	.5	88.3
Facilities for young children	2	.2	1.0	89.3
Health services	3	.3	1.5	90.8
Access to nature	1	.1	.5	91.3
More cycle paths and safe cycle areas	1	.1	.5	91.8
Encourage thriving and expanding business	1	.1	.5	92.3
Speeding traffic	1	.1	.5	92.9
Fair council tax same for all houses	1	.1	.5	93.4
Reduce salaries of senior offices and cllrs	1	.1	.5	93.9
Get rid of speed humps/ unnecessary road markings	3	.3	1.5	95.4
Race relations	1	.1	.5	95.9
New bridge	2	.2	1.0	96.9
Low flying airplanes flying into liverpool airport	1	.1	.5	97.4
Parking enforcement	1	.1	.5	98.0
Halton Hospital	1	.1	.5	98.5
Ensure that council workmen/ contractors do a proper days days work for their pay. We often see them sitting in their cars doing nothing	1	.1	.5	99.0

	Local lottery	1	.1	.5	99.5
	Council owned offices, what are the costs of running these	1	.1	.5	100.0
	Total	196	19.5	100.0	
Missing	Not Applicable	772	76.9		
	Missing	36	3.6		
	Total	808	80.5		
	Total	1004	100.0		

INVEST

Local environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	6	2.3	2.3	2.3
	6	1	.4	.4	2.6
	8	1	.4	.4	3.0
	10	75	28.2	28.2	31.2
	15	26	9.8	9.8	41.0
	20	114	42.9	42.9	83.8
	23	1	.4	.4	84.2
	25	19	7.1	7.1	91.4
	30	13	4.9	4.9	96.2
	38	1	.4	.4	96.6
	40	7	2.6	2.6	99.2
	50	1	.4	.4	99.6
	70	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	266	100.0	100.0	

Creating opportunities for children and young people

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	1	.4	.4	.4
	10	50	18.2	18.2	18.6
	13	1	.4	.4	19.0
	15	36	13.1	13.1	32.1
	18	2	.7	.7	32.8
	20	120	43.8	43.8	76.6
	25	22	8.0	8.0	84.7
	30	20	7.3	7.3	92.0
	35	2	.7	.7	92.7
	40	13	4.7	4.7	97.4
	50	5	1.8	1.8	99.3
	60	2	.7	.7	100.0
Total		274	100.0	100.0	

Minimising waste and increasing recycling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	10	3.3	3.3	3.3
	10	80	26.5	26.5	29.8
	12	1	.3	.3	30.1
	15	25	8.3	8.3	38.4
	18	2	.7	.7	39.1
	20	135	44.7	44.7	83.8
	25	21	7.0	7.0	90.7
	26	1	.3	.3	91.1
	30	22	7.3	7.3	98.3
	35	1	.3	.3	98.7
	40	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Improving Health

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	.2	.2	.2
	5	5	.9	.9	1.1
	10	59	10.6	10.6	11.6
	12	1	.2	.2	11.8
	15	33	5.9	5.9	17.7
	18	1	.2	.2	17.9
	20	244	43.7	43.7	61.6
	22	2	.4	.4	62.0
	23	1	.2	.2	62.2
	25	61	10.9	10.9	73.1
	28	1	.2	.2	73.3
	30	90	16.1	16.1	89.4
	33	1	.2	.2	89.6
	35	6	1.1	1.1	90.7

40	29	5.2	5.2	95.9
45	2	.4	.4	96.2
50	19	3.4	3.4	99.6
60	1	.2	.2	99.8
80	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	558	100.0	100.0	

Improving skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	3	2.4	2.4	2.4
	8	1	.8	.8	3.2
	10	22	17.6	17.6	20.8
	15	18	14.4	14.4	35.2
	20	62	49.6	49.6	84.8
	25	7	5.6	5.6	90.4
	30	9	7.2	7.2	97.6
	40	1	.8	.8	98.4
	50	2	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total		125	100.0	100.0	

Increase employment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	6	1.6	1.6	1.6
	10	34	8.9	8.9	10.5
	11	1	.3	.3	10.8
	15	28	7.4	7.4	18.2
	17	2	.5	.5	18.7
	18	1	.3	.3	18.9
	20	181	47.6	47.6	66.6
	24	1	.3	.3	66.8
	25	32	8.4	8.4	75.3
	30	61	16.1	16.1	91.3
	35	6	1.6	1.6	92.9
	40	13	3.4	3.4	96.3
	45	1	.3	.3	96.6
	50	10	2.6	2.6	99.2
	60	1	.3	.3	99.5
	80	1	.3	.3	99.7
	90	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total		380	100.0	100.0	

Tackling contaminated land

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
	10	26	31.7	31.7	32.9
	15	9	11.0	11.0	43.9
	20	39	47.6	47.6	91.5
	23	1	1.2	1.2	92.7
	25	1	1.2	1.2	93.9
	30	4	4.9	4.9	98.8

50	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Running services effectively

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	.3	.3	.3
	5	5	1.3	1.3	1.5
	10	94	23.9	23.9	25.4
	15	51	12.9	12.9	38.3
	20	153	38.8	38.8	77.2
	23	1	.3	.3	77.4
	24	1	.3	.3	77.7
	25	21	5.3	5.3	83.0
	27	1	.3	.3	83.2
	28	3	.8	.8	84.0
	30	31	7.9	7.9	91.9
	35	5	1.3	1.3	93.1
	40	10	2.5	2.5	95.7
	50	14	3.6	3.6	99.2
	55	1	.3	.3	99.5
	60	1	.3	.3	99.7
	75	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total		394	100.0	100.0	

Reducing crime and anti social behaviour

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	8	1.2	1.2	1.2
	7	1	.1	.1	1.3
	10	75	11.2	11.2	12.6
	13	2	.3	.3	12.9
	15	57	8.5	8.5	21.4
	18	2	.3	.3	21.7
	20	323	48.3	48.3	70.0
	23	1	.1	.1	70.1
	24	1	.1	.1	70.3
	25	54	8.1	8.1	78.3
	26	2	.3	.3	78.6
	28	1	.1	.1	78.8
	30	85	12.7	12.7	91.5
	35	2	.3	.3	91.8
	38	1	.1	.1	91.9
	40	28	4.2	4.2	96.1
	45	3	.4	.4	96.6
	50	18	2.7	2.7	99.3
	60	3	.4	.4	99.7
	70	1	.1	.1	99.9
	100	1	.1	.1	100.0
Total		669	100.0	100.0	

Furthering economic and urban regeneration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	10	40	26.1	26.1	27.5
	15	14	9.2	9.2	36.6
	18	1	.7	.7	37.3
	20	65	42.5	42.5	79.7
	22	1	.7	.7	80.4
	25	6	3.9	3.9	84.3
	30	13	8.5	8.5	92.8
	35	2	1.3	1.3	94.1
	40	8	5.2	5.2	99.3
	60	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

Improving educational attainment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	4	2.4	2.4	2.4
	8	1	.6	.6	3.0
	10	27	16.2	16.2	19.2
	15	16	9.6	9.6	28.7
	16	1	.6	.6	29.3
	20	82	49.1	49.1	78.4
	21	1	.6	.6	79.0
	25	15	9.0	9.0	88.0
	30	13	7.8	7.8	95.8
	35	3	1.8	1.8	97.6
	40	2	1.2	1.2	98.8
	50	2	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	167	100.0	100.0	

Creating employment opportunities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	1	.2	.2	.2
	5	5	1.2	1.2	1.4
	10	75	17.8	17.8	19.2
	12	1	.2	.2	19.5
	15	54	12.8	12.8	32.3
	16	1	.2	.2	32.5
	20	197	46.8	46.8	79.3
	24	1	.2	.2	79.6
	25	30	7.1	7.1	86.7
	30	38	9.0	9.0	95.7
	35	5	1.2	1.2	96.9
	40	8	1.9	1.9	98.8
	50	4	1.0	1.0	99.8
	60	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	421	100.0	100.0	

Tackling low wage economy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	5	4	3.8	3.8	4.8
	10	21	20.0	20.0	24.8
	15	13	12.4	12.4	37.1
	18	1	1.0	1.0	38.1
	20	47	44.8	44.8	82.9
	25	6	5.7	5.7	88.6
	30	9	8.6	8.6	97.1
	35	1	1.0	1.0	98.1
	45	1	1.0	1.0	99.0

70	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

Supporting an ageing population

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	8	2.1	2.1	2.1
	7	1	.3	.3	2.3
	10	67	17.4	17.4	19.8
	12	2	.5	.5	20.3
	15	47	12.2	12.2	32.6
	18	3	.8	.8	33.3
	20	191	49.7	49.7	83.1
	23	1	.3	.3	83.3
	25	28	7.3	7.3	90.6
	28	1	.3	.3	90.9
	30	22	5.7	5.7	96.6
	40	7	1.8	1.8	98.4
	50	4	1.0	1.0	99.5
	60	2	.5	.5	100.0
Total		384	100.0	100.0	

Creating prosperity and equal opportunity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	6	6.5	6.5	6.5
	10	19	20.7	20.7	27.2
	12	2	2.2	2.2	29.3
	15	13	14.1	14.1	43.5

18	1	1.1	1.1	44.6
20	38	41.3	41.3	85.9
25	6	6.5	6.5	92.4
30	5	5.4	5.4	97.8
40	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Improving amenities for all age groups

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	9	3.3	3.3	3.3
	7	1	.4	.4	3.6
	8	1	.4	.4	4.0
	10	76	27.6	27.6	31.6
	11	1	.4	.4	32.0
	12	1	.4	.4	32.4
	14	1	.4	.4	32.7
	15	37	13.5	13.5	46.2
	16	1	.4	.4	46.5
	17	1	.4	.4	46.9
	20	114	41.5	41.5	88.4
	22	1	.4	.4	88.7
	25	15	5.5	5.5	94.2
	30	11	4.0	4.0	98.2
	35	2	.7	.7	98.9
	40	2	.7	.7	99.6
	60	1	.4	.4	100.0
Total		275	100.0	100.0	

Increasing focus on community engagement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	3	8.1	8.1	8.1
	10	11	29.7	29.7	37.8
	15	6	16.2	16.2	54.1
	20	13	35.1	35.1	89.2
	25	3	8.1	8.1	97.3
	30	1	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	100.0	100.0	

SAVE**Improving environment**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	8	2.6	2.6	2.6
	10	51	16.7	16.7	19.3
	13	1	.3	.3	19.6
	15	25	8.2	8.2	27.8
	20	171	55.9	55.9	83.7
	23	1	.3	.3	84.0
	24	1	.3	.3	84.3
	25	15	4.9	4.9	89.2
	30	22	7.2	7.2	96.4
	35	1	.3	.3	96.7
	40	6	2.0	2.0	98.7
	50	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	100.0	

Creating opportunities for children and young people

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	9	3.8	3.8	3.8
	10	43	18.4	18.4	22.2
	15	14	6.0	6.0	28.2
	20	127	54.3	54.3	82.5
	25	17	7.3	7.3	89.7
	30	14	6.0	6.0	95.7
	35	2	.9	.9	96.6
	40	6	2.6	2.6	99.1
	50	2	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	234	100.0	100.0	

Minimising waste and increasing recycling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	5	2.4	2.4	2.4
	10	50	24.4	24.4	26.8
	15	14	6.8	6.8	33.7
	18	1	.5	.5	34.1
	20	104	50.7	50.7	84.9
	25	14	6.8	6.8	91.7
	30	14	6.8	6.8	98.5
	40	1	.5	.5	99.0
	50	1	.5	.5	99.5
	100	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	205	100.0	100.0	

Improving health

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10	13	17.8	17.8	17.8
	15	10	13.7	13.7	31.5
	20	37	50.7	50.7	82.2
	25	7	9.6	9.6	91.8
	30	3	4.1	4.1	95.9
	40	2	2.7	2.7	98.6
	50	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	73	100.0	100.0	

Improving skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	6	2.7	2.7	2.7
	8	1	.4	.4	3.1
	10	28	12.6	12.6	15.7
	12	1	.4	.4	16.1
	15	23	10.3	10.3	26.5
	20	140	62.8	62.8	89.2
	25	14	6.3	6.3	95.5
	30	9	4.0	4.0	99.6
	40	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	223	100.0	100.0	

Increase employment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
	10	17	20.2	20.2	22.6
	15	3	3.6	3.6	26.2
	20	48	57.1	57.1	83.3
	21	1	1.2	1.2	84.5
	25	2	2.4	2.4	86.9
	28	1	1.2	1.2	88.1
	30	9	10.7	10.7	98.8
	40	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Tackling contaminated land

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	6	1.4	1.4	1.4
	10	66	15.2	15.2	16.6
	14	1	.2	.2	16.9
	15	32	7.4	7.4	24.2
	17	1	.2	.2	24.5
	18	1	.2	.2	24.7
	20	223	51.5	51.5	76.2
	25	29	6.7	6.7	82.9
	26	1	.2	.2	83.1
	27	1	.2	.2	83.4
	28	1	.2	.2	83.6
	30	42	9.7	9.7	93.3
	33	1	.2	.2	93.5
	35	3	.7	.7	94.2
	40	10	2.3	2.3	96.5
	50	12	2.8	2.8	99.3

60	1	.2	.2	99.5
70	1	.2	.2	99.8
80	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	433	100.0	100.0	

Running services effectively

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	4	2.4	2.4	2.4
	10	23	13.7	13.7	16.1
	15	12	7.1	7.1	23.2
	20	89	53.0	53.0	76.2
	25	8	4.8	4.8	81.0
	30	22	13.1	13.1	94.0
	35	1	.6	.6	94.6
	40	5	3.0	3.0	97.6
	50	2	1.2	1.2	98.8
	60	2	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total		168	100.0	100.0	

Reducing crime and anti social behaviour

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	2.2	2.2	2.2
	5	1	2.2	2.2	4.4
	10	11	24.4	24.4	28.9
	11	1	2.2	2.2	31.1
	15	2	4.4	4.4	35.6
	16	1	2.2	2.2	37.8
	20	20	44.4	44.4	82.2
	22	1	2.2	2.2	84.4

25	3	6.7	6.7	91.1
30	2	4.4	4.4	95.6
50	2	4.4	4.4	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Furthering economic and urban regeneration

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	3	.7	.7	.7
	10	59	13.9	13.9	14.6
	15	28	6.6	6.6	21.2
	18	1	.2	.2	21.4
	20	254	59.8	59.8	81.2
	25	30	7.1	7.1	88.2
	27	1	.2	.2	88.5
	30	35	8.2	8.2	96.7
	35	4	.9	.9	97.6
	40	5	1.2	1.2	98.8
	50	3	.7	.7	99.5
	60	2	.5	.5	100.0
Total		425	100.0	100.0	

Improving education attainment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	5	1.7	1.7	1.7
	10	35	11.8	11.8	13.5
	15	28	9.5	9.5	23.0
	20	190	64.2	64.2	87.2
	25	15	5.1	5.1	92.2

28	1	.3	.3	92.6
30	10	3.4	3.4	95.9
35	2	.7	.7	96.6
40	6	2.0	2.0	98.6
50	3	1.0	1.0	99.7
60	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	296	100.0	100.0	

Creating employment opportunities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	5	3	2.9	2.9	3.8
	10	23	21.9	21.9	25.7
	15	11	10.5	10.5	36.2
	20	60	57.1	57.1	93.3
	25	5	4.8	4.8	98.1
	30	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
	35	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total		105	100.0	100.0	

Tackling low wage economy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	1	.3	.3	.3
	5	4	1.1	1.1	1.4
	8	1	.3	.3	1.6
	10	65	17.6	17.6	19.2
	13	1	.3	.3	19.5
	15	26	7.0	7.0	26.5
	18	3	.8	.8	27.3
	20	214	57.8	57.8	85.1
	25	12	3.2	3.2	88.4

30	30	8.1	8.1	96.5
35	2	.5	.5	97.0
40	2	.5	.5	97.6
45	2	.5	.5	98.1
50	4	1.1	1.1	99.2
51	1	.3	.3	99.5
70	1	.3	.3	99.7
100	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	370	100.0	100.0	

Supporting an ageing population

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	2	1.5	1.5	1.5
	8	1	.8	.8	2.3
	10	29	22.3	22.3	24.6
	15	15	11.5	11.5	36.2
	16	1	.8	.8	36.9
	20	68	52.3	52.3	89.2
	25	5	3.8	3.8	93.1
	30	6	4.6	4.6	97.7
	40	2	1.5	1.5	99.2
	50	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total		130	100.0	100.0	

Creating prosperity and equal opportunity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	6	1.5	1.5	1.5
	10	45	11.1	11.1	12.6
	12	1	.2	.2	12.8
	15	26	6.4	6.4	19.2
	17	1	.2	.2	19.5

18	1	.2	.2	19.7
20	246	60.6	60.6	80.3
23	1	.2	.2	80.5
25	29	7.1	7.1	87.7
26	1	.2	.2	87.9
30	32	7.9	7.9	95.8
40	9	2.2	2.2	98.0
50	7	1.7	1.7	99.8
60	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	406	100.0	100.0	

Improving amenities for all age groups

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	1	.4	.4	.4
	10	44	16.4	16.4	16.8
	15	27	10.1	10.1	26.9
	20	165	61.6	61.6	88.4
	22	1	.4	.4	88.8
	25	14	5.2	5.2	94.0
	26	1	.4	.4	94.4
	30	8	3.0	3.0	97.4
	33	1	.4	.4	97.8
	35	1	.4	.4	98.1
	40	2	.7	.7	98.9
	45	1	.4	.4	99.3
	50	1	.4	.4	99.6
	80	1	.4	.4	100.0
Total		268	100.0	100.0	

Increasing focus on community engagement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	.1	.1	.1
	5	6	.9	.9	1.0
	10	56	8.3	8.3	9.4
	15	34	5.1	5.1	14.5
	18	1	.1	.1	14.6
	20	352	52.4	52.5	67.1
	24	1	.1	.1	67.2
	25	53	7.9	7.9	75.1
	30	92	13.7	13.7	88.8
	33	1	.1	.1	89.0
	35	10	1.5	1.5	90.5
	40	33	4.9	4.9	95.4
	45	2	.3	.3	95.7
	50	22	3.3	3.3	99.0
	60	6	.9	.9	99.9
	80	1	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	671	99.9	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.1		
	Total	672	100.0		

Maintain current levels of service = increase Council tax

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	406	40.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	573	57.1		
	Missing	25	2.5		
	Total	598	59.6		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Improve current levels of service = increase Council tax

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	118	11.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	861	85.8		
	Missing	25	2.5		
	Total	886	88.2		
Total		1004	100.0		

Reduce current levels of service = Council tax to minimum

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	457	45.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	522	52.0		
	Missing	25	2.5		
	Total	547	54.5		
Total		1004	100.0		

Raise money increase charge of services

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	632	62.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	368	36.7		
	Missing	4	.4		
	Total	372	37.1		
Total		1004	100.0		

Introduce a payment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	252	25.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	736	73.3		
	Missing	16	1.6		
Total		752	74.9		
Total		1004	100.0		

Increase hire of sports pitches

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	375	37.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	613	61.1		
	Missing	16	1.6		
Total		629	62.6		
Total		1004	100.0		

Small charge for bus passes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	344	34.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	644	64.1		
	Missing	16	1.6		
Total		660	65.7		
Total		1004	100.0		

Increase charge for bulky items

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	461	45.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	527	52.5		
	Missing	16	1.6		

Total	543	54.1	
Total	1004	100.0	

Introduce registering birth or death charge

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	251	25.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	737	73.4		
	Missing	16	1.6		
	Total	753	75.0		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Introduce pest control charge

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	600	59.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	388	38.6		
	Missing	16	1.6		
	Total	404	40.2		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Should not charge for any

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	150	14.9	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	838	83.5		
	Missing	16	1.6		
	Total	854	85.1		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Paper questionnaire

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	733	73.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	251	25.0		
	Missing	20	2.0		
	Total	271	27.0		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Council website/ internet

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	221	22.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	763	76.0		
	Missing	20	2.0		
	Total	783	78.0		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Attend public meeting

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	120	12.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	864	86.1		
	Missing	20	2.0		
	Total	884	88.0		
	Total	1004	100.0		

Write to Council

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	66	6.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	918	91.4		

Missing	20	2.0	
Total	938	93.4	
Total	1004	100.0	

Financial info with questionnaire

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	526	52.4	100.0	100.0
Missing No	458	45.6		
Missing Missing	20	2.0		
Total	478	47.6		
Total	1004	100.0		

qa6

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Brief summary	688	68.5	71.3	71.3
Valid Full statement of accounts	277	27.6	28.7	100.0
Total	965	96.1	100.0	
Missing Missing	39	3.9		
Total	1004	100.0		

Council website

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	312	31.1	100.0	100.0
Missing No	679	67.6		
Missing Missing	13	1.3		
Total	692	68.9		
Total	1004	100.0		

Libraries/ direct link

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	175	17.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	816	81.3		
	Missing	13	1.3		
Total		829	82.6		
Total		1004	100.0		

Local press

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	387	38.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	604	60.2		
	Missing	13	1.3		
Total		617	61.5		
Total		1004	100.0		

Inside Halton

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	608	60.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	383	38.1		
	Missing	13	1.3		
Total		396	39.4		
Total		1004	100.0		

Council tax leaflet

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	649	64.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	342	34.1		
	Missing	13	1.3		

Total	355	35.4		
Total	1004	100.0		

Public meetings

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	95	9.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	No	896	89.2		
	Missing	13	1.3		
	Total	909	90.5		
	Total	1004	100.0		

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19th November 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Financial Services

SUBJECT: Medium Term Financial Strategy

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To establish the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2010/11 to 2012/13.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the Medium Term Financial Forecast be noted;**
- (2) the base budget be prepared on the basis of the underlying assumptions set out in the Forecast;**
- (3) the Budget Strategy and Capital Strategy be approved;**
- (4) the Reserves and Balances Strategy be approved; and**
- (5) further reports be considered by the Executive Board on the budget.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) sets out a three-year projection of resources and spending and it has been based on information that is currently available. New information will mean revisions to the Forecast. In particular, the Government's response to the recession, the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and the consequences on grant, especially beyond 2010/11.

3.2 There is great uncertainty about the level of public sector spending. As a result the Forecast gives two assumptions, an optimistic view, and a pessimistic view. The projections must be treated with a considerable degree of caution, but they do provide initial guidance to the Council on its financial position into the medium term.

3.3 During the Summer a survey was undertaken on the Council's budget using the Halton 2000 citizens panel and Area Forums. The results of the survey, which are reported separately on the agenda, should be taken into account when considering the budget and capital strategy.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

3.4 In summary, the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy has the following objectives:

- To prioritise investment in the five priority areas.
- To avoid excessive Council Tax rises.
- To deliver a balanced and sustainable budget.
- To achieve significant cashable efficiency gains to enable this to happen.

3.5 In setting the revenue and capital budgets, the Council has regard to its priority areas, namely:

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

These priorities are set out in more detail in the Council's Corporate Plan and in Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy.

Budget Strategy

3.6 The MTFE shows that the spending required to maintain existing policies and programmes is expected to increase at a faster rate than the resources available to support it. As a result, additional spending on new or improved services will have to be kept to an absolute minimum. To balance the budget the Forecast shows there is a requirement to make significant cost savings of at least £6m in each of the next 3 years.

3.7 As it stands at the moment, the Efficiency Programme is expected to generate savings of £3.0m next year and further savings of £2.5m and £1m in future years. This reduces the funding gap to at least £3m to be found in each of the next three years.

3.8 The Programme has also assisted the Council in developing a better understanding of its costs and how they compare to other Councils, which has enabled efficiencies and service improvements to be identified and prioritised.

Capital Strategy

3.9 The Asset Management Strategy sets out how the land and buildings that are in Council ownership or occupation are structured to support the Council's priorities. The capital programme is a major part of the strategy.

3.10 The MTFF shows that there is sufficient resource to cover the cost of the current Capital Programme. However, in the current economic climate it is unlikely that the Council will receive significant levels of capital receipts. As such the opportunity for additional capital spending is severely limited and therefore, new spending will need to be limited to schemes that come with funding

3.11 Prudential borrowing remains an option but the financing costs as a result of the borrowing will need to be accommodated within the revenue budget. Supported capital expenditure allocations will be passported to the relevant service.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The MTFs represents the “finance guidelines” that form part of the medium term corporate planning process. These guidelines identify the financial constraints that the Council will face in delivering its key objectives, and are an important influence on the development of the Corporate Plan and Service Plans and Strategies.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

5.1 There are no direct implications on the Council’s priorities, however, the revenue budget and capital programme support the delivery and achievement of all the Council’s priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The MTFs is a key part of the Council’s financial planning process, and as such minimises the risk that the Council fails to achieve a balanced budget.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Formula Grant 2009/10	Municipal Building	Nick Finnan
Formula Grant Consultation 2010/11	”	”
Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR2007)	”	”

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST

2010/11 TO 2012/13

**Financial Services
October 2009**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) sets out a three-year projection of resources and spending covering the period 2010/11 to 2012/13 and forms the background for the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. The projections made within the MTFF must be treated with caution and require continuous updating as the underlying assumptions behind them become clearer.
- 1.2 The MTFF represents the "finance guidelines" that form part of the medium term corporate planning process. These guidelines identify the financial constraints that the Council will face in delivering its key objectives, and are an important influence on the development of the Corporate Plan and Service Plans and Strategies.
- 1.3 Due to the level of uncertainty surrounding the future levels of public spending, the MTFF presents both an 'optimistic' and a 'pessimistic' view of the forecast levels of external support over the period.
- 1.4 The Audit Commission launched an Accounting Ratios tool in June 2009 to help local authorities monitor their financial performance on a range of financial ratios against similar authorities. The tool builds on the analysis of financial ratios included in the report 'Summing Up: A Review of Financial Management in Local Government 2005-2008' published in April 2009.
- 1.5 The tool calculates five key ratios based on the 2007/08 Final Accounts; it does not provide figures for any previous years. Appendix 1 compares Halton's performance across each of the ratios to its CIPFA Nearest Neighbours. The figures provided by the tool should be treated with caution, there are no right or wrong answers for each of the ratios, and to use one year's figures in isolation isn't sufficient as ratios need to be analysed over a number of years to identify trends or avoid exceptions. However, the five ratios show Halton to have a fundamentally sound financial base.

2.0 COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW

- 2.1 The financial year 2010/11 is the final year covered by the Government's 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR2007) which was announced on the 9th October 2007, setting out the Government's planned public sector spending for the three-year period up to 2010/11.
- 2.2 The Government stated that CSR 2007 is a "fair and affordable settlement" for Local Government and in exchange, Local Government should not make "excessive" Council Tax increases or reduce service quality. Overall Council Tax increases should be "well under" 5%.

- 2.3 The increase in resources announced in CSR2007 was underpinned by an ambitious value for money programme, requiring Local Government to achieve 3% cashable efficiency savings releasing savings of £4.9 billion by 2010/11. This was increased to £5.5 billion in the 2009 Budget Report announced in April 2009, requiring Councils to find 4% efficiency savings in 2010/11. The Council is required to report the value of “cash releasing value for money gains” as part of the new national performance indicator framework.
- 2.4 Beyond CSR2007, the Operational Efficiency Programme anticipates an additional £9bn per annum efficiency savings in procurement, back offices and IT and property running costs by 2013/14. No detail is provided on what Local Authorities share of these future savings will be.
- 2.5 An aim of CSR2007 is to deliver greater flexibility for Local Authorities to meet local priorities and improve local areas by removing ring-fencing and other controls from grants totalling £5 billion by 2010/11. The aim is that these will be mainstreamed into Formula Grant, and where this is not possible, through a specific grant delivered through an Area Based Grant.
- 2.6 The next spending review period is expected to cover 2011/12 to 2013/14, and is likely to be reported in 2010. Spending on public services assumptions for this period have been revised down in the 2009 Budget Report, down from 1.1% real terms growth anticipated in the Pre-Budget Report 2008 to 0.7% real terms growth. To put this in context, if 1.1% was to be achieved this would have been tighter than the average spending settlements from 1979 to 1997. There is a great deal of uncertainty over the level of funding local government will receive beyond 2010/11, with a lot of speculation about significant cuts in public spending to help reduce the level of public borrowing.

3.0 EXTERNAL SUPPORT

- 3.1 The Local Government Finance Settlement announced on the 24th January 2008 brought in three-year allocations for the period 2008/09 to 2010/11. The multi-year Settlement has aided medium-term planning, greatly reducing uncertainty when forecasting the level of settlement included in the forecast.
- 3.2 However, 2010/11 is the final year covered by this settlement and there is a great deal of uncertainty over the level of funding for Local Government from 2011/12 and beyond. This has made forecasting the level of grant funding included in the final two years of the forecast very difficult, therefore, the projections must be treated with a considerable degree of caution. As outlined earlier both an “optimistic” and “pessimistic” view of external support is used in the Forecast.

Formula Grant

- 3.3 The main source of Government funding to local authorities is through Formula Grant, which comprises Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and redistributed National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). Distribution of the grant to local authorities is based on what is known as the “four block model”. It distributes grant split over three blocks with the amount allocated to each block, at the national level, based on Ministerial judgement. The fourth block is the damping mechanism to ensure that all authorities receive at least the minimum increase in grant. The system is not transparent making it difficult to identify the amount of grant received by individual authorities for new functions or grant transfers.
- 3.4 The Government uses damping to protect Authorities from detrimental grant changes by setting a “Floor”, or minimum increase in grant. To meet the cost of bringing local authorities’ grant increase to the floor, grant increases above the floor are scaled back. This was retained in the formula throughout the CSR2007 period but has been tapered down to 1.5% in 2010/11.
- 3.5 The Government have indicated that they will not be re-opening the final year of the three-year settlement and therefore, the Forecast assumes that the amount of settlement Halton will receive for 2010/11 will remain at the levels announced in the Provisional 2010/11 Settlement in January 2009.
- 3.6 As there is a great deal of uncertainty over the level of Formula Grant after 2010/11 and the methodology that will be used, the optimistic forecast assumes a freeze in Halton’s settlement at the 2010/11 level. The DCLG are currently reviewing the methodology used to distribute Formula Grant from 2011/12, with possible adverse affects on Halton’s future settlements from changes to Concessionary Fares and Highways. Some functions will also transfer to Halton over the period of the Forecast, including the continuing transfer of funding from the Learning and Skills Council, and the transfer of Valuing People from the PCT in April 2011. The forecast assumes these transfers will be cost neutral, although this cannot be guaranteed and will be reviewed when new information becomes available.
- 3.7 The optimistic level of Formula Grant for Halton is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Formula Grant Forecast 2010/11 to 2012/13 - Optimistic

	2009/10 £'000's	2010/11 £'000's	2011/12 £'000's	2012/13 £'000's
Formula Grant	62,459	62,459	63,969	63,969
Provisional Increase		1,509		
Formula Grant Freeze			0	0
Formula Grant	62,459	63,969	63,969	63,969

- 3.8 The pessimistic forecast of future levels of Formula Grant assumes a 2% cash reduction in Halton's settlement in each year from 2011/12. This is shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2 – Formula Grant Forecast 2010/11 to 2012/13 - Pessimistic

	2009/10 £'000's	2010/11 £'000's	2011/12 £'000's	2012/13 £'000's
Formula Grant	62,459	62,459	63,969	62,689
Provisional Increase		1,509		
2% Annual Reduction			(1,280)	(1,254)
Formula Grant	62,459	63,969	62,689	61,435

Specific & Area Based Grant

- 3.9 The Council receives large sums of Specific Grants which, as the name implies, are intended for specific purposes. The provisional settlement 2010/11 announced provisional allocations for Specific Grants of £105.4m in 2010/11.
- 3.10 Area Based Grant (ABG) is a non ring fenced general grant allocated directly to local authorities as additional revenue funding and is allocated to specific policy areas rather than general formulae. Local authorities are free to use all of this funding as they see fit to support the delivery of local, regional and national priorities in their areas. For 2009/10 Halton received £14.8m in ABG and the grants were allocated in accordance with the national priorities. The provisional allocation for 2010/11 is £21.5m including the transfer into ABG of £6.8m Supporting People Grant.
- 3.11 CSR2007 announced the Government's intention of removing ring-fencing and other controls from grants totalling £5 billion by 2010/11 by mainstreaming them into Formula Grant or Area Based Grant. At present it is unlikely that any grants will transfer into the Settlement in

2010/11 and it is unclear which grants, if any, will transfer into the Settlement from 2011/12.

- 3.12 Allocations for 2011/12 are not yet known and, at this stage, the optimistic forecast assumes that grants will be maintained at their current levels. However the pessimistic view is that the level of grants will reduce by 2% each year. These assumptions should be treated with caution and will be reviewed when new information becomes available.

4.0 COUNCIL TAX FORECAST

- 4.1 The Government retains the right to control “excessive” Council tax increases and, as part of the CSR2007, the Government reiterated its expectation of Council Tax increases “well below 5%” and has continued to use its capping powers.

- 4.2 For 2009/10 the Council Tax for a Band D property is £1,116.69 (excluding police, fire and parish precepts), which will generate income of £42.7m. Each 1% increase in Council Tax generates approximately £426,000 in spending power.

- 4.3 When setting Council Tax levels it is clear that higher increases enable more growth in spending and/or reduce the requirement to make savings. However, there are a wide number of factors that need to be considered when determining the appropriate increase in Council Tax. These factors include:

- Halton has the 3rd lowest Council Tax level in the North West and the 30th lowest in England,
- Halton’s Council Tax is £90.86 (6.4%) below the average Council Tax set by Local Authorities in England.
- Halton’s increase in Council Tax in 2008/09 was 3.4% which was above the national average of 2.9%.
- Inflation - the Consumer Price Index (CPI), fell below the Governments target of 2% in June 2009 for the first time since September 2007. CPI is currently at 1.1%, and the Retail Price Index (RPI) at -1.4%.
- The general economic climate as the Country moves towards lifting itself out of recession, the slow housing market and increasing unemployment.

- 4.4 Table 3 below estimates the net amount of Council Tax income that will be produced for a given % increase in Halton’s Band D Council Tax for the next 3 years and assumes no change in taxbase.

Table 3 – Council Tax Income for 2010 to 2013

Projected Increases in Council Tax Income (£'000)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
2.0%	853	870	887
3.0%	1,280	1,318	1,357
4.0%	1,706	1,775	1,845

5.0 OTHER RESOURCES

- 5.1 Under the second generation Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) the Council will receive a reward grant of £1.25m for achieving specific improvements in performance across 12 targets. The performance reward grant is payable in two instalments of £628,000 paid in March 2009 and March 2010. These payments are split equally between revenue and capital and £250,000 of the revenue grant received in March 2009 was used to balance the 2009/10 budget. There is also the potential to receive a further £610,000 if the remaining LPSA targets are achieved. Again payments will be received in two instalments in March 2010 and March 2011, and split equally between capital and revenue.
- 5.2 In February 2008 the Government announced a further reward scheme distributing a total of £340m linked to Local Area Agreement (LAA) performance payable in 2011/12 and 2012/13. There is potential to receive a total of £891,000 if all targets are achieved, again split between capital and revenue. Given the uncertainty surrounding the achievement of these targets and the likely amount to be received, this has not been included in the Forecast.
- 5.3 The Government recently consulted on the revised Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) scheme which is set to allocate £50m in 2009/10 and £50m in 2010/11. Halton received £115,000 for 2009/10 but there is still uncertainty about the level the Council will receive for 2010/11. Given the uncertainty the 2010/11 figure has been excluded from the forecast.
- 5.4 The Government has consulted on a Business Rate Supplement Bill which will give upper tier authorities, such as Halton, the power to levy a local supplement on business rates for economic development purposes, from April 2010. The current proposals would allow a maximum levy of 2p in £ of rateable value above £50,000 of non domestic properties. At this stage it is unclear how much this would generate as there will also be a revaluation of non domestic properties and therefore it is excluded from the Forecast.
- 5.5 The Government is consulting on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL will be a new charge which local authorities in England and

Wales will be empowered, but not required, to charge on most types of new development in their area. At this stage it is unclear how much, if anything, this would generate and therefore it is excluded from the forecast.

6.0 SPENDING FORECAST

- 6.1 The spending forecast provides an estimate of the increase in revenue expenditure that will be required over the next three years in order to maintain existing policies and programmes. In effect this represents an early estimate of the standstill budget requirement using the information that is currently available.
- 6.2 The scope of the Forecast covers General Fund revenue activities that are financed through Revenue Support Grant, Non Domestic Rates and the Council Tax. Schools budgets are considered in Section 11.
- 6.3 The Forecast includes the budgetary consequences of previous budget decisions, including one-off savings used to balance the 2009/10 budget, this adds £2.6m to the forecast for 2010/11. It also includes further increases to the Revenue Priorities Fund of £0.5m in each year.
- 6.4 Pay and price inflation is the biggest uncertainty and the single most costly factor in the Forecast. The Local Government Pay Award is one of the major pressures affecting the budget. A pay award of 1% has been agreed for 2009/10 which is less expected and produces a budget saving of £800,000. A public sector pay freeze has been put forward as one way to bring down the level of public borrowing, however, it is felt to be more prudent to include pay inflation at 1% in each year of the forecast. It is projected to increase the spending requirement by £0.8m in 2010/11. In addition, the MTFP has provided £1m in each year to cover the cost of increments, the consequences of job evaluation, equal pay and premium pay.
- 6.5 Inflation has fallen dramatically since this time last year. Currently the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which the Government uses to measure inflation, stands at 1.1%. This is almost half the Governments 2% target and well below the 4.1% it was 12 months ago. The forecast assumes that many items of supplies and services expenditure will continue to be cash limited. However, it would not be prudent to cash limit certain types of expenditure. Where appropriate a rate will be used in the budget that more accurately reflects the true picture of current and future prices.
- 6.6 The impact of the recession has adversely impacted on income levels, particularly from market, commercial and industrial rents as well as from land search fees and planning fees. It is anticipated that income levels will not revert to their previous levels and the forecast assumes an overall loss of income of £1.5m in 2010/11.

- 6.7 The Government have set targets for both recycling waste and limits to biodegradable municipal waste. Failure to meet these targets will result in significant financial penalties and to respond to these targets will require considerable investment. In the meantime these penalties can be avoided by buying allowances under the LATS scheme.
- 6.8 In addition, the disposal of waste using a landfill site is subject to Landfill Tax paid on top of landfill fees. The 2009 Budget announced that the standard rate for Landfill Tax would continue to increase annually by £8 per tonne rising from £48 per tonne to £72 by April 2013. Consequently an additional £400,000 is included in 2010/11, and a further £600,000 in each of the following two years of the forecast to cover additional waste disposal costs from landfill tax and purchase of LATS allowances.
- 6.9 A key assumption that has been used in constructing the MTFE is that total spending in 2009/10 is kept within the overall budget. In particular it can be difficult to control 'demand led' budgets such as children in care and care in the community. The Forecast assumes any budgetary pressures in the demand for services or match funding will be addressed through the growth process.
- 6.10 In this context it is important to consider the contingency for uncertain and unexpected items. Due to the considerable uncertainty over inflation, interest rates, demand led budgets, and loss of income, the forecast includes a contingency of £1.0m in 2010/11, £1.5m in 2011/12, and £2.0m in 2012/13.
- 6.11 March 2009 witnessed the Bank of England base interest rate fall to, and remain at, a historical low of 0.5%. This has resulted in a large fall in the level of interest it is possible to earn on investments. The forecast includes £0.6m lost investment interest income as a result of the fall in interest rates.
- 6.12 The Council has a significant capital programme and the forecast includes the financing costs of the existing programme, such as the early land acquisition relating to the Mersey Gateway Project. The revenue costs associated with the Capital Programme are included in the forecast at £0.3m in 2010/11, £1.2m in 2011/12, and £1.6m in 2012/13.

6.13 Table 4 outlines the Spending Forecast for the next 3 years.

Table 4 – General Fund Medium Term Spending Forecast

Increase in Spending required to maintain existing policies and services	Year on year change (£'000)		
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
FYE of Previous Year Budget	2,603		
Pay Settlement below Budget 2009/10	-821		
Priorities Fund	500	500	500
Pay and price inflation	1,737	1,839	1,737
Pay Contingency	1,000	1,000	1,000
Waste Disposal	364	610	610
Contingency	1,000	1,500	2,000
Loss of Income	1,500		
Change of Interest Rates	623		
Capital Programme	311	1,245	1,600
TOTAL INCREASE	8,817	6,694	7,447

6.14 Bringing together the resources and spending forecasts indicates an overall funding gap of at least £6m-£8m in each of the next three years.

7.0 EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

7.1 The Council has a good record of delivering efficiencies. Nevertheless, KPMG were commissioned to assist putting together an efficiency and improvement programme. The Efficiency Programme consists of a number of workstreams which are currently being implemented. Following negotiations with the trades unions, a Staffing Protocol has been agreed.

7.2 It is anticipated that the current Efficiency Programme will deliver net savings of £3.0m next year with a further £2.5m and £1.0m in subsequent years. As further waves of the Efficiency Programme are implemented then additional savings will be made.

8.0 THE FUNDING GAP

8.1 Even with these savings there is still a significant funding gap between spending and resources. Table 5 demonstrates the funding gap at different levels of Council Tax increase.

Table 5: Funding Gap with a given % increase in Council Tax - Optimistic

Council Tax Increase of:	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
2%	3,805	3,413	5,611
3%	3,379	2,539	4,267
4%	2,952	1,656	2,896

- 8.2 Table 6 gives a more pessimistic outlook of the gap between spending and resources, again at different levels of Council Tax increase.

Table 6: Funding Gap with a given % increase in Council Tax - Pessimistic

Council Tax Increase of:	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
2%	5,108	4,668	6,840
3%	4,682	3,794	5,496
4%	4,255	2,911	4,125

9.0 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 9.1 Each year the Government provides supported capital expenditure (SCE) allocations for the local transport programme, housing, social services and education. These allocations can either be in grants or borrowing approvals. The formula grant system is constructed so that the funding cost associated with the allocations results in additional grant. The Forecast therefore assumes that the allocations are passported to the relevant services. However, this approach would have to be reconsidered if the Council were to find itself below the grant floor for a prolonged period since, as in these circumstances, grant is not made available to fund the borrowing costs.
- 9.2 The current system of capital controls allows local authorities to supplement the SCE allocations by way of prudential borrowing. Such borrowing is required to be:
- prudent
 - affordable, and
 - sustainable
- 9.3 The Council has used prudential borrowing provided that the cost of borrowing has been covered by savings or additional income. The Forecast continues this approach.
- 9.4 The Council has been extremely successful in attracting grants and contributions. In this way the Council has been able to undertake significant capital expenditure without financing costs falling on the budget.
- 9.5 The Council's capital programme is updated each year incorporating new starts approved through the budget process. The current programme is dominated by the land acquisitions for the Mersey Gateway project and the major regeneration projects designed to promote economic growth and employment opportunities. In the near future the Building Schools for the Future and Primary Capital Programme will be major components of the capital programme.

- 9.6 The spending plans and funding of the Capital Programme are as follows:

	2010/11 £m	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m
Spending Plans	55.8	42.7	26.8
Funding			
Grants and Contributions	25.7	3.8	-
Borrowing	27.1	32.3	23.8
Capital Receipts	3.0	6.6	3.0
	55.8	42.7	26.8

- 9.7 As the Capital Programme stands at the moment it fully commits the available capital receipts. In recent years a major source of funding the capital programme has been capital receipts. However, the credit crunch has meant this source of funding has dried up. Following the transfer of the housing stock to HHT, capital receipts from right to buys and the VAT shelter arrangement are receivable and these are included within the forecast.
- 9.8 A further major problem facing the current capital programme is accommodating the financing costs as well as the ongoing revenue costs such as maintenance of any assets.
- 9.9 In conclusion any new capital schemes would need to bring with it its own funding such as from SCEs, grants or prudential borrowing.

10.0 RESERVES & BALANCES

- 10.1 The Councils Reserves and Balances Strategy is attached in Appendix 2. It sets out the Council's Strategy in respect of the level of reserves and balances it wishes to maintain, by reference to the financial needs and risks associated with the Council's activities.
- 10.2 The level of balances and reserves will be reviewed as part of the budget and final accounts processes. At the moment they appear reasonable, however there are a number of uncertainties including the cost of job evaluation appeals and any equal pay claims which are still not clear.

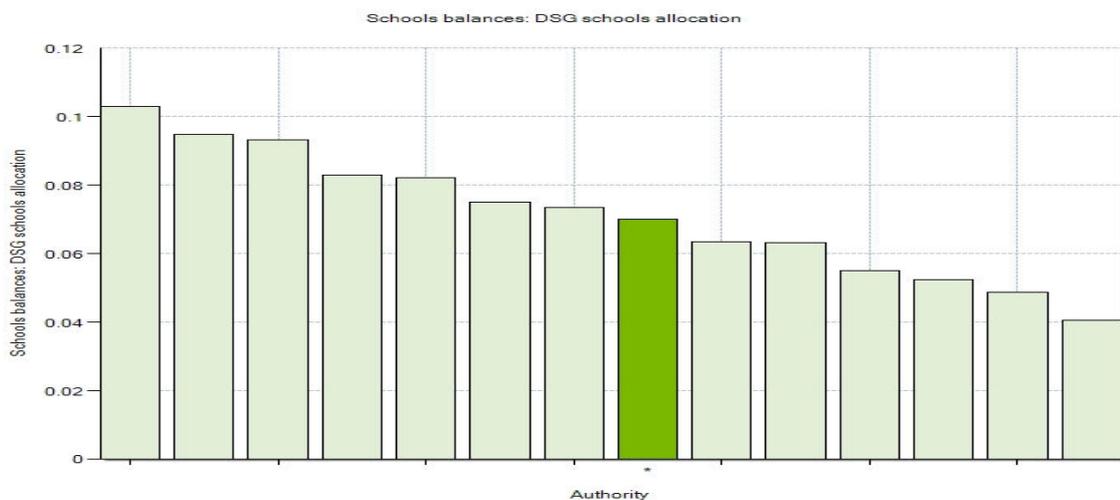
11.0 SCHOOLS BUDGET

- 11.1 Schools are now fully funded by Government grants, primarily the Dedicated Schools Grant. The DSG is used to fund the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) which is allocated to schools by way of a formula, in accordance with the Local Management of Schools Financial Scheme (the formula), and the central allocation in

accordance with Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) guidelines.

- 11.2 The Schools Forum assesses and considers current and future arrangements and changes to Schools funding, agreeing any formula changes.
- 11.3 CSR 2007 announced that education spend in England will rise by 2.8% per year in real terms until 2010/11. Funding will continue to be received on a “spend plus” model plus a basic per pupil increase each year throughout the period. However, the Government intend to move to a single formula distribution method for DSG by April 2011, at present the details and the possible effects on school funding are unknown.
- 11.4 The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) guarantees a minimum level for funding for all schools, regardless of the calculation for the schools within the formula, with schools receiving the higher of the MFG or ISB aiding the budget planning process. For 2010/11 the MFG is expected to be 2.1% per pupil. The continuation of the MFG after 2010/11 is uncertain as this may be removed as part of the introduction of the new distribution formula.
- 11.5 For Halton DSG will increase by 3.5% in 2010/11, equivalent to 4.1% per pupil respectively. The level of DSG beyond 2010/11 is uncertain.
- 11.6 The Audit Commission Accounting Ratio tool includes a ratio measuring school balances as a percentage of DSG allocation. Graph 1 shows the level of schools balances for our CIPFA nearest neighbours. Halton’s figure is close to 7% and is close to the average and also around the average level for Unitary authorities.

Graph 1: School Balances as a % of Dedicated Schools Grant



- 11.7 The level of balances retained will have been influenced by decisions made by school governors to hold money back for future expenditure plans. However, unnecessarily high levels indicate that schools are not

applying DSG to meet in-year educational needs. The level of balances held by Halton's schools does not appear to be out of step when compared to other authorities.

12.0 PARTNERSHIPS

12.1 The major partnership for the Council is the Halton Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). In conjunction with the Government Office North West, the LSP are responsible for setting local community priorities within Halton. These are delivered through a Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LSP's priorities have been funded through the Working Neighbourhood Fund Grant (formerly Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Grant) of £5.9m in 2009/10, and HBC priorities funding of £1.8m. The WNF grant is provisionally forecast to rise to £6.1m in 2010/11. The continuation of WNF from 2011/12 and beyond is uncertain, at this stage the forecast assumes that WNF will be maintained at their current levels. This assumption should be treated with caution and will be reviewed when new information becomes available.

12.2 Halton takes part in joint planning with Halton and St. Helens Primary Care Trust (H&SHPCT), and has several Pooled Budgets with H&SHPCT and one such pooled budget is the Adults with Learning Disabilities (ALD) Pooled Budget. However, funding for ALD services has began to transfer on a phased basis to local authorities from April 2009. The Forecast assumes this will be on a "net nil" basis.

12.3 Other pooled budgets include the Integrated Community Equipment Service Pooled Budget, and the Intermediate Care Pooled Budget. The Children with Disabilities (CwD) pooled budget with the PCT oversees the development and implementation of a multi-agency strategy regarding the provision of services to children with disabilities, their families and carers. There are planned to be a large number of Pooled Budgets within Children and Young People in the coming years, all supporting the Children's Trust.

13.0 MONITORING

13.1 Spending against each Departments revenue budget and capital programme will be monitored and reported to the Policy and Performance Boards, alongside service outcomes within the quarterly performance management reports. The Council-wide position will also be reported to the Executive Board Sub Committee.

14.0 SUMMARY

14.1 The Forecast has identified, in terms of the revenue budget that spending required to maintain existing policies and programmes is expected to increase at a faster rate than the resources available to support it, especially in times of recession and cuts in public spending. Consequently there is a requirement to make significant budget

savings, in addition to those identified by the Efficiency Programme, across each of the next three years. There are also spending pressures, not included in the Forecast, which will result in the need for further savings to keep the council tax increase to reasonable levels.

- 14.2 Levels of growth and savings will therefore be directly influenced by the decisions made concerning Council Tax increases. Higher Council Tax increases will reduce the level of savings that are required although the Government has demonstrated that it will use its reserve capping powers to limit Council Tax increases which it deems to be excessive.
- 14.3 The Medium Term Financial Forecast has been based on information that is currently available. Revisions will need to be made as new developments take place and new information becomes available.

RATIO ANALYSIS

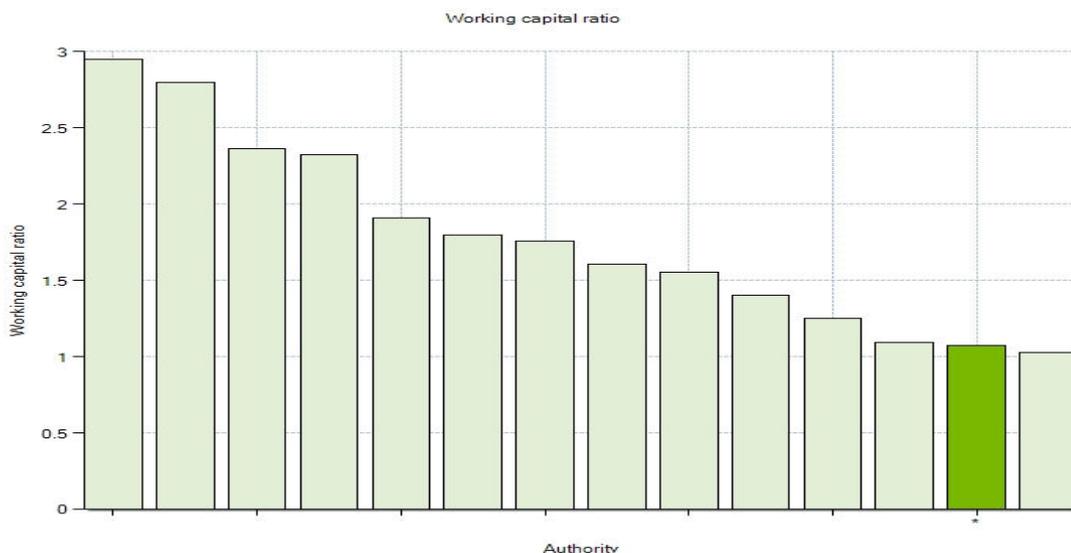
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Audit Commission launched an Accounting Ratios tool in June 2009 to help local authorities monitor their financial performance on a range of financial ratios against similar authorities. The tool builds on the analysis of financial ratios included in the report 'Summing Up: A Review of Financial Management in Local Government 2005-2008' published in April 2009.
- 1.2 The tool calculates five ratios based on the 2007/08 Final Accounts; it does not provide figures for any previous years. Each of the following charts compares Halton's performance across each of the five ratios to its CIPFA Nearest Neighbours. The figures provided by the tool should be treated with caution, there are no right or wrong answers for each of the ratios, and to use one year's figures in isolation isn't sufficient as ratios need to be analysed over a number of years to identify trends or blips.

2.0 WORKING CAPITAL RATIO

- 2.1 The Working Capital Ratio measures the relationship between current assets and current liabilities and recognises a council's ability to pay its current liabilities in the short-term.

Figure 1: Working Capital Ratio



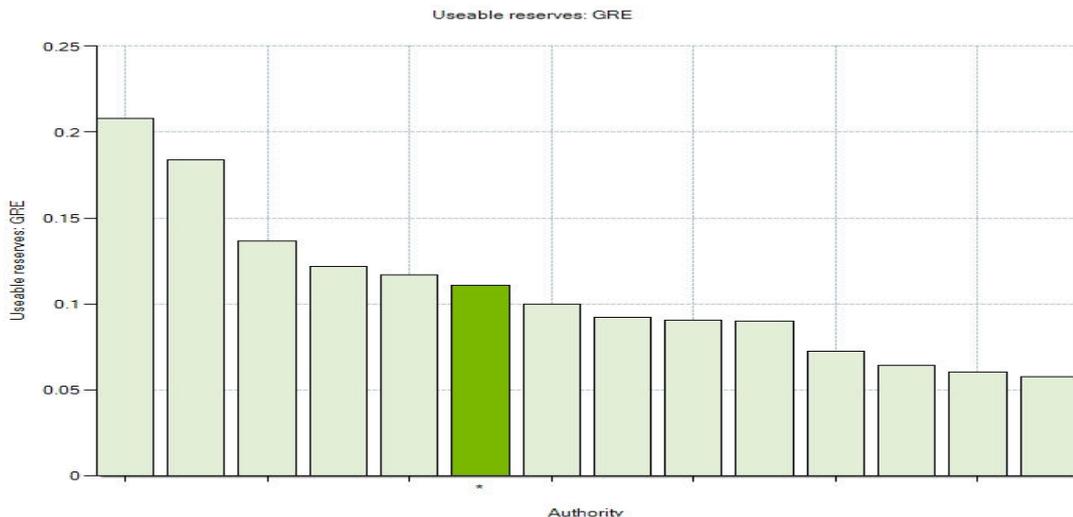
- 2.2 Figure 1 shows Halton to be at the lower end of the graph with a ratio of 1.07. A ratio of less than 1 would indicate that the council has more current liabilities than current assets and could potentially have difficulties paying current liabilities in the short-term if required to do so.

However, a ratio significantly above 1 does not indicate good financial performance, for example, a high level of current debtors could indicate poor performance in recovering debt. Halton's score of 1.07 is in the lowest quartile for Unitary Authorities, however, the score is above 1 and is therefore acceptable.

3.0 USEABLE RESERVES

3.1 Useable reserves as a percentage of general revenue expenditure shows the percentage of annual spend that could be covered by reserves. The calculation of this ratio can be difficult as the level of detail disclosed in authorities accounts can vary widely, making it difficult to identify useable reserves. The pensions reserve and the revaluation reserve has been excluded from this analysis as they are required to be held by statute.

Figure 2: Useable Reserves as a % of General Revenue Expenditure



3.2 Figure 2 demonstrates that Halton's useable reserves as a % of general revenue expenditure is around the average for the group at 11%, however, the level is within the upper quartile for Unitary Authorities. The level held by a council reflects the objectives and policy decisions, a clear statement of Halton's reserves policy is attached in the Reserves and Balances Strategy.

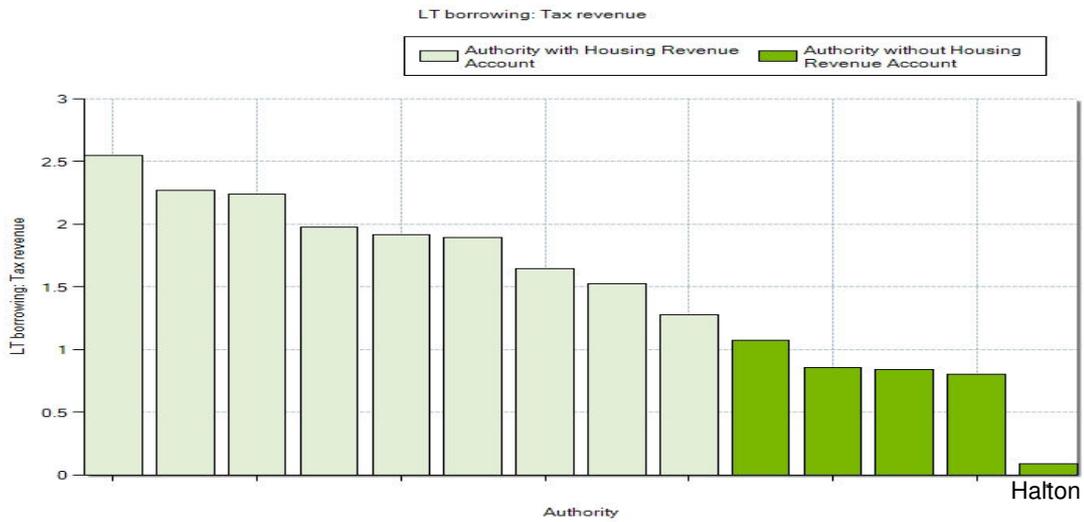
4.0 LONG TERM BORROWING

4.1 The above ratio compares long-term debt with tax revenue, defined as council tax, NNDR and other non-specific government grants, to consider the proportion of a council's tax related income that would be needed to pay off current long-term debt.

4.2 Figure 3 shows Halton has the lowest long-term debt compared to tax revenue at 9%. The above comparison does not highlight right or wrong levels of borrowing, however, Halton has a very low level of

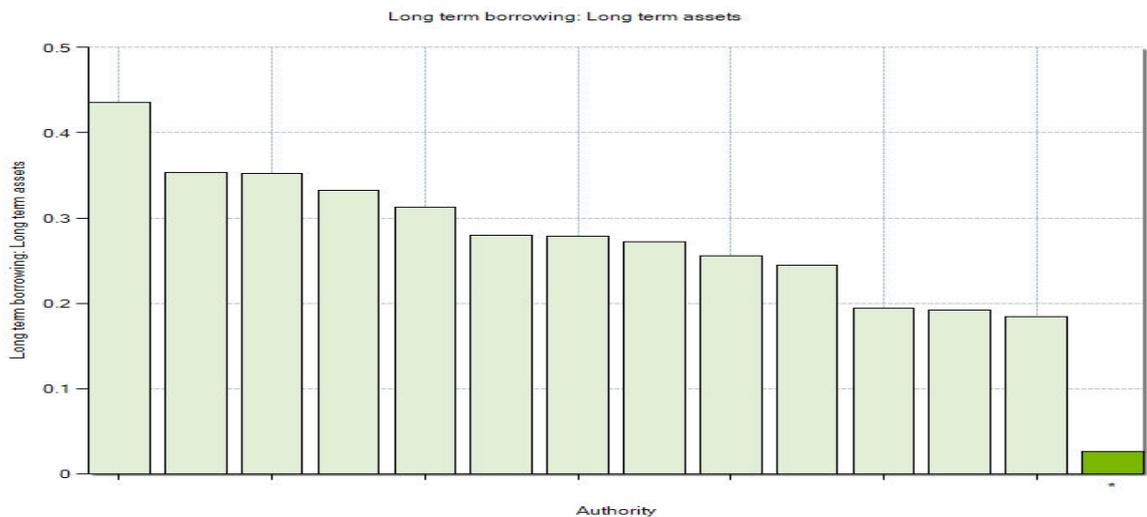
long-term debt and its repayment should only have minimal impact on future service delivery.

Figure 3: Long-term Borrowing compared to Tax Revenue



4.3 The majority of the assets held by a council are for the delivery of services not generating income, so a key consideration is whether assets can be used for longer without deterioration in the quality of service delivery. If assets require replacement or repair, this will often be funded from borrowing. The above ratio examines the relationship between long-term assets and long-term borrowing. Halton is the lowest in the grouping shown in Figure 4 at 2%, and is within the lowest quartile of Unitary authorities. A low ratio indicates a low level of borrowing compared to the level of long-term assets.

Figure 4: Long-term Borrowing Compared to Long-term Assets



RESERVES AND BALANCES STRATEGY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The following sets out the Council's Strategy in respect of the level of reserves and balances it wishes to maintain, by reference to the financial needs and risks associated with the Council's activities.
- 1.2 The overall strategy is to provide the Council with an appropriate level of reserves and balances in relation to its day to day activities and to ensure the Council's financial standing is sound and supports the achievement of its long term objectives and corporate priorities.
- 1.3 The Operational Director, Financial Services will undertake quarterly reviews of the level of reserves and balances and take appropriate action in order to ensure the overall strategy is achieved. The outcome of the reviews will be reported to Executive Board Sub Committee and will be used to inform the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the annual budget setting process and the final accounts process.
- 1.4 The Strategy concentrates upon the Council's key reserves and balances, being those which may potentially have a significant affect upon the Council's financial standing and its day to day operations.

2.0 GENERAL BALANCES

- 2.1 It has been the Council's policy since it gained unitary status to increase general balances. Close monitoring and control of budgets since then has meant this policy has been successfully achieved. It is considered prudent to maintain them at a reasonable level in order to provide for any major unforeseen future events.
- 2.2 The level of revenue budget savings currently indicated by the MTFS, provides increased uncertainty in terms of the Council's ability to deliver spending in line with its annual budget, which would result in a reduction in General Balances.
- 2.3 It is therefore considered prudent to maintain sufficient general balances in order to provide for such eventualities, as well as to minimise the financial impact of any major unforeseen future events.

3.0 BAD DEBT PROVISION

General Debtors

- 3.1 The Council makes provision for bad and doubtful debts based upon an annual review of outstanding debts profiled by age. The bad debt provisions in respect of general debtors currently total £4.1m.
- 3.2 Past experience has shown that after 43 days the likelihood of sundry debts being paid reduces significantly and therefore the risk of them not being recovered increases greatly. It is therefore considered prudent to make full provision for all sundry debts outstanding for more than 43 days.
- 3.3 In specific areas where historically there have been difficulties recovering sundry debts, such as with Adult Social Care, it is also considered prudent to make additional provision in order to ensure the risk of financial loss to the Council is minimised.

Council Tax / Business Rates (NNDR)

- 3.4 Bad debt provisions are also held in respect of Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) debts and are based on an overall 99% collection rate. The bad debt provisions in respect of Council Tax and NNDR debtors currently total £3.8m.
- 3.5 The levels of bad debt provisions held are considered prudent in relation to the current level and age profile of outstanding debts, but will continue to be reviewed annually and appropriate action taken in order to minimise the risk of financial loss to the Council.

4.0 INSURANCE RESERVE

- 4.1 The Council holds an Insurance Reserve in order to meet the cost of current and future insurance claims which exceed the level of cover provided by the Council's insurers.
- 4.2 In particular, this relates to claims for fire damage on school premises, where the Council's insurance policy has an excess of £100,000 and the Council also has to fund up to 20% of the cost of each claim (except where sprinkler systems are in existence). In addition, the cost of renewal of contents etc. following a fire often exceeds the insured costs. Past experience of major school fires in Halton has shown that the proportion of costs falling to be funded from the Insurance Reserve in these instances can be very significant.
- 4.3 The level of the Insurance Reserve is reviewed annually by comparison to the total outstanding claims and the potential cost of future major claims, particularly school fires. The Insurance Reserve currently totals £3.4m.

- 4.4 A separate Insurance Reserve exists to meet future claims in respect of the Council's previous housing stock, which was transferred to Halton Housing Trust in 2005. This reserve is primarily intended to minimise the financial risk to the Council of potential future environmental claims relating to the period prior to the transfer. This reserve currently totals £1.4m.

5.0 CAPITAL RESERVE

- 5.1 The Council holds a Capital Reserve to support the financing of the Council's capital programme and currently totals £4.75m. However, following the capitalisation direction received in respect of 2008/09 Mersey Gateway preparation costs, the Capital Reserve has been earmarked to meet the remaining Mersey Gateway preparation costs in 2009/10 and beyond.

6.0 SINGLE STATUS

- 6.1 The Council has set-aside funds totalling £2.5m to assist with meeting the costs of equal pay claims and job evaluation, following the adoption of single status. The likely cost of meeting equal pay claims is as yet unknown and it is not clear whether the reserve will be sufficient to meet these costs.

7.0 INVEST TO SAVE FUND

- 7.1 In 2007/08 the Council created an Invest to Save Fund which currently totals £2.7m, in order to provide one-off funding for proposals which will generate efficiencies and thereby create significant, permanent, revenue budget savings, whilst also supporting the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives. In particular, the fund will meet the costs of Efficiency Programme.
- 7.2 Applications for funding which meet specific criteria are considered by Executive Board Sub Committee and ultimately a proportion of the revenue budget savings achieved are returned in order to sustain the Fund.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	19 th November 2009
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Children & Young People
SUBJECT:	Primary School Special Educational Needs Review
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek permission to proceed to formal consultation on the proposals for Special Education Needs (SEN) in Primary Schools, ultimately leading to statutory notice.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: -**
That Executive Board:

- 2.1 Endorses the proposals and recommendations within the report.
- 2.2 Gives approval to proceed to statutory consultation on these proposals.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background**

Members will be aware that the Local Authority has been undertaking a review of Special Educational Needs provision within the Borough. It was agreed that resources will continue to be allocated to pupils in existing mainstream school settings to ensure that their needs are met.

- 3.2 The Council is committed to providing a range of SEN services that can meet the individual needs of children and their families. This begins with mainstream inclusive services within all schools. It is then complemented by SEN Unit provision within particular Primary Schools. Finally, the Council has a range of Special Education Needs schools. Such a diverse range of provision means that schools can cater for individual needs, and the personalisation of the curriculum for individual pupils. Such a broad range of services means that the Council is in a strong position to meet both current and emerging need.

- 3.3 The review of Special Education Needs provision within Primary School 'Units' is therefore only one part of a broader range of provision available to young people with Special Education Needs in the Borough. This report should be seen in that context.

3.4 A number of stages to the review of primary SEN have taken place. This has included:

- The 2005 Review of SEN Unit Provision
- A Strategic Review of Autistic Spectrum Disorder Provision in Halton (*See report of 28th August 2008*)
- A local analysis of need
- A review of Secondary School SEN resourced provision with future SEN provision agreed. Statutory notices have been published with implementation due in 2011.

3.5 Informal consultation on the proposals for Primary Schools SEN units closed on the 30th June 2009 with responses received and analysed. The majority of those who responded were in full support of the change of provision proposed.

There were 47 written responses to the original proposals with 36 in favour, 10 were not in full support and 1 Don't Know. There have been 11 written responses to the revised proposals of which 10 are in favour with 1 not in full support.

3.6 Of those who were not in full support of the proposals some thought that any reduction in current support places would be a negative step. Others thought there should be more places in the proposed resource bases. Careful consideration has been given to both points. Overall however the recommendation is that the proposals remain unchanged.

3.7 The reasons for the primary SEN review are:

3.7.1 To identify Special Education Needs provision that is required for Halton pupils and the number of places required both now and in the future. This is linked both to Building Schools for the Future and the Primary Capital Programme.

3.7.2 Acknowledgement that Halton currently retains a significant amount of SEN Unit provision in Primary Schools, carrying a number of unfilled places.

3.7.3 Concern that the current range and scope of Special Educational Needs Unit provision in Primary Schools may not be appropriate, and

3.7.4 As a result of the above, the Local Authority is potentially not fully securing value for money in its Primary School SEN provision.

3.8 The present provision of SEN units in primary mainstream schools is shown in Appendix 1.

4.0 **PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 Halton Council will ensure that Pathways for learning for SEN pupils will be personalised for the child and their family.
- 4.2 This will involve the current Primary SEN Unit Provision being re-designed to provide flexible provision within a Primary mainstream school or Early Years setting, which enables the learner to participate in mainstream learning.
- 4.3 When it has been shown, through assessment, that the pupil's needs cannot be met fully in a mainstream school without the support of enhanced resourced primary provision, this specialist resourced SEN provision will be considered. Prior to this decision there will be an expectation that 'reasonable adjustments' are undertaken (i.e. the application of the Disability Discrimination Act) using the totality of resources made available to the mainstream school.
- 4.4 Within all Primary School SEN resourced provision there will be joint working with other areas of Children's Services, for example Health and Social Care. This will provide wrap around provision for children and families.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the schools listed below develop the following SEN specialisms in line with the above proposals:
- 4.5.1 **The Brow Primary School**
- Resourced provision to accommodate 7 pupils for assessment.
 - Resourced provision to accommodate 10 pupils with speech, language and communication needs.
- 4.5.2 **The Grange Infants School**
Resourced provision to accommodate 7 KS1 pupils with a diagnosis of Autism, this includes pupils with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome. There would also be capacity within this provision for additional outreach support for pupils in other primary schools within the borough.
- 4.5.3 **The Grange Junior School**
Resourced provision to accommodate 7 KS2 pupils with a diagnosis of Autism, this includes pupils with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome. There would also be capacity within this provision for additional outreach support for pupils in other primary schools within the borough.
- 4.5.4 **Palace Fields Primary**
Resourced provision to accommodate 10 pupils with complex learning needs.
- 4.5.5 **Woodside Primary**

Resourced provision to accommodate 7 pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.

4.5.6 **Weston Point Primary**

Resourced provision to accommodate 7 pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.

4.5.7 **Westfield Primary School**

Resourced provision with 6 places to be made available for pupils with hearing impairment and this may include pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties.

4.5.8 **Oakfield Primary School**

- Resourced provision to accommodate 7 pupils for assessment.
- Resourced provision to accommodate 10 pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties.

4.5.9 **Simms Cross Primary School**

Resourced provision to accommodate 7 KS 1 and 7 KS2 pupils with a diagnosis of Autism, this includes pupils with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome. There would also be capacity within this provision for additional outreach support for pupils in other primary schools within the borough.

4.6 Following the closure of the informal consultation period in June 2009 it is proposed that the formal consultation process commences, ultimately leading to Statutory Notice if required.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The funding formula for Primary SEN provision will need to be revised to reflect the change in provision. Provision will need to be made within the Capital Programme for adaptations for schools to reflect the change in provision.

The purpose of the SEN review is to make provision fit for purpose and to meet current and future need. It was agreed, when embarking on the Primary Review that funding saved would be recycled, so that resources would be made fit for purpose. The funding for the revised provision was to be found from within the existing Budget, this would come from surplus places currently funded within existing SEN resourced provision.

The Strategy for Inclusion for Pupils with SEN Review 2008 states one of the aims is to **'agree a process to recycle the resources in under used provision** to best meet low incidence needs within the mainstream school community. To achieve this we will involve and engage with Head Teachers throughout the process.'

6.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The current model represents a potentially inefficient use of resources and this review will create a more efficient use of funding for SEN unit provision.
The Councils 'Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN' provides the policy content and framework by which Halton intends to meet the Special Educational Needs of young people in the Borough.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Proposals if agreed would:

- Increase the choice, diversity, inclusion and high standards in the Borough
- Reduce the surplus capacity within units in Halton schools.
- Improve access to education facilities and equipment
- Improve access to specialist staff, in Education and Health through Speech and Language Services
- Develop outreach support to mainstream Primary Schools in the Borough.
- Extend access to suitable accommodation
- Establish the supply of suitable places within a mainstream setting in the Borough
- Enable all pupils to have the opportunity to experience provision to match their individual need.

7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Educational attainment of children and young people will have a significant impact on their future employment, learning and skills.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

All pupils will have access to appropriate health provision.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

All schools prioritise safeguarding in their provision.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

Schools are central to urban regeneration.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 8.1 Provision for SEN within mainstream units does not match the needs of the Boroughs young people. The present provision for units within schools does not provide value for money due to the number of surplus places.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 9.1 Educational attainment is central to reducing inequalities and ensuring the best outcomes for all children and young people in Halton with a particular focus on vulnerable groups.

The Review of SEN Unit provision must be inclusive and reflect the contribution of all schools. The Review aims to increase diversity, access and choice, address under performance, and provide more integrated local services.

10.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

To formally consult on Section 4 of this report.

- 10.1 At present, there are surplus places within Primary mainstream SEN Units.

- 10.2 Mainstream Primary SEN Units are not matching the present and future requirements of the Borough.

11.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 11.1 To leave provision as it is. This would potentially leave the Council vulnerable to challenge on the basis of need and value for money.

12.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

- 12.1 The proposals for Primary SEN resourced provision must be implemented by September 2011 to be in line with the implementation of the agreed Secondary resourced provision.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
OFSTED Inspection of LEA – January 2004	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk
Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN – 2006/7	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk
Building Schools for the Future/ Primary Capital Programme	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk / Ann McIntyre

PUPILS ATTENDING PRIMARY SEN UNITS - SEPT 2009

(inc Statements and Enhanced)

Does not include any cushioning payments

KEY STAGE	SCHOOL	SEN UNIT TYPE	NO OF FUNDED PLACES	Average Funding per place	Funding allocated	NO OF PUPILS ATTENDING	SURPLUS PLACES	SURPLUS
KS1	Oakfield CP	Inf Ass	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	1	11	£ 69,201
KS1	Simms Cross CP	Inf Ass	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	4	8	£ 50,328
KS1	Weston CP	Inf Ass	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	0	12	£ 75,492
		Total	36		£ -	5	31	£ -
KS1/2	The Brow CP	SPAL	20	£ 7,401	£ 148,020	18	2	£ 14,802
		Total	20		£ -	18	2	£ -
KS1/2	Westfield CP	HI	8	£ 9,066	£ 72,528	4	4	£ 36,264
		Total	8		£ -	4	4	£ -
KS2	Weston Point CP	EBD	7	£ 10,255	£ 71,785	3	4	£ 41,020
KS2	Woodside CP	EBD	7	£ 10,255	£ 71,785	4	3	£ 30,765
		Total	14		£ -	7	7	
KS2	Moore CP***	MLD	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	2	10	£ 62,910
KS2	Oakfield CP	MLD	24	£ 6,291	£ 150,984	5	19	£ 119,529
KS2	Palacefields CP	MLD	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	1	11	£ 69,201
KS2	Simms Cross CP	MLD	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	4	8	£ 50,328
KS2	The Grange Jnr	MLD	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	1	11	£ 69,201
KS2	Weston CP	MLD	12	£ 6,291	£ 75,492	1	11	£ 69,201
		Total	84			14	70	
	Primary Total		162		£1,119,038	48	114	£ 758,242

Pupils attending - 41 have Statements + 7 SA+ Enhanced on assessment basis