



**Local Economy Policy and Performance Board**

**Monday, 15 September 2025 at 6.30 p.m.  
The Board Room - Municipal Building,  
Widnes**

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

**Interim Chief Executive**

**BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Eddie Jones (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Angela Teeling (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Victoria Begg	Labour
Councillor Neil Connolly	Labour
Councillor Emma Garner	Labour
Councillor Robert Gilligan	Labour
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Kath Loftus	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Mike Ryan	Labour
Councillor Aimee Skinner	Labour

***Please contact Isabelle Moorhouse on 01515113979 or  
isabelle.moorhouse@halton.gov.uk for further information.  
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 17 November 2025***

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

**Part I**

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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.*

**LOCAL ECONOMY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Local Economy Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 16 June 2025 in the Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Teeling (Vice-Chair), Begg, Connolly, Garner, Gilligan, Ryan and Skinner

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Hutchinson, K. Loftus and Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Cooke, G. Ferguson, M. Jones and S. Lowrie

Also in attendance: Councillor Bevan, J. Jones (Halton CAB) and N. Fedigan (Connect2Halton)

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

		<i>Action</i>
ELS1	MINUTES	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 24 February 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
ELS2	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
ELS3	CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU	
	The Board welcomed Jo Jones, from Halton Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), who gave an overview on the services offered in the Borough. CAB offered a free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information on a wide range of subjects. In addition to this, they also provided advocacy and mental health support, access to charitable grants, volunteer training, budgeting skills and financial literacy programme, employability support and research and campaigning. In 2024/25 CAB Halton had assisted 7,695 people/households, advised on 54,116 different issues and achieved £6.2m income gains. The presentation detailed the impact the service had achieved	

for people in the Borough in terms of economic value and as a voice for local people. It also set out the future of the service for 2025/26 and beyond and gave case study examples.

Members requested further information on the impact on the Council Welfare Advice Service since the reduction in Council funding towards Halton CAB and the type of public enquiries received.

Jo Jones was thanked for her informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation and comments made be noted.

Director  
Economy,  
Enterprise &  
Property

*N.B. Councillor Teeling declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed as an agency nurse.*

#### ELS4 CONNECT2HALTON UPDATE

The Board welcomed Nicola Fedigan, from Connect2Halton, who gave an overview on the services offered. Connect2Halton was a joint venture company launched in September 2024, (50% owned by Halton and 50% owned by Kent Council) dedicated to recruiting a flexible workforce such as temporary and casual workers. The key features and benefits were as follows:

- 100% of the profits were returned to the public purse (50/50 split);
- external agencies were managed to ensure compliance;
- it provided a one stop shop approach for managers;
- produced a significant reduction in off-contract spend; and
- it was based within Council offices and therefore focussed on local engagement, not national agencies.

Additional information was given following Members questions:

- questions were asked on the numbers of people in the candidate 'pool' and the areas of work they provided cover for;
- a meeting had been arranged with officers from Adult Social Care to discuss the provision of staff for the care sector using Connect2Halton;
- the service was prioritising Halton residents for casual

work; and

- managers were being encouraged where possible, not to recruit staff from other agencies and to use Connect2Halton.

Nicola Fedigan was thanked for her informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation and comments made be noted.

*N.B. Councillor Teeling declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the following item of business as she has a family member employed at Halton Leisure.*

#### ELS5 HALTON LEISURE CENTRE

The Board received a report and accompanying presentation which provided an overview of the activities and operations at Halton Leisure Centre since its opening on 10 February 2025.

It was reported that the new leisure centre had seen an increase in users and membership, achieving approximately 1,000 new members since opening which had increased monthly direct debit revenue by circa £30,000 per month. It was noted that:

- a new building, plant, equipment and technology had required staff training, new systems of work and policies and procedures had been developed;
- some elements of delivery had been staggered and still developing such as the café and soft play area;
- there was ongoing dialogue with Wates the construction company and a defect reporting system had been implemented now the site had moved beyond the snagging phase;
- the Active Halton App had been refreshed and was being used by the majority of customers; and
- the new leisure centre complied with school's requirements for swimming and 8 schools were now utilising the pool with a further 2 due to start in September.

In response to questions and comments, the following additional information was provided to Members:

- problems with the balustrade in the pool area had been identified and this had been discussed at meetings held with Wates and Property Services; and

- the use of social media and Marketing for the Centre had been highlighted and was being explored.

Members welcomed the presentation and thanked Sue Lowrie and Marc Jones for the update.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

ELS6 ANNUAL REPORT FOR 24/25

The Chair presented the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community PPB's Annual Report for 2024/25.

The Board had met four times during the year and the report set out the work carried out during the Municipal Year April 2024 to March 2025. He thanked all Members of the Board and Officers for their participation and support over the past year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report for 2024-25 be received.

ELS7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2024/25

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 4 of 2024-25 (1 January to 31 March 2025) and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2024-25 were agreed by Members and for the various function areas reported to the Board as follows:

- Enterprise, Employment and Skills; and
- Community and Environment.

The report detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period. Members were invited to highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be provided to a future meeting of the Board.

The Board discussed Sci-Tech Daresbury and the financial and social rewards for the Borough. They were advised that the site has no financial cost for the Council. A further report would be brought to the Board with information on the issues raised by Members. In addition further

information would be circulated on the Sandymoor Open Spaces Improvements.

Director  
Economy,  
Enterprise  
Property -  
&

RESOLVED: That the quarter 4 performance management reports be received.

#### ELS8 COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a report from the Director of Finance, which gave the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024-25 outturn forecast.

On 13 March 2025, Executive Board received the attached report and appendices, which presented details of Councilwide revenue and capital spending by each department and outlined the reasons for key variances from budget.

Executive Board has requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information. This is to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as outlined in the report be noted.

*Meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.*

**REPORT TO:** Local Economy Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 15 September 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Public Question Time

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE 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 RECOMMENDATION: 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**

4.1 None identified.

#### 5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None identified.

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

##### 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

None identified.

##### 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None identified.

##### 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None identified.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None identified.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None identified.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

**REPORT TO:** Local Economy Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 15 September 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Executive Board Minutes

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE 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 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

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

**5.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

None.

**5.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None.

**5.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None.

**5.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None.

5.5      **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

5.6      **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None.

6.0      **RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1      None.

7.0      **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1      None.

8.0      **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

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.

**Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Local Economy Policy and Performance Board**

<b>EXB16</b>	<b>HEALTH AND LEISURE IN HALTON</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that requested the Board to consider the relationship between increasing the cost of the local authority leisure facilities to residents and the potential impact on health inequalities in the borough. The Board was also asked to consider if it wished to subsidise leisure activities for certain groups in the borough. Options for how this could be implemented were outlined in the report together with a request from Halton Walking Football Club.

As health is the number one priority for Halton it was proposed that a temporary subsidy be put in place as stated in the report to allow existing groups to continue to be active but with the following recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) as being active is a key factor to promoting health and wellbeing in the borough the full subsidy amount should be allocated by contribution from Public Health;
- 2) to ensure fairness and consistency all groups who meet the criteria as set out in the report will receive a standardised 50 per cent discount; and
- 3) the Portfolio Holder for Employment Learning, Skills and Community Portfolio Holder be regularly updated on the status of discussions with the groups in receipt of the subsidy and the nature of support being provided by Sports Development. This ensures transparency and accountability whilst tracking progress toward the goal of enabling groups to become self-sustaining.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Local Economy Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director, Environment & Regeneration
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Presentation on Halton Business Investment & Growth Team
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Borough wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide a presentation to Members on the Business, Investment & Growth Team which will include an update on the UKSPF funded Business Support programme.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Policy and Performance Board receive and comment upon the verbal presentation.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Halton Business, Investment & Growth Team are currently delivering the UKSPF funded Halton Business Support Service which provides specialist support to Halton businesses. In addition the team are able to support local businesses with growth plans, property searches.
- 3.2 The Interim Regeneration & Business Growth Manager will provide a presentation outlining the range of current services offered to Halton businesses, progress on the delivery of the funded programmes and a view to post March-2026 when UKSPF funding comes to an end.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

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

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The programme is currently funded by UKSPF which runs to March 2026.

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

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

There are no implications associated with this report.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The team aims to support a range of activity designed to support companies to grow and create jobs which supports the local economy. The team also supports the councils inward investment activity, supporting development and providing growth opportunities for the economy.

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

There are no implications associated with this report.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

There are no implications associated with this report.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

There are no implications associated with this report.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The business support service supports the local community and voluntary groups to make a difference in Halton through support to CICs and social enterprises.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality or diversity issues directly associated with this report.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no implications associated with this report.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Local Economy Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director, Environment & Regeneration
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Presentation on Sci-Tech Daresbury
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Daresbury

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide a presentation to Members to update Sci-Tech Daresbury and local economic impact.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Policy and Performance Board receive and comment upon the verbal presentation.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Sci-Tech Daresbury Joint Venture was established in 2010 as a partnership with the Science & Technology Facilities Council (Daresbury Labs) and Langtree Property Partners. The campus is an Enterprise Zone and in 2024 became part of the Liverpool City Region Health & Life Sciences Investment Zone.
- 3.2 Members will receive a verbal presentation from the Interim Regeneration & Business Growth Manager on the Sci-Tech Daresbury campus, companies and impact.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

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

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

**6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

There are no implications associated with this report.



**6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

Sci-Tech Daresbury is home to over 150 companies. There are currently around 2,000 jobs and an ambition to grow to 10,000 jobs over the life of the masterplan. The campus is home to UK Research & Innovation's only northern laboratory with a number of the research councils and Innovate UK based there. Hartree National Centre for Digital Innovation was established at Daresbury.

**6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

There are no implications associated with this report.

**6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

There are no implications associated with this report.

**6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

There are no implications associated with this report.

**6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

Sci-Tech Daresbury has an established charity partnership as well as a range of public engagement activity that looks to support the local community and voluntary groups to make a difference in Halton

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality or diversity issues associated with this report.

**9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no implications associated with this report.

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

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Local Economy Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Employment Learning, Skills and Community
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Halton Adult Learning – The Creative Curriculum in 24/25
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the new creative curriculum delivered in 24/25 by Halton Adult Learning.
- 1.2 To provide Members with a summary of the impact of creative courses in the academic year 24/25.
- 1.3 To provide opportunities for Members to raise any questions with regards to the curriculum intent and its alignment with the local skills context.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Background Information**

Funded through the Liverpool City Region's Adult Skills Fund, Halton Adult Learning delivers a range of accredited and non-accredited courses in Runcorn and Widnes which aim not only to improve residents' lives but also address the skills gaps in the borough and across the LCR. The service also delivers Family Learning in schools across Halton, and co-ordinates the Pathways to Teaching programme on behalf of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. In the academic year 24/25, the service recruited a number of new teaching staff, enabling further curriculum development including creative courses in Art & Design, Craft and Creative Writing.

- 3.2 The curriculum intent behind the inclusion of creative courses is that whilst completing programmes in Arts, Craft and Writing, learners develop core transferable skills that prepare them for their next steps, whether that be further training, personal progress or paid employment. Tutors worked closely with managers to design

programmes that would allow holistic development of literacy, teamwork, communication and presentation skills, self-reflection and confidence.

### 3.3 **Accreditations**

Within the creative curriculum, learners have been able to access tailored learning aims (workshops / courses) with no qualifications attached. These programmes are open and accessible to all, however tutors must evidence tangible skills development within the learner journey. In addition, careful curriculum development ensured that substantial qualifications were embedded into the core offer to allow learners the opportunity to access accredited provision should this be appropriate for them. In 24/25, this included Certificates in Art and Design, Awards in Creative Craft and Awards in Progression.

3.4 Accredited programmes accounted for £34,509 of Adult Skills funding drawn down in 24/25.

### 3.5 **Progression**

The introduction of new creative courses proved to be extremely popular, with 364 enrolments in 24/25. Many learners did multiple courses, and with encouragement and guidance from their tutors, 39 learners progressed onto accredited courses where they were able to achieve qualifications.

### 3.6 **Test & Learn programmes**

A proportion of the service's annual funding is ringfenced for 'Test & Learn' projects, which afford the service the opportunity to deliver innovative projects in line with local need. In 23/24, the service offered Test and Learn courses in Creative Writing (Short Stories, Write Your Own Children's stories), designed to support with adult literacy and communication skills. These programmes proved extremely popular, and in 24/25, these courses were mainstreamed into core ASF provision. Furthermore, an additional Creative Writing Course (Write Your Own Memoir) was delivered through Test & Learn in 24/25, to support learners in continuing to develop their reading, writing and communication skills.

### 3.7 **Performance/achievement in Creative Areas**

Enrolment numbers for creative courses at Halton Adult Learning in 24/25 were:

Subject Area	Enrolments 24/25	Courses
Art	241	29
Sewing	30	4
Creative Writing	93	10
Total	364	43

**3.8 Retention & Achievement**

Achievement overall across creative arts was 80%. This includes data for those that withdrew from courses – for those that remained on programme the achievement rate was over 99%.

3.9 Retention across creative courses, therefore, was 80%, which is under the service tolerance of 90%. To address this, additional Information, Advice and Guidance processes have been built into the learner recruitment and onboarding process for 25/26, with learners meeting their course tutors prior to enrolment to ensure they have a clear understanding of the expectations of their programme of study (for example, learners on the Level 1 Certificate in Art & Design stated that they hadn't realised how much written coursework was required on the course). Reducing withdrawals will maximise funding and reduce wasted costs in enrolment and data processes.

**3.10 Funding and Reconciliation**

The service achieved over 97% of its funding target in 24/25, compared with 91% in 23/24. Creative courses account for £274,349 out of the overall £734,378.79 (over 37%) of funding drawn down.

3.11 Income and expenditure are closely monitored through a combination of internal and external mechanisms, to ensure that contracts are delivered efficiently. This includes termly scrutiny of performance on profile through Quality, Income and Marketing meetings and Review meetings with the service's Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Relationship Manager.

3.12 Where possible, funding streams are maximised to support the delivery of the service. For example, the service utilised its learner discretionary support fund to maintain the service's Warm Hub which offered hot drinks and snacks to learners attending classes in both of its centres. In addition, the service utilises this fund to pay for childcare and travel costs to remove as many barriers to learning as possible. On creative courses, training materials were free for learners, and the service was able to pay for travel to Hazlehurst Studios with Halton Community Transport.

**3.13 Key Successes.**

364 out of 1585 (22%) total enrolments in the last year were on creative courses. It is recognised that the introduction of the creative curriculum has contributed significantly to the service achieving 97% of its funding target.

3.14 The service held a successful Art Exhibition and Open Day in July 2025 with over 100 visitors to Kingsway Learning Centre. Learners exhibited their own work and provided information, advice and guidance to prospective new learners

- 3.15 The service continued to develop its curriculum offer to deliver tangible outcomes for learners. For example, learners on Creative Writing programmes became self-published authors and began to sell their products through online stores; Creative Enterprise learners received tuition on how to establish themselves as self-employed.
- 3.16 Additionally, creative courses have had a demonstrable impact on learners' self-belief and confidence:
- 3.17 'Amazing, I love the atmosphere, the teachers. Everyone is very nice and helpful. I'm very thankful that the childcare costs are covered, I wouldn't be able to do the course otherwise. It's really nice to get out of the house and meet new people.' (Creative Writing)
- 3.18 'I enjoy these courses for my mental health and wellbeing. It's a very friendly and relaxed place at Acorn Learning centre.' (Level 2 Story Sacks)
- 3.19 '[My course is] Very good for wellbeing and learning new skills with fantastic support and advice. Very friendly and welcoming staff.' (Level 1 Art & Design)
- 3.20 Managers in the service have worked hard to foster collaboration across other Council services and organisations across the borough, to raise the profile of Adult Learning but also to expose Adult Learners to the culture and opportunities on their doorstep – these have included designing and creating a mural at Widnes Library, and trips to Hazlehurst Studios and the Dukesfield murals.
- 3.21 **Next Steps**  
Collaboration across Halton has continued into the summer break, with Art learners designing and creating a mural in St Mary's Primary School in Runcorn. Managers are keen to explore new ways to collaborate with other Council services and organisations within the borough.
- 3.22 Curriculum development for 25/26 has taken into account the specific needs of the learners on Creative Courses. Progression pathways have been mapped out to ensure that learners can continue to progress through qualification levels with the support of their tutors. Halton Adult Learning's creative curriculum continues to broaden, with brand new Drama courses launching in September 2025.
- 3.23 Across the service, but in particular on creative courses, tutors have identified learners that they feel have the skills and attributes to support their peers and become mentors for the Adult Learning

Service. Therefore, the service's Test & Learn funded Mentoring Programme will launch in Autumn term.

**3.24 Concluding comments**

Creative programmes remain a core part of the Adult Learning curriculum. Enrolments for 25/26 commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025. To date (up to and including 20<sup>th</sup> August), the service had enrolled 394 adult learners which exceeds the total enrolments for Autumn term in the previous academic year (271). Of these 394 enrolments, 148 (37.6%) were for creative courses.

- 3.25 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority are committed to supporting Adult Learning in sustaining its support of Halton Residents and helping them to improve their lives. Through regular review and robust monitoring, the CA and Halton Adult Learning seek to continue to provide residents with the opportunity to access new learning opportunities that will provide them with the transferable skills they need for their next steps, whether that be improved personal circumstances, further learning or paid employment.

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None identified at this stage

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Halton Borough Council's Adult Learning Service is 100% externally funded. The service must achieve 100% of its expected delivery outputs to prevent reconciliation and to be able to sustain the Service. As the service only achieved 97% of its target this year, the reconciliation is anticipated to be around £20,000 this year. The Combined Authority recognises the continued progress made by the service and has not reduced the overall allocation for 25/26.

**6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S**

**6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

Halton Adult Learning's Creative curriculum has a demonstrative effect on learners' wellbeing, with one learner stating that their Art & Design course was 'like a candle in the dark'.

Learners have explored ways to monetise their talents, setting up Amazon accounts to sell their published stories, and taking commissions for craft projects. Learners writing memoirs found the process to be cathartic and empowering; learners undertaking 'Mindfulness Mondays' and 'After Work Art' found the courses invaluable to their mental health and ability to relax away from their stressful lives.

**6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The service continues to offer learning programmes and opportunities that reflect the needs of the residents in the borough and the local skills needs.

**6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

Many of the skills developed on creative courses at Adult Learning seek to address skills gaps in adults that have a direct impact on children, grandchildren and other family members. Learners created story sacks to support storytelling and promote shared reading, parents and grandparents wrote stories dedicated to their children and grandchildren, often featuring their family members as characters to further engage young people with reading.

**6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

Halton Adult Learning are committed to empowering its residents and providing new opportunities for those in need. Adult Learning programmes in 24/25 were free for those earning under £33,958.60, and the curriculum designed in a way that provided opportunities to develop cultural capital – for example studying others' published writing, artist's pieces and visiting educational attractions. Though the Adult Skills Fund Learner Support Funding the service was able to fund transport, childcare and Warm Hub (food and drink) supplies to those in need to ensure barriers to learning were removed wherever possible.

**6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

Sustainable materials were utilised where possible. For example, learners on sewing courses were encouraged to bring in pre-loved pieces from home to re-use the material instead of purchasing new.

**6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

Through curriculum design and development, appreciation for the borough and community was embedded into the delivery of courses. The service offered creative sessions during World Refugee Week to promote social cohesion and a sense of belonging. Learners visited local landmarks such as the Dukesfield murals and designed and created a new mural at Widnes Library.

**7.0 Risk Analysis**

7.1 The management of the Adult Learning service has been meticulous and close monitoring both internally and externally ensures any risks identified are carefully mitigated, with clear action plans in place to address any underperformance, quality and compliance factors.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None

**9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

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

‘None under the meaning of the Act.’



**REPORT TO:** Local Economy Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration

**PORTFOLIO:** Employment Learning Skills & Community

**SUBJECT:** Performance Management Reports for Quarter 1 of 2025/26

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the first quarter period to 30th June 2025.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2025-26 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Employment Learning and Skills
  - Community and Environment

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

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Policy & Performance Board:**

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

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

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

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

- 6.1 All Key Performance Indicators relate directly to the following Council's priorities:

- Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence
- Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy
- Supporting Children, Young People and Families
- Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
- Working Towards a Greener Future
- Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 At the time at which Annual Business Plans are developed Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 None identified.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 None identified.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

## Local Economy – Priority Based Monitoring Report Q1

Reporting Period: 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June

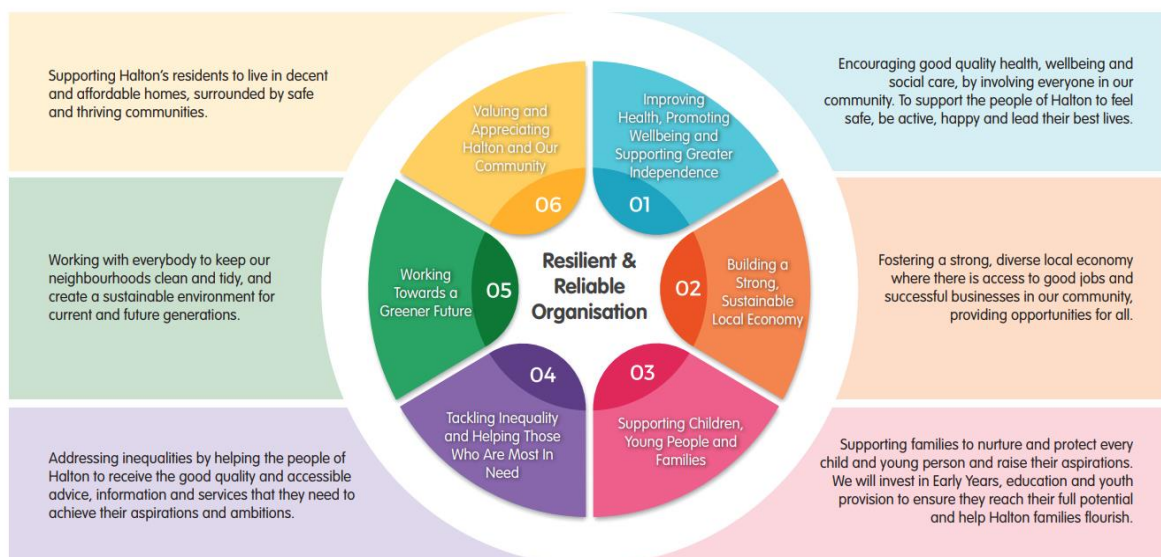
### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the first quarter of 2025 / 26 for service areas within the remit of the Local Economy Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2025 - 26 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Local Economy Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.3
- Employment, Learning and Skills
  - Library Services and other Culture & Leisure Services
- 1.4 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 5 of this report.
- 1.5 Corporate Priorities



**Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029**  
**Our Community, Our Priorities, Our Future**

**Plan on a Page**



## 2.0 High Priority Equality Actions

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

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


## 3.0 Performance Overview




The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.

### Employment, Learning & Skills

#### Key Objectives / milestones




<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need. <b>Employment, Learning &amp; Skills</b>
<b>ERD 08</b>	<b>To promote access to learning to those who need it most and create employment opportunities for Halton residents</b>

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Progress Q1</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
Deliver six accredited ESOL and two Pre-ESOL courses across Widnes and Runcorn to help our BAME residents improve their English skills between 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 and 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025		Achieved – successfully delivery of six accredited ESOL courses and launched a new conversation club for over 30 residents.

Percentage of people engaged in Learning from most deprived areas increased from 29% to 48% by July 2025.		39.8% of Adult Learners in the 24/25 academic year were from targeted wards – those identified as having a higher proportion of economically inactive residents. Whilst this has increased by over 10% (and has increased from 37.4% since Q4 in 24/25), the service has not met its target
The % of residents accessing Halton Adult Learning courses and achieving will increase from 88% to 92% between 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 and July 2025.		Achievement rates: Tailored – 98.7%, ASF – 80%, Overall – 92.5%  Significant improvement in Adult Skills Funded (ASF) areas (accredited, qualification based) this academic year, with more certificate claims to be processed over the summer break.
330 residents who access HPIJ employment programmes to obtain employment between April 2025 – March 2026.		72 residents were supported into work through HPIJ employment programmes in Q1. There were more job starts; however, we are awaiting evidence from employers for audit. Therefore, on target to achieve by end of Q4.








**Library Services and Other Culture & Leisure Services**





<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. <b>Leisure Services</b>
<b>ERD 21</b>	<b>Community Assets – Capital Investment Projects</b>

Milestone:	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
<b>Brindley Enhancement</b> completion Summer 2026.  A soft launch of the building extension will take place in Spring 2026. This will include the transition of the Library including the full fit out.  The completion of Brindley Green will follow by Summer 2026, along with the formal opening of Building and Green.	  	This is on target. Steelwork is up and external works are continuing. The building footprint is now taking shape.  Planning permission has been granted for the Brindley Green, to incorporate St Paul's Mews area.
<b>Runcorn Leisure Centre</b> options report on provision by autumn 2025 to Executive Board.		This is on target, subject to resource capacity.



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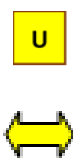
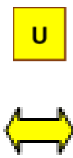


<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need.  <b>Leisure Services</b>
<b>ERD 22</b>	<b>Increase footfall at the Leisure Centres</b>

<b>Milestone:</b>	<b>Progress Q1</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
% of memberships at Brookvale Recreation Centre (only)	 	Brookvale – Q1 saw a <b>2%</b> increase in members compared to previous quarter. This is attributed to an increase in learn to swim members.
Footfall at Brookvale Leisure Centre  Annual Target 210,000 for 25/26	 <b>N / A</b>	Recorded footfall in Q1 <b>19,959</b> , however the centre has experienced technical difficulties in the attendance capture hence, this figure is significantly reduced and a not a true reflection of usage.
% memberships for Halton Leisure Centre (which incorporates access to Brookvale Recreation Centre)	 	Halton Leisure Centre - Q1 <b>33%</b> increase in members (including learn to swim) compared to previous quarter (noting HLC opened midway through Q4).  Halton Leisure Centre – <b>122%</b> increase in fitness memberships (excludes learn to swim) compared to Kingsway final figure.
Footfall at Halton Leisure Centre  Annual target to be determined after one full operating year	 	Footfall in Q1 <b>68,128</b>  This figure is significantly below the actual visits however significantly increased from previous operating year. This does not include tours and visits, in addition the centre management system has experienced glitches with the access gates initially recognising bar codes and causing delays upon entrance hence, some teething issues with the new system has impacted full capture.


<p>Number of community classes at Frank Myler</p> <p>Target to deliver 1000 annually</p>	 	<p>Q1 total is <b>307</b>, 250 community accessible indoor classes and 57 bookings for the multi-use games area (MUGA).</p> <p>Grass pitch bookings during the quarter: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 days</li> <li>• 6 evenings.</li> </ul> <p>The Health Improvement Team continue to provide a falls prevention service weekly on a Monday.</p> <p>Other activity in the quarter: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 holiday activity camps</li> <li>• 1 walk leader training session</li> <li>• 2 learn to cycle scheme sessions on the car park</li> </ul>
<p>Annual target 65% of service budget recovery for 25/26</p>	 	<p><b>49.83%</b> in Q1, 62.48% was the total end of previous year position. The new leisure centre has seen increased usage and memberships however, full (actual) operating costs are yet to be understood. The anticipation is this will be more meaningful by mid-year.</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<p>Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.</p> <p>Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy.</p> <p>Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families.</p> <p>Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need.</p> <p><b>Leisure Services</b></p>
<b>ERD 23</b>	<b>Increase footfall at the Brindley</b>




<b>Milestone:</b>	<b>Progress Q1</b>	<b>Supporting Commentary</b>
<p>Total number of tickets sold this quarter, including the cumulative in year quarter total.</p> <p>Annual target for 25/26 75,000 (18,750 per quarter)</p>	 	<p><b>15,727</b> tickets sold in Q1</p> <p>The enhancement works disruption, and the temporary access entrance were anticipated to affect attendances/performances throughout the period of construction.</p>

Total number of Theatre & Studio bookings this quarter.		Total of <b>84</b> bookings (available over 7 days a week) for theatre and studio in Q1, out of 170 available; this is related to large scale construction works and the significant impact for the Studio space
<b>Theatre</b> bookings this quarter of total % availability		<b>78%</b> achieved in Q1, 11 x theatre cancellations (dates not re-programmed due to construction works)
<b>Studio</b> bookings this quarter of total % availability		<b>21%</b> achieved in Q1, 18 bookings out of 85 available and 4 studio cancellations (with dates not re-programmed due to construction works)
75% of service budget recovery in 25/26		<b>118.5%</b> in this quarter presenting an over achievement on forecast; the ongoing construction work has impacted in previous quarters with last year's annual figure at 73.22%








<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need.  <b>Leisure Services</b>
<b>ERD 24</b>	<b>Increase footfall and e-access at the Libraries</b>

Milestone:	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
Footfall for all libraries – Ditton, Widnes, Runcorn and Halton Lea.  Quarterly target 70,000  Annual target 280,000		<b>Q1 total 66,623 (total library footfall across 4 sites)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Runcorn = 5,062</li> <li>• HLE = 24,252</li> <li>• Widnes = 33,459</li> <li>• Ditton = 3,850</li> </ul> Q2 usually has higher footfall, still aiming to achieve annual target.



<p>Total number of e-library digital <i>issues</i></p> <p>Quarterly target 1m</p> <p>Annual target 4m</p>	<p></p>	<p><b>Q1 total 993,020</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ebook issues = 3,157</li> <li>Eaudio issues = 8,107</li> <li>Pressreader articles = 887,793</li> <li>Ancestry = 1,777</li> <li>Picture Halton = 92,186</li> </ul> <p>The trend in the Library service is e-issues tend to be lower in Q1 which has been experienced in recent operating years, anticipate achieving annual target.</p>
<p>Library book borrowing per site – Ditton, Widnes, Runcorn and Halton Lea</p> <p>Quarterly Target 50,000</p> <p>Annual Target 200,000</p>	<p></p>	<p><b>Q1 total 44,068</b></p> <p>Ditton = 3,628 Halton Lea = 18,307 Runcorn = 4,201 Widnes = 17,932</p> <p>Target in Q1 not met; relocation of Runcorn library may be a contributory factor. A new KPI hence, comparator position will be demonstrated moving forward.</p>
<p>Number of attendances at Library events, both adults and children</p> <p>Annual Target 25,720</p>	<p></p>	<p><b>Q1 total 6,430;</b> 2,821 children plus 3,609 adults attending a range of events i.e. rhyme time, story time, reading groups, IT clinics, Lego, dungeons &amp; dragons, family history, coffee mornings, men's shed, crafting and themed events etc; the Library service offers a wide range of activities and ways to connect.</p>

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<p>Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence.</p> <p>Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy.</p> <p>Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families.</p> <p>Priority Four – Tackling Inequality and Helping those who are most in need.</p> <p><b>Community Centres</b></p>
<b>ERD 25</b>	<b>Increase footfall at the Community Centres to demonstrate levels of usage and demand for the Council's community assets.</b>

Milestone:	Progress Q1	Supporting Commentary
<p>Monitor the number of users in attendance at the Community Centres (including drop-ins, events and hires).</p> <p>Quarterly Target 55,000 Annual Target 238,000</p>	  	<p><b>Q1 total 69,716</b></p> <p>Castlefields 10,298 Ditton 12,812 Grangeway 15,580 Murdishaw 8,987 Upton 22,039</p> <p>Numbers have increased this quarter and exceeded the quarterly target. New installation of counters at the main entrances of community centres is providing accurate data.</p>
<p>Community room / hall hires</p> <p>Quarterly Target 2175 Annual Target 8,700</p>	  	<p><b>Q1 total hires 2,501</b></p> <p>Castlefields 398 Ditton 561 Grangeway 503 Murdishaw 475 Upton 564</p> <p>All Centres are performing well for this time of the year with the bookings as expected. However, Q2 figures are anticipated to decrease due to sessions cancelling for the summer holidays.</p>
<p>Community Centres - Total number of centre organised events</p> <p>Quarterly Target 30 Annual Target 120</p>	  	<p><b>Q1 total 33</b></p> <p>The bingo sessions continue to run at Castlefield's and Upton. Grangeway held a summer fayre in June and Upton held a pop-up shop event. All five centres held celebrations for VE/VJ Day.</p>
<p>% of service budget recovery</p>	  <p>N / A</p>	<p><b>16.49%</b> service budget recovery in quarter one, the end of previous year position was 27.11%; to be further considered in year as some income is completed annually.</p>

## 4.0 Financial Statements

### ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

#### Revenue Operational Budget at 31 May 25

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	4,124	773	710	63	376
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	85	(85)	(270)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,690	133	150	(17)	(98)
Premises	173	136	136	0	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	1,080	93	87	6	37
NNDR	659	629	629	0	0
Rents	157	0	0	0	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	88	0	0	0	0
Security	603	4	3	1	3
Supplies & Services	383	63	62	1	8
Supplies & Services - Grant	576	97	97	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	72	11	12	(1)	(1)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,605</b>	<b>1,939</b>	<b>1,971</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-561	-103	-103	0	0
Rent - Commercial Properties	-883	-158	-158	0	0
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-8	-8	0	0
Government Grant	-594	-55	-55	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-120	-241	-241	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-55	0	0	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-454	0	0	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-602	-522	-522	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-3,307</b>	<b>-1,087</b>	<b>-1,087</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,298</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	2,738	456	456	0	0
Transport	26	5	5	0	0
Central Support	2,878	480	480	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-9,342	-1,557	-1,557	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-3,696</b>	<b>-616</b>	<b>-616</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>2,602</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>55</b>

#### Comments on the above figures

Finance communicates with the department on a regular basis to manage and analyse spending, identifying potential savings that could support current and future priorities. In an era of constrained budgets, achieving these goals is essential. The report forecasts that the department will be under the approved budget by £0.055m at year-end.

### **Supporting Information**

Through diligent account monitoring, the success of utilising grant and external funding to alleviate pressure on the core budget is evident in employee expenses. Specific projects have been identified, and staff time has been allocated accordingly. Ensuring at all times that the department is compliant with the grant conditions. This approach will continue throughout the year.

To fulfil statutory and contractual obligations and support the borough's regeneration, maintaining a complete staff establishment is essential. However, the challenge of filling surveyor and project manager roles, even with a market supplement, continues to result in a lack of suitable candidates. Consequently, the engagement of agency personnel has been necessary, anticipated to cost £0.270m this financial year. Without these personnel, the borough's regeneration efforts would be hindered, potentially leading to a loss of business rates and council tax. Where possible, these costs are reimbursed through capital and external funding grants.

The recruitment of agency staff has increased commercial rental income by enabling the completion of pending rent reviews. All units at The Hive are now tenanted, which should result in this income budget being balanced for 25/26 providing there is no increase in inflation.

The costs associated with empty properties within the borough continue to be a budget pressure. In addition to the loss of rental income whilst the properties remain vacant, the department incurs additional costs for utilities, repairs, and maintenance. As of the end of May costs are £0.121m, although this does include annual NNDR charges so spend should not continue quite at this level. To reduce the expense, actions need to be taken to accelerate the leasing or explore temporary uses for properties, such as short-term rentals or community projects, which will generate some income and reduce costs. Some properties are in poor condition and require refurbishment before any letting could be considered.

Although the department has seen a significant increase in energy costs over the last few years, the department is forecasting that it will be £0.037m under budget by year-end.

The Repairs and Maintenance program is under continuous review to ensure it stays within budget. This financial year is particularly challenging because the 2025/26 budget did not include an inflation adjustment. An exercise was conducted with the service to distinguish between capital and revenue expenditures, and the budgets have been adjusted accordingly. Despite these adjustments, revenue expenditure is projected to exceed the budget by £0.098m by the end of the year.

### **Approved 2025/26 Savings**

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in March 25.

## ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

## APPENDIX A

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Asset Management		Accelerate the lease or sale of surplus land, non-operational buildings, surplus space within building, etc. to either generate lease rentals or capital receipts to help fund capital schemes and thereby reduce future capital financing costs.	0	100	U	It is currently too early to establish if this can be achieved. Although all options will be explored.

**Capital Budget at 31 May 25**

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	31 May Actual Spend £000	31 July Forecast Spend £000	30 Sept Forecast Spend £000	30 Nov Forecast Spend £000	31 Jan Forecast Spend £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000
Equality Act Improvement Works	300.0	303.5	0.0	75.0	75.0	76.0	77.5	303.5
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2,639.5	3,381.3	470.8	80.8	200.0	248.4	2,000.0	3,381.3
Property Improvements	200.0	231.1	33.7	39.4	39.4	39.4	39.4	231.1
Town Deal	7,190.4	10,091.0	1,384.0	500.0	3,000.0	1,153.2	500.0	10,091.0
Port of Weston	3,940.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	2,200.0	0	0	0	0	0	2,200.0
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	0.0	82.0	0	0	0	0	0	82.0
Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition	0.0	708.0	11	139.4	558.0	0.0	0.0	708.0
Changing Places	0.0	17.0	0	17	0	0	0	17.0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	0.0	101.2	0	10	30	30	31.2	101.2
<b>Total Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property</b>	<b>16,469.9</b>	<b>17,115.1</b>	<b>1,899.3</b>	<b>166.4</b>	<b>588.0</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>17,115.1</b>

**Comments on above figures****Foundry Lane**

Work has commenced on site.

### **Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet**

Project Violet is currently being reviewed and a full business case is in development. The programme anticipates a procurement exercise and the revised delivery programme proposes a 26 month build with construction commencing in August 2025 and completion in Q4 2026.

### **Property Improvements-**

Various works undertaken as and when required.

### **Changing Places**

Works complete, retention monies left to pay.

### **Town Deal**

Although at different stages work is progressing with all Town Deal funded projects.

1. The Brindley extension started on site August 2024, with the new drainage in place, foundation put down, steelwork up and new floors put in.
2. The youth centre -part of the Creative and Digital Skill centre - started September 2024, with the new build now well advanced including all external facades, and most steelwork in the wintergarden in place.
3. The Health Hub started work on site April 2025, after the library vacated to temporary location. The steelwork for the mezzanine is up, following installation of drainage.
4. The Runcorn Street art was delivered in May 2025.
5. The construction of the Temple Hall started March 2025, with foundation now complete.
6. The construction of two canal trip boats is underway at a boatyard in Liverpool.
7. The over 55s apartment block under construction at High Street is now receiving doors and windows, and external insulation.
8. Design work progresses on the remaining projects.

### **Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition**

The demolition works commenced in Spring 2025, following relocation of the Leisure Centre and period of decommissioning of the building.

### **Port of Weston**

This scheme is no longer going ahead.

### **UKSPF**

New reduced allocation for 25/26 which is for town centre improvements.

## COMMUNITY AND GREENSPACES DEPARTMENT

**Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2025**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	15,296	2,506	2,410	96	580
Agency - in addition to establishment	16	16	69	(53)	(237)
Premises	3,304	416	440	(24)	(139)
Supplies & Services	3,101	258	287	(29)	(176)
Transport	117	2	4	(2)	(10)
Other Agency Costs	240	63	81	(18)	(111)
Other Expenditure	172	0	0	0	6
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	0	0	0	(22)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	41	9	7	2	16
Transfers to Reserves	97	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>29,505</b>	<b>3,270</b>	<b>3,297</b>	<b>(27)</b>	<b>(93)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Sales Income	-1,342	-268	-275	7	42
Fees & Charges Income	-6,019	-1,524	-1,510	(14)	(89)
Rental Income	-1,111	-174	-159	(15)	(85)
Government Grant Income	-3,861	-1,288	-1,288	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-801	-115	-115	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-223	0	-18	18	155
Capital Salaries	-236	-6	0	(6)	(35)
Transfers From Reserves	-30	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-13,646</b>	<b>-3,375</b>	<b>-3,365</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(12)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>15,859</b>	<b>-105</b>	<b>-68</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(105)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	1,657	276	276	0	0
Transport	2,433	424	429	(5)	(29)
Central Support	4,297	716	716	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-843	-141	-141	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>7,743</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(29)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>23,602</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>1,212</b>	<b>(42)</b>	<b>(134)</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

Net spend against the Community and Greenspaces department is forecast to be £0.134m over the approved budget profile by the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

Employee spend continues to be an area providing underspend for the department into the new financial year, forecast spend being £0.580m under the approved budget profile. There continue to be vacancies held for restructures taking place contributing to the underspend. However, due to the nature of the services within this department, agency and service expenditure will also rise in order to facilitate the very visible services provided to the residents of Halton.

In previous years Waste Disposal Contracts have contributed to an underspend for the department, however, due to the rise in costs last year, it is unlikely to see an underspend going forward.

As the size of the contracts are very large, small percentage changes to the invoices can have significant impacts on the outturn position of the department and with invoices being received several periods after the costs are incurred, the outturn position may change throughout the year.




Estimated spend on premises costs is forecast to be £0.139m over budget in 2025/26. Premises costs have been built into the 2025/26 budget for Halton Leisure Centre, which did provide an underspend in the previous financial year. Higher stadium utility costs were offset from this and therefore will continue to be a budget pressure this year. There is more focus on internal services that can be provided (See £0.155m overachieved Internal Fees Income at outturn), and should this continue it can be utilised to offset the premises costs going forwards.

Supplies and Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.176m which is a budget pressure throughout the Department, and is primarily caused by inflationary cost increases of key goods and services over recent years. There is a risk if the Council were to contain these costs within the budget profile there would be a reduction in the service provided.

One of the key pressures within the 2025/26 financial year, as Halton Leisure Centre is a new site there is potential that it does/does not meet budgeted expectations and could have significant impacts on the outturn position.






## APPROVED BUDGET SAVINGS COMMUNITY AND GREENSPACES DEPARTMENT

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Stadium & Catering Services – School Meals	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over £200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.	12	0		School meals service has ceased and is reflected in the 25/26 budget.
Green Waste		Green Waste – increase green waste charges from £43 to £50 per annum, to bring Halton onto a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.	0	100		Green waste charges have been increased to £50.
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170		Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26
<b>Total Community &amp; Greenspace Dept</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>270</b>		




## 5.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

### Progress Symbols

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

### Direction of Travel Indicator

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

**REPORT TO:** Local Economy Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 15 September 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Finance Director

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Councilwide Spending as at 31 May 2025

**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue spending position as at 31 May 2025, together with the latest 2025/26 year-end outturn forecast. In addition, details of the 2024/25 year-end outturn position are also provided for information.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- (i) **The Council's overall spending position as at 31 May 2025 outlined in the Appendix, be noted.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 On 10 July 2025 the Executive Board received the report shown in the Appendix. This presented details of Councilwide revenue spending by each Department as at 31 May 2025 along with forecasts to year-end, and outlines the reasons for key variances between spending and budget.
- 3.2 Given the scale of the Council's current financial challenges, Executive Board requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information.
- 3.3 A Councilwide monitoring report is presented to Executive Board every two months and the attached report covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 May 2025. Given it is early in the financial year, the report focused solely upon revenue spending by each Department, however, subsequent reports will also include spending against the capital programme.
- 3.4 Within the report, Appendix 1 provides a Councilwide summary of revenue spending, while Appendix 2 presents details relating to each Department. In addition to spending as at 31 May 2025, the latest year-end forecasts of variances between revenue spending and budget are provided.
- 3.5 The Executive Board also received on 12 June 2025 a report of the 2024/25 Councilwide outturn, which can be accessed via the following link;  
<https://members.halton.gov.uk/documents/s79891/202425%20Spending%20as%20at%2031%20March%202025.pdf>

The final 2024/25 year-end outturn variances have been included in Appendix 1 below, by way of comparison to the current year's figures.

- 3.6 Appendix 3 indicates progress with implementation of previously approved budget savings for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Appendix 4 presents an update of the budget risk register.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

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

- 5.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
- 5.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
- 5.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
- 5.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
- 5.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**
- 5.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

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

#### **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 6.1 There are a number of financial risks within the budget. However, the Council has internal controls and processes in place to ensure that spending remains in line with budget as far as possible.
- 6.2 A budget risk register of significant financial risks is maintained and is included at Appendix 4 of the attached report.

#### **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 7.1 None.

#### **8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 None

#### **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072**

- 9.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act

**APPENDIX**

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 10 July 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Director of Finance

**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** 2025/26 Spending as at 31 May 2025

**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.2 To report the Council's overall revenue net spend position as at 31 May 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

**3.0 RECOMMENDED: That;**

- (ii) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 3;
- (iii) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to reduce the council wide forecast outturn overspend position;
- (iv) This report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board, in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION****Revenue Spending**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 31 May 2025 and Appendix 2 provides detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms, net Council spending as at 31 May 2025 is £1.073m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimates that net spending will be over budget by £6.185m if no corrective action is taken.
- 3.2 The forecast position is of great concern and action to reduce net spend must be taken immediately. Without action being taken the Council will not be in a position to provide a balanced budget by financial year-end and will further add to borrowings which will need to be taken through Exceptional Financial Support (EFS).

- 3.3 On 10 February 2025 Government issued a letter to the Council confirming it was minded to approve a capitalisation direction of a total not exceeding £52.8 million. The total is broken down by each financial year of the Council's request:
- £20.8 million in 2024-25.
  - £32 million in 2025-26.
- 3.4 Consistent with those councils that have previously sought Exceptional Financial Support, in order for Government to provide a final capitalisation direction, the council is required to undergo an external assurance review which will include, but will not be limited to, an assessment of the council's financial position and governance arrangements. It is expected this review will be undertaken later in the summer although no date has been fixed as of yet.
- 3.5 Council approved the annual budget of £183.052m on 05 March 2025, in doing so they agreed to the use of EFS totalling £29.385m. If no action is taken to reduce the forecast outturn position of £6.185m it will increase the level of EFS required for the current year to £35.570m, above the provisionally approved limit.
- 3.6 The cost of EFS is significant over the long term for the Council, for every £1m borrowing undertaken it is estimated will cost the Council approximately £100k over each of the next 20 years. It is imperative that action is taken now to reduce the level of planned spend over the remainder of the year and that approved saving proposals are implemented with immediate effect
- 3.7 The figures reflect a prudent yet realistic view of spend and income levels through to the end of the year. Work will continue to progress on updating the financial position as more information is made available.
- 3.8 In setting the 2025/26 budget Council approved significant levels of growth to ensure the budget was more relevant to the planned level of spend. Budget growth of £33.555m (22%) was added to the 2025/26 budget to bring the approved net budget to £183.052m. That the Council is still forecasting an overspend against the 2025/26 budget is a huge concern.
- 3.9 There are continued demand pressures on the budget which are above growth levels provided in the 2025/26 budget, these are more notable against adults community care and home to school transport. Levels of demand covering children in care appear to be under control for the first two months of the year, although still too high for an authority the size of Halton. Further information is provided within the report on the main budgetary pressure areas.
- 3.10 In setting the 2025/26 budget, inflation of 2% was provided for the pay award. Based on the initial 3.2% pay offer to Trade Unions it is now clear that budgetary growth for the pay award is insufficient, it is currently forecast the additional cost of the 3.2% pay offer will add approximately

£1m to the Council's running cost for the year. This additional cost is included within the reported forecast position for the year.

- 3.11 Another major factor in achieving a balanced budget position for the year is that all approved savings are fully achieved to the agreed levels. In total, savings of £7.225m were agreed for the current year, Appendix 3 provides detail on progress against the approved savings, it is clear significant work needs to be undertaken to ensure these are achieved. As per Appendix 3, savings have been RAG rated to inform on progress, high level summary of this is provided below.

Department	On-course to be achieved	Uncertain or too early to say	Highly likely or certain will not be achieved
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care	100	1,780	0
Finance	0	150	40
Legal	6	0	0
Children & Family Services	0	1,900	22
Education, Inclusion and Provision	0	300	0
Community and Greenspaces	282	0	0
Economy, Enterprise and Property	0	100	0
Planning & Transportation	0	0	100
Public Health	45	0	0
Corporate	0	2,400	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>6,630</b>	<b>162</b>

- 3.12 The use and cost of agency staff continues to be one of the main contributing factors to the overspend position for the year. This is mostly evident within the Children & Families Department and the Council's in-house Care Homes. Initiatives and support from the Transformation Programme are ongoing to reduce reliance upon agency staff.
- 3.13 Analysis of agency spend for the year to date, together with comparative analysis of 2024/25 costs, is included in the table below.

	2025/26		2024/25
	As at 31 May 2025		As at 31 March 2025
	£'000		£'000
Adult Social Care	955		6,035
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	130		810
Children & Family Services	574		5,220
Community & Greenspace	71		447
Economy, Enterprise & Property	60		417
Education, Inclusion & Provision	54		295
Finance	3		114
Legal & Democratic Services	63		881
Planning & Transportation	2		210
Public Health & Public Protection	0		22
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,912</b>		<b>14,451</b>

### Revenue - Operational Spending

3.14 Operational net spending for the first two months of the year is higher than the budget to date by £0.833m Based on current forecasts it is estimated net spend will be over budget for the year by £6.185m if no further corrective action is taken.

3.15 Within the overall budget forecast position for the period, the key budget pressure areas are as follows;

#### (i) **Children and Families Department**

The net departmental expenditure is estimated to be over budget profile at the end of financial year by £2.387m with the majority relating to social care services.

Growth budget of £12.1m and £3.9m of Children's Improvement Fund has been provided to the Children's and Families Department for financial year 2025/26. Unfortunately, this has not been sufficient to support the increasing costs across the service.

Although initial forecasts for financial year 2025/26 are showing a reduction in overspend of £6.047 compared to 2024/25 outturn, it's important to note that this is due to the increase in budget not the level of expenditure reducing in the service.

#### Employee Expenditure

Employee costs are forecast to be over budget profile by the end of financial year 2025/26 by £1.449m this is a similar level compared to the outturn for financial year 2024/25.

The level of agency has consistently reduced since October 2024 and is due to agency staff converting to Halton BC employees,



external recruitment and the employment of newly qualified social workers. The expectation is that agency will continue to reduce throughout the remainder of the year. Forecasts will be updated as and when changes are known.

Agency spend across the department remains high with spend totalling £0.574m.

One area of concern relates to the number of staff that remain in addition to the establishment (IATE). These are staff that are currently not allocated to an established role within their respective team. This figure currently stands at 9 across the service. Work should now be undertaken to reduce the level of staff that are in addition to the establishment if they do not form part of the redesign improvement plan.

### Supplies and Services

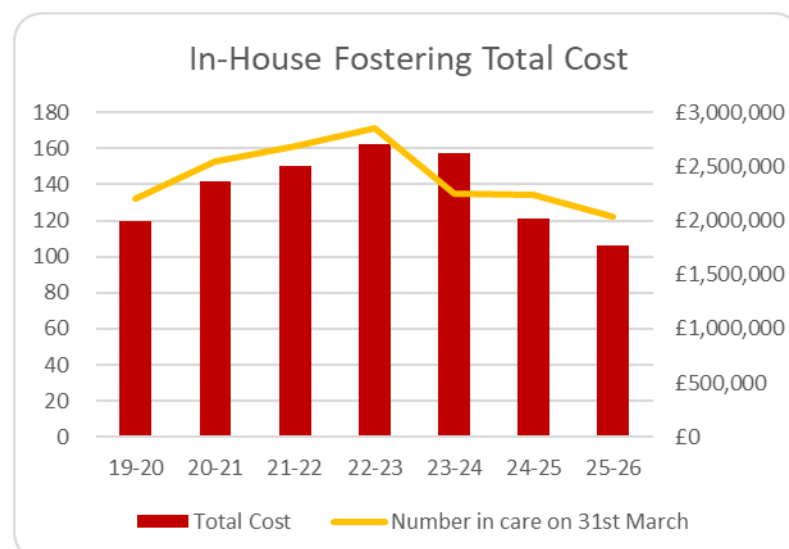
Supplies and services expenditure is forecast to be £1.057m over budget profile at the end of the financial year. Supplies and Services is diverse and covers a number of areas including nursery fees, consultancy, translation costs, equipment and support provided to young people.

A number of initiatives are being looked into to target specific areas of spend within supplies and services.

The creation of the Edge of Care and Family Time Teams should support the reduction of Supplies and Services expenditure. There is hope that particular tasks will no longer need to be outsourced which could result in the reduction in supplies and service.

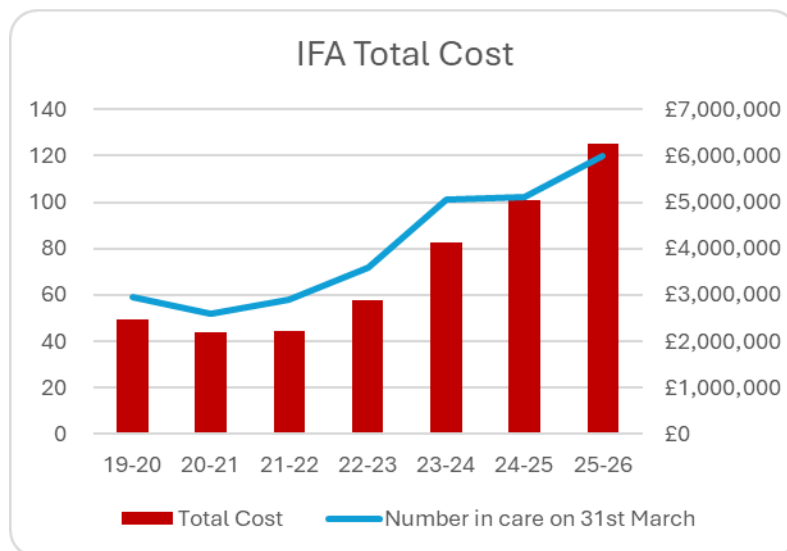
### Fostering

Inhouse fostering placements is estimated to be £0.515m under budget profile for financial year 2025/26.



Work continues to recruit and retain Halton's In-house foster carers, along with training to develop carers enabling them to accommodate more specialist placements. This therefore means that costs could increase. However, the ability to accommodate young people within in-house provision provides a substantial saving in comparison to Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) or residential care.

Increasing numbers of children in care and insufficient in-house fostering provision has meant increased reliance on Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA). Higher numbers of children placed within IFA provision and increased IFA rates has resulted in an estimated forecast overspend for the end of 2025/26 as £0.785m.



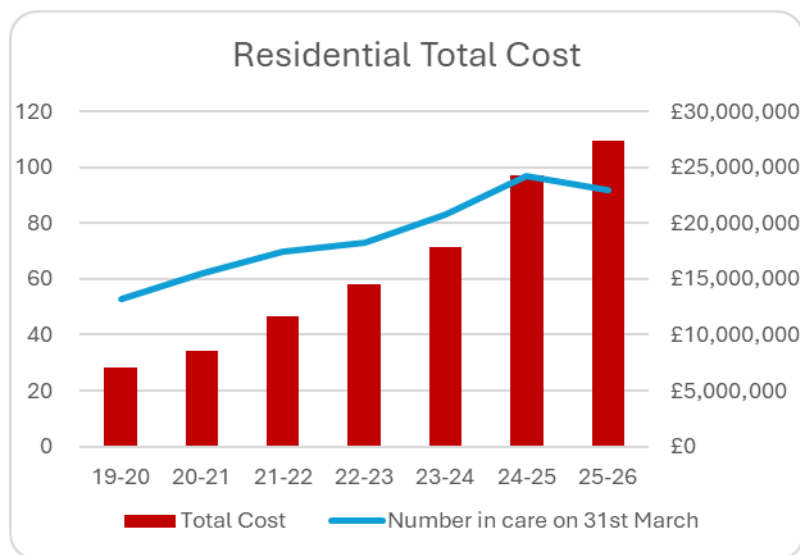
### Residential Care

Out of Borough Residential Care continues to be a budget pressure for the Children and Families Department as the costs of residential care have continue to rise year on year. The numbers of young people in residential placements remains high and the cost of placements is rising significantly year-on year.

Residential care costs are forecast to be under budget profile by £0.038m, although this is a significant reduction of £5.994m overspend compared to financial 2024/25, it's important to note that residential care budgets have been increased by more than £10m.

The level of forecast expenditure for residential care is £1.8m higher than the outturn spend for 2024/25.

The graph below illustrates the rising costs of residential care, for consistency this does not include the costs of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as these costs were not included previous years.



## (ii) **Adult Social Care Directorate**

### Community Care

The net spend position for the community care budget at the end of May 2025 is currently £0.502m over the available budget and the year end forecast shows net spend to be £2.627m over the annual budget.

This forecast is as things stand at the moment assuming no material changes, apart from increased demand of 4.9% and the agreed fee increase of 8% with care providers. However there is a risk that the forecast could be significantly more as the ICB carry out a formal “turnaround” reviewing all NHS spend which may impact on the community care budget and could result in more challenges to social care funding requests.

To mitigate this financial risk a number of actions are being considered for implementation to reduce costs and help bring spend back in line with budget. These are detailed below:

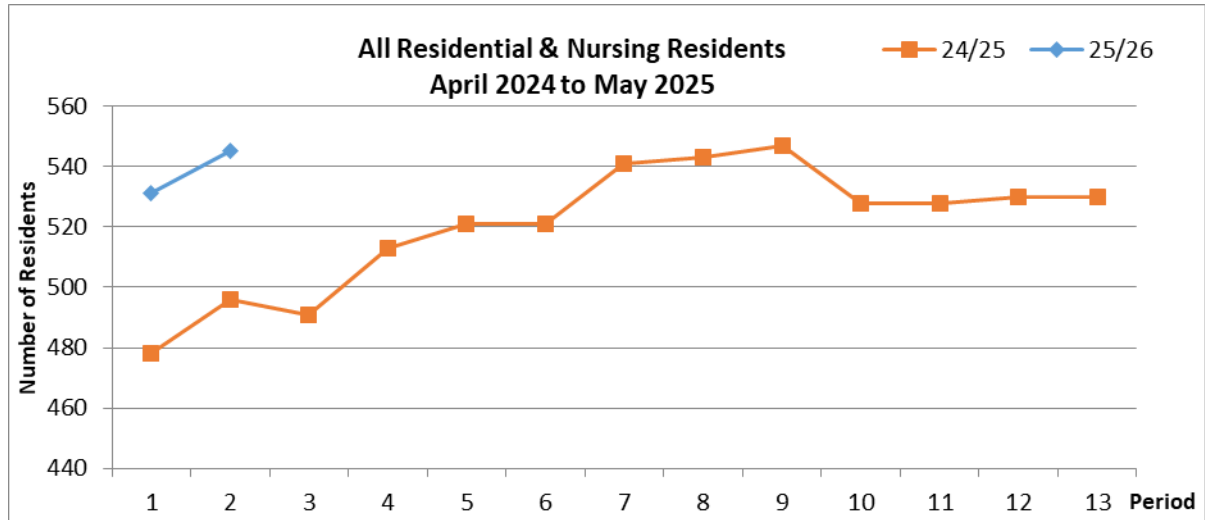
- Reduction of 1 to 1 packages of care if health’s responsibility
- Review 15 minutes packages of domiciliary care to identify medicine prompts which are health’s financial responsibility
- Ensure assessments carried out on discharge from hospital are complete and appropriate
- Maximise internal care home capacity

### Residential & Nursing Care

There are currently 545 residents in external residential/nursing care as at the end of May 2025 compared to 530 at the end of 2024/25, an increase of 2.8%. Compared to the 2024/25 average of 520 this is an increase of 4.8%. The average cost of a package

of care is currently £940.85 compared to £850.24 at the end of 2024/25 an increase of 10.6%. Supplementary invoice payments so far amount to £86k.

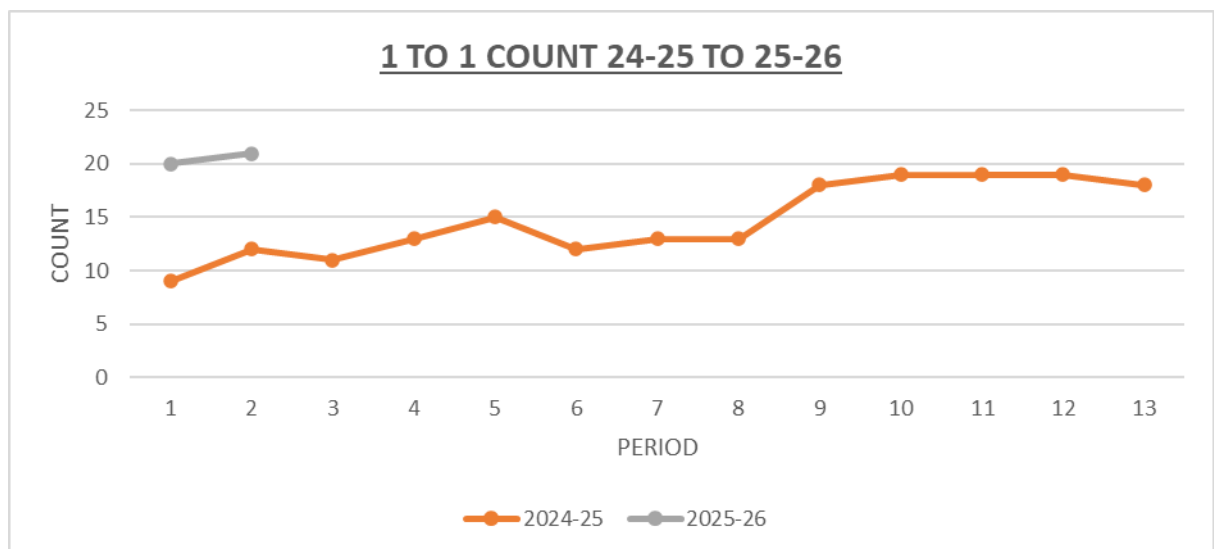
The graph below illustrates the demand for all residential and nursing placements.



### 1 to 1 Support In Care Homes

Payments for 1 to 1 support continue to exert pressure on the budget, due to increasing demand. This is generally to mitigate the risk from falls particularly on discharge from hospital. The full year cost for 2024/25 was £837,882.

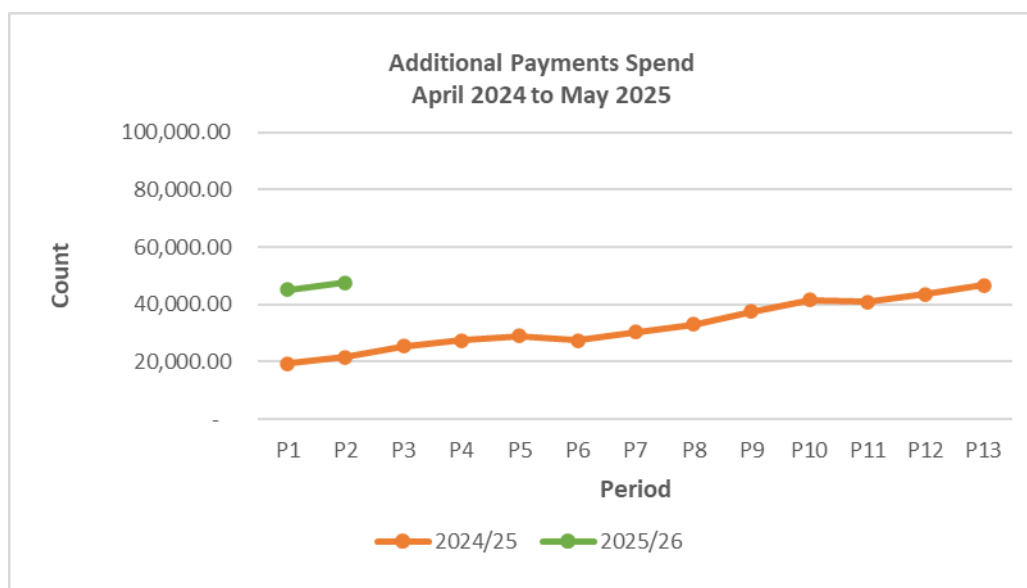
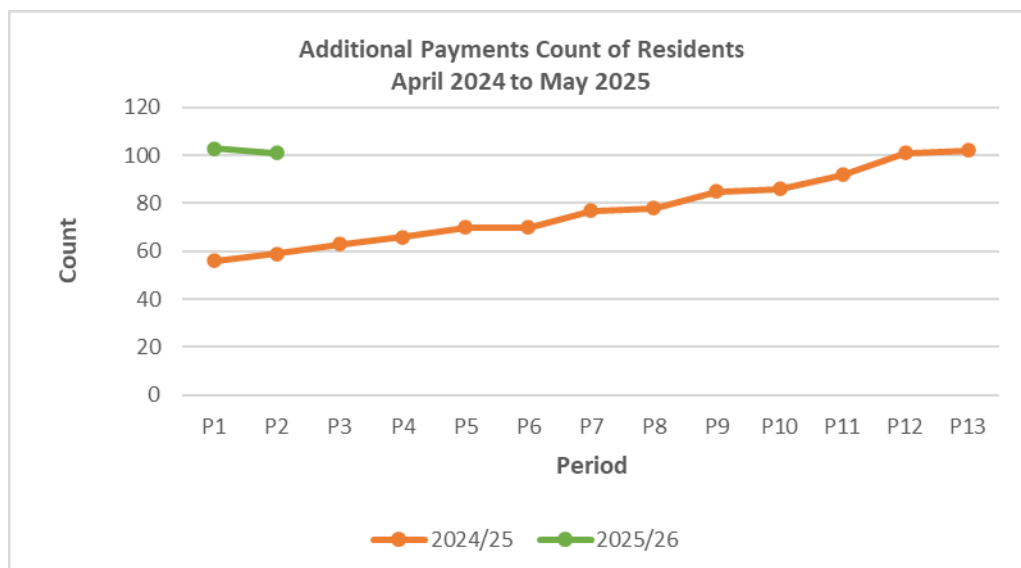
The graph below shows the count of service users receiving 1 to 1 care by period and clearly demonstrates an increase, particularly compared with the same period last year rising from 12 to 21. This is an increase of 75%.



### Additional Payments 2025/26

Additional payments to providers rose sharply throughout 2024/25, both in and out of the borough. These are where the care home charges an additional amount on top of the contracted bed rate. The cost of this for 2024/25 was £423,894.

The graph below illustrates the count of service users with an additional payment by period. This clearly shows a steady increase in numbers and costs for 24/25. The spend up to Period 2 2025/26 is £92,526.32. If numbers and costs remain the same (101) the forecast spend for the year will be approximately £0.615m.

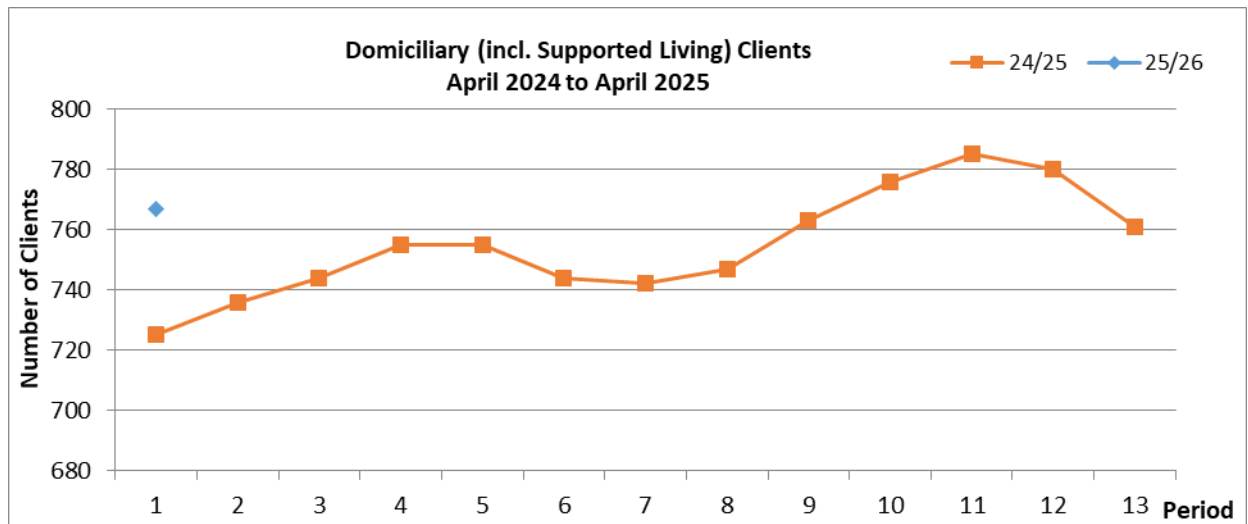


### Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

There are currently 767 service users receiving a package of care at home, compared to the average in 2024/25 of 754, an increase of 1.7%. However, compared with April 2024 the increase is

5.8%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £452.39 compared with £450.64 in 2024/25.

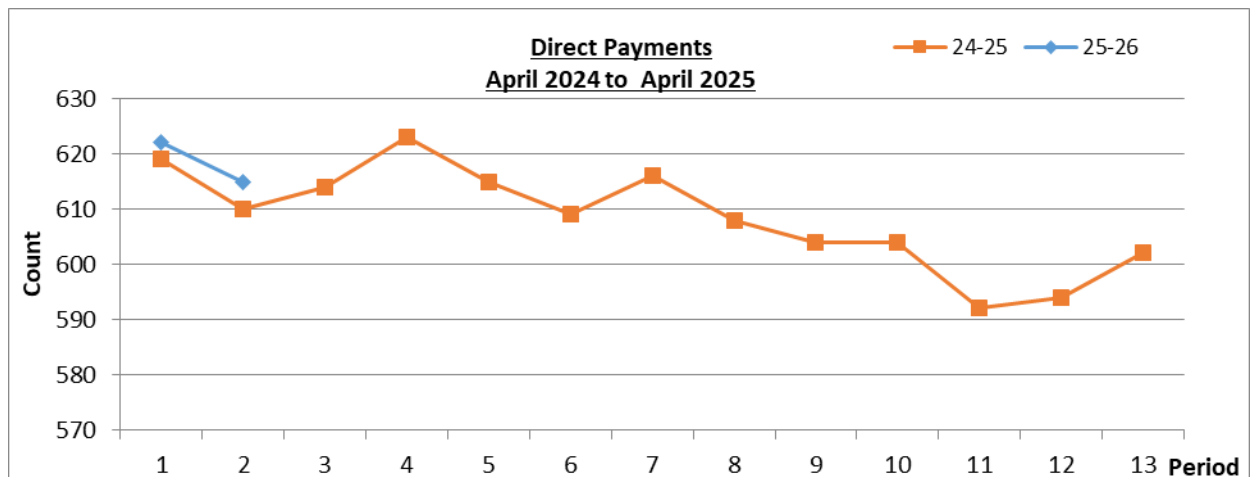
The graph below illustrates the demand for the service from April 2024 to April 2025.



### Direct Payments

The average number of clients who received a Direct Payment (DP) in Period 2 was 615 compared with 622 in Period 1, a decrease of 1.1%. The average cost of a package of care has also decreased from £571.26 to £511.50, a reduction of 10.46%.

The graph below shows movement throughout the year.



### Care Homes

Employee related expenditure is over budget profile at the end of May 2025 by £0.064M, with the expected outturn at the end of financial year being £0.517m over budget. Projections take into account agency spending patterns over the previous 3 financial

years, which consistently show increased spending patterns in the latter half of the financial year.

Recruitment of staff is a continued pressure across the care homes. There remains a high number of staff vacancies across the care homes. A proactive rolling recruitment exercise is ongoing within the care homes and is supported by HR.

Due to pressures with recruitment and retention in the sector, heavy reliance is being placed on overtime and expensive agency staff to support the care homes. At the end of May 2025 total agency spend across the care homes reached £0.585M, the cost of this has partially been offset by staff vacancies.

### (iii) Education, Inclusion and Provision

Schools Transport is the main budget pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. This is split into two main areas of SEN pupils attending In Borough and out of Borough Schools.

The table below illustrates the split between the two areas, and how each areas spend compares to the budget.

2025-26 as at May-25					
Area	Number of Users	Budget £000	Projected Spend £000	Variance £000	Average Cost per User
In Borough	484	1857	2066	(209)	£3,743.62
Out of Borough	145	1214	1612	(398)	£9,263.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>3071</b>	<b>3678</b>	<b>(607)</b>	

Note the above table excludes efficiency savings of £0.300m approved for the 2025/26 budget.

A Home to School transport consultation has been undertaken with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The consultation has been completed and the results have been analysed and recommendations put to Executive Board for possible policy changes from the beginning of the new academic year. However, it is too early to say if the savings can be achieved.

The current records show 629 service users, the majority of which attend schools within the Borough. The Out of Borough overspend has decreased compared to the previous year's overspend of £0.799m due to £0.712m added to the budget in 2025/26 for growth. The demand for the School Transport service is increasing in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough. The graphs below show the number of SEN children using this service, it is anticipated that these figures will increase, based on historic information. The demand for the School Transport service continues to increase in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough.

**(iv) Corporate and Democracy**

The Corporate & Democracy budget is currently forecasting an underspend against budget of £1.860m at the end of the financial year, there are a number of reasons for this.

Included within the budget are council wide saving proposals of £2.4m, it is currently estimated that only £0.5m of these savings will be achieved by 31 March 2026. Further details of the agreed savings are included at Appendix 3.

The additional cost of the pay award over the approved budget is estimated to cost the Council an additional £1m in the current financial year. This estimate has been included within Corporate and Democracy until the pay award is agreed and implemented.

Contingency of £4.251m is included and assumed will not be called upon (for new spend) through to 31 March 2026. The high level of contingency was included within the budget to allow for the gradual reduction in agency costs, demand and general cost pressures.

**Collection Fund**

- 3.16 The council tax collection rate through to the end of May 2025 is 18.53% which is 0.05% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.

Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, and the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts. £0.785m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

- 3.17 Business rate collection through to the end of May 2025 is 24.43% which is 1.22% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.

£0.344m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.



## Review of Reserves

- 3.18 As at 31 May 2025 the Council's General Reserve is unchanged from the previous period at £5.149m, which represents 2.81% of the Council's 2025/26 net budget. This level of General Reserve is considered to be insufficient and provides little to cover unforeseen costs. Within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, growth to reserves will be included at a rate of £2m per year.
- 3.19 There is a regular review of earmarked reserves undertaken to determine whether they can be released in part or in full to assist with funding the Council's current financial challenges, recognising that this only provides one-year funding solutions.

## Reserves Summary

- 3.20 A summary breakdown of the Council's reserves is presented in the table below, showing the balance of reserves as at 31 May 2025.

Summary of General and Earmarked Reserves	
Reserve	Reserve Value £m
<b>Corporate:</b>	
General Fund	5.149
Capital Reserve	0.499
Insurance Reserve	0.849
<b>Specific Projects:</b>	
Adult Social Care	0.710
Fleet Replacement	0.454
Highways Feasibility Costs	0.102
Local Development Framework	0.544
Community & Environment	0.546
Mersey Valley Golf Club	0.480
Mersey Gateway	34.351
CCLA Property Fund	0.263
Various Other	0.562
<b>Grants:</b>	
Building Schools for the Future	6.529
Public Health	1.504
Supporting Families Performance Payments	0.204
Children's & Education	1.225
Domestic Abuse	0.915
Enterprise & Employment	0.787
Food Waste Collection	0.237
Various Other	0.156
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>56.066</b>

- 3.21 The above table shows the diminishing level of reserves available to assist with funding any future budget overspends and balancing future

budgets. Only the £5.149m of the General Fund could now be used for these purposes, as all remaining reserves are committed for specific purposes.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 As at 31 May 2025, net revenue spend is forecast to be £6.185m over the budget to date despite significant levels of growth being included within the budget.
- 4.2 Urgent corrective should be taken as soon as possible across all Council services to identify spend reductions and ensure that agreed savings are fully implemented in a timely manner.
- 4.3 Departments should ensure that all spending continues to be limited to what is absolutely essential throughout the remainder of the year, to ensure that the forecast outturn overspend is minimised as far as possible and future spending is brought in line with budget.

#### **5.0 POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

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

- 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
- 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
- 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
- 6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**
- 6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**
- 6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

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

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 There are a number of financial risks within the budget. However, the Council has internal controls and processes in place to ensure that spending remains in line with budget as far as possible.
- 7.2 A budget risk register of significant financial risks has been prepared and is included at Appendix 4.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None.

**9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

**10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072**

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



## Summary of Revenue Spending to 31 May 2025

## APPENDIX 1

Directorate / Department	2024/25 Outturn (overspend) £'000	2025/26 Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	May 2025 Forecast Outturn (overspend) £'000
Adult Social Care	(546)	24,522	3,896	3,841	55	0
Care Homes	(1,283)	7,932	1,486	1,768	(282)	(794)
Community Care	(2,651)	27,061	3,004	3,506	(502)	(2,627)
Complex Care Pool	0	13,189	1,227	1,225	2	0
<b>Adults Directorate</b>	<b>(4,480)</b>	<b>72,704</b>	<b>9,613</b>	<b>10,340</b>	<b>(727)</b>	<b>(3,421)</b>
Finance	(312)	5,430	1,413	1,404	9	(113)
Legal & Democratic Services	(1,144)	-170	-60	0	(60)	(482)
ICT & Support Services	282	197	1,285	1,253	32	70
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	(31)	1,110	342	347	(5)	(21)
<b>Chief Executives Directorate</b>	<b>(1,205)</b>	<b>6,567</b>	<b>2,980</b>	<b>3,004</b>	<b>(24)</b>	<b>(546)</b>
Children & Families	(8,434)	53,903	4,939	5,378	(439)	(2,387)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	(1,254)	12,095	1,115	1,307	(192)	(1,239)
<b>Children's Directorate</b>	<b>(9,688)</b>	<b>65,998</b>	<b>6,054</b>	<b>6,685</b>	<b>(631)</b>	<b>(3,626)</b>
Community & Greenspace	204	23,602	1,170	1,212	(42)	(134)
Economy, Enterprise & Property	175	2,602	236	268	(32)	55
Planning & Transportation	280	9,256	449	561	(112)	(672)
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Directorate</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>35,460</b>	<b>1,855</b>	<b>2,041</b>	<b>(186)</b>	<b>(751)</b>
Corporate & Democracy	(1,457)	443	574	129	445	1,860
Public Health Directorate	98	1,880	-1,759	-1,810	51	299
<b>Total Operational Net Spend</b>	<b>(16,073)</b>	<b>183,052</b>	<b>18,808</b>	<b>19,890</b>	<b>(1,073)</b>	<b>(6,185)</b>



## Adult Social Care

## APPENDIX 2

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	18,077	3,038	2,778	260	1,302
Agency- Covering Vacancies	0	0	280	(280)	(1,567)
Premises	498	124	122	2	16
Supplies & Services	698	145	155	(10)	(52)
Aids & Adaptations	37	6	6	0	(4)
Transport	341	57	42	15	79
Food & Drink Provisions	228	38	24	14	78
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,408	235	184	51	269
Emergency Duty Team	157	0	0	0	(13)
Transfer To Reserves	295	0	0	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,050	189	189	0	0
					0
<u>Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes</u>					
Homelessness Prevention	548	196	193	3	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	139	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>23,476</b>	<b>4,028</b>	<b>3,973</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-1,044	-111	-62	(49)	(300)
Sales & Rents Income	-538	-175	-208	33	150
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,089	-96	-103	7	42
Capital Salaries	-117	0	0	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-687	-687	-687	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-4,475</b>	<b>-1,069</b>	<b>-1,060</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>(108)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>19,001</b>	<b>2,959</b>	<b>2,913</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	789	132	132	0	0
Transport	792	132	142	-10	0
Central Support	4,039	673	673	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-112	0	-19	19	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>5,521</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>24,522</b>	<b>3,896</b>	<b>3,841</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>0</b>

## Care Homes

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<b><u>Madeline Mckenna</u></b>					
Employees	770	122	116	6	52
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	10	(10)	(77)
Other Premises	90	14	5	9	15
Supplies & Services	26	3	6	(3)	(12)
Food Provison	51	4	9	(5)	(5)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-127	-7	-5	(2)	(24)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-23	-2	-3	1	10
<b>Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(41)</b>
<b><u>Millbrow</u></b>					
Employees	2,280	350	199	151	1,088
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	178	(178)	(1,308)
Other Premises	117	16	19	(3)	(13)
Supplies & Services	72	11	16	(5)	(30)
Food Provison	81	7	13	(6)	(10)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-13	-2	-5	3	11
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-742	-62	-67	5	10
<b>Total Millbrow Expenditure</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>(33)</b>	<b>(252)</b>
<b><u>St Luke's</u></b>					
Employees	3,595	614	392	222	1,603
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	252	(252)	(1,777)
Other Premises	156	19	29	(10)	(55)
Supplies & Services	67	10	13	(3)	(10)
Food Provison	128	21	26	(5)	(30)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-152	-19	-15	(4)	0
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-1,080	-83	-82	(1)	0
<b>Total St Luke's Expenditure</b>	<b>2,714</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>(53)</b>	<b>(269)</b>
<b><u>St Patrick's</u></b>					
Employees	2,031	338	365	(27)	700
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	145	(145)	(927)
Other Premises	144	17	24	(7)	(20)
Supplies & Services	67	9	12	(3)	(10)
Food Provison	127	21	17	4	0
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-99	-8	-5	(3)	(10)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-684	-83	-48	(35)	(94)
<b>Total St Patrick's Expenditure</b>	<b>1,586</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>(216)</b>	<b>(361)</b>
<b><u>Care Homes Divison Management</u></b>					
Employees	322	54	30	24	129
<b>Care Home Divison Management</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>7,204</b>	<b>1,364</b>	<b>1,646</b>	<b>(282)</b>	<b>(794)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	65	11	11	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	663	111	111	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>7,932</b>	<b>1,486</b>	<b>1,768</b>	<b>(282)</b>	<b>(794)</b>



## Community Care

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Residential & Nursing	20,674	1,340	1,395	(55)	(333)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	15,564	691	861	(170)	(1,343)
Direct Payments	15,513	3,430	3,644	(214)	(972)
Day Care	712	62	60	2	13
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>52,463</b>	<b>5,523</b>	<b>5,960</b>	<b>(437)</b>	<b>(2,635)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Residential & Nursing Income	-11,881	-729	-732	3	14
Community Care Income	-3,115	-230	-159	(71)	(210)
Direct Payments Income	-1,034	-77	-80	3	204
Income from other CCGs	-420	0	0	0	0
Market sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-466	-466	0	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-6,102	-1,017	-1,017	0	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-54	0	0	0	0
				0	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-25,402</b>	<b>-2,519</b>	<b>-2,454</b>	<b>(65)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>27,061</b>	<b>3,004</b>	<b>3,506</b>	<b>(502)</b>	<b>(2,627)</b>

**Complex Care Pool**

	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>	<b>Budget to Date £'000</b>	<b>Actual Spend £'000</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend) £'000</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn £'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Intermediate Care Services	6,312	494	500	(6)	(31)
Oakmeadow	1,995	299	295	4	22
Community Home Care First	1,941	142	132	10	42
Joint Equipment Store	880	0	0	0	0
Contracts & SLA's	3,262	0	0	0	0
Inglenook	134	14	8	6	34
HICafs	3,720	98	121	(23)	(124)
Carers Breaks	445	27	20	7	47
Carers centre	365	0	0	0	0
Residential Care	7,236	906	906	0	0
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,336	723	723	0	0
Pathway 3/Discharge Access	426	0	0	0	(2)
HBC Contracts	72	22	22	0	0
Healthy at Home	28	0	0	0	0
Capacity	30	0	-4	4	12
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>31,182</b>	<b>2,725</b>	<b>2,723</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Income</b>					
BCF	-15,032	-1,253	-1,253	0	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-2,959	-246	-246	0	0
Oakmeadow Income	-2	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-17,993</b>	<b>-1,499</b>	<b>-1,499</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>13,189</b>	<b>1,227</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

## Finance Department

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	7,242	1,163	1,149	14	86
Insurances	1,042	546	521	25	169
Supplies & Services	1,103	58	71	(13)	(76)
Rent Allowances	31,500	4,275	4,275	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,902	0	-45	45	91
LCR Levy	1,902	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	223	4	0	4	25
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	12	3	9	57
Discretionary Social Fund	106	16	0	16	97
Discretionary Housing Payments	279	41	40	1	2
Household Support Fund Expenditure	420	420	420	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>45,789</b>	<b>6,535</b>	<b>6,434</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>451</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-342	-123	-131	8	52
Burdens Grant	-58	-59	-63	4	24
Dedicated schools Grant	-150	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-670	-64	-55	(9)	(50)
Recovery of Legal Costs	-10	-2	0	(2)	(10)
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	1
Schools SLAs	-319	-2	0	(2)	(10)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,902	0	0	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-300	-47	-35	(12)	(75)
Rent Allowances	-30,700	-4,262	-4,142	(120)	(684)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-14	-13	(1)	(5)
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-279	-93	-93	0	(2)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-453	-76	-76	0	0
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	0	-22	22	22
Universal Credits	-5	-1	0	(1)	(5)
Household Support Fund Grant	-420	326	326	0	0
VEP Grant	0	0	0	0	5
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-89	0	0	0	0
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-185	0	-21	21	173
Transfer from Reserves	-21	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-36,130</b>	<b>-4,417</b>	<b>-4,325</b>	<b>(92)</b>	<b>(564)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>9,659</b>	<b>2,118</b>	<b>2,109</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>(113)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	493	82	82	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,092	349	349	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,814	-1,136	-1,136	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-4,229</b>	<b>-705</b>	<b>-705</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>5,430</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>(113)</b>

**Legal Services**

	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>	<b>Budget to Date £'000</b>	<b>Actual Spend £'000</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend) £'000</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn £'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	1,836	244	261	(17)	(101)
Agency Related Expenditure	34	34	63	(29)	(174)
Supplies & Services	163	63	60	3	16
Civic Catering & Functions	21	1	1	0	5
Legal Expenses	422	2	5	(3)	(145)
Transport Related Expenditure	8	2	3	(1)	(1)
Other Expenditure	0	1	1	0	(1)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,484</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>-47</b>	<b>(401)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-75	-10	-4	(6)	(40)
Reimbursement & Other Grants	0	0	0	0	2
School SLA's	-100	-4	0	(4)	(23)
Licence Income	-341	-37	-34	(3)	(20)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-516</b>	<b>-51</b>	<b>-38</b>	<b>(13)</b>	<b>(81)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>1,968</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(482)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	62	10	10	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	275	46	46	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-2,475	-412	-412	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,138</b>	<b>-356</b>	<b>-356</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>-170</b>	<b>-60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(482)</b>

## ICT &amp; Support Services Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,827	958	901	57	223
Supplies & Services	1,169	262	295	(33)	(199)
Capital Finance	100	19	6	13	73
Computer Repairs & Software	2,019	1,724	1,697	27	160
Communication Costs	133	25	41	(16)	(92)
Premises	139	55	56	(1)	(6)
Transport	3	0	0	0	1
Other	4	3	4	(1)	(6)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,394</b>	<b>3,046</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-849	-217	-217	0	2
Schools SLA Income	-659	-14	0	(14)	(86)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-1,508</b>	<b>-231</b>	<b>-217</b>	<b>(14)</b>	<b>(84)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>7,886</b>	<b>2,815</b>	<b>2,783</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	373	62	62	0	0
Transport	22	4	4	0	0
Central Support	1,391	232	232	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-10,969	-1,828	-1,828	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-7,689</b>	<b>-1,530</b>	<b>-1,530</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>1,285</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>70</b>

## Chief Executives Delivery Unit

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	3,522	558	548	10	65
Employees Training	99	42	38	4	21
Apprenticeship Levy	330	54	61	(7)	(41)
Supplies & Services	397	132	130	2	12
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,348</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-226	-26	-24	(2)	(9)
Schools SLA Income	-577	-12	0	(12)	(69)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-803</b>	<b>-38</b>	<b>-24</b>	<b>(14)</b>	<b>(78)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>3,545</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(21)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	157	26	26	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,008	168	168	0	0
Asset Rental Support	53	9	9	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,653	-609	-609	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,435</b>	<b>-406</b>	<b>-406</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(21)</b>

## Children &amp; Families

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	19,364	2,808	3,029	(221)	(1,449)
Other Premises	392	92	97	(5)	(39)
Supplies & Services	1,592	0	94	(94)	(1,057)
Transport	367	49	19	30	180
Direct Payments	1,220	261	245	16	94
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	224	168	168	0	0
Residential Care	27,517	2,130	2,238	(108)	38
Out of Borough Adoption	97	0	0	0	97
Out of Borough Fostering	5,469	248	399	(151)	(785)
In House Adoption	557	24	20	4	22
Special Guardianship Order	2,604	346	323	23	130
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,766	371	283	88	515
Lavender House Contract Costs	279	24	23	1	4
Home Support & Respite	494	67	63	4	25
Care Leavers	434	37	39	(2)	(10)
Family Support	81	10	7	3	15
Contracted services	3	1	1	0	(1)
Emergency Duty	184	0	0	0	0
Youth Offending Services	461	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>64,105</b>	<b>6,636</b>	<b>7,048</b>	<b>(412)</b>	<b>(2,221)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-33	-9	-7	(2)	(14)
Sales Income	0	0	0	0	0
Rents	-82	0	0	0	0
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-486	-52	-27	(25)	(153)
Transfer from reserve	-15	0	0	0	1
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-13,477	-2,293	-2,293	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-14,143</b>	<b>-2,354</b>	<b>-2,327</b>	<b>(27)</b>	<b>(166)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>49,962</b>	<b>4,282</b>	<b>4,721</b>	<b>(439)</b>	<b>(2,387)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	736	123	123	0	0
Transport	10	2	2	0	0
Central Support	3,331	555	555	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-136	-23	-23	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>3,941</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>53,903</b>	<b>4,939</b>	<b>5,378</b>	<b>(439)</b>	<b>(2,387)</b>

## Education, Inclusion &amp; Provision

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	8,792	1,305	1,314	(9)	248
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	29	(29)	(204)
Agency - in addition to establishment	43	24	24	0	6
Premises	15	1	0	1	3
Supplies & Services	3,012	300	309	(9)	(54)
Independent School Fees	10,155	3,004	3,004	0	0
Schools Contingency	400	2	2	0	0
Transport	43	3	6	(3)	(20)
Schools Transport	2,771	158	259	(101)	(907)
Early Years Payments including Pupil Premium	15,615	1,954	1,954	0	0
Commissioned Services	2,249	196	194	2	9
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,419	166	166	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	115	0	1	(1)	(66)
Capital Finance	4,604	712	712	0	1
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>49,233</b>	<b>7,825</b>	<b>7,974</b>	<b>(149)</b>	<b>(984)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-337	-126	-129	3	20
Government Grant Income	-6,534	-1,549	-1,549	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-30,161	-5,027	-5,027	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-446	-94	-59	(35)	(211)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,773	-298	-298	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-538	-12	-2	(10)	(59)
Government Grant Income	-491	-142	-142	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-40,280</b>	<b>-7,248</b>	<b>-7,206</b>	<b>(42)</b>	<b>(250)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>8,953</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>(191)</b>	<b>(1,234)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	405	68	68	0	0
Transport Support	773	146	147	(1)	(5)
Central Support	1,947	324	324	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>3,142</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>12,095</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>1,307</b>	<b>(192)</b>	<b>(1,239)</b>



## Community &amp; Greenspaces

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	15,296	2,506	2,410	96	580
Agency - in addition to establishment	16	16	69	(53)	(237)
Premises	3,304	416	440	(24)	(139)
Supplies & Services	3,101	258	287	(29)	(176)
Transport	117	2	4	(2)	(10)
Other Agency Costs	240	63	81	(18)	(111)
Other Expenditure	172	0	0	0	6
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	0	0	0	(22)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	41	9	7	2	16
Transfers to Reserves	97	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>29,505</b>	<b>3,270</b>	<b>3,297</b>	<b>(27)</b>	<b>(93)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Sales Income	-1,342	-268	-275	7	42
Fees & Charges Income	-6,019	-1,524	-1,510	(14)	(89)
Rental Income	-1,111	-174	-159	(15)	(85)
Government Grant Income	-3,861	-1,288	-1,288	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-801	-115	-115	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-223	0	-18	18	155
Capital Salaries	-236	-6	0	(6)	(35)
Transfers From Reserves	-30	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-13,646</b>	<b>-3,375</b>	<b>-3,365</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(12)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>15,859</b>	<b>-105</b>	<b>-68</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(105)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	1,657	276	276	0	0
Transport	2,433	424	429	(5)	(29)
Central Support	4,297	716	716	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-843	-141	-141	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>7,743</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(29)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>23,602</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>1,212</b>	<b>(42)</b>	<b>(134)</b>

## Economy, Enterprise &amp; Property

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	4,124	773	710	63	376
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	85	(85)	(270)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,690	133	150	(17)	(98)
Premises	173	136	136	0	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	1,080	93	87	6	37
NNDR	659	629	629	0	0
Rents	157	0	0	0	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	88	0	0	0	0
Security	603	4	3	1	3
Supplies & Services	383	63	62	1	8
Supplies & Services - Grant	576	97	97	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	72	11	12	(1)	(1)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,605</b>	<b>1,939</b>	<b>1,971</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-561	-103	-103	0	0
Rent - Commercial Properties	-883	-158	-158	0	0
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-8	-8	0	0
Government Grant	-594	-55	-55	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-120	-241	-241	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-55	0	0	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-454	0	0	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-602	-522	-522	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-3,307</b>	<b>-1,087</b>	<b>-1,087</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,298</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	2,738	456	456	0	0
Transport	26	5	5	0	0
Central Support	2,878	480	480	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-9,342	-1,557	-1,557	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-3,696</b>	<b>-616</b>	<b>-616</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>2,602</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>55</b>

## Planning &amp; Transportation Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,975	967	947	20	125
Efficiency Savings	-100	-17	0	(17)	(100)
Premises	188	62	56	6	38
Hired & Contracted Services	380	3	15	(12)	(74)
Supplies & Services	117	41	65	(24)	(148)
Street Lighting	1,643	1	32	(31)	(191)
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,803	99	169	(70)	(425)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Works	812	43	0	43	259
Fleet Transport	1,467	206	201	5	32
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	14	0	0	0	(3)
Bus Support	506	36	36	0	0
Agency Related Expenditure	8	1	1	0	3
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	31	0	0
NRA Levy	75	0	0	0	0
LCR Levy	1,553	0	0	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	359	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>14,831</b>	<b>1,473</b>	<b>1,553</b>	<b>(80)</b>	<b>(484)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Sales & Rents Income	-97	-16	-11	(5)	(27)
Planning Fees	-798	-198	-159	(39)	(232)
Building Control Fees	-251	-39	-33	(6)	(35)
Other Fees & Charges	-971	-193	-186	(7)	(40)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-174	-36	-36	0	0
Government Grant Income	0	-4	-5	1	0
Halton Hopper Income	-15	-3	-2	(1)	(6)
Recharge to Capital	-210	0	0	0	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,553	0	0	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-129	-129	-129	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-4,198</b>	<b>-618</b>	<b>-561</b>	<b>(57)</b>	<b>(340)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>10,633</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>(137)</b>	<b>(824)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	739	123	123	0	0
Transport	808	118	120	(2)	(13)
Central Support	2,505	420	420	0	0
Asset Rental Support	918	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,347	-1,067	-1,094	27	165
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-1,377</b>	<b>-406</b>	<b>-431</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>9,256</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>(112)</b>	<b>(672)</b>

## Corporate &amp; Democracy

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	369	61	80	(19)	(16)
Contracted Services	12	0	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	102	38	16	22	0
Premises Expenditure	24	8	8	0	0
Transport Costs	1	0	0	0	0
Members Allowances	994	166	171	(5)	0
Interest Payable - Treasury Management	4,258	710	676	34	200
Interest Payable - Other	215	36	36	0	0
Bank Charges	0	0	0	0	0
Audit Fees	0	0	0	0	0
Contingency	5,158	709	0	709	4,251
Capital Financing	3,346	584	584	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	300	300	263	37	0
Debt Management Expenses	20	3	3	0	0
Precepts & Levies	244	244	244	0	0
Pay Award over 2%	0	0	0	0	(1,000)
<b>Efficiency Savings:</b>					
Purchase of Additional Leave	-100	-17	0	(17)	(50)
Voluntary Severance Scheme	-200	-33	0	(33)	(100)
Apprenticeship First Model	-200	-33	0	(33)	(50)
Agency Staff Reduction	-1,700	-283	0	(283)	(1,700)
Review Existing Contracts	-200	-33	0	(33)	(100)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,643</b>	<b>2,460</b>	<b>2,081</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>1,435</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Interest Receivable - Treasury Management	-3,045	-507	-578	71	425
Interest Receivable - Other	-19	-3	-3	0	0
Other Fees & Charges	-146	-18	-13	(5)	0
Grants & Reimbursements	-334	-56	-56	0	0
Government Grant Income	-6,272	-1,045	-1,045	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-9,816</b>	<b>-1,629</b>	<b>-1,695</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>425</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>2,827</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>1,860</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	22	4	4	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	898	158	158	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,304	-419	-419	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>-2,384</b>	<b>-257</b>	<b>-257</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>1,860</b>

## Public Health




	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	5,627	802	772	30	177
Other Premises	6	1	0	1	6
Supplies & Services	322	87	100	(13)	(78)
Contracts & SLA's	7,206	253	219	34	200
Transport	4	0	0	0	1
Other Agency	24	24	24	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>13,189</b>	<b>1,167</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>306</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-122	-12	-11	(1)	(4)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-154	-59	-59	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-59	0	0	0	0
Government Grant Income	-12,435	-3,098	-3,098	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-12,770</b>	<b>-3,169</b>	<b>-3,168</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>-2,002</b>	<b>-2,053</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	209	35	35	0	0
Transport Support	24	4	4	0	(3)
Central Support	1,897	316	316	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-669	-112	-112	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>1,461</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>1,880</b>	<b>-1,759</b>	<b>-1,810</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>299</b>



## Progress Against Agreed Savings

## Appendix 3




### Adult Social Care

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Housing Solutions	474	Remodel the current service based on good practice evidence from other areas.	125	0		Currently Under Review
Voluntary Sector Support	N/A	Review the support provided by Adult Social Care and all other Council Departments, to voluntary sector organisations. This would include assisting them to secure alternative funding in order to reduce their dependence upon Council funding. A target saving phased over two years has been estimated.	100	0		Achieved
Community Wardens/Telecare Service		Community Wardens/Telecare Service – a review will be undertaken of the various options available for the future delivery of these services, with support from the Transformation Delivery	0	280		Currently Under Review


		Unit.				
Care Management Community Care Budget		Community Care – continuation of the work being undertaken to review care provided through the Community Care budget, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.	0	1,000	U	Unlikely to be achieved – currently forecast overspend position
Various		Review of Service Delivery Options – reviews will be undertaken of the various service delivery options available for a number of areas including; Day Services, Halton Supported Housing Network, In-House Care Homes, Reablement Service and Oak Meadow.	0	375	U	Currently Under Review
<b>Total ASC Directorate</b>			<b>225</b>	<b>1,655</b>		





## Finance

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Internal Audit	300	Restructure in light of potential retirements over the next two years within the Internal Audit Team.	50	0		It appears unlikely that the proposed £50k budget saving will be fully realised this year, if at all
Council Tax	84	Increase the charges applied when a court summons is issued by 30% (£23), to achieve full cost recovery over the three year period.	40	0		Increase in costs to be applied from 2026/27.
Debt Management		Debt Management – undertake a review of debt management policies and procedures, in order to implement a more robust approach to debt management and debt recovery, considering options such as seeking payment in advance wherever possible, to improve cashflow and reduce the risk of non-recovery.	0	100		Currently part of workstream being undertaken by the Transformation Programme.
<b>Total Finance Department</b>			<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>		

## Legal and Democratic Services

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Members		Deputy Mayor – cease provision of the Deputy Mayor's allowance, whilst retaining a nominated Deputy Mayor.	0	6		Achieved.
<b>Total Legal and Democratic Services</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>		


## Children and Families Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Children's Centres	1,293	Review the operation of Windmill Hill Children's Centre, where there is the potential to save on premises and staffing costs.	22	0		With the implementation of the family hubs the review of Windmill Hill will no longer be viable. The centre is located in an area of deprivation and the role of the centre as a family hub is a priority in the Children's social care review and supporting families at an earlier level, improving access to services for the most vulnerable and ensure a positive start for all children. These fit with the council priorities
Children's Residential Care		Residential Placements – continuation of the work being undertaken to review residential placements, especially high cost placements, and identify opportunities to step-down placements or find alternatives, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.	0	1,500		Residential placements were all reviewed in early 2024 with some reduction in costs established. As part of the longer term plan included in the sufficiency strategy, Halton has partnered with a not for profit organisation, Juno, who are awaiting registration from OFSTED - this approach is part of the LCR approach working with NFP organisations. in addition significant changes have




						been made to reduce the numbers of children coming into care. Mocking bird constellation is in place and evidenced support has resulted in appropriate transition so the need for residential is mitigated. A property has been identified for care leavers and further properties identified for additional semi-independent provisions. Juno will focus on their second home after July
Fostering		Independent Fostering Agencies and Out of Borough Fostering – continuation of the work being undertaken to review placements, to increase use of In-Borough foster carers wherever possible and thereby reduce costs, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.	0	200	U	Recruitment campaign has been launched to attract in house foster carers so Council reliance on IFA's is reduced. Unfortunately there is a national shortage of foster carers and as a result the reliance on IFA's continues
Legal Costs		Court Costs – implementation of measures in conjunction with Legal Services, to reduce the backlog and ongoing number of Children's cases going to court, thereby reducing the timescales involved and cost of court proceedings, in order to reduce	0	200	U	Progress has been made on reducing the cost of court with success in reducing the number of applications, the reduction in timeliness of proceedings, further work is currently underway to reduce the number of C2 applications to court. PLO process is proving effective for some families in diverting away from

		the current overspend and ongoing costs.				legal proceedings and safely maintaining children with parents, further exploration is taking place on the use of in house psychologists to undertake assessments in the court arena to further reduce court costs
<b>Total Children &amp; Families Department</b>			<b>22</b>	<b>1,900</b>		


## Education, Inclusion and Provision Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Home to School Transport		Home to School Transport – undertake consultation with stakeholders and partners with regard to implementing a new Home to School and College Travel and Transport Policy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.	0	300		The consultation with stakeholders and partners has taken place. The results have been analysed and recommendations put to Executive Board for possible policy changes from the beginning of the new academic year.
<b>Total EIP Department</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>300</b>		

## Community and Greenspace Department


Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Stadium & Catering Services – School Meals	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over £200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.	12	0		School meals service has ceased and is reflected in the 25/26 budget.
Green Waste		Green Waste – increase green waste charges from £43 to £50 per annum, to bring Halton onto a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.	0	100		Green waste charges have been increased to £50.
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170		Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26
<b>Total Community &amp; Greenspace Dept</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>270</b>		

## Economy, Enterprise and Property Department


Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Asset Management		Accelerate the lease or sale of surplus land, non-operational buildings, surplus space within building, etc. to either generate lease rentals or capital receipts to help fund capital schemes and thereby reduce future capital financing costs.	0	100		It is currently too early to establish if this can be achieved. Although all options will be explored.
<b>Total EEP Dept</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>		






## Policy, Planning and Transportation Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
Highways		LED Advertising Screens – install LED advertising screens at appropriate locations within the Borough in order to generate advertising revenue. The estimated annual income is the Council's share of advertising revenue net of capital financing costs for the installations.	0	100		It is not anticipated that this income will be achieved this financial year as the LED screens are no closer to being installed.
<b>Total PPT Dept</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>		

## Public Health Directorate Department

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
Environmental Health		Pest Control – increase charges for pest control on the basis of benchmarking data, to bring Halton onto a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.	0	45		Charges Increased
<b>Total Public Health Directorate</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>45</b>		

## Corporate and Democracy

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
Chief Executives Delivery Unit		Purchase of Additional Leave – development of a voluntary scheme to enable staff to purchase additional annual leave.	0	100		Scheme being considered by Executive Board, uncertainty to timing and sign-up to the scheme.
Chief Executives Delivery Unit		Voluntary Severance Scheme – development of a policy whereby staff may be offered voluntary severance in appropriate circumstances, but without creating a significant pension strain liability.	0	200		Scheme to be designed and approved. Uncertainty to timing and sign-up to the scheme.
Chief Executives Delivery Unit		Apprenticeships - implement an “Apprentice First” policy, with all appropriate vacant posts assessed initially to determine whether they might be suitable as an apprenticeship. This will build longer term resilience into the organisation's workforce and provide short term cost savings by drawing down funding from the apprenticeship levy. The scheme will be co-ordinated by the newly appointed Apprenticeship Officer, funded and supported	0	200		Scheme being developed, uncertainty to take up of the scheme.

		by the Transformation Delivery Unit.				
Council Wide		Agency Staff Reduction – continuation of the work being co-ordinated by the Transformation Delivery Unit to reduce the reliance upon agency workers across the Council, in particular within Adults and Children's Social Care. Target net savings of £1.7m for 2025/26, £1.3m for 2026/27 and £1.1m for 2027/28.	0	1,700	U	<p>There is evidence of reduced agency usage within the Children's directorate but targets have been built into directorate budget which duplicate what is included here.</p> <p>Uncertainty with regard to reductions across Adult Social Care.</p> <p>Highly unlikely the £1.7m saving will be achieved in the current financial year.</p>
Council Wide		Review all existing contracts across the Council to re-consider their requirements and performance on the basis of outputs achieved.	0	200	U	Currently part of workstream being undertaken by the Transformation Programme.
<b>Total Corporate &amp; Democracy</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>2,400</b>		

**Symbol****Objective**

Indicates that the objective is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.



Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.



Indicates that it is highly likely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.

## 2025/26 Budget Risk Register as at 31 May 2025

## Appendix 4

Risk No	Risk Identified	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Risk Control Measures	Assessment of Residual Risk with Control Measures Implemented			Responsible Person	Timescale for Review	Progress Comments	Date Updated
						Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score				
1	<b>Pay costs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay award</li> <li>Staff Turnover Saving Target</li> <li>Agency, casuals and overtime</li> <li>National Living Wage</li> <li>Pension Costs</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget based upon individual staff members/vacancies</li> <li>Budget monitoring</li> <li>Contingency</li> <li>Balances</li> <li>Medium Term Forecast</li> <li>Engage with Cheshire Pension Scheme and pension actuary</li> <li>Market supplement paid in multiple service areas</li> <li>Employer of Choice Initiative</li> <li>Connect to Halton – Review of Scheme</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB/ Directors	Monthly	<p>2025/26 budget includes pay growth at forecast 2% pay award. Initial pay offer to trade unions was set at 3.2%, this will cost approximately a further £1m to the budget</p> <p>Agency costs and usage remain high although some evidence of reduction in numbers within Children Social Care.</p> <p>Market Supplements paid to a number of service areas.</p> <p>Connect to</p>	31/5/25

											Halton scheme went live September 2024, agency and casual appointments to be covered by the scheme.	
2	<b>Redundancy and Early Retirements</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits Tracking Process</li> <li>• Future savings to take into account cost of redundancy and early retirements.</li> <li>• Seek Government approval to use capital receipts to fund transformation costs.</li> <li>• Develop policy for voluntary severance scheme</li> </ul>	2	3	6	ED/SB	Quarterly	<p>Tracker created to monitor redundancy costs in current year.</p> <p>Look to capitalise redundancy costs where possible where evidence exists it creates a longer term saving.</p> <p>£0.200m saving included in 25/26 budget for savings from voluntary severance scheme.</p>	31/05/25
3	<b>Savings not achieved</b>	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> <li>• Contingency</li> <li>• Rigorous process in approving savings.</li> </ul>	4	2	8	RR/ED/SB/Directors	Monthly	<p>Savings for 2025/26 have been written into Directorate budgets.</p> <p>Budget savings monitored closely</p>	31/05/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of savings at departmental and directorate level</li> <li>• Monthly budget monitoring</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Forecast</li> <li>• RAG monitoring of savings included in bi-monthly monitoring reports.</li> <li>• Transformation saving targets reported monthly through Transformation Programme Board.</li> </ul>						<p>and if necessary offsetting savings sought.</p> <p>Transformation Programme Board meeting on monthly basis to discuss progress against programme.</p>	
4	<b>Price inflation</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prudent budget provision</li> <li>• Latest forecast information used eg. utilities</li> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB	Monthly	<p>CPI for May 2025 is 3.4% and RPI is 4.3%. Both running higher than inflation included in 2025.26 budget.</p> <p>Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast</p>	31/05/25



					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contingency</li> <li>Balances</li> <li>CPI/RPI monitoring</li> <li>MTFS</li> </ul>						inflation to be 3.2% in 2025 and 2.1% through to 2027. Rates are higher than forecast that at 2025/26 budget setting and remain above Governments 2% target.	
5	<b>Review of LG Finance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business rates retention – 100% Pilot and Review</li> <li>Fair Funding Review</li> <li>National Public Spending Plans</li> <li>Social Care Green Paper</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MPs</li> <li>SIGOMA / LG Futures</li> <li>Liverpool City Region &amp; Merseyside Treasurers Group</li> <li>Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>Member of business rate retention pilot region</li> <li>Dialogue with DCLG</li> <li>Responding to reviews and consultations</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB/NS/M W/MG	Weekly/ Monthly	<p>Business rate retention pilot continues through to March 2027.</p> <p>Government are committed to providing more certainty on LG Finances through multi year settlements.</p> <p>Government issued the Fair Funding consultation on 20 June 2025, with a closing date of 15 August.</p> <p>Resetting the Business Rates Retention</p>	31/05/25

											consultation was issued by Government in April 2025 with Halton submitting a response prior to the 02 June deadline.	
6	<b>Treasury Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Borrowing</li> <li>Investment</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treasury Management Strategy</li> <li>Link Asset Services advice</li> <li>Treasury Management planning and monitoring</li> <li>Attendance at Networking and Benchmarking Groups</li> <li>Officer and Member Training</li> </ul>	1	3	3	ED/SB/MG	Daily / Quarterly	BoE base rate reduced to 4.25%.  Impact of Exceptional Financial Support request to be assessed with regards to timing of future borrowing.	31/05/25
7	<b>Demand led budgets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in Care</li> <li>Out of borough fostering</li> <li>Community Care</li> <li>High Needs</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget monitoring</li> <li>Contingency</li> <li>Balances</li> <li>Review service demand</li> <li>Directorate recovery</li> </ul>	4	4	16	ED/SB/NS/MW	Monthly	Numbers of children in care and with protection plans reviewed on a weekly basis.  Community care costs and	31/05/25

					<p>groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly budget monitoring</li> <li>Children Improvement Plan Investment Funding</li> </ul>						<p>numbers on increase, reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>Investment in Children Services following OFSTED inspection to be monitored with regard to control and reduction of future costs.</p>	
8	<b>Mersey Gateway Costs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs</li> <li>Toll Income</li> <li>Funding</li> <li>Accounting treatment</li> </ul>	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular monitoring with Crossing Board</li> <li>Capital reserve</li> <li>Government Grant</li> <li>Liquidity Fund</li> </ul>	2	1	2	ED/SB/MG	Quarterly	<p>Arrangements in place to monitor spend and availability of liquidity fund.</p>	31/05/25
9	<b>Council Tax Collection</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council tax monitoring on monthly basis</li> <li>Review of Collection Rate</li> <li>Collection Fund Balance</li> </ul>	3	2	6	ED/PG/SB/P D/BH/MG	Monthly	<p>Collection rate to 31 May 2025 was 18.53% which is marginally lower than the rate of 18.58% at the same point last year.</p>	31/05/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision for bad debts</li> <li>• Review recovery procedures</li> <li>• Benchmarking</li> </ul>						To 31 May 2025 £0.785m was collected in relation to old year debt.	
10	<b>Business Rates Retention Scheme</b>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and monitoring of latest business rates income to baseline and estimate for year.</li> <li>• Prudent allowance for losses in collection</li> <li>• Prudent provision set aside for losses from valuation appeals</li> <li>• Regular monitoring of annual yield and baseline / budget position</li> <li>• Benchmarking Groups</li> <li>• Review recovery procedures</li> </ul>	3	1	3	ED/SB/LB/MG	Monthly	<p>Collection rate to 31 May 2025 was 22.81% which is 1.22% lower than the rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>To 31 May 2025 £0.344m was collected in relation to old year debt.</p>	31/05/25
11	<b>Income recovery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty to economy following cost of living and</li> </ul>	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate charging policy</li> <li>• Budget monitoring</li> </ul>	3	2	6	ED/MM/SB	Monthly	Income shortfalls identified and cause of increased concern in certain areas are	31/05/25

	high inflation				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contingency</li> <li>Balances</li> <li>Income benchmarking</li> </ul>						<p>being closely monitored.</p> <p>Additional posts created within Adult Social Care Directorate, responsible for improving the overall collection of social care debt.</p>	
13	<b>Capital Programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs</li> <li>Funding</li> <li>Key Major Projects</li> <li>Clawback of Grant</li> <li>Availability and timing of capital receipts</li> <li>Cashflow</li> <li>Contractors</li> </ul>	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Management</li> <li>Regular monitoring</li> <li>Detailed financial analysis of new schemes to ensure they are affordable</li> <li>Targets monitored to minimise clawback of grant.</li> <li>Contractor due diligence</li> <li>Dialogue with Government departments.</li> </ul>	3	2	6	Project Managers/ED /SB/LH	Quarterly	Capital receipts have been fully committed therefore new capital schemes need to bring own funding.	31/05/25
14	<b>Academy Schools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of transfer upon Council</li> </ul>	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early identification of school decisions</li> </ul>	1	3	3	ED/SB/NS	Monthly	Consideration given in MTFS for loss of funding.	31/05/25

	budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of income to Council Services</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DfE Regulations</li> <li>• Prudent consideration of financial transactions to facilitate transfer</li> <li>• Services continue to be offered to academies</li> <li>• Transfer Protocol</li> </ul>							
15	<b>Reserves</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diminishing reserves, used to balance budget, fund overspend positions.</li> </ul>	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitored on a bi-monthly basis, reported to Management Team and Exec Board</li> <li>• Benchmarking</li> <li>• Financial Forecast</li> <li>• Programme to replenish reserves.</li> </ul>	3	3	9	ED/SB	Quarterly	Monitored and reported on a regular basis. Council reserves at historic low levels.  Reserves will need to be replenished within future budgets	31/05/25
16	<b>Budget Balancing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has struggled to achieve a balanced budget position for a number of years.</li> <li>• Forecast for current year is an overspend position of £19m.</li> <li>• Reserves</li> </ul>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current year budgets monitored on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Forward forecasting through to March 2029 reported on a prudent basis.</li> <li>• Regular conversations with DHLUC re Council's financial</li> </ul>	4	4	16	ED/SB	Ongoing	Council has received in-principle agreement to fund day to day costs through Exceptional Financial Support.  EFS covers a total of £52.8m over two years,	31/05/25

	<p>insufficient to balance current year budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council has been given approval in-principle for Exceptional Financial Support (day to day costs funded through capital borrowings) for 2024/25 and 2025/26.</li></ul>				<p>position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LGA to undertake a financial assurance review.</li><li>• Transformation programme in place.</li><li>• Financial Recovery Plan required to better inform how the Council will achieve future sustainable budgets.</li></ul>						<p>split: 24/25 - £20.8m 25/26 - £32.0m</p> <p>Council utilised £10m of EFS in 24/25, below the approved amount.</p> <p>Financial recovery plan to be put in place to limit Council exposure to EFS and repayment of borrowings to date.</p>	
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