

Public Document Pack



Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

Wednesday, 24 February 2021 6.30 p.m.
via public remote access (please contact
the Clerk named below for instructions)

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

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Bill Woolfall (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Mike Fry (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Robert Gilligan	Labour
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Paul Nolan	Labour
Councillor Joe Roberts	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Pauline Sinnott	Labour
Councillor Angela Teeling	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 511 8059 or e-mail gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on a date to be agreed,*

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	1 - 5
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	6 - 8
4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	9 - 16
5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES	
(A) PROBLEM PAVEMENT PARKING	17 - 20
(B) ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEMES UPDATE	21 - 27
(C) ENVIRONMENT FUND UPDATE	28 - 30
(D) IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT BILL	31 - 37
6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
(A) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2020/21	38 - 65

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.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 2 December 2020 held remotely.

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), Fry (Vice-Chair), Gilligan, Howard, A. Lowe, Nolan, Joe Roberts, Sinnott and Teeling

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs, I. Saxby and J. Unsworth

Also in attendance: One member of the press

**ITEM DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
<p>EUR14 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2020 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>EUR15 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.</p>	
<p>EUR16 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES</p> <p>The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.</p>	
<p>EUR17 ROAD SAFETY REPORT</p> <p>The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which gave details of road traffic collision and casualty numbers within the Borough in the year 2019.</p> <p>The Board was advised that Appendix A to the report</p>	

set out full details of the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in the year 2018, and compared these figures with those from previous years.

The latest figures (2019) for Halton could be summarised as follows:

- There were 183 road traffic collisions involving personal injury in Halton, 14 fewer than the year before, and a continuation of the overall general downward trend. These incidents resulted in 239 casualties, a 3% increase on the 2018 figures;
- A total of 31 killed or seriously injured (KSI) remained relatively low when compared to 10 years ago (41 in 2010). The figure for 2018 was 30;
- 28 of the casualties were classed as serious, with 3 fatalities (an increase of 1 compared to 2018);
- A total of 2 child serious injury (CKSI) which represented a decrease of 66% (compared to 6 in 2018);
- The numbers of people of all ages being slightly injured (SLI) was 208 (202 in 2018); and
- A total of 23 collisions occurred on Mersey Gateway controlled roads, resulting in a total of 28 casualties, slightly higher than in 2018.
- Halton still remained on course to achieve its performance targets.

In addition, the report highlighted the work the Road Safety Team had undertaken in 2019/20 and the programme for 2021 which would continue to cover road traffic reduction schemes, road safety education, training and publicity.

Members also considered information on the road safety schemes undertaken in 2019/20 and the report outlined the planned works for 2020/21 which included:

- Improved pedestrian crossing facilities at Halton Lea, Runcorn;
- Review of all school sites to ensure road layouts were appropriate, given the ongoing issues related to the Covid19 pandemic;
- Improvements to side-junction layouts on Liverpool Road, Widnes following concerns raised regarding poor visibility;
- Improvements to pedestrian crossing points at Dykin

Road / Moorfield Road roundabout;

- Reconfiguration of road markings as part of wider improvement scheme on southern section of Ditchfield Road, Widnes; and
- Major changes to route signage through Runcorn town centre following Runcorn de-linking works and associated changes to traffic flows.

RESOLVED: That

1. the overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton over the past decade be noted; and
2. the road safety programme for 2021 be supported.

EUR18 ROADSIDE MEMORIALS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought views on the creation of a roadside memorials policy. A number of authorities had started to establish policies and protocol relating to the placement and removal of roadside floral tributes and other memorials placed at the scene of fatal road crashes and other fatalities adjacent to the highway. Adopted policies generally set a time period for the placement of flowers and other tributes and include protocols and arrangements for their removal and the return of non-perishable items to relatives. It was recognised that this was a sensitive and emotional issue.

It was noted that the Council had a legal duty to ensure that highways were fit for purpose and to make sure that public open spaces were free from debris. An example of a roadside memorials and tribute policy had been previously circulated to the Board as Appendix A.

RESOLVED: That the Board supported the need for a roadside memorial policy in Halton.

EUR19 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION TOWN CENTRE FUND

The Board was advised that the Metro Mayor had previously announced a £1m Town Centre Fund allocation for each of the Liverpool City Region local authority areas. The purpose of the fund was to stimulate plans for Town Centres that would generate a long term sustainable approach to revitalising the high street. In Halton it was agreed that the investment would be in the Halton Lea ward. An action plan had been agreed with the Combined Authority in February 2020, initially for delivery by the end of

the calendar year however the programme had now been extended to 31st October 2021.

It was noted that the programme had nine projects and generated £601,875 of match funding in addition to the £1m. Members received details on the following nine work streams in the Halton Lea Town Centre Fund and the amount of funds allocated to each:

Re-location of Halton Hospital Services;
Third sector hub;
Roof top garden;
Culture HQ;
Wayfinding;
Wellbeing hub;
Community shop;
The box grants; and
Third sector grants.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR20 FLYPOSTING

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which outlined the Council position with regard to tackling fly posting. Fly posting was illegal and it was also unfair on those companies who chose to advertise legitimately. Fly posting also put an additional cost on the Local Authority and other landowners who had to remove fly posters. It also had a severe effect on the local environmental quality of the Borough and could act as an anti-social magnet that encouraged a social downward spiral and could lead to an increase in residents fear of crime.

The report proposed a week long 'crackdown' to raise awareness of the negative impacts of flyposting, confront and discourage the main perpetrators and improve the public realm of the Borough. The Council aimed to reduce fly posting throughout Halton through education and enforcement. In addition, a draft policy for fly posting prevention would be put together based on the principles outlined in the report and brought back to a future Board meeting.

Arising from the discussion, Members identified areas that could be targeted for enforcement, which included bridges, Halton Stadium, empty shops in the town centres and traffic lights.

RESOLVED: That

1. a formal anti fly posting policy be drafted based on the principles set out in paragraphs 4.3 – 4.8; and
2. the activity set out in paragraph 4.9 be endorsed.

Strategic Director,
Enterprise,
Community and
Resources,

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 24 February 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;

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

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

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

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 24 January 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the relevant Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19th November 2020

TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO

EXB38 MERSEY GATEWAY

The Board considered a report presenting the outcome of a consultation held in relation to the updating of the *Road User Charging Scheme Order* for the Mersey Gateway Bridge and the Silver Jubilee Bridge (the 'Bridges').

The public consultation took place from 23 September 2020 to 14 October 2020 and a summary of the responses received were outlined in the report. Appended to the report was the updated *Road User Charging Scheme Order 2020 (RUCSO)* and the consultation response analysis.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) confirms that no further consultation is required in respect of the updated RUCSO;
- 2) confirms that no public inquiry is required to be held into the making of the updated RUCSO;
- 3) agrees to the making of the updated RUCSO in the form (or substantially the same form) as that in Appendix 1 and delegate to the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, the authority to make any non-material or consequential amendments as necessary to enable the updated RUCSO to be made;
- 4) agrees to the toll charges being unchanged – as specified in the updated RUCSO; and
- 5) agrees to the administration fees in relation to registering with Mersey Gateway / Merseyflow being unchanged.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB39 DISABLED PARKING SPACES POLICY

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented the revised Disabled Parking Spaces Policy.

It was reported that the current Policy required updating to bring Halton’s approach in line with those of neighbouring authorities within the Liverpool City Region. Further, the current process required review due to changes to how mobility allowances were defined and awarded, increasing levels of on-street parking congestion, and the need to update explicit guidance and qualifying criteria in the existing Policy.

For Members information, the current application form was available at appendix A, and appendix B presented the proposed new application form, which also included the updated list of guidelines.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the revised Disabled Parking Spaces Policy.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB40 HALTON HOUSING TRUST PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report on the progress of Halton Housing Trust, since the last report to the Board on 17 January 2019.

Members welcomed Neil McGrath, Liz Haworth and Clive Deadman, from Halton Housing Trust who presented the report – *Annual Report to HBC Executive Board, October 2020*, which outlined some of the key organisational achievements over the past 18 months. Highlights included the completion of an additional 134 new homes to bring the total stock since transfer to almost 1,300; the appointment of five new apprentices; and the achievement of the highest possible regulatory rating of V1 G1.

The guests’ responded to Members’ questions on the report and Members congratulated the Trust on its achievements, recognising the challenges they faced generally, as well as in more recent times with the onset of the Pandemic and the need to support more vulnerable customers.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the progress made as set out in the report.

EXB41 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Board considered a report describing changes to the eligibility criteria for accessing housing and homelessness support that were made as a result of delegated powers to the Chief Executive, during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

The report explained the impact and implications of the changes in eligibility and discussed the arrangements going forward. Members agreed, taking into account the placement of Halton into Tier 3 and the subsequent national lockdown, and with the onset of winter, that Halton should adopt a similar approach as the LCR and continue with the wider eligibility of access to homelessness support, thus protecting the most vulnerable from the illness.

A review of the eligibility criteria would take place at the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the contents of the report; and
- 2) agrees to continue with the current approach to determining homelessness eligibility, subject to a review towards the end of the financial year.

EXB42 UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SDPS)

The Executive Board received a report that requested the removal of the Draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) from the Halton Local Development Scheme (LDS).

It was noted that the following documents had not progressed and were now unlikely to be progressed in their current form due to the expiration of the Unitary Development Plan:

- Draft Runcorn Old Town SPD;

Strategic Director
- People

- Halton Lea SPD;
- West Bank SPD; and
- Halebank Regeneration Area SPD

The reasons why each SPD was not progressed were outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the removal of the draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) from the Halton Local Development Scheme (LDS), in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB43 LOCAL PLAN - ADDENDUM TO STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)

The Board received a report that explained the requirement for an addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) within the Local Plan and sought a resolution from the Board for formal implementation of this.

Members were advised that due to national legislative change, an addendum was required to be temporarily added to the adopted SCI, which formed part of the Halton Local Plan Framework. This was presented in Appendix A – *Addendum (Covid-19) to the adopted SCI 2019*.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the addition of the addendum (Appendix A) to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for Local Plan making.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 10th December 2020

COMMUNITY AND SPORT AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIOS

EXB55 LEASE OF RECREATION CLUB BUILDING AND KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELDS, DUNDALK RD, WIDNES

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval to the granting of a lease to Widnes FC Ltd, for the Recreation Club building on Dundalk Road and King George V playing fields.

The report outlined the background and history of the

Club in recent years and Members were referred to the plan of the site attached to the report.

The Council invited Expressions of Interest (EOIs) to lease the Recreation Club building and King George V playing fields, subject to them being retained for social, sports and recreational use. Following a site visit made by interested parties, only Widnes FC Ltd expressed an interest to continue with discussions and went on to present a proposal to the Council.

It was noted that the proposal would require significant investment and resources to deliver and the report laid out the Council's position and steps required to be taken should the granting of a lease to Widnes FC Ltd be approved.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council enter into a lease agreement with Widnes FC Ltd;
- 2) the Council bring forward the site for sporting development, subject to planning permission; and
- 3) the Board delegates responsibility for oversight of the development and lease to the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property and the Operational Director – Communities and Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Physical Environment and Community and Sport.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21st January 2021

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

EXB62 RUNCORN TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN (TIP)

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval to submit Runcorn's Town Investment Plan (TIP).

In November 2019, the Government issued the Towns Fund Prospectus inviting 100 towns to develop a Town Investment Plan to benefit from up to £25m funding each from a national £3.6bn fund. Runcorn was invited to

develop a TIP, which was now in its final draft stage and would be ready for the submission deadline date of 31 January 2021.

The report outlined the details of the TIP and discussed the list of emerging projects to be included in the Plan. The Board was requested to delegate the final sign off to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Physical Environment.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board

- 1) agrees in principle to the Runcorn Town Investment Plan and project list; and
- 2) delegates approval of the final submission of the Runcorn Town Investment Plan to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Physical Environment, in order to meet the 31 January 2021 deadline.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy
and Performance Board

DATE: 24th February 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise,
Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment, Transportation,
Community Safety

SUBJECT: Problem Pavement Parking - Working
Party Update

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Board on the progress of the Working Party.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the update and endorses the recommendations set out in section 5.1.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Parking on pavements is a common problem nationally, as parked vehicles restrict the width of the pavement. This causes general problems for pedestrians, but particularly for those who use wheelchairs, the visually impaired, or those using prams. Interestingly, pavement parking has been prohibited in London since 1974.

3.2 It is also important to recognise that in many narrow streets pavement parking is necessary to maintain free-flowing traffic, including for emergency service vehicles. Ultimately, it is recognised there is no perfect solution to this complex problem.

3.3 Since 1974, Highway Code rule 244 has stated that drivers "MUST NOT park partially or wholly on the pavement in London and should not do so elsewhere unless signs permit it." In London, you *must not* park on the pavement, the *must* indicating there is legislation behind this rule and a driver could receive a fine for breaking it. However, outside of the capital or "elsewhere", the Highway Code states drivers *should not* park on the pavement, meaning it is advisory and not, therefore, backed up by any legislation.

3.4 However, Rule 242 states: "You MUST NOT leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road." This is a *must not*, again, meaning if a car is reported or seen by a police officer and judged to be either in a dangerous position or

causing an unnecessary obstruction of the road, a driver could receive a Fixed Penalty Notice.

- 3.4 The Road Regulation Traffic Act 1984 (as amended) enabled Councils to supervise parking places, including enforcement of certain parking regulations. Parking offences were previously dealt with through the criminal court system. The Road Traffic Act 1991 brought about key changes in the above arrangements. It enabled the Government to make orders so that local councils, rather than the Police, could enforce parking "offences". This resulted in those councils who applied for the necessary powers to "decriminalised" parking offences, and deal directly with parking enforcement via the civil enforcement system (rather than criminal system). A local council with civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers would then appoint Civil Enforcement Officers to carry out enforcement work and issues fines and penalty charge notices. Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, which provides for civil parking enforcement, has since updated the regulations.
- 3.5 Halton has previously undertaken some in-depth studies into the benefits of applying for civil parking enforcement powers. The last time was in 2009, when the Council concluded was that it was not in the local community's interest for Halton Borough Council to become a civil parking enforcement authority. A key component behind this decision was the desire to maintain free of charge car parks in Halton's three town centres to support the retail sector. The ongoing revenue cost of administering a CPE service was also a relevant factor. At the present time, the Police remain responsible for parking enforcement in Halton.
- 3.6 Recently, the Department for Transport (DfT) undertook a consultation exercise to look at the possibility of strengthening powers to tackle problem pavement parking. Details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking/pavement-parking-options-for-change>
- 3.7 The DfT sought views on three proposed options identified in the department's review of the pavement parking problem, and echoed by the Parliamentary Transport Committee:
 - Option 1 – improvements to the existing traffic regulation order (TRO) process, under which local authorities can put in place measures to prohibit pavement parking (e.g. double yellow lines), is sufficient and proportionate to tackle pavement parking; or if not:
 - Option 2 - legislative change to allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers to enforce against 'unnecessary obstruction of the pavement'; or
 - Option 3 - legislative change to introduce a London-style pavement parking prohibition throughout England.
- 3.8 The outcome of this consultation, together with the Government's response to the consultation has yet to be announced.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Prompted by the DfT consultation (as referred to above), the Board considered it timely to look again at pavement parking in the Halton. A Working Party was established at the last Board meeting to review the current position and issues associated with pavement parking in Halton.
- 4.2 The Working Party (WP) met virtually on 3rd February and considered the legislative framework for parking enforcement and tackling highway obstruction. The WP also debated the merits and likely consequences of the DfT consultation, before moving on to discuss the areas of the Borough where pavement parking problems have been reported.
- 4.3 Examples included the terraced streets of the Borough where only on-street parking was available, and in order to maintain traffic flows, parking on the kerb was the only realistic option available. This was contrasted with more sub-urban locations where properties had driveways, but often vehicles were parked on grassed verges. The WP perceived this to be a nuisance issue, with churned up grassed areas giving a negative visual impact on the character and appearance of an area. The WP agreed this was an area for closer scrutiny and had potential for a new policy to prevent parking on verges where damage was occurring. Example interventions included formal parking restrictions, planting trees, and charging the party responsible for the reinstatement of the verge where this was in Council ownership.
- 4.4 Enforcement of parking issues were given in depth consideration. Officers provided the WP with an overview of the 2009 study and the conclusion reached by Members, who at that time did not feel compelled to apply for Civil Enforcement Powers. The WP considered that it remained imperative that the viability and vitality of the town centres continued to be supported through free parking in official car parks, especially now due to the impact of the pandemic on the retail sector. The WP felt the best way to tackle the hot spots of problem parking was to continue the strong collaboration with the local Policing teams to take targeted action where parking was dangerous, or causing an obstruction of the pavement or highway.
- 4.4 Town planning policies were next given attention, and the WP considered the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) away from maximum car parking standards for developments. Maximum parking standards had previously been encouraged in order to combat urban sprawl and congestion, by restricting parking space to encourage a shift to other modes of transport beside the private car.
- 4.5 The NPPF now states:

'If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

- a) the accessibility of the development;*

- b) the type, mix and use of development;*
- c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
- d) local car ownership levels; and*
- e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.*

'Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure.'

4.6 Based on the national planning policy set out above, and the experience of Members on the WP, the WP agreed that the Development Control Committee remained the best body for assessing the parking requirements of new developments as they came forward, and the likely impacts on the surrounding area of any new development proposals.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Working Party agreed an action plan to cover the following:
- Recommend the Board endorse a decision not to seek CPE powers at the present time.
 - Draft a letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner requesting their continued support in taking targeted enforcement action where pavement parking presents an ongoing problem.
 - Produce a draft policy to tackle parking on the Council's verges.
- 5.2 If the PPB Board endorse the Working Party's recommendations then a further WP meeting will be held to implement the above actions.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There are no legal or financial risks arising from this report.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Parking Studies 2009	Electronic	Tim Gibbs

REPORT TO:	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	24th February 2021
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Transportation
SUBJECT:	Active Travel Schemes Update
WARDS:	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out an update for the Board on two active travel schemes within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). An overview of the LCWIP can be found here:
<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/activetravel/>
- 1.2 LCWIP Phase 2 – Runcorn to Daresbury
Provides a dedicated cycle route connecting Runcorn to Sci-Tech Daresbury. The final design of the route will be consulted upon during March 21. The draft consultation leaflet and route map can be found in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 LCWIP Phase 3 – Runcorn Busway (Halton Lea to Murdishaw)
Funding recently allocated to and received by the Liverpool City Region from the Department for Transport (DfT) for ‘active travel’. Halton’s allocation will allow the busway cycle route between Halton Lea and Murdishaw to become permanent. This is an important link and essentially forms a second project that eventually aims see the whole busway transform into an active travel corridor. A map of the route can be found in Appendix 2 to this report.
- 1.4 These phases follow on from the LCWIP Phase 1 schemes. Phase 1 provided the ‘Mineral Line’ between St Helens and Widnes, and also the Prescott to Runcorn route via Widnes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 **The Board endorses the two schemes and recognises the importance of consultation in measuring project success.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is a non-statutory document that aims to provide the context to prioritise a list of

walking and cycling routes to be created or improved. It aligns itself to the Governments 2017 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy that looks to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey.

- 3.2 The LCWIP is a ten year strategy for the wider Liverpool City Region and sets out a proposed network of strategic routes across the city region. These focus on origin/ destination points that will primarily be used by commuters, and people using cycling and walking as transport options. The routes will be designed to offer an alternative to travelling by car. The routes have been prioritised into a programme based on elements such as predicted employment and housing growth, air quality issues and accessibility.
- 3.3 The LCWIP supports a number of Transport Strategies from the Local Transport Plan 3, and the LCR's Local Journeys Strategy. It addresses the climate change agenda that the Combined Authority is committed to by providing and promoting clean and low carbon transport systems. Routes aim to enable people to connect easily with employment, services and social activities and providing opportunity to improve the health and well-being of the people who live and work in the borough.
- 3.4 The LCWIP will help deliver some of the City Region's Mayoral priorities to reduce transport emissions, and improve the health of the region by providing new and improved cycle and walking corridors to encourage residents and visitors to the City Region to make more sustainable travel choices. The formalisation of the LCR LCWIP consolidates and enhances support for future funding applications to within the LCRCA (Transforming Cities Funding), externally to Central Government, and other opportunities that may become available.
- 3.5 LCWIP Phase 2 (Runcorn to Daresbury)
In August 2020, residents and businesses were invited to comment on draft proposals for a dedicated cycle route connecting Runcorn to Sci-Tech Daresbury. The feedback provided has helped to shape the final design of the route, which will now be consulted upon in March 21 (see map in Appendix 1 (back page of draft leaflet)).
- 3.6 LCWIP Phase 3 (Runcorn Busway - Halton Lea to Murdishaw):
In June 2020 DfT invited applications for the Active Travel Fund to be submitted to DfT on 7th August 2020. The LCR was successful in receiving £7.896m from the Active Travel Fund, and this amount was 100% of the indicative allocation identified for the LCR by DfT.
- 3.7 The Busway sustainable travel corridor is recognised in the adopted LCR Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The first scheme on the busway (Astmoor Business Links) was delivered in 2018-19 and has proven to be popular. It is hoped that the whole of the busway where possible will follow suit. The busway route has been chosen as it will create a long, off-road route, linking to a number of destinations, and has

close proximity to existing routes. It equally allows both commuters and leisure cyclists to navigate to a number of destinations.

- 3.8 Halton has indicatively been awarded £2.2m of the £7.896m to make the temporary Active Travel Corridor between Halton Hospital and Murdishaw Local Centre permanent.
- 3.9 It is a condition of the funding from DfT that local authorities undertake thorough consultation on permanent schemes. DfT have indicated they require evidence of input from local communities through appropriate consultation.
- 3.10 A consultation period commenced on the 18 January 2021, and due to the current Covid circumstances a consultation letter and has been sent to residents and stakeholders in close proximity to the busway. Maps have been displayed in the Shopping City. Details of the consultation are also available on the HBC website. The consultation closed on the 22nd February 2021.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Active travel has seen an increasing profile due to key drivers such as tackling climate change, improving air quality, zero carbon emissions, and better health and wellbeing.
- 4.2 Halton is seeking to add further routes to its existing cycle network. However, funding new infrastructure is expensive, and this aspect means the creation of new routes has to be prioritised. Therefore, in prioritising routes, a number of criteria are considered including:
 - travel demand along a route (number of users expected)
 - the need to connect destinations (employment, retail and leisure)
 - the need to connect existing routes within the Halton and inter-borough. For example, the Transpennine Trail, canal corridors, and National Cycle Routes
 - The cost, deliverability, and safety of a route

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

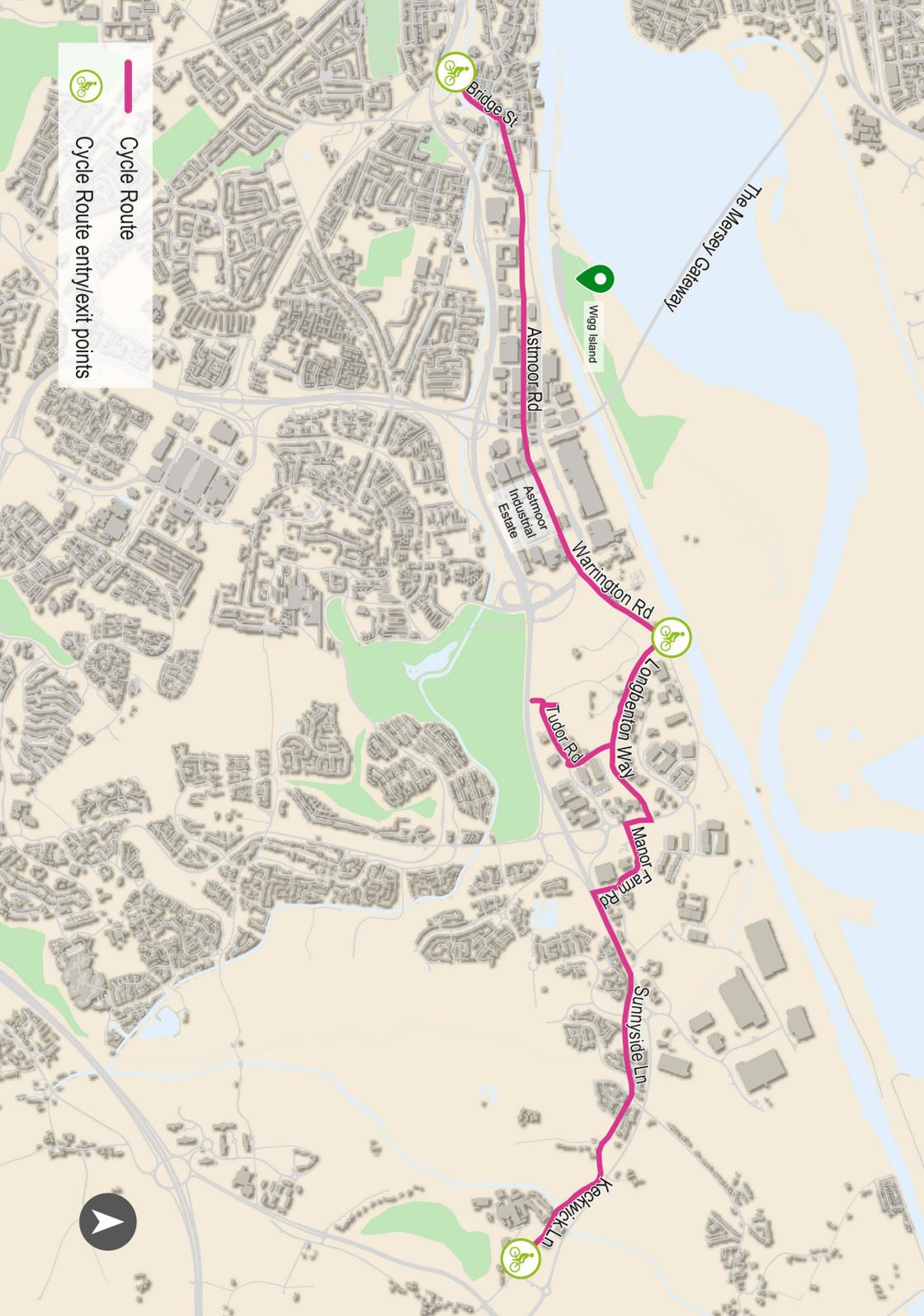
- 6.1 For LCWIP Phase 3, the temporary cycleway currently in place between Halton Lea and Murdishaw has allowed the assessment of safety considerations.
- 6.2 Financial risks arise from the need to meet conditions attached to the funding, for example in terms of the timescale for scheme delivery. However, these are standard conditions that accompany grant funding and processes are in place to manage these risks.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 Following the recent publication of the governments guidance note Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design, (LTN1/20), all newly implemented infrastructure for cycling and walking will need to meet minimum standards which includes provision for adapted bikes, provides a safe separated environment for cyclist suitable for use by children and adults.
- 7.2 The provision of safer cycle and walking routes also provides opportunity for individuals who may find themselves in transport poverty, as a result of lower incomes, to utilise active travel, potentially supported by the revenue activities which are also part of this fund.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Liverpool City Region Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/activetravel/	Online	Iain Dignall / Rebecca Taylor
Murdishaw Active Travel Scheme https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/traffic/cycling.aspx	Online	Iain Dignall / Rebecca Taylor



Creating a safer route between Runcorn and Sci-Tech Daresbury

PUBLIC CONSULTATION MARCH 2021

RUNCORN TO DARESBUY CYCLE ROUTE

Part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan



#LCRListens

IMPROVING CYCLING FACILITIES IN HALTON

In August 2020, Halton residents and businesses were invited to comment on draft proposals for a dedicated cycle route connecting Runcorn to Sci-Tech Daresbury. Thank you to everyone who provided comments. Your feedback has helped to shape the final design of the route which is now out for consultation (see map on back page).

Across the Liverpool City Region work is underway to create a network of more than 600km of new and upgraded walking and cycling routes. This network will cover all six boroughs of the city region – Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral – and be connected to the wider public transport network. Research shows that **more than 70% of city region residents support the building of separated routes to help people to cycle more easily and safely.**

This route is part of a long-term plan to encourage more people to take journeys by bike and will make cycling safer and easier for everyone, regardless of age or background.

Read more about our long-term plans for cycling in the Liverpool City Region at liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/activetravel.

To have your say on the public consultation, please go to our website: <https://consultprojectcentre.co.uk/cyclehalton>

Cycling is good for our environment, our health and our communities

Over the past year, more and more people have been cycling, both for work and for leisure. Around 60% of people in the city region think this will continue. We want to build on this progress and help people to make the decision to use a bike to get around.

Congestion and road traffic continues to affect air quality in Halton and across the Liverpool City Region. One solution to this problem is to encourage more people take shorter journeys by cycling. This would help to take cars off the roads and reduce harmful emissions.

Being active is also great for mental and physical health and good quality cycling routes can bring big benefits to the regional economy, increasing the number of visitors to our high streets and local shops.

To have your say on the public consultation, please go to our website: <https://consultprojectcentre.co.uk/cyclehalton>



Tell us what you think of the plans

We're asking your opinion to help make sure this new cycling route works for the local community. The plans we've worked on will help make these things a reality, but we would like to hear from residents so you can help shape how the route looks and works.

The feedback we received from the public during the first phase of engagement in 2020 has helped us design these proposals. We are now in the public consultation stage and would like to receive your final feedback on the cycle route.

Work is due to begin in 2021, with completion expected in 2022.

To have your say on the public consultation, please go to our website: <https://consultprojectcentre.co.uk/cyclehalton>

Alternatively, you can phone 0151 330 1249 to leave your details and we will send you a form to complete and return by post.

Please send your feedback by midnight Sunday 4 April 2021.

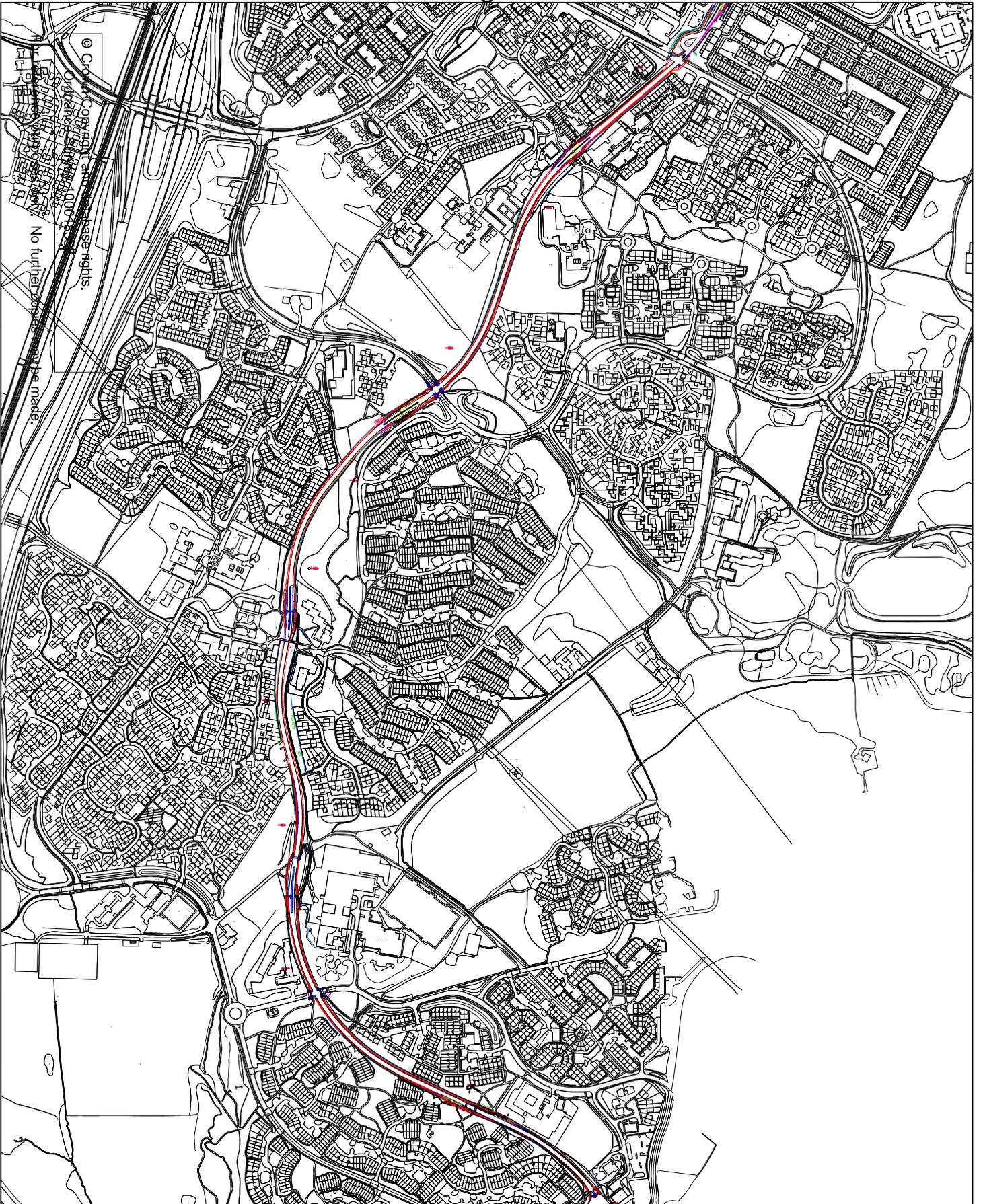
We are working to build back better in the city region

Our frontline teams are focused on responding to the Coronavirus to ensure residents, particularly those most vulnerable, have the support they need.

Social distancing measures mean we have to change the way we engage with the community but we are working on new ways to do this remotely so that you can continue to shape the positive changes happening in your area. The COVID-19 pandemic has given a new urgency to the question of how we share our public spaces and how we can champion walking, cycling and the safe use of public transport.

Our plans for this route, along with the rest of the walking and cycling network, are part of our commitment to building a fairer, greener and better Liverpool City Region after Coronavirus.

Visit liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/coronavirus for information on our response to COVID-19.



Notes:

REVISIONS



POLICY PLANNING &

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

T. Gibbs BSc MSc Dip. Surv MRTP I MRPS
Operational Director
Municipal Building, Kingway
Windsor, W4S 7A7 - Tel: 0303 333 4300

ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDOR
RUNCORN BUSWAY
CYCLEWAY
MURDISHAW TO HALTON LEA

Scale:

Date:

Drawn by:

JAN 2021

TB

Checked by:

Plan No:

Rev:

HW-S-2020-93-01 |

REPORT TO:	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	24th February 2021
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Physical Environment
SUBJECT:	Environmental Fund Update
WARDS:	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Board on the expenditure of the Environmental Fund.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the wide range of projects that have benefited from the fund, as set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Planning permission for the Runcorn Energy from Waste (EfW) Plant was granted in September 2008. The Plant is subject to a legal agreement entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3.2 The legal agreement contains a provision that the owner of the Plant agrees to pay the Council an annual lump sum payment for every tonne of fuel received and processed. The legal agreement states:

“that the lump sum payments shall be used by the Council to fund environmental matters as may be specified from time to time by the Council within the Borough of Halton for the benefit of its residents generally and which may include measures to improve public transport, highway network improvements, travel plan monitoring, waste recycling and wider community improvements such as landscaping and nature conservation measures.”

3.3 The fund has been in operation since 2015, and over that period has generate £3,471,740.

3.4 A number of projects have been funded and implemented and these set out in Appendix 1. These provide a number of interventions, for example, improvements to open space, (Town Park in Runcorn and Runcorn Hill). These improvements not only provide visual improvements and open up access, but also can have wider health benefits, encouraging people to use their local spaces more. Other projects have included the implementation of walking and cycling routes.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The fund seeks to advance the Council's environmental priorities. It adds considerable value by acting as matched financing for external funding bids.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications arising from the subject of this report.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There are no legal or financial risks that arise from the subject of this report.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the subject of this report.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
S.106 legal agreement	Municipal building	Andrew Plant

Ineos Energy From Waste		
Scheme	Grant Agreed to 10/11/20	Drawn to 10/11/20
Runcorn Hill Park Regeneration Scheme	£160,000.00	£135,537.00
Dukesfield Garages - clearance of fly tipping	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
Community Payback	£193,746.00	£149,651.00
Weston Point Layby Temporary Closure	£5,510.19	£5,510.19
Community Garden Runcorn Town Ctre	£24,000.00	£24,000.00
Runcorn Hill Park Walking/Running Track	£7,239.60	£7,239.60
Air Quality Monitoring	£32,600.00	£32,600.00
Runcorn Locks Restoration Scheme	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Wood Lane Pond Improvements	£17,279.33	£17,279.33
Runcorn Town Hall/Boston Avenue Scheme	£118,159.28	£118,159.28
Runcorn Hill Park Boundary to Highlands Road improvements	£56,043.40	£56,043.40
Beechwood Play Area	£37,327.16	£37,327.16
Town Park Ski Slope and Miniature Railway Access Improvements	£130,000.00	£130,000.00
Renewable Energy Solar Park Ditton Road	£250,000.00	£250,000.00
Weston Point Layby Permanent Closure	£6,416.46	£6,416.46
Town Park Rangers Team	£350,000.00	£167,276.29
Major Routeways	£300,000.00	£180,000.00
Prescot Rd Playing Fields	£136,816.00	£136,816.00
Canal Links (Silver Jubilee Bridge to Daresbury)	£40,000.00	£40,000.00
Runcorn Mainline Station to Heath	£20,000.00	£20,000.00
Victoria Park Glasshouse	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
Sewer Destructor	£7,637.00	£1,218.60
Environmental Contingency Fund	£17,090.00	£2,090.00
Halton Lodge Play Area	£12,500.00	£12,500.00
Widnes SUD	£205,653.00	£105,326.61
War Memorials	£48,958.00	£48,958.00
Hale Lighthouse Rd ACESS	£15,474.00	£13,873.75
Runcorn Station Piazza	£25,155.00	£25,155.00
Runcorn Hill Bowling Green	£52,507.00	£50,413.55
Barrows Green Widnes	£187,899.00	£154,042.54
Runcorn Hill Footbridge	£21,266.00	£5,450.88
Town Park Southern Path	£209,000.00	£190,855.40
Rooftop Garden and Community Kitchen Garden at Halton Lea (Shopping City)	£45,000.00	£45,000.00
Madeline McKenna Home	£15,165.50	£0.00
Runcorn Cemetery Seafarers and Covid	£198,818.64	£0.00
St Michaels GC Wildlife Garden	£97,000.00	£0.00
Brindley Green	£3,995.00	£0.00
Arley Drive Pitches	£80,669.00	£0.00
Town Park Palace Fields Avenue	£330,735.00	£0.00
Westfield Pre School Air Quality Monitoring	£21,400.00	£0.00
CCTV Cameras - Mobile Monitoring	£50,000.00	£0.00
	£3,593,559.56	£2,231,240.04
FUNDS RECEIVED		
From Ineos 20/3/15	£154,027.35	
From Ineos 19/5/16	£510,092.82	
From Ineos May 17	£616,258.56	
From Ineos May 18	£757,884.26	
From Ineos Jun 19	£703,306.87	
From Ineos May 20	£730,170.90	
	£3,471,740.76	

REPORT TO:	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	24th February 2021
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Physical Environment
SUBJECT:	Implications of the Environment Bill
WARDS:	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Board with an overview of the forthcoming Environment Bill and its implications for planning and regeneration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That

- 1. the Board notes the likely implications of the Environment Bill; and**
- 2. the Board invites a further report when the detail of the transition arrangements and secondary legislation is available.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Environment Bill sets the new environmental governance framework as the UK leaves the EU. The Bill sets out new environmental frameworks including:
- Setting legally binding environmental targets, with environmental improvement plans and a requirement for monitoring;
 - Setting out policy statements on environmental principles;
 - Establishes the Office for Environmental Protection and its legal powers;
 - Creates legislation around waste, air quality and water quality;
 - Sets the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain to be a condition of planning permission;
 - Establishes the mechanism for Conservation Covenants in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain;
 - The preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Nature Recovery Networks to direct offsite Biodiversity Net Gain provision;
 - The preparation of Species Conservation Strategies and Protected Site Strategies;
 - Controlling of felling of trees; and
 - Regulation of chemicals.

- 3.2 There are many aspects of the Environment Bill and there are a number of requirements on Local Authorities, however, this report focusses on those of particular relevance to the planning system as follows:
- The requirement for **all** development to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain; and
 - The update of the NERC Biodiversity duty on all public bodies to both conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- 3.3 The Environment Bill is currently at the reporting stage of its passage through the House of Commons. It is expected to gain Royal Assent in Spring 2021. Once enacted there will be a two year transition period. This transition period is to allow for the development of secondary legislation and the development of systems to support the implementation of the Bill. It is not currently clear what requirements there will be on Local Authorities to implement biodiversity net gain during this transition period.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.2 The Environment Bill will require all development to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This will be mandatory and habitat net gains are to be maintained for at least 30 years. The process of achieving this through the planning system brings in new mechanisms in the form of the Defra [biodiversity metric](#), conservation covenants and biodiversity credit schemes.
- 4.3 Appendix 1 to this report shows the Biodiversity Net Gain process within the planning system.
- 4.4 Calculating biodiversity net gain will require a change to current ecological survey and reporting through the mandatory use of the Defra Biodiversity Metric. The biodiversity metric quantifies habitat loss or gain by providing a 'Biodiversity Unit' figure. This figure is then be used to determine the amount of habitat provision required to achieve a net gain.
- 4.5 Where Biodiversity Net Gain is not achievable on-site (likely to be a significant proportion of developments), then off-site compensation will be required. However, developers and the LPA must still follow the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate) as required by NPPF. Developers will be required to submit a Biodiversity Gain Plan. The off-site provision will be secured through a Section 106 agreement, where this is within the LPA area or through a Conservation Covenant where this is outside of the LPA area. In addition, developers can purchase Biodiversity credits through a national Biodiversity Credit scheme. Section 106 agreements will need to be ring fenced, and there will need to be transparency between the net gain required by the specific development and the provision of habitats on the ground, as this will need to be published within the National Biodiversity Gain Site Register.

4.6 Local Nature Recovery Strategies

4.7 The Environment Bill makes provision for the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and Nature Recovery Networks (NRNs). The preparation of these LNRS and NRNs falls to the Local Authority in consultation with the wider community. Local Nature Partnerships will play a key role in the development of the LNRS and NRNs.

4.8 Nature Connected (the Local Nature Partnership for the Liverpool City Region) is to be briefed at the end of January on LNRS and NRNs. The NRN will inform and guide appropriate BNG habitat provision both onsite and off-site so that habitat provision is targeted and coherent and will achieve Biodiversity gains.

4.9 Update to the NERC Biodiversity Duty and Biodiversity Reports

4.10 The Environment Bill will update Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC). Section 40 places a duty on all Local Authorities to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in its policy and decision making. The Environment Bill strengthens this duty and will require Local Authorities to not only conserve biodiversity but also to enhance biodiversity.

4.11 Local Authorities will be required to undertake periodic review of the action the authority has taken in exercise of its Biodiversity Duty. Following review, the Authority must determine such policies and specific objectives including within their Local Plan as it considers appropriate for taking action to further their general biodiversity objectives.

4.12 The Local Authority must publish Biodiversity Reports. **The first of these Biodiversity reports must be published no longer than three years following the Royal Assent.** Subsequent reports must cover a period of no longer than five years. This report must also include a summary of biodiversity gain through planning permissions for that Local Authority.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There will be practical challenges to enable the system of Biodiversity Net Gain to operate smoothly. Therefore, during the lead up to Royal Assent and the two-year transition period, local authorities will need to develop and implement effective systems. Further detail will be provided to the Board as the detail of the transition period and secondary legislation emerges. However, the following elements are likely to be fundamental to the successful implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain and will require resourcing:

- Training in use of the Biodiversity Metric;

- Briefing and training to Members and Officers involved in planning and regeneration;
- The roll out of the use of the Biodiversity metric, initially for larger developments, to ensure they are providing net gain and also to allow trialling of the metric and systems before full roll out;
- Consideration of an LCR-wide position on Biodiversity Net Gain to set developer expectations and to provide clarity;
- Consideration of an LCR wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy including a Nature Recovery Network based around the existing LCR Ecological Network and the [LCR Natural Capital Baseline](#) being developed by Liverpool John Moores University;
- Identifying sites and areas within each local authority area for the delivery of habitat creation and enhancement. The Local Wildlife System and public greenspaces is seen as a key component of this provision;
- Engagement with land owners / managers to provide off-site compensation sites ready for planning;
- The identification of sites and areas for inclusion within the Biodiversity Credit scheme; and
- Conformity with the emerging LCR Spatial Development Strategy Natural Environment and Natural Capital policy;

5.2 Within the Liverpool City Region, the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) (a shared service operated via Sefton Council, to which Halton subscribes) has already started trial of the metric and some officers have attended Defra training courses, however, more training is required. It is clear from trialling the metric is that it will take additional time to review planning applications with Defra metric reports, potentially impacting on statutory timescales for determination. Secondly, with the requirement for **all development to achieve Net Gain** comes the need for all developments to be reviewed. Therefore, it is likely to increase the requirement for consultation with MEAS on schemes submitted for planning.

5.3 The metric has been used on a number of larger scale planning applications within the LCR where there will be significant impacts to habitats planning applications or where timescales are likely to lead to subsequent reserved matter applications being subject to BNG. Increasingly enquiries are being received from environmental consultancies and developers on the requirement to use the Defra metric and the need to provide BNG in support of planning applications. To provide clarity to developers and to ensure a level playing field in the transition period before BNG becomes mandatory, the LCR Local Authorities may wish to consider preparing a joint position statement on Biodiversity Net Gain. This has been done elsewhere in the Country, e.g. Surrey¹. This may be particularly useful given the different stages of

¹ https://surreynaturepartnership.files.wordpress.com/2020/11/recommendation-for-20-bng-in-surrey_snp-november2020_final.pdf

Local Plan preparation for each Local Planning Authority and given that the emerging LCR Spatial Development Strategy for the Natural Environment includes the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

- 5.4 Whilst the minimum mandatory net gain requirement is 10% there are a number of Local Authorities who have set more ambitious net gain targets (e.g. Lichfield, Oxford and Surrey which have adopted 20%) and the LCR Local Authorities could consider whether a more ambitious target would be appropriate for the sub-region.
- 5.5 The requirement for offsite provision of habitat creation or improvement is likely to be significant. In terms of planning and local communities, the location of this needs to be ideally close to the development and within the Local Authority area. Only if this cannot be achieved should it go out of the LA area. This sequential approach needs to be set out in local policy, and this could be set out within a LCR position paper on Biodiversity Net Gain. This brings in the issue of the need for suitable off site land on which to create or improve habitats to deliver net gain. This should be informed by the Nature Recovery Network. Establishing ready to go to sites or a habitat bank is vital in terms of delivering timely planning decisions, but will require significant upfront work and liaison now with Natural England, landowners and LA land managers. Local Authority owned local sites could also provide opportunities for transparent delivery of off-site compensation provision.
- 5.6 There is an option within the Environment Bill for developers to purchase Biodiversity Credits from the Secretary of State. This could be seen as an attractive, efficient option to many developers. However, the danger with this approach is that the credit schemes may not be within the local area and this could lead to a net loss of biodiversity within the LCR. The identification of sites for the national Biodiversity Credit Scheme can be achieved through the preparation of Nature Recovery Network for the LCR.
- 5.7 To secure off-site provision through the planning system S.106 agreements will be required. This will require a system for ring fencing and recording spends to ensure transparency. This is outside of the expertise of MEAS and requires input from the LCR Local Planning Authorities, although MEAS are happy to assist. The LCR Local Planning Authorities will also need to develop mechanisms to enable the use of Conservation Covenants within the planning system.
- 5.8 The Environment Bill requires the Local Authority to publish 'Biodiversity Reports', the first is to be published within 3 years of the Bill becoming law with subsequent reports every 5 years. The report should include a summary of biodiversity gain through planning permissions for a Local Authority. Each Local Authority will need to identify responsible officers to collate data and produce a report.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 The Environment Bill has a number of requirements for Local Authorities. Those of particular relevance to the planning system are the requirement for **all** development to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain; and the update of the NERC Biodiversity duty on all public bodies to both conserve and enhance biodiversity and the requirement this brings to review policies and produce a Biodiversity Report.
- 6.2 The implementation of the Bill has a number of challenges to get the system of Biodiversity Net Gain working smoothly through the planning system, these include:
- The implementation of the Defra Biodiversity Metric within all planning applications and their review;
 - Securing BNG through S.106 agreements and Conservation Covenants and ensuring effective systems are in place to facilitate this;
 - Identification of offsite BNG sites for habitat creation, restoration or enhancement so the LCR has a ready to go bank of sites to allow timely planning decisions; and
 - The development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Nature Recovery Networks to inform the appropriate location of habitat creation through BNG.
- 6.3 The key risk to be managed will be the resourcing of this additional legal requirement to ensure its environmental aims are achieved without adding delays in the approval of suitable development.

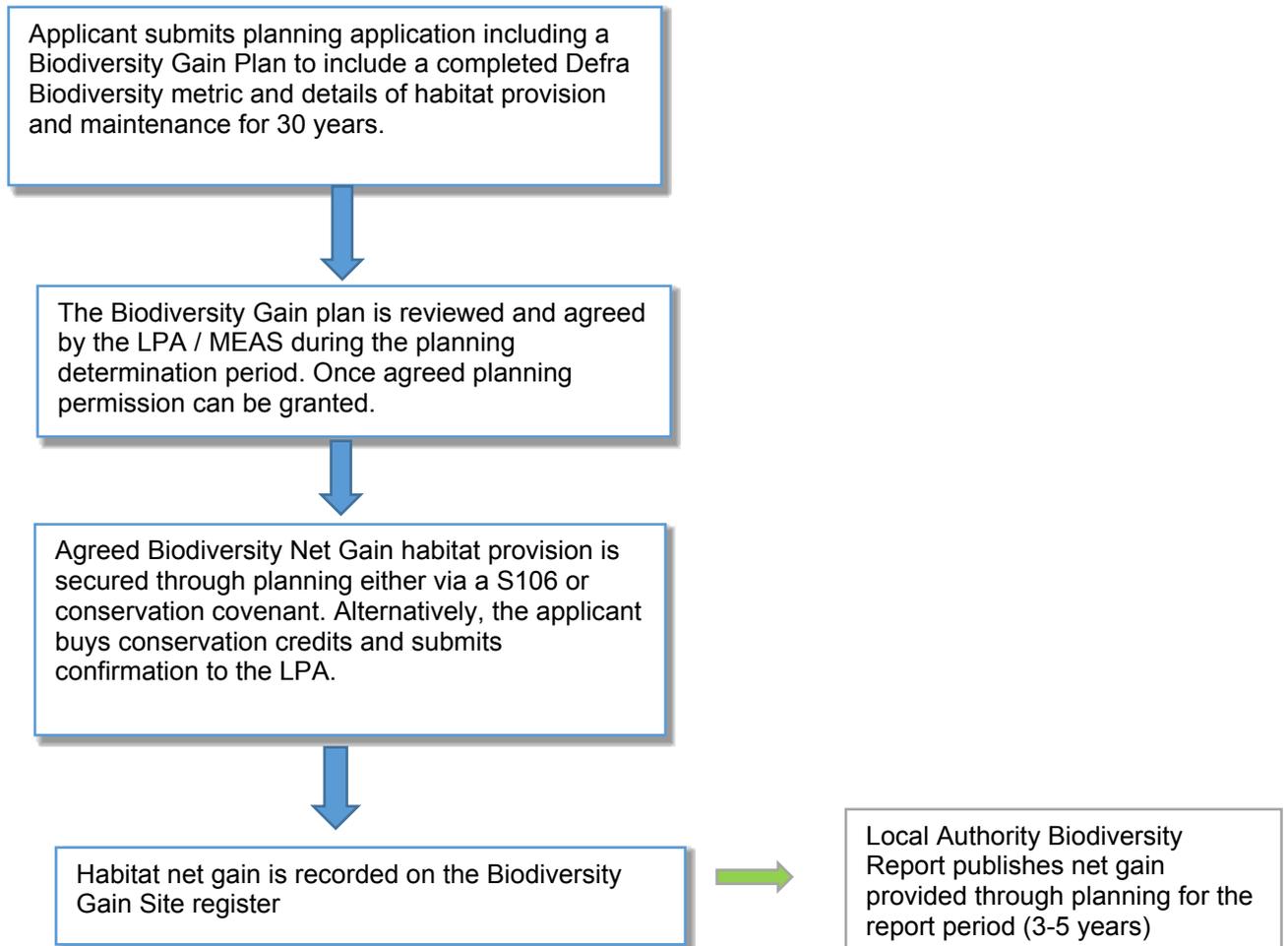
7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the subject of this report.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Environment Bill https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2019-21/environment.html https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020/30-january-2020-environment-bill-2020-policy-statement	Online	Alasdair Cross

Appendix 1: Biodiversity Net Gain process through planning



REPORT TO:	Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	24 th February 2021
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director Economy, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Reports for Quarter 2 of 2020/21
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the second quarter period to 30th September 2020.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2020 - 21 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board as detailed below:
 - Development and Investment Services
 - Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services
 - Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services
 - Housing Strategy

The report details progress against service objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

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

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Thematic Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.
- 6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 At the time at which annual business plans are developed, Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated. Progress concerning the implementation of any high risk mitigation measures, relevant to this board, are included as Appendix 1 of the performance management report for the second quarter period.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Not applicable.

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

Not applicable

Environment and Urban Renewal PPB – Priority Based Monitoring Report

Reporting Period: **Quarter 2 – 1st July 2020 – 30th September 2020**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the second quarter of 2020 / 21 for service areas within the remit of the Environment and Urban Renewal (E&UR) Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2019-20 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board i.e.:
- Development & Investment Services
 - Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement
 - Highways, Transportation & Logistics and Physical Environment
 - Housing Strategy
- 1.3 The emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments within the Directorate during the period which include:-

Regeneration / External Funding

- 2.2 Procurement of Project Violet concluded during this quarter and the selected contractor, Wilmott Dixon, started on site in August 2020. Campus occupancy has dropped due to Covid-19 however there has been some evidence of growth and strong interest. The JV are looking to progress proposals for the next phase, including land acquisition, infrastructure and further office space
- 2.3 Astmoor Masterplan and Delivery Strategy was adopted by Executive Board in September. Approval was also given for £1.5m capital funding over 2 years to refurbish Astmoor Road and the extension of the Discretionary Business Rates Relief scheme by one year to March 2025
- 2.4 A Strategic Investment Fund application to the Combined Authority for £110K for desktop site investigation studies on 5 Council owned sites is currently being finalised.

- 2.5 The Future High Street Fund business case for Runcorn town centre was submitted at the end of July 2020. This is a competitive bid for up to £25million for physical regeneration projects in the town centre which met the Government Criteria and satisfy the Green book appraisal.
- 2.6 Work continues at the Station Quarter to support colleagues in Open Spaces gain sign off from Network Rail and Avanti for the proposed Station Piazza and At Halton Lea work continues to implement the Liverpool City Region £1million grant to strengthen the centre by attracting and consolidating non-retail uses.
- 2.7 An ERDF grant for opening up High street safely fund of £114,260 has been allocated to Halton and a planning application for Gorse Point has been submitted and given its size interest in the site remains strong despite COVID and Brexit.
- 2.8 External Funding work has been focused on supporting organisations to apply for emergency funding streams. The Team attends the fortnightly Voluntary and Community Sector calls organised by the VCA and we know from this that there are other emergency funds being accessed by the sector; the Team is pulling together an overview of funding secured by the sector in Halton. From the information we have gathered to date, we understand that 133 projects/individuals have been funded in Halton totalling £1,215,382 through COVID emergency funds
- 2.9 A weekly COVID emergency fund bulletin has been released every Tuesday since March and this has been well received by the sector – latest version is available via the website at: <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/business/businesssupport/pdf/Funding/CoronavirusFunds.pdf> .

Highways, Transportation & Logistics and Physical Environment

- 2.10 As a consequence of the COVID pandemic the Development Control Committee have been undertaking meetings virtually and a number of major application have been determined with others concerning housing and employment schemes still under consideration.

Total Applications Received: (Includes those Withdrawn and Returned 193	
Applications Decided 172	Applications On-Hand (Undecided) 163
Pre-Applications Received 33	Pre Applications Closed 23

N.B. There are certain applications (such as tree preservation orders) that are not counted in the statutory CLG speed of processing statistics. This accounts for the difference between the figures reported above and the figures given for PPT LI 01.

- 2.11 Following submission of the Local Plan Officers are currently working to formulate responses to queries which have been raised by the planning Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State.
- 2.12 The new roundabout which has been installed as part of the Runcorn Demolition and Dde-linking projected opened during quarter 2 and the new junction for the Widnes Loops link road is due to be opened early in October.
- 2.13 As part of the Runcorn Station Quarter development the Cavendish Street / Shaw Street development is now due to commence with an expected completion of late summer 2021.
- 2.14 Reconfiguration of the carriageway over SJB has progressed, with renewal of the deck waterproofing and surfacing completed. The new splitter islands for the cycle lane and carriageway markings should be completed in October.
- 2.15 Work has progressed on Runcorn Approach Viaduct (RAV) including the STEP and LGF1 works. The new structural plinth for a parapet along the western side of RAV has been completed, and work to install the adjoining safety fencing commenced.

- 2.16 On the SJB arch, 'contact point' painting has been completed which concludes the arch superstructure maintenance painting project. Additionally a Listed Building Consent application has been submitted for the work art Waterloo Bridge that was necessitated by the removal of Queensway as part of the Runcorn De-linking project.

Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement

- 2.17 The delivery of Open Space Services has faced significant challenges during the first half-year period as whilst some technical and design staff were able to work from home the large majority of staff were required to work from various depots and on-site locations and this was exacerbated by the need to induct 13 new members of staff to posts that had become vacant during the period. However the swift and effective introduction, for example, of split-shift working arrangements and additional vehicle hire has meant that service delivery has continued whilst attaining appropriate social distancing.
- 2.18 During the period 1 April – 30 September 2020 the Borough's parks were extremely busy. A combination of periods of good weather and varying covid-19 restrictions meant that parks were for much of this period the option of choice for social interaction. In the earlier part of the period facilities such as equipped children's play areas, bowling greens, tennis courts and skate parks had to be closed. However all aspects of park management (grass cutting, cleansing, fine horticulture etc) were delivered to schedule.
- 2.19 A 'love your park' social and mainstream media campaign, led by the council's media team, was used to get messages out to the public about how they could help the council to look after the Borough's parks. The campaign was well received by the public and the Open Space Service received a lot of recognition from the public verbally and in writing.
- 2.20 Such feedback clearly demonstrated the significant impact that the often taken for granted accessible, well maintained open spaces has had in terms of the mental and physical health of residents during these challenging times.
- 2.21 There was also a notable increase in demand for streetscene services during the first half-year and staff from other departments, such as leisure centres, were successfully redeployed to assist in delivering increased service capacity which maintained the aesthetic appearance of open space areas.
- 2.22 Open spaces design and development work has continued throughout the period and a number of large scale projects were completed. These included the upgrading of a mile of footpaths at Runcorn Town Park, further boundary works at Runcorn Hill Park, footpath works at Victoria Park and the completion of the Peel House Cemetery.
- 2.23 At the beginning of the Covid-19 emergency staff from the Streetscene section built the body storage facility at the Silver Blades Ice Rink and they dismantled it when it was no longer required. The quality of the facility that the service put together was commented on by a number of professional emergency service organisations. The Open Space Service, using redeployed staff from the Waste & Environmental Improvement division ran the facility whilst it was open.
- 2.24 The Cemeteries & Crematorium section was also extremely busy during this period and an additional crematorium technician took up post in April 2020. During the period there were 905 cremations (in the same period last year 674) and 320 full body burials (293 in the same period last year).
- 2.25 Waste Collection Services continued to operate as scheduled throughout Quarters 1 and 2. To enable all services to be maintained safely, a number of new operational measures were introduced. This included specific measures to ensure that social-distancing rules could be adhered to, including, but not limited to, the use of additional vehicles for staff to travel to and from site independently to reduce the number travelling together in vehicle cabs.

- 2.26 Household waste collected during quarter 1 increased by 1,500 tonnes (16%) and fell back to normal levels during the second quarter period. However, with regards to the blue and green bin services, an increase in tonnage was seen across the whole of Q1 and Q2, with an additional 1,000 tonnes of recyclable materials and an additional 600 tonnes of garden waste being collected during that period; a 20% and 18% increase respectively.
- 2.27 At the end of Quarter 2 there were 17,700 households subscribed to the garden waste collection service, which is over 1,200 more subscriptions than at the end of Q2 last year and represents a take up rate of 40%; which is the highest participation level since it became necessary for this to become a charged service.
- 2.28 Following the reopening of the Council's two household waste recycling centres in quarter 1 it was necessary to introduce new arrangements to manage volumes of traffic and queuing times and social distancing measures and it has been necessary to limit access for some vehicle types. Moving through quarter 2 has seen traffic numbers and visits now returning to levels that would normally be expected for the time of year. However this situation will need to be kept under review in light of any further COVID related developments.

3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of the Directorate including:-

Regeneration / External Funding

- 3.2 The Sci-Tech Daresbury Science, Innovation & Growth Strategy will be refreshed to take account of the impact of Covid on the economy. In tandem with this, specific action plans such as the Talent & Skills Action Plan will be refreshed to respond to priorities for economic reset and recovery. As part of the masterplan process, the JV will consider the response to environmental sustainability.
- 3.3 The outcome of the Future High Streets Fund bid for Runcorn should be known in Autumn 2020 and this will help inform future project work and staffing requirements. Projects which are unsuccessful can, subject to them meeting certain criteria, be re-considered as part of the project prioritisation process for the Town Investment Plan submission.
- 3.4 With regards to external funding Emergency funds are still being released by grant funders, for example, Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) launched a new pot this week, and the team continues to monitor and promote these, as well as supporting with bid writing where appropriate.
- 3.5 Additionally the team is also looking at the longer term picture and how external funding might support recovery and resilience measures for the voluntary and community sector, as funders start to reopen their 'normal' grant programmes, as well as managing our core workloads.

Highways, Transportation & Logistics and Physical Environment

- 3.6 Additional site work has been identified on Runcorn Approach Viaduct for the renewal of an existing run of parapet on the western lead-in to SJB. There have been significant design issues in developing a solution that meets current technical standards, but this has been achieved. The proposal has been issued to the contractor for pricing and programming.
- 3.7 At this stage it is unclear whether the additional work will potentially delay the re-opening of Silver Jubilee Bridge and possible mitigation measures to alleviate this risk are presently being considered.

Open Spaces and Waste and Environmental Improvement

3.8 The cremators at Widnes Crematorium saw unprecedented use during the Quarter 1 and 2 periods and will require extensive overhaul during Q3 and 4. There will involve significant cost but it is anticipated that this can be met by the additional income that has been received.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

- 4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and Performance Monitoring arrangements. As such Directorate Risk Registers were updated in tandem with the development of the suite of 2019 – 20 Directorate Business Plans.
- 4.2 Progress concerning the implementation of all high-risk mitigation measures relevant to the Board are included as Appendix 1 to this report.

5.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 5.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.
- 5.2 The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>

6.0 Performance Overview

- 6.1 The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that fall within the remit of the Board.

Development and Investment Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
EEP 02a	To prepare a Town Investment Plan for Runcorn by January 2021	
EEP 02b	To prepare a Masterplan and Delivery Strategy for the Astmoor Industrial Estate by September 2020	
EEP 02c	To deliver the Liverpool City Region Town Centres' Fund in Halton Lea by 31st March 2021	

Supporting Commentary

EEP 02a

Halton has been invited to submit proposals under the Town Deal initiative to deliver a regeneration programme in Runcorn Old Town.

EEP 02b

Astmoor is identified as a key impact area in the Council's Mersey Gateway Regeneration Plan. There will be a requirement to develop a masterplan and delivery plan for the area which will be used to invite potential developer interest to bring forward employment sites in the area.

EEP 02c

Halton bid for £1m of Strategic Investment Funding to deliver a programme of initiatives in Halton Lea.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19 / 20 Actual	20 21 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 04	Occupancy rates of commercial and investment portfolio.	TBA	TBA	100% Investment and 90% commercial		
EEP LI 05	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	TBA	TBA	91%		
EEP LI 07	Number of companies benefitting from the Council's intensive Key Account Management Service.	TBA	TBA	56		

Supporting Commentary

Current Vacancies of commercial and investment portfolio –71 High St Runcorn, 6 Church St Runcorn, Frankie and Bennies the Hive, plot at Black Cat and the former bus depot Moor Lane. Marketing to commence in Q3 of Frankie and Bennie's unit and 6 Church St potential to use to open up the upper floors of 4, 6, 8, Church St. Refurbishment scheme for 71 High St underway. Unlikely to find tenants within Q3, Q4 due to economic climate.

Occupancy levels in the indoor Market remain very strong despite the 3 month closure due to COVID-19

Because of competing priorities the current resource dedicated to KAM is reduced and therefore the number of companies receiving KAM support has remained static.

Policy, Planning and Transportation

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
PPT 02	To deliver the 2019/20 LTP Capital Programme March 2020	
PPT 03	Ensure continued unrestricted availability of the Highway network and to allow future maintenance to be delivered on a steady state, lifecycle planned basis.	
PPT 04	Continue to maintain the Highway Authorities statutory duties in accordance with Section 41 and 58 of the Highways Act.	
PPT 05	Consult on a revised draft Delivery and Site Allocations Local Plan (DALP)	
PPT 06	To ensure that at least one exercise is carried out each financial to test the COMAH plans March 2019	

Currently the authority have a statutory duty to ensure the 9 Upper Tier COMAH Sites within the Borough are compliant in relation to the COMAH Regulations 2015. As part of these Regulations, exercises are planned as part of the 3 year COMAH Cycle.

For 2020/2021, both the Runcorn Site COMAH Operators Site and Univar Ltd, Widnes had scheduled Exercises to take place as part of this cycle.

However, due to Covid-19, both scheduled Exercises were suspended and rescheduled.

- Runcorn Site COMAH Operators rescheduled exercise from March 2020 to 16th October 2020.
- Univar Ltd, Widnes rescheduled exercise from July 2020 to 26th November 2020.

Both exercises will take place via MS Teams as part of a table top format. The COMAH aim and objectives will be used to structure the framework to validate the External COMAH Plan. A Multi-Agency Command and Control format with specific questions and answer sessions to be used, which in-turn will aim to validate the COMAH External Plan. A structured debrief will take place via an online document and an Exercise Report will be completed as part of the validation process. All arrangements including exercise scenario (taken from the Safety Report) have been agreed with the Competent Authority (HSE / Environment Agency).

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19 / 20 Actual	20 / 21 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
PPT LI 02	Net additional homes provided	450	552	See comment below	N/A	N/A
PPT LI 03	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	75	--		N/A	N/A
PPT LI 04	Processing of planning applications (%) as measured against targets for, a) 'major' applications	100%		75%		

Ref	Measure	19 / 20 Actual	20 / 21 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
	b) 'minor' applications	92.85%		64.7%		
	c) 'other' applications	88.17%		53.53%		
PPT LI 05	To ensure a rolling five year supply of housing land. (Deliverable supply (units) as a % of rolling 5 year requirement).	307	100	See comment	N/A	N/A
PPT LI 06	No. of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions. (5 Year Av.)	31.2	N/A	31.2 (See comment)		
PPT LI 07	No. of children (<16) killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions. (5 year Av.)	3.8	N/A	3.6		
PPT LI 08	No. of people slightly injured in road traffic collisions. (5 Year Av.)	243	N/A	238		
PPT LI 12	Damage to roads and pavements (% above intervention levels) repaired within 24 hours.	100	100	100		
PPT LI 15	% of network where structural maintenance should be considered: a) Principal Roads b) Non-Principal Roads c) Unclassified Roads	1.6 2 4	2 4 9	See comment	N/A	N/A
PPT LI 16	The proportion of non-frequent scheduled bus services on time (%): a) Percentage of buses starting route on time b) Percentage of buses on time at intermediate timing points	TBA TBA	99.00 95.00	See comment See comment	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
PPT LI 18	% of bus stops with Quality Corridor accessibility features. (No. of stops – 603)	461 (79%)	472 (81%)	461 (79%)		

Supporting Commentary

PPT 02/03

With regards to net additional homes provided there were 600 completions recorded in 16 month period April 2019 to July 2020 suggesting 12 month average of 450. 555 target in adopted Core Strategy. Proposed revision = 350.

With regards to affordable homes completions were monitored for 2019/20 as at 31st July 2020 and reported in August this year (2020).

PPT 04

The processing of planning applications has slowed when compared to the same period last year which were Major 100%, Minor 100% Other 85.7%.

This is largely due to the effects of a member of staff leaving in December 2019 and an increase in workload. A new member of staff has now been recruited and will take up post during quarter 3 and this will positively impact upon processing times.

PPT 05

The 5 year supply of housing land will be reported in quarter 3.

PPT 06/07/08

The traffic collision data being reported reflects the quarter 1 position as quarter 2 data is not yet available from Cheshire Police.

Whilst the total number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) has remained fairly static there has been a slight reduction in the number of children KSI and a slight upturn in the number of people slightly injured.

PPT 12/ 15

Repairs to damage of roads and pavement remains on track but the annual surveys required to monitor the network structure have been delayed as a consequence of the present COVID situation.

PPT 16/18

Due to the COVID pandemic bus punctuality checks were postponed and the initial lockdown period forced operators to significantly reduce service frequency as a result of much reduced passenger numbers. It is unlikely that this indicator can be reported during quarter 3.

The number of bust stops with accessibility features has remained static as alternative COVID related initiatives have taken precedence.

Waste and Environmental Improvement

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
CE 03a	Manage greenspace areas as per the agreed specification - March 2020 .	
CE 04a	Continue to deliver communications and awareness raising initiatives to ensure that participation with the Council's recycling services is maximised and that residents comply with the requirements of the Council's Household Waste Collection Policy - March 2020 .	

Supporting Commentary

Despite extreme challenges the Open Space Service was able to deliver all works within the councils agreed specification for green space management.

Restrictions that have been in place during Q1 and Q2 have impacted upon the ability to deliver the full range of communications and awareness raising activity, such as householder engagement, school visits and roadshows. However, throughout the first two quarters, messages and advice about waste and recycling have been regularly posted on the Council's social media sites.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	19 / 20 Actual	20 / 21 Target	Q2 Actual	Q2 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 05	Residual household waste per household.	TBA	TBA	314kg		
CE LI 06	Household waste recycled and composted.	TBA	TBA	38.9%		

Supporting Commentary

Residual waste per household is an estimated figure but shows slightly higher than that at quarter 2 last year which was 307kg. As detailed earlier in this report, residual waste to the half-year point was much higher than normal and it is unclear what impact this will have on the achievement of this annual target.

Again the recycling figure is estimated and at this point it is difficult to predict what the potential effect of the COVID situation may be by year-end.

7.0 Financial Statements

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**Revenue Operational Budget as at 30 September 2020**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	4,472	2,129	2,145	(16)	(31)
Repairs & Maintenance	2,205	995	895	100	200
Premises	76	64	64	0	0
Energy & Water Costs	694	252	234	18	33
NNDR	472	464	486	(22)	(22)
Rents	179	63	63	0	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	34	5	0	5	10
Security	471	168	168	0	0
Supplies & Services	260	212	197	15	15
Supplies & Services - Grant/External Funded	1,022	386	386	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisation	150	19	19	0	0
Covid-19 Discretionary Business Support Grants	831	831	831	0	0
Capital Financing	21	21	21	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	210	122	122	0	0
Total Expenditure	11,097	5,731	5,631	100	206
Income					
Fees & Charges	-876	-301	-301	0	(1)
Rent - Commercial Properties	-780	-319	-221	(98)	(216)
Rent - Investment Properties	-39	-17	-17	0	0
Rent - Markets	-570	-200	-198	(2)	(2)
Government Grant Income	-1,615	-1,012	-1,012	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Income	-1,044	-178	-178	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-440	-434	-434	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-206	-67	-67	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-794	-244	-244	0	0
Total Income	-6,364	-2,772	-2,672	(100)	(219)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,733	2,959	2,959	0	(13)
Covid Costs					
Staffing	0	0	1	(1)	(1)
Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	26	(26)	(51)
Security	0	0	16	(16)	(16)
Supplies & Services	0	0	74	(74)	(84)
Covid Loss of Income					
Rent - Commercial Properties	-197	-197	0	(197)	(312)
Rent - Investment Properties	-5	-5	0	(5)	(5)
Rent - Markets	-209	-209	0	(209)	(235)
Covid Grant Funding	0	0	-528	528	704
Net Covid Expenditure	-411	-411	-411	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,777	888	888	0	0
Transport Support	28	14	14	0	0
Central Support	2,082	1,041	1,041	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,592	-3,296	-3,296	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,701	-1,353	-1,353	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,621	1,195	1,195	0	(13)

Comments on the above figures

Finance continue to work closely with the Department to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved.

Whilst effective control over expenditure can be maintained, income remains a budget pressure, as the majority of the income is generated externally.

It is projected that the saving measures put forward by the Department for 2020/21 will be met.

However, future revenue savings are becoming increasingly hard to find, given the number of employees within respective business units. In addition, the department consists of 134.4 staff, of which 73 are externally funded, through grant/capital or external sources. There are three vacancies in the department at present. One vacancy is being recruited to whilst the remaining vacancy within the Investment & Development Division will not be filled and any savings will be used towards meeting the staff turnover saving target of £0.092m

The Repairs & Maintenance Programme is projected to be under budget this financial year. An assessment has been carried out to identify work that is not committed and which can be delayed until the next financial year to help balance the budget.

The negative variance in recent years for Energy & Water Costs was addressed at budget setting time. Due to the majority of staff now working from home the budget continues to show a positive variance this financial year. This may increase during the next few months depending on the working from home situation.

Some buildings have been acquired as part of a particular regeneration scheme and currently remain vacant. As a result, in the interim, operating costs will have to be funded internally until the buildings are demolished. This with the additional cost of NNDR on empty buildings is causing a significant budget pressure.

The report shows how much Grant/External Funding the Department receives for Supplies & Services. This highlights the difficulties the department is faced when making savings on controllable budgets.

Adult Learning Division has contributed £0.122m as match funding towards the Ways to Work Programme. During the last 4 year this has generated £1.808m in matched funding, creating an employment programme of £4.773.

Commercial Property rent continues to be the main budget pressure for the department. During the last few years, the Council has disposed of many properties, either in preparation for regeneration projects but also to generate capital receipts, which have been reinvested in Council services. This loss of rent has not been reflected in the future setting of income targets.

Capital grant conditions allowed the Council to recharge staff time to projects.

A balanced budget is forecast this financial year.

Covid Costs

The majority of the costs for COVID are related to loss of income. The market tenants and some commercial property tenants were given a three month rent free period in April. The department is forecasting that the Flea Market at Widnes Market will not open until at least January.

Additional costs for the department relate to the purchase of PPE equipment, adaptations to corporate buildings plus security on the Ice Rink whilst it was being used by the Council. It is also projected that additional cleaning will be required in the next few months.

Capital Projects as at 30 September 2020

	2020-21 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
3MG	72	21	21	51
Foundry Lane Residential Area	150	112	112	38
Equality Act Improvement Works	303	58	58	245
Widnes Market Refurbishment	149	88	88	61
Broseley House	24	20	20	4
Solar Farm	699	637	637	62
Solar Farm Extension	67	49	49	18
The Croft	30	0	0	30
Murdishaw Redevelopment	38	0	0	38
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	470	321	321	149
Kingsway Learning Centre Equipment	281	10	10	271
Halton Lea TCF	721	8	8	713
Sci Tech Daresbury – Project Violet	6,389	128	128	6,261
Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment	750	34	34	716
Total	10,143	1,486	1,486	8,657

Comments on the above figures.

Sci Tech Daresbury Project Violet- Project Violet commenced on site in August 2020 and the groundworks are commencing to schedule

Widnes Market - Evaporative cooler works completed. Initial redecoration works completed. Further phases of works planned for the remaining allocation

3MG -Alstom have confirmed they will expand on their existing site rather than purchase more land from the Council. CDP have confirmed they will acquire all the remaining land, including the public open space.

Solar Farm - All commissioning and testing has been completed. The system passed the Plant Performance Ratio test in September 2020 and the commissioning certificate was completed in August 2020.

The Council formally took over the site in September 2020.

Equality Act Improvement Works - The installation of a stair lift to improve access within Kingsway Learning Centre is currently on site and the Council is planning for various upgrade works to be undertaken later in the year following on from the various access audit reports carried out by consultants Cassidy & Ashton

Broseley House - Only one tenant now remains and notice has been served on them with a view to having them vacate the building when their lease expires in June 2021. Once vacated the building will be demolished and the site brought forward for redevelopment. Minimum works will be carried out until then so there should be little expenditure over the short term.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities – Works are progressing well and on budget, phases 1 and 2 have been handed back to the end user, The Council have a delay on the lift installation and the sliding folding partition but the rest of the works are progressing well

Halton Lea TCF – The project for the Community Shop is near completion.

Foundry Lane – The Foundry Lane project relates to the regeneration of the Foundry Lane industrial estate in Halebank. Over the next 5-10 years, the aim is to regenerate the 8ha site from its current low quality/value industrial usage, to a thriving mixed tenure housing estate of approx. 400 units. The project is currently at procurement stage in order to appoint a long term Development Partner.

Murdishaw –The Council is awaiting confirmation of the masterplan in partnership with Onward Homes. Outcome delayed due to Covid. Currently liaising with Onward to agree priority schemes. Hope to identify quick win projects for delivery in Q3/4.

PLANNING, PROVISION & TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**Revenue Operational Budget as at 30 September 2020**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	4,449	2,014	1,713	301	602
Premises	161	81	71	10	19
Hired & Contracted Services	129	94	204	(110)	(220)
Supplies & Services	125	61	80	(19)	(39)
Street Lighting	1,623	152	260	(108)	(217)
Highways Maintainance	2,532	1,108	1,040	68	135
Fleet Transport	1,363	663	450	213	426
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	197	98	98	0	0
Bus Support	560	128	136	(8)	(15)
Contribution to Reserves	440	45	12	33	65
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	61	61	61	0	0
NRA Levy	67	67	67	0	0
LCR Levy	882	441	441	0	0
Total Expenditure	12,589	5,013	4,633	380	756
Income					
Sales	-133	-83	-31	(52)	(104)
Planning Fees	-426	-316	-316	0	0
Building Control Fees	-217	-109	-67	(42)	(74)
Other Fees & Charges	-518	-348	-299	(49)	(97)
Grants & Reimbursements	-104	-98	-98	0	0
Government Grant Income	-98	-37	-37	0	0
Halton Hopper Income	-197	-98	-98	0	0
School SLAs	-45	-43	-41	(2)	(4)
Recharge to Capital	-317	-43	-5	(38)	(75)
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-882	-441	-441	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Efficiency Savings	-28	-14	0	(14)	(28)
Total Income	-2,965	-1,629	-1,433	(196)	(382)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,624	3,384	3,200	184	374
Covid Costs					
Employees	0	0	107	(107)	(159)
Fleet Transport	0	0	25	(25)	(30)
Bus Support	0	0	41	(41)	(41)
Contribution to Capital Reserves	0	0	378	(378)	(852)
Covid Loss of Income					
Planning Fees	-131	-131	0	(131)	(131)
Fees & Charges	-317	-203	0	(203)	(317)
Grants & Reimbursements	-75	-38	0	(38)	(75)
Government Grant Income	0	0	-923	923	1,605
Net Covid Expenditure	-523	-372	-372	0	0

Recharges					
Premises Support	572	286	286	0	0
Transport Support	692	309	281	28	55
Central Support	876	455	455	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,244	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-4,299	-1,771	-1,670	(101)	(202)
Net Total Recharges	-915	-721	-648	(73)	(147)
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,186	2,291	2,180	111	227

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £0.111m below the profiled budget at the end of Quarter 2 and the estimated outturn position for 2020/21 is for net spend to be £0.227m under the annual budget.

Budget holders have been working closely with the Department to try to ensure a balanced budget is achieved. Wherever possible capital expenditure has been prioritised in order to relieve pressure on the revenue budgets.

Employee spend is projected to be largely under budget this financial year due to various vacancies across the whole department, in particular the Planning and Traffic divisions. Vacant posts are currently being held and not advertised in a bid to make further savings. Across the department, there are 96.5fte's and of these, 14.4fte's are currently vacant, including a Divisional Manager post. It is important to note, however, that 3fte's are currently being filled via a contractual shared Building Control service between Halton and Knowsley. It is anticipated that the majority of these posts will be filled following a complete restructure in 2020/21.

Premises related expenditure is projected to come in under budget due to a reduction in running costs for Lowerhouse Lane Depot.

Hired & contracted services and supplies & services spend is projected to be over budget due to survey costs and plans that have been required in the Planning division. Halton also has a contract with MEAS (Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service) which is hosted by Sefton LA. This is used to provide Halton with advice in relation to ecology, waste, environmental impact assessments and local plans. To provide this advice internally would cost Halton more than the contract, but at the moment, it is significantly over the allocated budget. Legal fees are also currently projected to be over budget due to external legal advice needing to be procured for unauthorised traveller sites / Factory Lane, Widnes.

Street lighting spend will be over budget by the end of the financial year. This is due to a significant increase in utility costs. There is a capital street lighting upgrade programme in place that if implemented quicker could help to produce a revenue saving.

Highways maintenance budgets are projected to be under budget this financial year due to the capitalisation of expenditure as mentioned above.

Fleet transport costs are projected to be under budget this financial year. This is mostly due to fleet being replaced for newer models that are much more efficient and this has led to a reduction in consumables such as vehicle parts, tyres and fuel. This in turn then has an impact on the costs recharged out to other services within the Council.

Sales income is projected to be under the budgeted target by the end of the financial year due to a lack of permit and Section 50 income.

Building control income is also likely to under achieve due to a reduction in income from the shared service arrangement with Knowsley Council. This is being closely monitored in year.

The recharge of salaries to capital programmes is likely to not achieve its income target this financial year due to a lack of capital grants. In 2019/20, the £10.8m Runcorn Station Quarter project took up a large proportion of the Highways and Planning team's time which was then used to offset staffing costs. This project is smaller in value in 2020/21 and therefore there is less opportunity to capitalise.

There is an unachieved savings target in relation to a saving put forward a number of years ago regarding costs within schools transport. A saving target of £0.028m was put into the budget, achieved by educating special educational needs pupils to travel independently to school rather than by public transport.

COVID Costs and Loss of Income

Employees have worked additional hours to provide support to the various sections within the Council, which increased staffing expenditure. There has also been a significant increase in overtime within the Logistics division, which is all in relation to transportation. This is ending and has been reflected in the above figures.

Bus Support will have additional costs in 2020/21 due to services having to be provided during school holidays for the children who were identified as being in a key worker family.

There has also been a large increase in transfers to capital reserves due to two of the main highways contractors increasing costs due to the current situation. Costs are in relation to contractors having to spend additional time cleaning tools and operatives, additional time for loading and unloading, staggered starts and finishes. Lastly travel time to pick up materials has increased significantly due to plant closures being put in place due to lack of staff, this has meant contractors have had to travel further afield in order to pick up required materials. These additional costs are being monitored and projected costs have already reduced greatly from Q1. This will continue to be monitored in year.

Planning income was expected to come in under target due to the current climate. It was envisaged that there would be fewer applications made which as a result means fewer payments from house builders or members of the public. Applications seem to have picked up in the past quarter and therefore there is no further projection of loss of income past the first quarter of the financial year.

Lowerhouse Lane Depot was closed for the best part of three months and therefore the income likely to be received is projected to be under budget. Although the Depot is now open, again it is anticipated that business will not pick up as in previous years for another couple of months. This is affecting MOT, repairs and taxi testing income targets.

The Highways division are expected to achieve a lower amount of supervision fees because the work being carried out by third parties is not at the same level as in previous years.

Capital Projects as at 30 September 2020

	2020-21 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
<u>Local Transport Plan</u>				
Total Bridge & Highway Maintenance	4,810	968	968	3,842
Integrated Transport	1,169	240	240	929
STEP Schemes	0	0	81	(81)
SJB MM – Arch Painting	641	320	320	321
SJB – Deck Reconfiguration	453	502	502	(49)
SJB – Decoupling	10,247	5,686	5,686	4,561
KRN – Earle Rd Gyratory	233	0	0	233
Widnes Loops	4,258	1,113	1,113	3,145
Total Local Transport Plan	21,811	8,829	8,910	12,901
Halton Borough Council Schemes				
Street Lighting	527	0	0	527
Lighting Upgrades	2,957	66	66	2,891
Silver Jubilee Bridge - Lighting	500	0	0	500
Risk Management	355	31	31	324
Fleet Vehicles	2,586	32	32	2,554
SUD Green Cycle	469	225	225	244
Windmill Hill Flood Risk Management Scheme	240	54	54	186
Total Halton Borough Council Schemes	7,634	408	408	7,226
Total Capital Expenditure	29,445	9,237	9,318	20,127

Comments on the above figures.

The SJB MM (Silver Jubilee Bridge Major Maintenance) arch painting programme is almost complete, although it has been delayed due to various unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather.

Works are continuing for the lighting upgrade programme.

Spend on capital projects has picked up slightly when compared to Q1, this follows the trend from previous financial years and is expected to continue.

The STEP programme funding programme ended in 2019/20 but the contractors are still on site with the remaining schemes expected to finish soon. This will be offset by carry forward by grant funding from previous years.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2020**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn (Overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	13,636	6,570	6,165	405	493
Premises	2,176	1,314	924	390	463
Supplies & Services	979	491	475	16	9
Book Fund	155	40	40	0	0
Hired Services	541	155	66	89	179
Food Provisions	85	15	12	3	2
School Meals Food	1,384	154	134	20	0
Transport	157	86	91	(5)	(10)
Area Forum	210	34	34	0	0
Contribution to Archives	57	0	0	0	0
Levies	31	31	30	1	1
Waste Disposal Contract	6,188	0	0	0	136
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	84	0	0	0	65
Grant to Norton Priory	172	86	87	(1)	(1)
Capital Financing	0	0	50	(50)	(50)
Rolling Projects	0	0	86	(86)	(86)
Total Expenditure	25,855	8,976	8,194	782	1,201
Income					
Sales Income	-737	-450	-203	(247)	(325)
School Meals Sales	-1,274	-100	-86	(14)	(40)
Fees & Charges Income	-3,484	-2,281	-2,128	(153)	(345)
Rents Income	-78	-39	-28	(11)	(22)
Government Grant Income	-1,077	-1,077	-943	(134)	(134)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-547	-108	-95	(13)	44
Schools SLA	-1,208	-1,208	-1,309	101	101
Internal Fees Income	-380	-166	-37	(129)	(320)
School Meals Other Income	-130	-22	2	(24)	(31)
Catering Fees	-14	-9	-9	0	0
Capital Salaries	-173	-60	-57	(3)	(7)
Transfers from Reserves	-133	-38	-38	0	18
Total Income	-9,235	-5,558	-4,931	(627)	(1,061)
Net Operational Expenditure	16,620	3,418	3,263	155	140

Covid Costs					
Community Development	0	0	1	(1)	(1)
Community Safety	0	0	9	(9)	(9)
Leisure & Recreation	0	0	7	(7)	(16)
Open Spaces	0	0	248	(248)	(299)
Schools Catering	0	0	19	(19)	(19)
Waste & Environmental Improvement	0	0	3	(3)	(592)
Shielding Hub	0	0	25	(25)	(25)
Avoided Costs					
Commercial Catering	98	24	0	24	98
Community Development	35	27	0	27	35
Leisure & Recreation	368	126	0	126	368
Open Spaces	712	245	0	245	712
Schools Catering	972	651	0	651	972
Stadium	451	92	0	92	451
Covid Loss of Income					
Commercial Catering	-110	-34	0	(34)	(110)
Community Development	-269	-147	0	(147)	(269)
Leisure & Recreation	-1,091	-653	0	(653)	(1,091)
Open Spaces	-1,263	-514	0	(514)	(1,263)
Schools Catering	-1,497	-954	0	(954)	(1,497)
Stadium	-682	-215	0	(215)	(682)
Waste & Environmental Improvement	-12	-12	0	(12)	(12)
Government Grant Income	0	0	-1,676	1,676	3,249
Net Covid Expenditure	-2,288	-1,364	-1,364	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,640	820	820	0	0
Transport Support	2,360	1,184	1,073	111	223
Central Support	4,170	2,085	2,085	0	0
Asset Rental Support	146	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-488	-244	-244	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,828	3,845	3,734	111	223
Net Departmental Expenditure	22,160	5,899	5,633	266	363

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £0.266m under the available budget at the end of Quarter 2 and the estimated outturn underspend for 2020/21 is £0.363m under budget.

The Department has been greatly affected by Covid-19 in the first half of 2020/21. Many services were halted for at least part of the first half of the year, whilst others have had to make changes to working methods and service delivery, all of which have had an impact on the Department's budgetary position. As such, the estimated Department outturn for 2020/21 has changed considerably from 2019/20, with the caveat that there are many uncertainties around when and how service provision can begin to return to normal. The assumptions used in preparing these figures are that The Brindley will remain closed for the rest of 2020/21; Kingsway Leisure Centre and Brookvale Recreation Centre will remain open for the rest of the financial year with reduced capacity; Runcorn Swimming Pool will remain closed until next year; functions at the Stadium will not be able to take place for the rest of the year and any matches staged will be behind closed doors; Community Centres and Libraries will remain open but will operate with restrictions on services in line with Tier 3 guidance; and a full School Meals service will continue to be offered from September, albeit with disruption caused by increased student absences and partial school closures. Any changes to these assumptions will result in major changes to the Department's financial position.

Employee expenditure is £0.405m under budget at the end of Quarter 2. The underspend relates to a large number of unfilled vacancies in the Leisure Centres, The Brindley and within Open Spaces. Site closures and reductions in service delivery have allowed vacancies across the Department to be held open for longer than

usual which has also contributed to the underspend. As services are now beginning to resume, some of these vacancies have now been filled and it is not anticipated that an underspend of this scale will continue into Quarters 3 and 4. Savings on casual staff and overtime from sites that are currently closed have been classed as costs avoided due to Covid-19 and have been netted off reported Covid-19 income losses.

Premises costs are £0.390m under budget at the end of Quarter 2. Utilities and repair costs have reduced considerably whilst sites have been closed, although these will likely increase again now sites have started to reopen. The outturn position is currently projected to be £0.463m under budget due to ongoing closures at The Brindley and Runcorn Swimming Pool, a reduction in services offered at the Stadium and reduced energy usage at the Leisure Centres due to restricted capacity.

Spend on Supplies and Services is currently £0.016m under budget and spend on Hired Services is currently £0.089m under budget. This underspend has been generated by reduced spending on services that were temporarily halted, and spending is expected to return to normal once sites reopen.

No invoices have been received for the waste disposal contracts in 2020/21. Estimated expenditure has therefore been calculated based on the average cost per tonne in 2019/20. Any changes to these costs could have a large impact on the Department's outturn budget.

The overspend on Rolling Projects partially relates to emergency works to the Sankey Canal which have been necessitated by the closure of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station. Once the preliminary stages of the work are complete, a report will be taken to the Board which will set out options to fund the project.

An estimate of the income loss due to Covid-19 has been made based on the income received by the Department in 2019/20 and has been reported separately from the normal operational income. The underachievement of Sales Income of £0.247m at the end of Quarter 2 therefore relates to shortfalls in catering income from Commercial Catering and the Stadium which have been ongoing issues for many years.

Minimal income has so far been received for School Meals sales due to schools only being open for a very limited number of children in the summer term. It is extremely challenging to estimate the income which is likely to be received during the rest of the year as the service has been subject to considerable disruption since resuming fully in September, many schools have had to send large numbers of children home to self-isolate. Sales income will also be affected by the economic downturn due to a likely increase in free school meals numbers and possible reductions in the amount of household income available for discretionary spending. These factors mean that any projections relating to the School Meals service are subject to a high degree of uncertainty and could change considerably by the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

Fees & Charges Income is £0.153m under budget at the end of Quarter 2. This relates to historic shortfalls in income in the Leisure Centres and the Stadium, offset by an increase in income for Cemeteries, the Crematorium and green waste licences.

The shortfall in Government Grant income relates to the Universal Infants Free School Meals Grant.

The Department has incurred £0.312m of additional costs due to Covid-19 at the end of Quarter 2. £0.217m of these costs relate to the rental of the ice rink for use as a temporary morgue and the installation of a temporary cremator to cope with additional service demand. There were also £0.020m of additional costs incurred due to the School Meals service requiring to operate throughout the school holidays, and £0.015m of food costs relating to the Shielding Hub for distribution to vulnerable residents. The estimated additional costs for the whole of 2020/21 are £0.961m. The majority of the additional costs are in relation to waste disposal, caused by a significant increase in the amount of waste generated from households during lockdown. This has increased considerably from the estimated cost at Quarter 1 due to the Liverpool City Region being subject to Tier 3 restrictions from October. It has now been determined that the temporary cremator will be required to be in place throughout the rest of 2020/21 at an additional cost of £0.020m. There are also additional costs being incurred relating to PPE and cleaning requirements in buildings which are open to the public.

Covid-19 related income losses across the Department in Quarter 2 are estimated at £2.529m, offset by £1.165m of avoided costs for casual and agency staff, overtime, food and bar provisions, and costs of artists performing at The Brindley.

It has been assumed that all additional costs and loss of external income that can be attributed to Covid-19 will be covered by government grant funding. This includes a grant of £0.231m awarded by the Arts Council to assist with the running costs of The Brindley, as well as to purchase equipment to enable the theatre to reopen safely in 2021/22. The only impact of Covid-19 which is shown as having an effect on the Department's financial position is therefore the loss of internal income which cannot be offset by grant funding. This loss of income will be offset by a reduction in expenditure across other Departments. This has the largest impact on the Stadium and the Community Centres, all of which receive significant income from internal room hire.

Transport recharges are currently £0.111m under budget, which is projected to increase to £0.223m at the end of 2020/21. This is consistent with the historical trend of reduced transport running and maintenance costs within the Department.

Capital Projects as at 30 September 2020

	2020/21 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	69	33	33	36
Children's Playground Equipment	120	20	20	100
Landfill Tax Credits	10	0	0	10
Upton Improvements	13	0	0	13
Crow Wood Play Area	90	6	6	84
Crow Wood Pavilion	1	1	1	0
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery	349	300	308	41
Victoria Park Glass House	25	20	20	5
Sandymoor Playing Fields	27	0	0	27
Town Park	246	20	14	232
Open Spaces	542	150	154	388
Bowling Greens	5	4	4	1
Widnes & Runcorn Cemeteries – Garage & Storage	3	3	3	0
Litter Bins	20	20	20	0
Brookvale Recreation Centre Pitch	488	0	0	488
Moor Lane Leisure Centre	4,986	984	984	4,002
Total	6,994	1,561	1,567	5,427

Comments on the above figures.

Stadium Minor Works – There have been major works carried out to modernise the Bridge Suite, including upgrading to energy efficient LED lighting.

Children's Playground Equipment - This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds.

Crow Wood Park – The park building and the external works are substantially complete and the next phase of landscaping works is now under way.

Open Spaces Schemes – This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including works to Sunnybank Park, Hale Lighthouse Approach, Birchfield Gardens and several projects in the Runcorn Hill area.

Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – The major hard landscaping is nearing completion. The final planting needed to complete the scheme will take place in the autumn.

Victoria Park Glass House – Works to the glass house are now complete. Works to the garden are currently being carried out.

Sandymoor Playing Fields – The main work has been completed and the site has now been handed over to the Parish Council. There will be some soft landscape establishment works to complete over the next year.

Widnes & Runcorn Cemeteries - Garage & Storage – Work at both sites has now been completed, with the exception of some final establishment works. There will be a retention payment due in 2020/21.

Town Park – The southern paths phase is nearing completion, with only reinstatement works remaining to be completed.

Bowling Greens – Works related to the removal of the bowling green is now substantially complete.

Moor Lane Leisure Centre – Works currently on hold due to potential compulsory purchase orders (CPO) on site.

8.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green 	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber 	Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved</i>
Red 	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Green 	Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber 	Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red 	Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N / A 	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Environment and Urban Renewal) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2020

The purpose of this report is to provide an update concerning the implementation of mitigation measures for those areas of risk which have been assessed as high within the Directorate Risk Register and are relevant to the remit of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

Business Area – Policy, Planning and Transportation

Assessment of current risk		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R17	Failure to maintain and make available the Councils highway network could lead to adverse consequences for road users and others. <i>(Strategic Priority: Safer Halton / Halton's Urban Renewal)</i>	3	4	12		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
<i>R17 a</i>	<i>Delivery of prioritised maintenance programme</i>	Operational Director (Highways and Transportation)	Annually	2	3	6
<i>R17 b</i>	<i>Timely and effective use of Variable Message Signs</i>					
<i>R17 c</i>	<i>Coordination of works to minimise impact.</i>					

Progress update

Halton's Highway Safety Inspection Policy Framework is in place, this is in conjunction with the Highways Asset Management Plan.

The availability of revenue budget remains problematic due to the ongoing fiscal pressures being experienced across all service areas of the Council which will inevitably have an impact upon what can be delivered. As a consequence revenue funding continues to be used in a targeted way paying particular attention to the ongoing safety of the highways infrastructure.

Variable Message Signs continue to be used regularly to help manage the flow of traffic and minimise disruption on the road network as a result of maintenance and urgent works, events and other incidents.

Highway works are managed through permits to help coordinate maintenance to highways including works by utility providers. This alleviates the congestion and disruption that can occur when such works are necessary and allows a greater degree of planned co-ordination of the wider highway network and use of alternative routes etc.

Implementation of High Risk Mitigation Measures (Environment and Urban Renewal) – Quarter 2 to 30th September 2020

Business Area –Community and Environment

Assessment of current risk		Impact (Severity)	Likelihood (Probability)	Score (I x L)		
ECR R35	Unwillingness of public to participate in Council recycling services or comply with Council policies will result in increased costs being incurred.	4	3	12		
Risk control measure(s)		Lead Officer	Timescale Review	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Score
R35 a	<i>Produce a Waste Prevention Plan to set out initiatives to help reduce the amount of waste produced in Halton.</i>	Operational Director	Quarterly	4	2	8
R36 b	<i>Ensure sufficient resources are in place to deliver comprehensive community engagement, education and promotional campaigns</i>					
R37 c	<i>Work closely with officers from other Council Departments, external organisations and community groups to deliver projects to encourage residents to participate in Council waste recycling and waste reduction schemes and initiatives.</i>					
R37 d	<i>Consideration of policies and initiatives to incentivise and encourage residents to participate in Council recycling services and initiatives.</i>					

Progress update

The increasing cost of dealing with residual waste means that reducing the amount of waste generated in Halton and recycling as much of what is produced as possible remains a key focus. The Council employs two Community Engagement Officers who are actively involved in activities and delivering initiatives to promote waste prevention and encouraging residents to make full use of the recycling services and facilities provided by the Council. The Council is now signed up to the Liverpool City Region-wide ‘Recycle Right’ Campaign, which is aimed at removing any confusion over what residents can recycle and is intended to help improve the quality and level of recycling materials collected. As well as working in partnership with other regional local authorities on encouraging improved participation in recycling services, Officers work very closely with Housing Associations and community groups on numerous waste and recycling initiatives.

The primary method used by Officers to engage with local residents and community groups over waste matters involves direct face to face interaction through, for example, visits to householders at their homes or events at community venues. Due to COVID 19 local restrictions, Officers have been somewhat constrained in their ability to carry out engagement activity. Some reduced activity is continuing but this is limited to only being able make telephone calls or send advisory letters. The review of existing waste and recycling policies, together with consideration of introducing new ones, remains on-going.