

Public Document Pack



Corporate Policy and Performance Board

**Tuesday, 3 November 2020 6.30 p.m.
Via public remote access (please contact
Clerk named below for instructions)**

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

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Robert Gilligan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Ged Philbin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor John Abbott	Labour
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Martha Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Chris Loftus	Labour
Councillor Alan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Angela McInerney	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Joe Roberts	Labour
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour

*Please contact Gill Ferguson on 0151 511 8059 or
gill.ferguson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 26 January 2021*

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	1 - 4
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (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 and voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 8 September 2020 via public remote access

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Howard, M. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, A. Lowe, A. McInerney, N. Plumpton Walsh, Joe Roberts and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, E. Dawson, G. Ferguson, L Pennington-Ramsden and S. Johnson Griffiths

Also in attendance: One Member of the press

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

	<i>Action</i>
CS9 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 28th July 2020 were taken as read and signed as a correct record subject to Councillor Joe Roberts being added to the list of those present.</p>	
CS10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CS11 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The Board was presented with the Minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.</p>	
CS12 CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20	
<p>The Board was provided with a report from the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented details of health and safety management</p>	

within the Authority from 1 April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

The report highlighted health and safety incidents that had taken place over the past twelve months and as a result of those incidents proposed actions for the future. In addition the report included information around the number of actual near misses, accidents that had resulted over 7 day absences, together with significant accidents. In summary:

- there had been a decrease in significant incidents whilst over 7 day injuries have remained the same as the previous year at 16;
- there had also been a total of 8 near misses, a decrease of 4 from the previous year. Slips, trips and falls, Manual Handling incidents and equipment use accidents had all decreased;
- violent Incidents were showing a rise in the number of verbal incidents compared to last year's figures and physical incidents have rose from 10 to 12 in the last 12 months. There had also been a rise in physical incidents but no reported verbal incidents within Halton schools;
- lone working monitoring system usage data showed seventy nine users had been deleted for non-use across both directorates despite mandatory use being approved and endorsed by Management Team;
- Display Screen Equipment assessments had risen to 32 for 2019 compared to 23 throughout 2018 with staff coming forward to report various health issues surrounding Musculoskeletal Disorders; and
- Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system had risen from **1432** in 2018/19 to **1859** in 2019/20 following consultations at Joint Consultative Committee Meetings across the Authority.

Arising from the discussion Members were advised on the home working risk assessments currently in place for staff which included:

- delivery of specialist equipment such as chairs and tables to their home;
- Managers had carried out appropriate assessments

and there had been continuous support from the Health and Safety Team;

- support had been provided to those staff to work from a Council building;
- the Learning and development team provided online mental health learning and support to staff; and
- a workforce survey was being developed to go out to staff.

A Member queried the legal implications of deleting staff from the lone working system and it was reported that there were other lone working controls in place, however this would be looked into.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS13 PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director of Public Health which provided a presentation covering the most recent data on COVID-19 Coronavirus; latest update on Halton outbreak support team approach, and Halton's testing approach in the community and for schools.

Whilst COVID-19 Coronavirus presented an unprecedented challenge, well-established local arrangements for public health were being used as the basis of an enhanced response. The pandemic was having a profound impact on the Council's finances, its staff, all of its services and the way it operated. This response was dynamic and in order to provide the most up to date information a presentation would be provided.

The presentation highlighted the most recent COVID-19 Coronavirus figures for Halton and provided an update on how the Halton outbreak support team were working within the contain framework to successfully identify and manage local outbreaks using information from NHS Test and Trace and how this also worked with the Cheshire Hub.

It was recognised that testing was key and there was a robust programme in Halton with regional sites as well as mobile testing units and walk through testing sites in both Widnes and Runcorn. All of these were accessible on the national portal. In addition, national home delivery testing kits were also available.

Arising from the discussion a Member queried if the Walk in Centres were still appointment only and it was agreed that this would be checked and Members advised.

Members queried the policing of the track and trace system in pubs and restaurants and were advised that the responsibility was the Environmental Health team, however they did not have the resources to carry out spot checks. Should a member of the public have concern that the COVID-19 guidelines were not being followed they should phone the contact centre to report it.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 3 November 2020

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: Corporate Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 3 November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes
WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Corporate Services 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 Corporate Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17th September 2020

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB19 BUSINESS RATES SECTION 44A DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY STATEMENT

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval of the Business Rates Section 44A Discretionary Rate Relief Policy Statement, to allow discretionary relief for short term periods for unoccupied or partly unoccupied business premises.

The Business Rates Section 44A Discretionary Rate Relief Policy Statement was presented to Members in Appendix A of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Business Rates Section 44A Discretionary Rate Relief Policy Statement, as presented in Appendix A, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB20 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented an application for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, for consideration.

The report outlined details of the application from *Sports Traider*, a registered Charity and a letter detailing the Charity's aims and activities was attached at Appendix 2 of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board approves the application from *Sports Traider* for the award of 15% discretionary rate relief in respect of Unit 39, Orchard Way, Runcorn Shopping Centre, Runcorn.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB21 2020/21 REVENUE SPENDING AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented the Council’s overall revenue net spending position as at 30 June 2020, together with a forecast outturn position. It also advised Members on the financial impact of Covid-19 and summarised Government funding made available to the Council to date.

The following appendices were attached:

- A summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 30 June 2020 – Appendix 1;
- Detailed figures for each individual department – Appendix 2; and
- Capital Programme spending – Appendix 3.

It was reported that as at 30 June 2020 total spending was £770,000 above budget and in overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend would be over budget by £6.951m, unless corrective action was taken. It was noted that this was inclusive of additional costs and loss of income incurred as a result of Covid-19 as explained in paragraph 3.2.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continued to be limited to only absolutely essential items;
- 2) Departments seek to implement those approved budget savings proposals which currently remained to be actioned;
- 3) Strategic Directors take urgent action to identify areas where spending could be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year;
- 4) the write off debts as set out in paragraph 3.19 be approved; and
- 5) Council be requested to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.17.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB22 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2023

The Board received an overview of the new one page

Organisational Development (OD) Strategy 2020-23, from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources.

It was noted that a contemporary approach had been adopted in the development of the Strategy and it was no longer appropriate to have lengthy and time consuming strategies that few employees had the time or inclination to read. The factors taken into account for the new design and content were explained in the report and the *Organisational Development Strategy – Unlocking our Potential 2020-23* was appended to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board note the Organisational Strategy 2020-23.

EXB23 CORPORATE SECURITY CONTRACT

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which notified Members of the intention to go out to tender with regards to procuring a new corporate security contract in line with the Council's procurement strategy.

Members noted that the existing contract was due to expire on 28 February 2021, so the new contract would commence on 1 March 2021 and be for a 3 year period with the option to extend it for a further 12 months, subject to satisfactory performance.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the intention to go out to tender via the Chest, in respect of procuring a new corporate security contract.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	3 rd November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources
SUBJECT:	Area Forum Annual Report for 2019/20
PORTFOLIO:	Community & Sport
WARDS:	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with details of Area Forum project delivery and financial spend for the period 1st of April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members consider and comment upon the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Local Area Forums provide a mechanism for Councillors to respond to community needs and aspirations through the funding and delivery of initiatives and projects. Area Forum money can also be used as 'match funding' to help level in additional funding from a variety of external sources. Support to Area Forums is provided by Community Development and Project Officers.

4.0 LOCAL AREA FORUM

- 4.1 Each year funding is allocated to support the Area Forum projects programme. In 2019/20, the budget was £200,000. The budget is split on a 'per capita' basis across the seven Local Area Forums that cover the Borough and are made up as follows;

AF1 – Broadheath, Ditton, Hale & Hough Green
AF2 – Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside
AF3 – Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View
AF4 – Grange, Halton Brook, Heath & Mersey
AF5 – Halton Castle, Norton North, Norton South & Windmill Hill
AF6 – Beechwood & Halton Lea
AF7 – Daresbury

- 4.2 The Community Development & Project Officers are neighbourhood based. They engage with, and work alongside, community groups to support them to

develop their skills and knowledge and to promote community action. Members of the local community are invited to contribute ideas for neighbourhood projects to enhance their local area.

- 4.3 Community Development & Project Officers manage the Area Forum funding applications process. They will support community groups in the submitting applications and for Members' consideration and then co-ordinate the delivery of approved projects. Initiatives must have community support and must not result in long-term financial commitment.
- 4.4 Case study information and resident feedback which demonstrates the impact Area Forum projects have for local communities is set out within Appendix 1. A full breakdown of projects across the seven Forum areas is contained within Appendix 2.

5.0 LOCAL AREA FORUM EXPENDITURE

- 5.1 The Projects funded through the Local Area Forums are varied. They have been categorised into a number of key areas, which are listed below;

5.1.1 **Children & Youth Facilities** - This covers activities, support and improvements to facilities for children and young people.

5.1.2 **Community Events** - This category is for community events, organised by local groups. These event supports participation and residents connecting with each other.

5.1.3 **Community Resource & Equipment** - This category is for equipment and resources to support community organisations and venues.

5.1.4 **Community Initiatives** - This category includes community activity and pilot initiatives in local neighbourhoods.

5.1.5 **Improved Parks** - This category includes initiatives which support the provision of weekend gardeners in the Council's parks; which can deter vandalism, improve public reassurance and the general appearance of parks. It also includes improvements such as benches or new features.

5.1.6 **Landscapes** - This category includes increased planting and any support to green spaces.

5.1.7 **Pedestrian & Highway Improvements** - This category captures improvements to the local physical infrastructure, such as pathways and any facilities on the highways, for example road safety improvements, traffic calming and speed surveys.

5.1.8 **Community Safety** - This category covers initiatives that deter crime and anti-social behaviour (ie fencing, lighting and alley gating).

5.2 Breakdown of Budget by Area Forum

The Area Forum budget is allocated 'per capita' on the population levels for each area as set out below;

Forum	2018/19 Carry Forward	2019/20 Budget	Total Budget	2019/20 Spend
1: Broadheath, Ditton, Hale & Hough Green	£4,891.27	£34,580.00	£39,471.27	£31,007.31
2: Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside	£37,642.19	£29,970.00	£67,612.19	£44,069.12
3: Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View	£35,506.47	£35,590.00	£71,096.47	£65,805.68
4: Grange, Halton Brook, Heath & Mersey	£13,418.33	£42,210.00	£55,628.33	£5,0859.4
5: Halton Castle, Norton North, Norton South & Windmill Hill	£24,651.81	£34,580.00	£59,231.81	£31,780.53
6: Beechwood & Halton View	£13,982.38	£15,640.00	£29,622.38	£18,984.73
7: Daresbury	£2,948.38	£7,430.00	£10,378.38	£8,373.39
Total	£133,040.83	£200,000.00	£333,040.84	£250,880.16

5.3 Breakdown of Expenditure by Category

5.3.1 Broadheath, Ditton, Hale & Hough Green

	Children & Young People	Community Events	Community Resources & Equipment	Community Initiatives	Improved Parks	Pedestrian & Highway Improvements	Landscapes	Community Safety	Total
AF1	£1,210.00	£0.00	£5,336.52	£300.00	£7,600.00	£7,611.35	£5,000.00	£3,949.44	£31,007.31
AF2	£2,686.82	£1,430.00	£4,495.30	£10,442.00	£0.00	£11,482.00	£1,533.00	£12,000.00	£44,069.12
AF3	£13,437.20	£0.00	£9,931.44	£7,268.19	£7,600.00	£10,719.67	£0.00	£16,849.18	£65,805.68
AF4	£5,150.00	£5,827.00	£10,755.92	£15,606.00	£8,190.00	£0.00	£400.00	£4,930.48	£50,859.40
AF5	£2,769.40	£7,004.34	£11,236.89	£6,969.90	£3,800.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£31,780.53
AF6	£7,246.38	£347.00	£9,991.39	£260.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,139.96	£0.00	£18,984.73
AF7	£573.97	£0.00	£1,114.42	£2,685.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4,000.00	£8,373.39
Total	£33,073.77	£14,608.34	£52,861.88	£43,531.09	£27,190.00	£29,813.02	£8,072.96	£41,729.10	£250,880.16
%	13	6	21	17	11	12	3	17	100

The forum approved 14 projects with spend of £31,007.31. The highest category of spend was Pedestrian & Highway Improvements.

5.3.2 Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside

The forum approved 15 projects with spend of £44,069.12. The highest category of spend was Community Safety.

5.3.3 Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View

The forum approved 18 projects with spend of £65,805.68. The highest category spend was Community Safety.

5.3.4 Grange, Halton Brook, Heath & Mersey

This forum approved 30 projects with spend of £50,859.40. The highest category of spend was Community Initiatives.

5.3.5 Halton Castle, Norton North, Norton South & Windmill Hill

This forum approved 23 projects with spend of £31,780.53. The highest category spend was Community Resources & Equipment.

5.3.6 Beechwood & Halton Lea

This forum approved 14 projects with spend of £18,984.73. The highest category of spend was Community Resources & Equipment.

5.3.7 Daresbury

This forum approved 4 projects with spend of £8,373.39. The highest category spend was Community Safety.

5.4 Breakdown of Expenditure by Council Priority

5.4.1 All Area Forum projects are required to demonstrate a contribution to the Council's Priorities. The table below shows spend on projects for each Priority.

	Healthy Halton	Environment & Regeneration	Employment, Learning & Skills	Children & Young People	Community Safety	Total
AF1	£150.00	£19,211.35	£5,186.52	£1,510.00	£4,949.44	£31,007.31
AF2	£4,022.40	£10,624.00	£5,795.30	£13,627.42	£10,000.00	£44,069.12
AF3	£1,000.00	£18,860.29	£8,439.34	£13,437.20	£24,068.85	£65,805.68
AF4	£6,988.90	£25,001.52	£6,331.50	£7,607.00	£4,930.48	£50,859.40
AF5	£15,334.61	£6,160.00	£6,336.52	£3,949.40	£0.00	£31,780.53
AF6	£2,546.96	£9,398.00	£4,898.25	£2,141.52	£0.00	£18,984.73
AF7	£0.00	£2,685.00	£1,688.39	£0.00	£4,000.00	£8,373.39
Total	£30,042.87	£91,940.16	£38,675.82	£42,272.54	£47,948.77	£250,880.16
%	12	37	15	17	19	100

6.0 Supporting Funding

6.1 Area Forum projects can enable the leverage of funding from other organisations and grant giving bodies. Community Development and Project Officers work collaboratively with Officers from other Council Departments to seek out and secure external funding opportunities. Overall, an additional amount of £162,286.82 was 'levered in' to support area forum projects; providing a total spend of £413,166.98 as detailed in the table below;

Funding Source	Amount
Area Forum	£250,880.16
Halton Borough Council	£105,451.27
Other Halton	£47,776.67
External	£9,058.88
Total	£413,166.98

In the above below, 'HBC' refers to funding provided by departments within the Council; such as Highways and Open Space Services. 'Other Halton' refers to funding provided directly by applicants or other agencies such; as local Housing providers. 'External' refers to funding coming in from outside of Halton; for example from organisations such as WREN, Biffa and Big Lottery Fund.

7.0 STRATEGIC APPROACHES

7.1 The Local Area Forum projects programme provides a means of funding neighbourhood schemes in response to local needs and aspirations. In addition, area forum grants often provide much needed third party or match funding to support larger schemes. Area forums provide a platform for community engagement at a neighbourhood level which not only delivers projects and improvements but can contribute towards achieving strategic objectives and informing decisions on policy development.

8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no Policy implications arising from this report

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 These are contained within the report.

10.0 RISK ANALYSIS

10.1 There are no significant risks associated with this report.

11.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

11.1 The Area Forum process is open and accessible to all members of Halton's community.

12.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

12.1 A Healthy Halton

Many of the community initiatives have a wellbeing impact supporting the ethos of a whole area approach to community life. Enabling community led activity also builds community resilience.

12.2 Environment & Regeneration in Halton

Local area forums provide a mechanism for residents to be involved in local decision making, impacting on place shaping for their local area. Halton's residents can influence expenditure to improve their local environment and work jointly with the Council towards the communities' aspirations.

12.3 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The expenditure that supports community initiatives includes accessing learning & skills opportunities through locally delivered courses. Many of the community initiatives have volunteer opportunities either with the Management Committees or as part of delivering activities; for example, community cafés.

12.4 Children & Young People in Halton

The expenditure profiles for each of the area forums demonstrates a significant proportion of funding is allocated to supporting activities and facilities for children and young people.

12.5 A Safer Halton

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents' fear of crime where they live. They are likely to feel a stronger sense of belonging and safety in an environment where the communities know each other, are active and there are established links to other stakeholders.

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

13.1 None under the meaning of the Act

APPENDIX 1

Area Forum Case Studies and Feedback**Area Forum 1 Broadheath, Ditton, Hale & Hough Green**

Broadheath: £1,000 was awarded to Ditton Nursery School for safety measures and *“the grant has helped the community by keeping our young children safe in education. Now with the railings in situation we can lessen the risk that children will access the car park area thus ensuring their safety. Zig zag & disabled road markings prevent people parking close to the path way or in a disabled space, which again lessens the risk of a child being injured due to bad visibility of the car park area”*.

Ditton: Clincton Angling Association – Site Improvements, £5,000. Working with Open Space Services, a new path around the main pond was installed and 20 angling pegs were replaced; as well other smaller paths. The angling pegs were dangerously unsafe so it was vital that this work was carried out. The improvements have created a more pleasant environment for both anglers and the wider community.

Hale: 8th Widnes Scout Groups, £700 – The forum funding will provide young people between the age of 6 and 14 with extra opportunities to build their range of skills and self-esteem through participation in adventurous activity. *(This activity has been delayed due to covid and will go ahead at a later date)*

Hough Green: Pedestrian Barriers, Upton Community Centre - £4,000 was provided to install barriers on the path outside Upton Community Centre leading to the shops to improve the safety of pedestrians as motorbikes had been using the area.

Area Forum 2: Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside

Appleton: Fairfield School Entrance Improvements £12,000 was awarded to make improvements around the school’s entrance to ensure increased safety for children, staff, parents and the whole community.

Kingsway: Bowling Club – The club received £1,600 to provide a pantomime for local children and their families along with further entertainment and refreshments. This activity was aimed at those that otherwise would not have been able to access such an activity around the Christmas celebrations.

Riverside: Sam’s Diamonds Garden Project - £1,500 was provided to enable the group to purchase gardening equipment that they could use to create a “Garden of Hope”. This would be a place for women undergoing cancer treatment a place to rest and relax, as well as keep active, with gentle gardening. It also provided the opportunity to learn new skills. *Work was due to commence in March so has been delayed due to Covid.*

Area Forum 3: Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View

Birchfield: Upton Rocks Park CCTV - £10,000 was provided to install CCTV to cover this area to help reduce anti-social behaviour.

Farnworth: Widnes Historical Society - £3,100 was awarded to the group to produce two books based on Notes and Queries from paperwork dating back to the 1800s. *“Members of the Historical Society, both past and present, have benefitted by having their memories in print. Local people have benefitted by purchasing the book and reading the content and extra income from book sales has ensured that Widnes Historical Society will continue to thrive into the future”*

Halton View: Title Shot Boxing Club - £1,000 was awarded to the group to purchase kit for their members. The following feedback has been provided: *“We have the kits now and had the great pleasure of our boxers competing for the first time this season in the new kits, it was a great feeling to turn up at a huge competition as a team in the team colours. The added bonus is that our boxers won the area championships and now compete in the national quarter finals which is a huge achievement for our club in only its second season”*

Area Forum 4: Grange, Halton Brook, Heath & Mersey

Grange: Grange Community Forum - £375 was given to this group to organise a Halloween party for children and families from the area. This included entertainment and refreshments and provided a safe way for families to celebrate and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable.

Halton Brook: Wicksten Drive Alleycats - £115 was awarded to the group so that they could hire a skip to clean up the area. The space is important for community activity, children’s play and for adults to socialise and look after this green space so that all can enjoy it.

Heath: Runcorn Hill Conservation Project - £590 was awarded so that personal protective equipment and resources could be purchased for the volunteers on the conservation project that has a hugely beneficial impact on the area.

Mersey: Unlock Runcorn - £1,330 to purchase planters and soil to create a sensory and nature garden to benefit volunteers, local residents and community members.

Area Forum 5: Halton Castle, Norton North, Norton South & Windmill Hill

Halton Castle: Recharge & Restore - £1,300 received by the group to enable them to hold therapy sessions for 19 people, to help with stress reduction and pain relief. *“Those who attended were suffering from anxiety and stress and all reported an improvement in their frame of mind after the treatment”*.

Norton North & South: Murdishaw Community Centre - £1,500 was awarded so that the centre could provide a number of family orientated community events for local residents; including a summer event and Halloween, Christmas and Easter parties (the latter being delayed due to Covid).

Windmill Hill: Windmill Hill Primary School - £900 was awarded to the school so that they, as part of National Science Week could facilitate extra-curricular activity where they pupils could explored practical experiments through the Catalyst Museum. The children had the opportunity to gain new skills and from the opportunity to aspire for scientific roles within their future.

Area Forum 6 Beechwood & Halton Lea

Beechwood: Beechwood Primary School were awarded £1045.52 so that they could purchase a paediatric changing table for their accessible toilet to enable children with complex needs to be looked after. They were also subsequently awarded £1000 to purchase digital technology to further support children with additional learning needs.

Halton Lea: MakoDigital Arts CIC were awarded £1,600 to lead digital workshop for young people aged 8 – 16 from Area Forum 6. This was awarded just before lockdown and the organisation were able to adapt and offered their course virtually.

Area Forum 7 Daresbury

Daresbury: Preston Brook Parish Council were awarded £4,000 to purchase 3 flashing speed signs to be placed along the main road in an attempt to reduce the speed of vehicles travelling through the village.

APPENDIX 2

Area Forum Projects List 2019/20

Area Forum 1: Broadheath, Ditton, Hale & Hough Green		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£5,186.52	All
Weekend Park Workers	£7,600.00	Ditton and Hale
Clincton Angling Association - Site Improvements	£5,000.00	Ditton
Ditton Nursery - Railings	£1,000.00	Broadheath
Hale Estate sign	£871.00	Hale
Alleygate - Tabley Avenue	£1,680.22	Broadheath
Alley Gate - Cradley	£1,680.22	Broadheath
Car Park, Upton CC - Line Marking and Bus Access	£1,032.15	Hough Green
The Monday Club - Radio Mikes	£150.00	Broadheath
Pedestrian Barriers - Upton CC	£4,708.20	Hough Green
Ditton Library - Lunch packs	£300.00	Ditton
9th All Saints Rainbows - Activity Trip	£510.00	Hough Green
8th Widnes Scout Group - Training Skills	£700.00	Broadheath, Ditton and Hale
Friends of Pickerings Pasture - CCTV	£589.00	Ditton
Total	£31,007.31	

Area Forum 2: Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£4,495.30	All
Kingsway Skip Scheme	£2,486.00	Kingsway
Fairfield School - Improved Entrance	£12,000.00	All
Fortuna Female Society - Event	£1,430.00	Riverside
Pedestrian Link - Kingsway Ward	£320.00	Kingsway
Widnes Library - Summer Reading Project	£600.00	Kingsway
Pantomine - Milton Ave Bowling Club	£1,627.42	Kingsway
Scott Avenue Improvements	£10,000.00	Kingsway
St Marie's Heritage Group - Display Material and Equipment	£1,300.00	Riverside
Sam's Diamonds - Garden Project	£1,533.00	Riverside
Riverside Skip Scheme	£2,025.00	Riverside
Access Improvements, Milton Avenue	£1,162.00	Kingsway
Kingsway Spring Clean Skip Scheme	£2,171.00	Kingsway
West Bank Skip Scheme - March	£2,460.00	Riverside
Kops and Kids - Sports Equipment	£459.40	Kingsway
Total	£44,069.12	

Area Forum 3: Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£5,339.34	All
Street Lighting (Between Bloomsbury Way & Cornerhouse Lane).	£7,219.67	Birchfield
CCTV Camera for Upton Rocks Park	£12,000.00	Birchfield
Weekend Park Workers	£7,600.00	Birchfield & Halton View
Dual Bin, Wilmere Lane	£492.10	Farnworth
Halton Farnworth Hornets - 2 x "You are being monitored signs"	£160.00	Farnworth
Moorfield Primary School - Outdoor Play Equipment	£5,000.00	Halton View
Title Shot Boxing Club - new kits	£1,000.00	Halton View
Page Lane Traffic Calming	£3,500.00	Halton View
Youth Engagement in Upton Rocks Park - Trust R Youth	£2,948.00	Birchfield
Community Safety Sign	£150.00	Farnworth
Alley Gates - Bancroft Road	£2,365.68	Halton View
Widnes Historical Society - printing costs for book	£1,500.00	Farnworth
Lunt's Heath Rd - 2 Police Enforcement and 30mph signs	£1,150.00	Farnworth
Alley Gate behind 130 Derby Rd	£1,483.50	Farnworth
Skip Schemes for all 3 wards	£7,108.19	All 3 Wards
Trust R Youth - continuation of outreach work	£5,489.20	Birchfield
Widnes Historical Society - printing costs for 2nd book	£1,600.00	Farnworth
Refund from Alleygate Scheme	-£300.00	
Total	£65,805.68	

Area Forum 4: Grange, Halton Brook, Heath & Mersey		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£6,331.50	All
Hope Corner - Café Furniture	£1,488.90	Heath
Alley gating - Morval Crescent	£2,284.48	Halton Brook
Alleygate - Thorn Road	£2,216.00	Grange
Grange Forum - Easter Event	£375.00	Grange
Mersey, HB & Grange Skip Scheme	£9,186.00	Mersey, Halton Brook & Grange
Weston / Weston Point Skip Scheme	£2,540.00	Heath
CTiR - Easter Hunt	£672.00	All Wards
Heath School - Community Day	£500.00	All WArds
Grange Noticeboard - repair of damage	£94.50	Grange
Wicksten Drive Alleycats	£115.00	Halton Brook
Weekend Park Workers	£7,600.00	All Wards
Old Town Bloomers - Community Equipment	£718.02	Mersey
Guides Moughland Lane - Tree pruning	£400.00	Heath
Runcorn Hill Conservation Project	£590.00	Heath
Halton Lodge Children's Centre - Fun Day	£905.00	Grange
Runcorn Hill Event (Sat 27/Sun 28 July)	£3,500.00	All Wards
Runcorn library - Summer lunch clubs	£300.00	Mersey
Holy Spirit Nursery - End of term celebration	£250.00	Halton Brook

Unlock Runcorn	£1,330.00	Mersey
Halton Lodge & Grange Pre-school	£2,850.00	Grange
Grange Forum - Halloween Event	£375.00	Grange
Christmas Hampers for Halton Families	£1,000.00	All Wards
John Swain Bench - RTH	£878.00	All Wards
Holy Spirit School - Panto trip	£250.00	Halton Brook
Warm Front Discount Scheme	£1,000.00	Halton Brook & Mersey
Laptop and Equipment- Victoria Music	£1,130.00	Heath & Mersey
Mersey Litter Pick and Skip Day	£1,550.00	Mersey
Foodbank Graffiti Removal	£430.00	Mersey
Total	£50,859.40	

Area Forum 5: Halton Castle, Norton North, Norton South & Windmill Hill		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£5,186.52	All
Murdishaw Over 60's - Christmas Meal	£213.60	Norton North & South
Recharge and Restore - Therapy Sessions	£1,300.00	Halton Castle
Halton Village Millenium Green - Community Activity	£1,400.00	Halton Castle
Weekend Park Workers	£3,800.00	All
CHI - Café / Community Facilities	£1,940.00	Halton Castle & Windmill Hill
Murdishaw Community Centre - Events	£1,500.00	Norton North & South
Castlefields Community Centre - Events	£795.80	Halton Castle
PPX Event - Phoenix Park	£960.00	All
Onward Homes - Mend & Meet	£164.94	Norton North & South
Kops n Kids - Activity Session	£1,200.00	All
Halton Haven Community Café	£2,810.37	All
Brookvale Get Together	£300.00	Norton North & South
Village Life - Christmas Lunch	£300.00	Halton Castle
Brookvale Skip Scheme	£2,360.00	Norton South
Brookvale Children's Centre Fun Day	£560.00	Norton North & South
Windmill Hill Children's Centre Fun Day	£560.00	Windmill Hill
Murdishaw Arts Co-op - Tutor	£250.00	Norton North & South
Mini Kops n Kids	£210.00	Norton North & South
Windmill Hill Primary - Science Afterschool Project	£900.00	Windmill Hill
Warm Home Front Discount Scheme	£1,500.00	Halton Castle, Norton South & Windmill Hill
Kops and Kids 2020	£459.40	Norton North & South
Halton Speak Out - Hello Cafe	£3,109.90	Norton South
Total	£31,780.53	

Area Forum 6: Beechwood & Halton Lea		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£2,346.39	All
Runcorn Sea Cadets - Projectors	£550.00	Halton Lea
Benches - Beechwood Estate	£1,948.00	Beechwood
Four Estates - Water Boiler/Dishwasher	£547.00	Halton Lea
Easter Disco - Hallwood School	£347.00	Halton Lea
Hillview Women's Group - Day Trip	£260.00	Beechwood
Halton Lodge and Grange Pre School - Rendering	£2,850.00	Halton Lea
Beechwood Primary School - Paediatric Bed	£1,045.52	Beechwood
Halton Lea Library - Libraries Lunch	£600.00	Halton Lea
4 Estates - Hallwood Halloween Disco	£199.00	Halton Lea
Beechwood Primary School - Digital Equipment	£961.86	Beechwood
Mako Digital Media - Training Course	£1,590.00	All
Beechwood CC - Weather Proofing	£4,600.00	All
St Lukes Care Home - Garden Project	£1,139.96	Halton Lea
Total	£18,984.73	

Area Forum 7: Daresbury		
Group/Project	Spend	Ward
Locality	£1,114.42	Daresbury
Moore Parish Council - Moore Meadows Information Boards	£2,685.00	Daresbury
Preston Brook Parish Council - Reduce Speed Road Signs	£4,000.00	Daresbury
Preston Brook Pre-School - Laptop and Software	£573.97	Daresbury
Total	£8,373.39	

REPORT TO:	Corporate Services Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	3 rd November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director Enterprise, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Corporate Complaints
WARDS:	All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide statistical analysis of those Corporate Complaints received during the 2019 – 20 financial year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the content of the report be considered.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Context

- 3.1 The Council presently administers a 2 stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints whereby the public can seek redress if they believe Council departments have failed to deliver a satisfactory level of service.
- 3.2 When complaints are received that have not been raised previously, in the first instance they are normally directed to the relevant department for matters to be investigated and a response to be provided by a Senior Officer from the service.
- 3.4 Should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the initial response /outcome to their complaint they may request an internal review of the Council's actions / position in relation to their complaint. Such reviews are undertaken independently of the service by an Investigating Officer from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Team.
- 3.5 If the Council cannot resolve matters to the complainant's satisfaction individuals are advised that they can refer matters to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or relevant Professional body or, in the case of complaints relating to Freedom of information requests, the Information Commissioners Office.
- 3.6 At the time of writing this report the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) has recently released updated guidance to local authorities concerning effective complaint handling. The content of that document, which was released on 08th October, is now being considered to ensure that the Council's approach remains consistent with the standards established by the LGSCO.

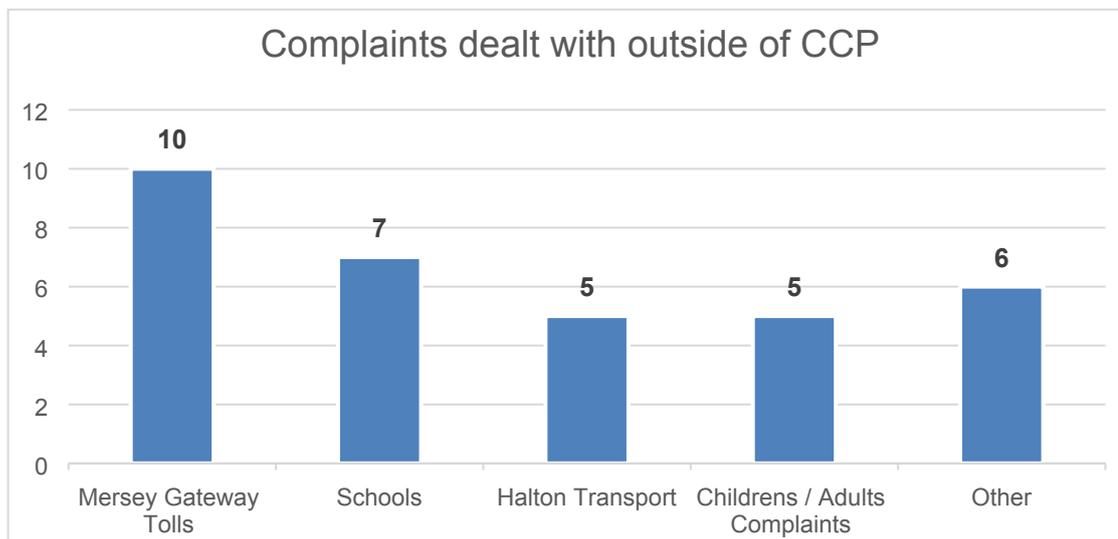
4.0 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS TREND ANALYSIS 2019 - 20

- 4.1 The chart below provides a breakdown of the number of corporate complaints received for each of the financial years from 2012 to 2020.



- 4.2 As the chart illustrates the number of complaints received rose markedly in 2015-16 but have now fallen back to the average levels over the preceding number of years. This may illustrate the effects of the approach to austerity by central government becoming more visible to service users during that particular period and a greater degree of familiarisation with the consequence of financial constraints since that time.
- 4.3 Of the 96 complaints that were received a total of 33 could not be dealt with through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedures (CCP). Of these complaints 5 were dealt with through the Children's or Adult Social Care Complaints Procedures, 1 complaint related to a staffing matter regarding a former employee and the remainder concerned outside bodies or matters for which the Council was not responsible. The table below illustrates the primary nature of these complaints.
- 4.4 Where matters concerned issues relating to third parties the Council provided advice to the complainant as to whom their complaint should be directed and where possible provided the relevant contact details of the organisation concerned. In certain circumstances, e.g. complaints involving Halton Transport, the Council forwarded relevant details of behalf of the complainant and asked that the organisation provide a response directly.

4.5 The Council has in place an established 2 stage procedure for dealing with complaints concerning matters involving crossings of the Mersey Gateway. In the first instance complaints are dealt with by the Council's contracted toll operator Merseyflow. Should complainants remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint at stage 1 they can request that their complaint be further considered by the Mersey Crossings Gateway Board.



4.6 Presently the Council aims to respond to complaints dealt with at stage 1 of the Corporate Procedure within 10 working days and those dealt with at stage 2 within 28 working days. The table below shows the number of complaints that were received and dealt with at each stage during the year and the success rate for responding to complainants within the relevant target timeframe.

4.7 It should be noted that at the time of writing this report the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has been critical of a local authority's approach of adopting a single stage process for dealing with complaints and considers that this may limit the opportunity for organisational learning.

Number of Stage 1 Complaint Responses	
within 10 day target timeframe	33 (67%)
Within 15 days	9 (19%)
Within 20 days	4 (8%)
20 days +	3 (6%)
Total	49 (78%)*

Number of Stage 2 Complaint Responses	
within 28 day target timeframe	8 (57%)
Within 33 days	1 (7%)
Within 38 days	3 (21%)
33 days +	2 (15%)
Total	14 (12%)*

* Percentage of all 63 complaints

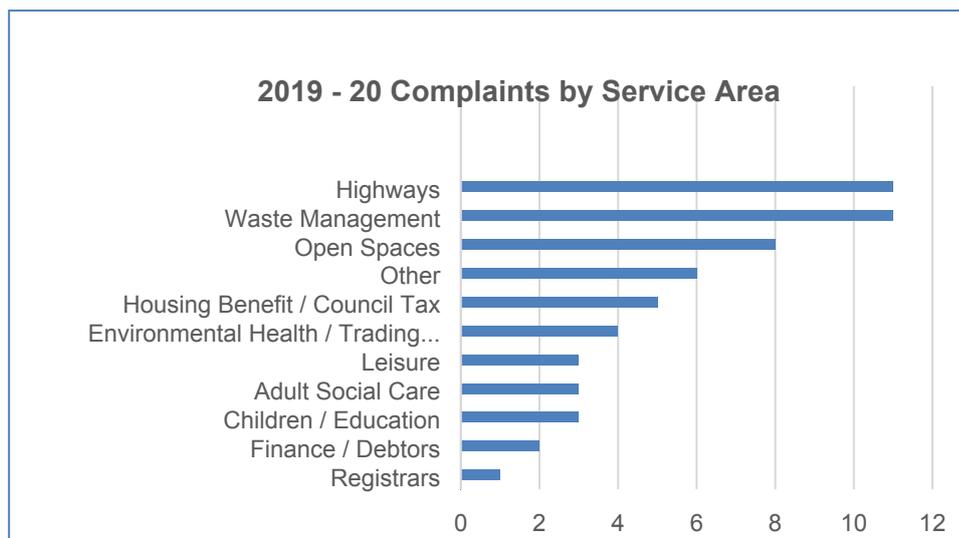
4.8 A number of complaints were dealt with outside of the target timeframe and this primarily related to staffing availability and in some cases resulted from the complexity of the issue in hand and / or the need to review preceding communications between the Council and the complainant.

- 4.9 There was no specific service area that was subject to delays occurring and it remains standard practice that where possible complaints are advised in advance should it be likely that target timeframes will not be met.
- 4.10 The determination of target response timeframes remain discretionary and it is the case that some local authorities choose to adopt longer timescales than those currently applied in Halton. However in taking account of the continued fiscal pressures being faced by the Council it is considered that the timeframes currently in place strike an appropriate balance between the availability of resources and the reasonable expectations of complainants.
- 4.11 The following table provides an overview of the outcome of complaints that were received during 2019 – 20. It should be noted that in a number of cases an objective determination could not be made due to a lack of independent corroborative evidence or where the subject of the complaint involved external agencies such as local housing providers.

Complaint Outcome	Stage 1	Stage 2
Complaints Upheld	16 (33%)	1 (8%)
Complaints Partially Upheld	8 (16%)	0
Complaints Not Upheld	24 (49%)	11 (78%)
Undetermined	1 (2%)	2 (14%)

- 4.12 In a small number of cases it was not possible for the Council to retrospectively determine what events may have occurred. For example complaints concerning the alleged behaviour of staff, or the nature of interactions between two parties, where the Council has no objective means of corroborating either parties recollection of events. In such circumstances, the Council provides an appropriate explanation of the circumstances and, where relevant, would apologise for any injured feelings that the complainant had experienced.
- 4.13 A number of complaints were upheld or partially upheld during the course of the year and these occasions provided an opportunity for the Council to both learn from the events and to provide a suitable form of redress to the complainant. It should be noted that none of the complaints, which were upheld, were progressed by the complainant to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and this could provide assurance that the Council actions and remedies were appropriate to the circumstances and were acceptable to those affected.
- 4.14 These complaints that were upheld were not confined to any specific service area and broadly reflected the categorisations of complaints as detailed later in this report.

- 4.15 In summary those complaints which were upheld or partially upheld generally resulted from human or procedural error, a lack of clarity in communication and the sharing of information, or some form of technical or property related issue requiring repair.
- 4.16 There were two particular cases in the year, one involving the actions of an employee, and one involving a procedural matter, whereby the Council acknowledged that the emotional impact upon each of the complainants was considered to be significant. In both of these cases, the Council acted swiftly to investigate and take remedial action and communicate its findings, apologies and proposed remedies which were subsequently accepted by each of the complainants concerned.
- 4.17 Other upheld complaints related to payments not being correctly processed or calculated, delays occurring in dealing with matters and a lack of communication from the Council, or incorrect information being provided by the Council. In each of these cases apologies were given and matters expedited or corrected and the issues raised were discussed with the staff involved.
- 4.18 There were also a small number of cases whereby whilst the Council accepted that events had been as described by the complainant this was to some degree the result of circumstances beyond the control of the Council e.g. equipment requiring repair or technology failure. In such circumstances the Council apologised for the situation having arisen and confirmed what actions were being taken as a result of the complaint being received.
- 4.19 As an example, 2 of the complaints which were upheld related to the condition of facilities at different Council venues. In both cases it was acknowledged that the fabric in parts of each facility had been affected by repairs being outstanding and which were being awaited at the time the complaint had been received.
- 4.20 A number of complaints resulted from staff not following correct procedures and where this was the case the complainant was provided with an apology and the actions of individual employees was addressed by the relevant service manager.
- 4.21 In 11 of the 12 complaints that were determined at stage 2 of the complaints procedure the internal independent review did not identify fault on the part of the Council. In a further 2 cases no determination could be made. In these cases complainants were advised of the outcome of the investigation and that if they remained dissatisfied with the way in which their complaint had been dealt with they may seek independent advice from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
- 4.22 As would be expected the nature of those corporate complaints received covered a relatively wide range of Council services as illustrated within the chart below.



- 4.23 The service areas of Highways and Waste Management represented the highest number of complaints received during the year. However, both of these service areas engage with the Halton population as a whole to a significant extent and therefore the receipt of complaints as a proportion of service users / recipients is not considered to be a cause of concern.
- 4.24 The categorisation of complaints is broadly consistent with that of the preceding year although slightly more complaints were received concerning highway related matters.
- 4.25 This may be unsurprising given the ongoing residual works that have been necessary following the completion of the Mersey Gateway project. A number of complaints related directly to the impacts of roadworks being undertaken and in such cases the Council, whilst apologising for any individual inconvenience, confirmed that the works were a necessary part of maintaining the highway / utilities infrastructure.
- 4.26 One complaint was received concerning a business owner seeking compensation as a result of traffic diversions being in place and this matter was referred to the Council's insurance section to be progressed.
- 4.27 The Council also investigated 2 complaints from a local residents concerning flooding at their properties, which they believed to be the result of problems with the highway drainage system. Following investigation this was found not be the case and the complainants were advised accordingly.
- 4.28 With regards to Waste Management and Environmental Improvement matters complaints largely related to missed bins and spillages, with one complaint also relating to an environmental enforcement matter.
- 4.29 The introduction of on-board cameras in refuse vehicles has made complaints of missed bin collections much easier to deal with objectively as it can now be determined whether bins from individual properties were presented at the

kerbside for collection as required and what actions were undertaken by operatives. However there were a small number of complaints of missed bins / spillages that were upheld as the Council and in these instances corrective actions were undertaken and an apology was provided and where necessary staff were given additional instruction.

- 4.30 In regards to the environmental enforcement matter, and although correct procedures had been followed, the Council acknowledged that in retrospect the wording of a letter sent to a landlord could have been subject to different interpretation. In that instance the Council apologised to the complainant and confirmed it would provide further clarification regarding the content of the letter should the complainant wish it.
- 4.31 With regards to Open Spaces the majority of complaints related to the management of trees and vegetation and the general maintenance of the Council's open spaces. On a number of occasions, complainants concerned land that was not in the Council's ownership and this was explained to complainants, were directed to the appropriate parties to further progress their issues.
- 4.32 In the majority of cases the Council was carrying out works in accordance with its maintenance schedule and or policies relating to the management of trees and of Local Nature Reserves and this was explained to residents. In the absence of these complaints being escalated to stage 2 it would suggest that once complainants became aware of the Council's fiscal position, and associated policies, they understood the situation more fully and recognised the limitations of what could be delivered.
- 4.33 In one case the Council upheld a resident's complaint that shrubbery had not been maintained and needed to be cut back. Following an investigation the Council apologised to the complainant and, taking account of seasonal limitations, arrangements were made to undertake the works at the earliest opportunity
- 4.33 The majority of Benefits / Council Tax complaints concerned the processing of claims, an application to the Discretionary Award Scheme, the reissuing of amended Council Tax accounts and the collection of arrears.
- 4.34 In the majority of cases due process had been followed and complainants were advised of this and of what steps they may need to take to progress matters. However, in 2 instances the Council acknowledged that errors had been made in calculating an entitlement, and in issuing a letter based upon inaccurate information, and corrective action was taken and apologies were provided to complainants.
- 4.35 Complaints relating to children's services related to the assessment and determination of Education and Health Care Plans and one matter concerning school attendance. Following investigation the Council concluded that its actions were appropriate and consistent with statutory guidance.

- 4.36 In regards to Environmental Health complaints primarily related to the Council's unwillingness to provide pest control with regards to mice, and to the provision of advice concerning the repairs responsibilities of a local Registered Social Landlord. In each case the Council's actions were considered to have been appropriate and this was confirmed to the complainants.
- 4.37 One complaint, dealt with at stage 1 and at stage 2, concerned the payment of the required fee by a dog owner for the collection of their dog which had been collected as stray. Whilst the Council sympathised with the individual concerning the circumstances in which the dog was found unattended it confirmed that the fee could no be waived. The complaint was subsequently investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman who found no fault on the part of the Council and required no further action to be taken.
- 4.38 With regards to Adult Social Care, complaints mainly focused upon the delivery of care packages or the issuing and payment of invoices. In most instances the Council's position was explained and in one case the complaint was upheld and an apology was provided to the complainant and a mutually acceptable resolution determined.
- 4.39 The remainder of the complaints received during the year covered a variety of other matters including staff actions, comments, and behaviour, the general cleanliness of an area, and inconsiderate parking by motorists.
- 4.40 An analysis of the complaints received during the course of the year does not indicate that any one service is disproportionately represented and this provides assurance that there have been no systemic weaknesses within existing procedures and the ongoing delivery of services across the organisation.
- 4.42 It should also be noted that individual services will also receive complimentary feedback during the course of the year. Unfortunately, as such information is directed to individuals and or specific service areas, such information cannot be summarised within this report.

5.0 LOCAL GOVERNEMENT OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 The following tables provide a summary of the numbers of complaints and enquiries that were received by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2019 - 20.

Service Area	Number
Adult and Care Services	7
Education and Children Services	12
Planning and Development	2
Corporate and other	0
Highways and Transportation	22

Benefits and Tax	2
Housing	2
Environment Services	4
Total	51

5.2 **ADDITIONAL COMMENT TO FOLLOW.**

5.3 .

5.4 .

5.5 .

6.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Complaints provide essential information and inform the development of Halton Borough Council services and policies. The Corporate Complaints Procedure is regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to conform to best practice and remains fit for purpose.

7.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Improvement and quality assessment agendas increasingly consider the robustness of complaints procedures and how they are demonstrably used to inform and drive change.

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

8.1 It is important for the Council to have robust complaint procedures in place to improve service delivery and ultimately help the achievement of all of its six strategic priority areas.

9.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

9.2 An inefficient or ineffective complaints system will fail individuals who want to use it and prevent the organisation from learning from complaints. Whilst complaints can result in positive changes for individuals, they are also a key source of intelligence, which can be used to influence the design and delivery of services that the organisation provides and commissions.

10.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

10.1 All complaint forms are issued with a separate form for monitoring diversity of complainants with regard to age, disability, ethnicity and gender. Unfortunately, the majority of corporate complainants choose not to return the monitoring form with their complaint so information collected is extremely limited. However, upon the basis of available evidence there is no indication that any specific social

groups are over or under represented by age, gender, disability etc. which suggests that the complaints process remains accessible on an equitable basis.

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	3 rd November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise Community & Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Environmental Services
SUBJECT:	Energy / Carbon Reduction Update
WARDS:	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on related activities aimed at reducing CO2 emissions within the Borough.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: The report and the ongoing work be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 CARBON FOOTPRINT

3.1.1 Since the Council's participation in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme, the Council has continued to implement a number of actions to reduce its carbon emissions and impact on the environment and at the same time deliver financial savings. Overall, the Council's CO2 emissions continue to reduce from a baseline in 2006/7 of 26,338 tonnes of CO2, to 11354 tonnes for 2019/20.

3.1.2 For 2019/20 the overall emissions have reduced by 3.2%.

Emission from specific Sectors	Co2 (Tonnes)
Fleet Transport	1,117
Business Mileage	349
Street Lighting	1,784
Corporate & School Buildings	8,104

There have been slight increases in emissions associated with both fleet transport and business mileage from the previous. Corporate buildings have also seen a

slight increase, this being solely down to increased gas usage. We have also taken on 2 new care homes, which have been included in the figures for the first time and general usage across the board seems to have risen slightly.

3.2 Street Lighting

3.2.1 Emissions from street lighting have been reduced by nearly 18%. This is attributed to the LED Lighting Switching Programme introduced by the Council some years ago. There has also been a reduction in emissions from schools of over 8%. This in part is down to 2 further schools converting to Academy status and as such have been taken out of the figures.

3.2.2 The Council is currently implementing a programme to switch high sodium pressure street lighting, used in residential areas and the main through routes in the borough, to LEDs. The programme started in 2015. The total cost of the programme was estimated at £4.6 m.

3.2.3 In total the Council has now changed approximately 15,300 street lights with a further 4,000 to be completed. Around 2000 street light LED upgrades were programmed for 2019/20 financial year, but the Covid restrictions delayed about 1200 units.

3.2.4 Typically, the carbon reduction is around a 60-70% saving on all street lights upgraded to LED.

3.3 Roof Top Solar and Biomass

3.3.1 The Solar PV on Council buildings has generated approximately 910,283 kilowatts of energy, which equates to 232tonnes of CO₂. The total income to date generated from Feed in Tariff payments is £343,825 with savings in energy bills approximately £8,008. The capital cost of the Solar PV was approximately £280,000 in 2012/13. The capital has now been repaid but the Council has an ongoing income stream to 2037.

3.3.2 The Biomass boilers at Brookvale Leisure Centre and Norton Priory have used approximately 5.7m kilowatts respectively. This equates to a CO₂ reduction of approximately 1000 tonnes. In addition, they have generated ££265,000 of income from the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme. This is currently being used to repay the existing capital costs.

3.4 Solar Farm

3.4.1 The construction of a 1MW solar farm on the former St Michael's Golf Course was completed in August 2020. This will provide energy via a private wire to the Stadium. The capital cost of the scheme was approximately £1.2m of which 50% funding was provided by the European Development Fund.

3.4.2 The system will produce approximately 850,000kwh per annum over the next 25 -30 years. The energy generated by the Solar Farm will reduce CO2 emissions by 380 tonnes per annum.

3.4.3 The initial estimates were the energy used at the Stadium would offset costs by approximately £50,000 per annum at current prices. The surplus energy is sold under a Power Purchase Agreement and used to cover the operation and maintenance costs.

To date the system has produced approximately 230,000kwh in the first months of operation. We are currently using less energy from the Solar Farm at the Stadium and exporting more energy to the grid than predicted. This is due to the current Covid 19 restrictions, which has reduced normal activity at the Stadium and reduced energy demand.

The Council is currently exploring the feasibility of extending the farm and connecting it to the new Leisure Centre in Moor Lane.

3.5 Climate Action Plan

3.5.1 In December 2020, the Council declared a climate energy emergency. The work in this areas has been affected by Covid 19 and the need divert resources to address the pandemic. It is intended over the next 2/3 months to work with key Council Officers supported by APSE Energy to bring forward an action plan to cover the period 2021/22 to 2025/26.

3.6 Public Decarbonisation Fund

3.6.1 The Government has recently announced a Public Decarbonisation Fund of 1bn of grant funding, up to 100% of capital costs for energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within public sector non-domestic buildings. Timescales for bids are tight and need to be submitted by either November 2020 or January 2021, with work completed by September 2021. Further work will be undertaken to assess the criteria with a view to submitting a bid in January 2021.

3.7 Borough Wide Projects

3.7.1 The Council is involved in a number of wider projects that aim to reduce the borough's carbon emissions. These include:-

Municipal Fleet Decarbonisation Plan: An Initially a feasibility study commencing in October 2020 will seek to identify various factors, such as capital and operational costs, technical requirements for utilising alternative powered vehicles for hydrogen hybrids, Battery Electric and FCEV. The project will examine the size and composition of the existing fleet and the normal renewal and replacement cycle of those existing vehicles. To understand perceived and actual barriers to early adoption and external funding that might be required. The study will report in around April/May 2021.

Low carbon Taxi: The project is an alternative fuels project to target some of the local taxi fleet (potentially 50 vehicles). This would assist in meeting the objectives of an emerging Liverpool City Region Climate emergency. With the EV market starting to become more affordable and range of batteries becoming more realistic for a commercial user, the timing is right to progress a project. A tiered approach could be adopted for example with Euro VI become the standard by 2025 for all newly registered vehicle as a standard.

T1 All newly registered petrol vehicles should be 100mg or less by 2025 and 75mg or less by 2030.

T2 This could be implemented at no cost to the council and if supported implemented in the next 12 months.

T3 Phase 2 would aim to secure funding to provide additional money to the worst offending vehicles (taxi) and RCV project above to encourage a transition to alternative powered vehicles.

‘3MG Going Green’: Stobart Energy installed a £100m Biomass at 3MG in Widnes, which has capacity to serve 45,000 new homes. Currently, Stobart have an agreement with Scottish Power to sell the surplus power to the grid. Stobart would like to be able to sell the electricity to 3MG businesses via a private wire and this will be explored in the coming years.

Astmoor Low Carbon Study Project: The project is a collaboration between the University of Chester, HBC, Halton, Chamber of Commerce and The Astmoor Industrial Estate Business Improvement District. The overall project will attempt to realise beneficial change in energy use on the estate. The project has 2 phases. The 1 phase will be research undertaken by post-graduate students from the University of Chester. It will be analytical in approach and have a strong commercial aspect.

PH1 The first phase will establish a baseline of energy usage that can be used to determine the carbon footprint of the entire estate. This work should result in an action plan being prepared that will offer the entire estate options, that if followed will achieve at least a 10 % reduction in the overall carbon footprint .

PH2 The second strand of this first phase will work with a small number of selected businesses on the estate. It will look in appropriate detail at current energy usage patterns and how their carbon profile can change. A specific action plan will be prepared for each business.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The approach and policies adopted to date are consistent with overall objective in the Corporate Plan.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Investment in energy efficient measures has the potential to reduce the Council’s energy costs, reduce carbon emission and generate future income streams or the Council.

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:

Encouraging investment in energy-efficiency will benefit from lower carbon emissions, job creation, supply chain development and increased competitiveness and security of energy supply.

6.3 A Healthy Halton:

Reducing CO2 can bring about improved air quality.

6.4 A Safer Halton:

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal:

The transition to a low carbon economy can support the development of the local economy. Ensuring that future economic growth is decoupled from the consumption of fossil fuels and the inevitable carbon emissions.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Individual schemes would have to be assessed on an individual basis to develop risk registers for each measure.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

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

None

REPORT TO:	Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	3 rd November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Enterprise Community Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Resources
SUBJECT:	Corporate Accident / Incident Report 1 st April to 31 st August 2020
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on the performance of health safety management within the Authority for 1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1. the report be received; and**
- 2. the Board notes the contents of the report including the recommendations and actions contained within it.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The report on the performance of health and safety management in relation to Key Performance Indicators for the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020 is attached for the Boards consideration.

3.2 It highlights health and safety issues and incidents over that period and is the first report presented to the Board on this issue since the beginning of the pandemic.

3.3 The report includes information around the number of actual near misses, over 7 day and significant accidents.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The report assists in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with the report, although there are clearly financial consequences of absences from work.

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

The provision of a safe working environment and reduction in accidents is important in order to provide:

6.1 **A Healthy Halton**

6.2 **A Safer Halton**

6.3 **Efficient and Effective Delivery of Services**

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Accidents which lead to lost time have financial implications for the authority (although these are always secondary to our concern for the well-being of staff and customers). Managing that risk effectively is important for both staff and customers. Effective health and safety management procedures are an important part of mitigating those risks.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues arising from this report.



CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT
Policy & Performance Board
1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 clearly places responsibility on those who create the risk to manage it. The HSE Strategy, 'Helping Great Britain Work Well' highlights that members of the board have both collective and individual responsibility for health and safety. As such, the need is for board-level members to champion health and safety and be held accountable for its delivery.

Part of this includes identifying areas for improvement in health and safety management with the intention of improving staff morale, reducing in work-related sickness absence and lowering insurance premiums for legal, moral and financial reasons. In particular having robust health and safety procedures in place provides safeguards against legal action being taken against the Authority.

1.2 Health and Safety Management System

In order to demonstrate how Halton Borough Council as an employer is delivering the HSE Strategy, this report is to provide Management Team with details of health and safety performance in relation to Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Details of KPI's are as follows:

LEAD INDICATORS

Proactive action taken and any outcomes

KPI

1. **Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems**
Rationale – creating a safe working environment
2. **Number of Near Misses**
Rationale – action taken to prevent further similar incidents and before injuries
3. **Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system**
Rationale – demonstrating effective management of lone working risks

REACTIVE [Lagging] INDICATORS

Reactive action taken in response to accidents/incidents

4. **Number of Significant¹ and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents²**
Rationale – identify accident/incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences
5. **Number of Violent Incidents**
Rationale – identify incident trends and actions required to prevent similar occurrences

¹ Accidents that either require more than basic first aid, incur time lost or arise from a failure in health and safety management

² Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, (RIDDOR) 2013, including Fatalities, Specified Injuries, Over 7-day Injuries, Reportable Occupational Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences

National and Local Information together with performance gaps and incident trends form the basis for the Recommended Actions for 2019/20.

By responding positively to identified trends, the Authority can demonstrate compliance with the recommendations of the Health and Safety Executive's guidance HS(G)65 "Management for Health and Safety".

2. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Summary

COVID-19 has dominated our home and work lives for the period this report covers. It has been a difficult time for many having to deal with illness and bereavement as well as other contributing issues. The pandemic reflection on this current report shows a significant reduction in accidents and violent incidents due to a high volume of home working during the nationwide lockdown and most Council Buildings closing. This has resulted in a shorter report for this period. A number of risk control measures have been implemented across the authority to protect staff and many frontline services have endured major changes in their working practices to comply with Government guidance and ensure their health, safety and welfare. Assistance for staff has also been provided on the Enable e-learning platform via a number of wellbeing programmes and courses.

The pandemic has dictated an increase in the demand for personal protective equipment resulting in the opening of a central distribution hub at the DCBL stadium that has provided items for a number of frontline services across Care Homes, Domiciliary Care, Community Meals and many other teams. The increase in risk assessments on the corporate system can also be attributed to the pandemic.

Reportable and significant accidents for Halton Employees are currently at a total of 6 across both directorates plus zero near misses. This compares to 45 in total last year with near misses at 8.

Violent Incidents corporately are showing currently as 1 verbal and zero physical incidents.

Lone Working Monitoring System update – registered users have increased from the same period last year and actual percentage use has also risen. Although showing increases the numbers still remain low with teams using other precautions such as booking in/out systems, outlook diaries, general checking in on colleagues, local written procedures and the completion of lone working risk assessments.

Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system are 1905 for both Enterprise, Community and Resources and People, compared to 1464 last year.

2.2 Recommendations 2020/21

The following recommendations are as a result of the accident analysis data for 2019/20 and will be actioned during the period 2020/21.

No.	KPI No.	ACTION	RATIONALE	RESPONSIBLE
1.	4	Managers to ensure all relevant staff are aware of Occupational Road Risk Policy and other linked documents, Driving Documents System usage and the importance of production of documents due to days lost for RTC's logged as an accident category.	Accidents 2020/21	All managers
2.	2	Managers to ensure all relevant staff are aware of Occupational Road Risk Policy and other linked documents, Driving Documents System usage and the importance of production of documents due to near misses involving RTC's.	Near Misses 2020/21	All managers
3.	3	Review Lone Working Risk Assessments and enforce the 'mandatory' use of the Contact Centre Monitoring system when required	Reinforce Management Team decision and safety of lone working employees	All managers

GENERAL ACTIONS

Action a series of Lockdown/Bomb Threat Exercises across main Council buildings	2020/21	Health and Safety Team – time period extended due to COVID19
Review and update Health and Safety policies (Corporate & Schools) requiring timescale or legislation reviews	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
School Audit and Healthcheck visit programme	Ongoing	Health and Safety Team
Resolve emerging actions from January 2020 Staff Stress Survey	2020/21	All managers

3. INFORMATION

3.1 Local/National Information

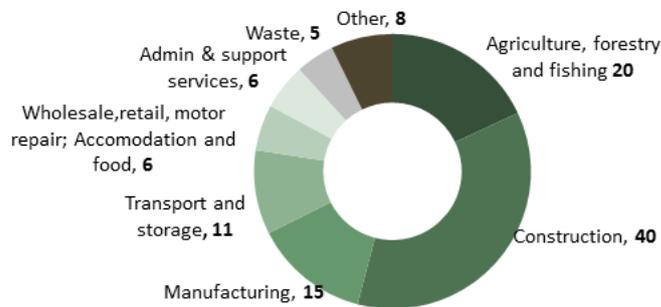
The HSE has released its annual workplace fatality figures for 2019/20. The latest figures show that between April 2019 and March 2020, 111 people were killed in Great Britain while doing their job, the lowest year on record. 40 fatal injuries to construction workers accounted for the largest share.

The main categories were as follows;

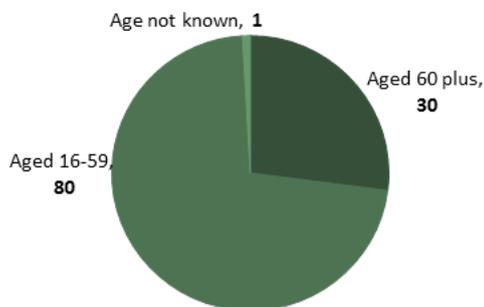
- Falls from height – 29
- Struck by a moving vehicle – 20
- Struck by a moving object – 18
- Trapped by something collapsing or overturning – 15
- Contact with moving machinery – 11

92 Members of the public were killed due to work related activities in 2019/20 (excluding those that died in Local Authority enforced workplaces – typically around 12-16 deaths per year).

Fatal injuries to workers by main industry,



Fatal injuries to workers by age,



4. LEAD INDICATORS

4.1 . Number of risk assessments completed on corporate systems

4.1.1 An electronic risk assessment system, based on the Intranet, has been 'live' since September 2011.

- Actual number of assessments completed up to 31/8/20 are; 1905

Enterprise, Community & Resources – 1255
People – 650

See section 7 for position statements and comparisons.

4.2 Number of Near Misses

4.2.1 The number reported in the last 3 years are:

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
16	12	8

From the 1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020 there have been zero near misses reported on the corporate system.

4.3 Percentage of registered staff on the Lone Working Monitoring System who are utilising the system

4.3.1 Lone Working – Contact Centre Monitoring update – registered users have increased from the same period last year and actual percentage use has also risen.

	June – Sept 2019		June – Sept 2020	
	Registered Users	No's Using System	Registered Users	No's Using System
Enterprise Community & Resources	65	52	69	65
People	261	161	267	211
TOTAL USERS	326	213	336	276
% OF USE	65%		82%	

5 REACTIVE ['Lagging'] INDICATORS

5.1 Number of Significant and RIDDOR Reportable Accidents

5.1.1 The number of significant accidents and RIDDOR reportable to the HSE for each Directorate excluding schools that took place from 1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020 is 6.

Directorate	Specified Injury	> 7-Day	Significant
Enterprise, Community and Resources	0	1	1
People – excluding schools	1	0	3
TOTAL YTD 2019/2020	1	16	28
TOTAL YTD 2018/2019	1	16	89
TOTAL YTD 2017/2018	2	13	46

5.2 Number of Violent Incidents

5.2.1 From 1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
Enterprise, Community and Resources	0	0
People	1	0

Directorate	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2019/20	30	12
TOTAL 2018/19	23	10
TOTAL 2017/18	35	11

5.2.2 Schools

From 1st April 2020 to 31st August 2020 there have been 2 physical violent incidents within schools.

Schools	Verbal	Physical
TOTAL 2019/20	0	45
TOTAL 2018/19	7	40
TOTAL 2017/18	4	28

6. Risk Assessment Position Statements

Risk Assessment Position Statement - All Directorates

31 August 2020

		Enterprise, Community & Resources				People			
		Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review	Expected No. RAs	Actual No. RAs (up-to-date)	%	Earliest Review
Risk Assessment Type	Home Working Risk Assessment	416	318	76.44	01/09/2020	299	225	75.25	08/10/2020
	Environmental/Fire Risk Assessment	61	46	75.41	16/09/2020	47	26	55.32	20/09/2020
	Fire Risk Assessment								
	Lone Working Risk Assessment	33	18	54.55	10/09/2020	27	5	18.52	03/09/2020
	Manual Handling Risk Assessment	9	8	88.89	28/11/2020				
	Occupational Risk	248	175	70.56	01/09/2020	49	22	44.9	18/09/2020

Assessment								
Ladder Checklist	12	7	58.33	27/09/2020				
General Risk Assessment	102	57	55.88	24/09/2020	119	38	31.93	02/09/2020
COSHH Risk Assessment	40	37	92.5	02/10/2020	70	27	38.57	09/09/2020
COSHH (Advanced) Risk Assessment	14	10	71.43	31/10/2020	4	1	25	17/01/2021
Transport in Depots Risk Assessment	1	1	100	27/08/2021				
Workstation Risk Assessment	717	578	80.61	02/09/2020	524	306	58.4	05/09/2020
Total	1653	1255	75.92	-	1139	650	57.07	-

September 2018 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1007 People 349
September 2019 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1046 People 418
September 2020 Enterprise, Community & Resources 1255 People 650

Lynn Pennington-Ramsden
Principal Health and Safety Advisor,
Risk and Emergency Planning
1st September 2020