

# Public Document Pack



## Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

Wednesday, 15 July 2020 5.30 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 Keith Morley	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 Wednesday, 30 September 2020*

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

**Part I**

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<b>1. MINUTES</b>	<b>1 - 6</b>
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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.	
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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.*

**ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 26 February 2020 at the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn*

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Sinnott

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Ferguson, T. Gibbs, S. Burrows and S. Rimmer

Also in attendance: One member of the public and B. Wade, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

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

EUR24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

EUR25 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

EUR26 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board.

Under Minute EXB74 a Member queried the reason for the extension in the contract with Halton Housing Trust and it was agreed that a written response would be provided.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

*Action*

Operational  
Director, Policy,  
Planning and  
Transportation

EUR27 HIGHWAY WORKS PERMIT SCHEME - YEAR 3 UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on the performance of the Permit Scheme which was in its third year of operation. The aim of the Scheme was to allow the Council, as a local highway authority, to coordinate both utility and local authority highways works on local roads. The purpose was to reduce the duration of these works on the local highway network to ensure the free flow of traffic and minimise disruption. Equally it was important to recognise the fundamental necessity of maintaining roads and utility infrastructure (sewers, water supply, drainage, communications, gas and electricity supply) to homes and businesses.

The Board was advised that a third year audit of the Permit Scheme had been undertaken independently to review the operation of the Scheme and to determine whether benefits achieved in previous years had been maintained. The findings of the audit were outlined in the report and highlighted that:

- From the previous year there had been very little change in the number of permits, however highway works had slightly increased. Utility works had been more consistent over the 3 year period to date;
- The duration of the permitted street work in number of days worked had reduced steadily year on year, with a 28% reduction since the scheme was implemented;
- The permit scheme had reduced the number of days worked on Halton's street network by 4,663 in the 3 year period; and
- The financial benefit to the road user in year 3 was:
  - i. Average monetary cost of works per day £192.00;
  - ii. Number of days saved under Permit Scheme 1,765;
  - iii. Monetary benefit to road users: £0.34m per annum; and
  - iv. the saving to the road user as a result of the permit scheme was just under £1m.

RESOLVED: That the third year performance for the Permit Scheme be noted.

EUR28 PEST CONTROL SERVICE - UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health, which provided an update on the Council's pest control service and a rationale for maintaining free rat treatments for all residents. The report outlined the number of staff within the team, the service provided and current pest treatment charges with income generated over the last 10 years.

In respect of charges for rat treatments, details were provided for fees charged by the Liverpool City Region and Cheshire Local Authorities. At present treatment of rats was provided to residents free of charge in Halton. However, in recent months some Members had suggested that a charge should be introduced for all rat treatments to help to subsidise the service further and make it more sustainable over the longer term.

Members were advised on the potential net income, against a likely drop in demand for the service should a charge be introduced. The report also discussed the impact of a charge on low income groups and the practicalities of introducing some form of means test to offset this. Further concerns about introducing a charge included:

- Rat activity was likely to increase;
- Many people who experienced rat activity on their property view the activity as a wider environmental problem caused by conditions beyond their own property. They would therefore be reluctant to pay for something they don't perceive to be their responsibility;
- Other local authorities who had introduced a charge suggested that members of the public delay reporting rats until the problem had got out of hand and was affecting a wider area. This was likely to require the input of the Environmental Protection Team to take action against the landowners to enforce the provisions of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949. Such action was costly and time consuming and represented a further hidden cost to a charging regime;
- The information received through requests for free treatments enabled the Environmental Health team to locate trends across the Borough. A reduction in

notifications means the Environmental Health team may be slower to identify and respond to these issues; and

- The Council placed bait in secure locations so that it cannot be tampered with by children or animals.

Due to these concerns it was noted that it was the view of the Environmental Health Department that introducing a charge for rat treatments would be counterproductive. Whilst this would significantly reduce demand for the service and make service volumes more manageable, it would have the unintended consequence of increasing rat activity in the Borough by reducing the number of pro-active rat treatments that were carried out.

Furthermore, the control of the rat population was a wider environmental concern that would be best addressed collectively through a universal service rather than on an individual basis by providing a service only to those willing or able to pay for it.

Arising from the discussion, the Board was advised on the service provided by the team to address dog fouling and it was agreed that Councillors would be updated by email on the current service.

Director of Public Health

RESOLVED: That the Board supports the maintenance of free rat treatments for all Halton residents.

#### EUR29 LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INVESTMENT PLAN (LCWIP)

The Board received a presentation on the progress of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP). The Plan had been developed locally within the LCR and linked with the national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. The Board received details on the three phases of the LCWIP and the priority routes within each phase.

The Board noted the progress on Phase 1 of the LCWIP which included a cycle link in Runcorn to Daresbury via newly improved and constructed tracks along the busway and the Bridgewater Canal. In addition, the Board received information on Bike Life, which was the largest assessment of cycle development in UK cities and the launch event in Runcorn on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

RESOLVED: That

1. the content of the report be noted; and
2. the 'Bike Life' launch on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (at the Brindley, Runcorn) is welcomed as a prestigious event to publicise the active travel network (paragraph 3.14-3.16).

#### EUR30 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on the work to consolidate non-moving Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) such as yellow lines, clear way designations etc.

Members noted that a consolidation of speed limit Orders had already been undertaken and the work had been welcomed by the Police as it made prosecution straight forward due to the accuracy of the records held. Work was now being undertaken across the Borough to ensure that all road markings displayed on the streets corresponded with the records held for those Orders. To date:

- In Widnes detailed inspections and surveys of every road were undertaken to see how the signs and road markings for the existing TROs corresponded to existing paper orders. The surveys had revealed some anomalies and it was noted that 80% of the remedial work had been carried out; and
- In Runcorn initial site surveys had been completed. Results were currently being transferred onto a data base and any anomalies would be addressed prior to a consolidation Order being made.

It was reported that the number of TROs being actioned had been limited due to the focus on progressing the Runcorn and Widnes consolidation Orders, together with team capacity reducing to three staff. It was proposed that priority would be given to those Orders that would improve road safety or ease congestion at critical bottlenecks in the road network. A list of those TRO activities to be undertaken was outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That

1. the progress on consolidation of the non-moving Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) be noted; and
2. the TROs to be progressed once the consolidation

Orders for Runcorn and Widnes are made be noted.

*At the conclusion of the meeting the Chair thanked Councillors Joe Roberts and Pauline Sinnott for their contribution to the Board and wished them well for the future.*

*Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.*

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> July 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:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**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 16 January 2020**

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

**EXB74 REQUEST FOR WAIVER FOR THE ALLOCATION OF A CONTRACT TO HALTON HOUSING TRUST**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which sought approval for the continuation of a contract with Halton Housing Trust. This referred to the management of the housing register and the housing allocations process, on behalf of Halton Borough Council.

Members were advised that, as part of the voluntary stock transfer process in 2007, Halton Borough Council opted to transfer its entire housing stock to Halton Housing Trust (HHT). In 2012, a new Choice Based Lettings Scheme – Property Pool Plus (PPP) - went live in Halton which was a sub-regional IT management scheme, operating across the other five local authorities in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) area.

It was reported that since then, the LCR had commissioned an independent review of the way in which the PPP process operated. Members noted that the aim of the review was to consider whether there was a more cost - effective approach which could deliver the same or improved outcomes for those using the service. A report on the outcome of the review was due in Spring 2020.

In requesting an extension to the current contract with HHT under Procurement Standing Orders, it was reported that as the contract with HHT would have expired before the Board meeting, the Chief Executive had used his emergency powers to authorise an extension to the existing contract for seventeen days from 31 December 2019 to 16 January 2020.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted; and

Strategic Director  
- People

- 2) a waiver by virtue of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 of Part 2 or Part 3 as appropriate, be approved for the extension of the contract with Halton Housing Trust for a further twelve months.

*(N.B. Councillor Wright declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as she was a Trustee of Nightstop Communities Northwest)*

EXB76 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Board considered:

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

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

EXB77 FOUNDRY LANE RESIDENTIAL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which updated Members on the proposals for residential development at Foundry Lane, Widnes.

The report provided Members with details of the proposals, policy and financial implications for their consideration.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) supports the principle, subject to planning and other statutory approvals, of bringing forward residential development in the Foundry Lane area, bringing back into use under-utilised brownfield sites and making better use of poor quality industrial sites;
- 2) endorses the decision taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and the Portfolio Holders for Physical Environment and Resources to acquire the Stobart Foundry Lane site;
- 3) authorises the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange all required documentation to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services;
- 4) agrees to accept the offer of grant from Homes England for the purpose of preparing the sites known as Tarmac and Stobart for residential development; and
- 5) agrees to fund any shortfall in the preparatory works for the above two sites, if this exceeds the Homes England grant.

Strategic Director  
– Enterprise,  
Community and  
Resources

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

**EXB87 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval for the update to Halton's Local

Development Scheme (LDS).

The Board was advised that the LDS was a public statement of the Council's three year work programme for the production of the Local Plan. Councils were required to prepare and keep up to date an LDS and to set out the timetable for the production of their Local Plan. It was noted that this update would cover the remaining stages in the preparation of the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Halton Borough Council Local Development Scheme 2020 Revision (Appendix 1) be formally adopted and shall have effect from 28 February 2020; and
- 2) authority be delegated to the Operational Director: Policy, Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Executive Board Member, Physical Environment, to approve any minor changes to the wording and/or timelines of the production of documents in the Local Development Scheme as required prior to publication.

Strategic Director  
- Enterprise,  
Community and  
Resources

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy Performance Board (PPB)

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources.

**PORTFOLIO:** Cross-cutting

**SUBJECT:** Environment and Urban Renewal Priorities Update

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report updates the Board on the work undertaken during the Covid pandemic to achieve the Environment and Urban Renewal of the Borough.
- 1.2 For the majority of the Council services relevant to the remit of this Board, 'business as usual' has been the approach. Bins have continued to be emptied, the roads repaired, public spaces have been maintained and cleansed, and decisions have been made on development schemes, with key regeneration projects making progress.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That**

**The Board notes the progress made against the relevant Council priorities during lockdown.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 When UK lockdown commenced on the 23 March 20 there was a significant amount of uncertainty as to how the pandemic would progress, and the extent of local impacts. With the exception of 'key workers', the population at large was instructed to stay at home and shelter, or in the case of those with underlying health condition to become 'shielded'.
- 3.2 It was imperative that the services relied upon by sheltering and shielded residents, and key workers continued to function. Halton's staff quickly adapted to a new work environment, observing strict health and safety practices, working from home where possible, or continuing front line activities such as highway safety and permit inspections, building control inspections, planning enforcement, waste collection, and many other statutory functions that cannot be done from home.
- 3.3 The following topic based updates are presented to the Board to give a flavour of the work that has continued throughout lockdown:
- 3.4 **Logistics and Transport Management**

3.5 The teams provided a critical role in both the personal protective equipment (PPE) Hub and Shielding Hub, the latter established to deliver food, supplies and medicines to shielded individuals. Measures were put in place to ensure the Council's fleet of vehicles was operational at all times through the pandemic. During March / April in the region of 500 emergency deliveries had been made to 'shielded' individuals. Large quantities of food was collected from supermarkets and a number of large collections of PPE were made by the in-house fleet vehicles. Seven fleet vehicles are now equipped with dividing screens for passenger transport / community meals. Social distancing measures have been installed at Lower House Lane Depot, such as one way systems, stencilling and signage. This has enabled the MOT bay to re-open for taxi testing, and also to the public for servicing and repairs. The team have also supported the re-opening of schools, providing transport for pupils.

3.6 Public Transport:

Important events have included the retail sector re-opening on 15<sup>th</sup> June and face masks became compulsory on public transport from 15<sup>th</sup> June. The Council put in place measures to support these, for example:

- Social distancing measures have been put in place at bus stops
- Stencilling intermediate bus stops with 2 metre reminders both on the floor and also on shelters.
- Changes at bus interchanges to separate boarding and alighting passengers, provide the majority of the space available in each of the locations to allow for social distancing for waiting passengers.
- Posters installed to reminding passengers of the social distancing policy and that face coverings must be worn.
- Team in regular contact with the bus operators.
- Following the recent increase in bus services frequency across the Borough, the intention is to withdraw the pre 09.30 travel agreement which has been in place since the start of the lockdown period. The withdrawal will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020. This will fall in line with Cheshire West and Chester who are also members and the administrators of the Cheshire scheme.

3.7 Increase in Bus Services:

Arriva increased services from 1<sup>st</sup> of June to approximately 73% of pre Covid levels. Service increase from hourly is as follows;

- Arriva re-introduced the X1 (Liverpool) service from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June
- 1 and 2 busway Circular every 12 mins in both directions
- 3a re-introduced to provide 30 minute frequency with 3c Runcorn Shopping City - Weston
- 500 every 30 mins Halton Hospital-Liverpool
- 110 every 30 mins Murdishaw - Warrington
- 61 every 40 mins Murdishaw-Liverpool
- 79c every 30 mins Widnes-Liverpool
- 62 service re-instated on an hourly frequency Murdishaw-Hale Bank
- X30 will remain hourly Chester-Runcorn
- 14a will remain hourly for now Murdishaw-Hough Green

### 3.8 **Town Planning & Development**

#### 3.9 **Local Plan**

During April, the Planning Inspectorate advised that Hearing Sessions are currently on hold and are not expected to be held until October / November 2020. Details of hearing sessions will be made public 6 weeks before the hearing. Two Inspectors (Caroline Mulloy & David Troy) have been appointed to examine the Halton Local Plan, and the team has been busy responding to questions from the Inspectors as they review the plan and background documents. Members will have received a letter highlighting this information.

3.10 The Council responded to Liverpool John Lennon Airport 'Airspace Change Procedures', lobbying for reduced noise and disturbance for residents whilst accommodating technology and safety improvements at the airport

#### 3.11 **Building / Development Control & Enforcement**

- Building Control continued to visit new housing sites to allow the sale of new homes
- The Waking Watch provision at The Decks was extended to allow critical work on fire alarm systems to be completed and allow residents to stay in their homes during lockdown
- Planning applications processing saw increased productivity due to new ways of working
- Enforcement action is being taken against a group who have commenced a residential use without planning permission in Widnes.
- A planning application was received for homes on Widnes Golf Course and proved to be very controversial locally

#### 3.12 **Road Safety**

The teams have operated 'business as usual', albeit working remotely, providing all normal traffic management services (see points below). On temporary secondment, the Road Safety Coordinators have assisted with the Covid19 sheltering hub. School crossing patrols were stood down temporarily while schools were closed.

- In preparation for the re-opening of the Household Waste Sites (increased queue lengths due to demand and social distancing inside sites) traffic management (TM) measures were put in place
- Identification of possible sites and organising TM arrangements for Covid19 military mobile testing stations at the Heath, Runcorn and Widnes Market.
- Temporary and permanent TM measures at hot spots for leisure walkers to cope with increasing levels of traffic / parking congestion
- Temporary signage / road markings (stencilling) for School Crossing Patrol sites so children / adults waiting to cross can maintain social distancing
- Undertaking scheme design and carrying out Road Safety Audits on proposed walking / cycling measures as space within the adopted highway is reallocated in response to changes in the way people travel. Whilst recognising the urgency of the situation, road safety assessment were undertaken on proposals to ensure the safety of ALL road users.

- Audited signage and other street furniture to remove bottlenecks and pinch-points from existing footways in key areas, to allow social distancing can be more easily maintained.
- Working with schools to ensure adjacent roads are able to cope new arrangements. Identification of measures (such as temporary traffic regulation orders) to ensure as safe an environment as possible can be created for active travel.
- The upgrade to the street works permit system went live, it now shows all future works, as soon as a permit is granted it will show on the map: <https://one.network/custom/halton/>

### 3.13 **Highways**

#### 3.14 Post-Covid Travel and Active Travel Interventions

During June the Department for Transport (DfT) wrote to the Combined Authority to launch an Active Travel Emergency Fund. Nationally this comprised £250m, with £25m top sliced for cycle repair schemes. The remaining £225m is to be released in two phases, with £45m allocated now, and the remainder in the future. The LCR CA is to receive £1.974 of the national £45m for phase 1, which are schemes to be implemented over July and August. Although no allocation has been announced for Phase 2, schemes are being refined to as to be available when funding is available.

3.15 DfT's letter specified criteria to guide the expenditure of the funds: "swift and meaningful plans to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians, including on strategic corridors", "The quickest and cheapest way...will normally be by point closures. These can be main roads...or of parallel side streets." "Pop up segregated cycle lanes will also be funded but are more difficult to implement quickly." As the guidance states, they must use full or light segregation. "Elaborate, costly materials will not be funded at this stage." "Anything that does not meaningfully alter the status quo on the road will not be funded." Works must start within 4 weeks and be completed within 8 weeks of starting, otherwise monies are clawed back by downward adjustments to payment of future grants. This affects an LA's ability to secure Tranche 2 funding.

3.16 Schemes proposed under Phase 1 are temporary segregated cycle corridors:

- Green Oaks Way, Widnes
- East Lane Runcorn and busway from Halton Hospital to Murdishaw Centre (subject to Operator consultation and Road Safety Audits)

3.17 Local consultation is being undertaken to identify additional desirable active travel routes in Halton via employer and employee consultations and a letter to schools about desirable transport routes. Scheme proposals follow analysis of bus data, transport models and site observations.

3.18 Phase 2 Schemes:

- Review of existing combined footway cycleway on Heath Road in Runcorn, possible segregated cycle route or further widening of footpath. Includes a small section of Clifton Rd to link into existing cycleway infrastructure.

- Acceleration of currently proposed route through Frederick St / Appleton Village to link into Victoria Park. Route from Locket Rd junction up Birchfield Road to Willmere and beyond to St Helens
- Design of Cycle Route to Frodsham from Weston via Cow Hey Lane to support workers travelling to Ineos, Innovyn, Rocksavage Power Station and the Heath Business Park from Sutton Weaver, Frodsham, Helsby and beyond.
- Acceleration of LCWIP programme to complete the busway verge to cycleway schemes around the entire Busway loop.
- Implement a cycle route from Hough Green through Chestnut Lodge towards the Town Centre supporting an area with reliance on buses and deprived.
- Increase routes from the new Astmoor Cycle spine into and across the wider estate.
- Route from Cronton College along Cronton Lane, Lunts Heath Rd to South Lane to enable East West movement through North Widnes and linking into St Helens / Widnes Town Centre route to encourage students away from car usage and towards cycling
- Maximise use of existing infrastructure through vegetation clearance on existing routes, identifying bottlenecks and widen where possible to an ideal 3.5m. Particularly around Southern Expressway routes supporting workers traveling to Whitehouse.
- Develop an on road cycleway along Moor Lane removing one lane to link from the Ditton Rd route from Halewood into the existing Kingsway route that in turn could be developed with physical protection features
- Implement cycle storage at local centres

### 3.19 Transport for the North (TfN)

TfN contacted the LCR Combined Authority asking for schemes that could be accelerated to help with economic recovery. TfN are putting this forward speculatively to Government, so no money guaranteed. Halton relevant schemes include:

Daresbury Expressway widening scheme, which has been rebranded as East Runcorn Business Corridor.

- LJLA Eastern Access Corridor (CA Scheme)
- Rail Access for All – stations include Widnes and Hough Green
- Universal Traffic Control (UTC) to integrate traffic signals on main routes.

### 3.20 Major Schemes

#### 3.21 Runcorn Station Quarter

- Construction of the new road layout has reached an advanced stage.
- The redundant approach road to the SJB from Runcorn is completely demolished and there is good visibility of the Waterloo Bridge from the west.
- Grants were secured from the LCR CA and Metro-mayor to part fund the RSQ works and Station Piazza.

- Station Piazza element is progressing, with efforts to secure permissions with Network Rail and Avanti to construct the piazza on their respective land.

### 3.22 Widnes Loops

- Construction of the new junction on to the Mersey Gateway is progressing, and the outline is now visible on site
- Focus has been on overcoming utility issues (primarily service diversions) with ongoing dialogue with United Utilities and Scottish Power. A 'service corridor' has been created along the eastern edge of Victoria Road, so that all utilities (previously running all over, hence the delays) are in one narrow area.

### 3.23 Silver Jubilee Bridge

- The contractor, Balvac, is continuing works to reconfigure SJB for vehicles and cycles, as well as the installation of a new parapet support structure on Runcorn Approach Viaduct (RAV) East, that is now required due to the demolition of the RAV West (which carried traffic using the demolished trumpet loop).
- HBC have undertaken to remove pigeon exclusion netting from the structures within the SJB complex. This applies to the Runcorn side only (netting had not been installed on the Widnes approach structures).

### 3.24 Miscellaneous

- Rollout commenced of 29 on-street electric vehicle charging points for residents. In conjunction with Connected Kerb Ltd this scheme is Government grant funded by OLEV.
- Liverpool Road, Widnes resurfacing scheme designed and started 18 May
- Flood risk management scheme application submitted to the Environment Agency for funding for a scheme at Bridgeway / Lockgate at Windmill Hill, Runcorn to manage surface water & runoff. Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, HBC is designated as Lead Local Flood Authority. In HBC's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) a total of 15 hotspot areas were identified and Bridgeway and Lockgate was ranked highest for the number of households at risk.

### 3.25 Regeneration

#### 3.26 Future High Streets Fund

- Draft bid submitted 16 March 2020, with final business case to be submitted no later than 31<sup>st</sup> July.
- HBC's consultants 'WSP' have been commissioned to prepare feasibility study for boatlift and associated infrastructure west of Waterloo Bridge, in partnership with 'Unlock Runcorn'.

#### 3.27 Runcorn Town Deal

- Last meeting of Town Deal Board held in February 2020, with March and April meetings cancelled. A meeting has been scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> July
- Government has produced guidance for how they would like to see proposals for town deal funding being presented. Government is providing some technical advice to support bid submissions.
- Government has now advised local authorities that, due to the virus, there will be three opportunities to submit bids: by July 2020, or October 2020, or January 2021. Given that Halton will be awaiting the outcome of its Future High Streets Fund bid in the autumn, it seems sensible to submit in January 2021.

3.28 Ditton Corridor

- Housing on the former Stobart/Tarmac (Halebank) site – the masterplan is currently being finalised and site clearance/investigation is on schedule. Support is being sought from Homes England for funding of the scheme
- Wider project area - Initial master planning (including detailed Flood Risk analysis) underway & on schedule. Land assembly plans are on schedule.

3.29 Open Space Service

3.30 Throughout the Covid-19 lockdown the Service has been operational and undertaking public duties. Throughout the pandemic the government has made it clear that public parks must remain open (although facilities such as children's play areas, Multi Use Games Areas, skate parks and bowling greens had to close). Initially parks were to be used by the public for one period of daily exercise per person but then restrictions were eased and some facilities were able to reopen. The result has been very high visitor numbers to all of our major parks and higher levels of use at our smaller neighbourhood parks and open spaces. This has had a big impact on the service. In particular emptying bins that are constantly being filled has proved to be very challenging. However the service has managed to maintain the Borough's public parks to a high standard, and all of the planned maintenance activities have taken place throughout the emergency period.

3.31 The functions of the Street Scene service include the horticultural maintenance and the street cleansing activities of neighbourhood areas, town centres and the major highway network. The period in which people were only allowed out for exercise once per day and close to home led to a big increase in the use of the street litter bins, but within the town centres there was a big decrease, requiring adjustments to be made to service provision. Grass cutting on the major highways was suspended in March, as was mechanical sweeping. The fortnightly emptying of street litter bins in neighbourhood areas went to weekly in order to cope with the situation. The grass cutting on the major highway network and the mechanical sweeping recommenced in June. Street litter bin collections have now reverted to fortnightly. Throughout the emergency period grass cutting was carried out as per the schedule.

3.32 Cemeteries and Crematoria

3.33 The Cemeteries and Crematorium section has been extremely busy throughout the covid-19 emergency. The numbers of cremations carried out to date are almost equal to what would be done in a full year. Extra resources were drafted into the section so that additional burial and cremation slots could be offered. As numbers within the crematorium chapel had to be reduced to only 12, free webcasting of funerals was granted and large numbers have taken up that option. A temporary portable cremator was sourced during the emergency period and it was installed in mid-June. The temporary portable cremator has been put into place in order to guarantee that the service can cope with any increase in capacity requirements. As the existing cremators have been worked to their limits, major servicing will need to be carried out very soon and the temporary mobile cremator will assist with this. The Open Space service also facilitated the setting up of, and the running of, a temporary body storage facility at the Silver Blades ice rink in Widnes. Staff from the division constructed the actual facility and managed its operation (with staff from other service areas being drafted in to assist). That facility has now been de-constructed and the ice rink has been handed back to its owners. Work on the new cemetery at Peel House continued throughout the emergency period, and although not yet open to the public, the new cemetery is ready for burials.

3.34 During the emergency period staff from other areas of the Council have been drafted into the Open Space Service to help to keep front line operations going.

3.35 **Waste and Recycling Operations**

3.36 Since the start of the COVID-19 emergency waste management operations have continued as normal. All general waste, recycling, garden waste and bulky household items collections were carried out as scheduled.

3.37 As a result of many people spending more time at home than normal, which increased the likelihood of more waste being generated by each household, our 'no side waste' Policy was relaxed which saw all waste presented for collection being removed. This significantly increased the workload for collection crews and the tonnages of waste collected, but nonetheless, all collections were completed on a daily basis.

3.38 **Household Waste Recycling Centres**

3.39 Following their initial closure in March, the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres were reopened on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May. Since reopening, the centres have operated within strict guidelines to ensure that social distancing rules can be adhered to. This included a restriction on the number of cars allowed on site at any one time. These restrictions impacted upon queuing times and necessitated the implementation of Traffic Management plans at both sites. Traffic Marshalling arrangements were also required to be put in place for a number of weeks at the Johnson's Lane site due to heavy HGV traffic movements from nearby industrial premises. Although both sites remain busy, and there are still lengthy waiting times on occasions, such waiting times have

reduced considerably from the early weeks of reopening when cars were queuing for up to 3 hours.

3.40 Access to the Council's HWRCs was also limited to cars only, with no vans or large trailers being allowed entry. This was due to them usually carrying much larger volumes of waste than cars, meaning longer unloading times, with subsequent impact upon queuing times. The restriction on vans and large trailers is currently under review and Officers are currently exploring options for enabling this restriction to be lifted.

#### **3.41 Environmental Improvement Services**

3.42 The fly-tipping removal and environmental nuisance cleaning operations continued as normal through the COVID-19 emergency. However, the situation did impact upon the Council's environmental enforcement activities but plans are being made for such activity to now be increased.

### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The work reported above makes progress against the suite of environment and urban renewal policies, as set out in the Corporate Plan and subordinate plans and strategies, for example the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan.

### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None.

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

6.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Board on work undertaken to further the Council's environment and urban renewal priorities during Covid lockdown. Good transport networks, clean public spaces, and active development and regeneration are all fundamental to economic recovery, increasing employment, and sustainable communities.

### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 N/A

### **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed.

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

9.1 None.

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy Performance Board (PPB)

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources.

**PORTFOLIO:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Disabled Parking Spaces Policy

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of changes to the disabled person's parking spaces policy.
- 1.2 On-street advisory disabled parking spaces have been provided free of charge for the previous 15 years, subject to the applicant meeting certain criteria. Over this period more than 600 Halton residents have applied for a disabled person's parking space, with more than 60% being approved.
- 1.3 Changes in how mobility allowances are defined and awarded, increasing levels of on-street parking congestion, and a lack of explicit guidance and qualifying criteria, all suggest the current process requires review.
- 1.4 The new application process brings Halton's approach in-line with those of neighbouring Authorities within the Liverpool City Region.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That**

- 2.1 **The Board considers the revised disabled parking spaces policy and recommends it be reported to Executive Board for adoption.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Since 2006, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Section has installed advisory on-street disabled person's parking spaces for residents with the most severe mobility issues, allowing them to park their vehicles as close to their property as possible.
- 3.2 To obtain a parking space an application must be made which demonstrates certain qualification criteria. Appendix A, the current application form, can either be accessed on-line, completed at a Direct Link with an advisor or alternatively, forms are posted out and returned via a pre-paid envelope.
- 3.3 To qualify for a disabled person's parking space the applicant must have a Blue Badge, be in receipt of the higher rate of mobility allowance, and have a vehicle

registered at their address. There must also be no possibility of off-street parking being provided at the property.

- 3.4 Since 2006, more than Halton 600 residents have applied for a disabled parking bay, with over 60% being approved. The most common reasons for applications being denied include: the applicant does not have either a Blue Badge, or a vehicle registered at their property, they have off-street parking available, there are waiting restrictions outside their property, or the road or parking area adjacent to their home is either unadopted or private land (usually owned by a Housing Association).
- 3.5 In some instances, applications are rejected despite the resident seemingly meeting all the criteria. This usually happens when the routine site assessment reveals concerns over the safety of the proposed parking space or if its location would obstruct neighbouring properties.
- 3.6 In addition, the current application form has failed to recognise changes in how mobility allowances are categorised and awarded. The enhanced component of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), introduced by the Department of Work and Pensions in 2013, as well as War Disablement Pensioners Mobility Supplement have not been listed as qualifying criteria on the Form, resulting in unnecessary and unwanted confusion, for both applicant and Council Officers.
- 3.7 Concerns regarding the appropriateness of the current application form prompted a recent investigation into how neighbouring Authorities within the Liverpool City Region managed the disabled parking bay application process. This study concluded that more information should be included on the form as well as amending the qualifying criteria to recognise the changes in mobility allowances.
- 3.8 Appendix B shows a copy of the proposed new application form. Page 2 of the form provides the comprehensive list of guidelines that was lacking in the original in addition to listing all the categories of mobility allowance that meet the criteria. It is anticipated that providing this additional information will make the whole process more straightforward and transparent.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The work on Disabled Person's Parking Spaces (DPPS) is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in Halton's Local Transport Plan and Liverpool City Region's Transport Plan for Growth.
- 4.2 Updating this process brings Halton into line with how other Authorities in the Liverpool City Region manage their residential disabled parking applications.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

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

- 6.1 An efficient and well managed system for disabled parking in residential areas that recognises the needs of both the applicant and wider public contributes both directly and indirectly to all of the five Council priorities. Good transport networks are fundamental to economic growth, employment, and sustainable communities.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 N/A

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 The scheme the Council administers, is purely residential and is designed to allow Blue Badge holders, who have no reasonable off-street parking, the ability to park their vehicles as close to their residences as possible and there is no requirement under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 or the Equality Act 2010 to provide them.

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

N/A

**APPENDIX A**



**APPLICATION FOR DISABLED PERSONS PARKING SPACE**

Halton Borough Council receives a lot of enquiries from disabled drivers with no off-street parking available who have problems parking their car adjacent to their property.

The best way to help prevent this problem is to apply for a Disabled Persons Parking Space road marking. It is an advisory road marking and has no legal backing but it draws attention to the fact that a disabled person, with restricted mobility, resides at the adjacent property.



Having a Disabled Persons Parking Space on the road outside your house will not guarantee that the space is kept clear at all times, but where these markings have been used in other areas of the Borough, they have been successful in helping disabled drivers park as close as possible to their property.

To qualify for a Disabled Persons Parking Space you must be in receipt of the higher rate of mobility allowance and have a vehicle registered at the address. There must also be no possibility of off-street parking being provided at your property. With this in mind, photocopies of your Blue Badge, Mobility entitlement and V5c Registration Document must be provided. On receipt of this form, an Engineer will make a site inspection to investigate the feasibility of providing such a road marking.

It normally takes around twelve weeks from when you send the application form back before the marking is provided.

## APPLICATION FOR DISABLED PERSONS PARKING SPACE

**Applicants Full Name  
Address**

**Date of Birth  
Telephone Number**

**Owner of Vehicle**

**Vehicle Registration**

**Blue Badge Number**

**Blue Badge Expiry Date**

Do you have access to off-street parking?

**YES/NO**

Is it possible to provide a parking space in the front garden of you property?

**YES/NO**

Are there road humps or yellow lines outside your property?

**YES/NO**

**I declare that the above information is correct and attach copies of the following documents in support of my application.**

- A photocopy of V5c Vehicle Registration Document (Logbook)
- A photocopy of your higher rate mobility allowance
- A photocopy of both sides of the Blue Badge (opened)

**Signed**

**Date**

Please return this form to:  
Halton Borough Council  
Traffic Management Section (DPPS)  
Municipal Building  
Kingsway  
Widnes  
WA8 7QF  
**APPENDIX B**



## APPLICATION FOR DISABLED PERSONS PARKING

**Applicants Full Name**

**Date of Birth**

**Address**

**Telephone Number**

**Owner of Vehicle**

**Blue Badge Number**

**Vehicle Registration**

**Blue Badge Expiry Date**

**PLEASE READ THE GUIDELINES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS APPLICATION FORM BEFORE FILLING IN AN APPLICATION FORM.**

**I declare that the above information is correct and attach copies of the following documents in support of my application:-**

- **Copies of both sides of the applicants blue badge as proof of the applicant's entitlement.**
- **Copy of the V5 document as proof that the vehicle is registered to the address of the applicant.**
- **Copy of the entitlement to the Enhanced Mobility Component of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or the higher rate of mobility component of the Disability Allowance, War Disablement Pensioners Mobility Supplement as proof of the applicant's mobility issue.**
- **Copy of the applicant's driving licence.**

**Signed**

**Date**

**Please return form to:-**

**Halton Borough Council, Traffic Management Section (DPPS), Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 7QF.**

**Policy**

- a) You possess a Blue Badge that has been awarded for life or an indefinite period.
- b) You will have been awarded Enhanced Mobility Component of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or the higher rate of mobility component of the Disability Allowance, War Disablement Pensioners Mobility Supplement as proof of the applicant's mobility issue.
- c) The main vehicle in which your blue badge is used is kept at the application address.
- d) You do not have an off-street parking facility on your own land, and it is not reasonably possible to provide one.

- e) There are no waiting restrictions or bus stops fronting your property and you do not reside in a residents parking area.
- f) A disabled parking bay doesn't already exist at the property. Only one bay per property will be permitted.
- g) Vehicle access, in particular emergency vehicles, and visibility would not be impaired by the provision of an Advisory Disabled Persons Parking Bay.
- h) There are no humps or other traffic calming features directly outside your property.
- i) The road has a speed limit of 30 mph or less.
- j) The current number of Advisory Disabled Persons Parking Bays installed is lower than 10% of the total number of residential properties within a clearly defined block of houses within a road, i.e. 20 houses = maximum of 2 disabled bays at that location.
- k) The requested location of the parking bay is not:
  - 1. listed in the Highway Code as a place where vehicles should not be parked.
  - 2. located in the turning head facility of any cul-de-sac.
  - 3. at a location where there is a history of visibility related accidents.
  - 4. in a position which may prevent the passing of normal traffic flows.
  - 5. in a position where a parked vehicle will be unsighted to travelling vehicles such as on a bend.
  - 6. On unadopted highway or private land.
- l) If you leave the residence after a bay is installed, it is your responsibility to inform the council so that the bay can be removed.
- m) The Advisory Disabled Persons Parking Bay **cannot** be reserved for the exclusive use of the applicant and may be used by any other Blue Badge Holder. Signage will not be provided.
- n) The occurrence of existing parking on the public highway does not automatically mean it is possible to install an Advisory Disabled Persons Parking Bay, as the Highway Authority may not wish to endorse parking at the particular location.
- o) If a parking bay is installed, it will be reviewed at regular periods by the Council to establish if the need for the bay still exists, if it has created any problems, or if it is being misused. The bay may be removed following any such review.
- p) Note: Advisory Disabled Persons Parking Bays are **NOT** legally enforceable by the Police.

***An Eligibility Review will also be carried out. This will consist of resending the supporting documents. If the applicant returns the documents within the time period stated in the letter, the bay would remain. If the form is not returned the bay will be removed.***

**How long will it take?**

- The **assessment** of an application and decision may take up to **6 weeks**.
- If the application is **successful**, it may take a further **6 weeks** for the road markings to be put in place.