

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 14 October 2021 2.00 p.m.
Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Chief Executive

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

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	1 - 8
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
3. ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO	
(A) HALTON HOUSING TRUST - ANNUAL REPORT	9 - 23

Please contact Ann Jones 0151 511 8276 or ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.

The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 18 November 2021

Item	Page No
4. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO	
(A) REQUEST FOR HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL TO LEAD THE PROCUREMENT OF AN IAG SERVICE FOR HALTON, KNOWSLEY AND WIRRAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES	24 - 27
5. ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO	
(A) PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR LIQUID ROAD FUEL CONTRACTS - SUPPLY OF DIESEL, KEROSENE, HVO AND AD BLUE	28 - 30
6. SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
PART II	
<p>In this case the Board has a discretion to exclude the press and public and, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, it is RECOMMENDED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, having been satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.</p>	
7. DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO	
(A) PROPOSED LEISURE CENTRE, MOOR LANE, WIDNES - UPDATE REPORT	31 - 119

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.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 16 September 2021 in Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Dennett, Harris, M. Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, T. McInerney, Nelson, Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, D. Parr, I. Leivesley, M. Vasic, M. Reaney, E. Dawson and A. Jones

Also in attendance: One member of the press

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

Action

The Board observed a minute's silence in honour of Councillor Howard, who sadly passed away last week.

EXB23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB24 TAXI LICENSING - POLICY UPDATES RELATING TO THE ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUS CONDITIONS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which requested approval of amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Assessment of Previous Conviction Policy and the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Condition (Driver Conditions).

It was reported that the Regulatory Committee had considered and approved the above amendments at its meeting on 30 June 2021. The reasons why these amendments were necessary were described in detail in Appendix 1 of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the amendments to the 'Previous Convictions Policy' be approved and adopted; and
- 2) the amendment to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver's conditions relating to the requirement to report matters relating to their behaviour be approved and adopted.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB25 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 Mersey Weaver District Scouts, in respect of their premises at Unit 3, Ringway Road, Runcorn. Appended to the report was the potential annual cost to the Council of granting discretionary rate relief.

RESOLVED: That the request for 15% discretionary rate relief from Mersey Weaver District Scouts in respect of their premises at Unit 3, Ringway Road, Runcorn, from 1 April 2021 be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

EXB26 2021/22 BUDGET MONITORING AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council's overall revenue net spending position as at 30 June 2021, together with an initial forecast outturn position. The report also included the financial impact of Covid-19 with a summary of Government funding made available to the Council to date.

A summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 30 June 2021 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms the outturn forecast for the year showed that net spend would be over the approved budget by £4.661m. It was noted that this figure was based on current service demand and forecast of future costs and income levels. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 30 June 2021.

The implications to the Council of the recently announced 1.25% increase in National Insurance

contributions was discussed.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to only absolutely essential items;
- 2) Strategic Directors take urgent action to identify areas where spending could be reduced or suspended for the remainder of the current financial year; and
- 3) Council be requested to approve the revisions to the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 3.14.

Operational
Director - Finance

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB27 FULL COST DOMICILIARY CARE CLIENTS RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM TWO CARERS - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – People, which presented the outcome of the consultation on the full cost domiciliary care clients receiving support from two carers and being charged for both carers, thus removing the subsidy provided by the Council.

The proposals made at the June meeting of the Board were agreed and this report presented Members with the outcome / feedback from the consultation process and an outline of the next steps to be taken. A summary of 78 responses was attached as Appendix 1 and discussed in paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 of the report.

Reason(s) for Decision

Executive Board approval is required to enable the Council to begin charging full cost domiciliary care clients with two carers for both carers (rather than just one as is currently the case), in line with the Care Act.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Continuing to subsidise the cost of domiciliary care provision for those with two carers who are deemed able to afford the cost of their own care was neither fair nor cost effective. It is simply not equitable that full cost domiciliary care clients with two carers were only paying for one carer, which represented half the cost of the actual package of care.

Implementation Date

New clients to be charged for both carers with effect from 11 October 2021; existing clients to have charges increased on an incremental basis of 15% per month from October 2021 to March 2022; and with effect from 1 April 2022, all full cost domiciliary care clients receiving support from two carers will be charged for both carers.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) note the contents of the report, particularly the outcome of the consultation process (paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10); and
- 2) approve the implementation of charging full cost domiciliary care clients for both carers on the basis outlined at paragraph 3.16.

Strategic Director
- People

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB28 SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST

The Board received a report from the Director of Public Health, advising them of the Chief Executive's use of emergency powers, in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.2, to make a direct award for the Substance Misuse Service contract, to cover the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.

It was noted that due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, a waiver was granted in December 2020 to allow continued provision of the service by the incumbent provision for the period up to 30 September 2021, in anticipation that the procurement exercise would be completed by this time. The Board was advised that unfortunately, although the exercise was now underway, it would not be completed within this timeframe. The Chief Executive's use of emergency powers had allowed the continued delivery of the specialist service whilst the procurement process is completed.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the report.

Director of Public
Health

COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB29 MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING - GOVERNANCE AND SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS IN HALTON

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive, which informed of the current arrangements in Halton to meet the requirements under the Modern Day Slavery Act 2015 and its review and changes in 2019/20.

The report also advised of the current arrangements in Halton to support victims of Modern Slavery (MS) and Human Trafficking (HT) and presented Halton's Transparency Statement, which had been refreshed for 2021-2023 and required the Board's agreement, so it could be published on the Council's website.

It was reported that following the review of the Modern Day Slavery Act in 2019 and a period of consultation in 2020, Government had brought in some changes and made 80 recommendations – the report provided Members with links to these changes under paragraph 9 of the report. Also presented in the report were the different strands of activity across Halton and Cheshire, which showed how the Council was meeting its responsibilities within the Act; this included the Transparency Statement, which was attached at Appendix one.

It was noted that a seminar for all Members on the subject of modern slavery and human trafficking, and the refreshed Transparency Statement would be arranged as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board notes the contents of the report and agrees the Council's refreshed Transparency Statement.

Chief Executive

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB30 DEVELOPMENT OF PRIORY MEADOW, RUNCORN FOR HOUSING

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which requested approval to market Priory Meadow for housing on a gifted homes bases.

The report outlined some background and historical information in respect of the site and gave details of the tender opportunity that presented itself. It was noted that the site was one of the last pieces of the Castlefields Masterplan and would make an important contribution to meeting the housing needs of the Borough.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approves the marketing of Priory Meadow;
- 2) agrees to Officers testing the market for gifted homes and entering into legal agreements on this basis; and
- 3) authorises the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property, and the Operational Director for Legal and Democratic Services to ensure full legal compliance in relation to the project.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL
PORTFOLIOS**

EXB31 PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval of Halton’s Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) 2021 – 2037.

Halton’s Playing Pitch Strategy set out the Council’s strategy for identifying and meeting the playing pitch and associated facility needs of the Borough from now, through to 2037. It considered how well the existing playing pitch provision and associated facilities met the needs of communities in terms of supply and demand throughout this time period.

It was noted that the Strategy had been produced in accordance with national planning guidance using the Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance, which was very rigid in its approach and provided robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision throughout Halton.

Appended to the report was the *Halton Borough Council Strategy and Action Plan* (appendix 1) which set out a series of initial recommendations for further consideration; and the *Halton Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy Draft Assessment Report* (appendix 2) which set out the latest background information for each sport.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Assessment Report and the accompanying Strategy and Action Plan be approved;

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

- 2) the Assessment Report and the accompanying Strategy and Action Plan be published on the Council's website; and
- 3) the Halton Playing Pitch Strategy 2021 – 2037 be the basis for making strategic decisions on future playing pitch provision and associated facilities across the Borough.

EXB32 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 items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB33 FOUNDRY LANE RESIDENTIAL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic

Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on proposals for residential development at Foundry Lane, Widnes and sought approval to enter into a contractual Development Agreement with an appointed partner.

RESOLVED: That the list of recommendations from 2.1 to 2.5 in the report be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

MINUTES ISSUED: 21 September 2021

CALL-IN: 28 September 2021 at 5.00 pm

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 28 September 2021.

Meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 14 October 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care Portfolio

SUBJECT: Halton Housing Annual Report

WARD(S): Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides an update on Halton Housing's activities since the last report to Executive Board in November 2020.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board Members note the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Liz Haworth, Group Chief Executive of Halton Housing will attend the meeting to present the attached report. She will be accompanied by Neil McGrath, Deputy Group Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer and Clive Deadman, Chair of Halton Housing.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications arising from this report.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None identified.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None identified.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Halton Housing is a major employer in the Borough, employing around 330 staff. It has recently taken on three Kickstart placements and employs 11 apprentices.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

A quality, affordable, and safe home plays a key part in the health of individuals. Halton Housing provides 49% of the social housing within the Borough. Its Chief Executive is a member of the One Halton Board. Halton Housing has supported the Council with its response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Halton Housing has a key role to play in the management and resolution of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and works in partnership with the Council and other bodies to address issues. It has recently signed up to join the multi-agency approach to tackle serious organised crime and “county lines’ operating in Halton.

6.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal

Halton Housing is an active developer of new homes within the Borough. It is also a member of the Runcorn Town Board and is actively involved in the regeneration of Runcorn town centre.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Regular meetings between the Chief Executive of Halton Housing and the Council’s Chief Executive take place to discuss a range of issues and to explore risks.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Halton Housing has offered 149 properties to vulnerable customers, as direct matches to reduce homelessness.

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

9.1 None identified.



Annual Report to HBC Executive Board

October 2021

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 There have been changes to the operating environment such as the rent reductions announced in 2015 and the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic in 2020/21. As the environment changes, we will continue to monitor performance to gain assurance that the impact of those changes is being effectively managed and mitigated.
- 1.2 Rather than just respond to changes in our operating environment we have worked hard to try to influence policy as it is being developed. This has been at a local, regional, and national level.
- 1.3 Some of our key organisational achievements for 2020/21 include:
- Launched refreshed digital platforms including new website, customer portal and customer app.
 - Launched our new placeshaping strategy and our first neighbourhood project, 'Destination Ditton'.
 - Completed the construction of an additional 92 new homes. This has taken the number of new homes built and acquired since stock transfer to almost 1,400.
 - Achieved No 1 Housing Digital provider award.
 - We have achieved our rent arrears and void targets and cleared our repairs backlog, despite the challenges of Covid-19.
- 1.4 We enjoy a strong strategic relationship with HBC, and we continue to be represented and play an active role in contributing towards the Council's strategic priorities including homelessness, care leavers, regeneration, crime and disorder and health.
- 1.5 Our Direction (OD3) is a framework for how we run the organisation. There are six priorities. Each priority has a clear strategy which sets out the why, how and actions to March 2022, financial implications and the associated KPI's. Underpinning everything is our corporate vision: "Improving People's Lives".

- 1.6 We are now entering the third and final year of OD3. Building on the strong foundations that have been put in place we have embarked on the development of our new corporate strategy from April 2022. We have had a meeting with the Council's senior management team to better understand our individual priorities and seek ways in which we can work together.
- 1.7 Customers remain at the heart of all that we do, we will continue to innovate, maintain a strong focus on our homes (and build new ones), and further strengthen our brand and reputation as a landlord of choice in Halton and beyond.
- 1.8 The priorities for 2021/22 take account of a range of drivers including changes in the external environment including the Social Housing White Paper, the Together with Tenants Charter, the new NHF Code of Governance (2020), the Future Homes Standard, building safety and economic recovery post the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Introduction

Operating Environment

- 2.1 Whilst performance is strong, there have been changes to the operating environment, such as the rent reductions announced in 2015 and the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic in 2020/21. As the environment changes, we will continue to monitor performance to gain assurance that the impact of those changes is being effectively managed and mitigated.
- 2.2 Rather than just respond to changes in our operating environment we have worked hard to try to influence policy as it is being developed. This has been at a local, regional, and national level.

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic

- 2.3 As well as serious implications for people's health, Covid-19 has significantly impacted businesses and the wider economy. We have responded well to the challenge presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and received positive feedback from key stakeholders including Halton Borough Council (HBC).
- 2.4 Throughout the year, we continued to consider the principal risks and uncertainties resulting from the pandemic. Some headline risks that continued to be addressed include:
- Our seamless transition to working from home largely because of our well-established flexible working agile culture. We have developed our future ways of working as we transition to the 'new normal'.
 - Emergency repairs and key compliance works continued throughout the lockdown period. An almost full range of services was resumed from 1st June 2020. The backlog in repairs has been cleared.
 - Only one of the two development sites was shut down for a short period of time. There were delays on sale completions on only a small number of homes, but all were either sold or reserved by 31st March 2021.

- Additional monitoring of rent arrears was introduced. The debt recovery team and welfare benefits advisors worked closely with customers to maximise take up of benefits and establish affordable payment plans. We outperformed our rent arrears targets by the year end, and we reduced our provision for bad debts at the year end.
- No customers were evicted from their homes during 2020/21.
- We have offered 149 properties to vulnerable customers, as direct matches to reduce homelessness. We have also been successful in submitting a funding bid to MHCLG for capital and revenue funding with HBC to support rough sleepers and homelessness in Halton which includes funding to refurbish two of our longer-term void properties.

Our Direction (OD3)

2.5 Our Direction (OD3) is a framework for how we run the organisation. There are six priorities. Each priority has a clear strategy which sets out the why, how, targets to March 2022, financial implications and the associated KPI's. Underpinning everything is our corporate vision: "Improving People's Lives".

2.6 Our six priorities are:

1. **Customer Focus** - Customers are our key focus. We will listen to their views, understand their needs and preferences, and deliver services that are accessible, high performing and provide value for money. We will be a pioneer for innovative service delivery using insight, digital and Artificial Intelligence, whilst ensuring our visible presence within our neighbourhoods.
2. **Places to be Proud Of** - We will keep our customers safe and continue investing in our existing homes to make sure they are fit for the future and that we minimise our environmental impact. We will build on our role within our neighbourhoods, working with partners to tackle the challenges they face and create places to be proud of.

3. **Growth and Diversification** - We will continue to grow and diversify our business, developing a whole market housing offer which meets a range of needs including those of older people and those starting out on the housing ladder. We will grow our commercial arm, OSUK to generate profits which help protect our business and subsidise our social housing activity.
 4. **Healthy Organisation** - We will deliver all of this through our people. We will create an environment where colleagues are valued and listened to, and where they have a strong voice which shapes our future direction. We will recruit and retain people with the right skills, but more importantly the right behaviours to help us deliver our plans. We will invest in our leaders, our people and our IT and create a healthy organisation where everyone can do a great job in an innovative, collaborative, and agile business.
 5. **Well Governed & Financially Viable** - Our plans can only be delivered if we maintain our strong foundations. This means being as efficient and productive as we can be, maximising our income and delivering great performance. It means being well governed, compliant with regulatory and legal requirements and having the financial capacity to fund our plans.
 6. **Brand and Reputation** - We will build on our brand and reputation with our customers, our colleagues, local partners and within the sector. We will be the first choice for people looking for a home within the borough and beyond and a partner of choice for those who invest in our neighbourhoods and provide services to our customers. We will continue to be regarded in the sector as a forward thinking, innovative housing provider.
- 2.7 We are now entering the third and final year of OD3. Building on the strong foundations that have been put in place we have embarked on the development of our new corporate strategy from April 2022. We have had a meeting with the Council's senior management team to better understand our individual priorities and seek ways in which we can work together.
- 2.8 Customers remain at the heart of all that we do, we will continue to innovate, maintain a strong focus on our homes (and build new ones), and further strengthen our brand and reputation as a landlord of choice in Halton and beyond.

- 2.9 The priorities for 2021/22 take account of a range of drivers including changes in the external environment including the Social Housing White Paper, the Together with Tenants Charter, the new NHF Code of Governance (2020), the Future Homes Standard, building safety and economic recovery post the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.10 Over the last 12 months we have delivered several significant achievements and outcomes. We have a strong brand and reputation which we will build on with our customers, our colleagues, local partners and within the sector.
- 2.11 Our key priorities for 2021/22 include:
- Customers are our key focus. We will deliver services that are accessible, high performing and provide value for money.
 - We will keep our customers safe and continue investing in our existing homes.
 - We will continue to grow and diversify our business.
 - We will create an environment where colleagues are valued and listened to.
 - We will be well governed, compliant with regulatory and legal requirements and have the financial capacity to fund our plans.
 - We will build on our brand and reputation with our customers, our colleagues, local partners and within the sector.

3 Customer Focus

- 3.1 Customers are our key focus. We will listen to their views, understand their needs and preferences, and deliver services that are accessible, high performing and provide value for money. We will be a pioneer for innovative service delivery using insight, digital and Artificial Intelligence, whilst ensuring our visible presence within our neighbourhoods.
- 3.2 We have signed up to the NHF Together with Tenants Charter and continue to strengthen the customer voice with a range of online opportunities for customers to engage including virtual complaints and repairs forums.

3.3 Our key achievements for 2020/21 include:

- Through listening to our customers and using our insight we have developed our Customer Contact and our Customer Voice Strategies.
- We have created new Neighbourhood and Customer Experience directorates to create more capacity to focus on both the customer and place and deliver a more visible presence within our neighbourhoods.
- We have appointed a new Chair and Vice Chair of the Customer Forum
- Completed a self-assessment against new Housing Ombudsman Code of Guidance to demonstrate compliance.
- Launched refreshed digital platforms including new website, customer portal and customer app.

4 Places to be proud of

4.1 We will keep our customers safe and continue investing in our existing homes to make sure they are fit for the future and that we minimise our environmental impact. We will build on our role within our neighbourhoods, working with partners to tackle the challenges they face and create places to be proud of.

4.2 Our key achievements for 2020/21 include:

- We have continued to demonstrate excellent performance in the management of health and safety compliance.
- We have developed our strategies for Asset Management, Environmental and Sustainability and Placeshaping.
- Our first neighbourhood project, 'Destination Ditton' has been launched.
- Raised our profile through representation on boards including Building Better, Runcorn Town Fund, Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) and Riverside College.
- Set out our Social Value Strategy which has been approved by Board.

Social Value and Placeshaping Strategies

- 4.3 As a housing association we are an anchor institution within our neighbourhoods. We are an employer, builder, partner, and place maker. We are at the beating heart of communities across Halton – and we are here to stay.
- 4.4 Our Social Value Strategy links closely with both our Placeshaping and Environmental and Sustainability strategies. It aims to improve the conditions of life for the residents of the areas in which we own or manage housing stock by tackling inequalities arising from:
- Homelessness
 - Health
 - Income
 - Fuel and food poverty
 - Digital exclusion
 - Employment opportunities

Destination Ditton

- 4.5 The “Destination Ditton” project brings together Halton Housing customers, residents of Ditton and local and national partners, Halton Borough Council, Job Centre Plus, Department for Work and Pensions, Riverside College, Power in Partnership (PiP) and Ormiston Chadwick Academy to name a few, all seeking to create lasting improvements, bring communities together and create opportunities for all age groups.
- 4.6 Earlier this year we asked customers and residents, what improvements they wanted to see in Ditton, through several surveys and engagement events.

- 4.7 The findings of both exercises have been pulled together into a plan which will be delivered throughout 2021 with four key themes and areas of focus for the programme, including: green and open spaces, supporting employment opportunities, education and training and health and wellbeing.
- 4.8 Several projects have been identified, with a number already underway including:
- Supporting high school children with online learning by funding and providing 50 laptops. Halton Housing is also providing school uniforms for customers who are in financial hardship.
 - Partnering with several local volunteer groups to help tackle food poverty and supporting the launch of a mobile community supermarket, which will provide low-cost quality food.
 - Providing interview experience to young learners at Power in Partnership (PiP), in support of their 'work ready' programme.
 - Funding DJ lessons and bicycle repairs and maintenance workshops

Sustainability and the Environment

- 4.9 We aim to reduce the environmental impact of our activities. To achieve net zero carbon, we will progress innovative options to decarbonise our existing housing stock, focusing on our lower performing homes and minimise the environmental impact of our maintenance activities and travel. We will work with customers to reduce fuel poverty; consider how environmental and sustainability becomes an increasing factor in our decision making; and invest in our communities to increase biodiversity and access to quality green space to create thriving places where people choose to live.

5 Growth and Diversification

- 5.1 We will continue to grow and diversify our business, developing a whole market housing offer which meets a range of needs including those of older people and those starting out on the housing ladder.

5.2 Our key achievements for 2020/21 include:

- We approved the development of 215 new affordable homes across three schemes – 110 for rent and 105 for shared ownership.
- Completed the construction of an additional 92 new homes. This has taken the number of new homes built and acquired since stock transfer to almost 1,400.
- All homes developed for sale have been sold and all shared ownership homes have either been sold or reserved.

5.3 We are going to build and acquire 1,000 additional new homes for rent, sale, and shared ownership over the next five years.

6 Healthy Organisation

6.1 We will deliver through our people. We will create an environment where colleagues are valued and listened to, and where they have a strong voice which shapes our future direction. We will recruit and retain people with the right skills, but more importantly the right behaviours to help us deliver our plans. We will invest in our leaders, our people and our IT and create a healthy organisation where everyone can do a great job in an innovative, collaborative, and agile business.

6.2 Our key achievements for 2020/21 include:

- We launched and are delivering our Leadership Matters training and development programme.
- The implementation of the Driving Our Future change programme has continued at pace.
- Completed a Stakeholder Survey and developed a subsequent action plan.
- Achieved No 1 Housing Digital provider award.
- Achieved the Investor in People (IIP) gold standard and achieved the health and wellbeing award.

Transformation

6.3 We are undertaking the second year of the “Driving Our Future” change programme. The deliverables will include:

- Trialling a range of innovative new products designed to enhance efficiency and deliver improved services to customers
- Enhanced day-to-day repairs systems, processes and working practices.
- An enhanced telephony system and redesigned customer reception area based on customer feedback.

7 Financially Viable and well governed

7.1 Our plans can only be delivered if we maintain our strong foundations. This means being as efficient and productive as we can be, maximising our income and delivering great performance. It means being well governed, compliant with regulatory and legal requirements and having the financial capacity to fund our plans.

7.2 Our key achievements for 2020/21 include:

- We have achieved our rent arrears and void targets and cleared our repairs backlog, despite the challenges of Covid-19.
- We have achieved the highest possible regulatory rating (V1 G1).
- We have appointed a new chair of OSUK, our commercial subsidiary, and four new Board Members.
- Conducted a review and self-assessment against the Social Housing White Paper
- Conducted a review and self-assessment against the new National Housing Federation 2020 Code of Governance and the actions identified have started to be addressed.

8 Brand and Reputation

8.1 We will build on our brand and reputation with our customers, our colleagues, local partners and within the sector. We will be the first choice for people looking for a home within the borough and beyond and a partner of choice for those who invest in our neighbourhoods and provide services to our customers. We will continue to be regarded in the sector as a forward thinking, innovative housing provider. We were judged first in the list of UK Digital Landlords by Housing Digital.

Key Partnerships

8.2 We recognise we have an important role in investing in and tackling the challenges faced by the place in which we operate. Examples of our achievements include:

- Several projects aimed at engaging with young people and reducing anti-social behaviour in the area.
- Work with Riverside College to engage adults in improving their skills and employment prospects.
- Recruited three placements under the government's Kickstart scheme and six additional apprentices making it 11 apprentices in total
- Donation of 50 laptops for digitally excluded children attending Ormiston High School.
- Work with the Halton Employment Partnership to promote schemes for the unemployed to our customers.
- Work with HBC and other partners on initiatives to engage customers in health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Initiatives to improve access to affordable food via community shops.
- Engagement with third sector partners on initiatives to alleviate loneliness.
- Green space projects to enhance open spaces on the estate.

8.3 We have signed up as an early adopter of the ESG Sustainability Reporting Standard. Our first ESG report will be published in Autumn 2021.

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	14 th October 2021
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Children and Young People
SUBJECT:	Request for Halton Borough Council to lead the procurement of an IAG service for Halton, Knowsley and Wirral Local Authorities
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To obtain Executive Board approval for Halton Borough Council to lead the procurement of services to encourage, enable and assist young people to participation in education and training

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) **the report be noted; and**
- ii) **the Board approves Halton Borough Council acting as lead in a joint procurement process with Knowsley and Wirral local authorities.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Local Authorities have a duty to make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan, support that will encourage, enable and assist them to participate in education or training. This is a duty under Section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- 3.2 In addition, the Education and Skills Act 2008 placed two 'Raising the Participation Age' related duties on local authorities with regard to 16 and 17 year olds:
- 3.2.1 Local authorities must promote the effective participation in education and training of 16 and 17 year olds in their area with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training. A key element of this is identifying the young people in their area who are covered by the duty to participate and encouraging them to find a suitable education or training place.
 - 3.2.2 Local authorities must make arrangements – i.e. maintain a tracking system - to identify 16 and 17 year olds who are not participating in

education or training. Putting in place robust arrangements to identify young people who are not engaged in education or training or who have left provision enables local authorities to offer support as soon as possible.

- 3.3 Since April 2014 the 14-19 Team within Halton Borough Council have implemented the Halton Participation Strategy to meet the above duties. The revised approach to this area of work, brought about by the Halton Participation Strategy, brought a large element of the work in house and achieved financial and resource efficiencies in doing so.
- 3.4 The Halton Participation Strategy has also significantly reduced the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training or whose activity is not known to the Council. In April 2014 the reported figure for Halton was 9.2%. The published annual average for Halton in 2020/21 is 4%.
- 3.5 An element within the Halton Participation Strategy is the commissioning of a specialist service to encourage, enable and assist young people to participation in education and training through the provision of information, advice and guidance by appropriately trained advisers.
- 3.6 The commissioning of a service to provide information, advice and guidance to young people has been carried out in collaboration with Knowsley, Liverpool and Wirral authorities since 2014. The Executive Board approved Halton Borough Council to lead the first procurement process on the 17th October 2013 and to lead a new procurement round on the 20th July 2017.
- 3.7 On both occasions the contract was awarded to Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership/Career Connect as the most able to deliver to the scale and the requirements of the contract. The current contract came into effect from 1st April 2018 for a period of one year with an option to extend for a further three 12 month periods. The options to extend has been taken and the current contract will end on 31st March 2022.
- 3.8 Halton and the two Liverpool City Region Authorities of Knowsley and Wirral seek to procure a service to encourage, enable and assist young people from 1st April 2022. The service would maintain similar features to current as all local authorities have found the current service specification to support them in meeting their statutory duties.
- 3.9 The joint procurement process would seek to procure a service from April 2022 for 4 x 12 month periods. This would allow for consistency of service from 2022 to 2026 with the option to reduce or terminate the service annually should the Council's statutory

duties change or further budget savings require a reduction.

3.10 The expected maximum total contract value annually would be:

Halton	£154,000
Combined Knowsley & Wirral	£781,000
<i>Maximum total annual value</i>	<i>£935,000</i>

3.11 The joint procurement process would once again lead to a Framework Agreement for the service, with each local authority responsible for their own element of service delivery and managing their own payment schedules direct to the service provider.

3.12 There is a significant advantage to Halton to be involved in a joint procurement process because of the size of the contract across the three local authorities; there are economies of scale Halton will benefit from, and given the size of Halton’s budget it’s likely the Council will benefit the most from being part of a much larger contract.

3.13 As the lead for the development of the current Framework Agreement to encourage, enable and assist young people the authorities have asked Halton to act as the lead once again to procure a joint service from April 2022.

3.14 As Halton has the most experience of procuring this service there is an advantage to the procurement teams of all the local authorities involved for Halton to lead. Given the scale of Halton’s budget compared to the investment in this procurement from other local authorities Halton’s procurement team will negotiate with the other local authorities a reciprocal arrangement whereby another authority leads another joint procurement exercise.

3.15 Given the benefits outlined above, and in order to make the procurement process as efficient as possible for all local authorities involved, the Strategic Director, People, seeks Executive Board approval to lead the procurement across Halton, Knowsley and Wirral Local Authorities.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Securing a service to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education is an essential element of the Council’s work to meet its statutory duties.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 A joint procurement process offers the best option for all local authorities to achieve value for money through economies of scale.

As the smallest budget holder Halton has the potential to benefit most from this joint procurement.

- 5.2 The staffing resource from all local authorities involved can be best utilised by allowing Halton to lead this particular joint procurement process, given the vast experience and documentation already available in Halton.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The service to encourage, enable and support young people to participate in education and training is an important element of the Halton Participation Strategy, which is proving successful in providing young people who are not in education, employment or training with the support they need to progress.

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

The Halton Participation Strategy supports key priorities in encouraging young people to access learning or training that will lead to longer term, more sustainable employment options.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 There is a financial risk in not being part of a joint procurement process and therefore incurring a higher level of service charge from any supplier delivering to Halton only.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 None identified.

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

- 9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 14th October 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director
Enterprise Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO Environment and Urban Renewal

SUBJECT: Preliminary Estimates for Liquid Road Fuel
Contracts – Supply of Diesel, Kerosene, HVO
and Ad Blue

WARDS: Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Council to be included in a national procurement exercise in order to award Contracts for the supply of Liquid Road Fuels to Council sites.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That: the Board

- 2.1 Approves the use of Procurement Standing Order 1.4.1 to allow the Council to use a Framework Agreement procured by a Central Purchasing Body (Crown Commercial Services) in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulation 2015, in order to award Contracts for the supply of Liquid Road Fuels to Council sites.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council currently has a Liquid Road Fuel contract and a contract for the provision of Ad Blue in place with a total expenditure of in the region of £488,000 per annum. These contracts supply Council sites with diesel and Ad Blue.
- 3.2 Both Contracts were awarded under a national Framework Agreement procured by Crown Commercial Services (an executive agency sponsored by the Cabinet Office that provides commercial services, including buying services, for the public sector.) in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The Contracts expire on 31st March 2022.
- 3.3 Crown Commercial Services are commencing a new procurement exercise to award new call off Contracts under the Framework for the provision of Liquid Road Fuels including Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). By joining this procurement exercise, the Council will be able to award new Contracts for its fuel requirements for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024 (24 months).
- 3.4 The budget identified for these Contracts is £668,000 per annum (cost centre 4070). A 24 month contract has been estimated at £1,376,000.

4.0 BUSINESS CASE

- 4.1 The position under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015:- The Liquid Road Fuels Framework has been tendered by Crown Commercial Services (CCS) in line with EU Regulations. The Framework has been structured in such a way that call off contracts for public organisations can be awarded through a bulk competition run by CCS based on 100% price. The qualitative elements have already been evaluated by CCS when the framework was set up.
- 4.2 Value for Money – The use of a national central purchasing body with increased purchasing power will offer economies of scale for the Council. The procurement exercise will also save Council resources as CCS manage the majority of the procurement process.
- 4.3 Transparency - Contracts will be recorded in the Council's Contract Register accessible via the internet together with the publication of all spend in excess of £500.00. Award details will also be published on the Contracts Finder website.

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 5.1 The Council has passed a Climate Emergency Motion which commits the Council to a number of actions to reduce its Carbon Footprint in relation to our own business activities and those of the wider community. In addition, the Government has announced they will end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, with all new cars and vans being fully zero emission from 2035.
- 5.2 The Council had made significant progress over many years to reduce its Carbon Footprint and emissions had reduced significantly from a 2008 baseline. The Council is currently developing a Climate Change Action Plan which will be published in the autumn of 2021. As part of the Action Plan the Council will develop plans to transition its fleet from petrol/diesel to lower emission vehicles. This work will take some years to complete and in the meantime to ensure ongoing service delivery this current fuel contract is required.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No direct impact

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

8.1 Children and Young People in Halton

No direct impact.

8.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

No direct impact.

8.3 A Healthy Halton

No direct impact.

8.4 A Safer Halton

No direct impact.

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

No direct impact.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

There are no risks anticipated with acceptance of this Procurement Strategy.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

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

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

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

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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