

Public Document Pack



Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 9 March 2026 at 6.30 p.m.
Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

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

Interim Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Mike Fry (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Chris Carlin (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Irene Bramwell	Labour
Councillor Neil Connolly	Labour
Councillor Emma Garner	Labour
Councillor Chris Loftus	Labour
Councillor Angela McInerney	Labour
Councillor Louise Nolan	Labour
Councillor Margaret Ratcliffe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Tom Stretch	Labour
Councillor Angela Teeling	Labour

Please contact Kim Butler on 0151 511 7496 or e-mail kim.butler@halton.gov.uk for further information.

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
2. MINUTES	1 - 5
3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	6 - 8
5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES	
(A) HOUSING SOLUTIONS PERFORMANCE UPDATE	9 - 20
(B) THE RENTERS RIGHTS ACT 2025 – UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION.	21 - 25
(C) PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR – PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE SELECTIVE LICENSING IN 6 AREAS.	26 - 32
(D) PROTECT DUTY (PROTECTION OF PREMISES ACT)	33 - 38
6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
(A) PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2025/26	39 - 57
7. COUNCILWIDE SPENDING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2025	58 - 129

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.

HOUSING AND SAFER POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at the Board Room, Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Fry (Chair), Carlin (Vice-Chair), Bramwell, Connolly, Garner, C. Loftus, A. McInerney, L. Nolan, Ratcliffe and Teeling

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Burrows, K. Butler, R. Freeman and N. Goodwin

Also in attendance: 4 observers in the public gallery

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

	<i>Action</i>
SAF19 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<p>The Chair advised the Board that he had recently represented Halton on the Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioners Office Complaints Sub-Committee, which considered three complaints, all of which were dismissed.</p>	
SAF20 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2025 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
SAF21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	
SAF22 DOMESTIC ABUSE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
<p>The Board considered a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, regarding the work undertaken by the Domestic Abuse Board and the work programme for the period 2025/26.</p> <p>The Board, which was a multi-agency partnership,</p>	

underwent a review which had included its membership, to ensure appropriate senior level representation from stakeholders. It also published an interim strategy, mobilised its Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and set out a work programme which was supported by a sub-group structure. The Board meets on a bi-monthly basis.

The interim Domestic Abuse Strategy, which was attached to the report as an appendix, set out four strategic priorities:

- act before someone is harmed;
- increase safety for those at risk;
- identify and stop harmful behaviours; and
- support people to live the life they want after harm occurs.

The Board responded to these priorities by establishing four sub-groups titled Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue. The groups work collectively to operationalise the priorities through high level oversight, partnership co-ordination and outcome driven planning. The structure would also ensure the work of the Board feeds into the Safeguarding Boards, Scrutiny Boards and any other statutory groups.

Accommodation arrangements for domestic abuse had fed into the emerging Housing Strategy for the Borough, to ensure that statutory requirements were met and to improve housing offers for emergency, supported and dispersed accommodation for victims and their families going forward.

Also attached to the report was a draft Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This provided a strategic overview of domestic abuse in Halton, the statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 which would inform future service commissioning, Housing Strategy and multi-agency co-ordination. There had been some key findings from the draft assessment and these were outlined in section 3.9 of the report. The JSNA also included 13 strategic recommendations, which the Partnership Board needed to consider.

Members of the Board were advised that work was underway to raise awareness of older persons domestic abuse and a partnership event was planned for 21 November 2025 to discuss prevention and best practice management for those who supported individuals at risk of, or experiencing, domestic abuse in later life.

The following additional information was provided in response to Members questions/comments:

- although Halton's perpetrator rate was higher than the national average, it was suggested that the national figure was exceptionally low and therefore more work was required to identify the reason for this. Further work was also required to identify how Halton compared to its neighbouring authorities. It was agreed that Members would be provided with a further update in due course;
- concerns were also raised regarding the statistics of Halton's repeat victimisation rate and the Board requested further clarification on this;
- Members were reassured that Halton was compliant with the Domestic Abuse Act. However, with regards to accommodation, Halton needed to strengthen their dispersed step down offer and how it supported victims who required family type accommodation in residential areas, hence the importance of input to the Housing Strategy. In terms of emergency accommodation, the Executive Board had approved a significant capital investment in a programme of work earlier in the year and this was now in motion;
- there was a mutual agreement between local authorities to share referrals and provide supported accommodation in out of areas to help protect victims; and
- Domestic Abuse victims were prioritised in terms of housing allocations.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the development of the statutory Domestic Abuse Partnership Board governance arrangements;
- 2) endorse the work programme; and
- 3) note the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Domestic Abuse.

Director of
Community &
Greenspaces

SAF23 TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Director of Public Health, which provided an update on the work of the

Trading Standards Service over the past 12 months and the contribution this work had made to the Council's public protection and community safety objectives.

It was noted that the Trading Standards team provided a wide range of statutory services to protect consumers and legitimate businesses from unfair, misleading or unsafe trading practices. Amongst others, these services included weights and measures, product safety, age restricted sales, explosives, scams awareness, fair trading, doorstep crime, e-crime, fraud, counterfeit and illicit goods – including tobacco and vapes and animal feeding stuffs. The team also provided an enhanced consumer advice service to help consumers enforce their own civil consumer rights.

The report focussed on the following services which contributed to protecting public health and safeguarding children and adults:

- scams awareness;
- doorstep crime;
- tobacco and vapes;
- age restricted sales;
- consumer advice and the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline;
- product safety; and
- iCAN consumer alert network and Facebook.

The report also provided case studies for each of the services, which the Board noted.

Following discussions and arising questions from Members, some additional information was noted:

- the secure "159" helpline provides direct access to a bank's fraud department, enabling anyone to report suspicious calls or seek help if they believe they may be the victim of a scam;
- there was no accreditation scheme for compliant shop owners, particularly those selling tobacco or vaping products. Such premises were required to hold licenses, which were subject to review as part of regulatory oversight; and
- concerns were raised about scams/fake products which were promoted via Facebook. Trading Standards advise consumers not to make any purchases via Facebook as consumer protection laws

may be limited. In particular, third-party sites linked from Facebook were not covered by Facebook's Purchase Protection.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the report;
- 2) agree to follow the Halton Trading Standards page on Facebook to increase awareness.

SAF24 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2025/26

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 2 of 2025/26.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2025/26 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to the Board as detailed below:

- Community Safety and Protection;
- Risk and Emergency Planning;
- Drug and Alcohol Action;
- Domestic Violence; and
- Housing.

The reports 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.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 2 performance management report be received and noted.

Meeting ended at 7.26 p.m.

REPORT TO:	Housing & Safer Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	9 March 2026
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**

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	9 March 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Adult Services
PORTFOLIO:	Health & Wellbeing
SUBJECT:	Housing Solutions Performance Update
WARD(S):	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Board of the Homelessness service provision administered by the Housing Solutions Team, to include performance and contributing factors affecting service delivery.
- 1.2 The report will evidence the statistics during the past three years to demonstrate the gradual increase in homelessness and prevention.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Housing Solutions Team

The Housing Solutions Team are responsible for the homelessness administration and must be fully compliant with the homelessness legislation. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was implemented in April 2018, which changed the administration process and had a vast impact upon the team. The purpose of the Act was to place further emphasis upon prevention and early intervention to reduce homelessness.

- 3.1.1 The legislation also affected the decision-making process, whereby, clients threatened with homelessness are placed under relief for 56 days, subsequently, the officer cannot issue the homelessness decision until after this period. Subsequently, this resulted in an increase in demand for temporary accommodation.
- 3.1.2 The aim of the Housing Solutions Team is to assist and prevent people who are threatened with homelessness in Halton. To provide a community focussed and accessible service to ensure people know where and how they can seek help and assistance to prevent them becoming homeless and receive a quality and confidential housing options service.
- 3.1.3 Each officer within the team has their own specialism and works closely with the designated client group. Each of the officers provide drop-in advice

sessions across the Borough, to ensure the service is accessible and provides a less formal setting for vulnerable clients. It also allows officers to work directly with hard-to-reach clients and break down formal communication barriers. The approach has been recognised as best practice, with many Local Authorities now applying a similar approach.

3.2 **Staffing**

3.2.1 The team are managing the increased demand, although the additional prevention activity is time intensive. Nationally there has been an increase in homelessness review appeals and legal challenges, which has been jointly addressed with Legal services. Other issues have impacted the team, including staff sickness absence and recruitment, resulting in some agency staff usage. However, by the end of 2025 all vacancies had been filled and the team are now at full capacity, resulting in no further agency usage.

3.2.2 The team work directly with vulnerable clients and fully utilise the prevention fund to support clients to remain in their homes or secure alternative accommodation. Halton was one of a few Local Authorities that was awarded the highest grant funding across the country for 2025/26 owing to the high level of prevention activity and excellent outcomes achieved.

3.3 **Homelessness Performance**

Despite some challenges the service has continued to provide a high-quality offer with excellent outcomes, alongside the continual flow of homelessness presentations. The team have continued to prevent and reduce homelessness, provide specialist advice and support as well as working to reduce the reliance on hotel usage. The team facilitate a number of prevention measures to mitigate tenancy re-possession and enable clients to remain within their home, if safe to do so.

3.3.1 There is a robust process in place to support vulnerable households which has proven very successful. The number of referrals received for clients facing repossession was 395, with 287 being prevented, resulting in 11 evictions, which were mainly due to none engagement.

3.3.2 The table below gives a comparison over the last three years, further illustrating the level of prevention activity achieved.

3.3.3

YEAR	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Apr 2025 – Dec 2026
Presentations	3156	3382	3552	2925
Relief status	1180	852	890	982

Prevention	1423	1556	1969	1853
Statutory Homeless	433	660	417	364

3.4 Temporary Accommodation

The team have continued to work towards sourcing temporary accommodation options, in order to avoid hotel usage, which is always a last resort. Hotels are on occasion required to meet individual needs or local authority statutory requirements. There is a plan in place to manage the move-on transition from temporary hostel and/or permanent accommodation to free up availability within commissioned services to support.

- 3.4.1 The table illustrates the reliance upon hotel usage during the past three years. The figures are higher for 2022, as a result of the 'everyone in' approach during covid, which was predominantly for single clients. There also continues to be an increase in families being placed in hotels, which is due to the increase in Section 21 'no fault notices' being issued by landlords. However, due to the prevention activity mentioned above, there has been a decrease.

YEAR	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Apr 2025 – Dec 2026
Placement	114	68	110	74
Total Families	47	28	62	53
Total Singles	67	40	48	21

- 3.4.2 Halton has taken a robust approach to tackling homelessness and meeting the needs of vulnerable homelessness clients. The main objective is to continue to review the housing provision available within the Borough to ensure increased demand can be met. Details of commissioned and leased temporary accommodation provision within the Borough is as follows.

3.4.3 Commissioned Services

Brennan Lodge, Widnes	39 self-contained units	Single Clients
Halton Lodge, Runcorn	66 self-contained units Inc 3 sit up spaces	Single Clients Rough Sleepers
Grangeway Court, Runcorn	14 self-Contained units	Families

Maya Court, Widnes	12 self-contained units	Victims of Domestic Abuse
NSAP Market & Lacey Street, Widnes	4 self-contained apartments	Rough sleepers / Offenders

3.4.4 **None Commissioned**

Columba Hall, Widnes	16 self-contained apartment	Families
Shared Accommodation, Runcorn	3 shared house units	Singles 3 Males
Shared Accommodation Widnes	8 shared house units	Singles 4 Females 4 Males
Victoria Street	11 Self-contained apartments	Move on accommodation Singles and Families

3.5 **Rough Sleeping**

Halton is committed to providing accommodation for all homeless clients that are rough sleeping or at imminent risk of homelessness. The Local Authority commission Whitechapel to deliver the outreach service and conduct early morning area checks daily to verify rough sleepers. The support officers also support the cohort with move on options, which has proven successful in retaining low rough sleeper figures.

- 3.5.1 The Local Authority has also increased the temporary crash pad provision for rough sleepers from three units to seven. The purpose is to identify rough sleepers and encourage them to move into commissioned services. The officers provide additional support to clients to engage with agencies and make positive lifestyle choices to help secure move on accommodation to provide stability. Halton has been identified as best practice for the applied process and positive partnership working to achieve successful outcomes.

3.6 **Future Challenges**

The Local Authority like most Authorities across the country continue to face challenges around homelessness.

3.6.1 S21 Notice Seeking Possession / Eviction

Due to economic pressure, some households struggle to afford to remain within their properties and therefore, can be threatened with homelessness. However, the introduction of the Renters Rights Act, which is due to be implemented in May 2026, will abolish section 21 notices, with further grounds that landlords will need to comply with prior to issuing Section 8 notices. This should have an impact on the level of private sector evictions, which will support officers to engage with landlords to seek positive resolutions for clients.

3.6.2 Private & Social Housing

During the past twelve months the Local Authority has seen an increase in the level of clients approaching the Housing Solutions Team for support and assistance, as many landlords pursue legal possession of their properties. The table below illustrates the level of repossession notices issued within the social, private, and home ownership sectors during past two years.

YEAR	2023/2024	2024/2025	Apr 2025 – Dec 2026
Home Ownership	42	52	69
Private Rented	336	384	399
Registered Social Landlord	271	499	395

3.6.3 Within the Housing Solutions Team there is a designated officer who is actively involved in the court process. The officer works directly with lenders to reach an agreement that will allow the clients to remain within their home. The Mortgage Rescue Scheme and possession process has been identified as a priority within the prevention funding identified below, which will be allocated to assist homeowners and tenants. There has been a recent example in which a Halton resident was supported by Housing Solutions, Occupational Therapy and Social work team to find suitable accommodation due to mortgage rescue. Working with Property Pool Plus a Halton Housing property was identified and adapted to meet his complex needs. He has recently moved into the new property is delighted with his new home and support he was given from the teams in HBC.

3.6.4 The Home Ownership possession numbers are low in comparison with other housing sectors. However, we do anticipate that affordability for many homeowners and households will prove to be a major factor to clients losing their homes. The level of prevention activity has been successful, with a vast reduction in evictions. Eg, Homeownership referrals were 69, with 53 being prevented and the remainder suspended at court, resulting in zero evictions. The tables illustrate the level of prevention activity within appendix 1.

3.6.7 Staff are working with clients and landlords in registered social landlord properties to address issues and utilise the prevention fund to offset arrears, save the tenancy and prevent homelessness, ultimately preventing the repossession.

3.6.8 Further discussions are ongoing with the private rented sector to encourage them to work directly with the Local Authority, to increase the accommodation options available and offer clients choice. There are a number of prevention incentives available, to offer reassurance to the landlords and to strive to address and reduce future homelessness.

- Bond Guarantee Scheme
- HBC will act as guarantor.
- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Prevention Fund – Rent in advance, Deposits. Credit Check

- GIFT – Furniture package.

3.6.9 The Local Authority also holds a private landlord forum on a quarterly basis, which is well attended. Within the team there is a Landlord Accreditation Officer who is liaising with private landlords and letting agents to encourage engagement, which to date has resulted in a number of landlords approaching the service looking to work with the Local Authority to offer up accommodation for vulnerable households.

3.7 Registered Social Landlords

There is a robust process in place with the registered social landlords that notifies the housing solutions adviser at an early stage of pending action. The process has proven successful with the officer achieving positive outcomes to reduce evictions and have further negotiations to enable the client to remain within their home. The Level of activity during April 2025 – Dec 2026 contained within Appendix 1

3.7.1 The CAB Debt Advice officer has also been a positive addition to the Housing Solutions Team. The debt officer works closely with the housing solutions adviser who deals with social rent arrears, homeowners, and court action. Both officers address the arrears, housing, and debt management issues in order to support the client to sustain their tenancies. To date, the CAB officer has achieved the following outcomes.

Actions	Achievements
Clients Helped	310
Social Landlord debts written off	£562,704
Homeowner saved homes – written off debts	£727,947
Total Debts written off	£1,602.322 Average of £4,651.15 per client
Former Tenancy arrears written off	£43,620

3.8 Discontinuation Notices

The Local Authority continues to see an increase in the discontinuation notices being issues by the Home Office to asylum seekers/refugees. There is a designated officer who liaises directly with Serco to ensure all client referrals are registered at the earliest stage of the notice. The officers work to ensure all asylum seekers awarded positive refugee status are supported and advised accordingly, to source accommodation and access all housing options and services available.

3.8.1 The main challenge is that asylum seekers who receive a positive decision to remain do not necessarily meet the homelessness criteria, but this is not always understood. It can cause confusion for clients and therefore it has been raised with the Home Office and Serco. The commissioned British Red Cross officer works across all agencies, to assist and support asylum seekers within

the Borough. The Housing Solutions officer conducts weekly drop-in advice sessions within the voluntary sector, to offer early intervention measures and coordinate the level of agency engagement. This has increased communication and partnership working, which has reduced crisis led presentations. The officer will advise clients accordingly to access all housing options and services and support them throughout the process.

3.9 Funding

The Government confirmed the allocation of a key element of the overall investment: funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which is available to local authorities in 2026/2027 to support and deliver services to prevent and tackle homelessness. The purpose of the Homelessness Prevention Grant is to give local authorities control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness, and to deliver the following priorities:

Funding Grant	Initiative	Total Award
Homelessness Grant	Homelessness Prevention Domestic Abuse	£730,000 £150,000
Rough Sleeper Grant	Accommodation / Support	£169,700
Trailblazer Grant	Early Intervention Officer	£39,000
AFEO Grant	Offender Co-ordinator	£60,000

3.9.1 The AFEO funding introduced a new co-ordinator post in 2021/22 to work across offender services and improve service delivery. The post has achieved successful outcomes, resulting in a vast improvement in communication, partnership working and a consistent approach as Local Authority services. Subsequently, no offender has been released back to Halton without a full pathway plan and accommodation route. The service has been deemed best practice, and the remaining Liverpool City Region Local Authorities have recently introduced the same approach.

3.9.2 Engagement with partner agencies is ongoing; to support and advise all client groups to source suitable accommodation. The aim is to assist clients to achieve positive outcomes and promote lifestyle change. Communication and teamwork between service agencies is excellent, enabling a quick response and implemented action to address crisis issues.

3.9.3 The Government recognises that there is not one single solution to end homelessness, and a strategic approach to tackling the causes of homelessness and the health and well-being of vulnerable client groups is as important as the supply of affordable homes and supported housing.

3.10 Homelessness Priorities 2026/27

The MHCLG expect the funding allocation to be specifically used to maximise upstream homelessness prevention for low-income clients to secure and retain suitable accommodation. The funding priorities for 2026/27 will be allocated to meet the needs of all clients as detailed below.

PRIORITY	REASON	PURPOSE
Priority 1	Homelessness Prevention	Prevention Incentives Social / Private Rent arrears support Rent in Advance / Deposits LA Guarantor service Create new tenancy agreement. Etc
Priority 2	Reduce Temporary accommodation	Reduce hotel usage. Ensure families are not placed within hotels for more than 6 weeks. Increase suitable temporary provision for vulnerable households
Priority 3	Reduce Rough Sleeping	Provide suitable short/long term accommodation provision. Efficient outreach support services Access to health provision Move on accommodation – sustainability and support
Priority 4	Affordability	Assist vulnerable households to maximise income. Support social, private and homeowners with accrued arrears to retain tenancies / property.
Priority 5	Exceptional Circumstances, e.g. Hoarders	Hoarding - Fund clean-up process to support vulnerable clients and save tenancies. Hospital Discharge – Early intervention Reduce arrears.

3.11 **Property Pool Plus**

The Property Pool Plus (PPP) Housing Allocations Scheme is a jointly administered scheme across the five Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral. The scheme has been in operation since July 2012.

- 3.11.1 The scheme is a sub-regional scheme which enables people seeking social and affordable housing to register on-line. Applicants are required to meet a range of eligibility and qualification criteria relating to issues such as immigration status, local connection, previous tenancy conduct, acceptable behaviour, home ownership, and savings.
- 3.11.2 PPP operates on a Choice Based Lettings model whereby properties becoming available for letting are advertised online for registered applicants to express an interest (bid), subject to meeting the property eligibility criteria e.g. property size.
- 3.11.3 The volume of work that HH have undertaken on our behalf, during April 2025, is detailed below. Of the successful allocations, 411 were accommodated

within HH properties, the remainder were allocated places in a number of different housing associations across the Borough.

Housing Register	Total
LCR Received Applications	3,.009
HH Registered Active for Period	7819
Rehoused	705
Rehouse into HH Properties	411

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no policy implications associated with the information within this report. Although the potential solutions for some of the issues highlighted may lead to changes in the future.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Financial implications have been identified, due to the reliance upon hotel usage, which will have a significant impact upon local budgets.

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

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

Protect the most vulnerable households, as many are reliant upon accessing social housing to meet their housing needs. Facilitate a choice-based lettings scheme to promote access to suitable social housing, to promote stability, thus improving health and wellbeing, resulting in greater independence!

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

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity.

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

Housing support services provided to young people, within both supported accommodation and their own home, ensure they are empowered to access, maintain existing education, training, health services, and support networks.

The Housing Solutions Team have a statutory duty to accommodate people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. There is a designated youth officer within the Housing Solutions Team, who works directly with young people, to address their needs and refer into the relevant services. The officer will strive to ensure that young people are supported, safe and accommodated within a secure environment.

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

The services in place will tackle inequality and further identify that those most in need will be awarded priority and support to secure social housing.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None at this stage

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

The local authority has a statutory duty to administer homelessness and support clients threatened with homelessness. The process and service options allow clients choice to secure social housing, therefore promote community stability within the Borough.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

None at this stage

8.0 **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES**

The equality implications have been identified and mitigated.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

None at this stage

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
N/a		

Appendix 1

Repossession Notice Activity**Homeowners Statistics Apr 2025 – Dec 2026**

Action	Total Prevented
Referrals	69
Evictions Prevented	53
Sold Properties to prevent eviction	0
Rehoused prior to eviction	0
Successful court action Adj/SPO to save property	16

Social Housing Referral Statistics Apr 2025 – Dec 2026

Action	Total Prevented
Referrals	395
Prevention Eviction	287
Evictions	11
Funding Applications	117
Total costs	£97,718
Successful court action Adj/SPO save tenancies	97
Total Eviction Loss	11

Appendix 2

	Urgent/ highest priority housing need (eg Band A or 1)	High priority housing need (eg Band B or 2)	Medium priority/ identified housing need (eg Band C or 3)	Low priority/ no housing need (eg Band D or 4)	No assessed Need / Reduced Priority
Name of Band (eg 1, 2, A, B)					
2018-19 Total number of allocations	124	411	210	44	97
2018-19 Number in band at end of financial year	89	839	896	598	672
2019-20 Total number of allocations	209	431	129	23	44
2019-20 Number in band at end of financial year	154	1029	937	662	629(E) +81(F)
2020-21 Total number of allocations	262	296	65	19	34
2020-21 Number in band at end of financial year	232	1292	1150	733	771(E) + 71 (F)
2021-22 Total number of allocations	254	239	35	6	26
2021-22 Number in band at end of financial year	278	1284	1071	754	710 (E) + 57 (F)
2022-23 Total number of allocations	319	222	45	14	20
2022-23 Number in band at end of financial year	227	1246	1113	803	749 (E) + 45 (F)
2023-24 Total number of allocations	337	233	45	9	5
2023-24 Number in band at end of financial year	320	1134	1258	N/A New banding structure (A- C)	Band D refusals to be implemented
2024-25 Total number of allocations	311	222	42	2	2
2024-25 Number in band at end of financial year	348	1052	1139	N/A New banding structure (A- C)	Band D refusals to be implemented
Apr – Dec 2025 Total number of allocations so far	At end of Q2 – 88	At end of Q2 - 71	At end of Q2 - 20	N/A New banding structure (A- C)	Band D refusals to be implemented
2025 Current number in band	311	1030	1102	N/A New banding structure (A- C)	Band D refusals to be implemented

REPORT TO:	Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	9 th March 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Director of Public Health
PORTFOLIO:	Housing and Environmental Sustainability
SUBJECT:	The Renters Rights Act 2025 – Update on implementation.
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the implementation of the Renters Rights Act 2025

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 On the 16th September 2025 the board received a report providing an update on Housing Standards matters. This report included a summary of new measures proposed by the Government in the Renters Rights Bill.
- 3.2 The Bill contained a number of measures to improve the rights of tenants and the condition of properties within the private rented sector.
- 3.3 On the 27th October 2025 the bill received Royal Assent and became the Renters Rights Act 2025
- 3.5 The government have now published a timetable for implementation of the substantive measures within the Act. These measures will be implemented in 3 Phases commencing in May 2026 and are set out in section 4 below.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 **Phase 1** The following provisions relating to improved rights and security for tenants will come into force from 1st May 2026
- 4.2 **Abolish Section 21 “no fault” evictions.**
Landlords will no longer be able to evict tenants without a reason. Landlords will only be able to seek possession of property for a valid reason. E.g. significant rent arrears or anti-social behaviour. Landlords must follow a set legal process to secure possession.

4.3 **Introduce assured periodic tenancies.**

Tenancies in the private rental sector will no longer be subject to minimum terms. This means a tenant will be able to stay in the property as long they want or until a landlord follows the legal possession process for a valid reason.

4.4 **Limit rent increases to once per year.**

Landlords will only be able to increase rent once per year and must follow a set legal process providing at least 2 months notice. Rent increases must be in line with market rates. A tenant will be able to challenge any increase that is above market rate.

4.5 **Ban rental bidding and rent in advance.**

Landlords and agents will not be able to request more than one month rent in advance and will not be able to encourage rental bidding by requesting or accepting offers in excess of the advertised market rent.

4.6 **Ban discriminatory letting practices.**

Landlord and letting agents will not be able to do anything that might discriminate against potential tenants for example because they have children or receive benefits.

4.7 **New Enforcement Powers.**

Councils have been provided with new and enhanced powers to investigate offences and enforce the provisions. These new powers came into force on 27th December 2025 and will complement existing powers to prevent harassment and illegal eviction. Enforcement of the provisions will be carried by the councils Environmental Health department who will continue to work closely with the councils Housing Solutions Team who work with landlords and tenants to provide tenancy support and prevent homelessness.

4.8 **Phase 2 from late 2026**

Phase 2 will be introduced in 2 stages beginning in late 2026.

4.9 **Phase 2 Stage 1 –Database of Private Sector Landlords**

In late 2026 the government will begin the roll out of a database to Private sector landlords and local Councils. It will be mandatory for all landlords to register on the database, and a fee will be charged. It will be illegal for a landlord to rent a property if both the property and landlord are not registered on the database. Councils will have access to the database which will provide greater insight and transparency into the private rental property market in the area. Information on the database will include:

- Landlord contact details.
- Full details of property including property type, number of rooms, number of tenants
- Safety Information such as Gas, Electrical and Energy certification.

4.10 **Phase 2 Stage 2 – Late 2026 to 2028 - Private Sector Landlord Ombudsman**

The government will create a Private Sector Landlord Ombudsman to consider and resolve disputes between landlords and tenants. The secretary of state will first choose a scheme administrator. Once the scheme is established all landlords will be required to become members. The Government have stated they expect the scheme to be open in 2028.

4.11 **Phase 3 – Implementing a Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector.**

These proposals are anticipated much further into the future and in some cases, implementation remains subject to consultation. New minimum Energy Efficiency standards for Private rental property are not anticipated until 2030 and a new decent home standards for the Private Rental Sector is not anticipated until 2035 or 2037.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The council has received a small new burdens payment of £30k for 25/26 to support enforcement of the renters rights bill. A further payment is expected for 26/27. It is difficult to predict the current demand for enforcement activity. The one-off in year funds received so far are insufficient to fund a further post and so enforcement activity and work with landlords and tenants will need to be undertaken within existing resources. It is currently unclear if councils will receive any fees associated with landlords registering on the new landlord database.

5.2 The new and existing enforcement powers provide for the service of Civil Penalty notices. There is no minimum penalty but a maximum of £40,000 is set for more serious and persistent offending. Civil penalty notices are an alternative to prosecution. Local council's will be able to retain civil penalty notice fees which can be used to fund housing services including enforcement. However, at this stage it is not possible to predict compliance rates and therefore the potential income from penalty notices. Any income will also be dependent on payment or civil recovery. Therefore, the income from civil penalties is uncertain and at this stage does not form a reliable basis to fund additional staffing resources.

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

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

The new renters' rights bill provisions, alongside the borough's housing strategy, are intended to provide safe healthy and sustainable homes to ensure residents can live independently for longer in their own home.

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

The provisions of the renters' right bill aim at addressing problems with

the current private sector letting market. Addressing these issues through tenancy and rental reforms will ensure tenants and responsible landlords are protected from the activities of irresponsible and unfair letting practices.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The new renters' rights bill provisions, alongside the borough's housing strategy, are intended to provide safe healthy and sustainable family homes.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

The renters rights' bill provisions, alongside the borough's housing strategy, will ensure those who are unable to buy their own property, or secure a housing association home, will be provided with the same protections as social landlord tenants. Tenants in the private sector will benefit from more secure tenure and will be protected from unfair and discriminatory rental practices.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

Provisions within the renters rights bill and the housing strategy are aimed at improving the environmental sustainability of homes through improved energy efficiency. The government is currently consulting on increasing the minimum energy efficiency standard for private rental properties to Band C by 2030.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

Providing more secure tenancies, and improved property standards, will enable tenants to remain within their established communities near family, schools and their place of work, and avoid the upheaval caused by short term tenancy agreements and no-fault evictions.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 It is not possible to fully assess the risk from these measures. The likely demand for interventions is unknown, and the current funding provided by Government is insufficient to fund further posts. Therefore, the Council's response to the new provisions will need to be funded through existing resources.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The provisions in the renters' rights bill are intended to address discriminatory rental practices and ensure that tenants in the private rental sector are provided with the same rights and protections as tenants in the social rented sector.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The future Improvements to energy efficiency of homes to reduce fossil fuel consumption will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	9 th March 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Director of Public Health
PORTFOLIO:	Housing and Environmental Sustainability
SUBJECT:	Private rented sector – proposal to introduce selective licensing in 6 areas.
WARD(S)	Central and Westbank Appleton Mersey and Weston Bridgewater Highfield Halton Lea

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposal to introduce selective licensing of private rental properties in 6 areas of the borough and commence public consultation on this scheme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) The Board endorse the proposal to introduce selective licensing in 6 areas of the borough and for detailed scheme documents to be drawn up for consultation; and
- 3) A report be taken to Executive Board requesting approval to commence consultation on the proposed scheme.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In September 2022 the Environment & Urban Renewal PPB resolved to form a working party of members to consider policy to address the proliferation and standards of Houses in Multiple Occupation. This followed concerns raised by elected members about anti social behaviour and property standards.

3.2 An outcome of the working party was a borough wide study, produced by Metastreet, an external housing consultancy, to provide a detailed understanding of the condition and impacts of the boroughs entire private sector housing stock including HMO's.

3.3 In September 2024 the Environment & Urban Renewal PPB received a report

setting out the outcomes of the working party including the findings of stock condition and impacts study. The report identified that 3 wards, Central & West Bank, Mersey & Weston and Appleton had a higher than average percentage of private rental properties. The report also identified a higher incidence of property related complaints and predicted property hazards in those wards. The report recommended that future interventions to improve property standards were focussed on those wards. Members endorsed the proposal that further interventions to improve standards in the Private Rental Sector were taken forward and considered during the development of the borough wide housing strategy.

- 3.4 In December 2025 the Council adopted the Housing Strategy. During the development of this strategy the council commissioned a further study from Arc 4 to assess the evidence to support selective licensing in certain areas as a means to address member concerns around property standards and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.5 Under the Housing Act 2004 a local housing authority can designate all or part of its area as subject to selective licensing. Within that area all private rental properties must be licensed by the local authority. There are a limited number of exemptions including larger HMO properties that are already subject to mandatory licensing.
- 3.6 The purpose of selective licensing is to address specific problems defined within the Act. These problems are:
 - Low Housing Demand
 - Anti- social behaviour
 - Poor housing conditions
 - High levels of migration
 - High Level of deprivation
 - High level of crime
- 3.7 In December 2024 the government introduced a new general approval removing the need for local authorities to seek approval from the Secretary of State for licensing schemes of any size. Previously schemes including more than 20% of the council's housing stock required government approval.
- 3.8 However, all selective licensing schemes must still comply with the statutory requirements set out in the Housing Act. Designations relating to Housing Conditions, Deprivation, Migration and Crime may only be considered in areas with a high proportion of housing in the private rental sector. This is currently set at 19%.
- 3.9 The local authority must consult stakeholders including tenants, landlords and agents for a period of at least 10 weeks and consider the responses to this consultation in any final scheme.
- 3.10 The review of evidence undertaken by Arc4 identified 4 wards with a high percentage of private rental property (over 19%). These wards also ranked highest when assessed against 18 indicators for poor property conditions,

including predicted hazards, property age (pre 1919 and pre-1944) and Energy efficiency.

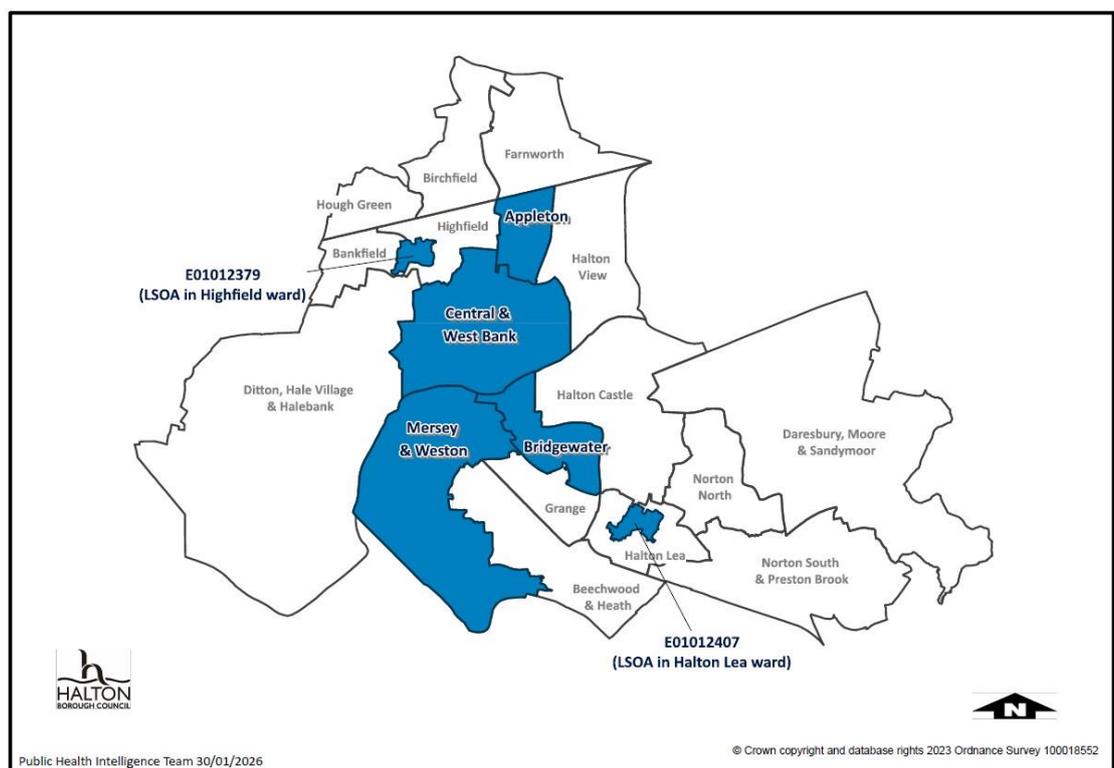
- 3.11 Although the other wards in Halton have lower levels of private rental property there are some further geographical areas within these wards with levels of private rental property above 19%. These areas include 2 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) within Halton Lea and Highfield wards. These 2 LSOA's with high levels of private rental properties also rank highest of all LSOA's in the borough for the 18 indicators of poor property conditions.
- 3.12 Lower Super Output Areas are small geographical areas which were created by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and are mainly used for census purposes. They enable statistical comparisons of geographical areas of similar population sizes.
- 3.13 A selective licensing scheme in these 4 wards and 2 LSOA's would seek to ensure that property conditions in the private rental sector are improved and maintained and comply with all housing standards requirements.
- 3.14 Central & Westbank, Appleton and Mersey & Weston wards and the 2 LSOA's in Highfield and Halton Lea wards are also amongst the boroughs most deprived wards and LSOA's. Deprivation significantly affects health inequalities with individuals in deprived areas experiencing worse health outcomes and a higher prevalence of chronic health conditions than those in least deprived areas. A selective licensing scheme in those 5 areas would therefore seek to reduce the risk of housing being a source of health inequalities.
- 3.15 Whilst there is some evidence of higher ASB and Crime rates in Central and Westbank, Appleton and Mersey & Weston the evidence is not conclusive that ASB and Crime is related directly to private rental property in those areas. The town centres of Runcorn and Widnes are within those wards and this will account for some of the ASB and crime figures. It was also noted that ASB rates are higher in wards with lower levels of private rental property.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Based on the evidence available it is proposed to introduce a selective licensing scheme in 4 wards and 2 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in the borough. Table 1 below specifies the areas proposed, the number of properties implicated and the objective for the selective licensing scheme. The map below highlights the areas to be included.

Table 1 Scheme numbers of objectives

Area	Total Properties	Total PRS	PRS%	Scheme objective
Central & West Bank ward	3060	660	22%	Property conditions Deprivation
Appleton Ward	3063	798	26%	Property conditions Deprivation
Mersey & Weston Ward	3803	1054	28%	Property conditions Deprivation
Bridgwater Ward	3439	796	23%	Property conditions
LSOA E01012379 (Highfield)	769	177	23%	Property conditions Deprivation
LSOA E01012407 (Halton Lea)	892	228	26%	Property conditions Deprivation

Map 1 Proposed selective licensing areas.

- 4.2 There is insufficient evidence at this stage to support the introduction of a scheme to address crime and anti social behaviour in any of the Councils wards. This will be kept under review.
- 4.3 The introduction of a selective licensing scheme will enable the council to proactively check private rental properties to ensure they reach the required

standard, particularly in areas with the oldest housing stock. The current system relies on tenants reporting disrepair to the council. Whilst the Renters Rights Act 2025 provides some improved tenancy protections for tenants, which will come into force in May 2026, further measures to improve property standards such as a decent homes standard are not due to come into force until 2035.

- 4.4 It is estimated there are 3,713 private rental households within the 6 areas proposed. Based on 2021 census data there are 8,019 private rental households in the borough. Therefore, the proposed scheme includes 38% of the borough's private rental households. As set out in section 3.7 the council no longer requires permission from the Secretary of State to introduce a scheme of this scale in the proposed areas.
- 4.5 Councils can charge a fee for the license which can be used to fund the scheme. Licenses remain valid for a 5 year period. It is proposed to offer a discount for properties with high energy efficiency ratings, and landlord who support the council meeting it homelessness duties.
- 4.6 Licenses will specify a number of conditions that license holders must comply with to ensure the scheme fulfils its objectives. These conditions will be set out in the consultation document. It is proposed to request that Executive Board delegate the power to determine appropriate conditions to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing and Environmental Sustainability.
- 4.7 The introduction of selective licensing is a highly specialist areas of housing law. In the interests of continuity and expediency It is proposed that Arc 4 who supported the council with the production of the housing strategy and undertook the work to establish the evidence base for selective licensing be commissioned to draw up a detailed consultation document and support the consultation process. This work will be commissioned in accordance with the council's procurement protocols.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The council can charge fees for selective licenses. These fees should be used to fund the selective license scheme. It is intended that Halton's scheme will be cost neutral in that the fees will finance the scheme without requiring additional resources. There are likely to be some up-front fees associated with set up that will be recovered from fees. A license fee of around £550 is proposed. Licenses last for a period of 5 years. Based on the number of properties subject to the scheme total income from fees over the period is projected to be around £2m this will provide £400,000 per annum for staffing and other resources to establish and manage the scheme over the 5 years.

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

- 6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater

Independence

The proposed scheme aims to improve and maintain standards in the private rental sector to ensure housing provides a safe and healthy living environment for residents.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

None

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The proposed scheme aims to improve and maintain standards in the private rental sector to ensure housing provides a safe and healthy living environment for residents.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

The scheme is intended to prevent housing from being a source of health inequalities by improving and maintaining the standard of private rental housing in the boroughs most deprived areas.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

Ensuring that properties meet the required minimum energy efficiency rating helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the cost of heating homes.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

Improving standards in the private rental sector will contribute to safer and more attractive neighbourhoods and have a wider benefit to community safety and wellbeing.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The council will need to fully consider the consultation responses from stakeholder groups to ensure any concerns raised by these parties are addressed. The Renters Rights Act 2025 prevents landlords from increasing rents above market rates which will help prevent the cost of the license fees being passed on to tenants. In any case the cost of the license fee equates to just over £100 per year and is set to recover the cost of running the scheme.

7.2 Proposals in the Renters Rights Bill to introduce a decent homes standard for the private rental sector will not come into force until 2035. This scheme will enable the Council to proactively ensure that housing conditions in the private rental sector are maintained and improved, particularly in areas with the borough's oldest housing stock. The scheme will be self financing with the costs covered by licenses fees.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The scheme is intended to prevent housing conditions from being a source of health inequalities and is targeted at areas of high deprivation.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The scheme will enable the council to proactively ensure that private rental properties in the license scheme area meet the required energy efficiency standards.

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

'None under the meaning of the Act.'

REPORT TO:	Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	9 th March 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Community Safety
SUBJECT:	Protect Duty (Protection of Premises Act)
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Protect Duty of the Protection of Premises Act and updates on Halton Borough Council's progress in preparing for compliance.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Board:

- 1) endorses the continuation of work to progress towards compliance with the Protect Duty and the Protection of Premises Act requirements; and
- 2) notes that progress will continue to be monitored and reported through the appropriate governance arrangements.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Following Royal Assent on 3 April 2025, Martyn's Law is now established in legislation as the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. The Government has confirmed an implementation period of at least 24 months before legal requirements are enforced, with statutory guidance expected in Summer 2026. Enforcement is anticipated from 2027.

3.2 Based on the most recent Home Office and ProtectUK publications, the framework now clearly defines two legal tiers. The duty applies to in-scope premises and events, determined by capacity thresholds:

3.3 **Standard Tier** (200–799 people)
Focuses on preparedness measures, including staff training, clear action plans for evacuation/lockdown, and basic situational readiness. No physical security alterations are required at this tier.

- 3.4 **Enhanced Tier** (800+ people or qualifying events)
Requires both preparedness and proportionate protective security measures, informed by risk assessments. Enhanced events also include “qualifying events” expecting 800+ attendees, even if not held at an enhanced premises.
- 3.5 Premises fall within the scope of the act if they meet the criteria set out in the legislation, including being publicly accessible and used for one of the categories listed in schedule 1 (e.g., entertainment, retail, hospitality, education, leisure, healthcare, places of worship). Not all public buildings are automatically in scope; eligibility depends on the statutory criteria and the capacity thresholds.
- 3.6 The duty applies to the “responsible person”, defined as:
- the organisation/person with control of a premises, or
 - the organiser of a qualifying event (not necessarily the premises owner).

This is a critical change from earlier consultations: responsibility may fall on either party depending on control, not automatically the premises controller.

- 3.7 Core requirements specify while final statutory guidance is pending, the act specifies that responsible persons must:
- Ensure preparedness procedures are in place (evacuation, invacuation, lockdown).
 - Ensure staff awareness training (e.g., ACT Awareness).
 - Maintain communication and co-ordination plans.
 - For enhanced-tier premises/events, consider proportionate protective security measures, justified and documented via risk assessments.

While organisations should prepare, no compliance duties apply until the act formally comes into force following the implementation period and statutory guidance publication.

- 3.8 Governance and Oversight - a multi-service Protect Duty Working Group continues to meet quarterly to co-ordinate the Council’s approach. Membership includes Community Safety, Property Services, Emergency Planning, Leisure, Environmental Health, Health & Safety, Catering/Stadium, and Insurance. The group demonstrates cross-directorate engagement and Integration with Event Safety (HESAG) through a standing Protect agenda item.
- 3.9 Accountability will be maintained through internal audit reviews, annual compliance reporting to Corporate Management Team, and external scrutiny where required. The Council will also engage with regional resilience forums and national counter-terrorism networks to ensure alignment with best practice and evolving guidance.
- 3.10 A Designated Officer will be responsible for maintaining a central

compliance register, tracking actions, and ensuring that all relevant premises and events are assessed and monitored in accordance with the legislation.

3.11 Responsibility for ensuring compliance with Protection of Premises act in relation to public events will be embedded within the Council's existing Halton Events Safety Advisory Group (HESAG) arrangements. HESAG is chaired by the Council and comprises of representatives from emergency services and relevant stakeholders, will incorporate Protect Duty compliance as a standing agenda item. Event organisers will be required to demonstrate that appropriate risk assessments, staff training, and protective security measures are in place in line with the Act. The Protect Duty Compliance Officer will act as the Council's lead advisor on Martyn's Law within the SAG, ensuring that all qualifying events are scrutinised for compliance and that learning from events is captured and shared across the partnership.

3.12 **Progress to date**

3.13 Identification of buildings in scope – Property Services have supplied occupancy figures for all relevant Council buildings, forming the basis of scoping work to determine the resource required. All Council buildings and events are expected to require compliance, including community centres, markets and open-space sites.

3.14 Resource – it has been identified that a resource is required to lead and co-ordinate the Council's compliance activities, ensure that risk assessments and protection plans are developed for all relevant premises, provide specialist advice to services and third-party event organisers, and liaise with national agencies such as Counter Terrorism Policing and the Home Office. Recruitment for an Officer to temporarily take on additional duties to fulfil are underway anticipating this will support understanding and establishing necessary arrangements, as far as possible, requirements are absorbed as business as usual and informs future needs.

3.15 Development of Risk Assessment Templates - Leisure's Protect-aligned risk assessment template has been shared and will form the basis of a standardised corporate approach.

3.16 Engagement With Neighbouring Authorities – neighbouring local authorities have working groups in earlier stages of development.

3.17 Next Steps –

Short-Term (next 3–6 months)

- Finalise and circulate the Protect Duty scoping report.
- Confirm the Protect Duty Lead role and establish an ACT inbox for reporting vulnerabilities.
- Standardise hire agreements and incorporate Protect

responsibilities.

- Ensure representation is correct at the subgroup working group.
- Develop training pathways using ProtectUK and ACT e-learning.

3.18 **Medium-Term**

- Conduct building-level Protect risk assessments across all Council facilities.
- Develop a corporate Protect policy and implementation plan.
- Provide training/workshops for schools and community venues.
- Promote counter terrorism awareness campaigns to the public and staff.

3.19 **Long-Term**

- Secure sustainable funding for compliance measures.
- Embed counter-terrorism-aware design principles in all planning and development activities.
- Integrate Protect Duty responsibilities into job roles across key frontline services.

3.20 The Council has made strong early progress towards compliance with the Protect Duty through proactive governance, cross-service working, benchmarking, and early scoping work. Significant challenges remain, particularly around resourcing, the scale of assets in scope, and uncertainty in national guidance however, the foundations are in place.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The proposed action aligns with the Council's existing duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and national counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST), particularly the "Protect" and "Prepare" strands.

4.2 It supports the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 in relation to public venues.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Costs associated with the resource (additional duties for a lead office have been absorbed within the Community and Greenspace division.

5.2 Additional costs such as training and incident response equipment may be identified during implementation and will be subject to separate business case approval.

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

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

The work detailed in this report supports public safety and confidence, ensuring that venues are prepared to respond to incidents and safeguard the public.

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

By ensuring the safety of public venues and events, the Council can continue to support safe and thriving commercial and cultural environments.

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

The work detailed in this report will help ensure that public spaces and family-friendly events are secure and welcoming, particularly during periods of high footfall.

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

Protective measures will be applied equitably across the borough, ensuring all residents have access to safe spaces and events.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

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

The role directly supports the protection of the public realm and enhances community confidence in the Council's ability to manage risks effectively.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Final statutory guidance will not be published until Summer 2026, meaning that some requirements may change. This creates a risk of duplication of effort or the need to revise early work.

7.2 Delivering the Protect Duty across a large and diverse estate will require ongoing capacity for coordination, assessment, and training. Without dedicated resource, there is a risk of inconsistent or incomplete compliance.

7.3 Additional resources may emerge, including training, incident response equipment, and proportionate protective measures for enhanced tier premises. These may exceed initial expectations and require future funding bids.

7.4 Failure to prepare adequately ahead of enforcement in 2027 could lead to reputational harm, reduced public confidence, and potential regulatory action once the SIA begins formal oversight.

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: Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9th March 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 3 of 2025/26

WARD(S) Borough wide

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 third quarter period to 31st December 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:
- Community Safety & Protection
 - Risk & Emergency Planning
 - Drug & Alcohol Action
 - Domestic Violence
 - Housing
- 1.3 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 third quarterly 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.

Housing and Safer – Priority Based Monitoring Report Q3

Reporting Period: 1st October to 31st December

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the third quarter of 2025 / 26 for service areas within the remit of the Housing & Safer 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.
- Community Safety & Protection
 - Risk & Emergency Planning
 - Drug & Alcohol Action
 - Domestic Violence
 - Housing
- 1.3 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 5 of this report.
- 1.4 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 Councils 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.

Community Safety & Protection

Key Objectives / milestones

Corporate Priority	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Community Safety & Protection
ERD 31	Deliver the statutory requirements and services that support victims of Domestic Abuse as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Milestone:	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Number of referrals into the Domestic Abuse Service for support to victims.	 	430 referrals, a reduction of 72 referrals compared to the 502 in Q2. This is a decrease in referrals from the same quarter in year 2024, 469.
Number of days cases are open.	 	22 days for all cases. This is a decrease from Q2, which was 27 days. The team are working with clients to support efficiently.
Number of cases closed.	 	96 cases closed in Q3 a decrease from 108 cases in Q2. A slight decrease from 107 cases in the same period in 2024.
Repeat referral rate.	 	46% which is the same rate as Q2.

Number of referrals into the Domestic Abuse Service for perpetrators	 	31 shows a significant increase from Q2 of 18 . The Q2 figure was low compared to other quarters. the service has an increased offer currently, due to a Police and Crime Commissioner commissioned piece of work, this has enabled increased capacity to encourage referrals.
Number of days cases are open.	 	134 days compared to 125 days in Q2. Clients are engaged and working through the programme, longer case days indicates a positive direction of travel.
Number of cases closed	 	2 Cases were closed in Q3, a decrease from 8 in Q 2.
Repeat referral rate	 	21% shows a further increase on the repeat referral rate which was 11% in Q2. It is anticipated this number may increase as it often requires multiple interventions to change behaviour.

Corporate Priority	Priority One - Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Community Safety & Protection
ERD 32	Ensure preparedness and risk and resilience in Emergency Planning for Halton as set out in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Milestone:	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Delivery of two COMAH exercises per year to ensure the boroughs nine COMAH sites complete an exercise every 3 years	 	Exercise Halton 19 was delivered on 2nd October 2025; followed by a multi-agency debrief; the exercise report was published in December 2025. With exercises also completed in Q1 and Q3 the annual target is met.
Number of Emergency Planning training sessions delivered to ensure responders are equipped to deliver effective responses to major incidents and standby ensuring that the Council has robust preparedness.	 	One joint Cheshire Resilience Forum tabletop exercise held in November, activity in Q1 & Q2 previously reported setting out sessions delivered.

100% responders attending training sessions	 	<p>90% of Responding Officers have attended training during 2024/25 & 2025/26 (up to qtr. 3).</p> <p>Training and exercising will be on going with officers required to attend refresher sessions throughout 2026/27.</p>
---	--	--

Corporate Priority	Priority Five - Working Towards a Greener Future Community Safety & Protection
ERD 33	To work towards a cleaner, greener Halton applying statutory powers as set out in the Environment Protection Act 1990 & Environment Act 2021

Milestone:	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Issue a minimum of 15 fixed penalty notices (FPN's) per quarter	 	Q3 total is 6 ; reduced staff capacity has impacted on the number of FPN's issued in the third quarter.
Achieve minimum of three prosecutions for environmental crime per quarter.	 	4 cases heard in Q3 (however awaiting results from the Courts for two of the cases as they were due to be heard on 29/12/2025); there are 7 case files currently in progress and a further case that has been listed and is awaiting hearing at Magistrates Court. Hence, the service anticipates achieving the annual target with a total of 7 prosecutions already secured so far this financial year.

Corporate Priority	Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community. Community Safety & Protection
ERD 34	To co-ordinate an effective Community Safety Partnership, Safer Halton as set out in Section 6 Crime & Disorder Act 1998 placing the duty on responsible Authorities

Milestone:	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Overall crime figures for Halton		2,667 crimes, a reduction of 6.8% from Q2.

		A decrease of 7% compared to the same quarter in the previous year.
--	---	---

Corporate Priority	Priority Two - Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. Community Safety & Protection
ERD 35	Ensure a fit for purpose surveillance service that contributes to tackling crime & disorder whilst supporting residents to feel safe in the borough.

Milestone:	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Minimum of 80% of public surveillance cameras to be fully operational.	 	74% of cameras were fully operational however, it is worth noting that 82% of what are classified as priority one cameras were fully operational during this period and 79% priority two cameras.
Minimum of 90% fully operational control room weeks	 	85% achieved, due to unforeseen staff shortages, recruitment of new officers currently in progress.

Housing – Planning & Development

Corporate Priority	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. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community. Planning & Development
ERD 11	Create and maintain statutory plans, generated through community consultation, that guide decisions on future development proposals and address the needs and opportunities of the area

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Delivery of the DALP during the plan period (2037)		Ongoing data collection indicates that the DALP is meeting most of policy

		requirements however a full analysis cannot be made until March/April 2026
Publication of the LCR LTP4 in 2025		The LTP4 (LCR) is due to go out to public consultation in Q3, I would assume the Document will be published towards the end of Q4.

Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. Planning & Development
ERD 12	Providing new homes that meet Halton’s needs

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Number of homes granted planning permission		In Q3 there have been 4 planning applications granted which total 42 dwellings.
Number of annual completions of market and affordable homes		The Housing AMR states the number of Net homes built in 24/25 was 387.

Corporate Priority	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community. Empty Properties
ERD 13	To reduce the number of empty homes within the borough.

Milestone:	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Number of empty homes in Halton		The total number of empty properties in Q3 is 600. The total number of empty properties in Q1 and 2 was 1173.

		Properties are empty for various classifications.
--	--	---

Corporate Priority	Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need Community Safety & Protection
ASC objective 6	Annual review of the Homelessness Strategy to determine if any changes or updates are required

Milestones	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
DO6 1: Number of homeless presentations made to the Local Authority for assistance, in accordance with Homelessness Act 2017 (Relief, Prevention, Homeless, Advice)		<p>2024/25 Actual = 3988 2025/26 Target = 4500 2025/26 Q3 = 832</p> <p>data statistics broken down as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations = 832 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach = 88 • Relief = 161 • Main Duty = 21 • Prevention = 284 • Advice = 299 <p>There continues to be an increase in homelessness nationally. Halton has seen a slight decrease in family presentations during Q3; However, additional pressure has been placed on single temporary accommodation provision, which is due to bad weather and everyone in approach and the lack of move on accommodation. The main emphasis is placed upon prevention, with officers making full use of the prevention incentives available to support client to remain in their homes or source alternative accommodation</p>
DO6 2: Local Authority accepted a statutory duty to homeless households in accordance with homelessness Act 2002 (Number)		<p>2024/25 Actual = 911 2025/26 Target = 1500 2025/26 Q3 = 21</p>

		<p>There has been a decrease in in the homelessness acceptance duty. This is partly due to the prevention work across the team and working with landlords to source alternative accommodation prior to Homelessness.</p>
<p>DO6 3: Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation (Hostel, Bed & Breakfast)</p>		<p>2024/25 Actual Hostels: Single = 1260 Families = 210 Hotels: Single = 21 Families = 56</p> <p>2025/26 Target Hostels = 2500 (combined) Hotels = 150 (combined)</p> <p>2025/26 Q3 Hostels: Single = 105 Families = 14 Hotels: Single = 17 Families = 5 Dispersed Singles = 16 Families - 16</p> <p>Due to the increase in homelessness this has placed additional pressure upon temporary accommodation providers. Although there has been a reduction in hotel usage, due to demand, there is often a reliance on hotels for short periods of time.</p> <p>There continues to be an increase in homelessness presentations for the above stated reasons. The service has a robust process in place to transfer families from hotels into commissioned services as quickly as possible, with concerted efforts being made to increase both temporary and long term accommodation provision.</p> <p>The service has continued to meet the DHLUC target of no families in B&B for 6 weeks or more. As mentioned above, there is a robust process in place to ensure families are transferred to commissioned services as quickly as possible.</p>

4.0 Financial Statements

COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE**Revenue Budget as at 30 November 2025**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	15,639	10,403	9,996	407	611
Agency - Covering vacancies	20	16	16	0	0
Agency - In addition to establishment	16	16	201	(185)	(272)
Premises	3,304	1,973	1,995	(22)	(32)
Supplies & Services	3,659	2,416	2,597	(181)	(272)
Transport	117	72	91	(19)	(28)
Extended Producer Responsibility	500	30	30	0	0
Other Agency Costs	454	287	275	12	17
Other Expenditure	187	102	99	3	4
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	2,867	2,906	(39)	(57)
Transfers to Reserves	1,091	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	32,108	18,182	18,206	(24)	(29)
Income					
Sales Income	-1,359	-931	-916	(15)	(23)
Fees & Charges Income	-6,300	-4,678	-4,806	128	192
Rental Income	-1,118	-632	-573	(59)	(88)
Government Grant Income	-5,210	-1,458	-1,458	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-871	-493	-493	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-216	-98	-199	101	152
Capital Salaries	-236	-76	-67	(9)	(14)
Transfers From Reserves	-619	-4	-4	0	0
Total Income	-15,952	-8,370	-8,516	146	219
Net Operational Expenditure	16,156	9,812	9,690	122	190
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,657	1,105	1,105	0	0
Transport Support	2,433	1,714	1,781	(67)	(102)
Central Support	4,297	2,865	2,865	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-843	-562	-562	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,743	5,122	5,189	(67)	(102)
Net Departmental Expenditure	23,899	14,934	14,879	55	88

Comments on the above figures

Net spend against the Community and Greenspaces department has seen an improvement to the net outturn position since the previous report at 30th September 2025. The forecasted outturn is now expected to fall £0.8m under the approved budget profile (in comparison to £0.72m underspend previously forecasted).

Employee spend continues to be an area providing underspend for the department into the new financial year, forecast spend being £0.611m under the approved budget profile. There continue to be vacancies held for restructures taking place contributing to the underspend. However, as a result of this, in order to facilitate the very visible services provided to the residents of Halton, both Agency and Supplies & Services expenditure is forecasted to be (£0.272m and £0.272 respectively) above the approved 2025/26 budget.

Estimated spend on premises costs is forecast to be £0.032m over budget in 2025/26. The Stadium utility costs are notably higher than the available budget and will continue to be a budget pressure this year.

Supplies and Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.272m 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.

Historically, Waste Disposal Contracts had contributed to an underspend for the department, however, due to the rise in costs last year, expenditure is now likely to fall close to the approved budget profile. It is worth noting, 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. These invoices also are received several periods after the costs are incurred; therefore the outturn position may change throughout the year. Within 2025/26 there has been a budget line created for the Extender Producer Responsibility Scheme, this funding has been provided to manage packaging waste. To facilitate the scheme and ensure compliance, £0.500m has been forecasted to be utilised within the financial year, should there be any budget underutilised by 31st March 2026 this will require carrying forward into the 2026/27 financial year.

Income for the Community and Greenspaces Department is on track to be higher than the approved budget by £0.219m. The main contributor to the overachievement however is with Halton Leisure Centre, income is remaining consistently high, and forecasts have been adjusted as such to reflect this.

There also continues to be pressures with the Brindley as the extension works are underway, income did fall within the previous financial year and is currently forecast to do the same this year. Once the works are completed the income is likely to rise again, however, this will require close monitoring as the utility expenditure will also increase with the larger site.

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Green waste charges have been increased to £50.
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26
Total Community & Greenspace Dept			12	270		

Capital

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000
Stadium Minor Works	22.1	22.1	24.6	24.6	24.6	-2.5
Halton Leisure Centre	99.7	99.7	92.5	94.0	95.0	4.7
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	52.5	60.5	65.0	2.8
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	770.0	650.9	700.0	770.0	0.0
Runcorn Town Park	450.6	450.6	10.2	60.0	125.0	325.6
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,841.6	250.0	173.4	180.0	250.0	0.0
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	469.2	450.0	301.2	360.0	450.0	0.0
Cemetery Infrastructure work	469.1	469.1	10.5	207.0	410.0	59.1
Stadium Public Address System	810.0	346.0	34.9	286.0	346.0	0.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0
Replacement Cremator	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Stadium Steelwork Repairs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Brindley Lighting	0.0	200.0	0.0	100.0	200.0	0.0
Homeless Accommodation Refurbishment	0.0	52.0	49.3	51.0	52.0	0.0
CCTV Infrastructure Works	0.0	105.0	1.2	50.0	105.0	0.0
Equality Act Improvement Works	303.5	303.5	17.7	150.0	303.5	0.0
Community and Greenspaces Departmental Total	5,518.7	3,630.8	1,418.9	2,323.1	3,241.1	389.7

Comments on the above figures

There have been delays to capital projects starting within the last financial year due to staffing issues, so a number of schemes had been rolled into the 25/26 capital programme these works have begun, but again there will be a knock on affect to 26/27 based on this, so the forecasted and revised allocations have been adjusted to reflect this. In regard to the cemetery infrastructure work there is potential to receive grant/external funding rather than rely on solely on borrowing. The *replacement cremator* line is in relation to a cremator installed last year; however the contractors are requiring some additional works required to get it fully commissioned and proper emissions testing to be carried out. Management are currently reviewing options.

Adult Social Care**Revenue Operational Budget as at 30 November 2025**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	18,815	12,544	11,645	899	1,052
Agency- Covering Vacancies	0	0	1,180	(1,180)	(1,441)
Premises	498	353	327	26	67
Supplies & Services	698	628	768	(140)	(199)
Aids & Adaptations	37	24	28	(4)	2
Transport	341	227	239	(12)	(22)
Food & Drink Provisions	228	152	94	58	128
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,408	939	737	202	301
Emergency Duty Team	157	78	70	8	(20)
Transfer To Reserves	290	13	13	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,043	619	606	13	16
Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes					
Homelessness Prevention	548	397	275	122	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	167	111	106	5	0
Trailblazer	75	50	38	12	0
Total Expenditure	24,305	16,135	16,126	9	(116)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,044	-696	-447	(249)	(314)
Sales & Rents Income	-538	-407	-351	(56)	(53)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,203	-1,240	-937	(303)	(301)
Capital Salaries	-699	-640	-640	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-783	-746	-727	(19)	0
Total Income	-5,267	-3,729	-3,102	(627)	(668)
Net Operational Expenditure	19,038	12,406	13,024	(618)	(784)
Recharges					
Premises Support	789	526	526	0	0
Transport	792	528	519	9	16
Central Support	4,039	2,693	2,693	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-112	-56	-56	0	0
Net Total Recharges	5,521	3,691	3,682	9	16
Net Departmental Expenditure	24,559	16,097	16,706	(609)	(768)

Comments on the above figures

The above information relates to Adult Social Care, excluding Community Care and Care Homes.

Net Department Expenditure is currently £0.609m over budget profile at the end of the sixth period of the financial year. Current expenditure projections indicate an overspend for the full financial year in the region of £0.768m.

Comparison to previous year outturn and period 6 forecasted outturn

The outturn position for financial year 2024/25 was £0.545m over budget. Based on the estimated outturn position for 2025/26, there is an expectation that the estimated outturn overspend will be £0.223m higher than the last financial year.

The outturn position for period 6 was £0.751m over budget. Based on the estimated outturn position for period 8, there is an expectation that the estimated outturn overspend will be £0.017m higher than period 6.

Employee related spend

The projected full-year cost is above the annual budget by £0.389m. This a reduction of £0.082m from the projected full year over budget spend as at period 6.

Factors relating to the projected overspend include;

Unbudgeted agency costs are in respect of covering vacant posts, particularly in terms of front line Care Management and Mental Health Team posts. However, there continues to be a reduction in agency use across these divisions due to filling of vacancies. The reduction of use of agency staff members has been reflected in the forecasted spend until the end of the financial year. Agency spend across the division as a whole at the end of November 2025 stood at £1.180m, with a full year spend of £1.441m projected. This is partially offset by a forecasted underspend on the staffing budget of £1.052m.

Within period 4 reports, it was reported of an unbudgeted Market Supplement which has been awarded to social workers across the division. To assist with easing budgetary pressures, the budget to cover the market supplement has been provided on a temporary basis, initially for 12 months, resulting in an increase in budget of £0.391m. This increased budget is reflected within the figures above and has assisted in the reduction of the full-year forecasted over budget spend.

As part of previous savings targets the budget for Care Arranger posts was removed. However, this has not been addressed within the actual staffing structure, resulting in a projected unbudgeted spend of £0.096m during the 2025/26 financial year.

Supplies and Services related spend

The projected £0.199m forecasted full-year spend above budget relates to an increased volume of caseload with respect to Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DoLs) assessments. Spend to November 2025 was £0.132m, with a total spend for this financial year forecast at £0.217m. Demand for this service has increased significantly over the last few years, with this trend continuing throughout the current financial year.

Transport related spend

The transport and transport recharge budgets were substantially increased for 2025/26 financial year. Due to this, the forecasted spend is broadly to budget.

Housing Strategy related spend

Housing strategy initiatives included within the report include the Rough Sleeping Initiative and the Homelessness Prevention Scheme. The Homelessness Prevention Scheme is an amalgamation of the previous Flexible Homelessness Support and Homelessness Reduction Schemes, and is wholly grant funded. It is assumed that unspent funding is carried forward to the following financial year.

Income

Income for the Department as a whole is under the budgeted income target by £0.627m with a projected under achieved target at the end of the financial year being £0.668m. The main areas making up the under achievement of target income are Community Meals, Telehealthcare, Transport, Positive Behaviour Service and the Day Services Trading areas.

Within the projected income figures for the remainder of the financial year is a further reduction of income for Community Meals in the run up to the end of the service in March 2026.

Unachieved income targets forecast within the Positive Behaviour Service relate to historical contracts in place, which do not have an agreement within them to increase prices on an annual basis. This is therefore adding additional pressure to this budget. A number of contracts are due to end next financial year and this issue will be addressed when re-negotiating these contracts.

2025/26 Savings

Savings targets including in the budgets for Positive Behaviour Service of £0.250m and Telehealthcare of £0.280m are unlikely to be achieved.

Progress against 2025/26 approved savings for the Adult Social Care Directorate are included at Appendix A.

2025/26 Adult Social Care Directorate Savings

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		
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 Unit.	0	280		Unlikely to be achieved – currently forecast overspend position
Care Management Community Care Budget		Community Care – continuation of the work being undertaken to	0	1,000		Unlikely to be achieved to be achieved on a longer term basis. Interim

		review care provided through the Community Care budget, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.				measures in place to support the current year position includes use of surplus capital grants.
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		Unlikely to be achieved by financial year-end.
Total ASC Directorate			225	1,655		

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

REPORT TO: Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9 March 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Finance Director

PORTFOLIO: Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Councilwide Spending as at 30 November 2025

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Council's overall revenue spending position as at 30 November 2025, together with the latest year-end outturn forecast.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That;

1) **The Council's overall spending position as at 30 November 2025 outlined in the Appendix, be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On 15 January 2026 the Executive Board received the report shown in the Appendix. This presented details of Councilwide revenue spending by each Department as at 30 November 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 30 November 2025 in terms of revenue and capital spending.

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 30 November 2025, the latest year-end forecasts of variances between revenue spending and budget are provided.

3.5 Appendix 3 outlines the forecast deficit on the schools high needs budget.

3.6 Appendix 4 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.

3.7 Appendix 5 presents spending to date against the capital programme.

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 6 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

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15 January 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Finance

PORTFOLIO: Corporate Services

SUBJECT: 2025/26 Councilwide Spending as at 30 November 2025

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.2 To report the Council's overall revenue net spend position as at 30 November 2025 together with a 2025/26 forecast outturn position.

3.0 RECOMMENDED: That;

- 2) Executive Directors continue to implement the approved 2025/26 saving proposals as detailed in Appendix 4;**
- 3) Executive Directors continue to identify areas where they can further reduce their directorate's spending or generate income, in order to ensure the council wide forecast outturn overspend position for the year remains within budget.**
- 4) 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.**
- 5) Council be asked to approve the revisions to the capital programme set-out in paragraph 3.31 and incorporated within Appendix 5;**
- 6) The forecast position for High Needs set-out in Para 3.19 to 3.24 and Appendix 3, be noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Revenue Spending

3.1 Appendix 1 presents a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget up to 30 November 2025 (period 8) and Appendix 2 provides detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms, net Council spending as at 30 November 2025 is £0.294m over budget. The outturn forecast for the year estimates that net spending will be over

budget by £1.281m if no further corrective action is taken. This is a much improved position from that reported at the end of September 2025 (period 6) where forecast spend for the year was estimated to be £4.672m over budget.

3.2 The improved position on the forecast outturn from that reported at the end of September 2025 can be linked across a number of areas, including:

- Adult Social Care Directorate – The forecast outturn position for Community Care is £0.683m at the end of November, compared to a forecast outturn of £2.315m from two months prior. The position has improved due to more flexible utilisation of the Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) through the capitalisation of qualifying staffing and equipment costs against the grant, which it is intended to continue for future years.
- Care Homes - The overspending forecast against the Council's in-house care homes has decreased by a further £0.218m as a result of a lower forecast of agency spend, stemming from the ongoing review of sickness absence. Overall the Adult Social Care forecast outturn position has improved by £1.723m.
- Children and Families Department – The outturn position for the Department has improved by £1.601m. Employee costs are forecast to be under budget profile by the end of financial year 2025/26 by £0.096m which is a reduction of £0.822m since last reported at 30 September 25. Residential care costs are forecast to be under budget profile by £0.513m which is a reduction of £0.571m since last reported on 30 September 25.
- Environment and Regeneration Directorate – The forecast outturn position for the Directorate has improved by £1.006m. This is largely as a result of revised forecasts of income generation within the Planning and Transportation department, related to planning fees and the number of approved utility permit applications.

3.3 Despite the reduction in forecast net costs for the year it remains vital the Council continue to limit expenditure through to the end of the financial year to achieve as a minimum, a balanced budget position. It should be remembered that in setting the current year budget the Council have planned to utilise £29.385m of Exceptional Financial Support.

3.4 As part of the action to ensure spend for the year remains within budget, recovery meetings have been put into action where directorate leads will provide action points on how they aim to keep net spend within the approved budget.

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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. There is uncertainty in when MHCLG will commission this review and therefore the Council has taken a proactive approach and commissioned CIPFA to support a review of the Council's financial resilience and financial management arrangements. The review is currently being undertaken on the same basis of the latest specification for such reviews required by MHCLG for councils requesting EFS.
- 3.7 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. As a minimum the Council must ensure that spend for the year remains within the approved budget to ensure the provisional capitalisation direction is not breached.
- 3.8 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 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.
- 3.9 Within the Corporate and Democracy table (included at Appendix B), current year costs relating to EFS have been included. It is forecast the cost of EFS interest will be £1.096m with repayment of the principal debt totalling £0.500m
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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, although still

too high for an authority the size of Halton. Further information is provided within the report on the main budgetary pressure areas.

- 3.13 In setting the 2025/26 budget, inflation of 2% was provided for the pay award. The pay award has been agreed at 3.2%, therefore budgetary growth for the pay award is insufficient, the revised forecast of the additional cost of the 3.2% pay offer will add approximately £1.2m to the Council's running cost for the year. This additional cost is included within the reported forecast position for the year.
- 3.14 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 4 provides detail on progress against the approved savings. As per Appendix 4, 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	125	1,655
Finance	0	100	90
Legal	6	0	0
Children & Family Services	0	1,900	22
Education, Inclusion and Provision	0	0	300
Community and Greenspaces	282	0	0
Economy, Enterprise and Property *	0	0	100
Planning & Transportation *	0	0	100
Public Health	45	0	0
Corporate	100	500	1900
Totals	533	2,125	4,667

*note alternative one-off savings have been identified for the current year.

- 3.15 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.

- 3.16 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 July 2025	As at 30 September 2025	As at 30 November 2025	Total 2025/26 To Date	As at 31 March 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
Adult Social Care	955	1,687	805	573	4,020	6,035
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	130	145	146	118	539	810
Children & Family Services	574	739	594	564	2,471	5,220
Community & Greenspace	71	59	52	53	235	447
Corporate & Democracy	0	0	0	6	6	0
Economy, Enterprise & Property	60	77	86	72	295	417
Education, Inclusion & Provision	54	72	48	56	230	295
Finance	3	0	1	1	5	114
Legal & Democratic Services	63	59	43	37	202	881
Planning & Transportation	2	0	0	0	2	210
Public Health & Public Protection	0	0	0	0	0	22
Total	1,912	2,838	1,775	1,480	8,005	14,451

Revenue - Operational Spending

- 3.17 Operational net spending for the first eight months of the year is higher than the budget to date by £0.294m. Based on current forecasts it is estimated net spend will be over budget for the year by £1.281m if no further corrective action is taken.
- 3.18 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 outturn position is estimated to be over budget profile at the end of financial year 2025/26 by £0.209m with the majority relating to Social Care Services. Since last reported at 30 September 25 there has been a reduction in forecast outturn for the department of £1.6m.

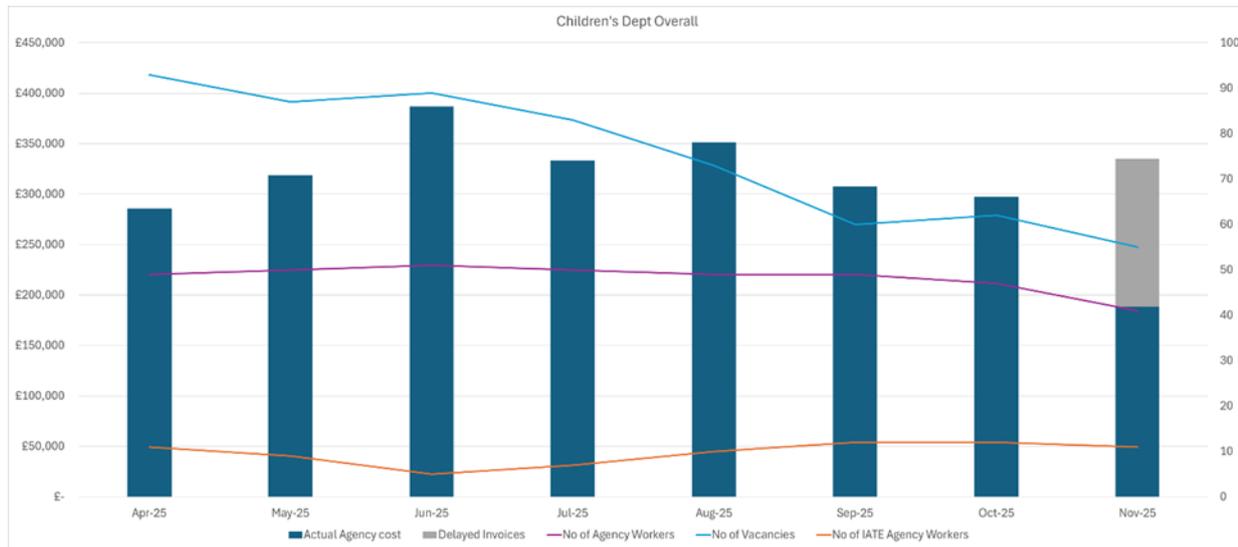
Employee costs are forecast to be under budget profile by the end of financial year 2025/26 by £0.096m which is a reduction of £0.822m since last reported at 30 September 25.

A large proportion of the reduction relates to the utilisation of a number of grants that are available to the service, this equates to £0.486m to 30 November 2025 and has supported the reduction in forecast overspend.

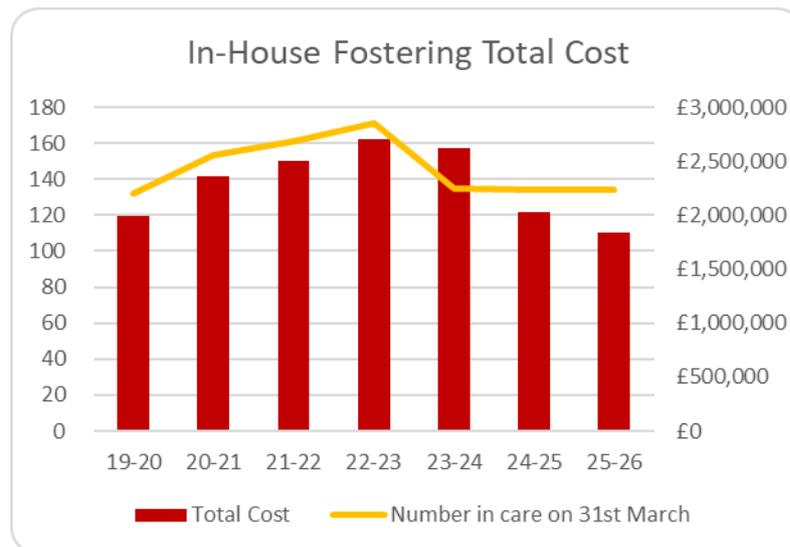
Since last reported on 30 September 25, a number of agency have converted to Council employment, with hopeful further planned conversions over the coming months. Forecasts will be updated as and when to reflect the changes in staffing.

The chart below demonstrates the following information, for the period April to November 2025:

- Agency costs
- The number of agency staff that the Council have received an invoice for within each month
- The number of vacancies across the Children and Families Department
- The number of staff that are currently in addition to the establishment (IATE)

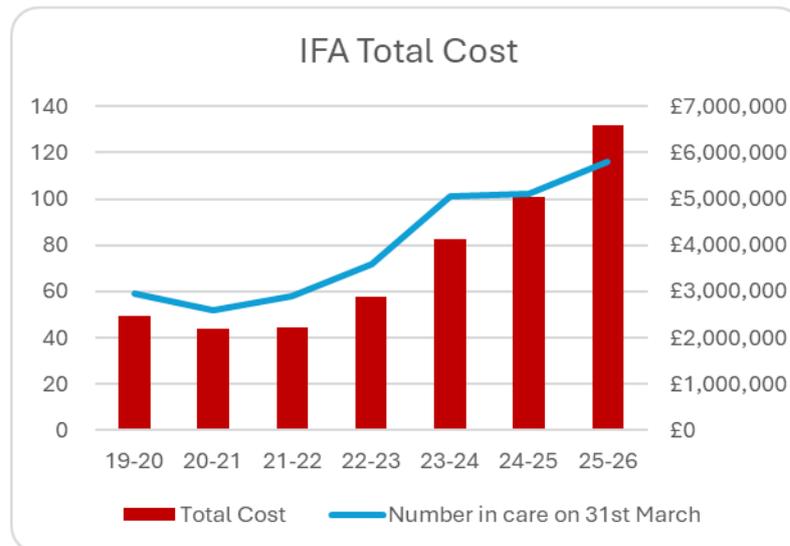


In-House fostering placements are estimated to be £0.548m under budget profile for financial year 2025/26.



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 of £1.114m.

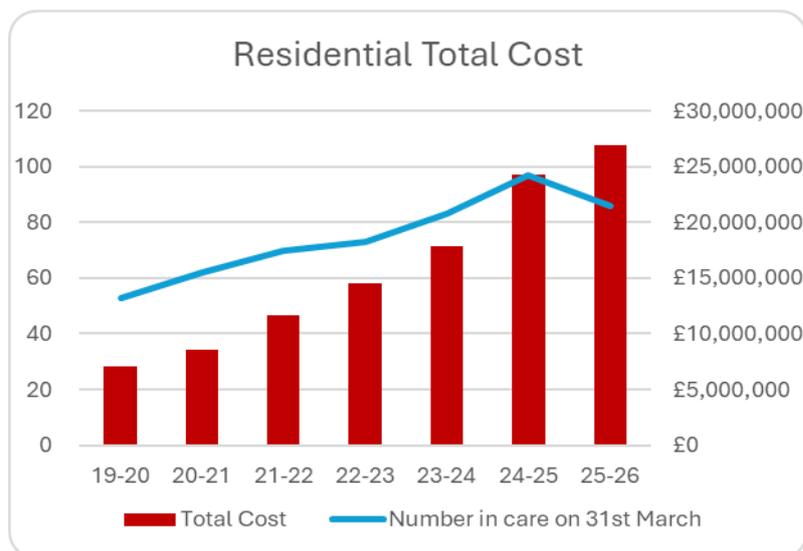


Out of Borough Residential Care continues to be a budget pressure for the Children and Families Department as the costs of residential care have continued to rise year on year. The numbers of young people in residential placements remains high and the cost of placements is rising significantly year-on-year.

Residential care costs are forecast to be under budget profile by £0.513m which is a reduction of £0.571m since last reported on 30 September 25.

A number of initiatives are taking place to help reduce residential spend, including a High Cost Placement Panel, Medium Cost Placement Panel and particular cohort focused projects. The panels have been created to ensure that an effective care plan is in place for all young people at the best available cost of placement this work is ongoing.

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 November 2025 is currently £0.411m over the available budget and the year-end anticipated spend is forecast to be £0.683m over planned budget.

In September the expected year-end forecast was reduced from £2.627m to £2.315m due to the impact of the recovery plan. The forecast has since been reduced further to £0.683m by capitalising qualifying staffing and equipment costs against the Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) enabling revenue budget to be utilised against community care budget pressures. Additionally the pool budget has released £0.400m toward this budget's financial performance.

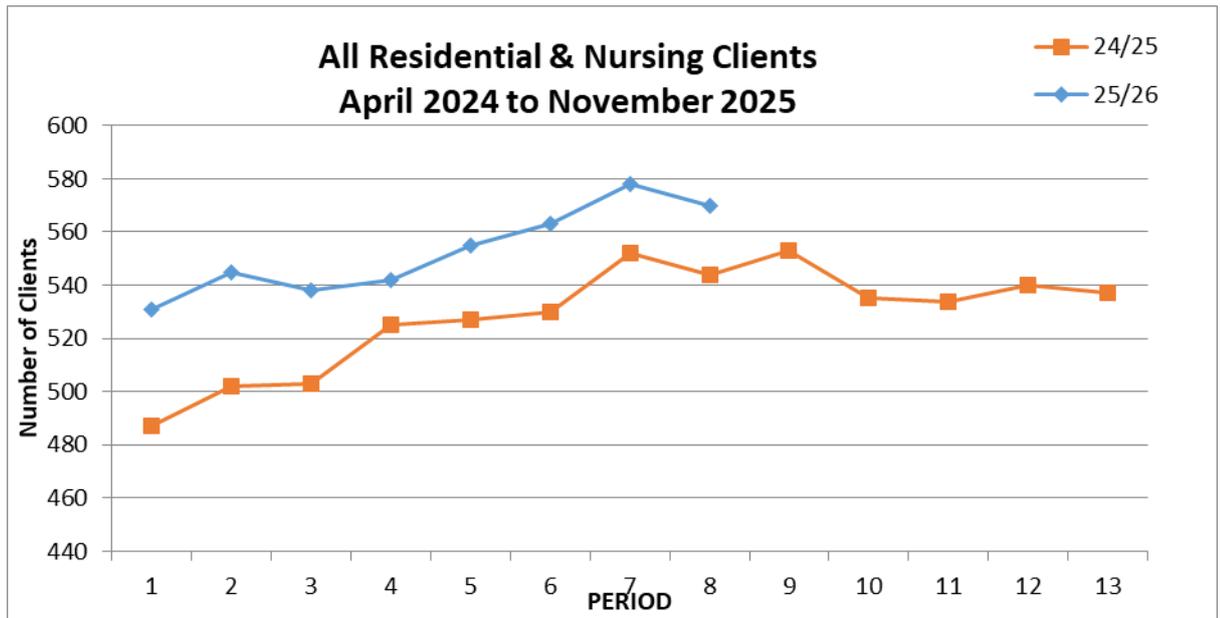
Recovery meetings continue and currently focus is on the following areas to try to reduce spend further:-

- Review 1 to 1 packages of care for appropriateness
- Identify and signpost new 15 minute packages of domiciliary care (medicine prompts) which should be commissioned and funded by health under the Care Act.
- Ensure assessments carried out on discharge from hospital are complete and appropriate
- Maximise internal care home capacity

Residential Care

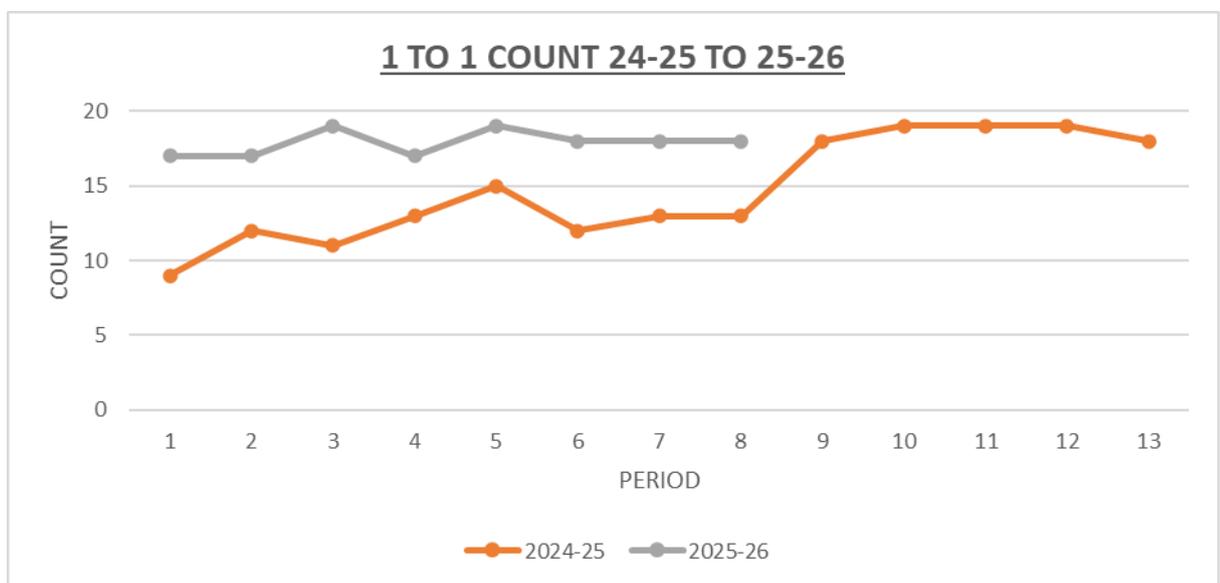
There are currently 570 residents in external residential/nursing care as at the end of November 2025. Compared to the 2024/25 average of 520 this is an increase of 9.6%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £949.76 compared to £850.24 at the end of 2024/25 an increase of 11.7%.

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



Payments for 1 to 1 support continue to exert pressure on the budget. These are 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. Currently there are 18 compared to 13 at the same point last year. This is an increase of 38%. It is expected that these should reduce as packages continue to be reviewed, however commissioning of new packages with a 1:1 care element are resulting in numbers remaining high.

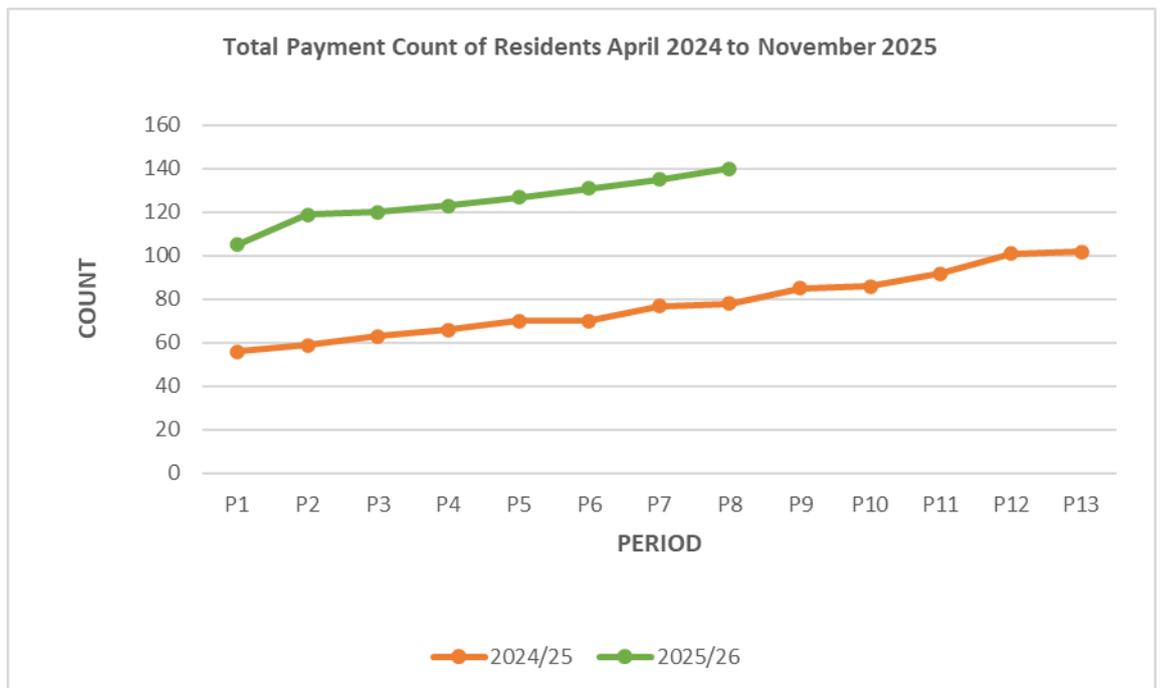


Additional Payments 2025/26

Additional payments to providers rose sharply throughout the last financial year, 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 £0.424m.

The graphs below illustrate the count and spend of service users with an additional payment by period.

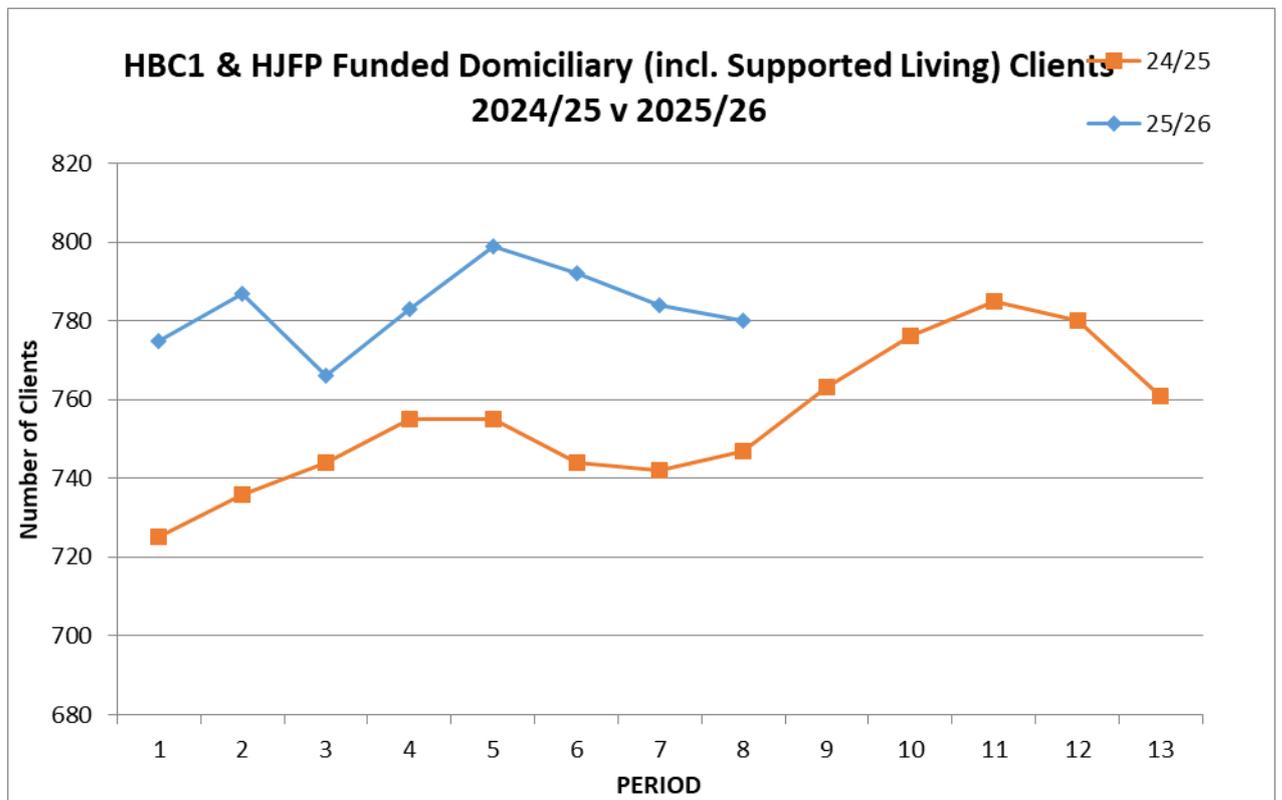
This clearly shows a steady increase in numbers and costs for 2025/26, the spend up to November is £0.405m. If numbers and costs remain the same, the forecast spend for the year will be approximately £0.696m.



Domiciliary Care & Supported Living

As at November there are 780 service users receiving a package of care at home, compared to the average in 2024/25 of 754, an increase of 3.4%. The average cost of a package of care is currently £537.15 compared with the average of £450.64 in 2024/25 an increase of 19.19%.

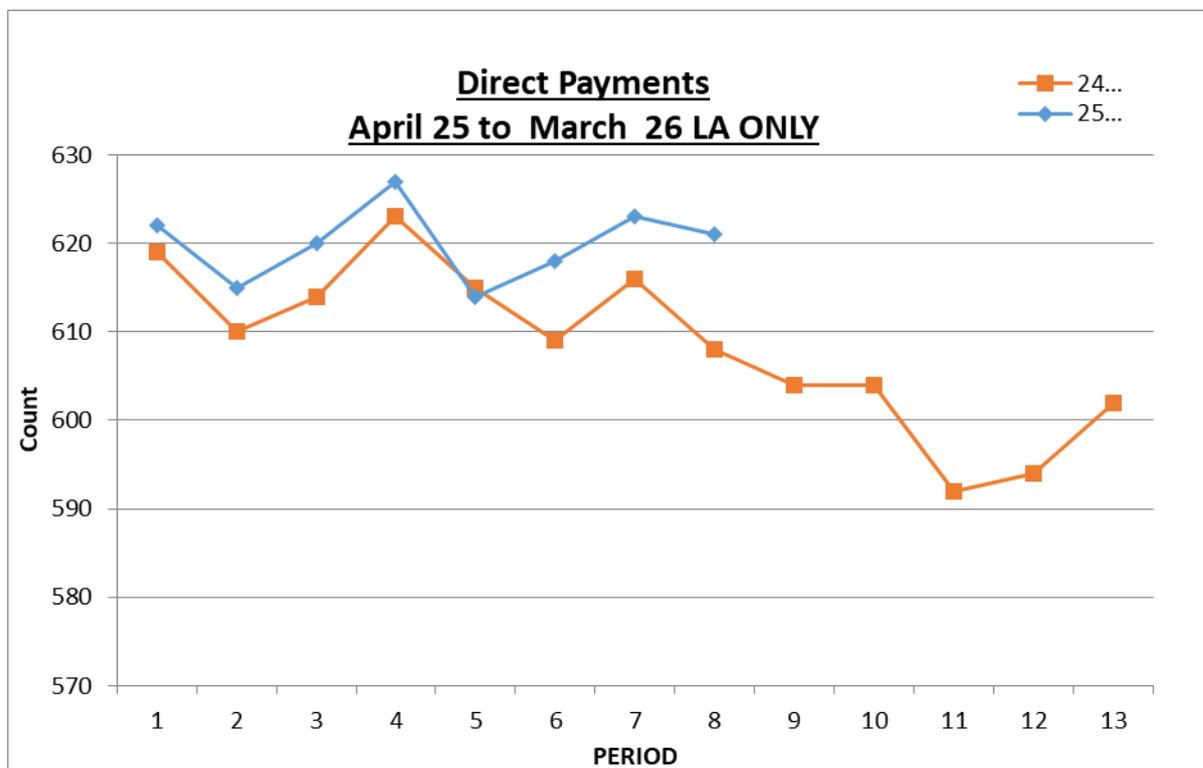
The graph below illustrates the demand for the service from April 2024 to November 2025.



Direct Payments

The average number of clients who received a Direct Payment (DP) in November was 621 compared with 622 in April, a small decrease. The average cost of a package of care has also decreased from £571.26 to £491.76, a reduction of 13.9%. The financial impact of this is a reduction in spend of approximately £200k per month.

The graph below shows movement throughout the year.



Care Homes

Spend for the first nine months of the 2025/26 Financial Year to 30 November is £0.084M above profile, with an estimated spend above budget for the year of £0.385M. This primarily relates to unbudgeted agency staffing costs, and a current shortfall against target of client finance and out of borough income.

Employee related expenditure is anticipated to be above budget at the end of financial year by £0.152M. Projections take into account agency spending patterns over the previous 3 financial years, but also with reference to the recent decrease in agency expenditure, this has dropped considerably from previously reported as a result of the ongoing review of sickness absence.

Income Targets include those for privately funded residents, out of borough placements, and reimbursements from the ICB in respect Of Continuing Health Care, Funded Nursing Care, and Joint Funded placements. Income across all headings is currently projected to be under-achieved by £0.131M for the full year.

Adult Social Care (excluding Care Homes and Community Care)

Net Department Expenditure is currently £0.609m over budget profile at the end of the sixth period of the financial year. Current expenditure projections indicate an overspend for the full financial year in the region of £0.768m.

Factors relating to the projected overspend include;

Unbudgeted agency costs in respect of covering vacant posts, particularly in terms of front line Care Management and Mental Health Team posts. However, there continues to be a reduction in agency use across these divisions due to filling of vacancies.

A projected £0.199m forecasted full-year spend above supplies and services budget relates to an increased volume of caseload with respect to Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DoLs) assessments. Spend to November 2025 was £0.132m, with a total spend for this financial year forecast at £0.217m. Demand for this service has increased significantly over the last few years, with this trend continuing throughout the current financial year.

Income as a whole is under the budgeted income target by £0.627m with a projected under achieved target at the end of the financial year being £0.668m. The main areas making up the under achievement of targeted income are Community Meals, Telehealthcare, Transport, Positive Behaviour Service and the Day Services Trading areas.

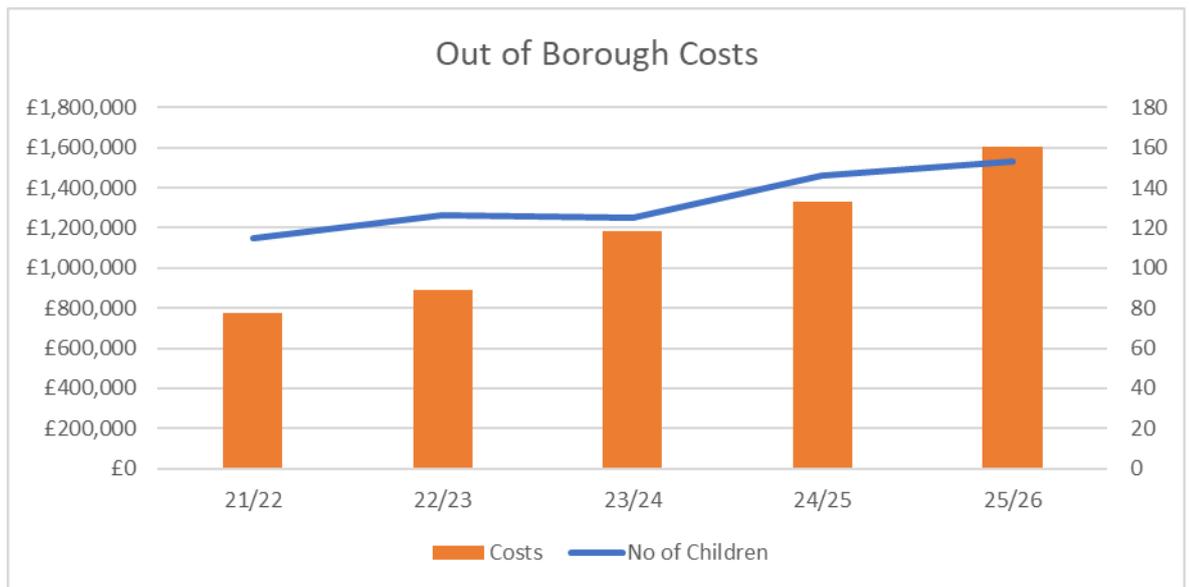
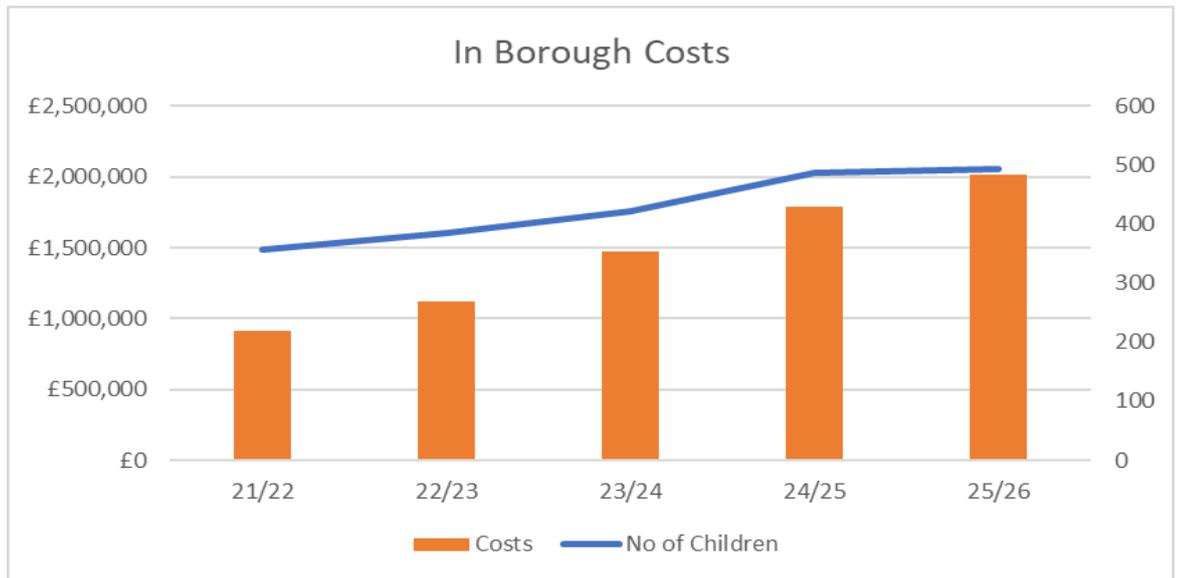
(iii) Education, Inclusion and Provision

Net departmental expenditure is £0.593m over budget at the end of November, based on available information. The forecast outturn for 2025/26 is currently an overspend against budget of £1.034m. The main variances are school transport, Inter Authority Income and schools SLA income.

Schools Transport is the main budgetary demand 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 current records show 647 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 has increased by roughly 7% since the last report, for both in and out of borough transport, although average cost per user has reduced by 6%. The graphs below show the number of SEN children using this service.

The graphs below show the trend in the number of SEN children using this service and the associated costs.



(iv) Planning and Transportation

As of 30th November 2025 it is forecast net spend will be £1.390m under the approved 2025/26 budget. This is a significant increase of the underspend of £0.364m forecasted at the end of September 2025. This is largely due to revised forecasts around staffing and income.

There are a large number of vacancies across the department that have not yet been filled. The Highways restructure has been taken out of the projections from the last report to now, as it is unlikely that it will be in place before March 26. This has resulted in a forecast staffing underspend of £0.487m

Overall, it is forecast income for the department will be £1.050m over the budgeted income target.

Planning income is an ever-moving area and unlike earlier reports it is now expected to be over its income target. Following on from the 2024/25 financial year there is a downturn in the number of applications being received so there is some reliance on receiving planning applications from housing developers. This forecast is based on the income that has been received so far, this financial year and what is likely to be achieved going forward. Building control income is projected to not achieve its income target as in previous years.

Fees and charges income is projected to overachieve its income target, but this is constantly in flux as it is fully dependent on the amount of permit applications etc that is received. It is anticipated that the high level of permit income that was seen in previous years will eventually drop off but for now has been consistent for the past 8 months, due to the large number of housing developers requiring permission to install utilities. There are a number of reasons for the current over achievement of permit income, including:

- The number of permits being received has been higher than usual due to several companies carrying out fibre roll outs and upgrades. This seems to be coming to an end and the number of permits relating to fibre are most likely to severely decrease for the remainder of the year.
- As a result of the increased amount of works, this also increases potential for FPNs, S74 charges and defect charges to be issued against permits. As the number of works decreases, so will the associated charges.
- There is higher than usual income associated to traffic management due to the amount of works taking place since April.
- There are more inspections now than in previous years, which has increased income.

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 3.19 As at 31 March 2025 the Council had a deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve of £14.469m. This is as an impact of the increasing demand and costs of High Needs.
- 3.20 The DSG deficit currently has no impact on the Council's General Fund as Government have in place an override which allows the Council to carry the deficit on its balance sheet. The override is due to end at 31 March 2028 at which point the accrued DSG deficit will have to be funded from Council resources. This is a significant pressure for a large number of local authorities with Government due to report on plans to mitigate the impact at 31 March 2028 and future funding of High Need demands.
- 3.21 Forecast 2025/26 costs for all anticipated demands on High Needs funding are estimated to be £42.508m, which is a substantial amount in excess of the budgeted High Needs allocation of £29.760m. After applying a 2% across-the-board increase to High Needs funding rates, the Council began

the financial year anticipating a DSG shortfall of £9.4m, the first 8 months of 2025-26 have seen that increase by £3.35m.

- 3.22 The projected overspend is in the main due to significant expansions in numbers and specifications of resource bases, increasing numbers and costs of high-cost specialist placements in or out of Borough, and increases in numbers and value of EHCP (Education & Health Care Plan) assessments.
- 3.23 There is a cost to the General Fund in managing the DSG deficit, this relates to the cashflow impact of a deficit position. The deficit position results in more borrowing costs for the Council which can not be allocated against DSG and therefore are coded against the General Fund. Interest costs in the current year are estimated at £0.891m
- 3.24 Appendix 3 provides detail on the High Needs 2025/26 forecast outturn position

Collection Fund

- 3.25 The council tax collection rate through to the end of November 2025 is 71.34% which is 0.09% 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. £1.992m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

- 3.26 Business rate collection through to the end of November 2025 is 75.01% which is 1.02% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.

£0.945m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.

Review of Reserves

- 3.27 As at 30 November 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.
- 3.28 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

3.29 A summary breakdown of the Council's reserves is presented in the table below, showing the balance of reserves as at 30 November 2025.

Summary of General and Earmarked Reserves	
Reserve	Reserve Value
	£m
Corporate:	
General Fund	5.149
Capital Reserve	0.398
Insurance Reserve	0.849
Specific Projects:	
Adult Social Care	0.711
Fleet Replacement	0.454
Highways Feasibility Costs	0.102
Local Development Framework	0.544
Community & Environment	0.542
Mersey Valley Golf Club	0.480
Mersey Gateway	33.542
CCLA Property Fund	0.263
Various Other	0.159
Grants:	
Building Schools for the Future	6.529
Public Health	1.147
Supporting Families Performance Payments	0.204
Children's & Education	1.257
Domestic Abuse	0.915
Enterprise & Employment	0.777
Food Waste Collection	0.237
Mersey Gateway Environmental Trust	0.492
Various Other	0.154
Total Earmarked Reserves	54.903

3.30 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.

Capital Spending

3.31 Council approved the 2025/26 Capital Programme on 5 March 2025. Since then the capital programme has been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes have developed. Appendix 5 brings all the separate elements together and report on the Council's total planned capital programme expenditure. The schemes which have been revised within the programme are as follows:

- i. Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet
- ii. Astmoor Masterplan
- iii. Sci-tech Daresbury – CPO
- iv. Runcorn Town Centre Management
- v. Widnes Town Centre Framework
- vi. East Runcorn Connectivity
- vii. Mersey Gateway Crossings Board

3.32 Capital spending at 30 November 2025 totalled £28.258m, which represents 53% of the total Capital Programme of £53.064m (which assumes a 20% slippage between years).

3.33 Capital receipts available to fund the programme are expected to be fully utilised by the end of the financial year. If planned use of receipts is to allocation there is risk to £0.375 of these costs falling on the General Fund position. Provision has been included within Corporate and Democracy to cover the event of this happening.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 As at 30 November 2025, net revenue spend is forecast to be £1.281m 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. 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 6.

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 30 November 2025

APPENDIX 1

Directorate / Department	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	November 2025 Forecast Outturn (o'spend) £'000
Adult Social Care	24,559	16,097	16,706	(609)	(768)
Care Homes`	8,077	5,664	5,748	(84)	(385)
Community Care	28,404	18,203	18,614	(411)	(683)
Complex Care Pool	13,249	3,667	3,128	539	303
Adults Directorate	74,289	43,631	44,196	(565)	(1,533)
Finance	5,662	4,318	3,984	334	432
Legal & Democratic Services	323	150	10	140	102
ICT & Support Services	269	170	125	45	68
Chief Executives Delivery Unit	1,157	577	616	(39)	(108)
Chief Executives Directorate	7,411	5,215	4,735	480	494
Children & Families	55,584	31,144	31,799	(655)	(209)
Education, Inclusion & Provision	12,142	7,978	8,571	(593)	(1,034)
Children's Directorate	67,726	39,122	40,370	(1,248)	(1,243)
Community & Greenspace	23,899	14,934	14,879	55	88
Economy, Enterprise & Property	2,523	1,758	1,726	32	127
Planning & Transportation	9,329	4,325	3,397	928	1,390
Environment & Regeneration Directorate	35,751	21,017	20,002	1,015	1,605
Corporate & Democracy	-4,025	-763	-774	11	(635)
Public Health Directorate	1,900	-1,779	-1,792	13	31
Total Operational Net Spend	183,052	106,443	106,737	(294)	(1,281)

Adult Social Care

APPENDIX 2

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	18,815	12,544	11,645	899	1,052
Agency- Covering Vacancies	0	0	1,180	(1,180)	(1,441)
Premises	498	353	327	26	67
Supplies & Services	698	628	768	(140)	(199)
Aids & Adaptations	37	24	28	(4)	2
Transport	341	227	239	(12)	(22)
Food & Drink Provisions	228	152	94	58	128
Supported Accommodation and Services	1,408	939	737	202	301
Emergency Duty Team	157	78	70	8	(20)
Transfer To Reserves	290	13	13	0	0
Contracts & SLAs	1,043	619	606	13	16
Housing Solutions Grant Funded Schemes					
Homelessness Prevention	548	397	275	122	0
Rough Sleepers Initiative	167	111	106	5	0
Trailblazer	75	50	38	12	0
Total Expenditure	24,305	16,135	16,126	9	(116)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,044	-696	-447	(249)	(314)
Sales & Rents Income	-538	-407	-351	(56)	(53)
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-2,203	-1,240	-937	(303)	(301)
Capital Salaries	-699	-640	-640	0	0
Housing Schemes Income	-783	-746	-727	(19)	0
Total Income	-5,267	-3,729	-3,102	(627)	(668)
Net Operational Expenditure	19,038	12,406	13,024	(618)	(784)
Recharges					
Premises Support	789	526	526	0	0
Transport	792	528	519	9	16
Central Support	4,039	2,693	2,693	0	0
Asset Rental Support	13	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-112	-56	-56	0	0
Net Total Recharges	5,521	3,691	3,682	9	16
Net Departmental Expenditure	24,559	16,097	16,706	(609)	(768)

Care Homes

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
<u>Madeline Mckenna</u>					
Employees	783	521	464	57	85
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	69	(69)	(92)
Premises	90	51	49	2	9
Supplies & Services	25	14	16	(2)	1
Food Provison	51	29	36	(7)	(3)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-127	-79	-73	(6)	(11)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-34	-21	-21	0	0
Total Madeline Mckenna Expenditure	788	515	540	(25)	(11)
<u>Millbrow</u>					
Employees	2,172	1,455	836	619	959
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	665	(665)	(1,177)
Premises	117	72	95	(23)	(33)
Supplies & Services	72	39	36	3	14
Food Provison	81	47	53	(6)	1
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-13	-4	0	(4)	(21)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-635	-375	-421	46	70
Total Millbrow Expenditure	1,794	1,234	1,264	(30)	(187)
<u>St Luke's</u>					
Employees	4,096	2,757	1,609	1,148	1,732
Agency - covering vacancies	62	62	1,101	(1,039)	(1,742)
Premises	156	94	127	(33)	(50)
Supplies & Services	68	39	53	(14)	(15)
Food Provison	128	64	84	(20)	(34)
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-153	-82	-21	(61)	(24)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-1,497	-905	-895	(10)	(18)
Total St Luke's Expenditure	2,860	2,029	2,058	(29)	(151)
<u>St Patrick's</u>					
Employees	2,212	1,474	884	590	865
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	617	(617)	(918)
Premises	144	88	89	(1)	2
Supplies & Services	67	41	45	(4)	0
Food Provison	127	83	57	26	12
Private Client and Out Of Borough Income	-99	-61	-5	(56)	(93)
Reimbursements & other Grant Income	-866	-439	-409	(30)	(40)
Total St Patrick's Expenditure	1,585	1,186	1,278	(92)	(172)
<u>Care Homes Divison Management</u>					
Employees	322	215	123	92	136
Care Home Divison Management	322	215	123	92	136
Net Operational Expenditure	7,349	5,179	5,263	(84)	(385)
Recharges					
Premises Support	65	43	43	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	663	442	442	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	728	485	485	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,077	5,664	5,748	(84)	(385)

Community Care

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Residential & Nursing	21,977	12,809	12,885	(76)	(169)
Domiciliary Care & Supported living	16,703	10,487	10,792	(305)	(488)
Direct Payments	15,665	10,528	10,608	(80)	(115)
Day Care	712	438	406	32	52
Total Expenditure	55,057	34,262	34,691	(429)	(720)
Income					
Residential & Nursing Income	-13,081	-7,610	-7,620	10	14
Community Care Income	-3,115	-1,747	-1,659	(88)	(140)
Direct Payments Income	-1,034	-540	-636	96	163
Income from other CCGs	-471	-230	-230	0	0
Market sustainability & Improvement Grant	-2,796	-1,864	-1,864	0	0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	-6,102	-4,068	-4,068	0	0
War Pension Disregard Grant	-54	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-26,653	-16,059	-16,077	18	37
Net Operational Expenditure	28,404	18,203	18,614	(411)	(683)

Complex Care Pool

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Intermediate Care Services	6,425	3,736	3,461	275	414
Oakmeadow	2,040	1,315	1,284	31	46
Community Home Care First	1,838	610	198	412	617
Joint Equipment Store	880	367	367	0	0
Contracts & SLA's	3,330	-7	-7	0	0
Inglenook	137	80	62	18	27
HICafs	3,729	1,578	1,383	195	292
Carers Breaks	445	240	240	0	0
Carers centre	365	-15	-15	0	0
Residential Care	7,236	4,524	4,524	0	0
Domiciliary Care & Supported Living	4,336	2,890	2,890	0	0
Pathway 3/Discharge Access	426	286	286	0	0
HBC Contracts	72	65	65	0	0
Healthy at Home	28	-28	-28	0	0
Capacity	30	21	13	8	12
Total Expenditure	31,317	15,662	14,723	939	1,408
Income					
BCF	-15,032	-10,022	-10,022	0	0
CCG Contribution to Pool	-3,034	-1,973	-1,973	0	0
Oakmeadow Income	-2	0	0	0	(1)
Total Income	-18,068	-11,995	-11,995	0	(1)
ICB Contribution Share of Surplus	0	0	0	0	(704)
HBC Transfer to Community Care Budget	0	0	400	(400)	(400)
Net Operational Expenditure	13,249	3,667	3,128	539	303

Finance Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	7,461	4,935	4,764	171	257
Insurances	1,048	812	636	176	264
Supplies & Services	1,127	577	648	(71)	(107)
Rent Allowances	31,500	17,330	17,330	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,902	1,116	1,069	47	71
LCR Levy	1,902	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	223	0	0	0	(65)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	57	16	41	61
Discretionary Social Fund	106	68	1	67	101
Discretionary Housing Payments	279	145	145	0	0
Household Support Fund Expenditure	1,207	1,207	1,207	0	0
Total Expenditure	46,825	26,247	25,816	431	582
Income					
Fees & Charges	-361	-281	-316	35	53
Burdens Grant	-58	-55	-49	(6)	(9)
Dedicated Schools Grant	-150	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-670	-528	-528	0	0
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	1
Schools SLAs	-319	-309	-308	(1)	(1)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,902	0	0	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-300	-205	-166	(39)	(58)
Rent Allowances	-30,700	-16,500	-16,219	(281)	(421)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-60	-27	(33)	(50)
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-279	-93	-93	0	0
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-453	-302	-302	0	0
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	-7	-22	15	22
Universal Credits	-5	-3	-9	6	4
Household Support Fund Grant	-1,207	-360	-360	0	0
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-89	-44	-44	0	0
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-187	-180	-387	207	309
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-13	-13	0	0
Total Income	-36,934	-18,940	-18,843	(97)	(150)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,891	7,307	6,973	334	432
Recharges					
Premises Support	493	308	308	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,092	1,246	1,246	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,814	-4,543	-4,543	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-4,229	-2,989	-2,989	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	5,662	4,318	3,984	334	432

Legal Services

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	2,314	1,525	1,170	355	532
Agency Related Expenditure	79	79	202	(123)	(246)
Supplies & Services	181	151	136	15	32
Civic Catering & Functions	21	14	11	3	5
Legal Expenses	418	105	177	(72)	(144)
Transport Related Expenditure	8	3	3	0	0
Other Expenditure	1	1	2	(1)	(2)
Total Expenditure	3,022	1,878	1,701	177	177
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-75	-39	-21	(18)	(35)
School SLA's	-100	-88	-77	(11)	(23)
Licence Income	-386	-177	-169	(8)	(17)
Total Income	-561	-304	-267	(37)	(75)
Net Operational Expenditure	2,461	1,574	1,434	140	102
Recharges					
Premises Support	62	42	42	0	0
Transport Recharges	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	275	184	184	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-2,475	-1,650	-1,650	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,138	-1,424	-1,424	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	323	150	10	140	102

ICT & Support Services Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,899	3,873	3,736	137	205
Supplies & Services	1,063	807	736	71	107
Capital Finance	496	287	249	38	57
Computer Repairs & Software	1,724	1,966	1,987	(21)	(30)
Communication Costs	138	84	104	(20)	(31)
Premises	139	87	83	4	10
Transport	3	2	1	1	1
Other	4	1	4	(3)	(5)
Total Expenditure	9,466	7,107	6,900	207	314
Income					
Fees & Charges	-849	-255	-283	28	42
Schools SLA Income	-659	-561	-364	(197)	(295)
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-7	7	7
Total Income	-1,508	-816	-654	(162)	(246)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,958	6,291	6,246	45	68
Recharges					
Premises Support	373	249	249	0	0
Transport	22	15	15	0	0
Central Support	1,391	928	928	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-10,969	-7,313	-7,313	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-7,689	-6,121	-6,121	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	269	170	125	45	68

Chief Executives Delivery Unit

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,569	2,339	2,313	26	40
Employees Training	99	67	60	7	11
Apprenticeship Levy	330	176	215	(39)	(59)
Supplies & Services	412	341	384	(43)	(65)
Agency	3	3	3	0	0
Total Expenditure	4,413	2,926	2,975	-49	-73
Income					
Fees & Charges	-241	-176	-206	30	46
Schools SLA Income	-580	-550	-495	(55)	(81)
Total Income	-821	-726	-701	(25)	(35)
Net Operational Expenditure	3,592	2,200	2,274	(74)	(108)
Recharges					
Premises Support	157	105	105	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,008	672	672	0	0
Asset Rental Support	53	35	0	35	0
Recharge Income	-3,653	-2,435	-2,435	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,435	-1,623	-1,658	35	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,157	577	616	(39)	(108)

Children & Families

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	20,973	13,328	13,192	136	96
Other Premises	392	222	214	8	11
Supplies & Services	1,729	1,210	1,631	(421)	(522)
Transport	367	211	161	50	76
Direct Payments	1,220	803	708	95	141
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	232	119	119	0	0
Residential Care	27,751	15,759	15,933	(174)	513
Out of Borough Adoption	97	49	5	44	92
Out of Borough Fostering	5,605	3,047	3,772	(725)	(1,114)
In House Adoption	557	177	161	16	23
Special Guardianship Order	2,604	1,615	1,535	80	119
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,766	1,706	1,341	365	548
Lavender House Contract Costs	279	163	160	3	4
Home Support & Respite	496	385	316	69	103
Care Leavers	434	257	248	9	15
Family Support	81	44	15	29	41
Contracted services	3	2	2	0	0
Emergency Duty	184	33	33	0	0
Youth Offending Services	461	32	127	(95)	(143)
Total Expenditure	66,231	39,162	39,673	(511)	3
Income					
Fees & Charges	-49	-36	-27	(9)	(14)
Sales Income	-1	-1	-1	0	0
Rents	-82	-50	-50	0	0
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-512	-566	-423	(143)	(212)
Transfer from reserve	-16	8	-1	9	14
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-13,838	-9,960	-9,960	0	0
Total Income	-14,548	-10,605	-10,462	(143)	(212)
Net Operational Expenditure	51,683	28,557	29,211	(654)	(209)
Recharges					
Premises Support	736	490	490	0	0
Transport	10	6	7	(1)	0
Central Support Recharges	3,331	2,221	2,221	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-176	-130	-130	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,901	2,587	2,588	(1)	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	55,584	31,144	31,799	(655)	(209)

Education, Inclusion & Provision

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	8,796	5,550	5,321	229	310
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	131	(131)	(204)
Agency - in addition to establishment	66	72	85	(13)	6
Premises	15	9	1	8	2
Supplies & Services	3,281	1,799	1,819	(21)	(34)
Independent School Fees	10,155	7,805	7,805	0	0
Schools Contingency	430	168	168	0	0
Transport	43	27	42	(15)	(26)
Schools Transport	2,772	1,293	1,760	(466)	(777)
Early Years Payments including Pupil Premium	15,805	10,217	10,217	0	0
Commissioned Services	2,193	1,251	1,255	(4)	(7)
Inter Authority Special Needs	1,400	1,282	1,282	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	115	-21	19	(40)	(67)
Capital Finance	4,599	2,844	2,847	(2)	(4)
Total Expenditure	49,670	32,295	32,752	(456)	(800)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-338	-325	-349	24	41
Government Grant Income	-6,896	-4,193	-4,189	(4)	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-30,134	-20,088	-20,088	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-446	-366	-243	(124)	(206)
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,767	-1,064	-1,061	(3)	(5)
Schools SLA Income	-538	-369	-334	(35)	(59)
Transfer From Reserves	-551	-134	-142	8	0
Total Income	-40,670	-26,540	-26,407	(133)	(229)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,000	5,756	6,345	(589)	(1,029)
Recharges					
Premises Support	405	270	270	0	0
Transport Support	773	654	658	(3)	(5)
Central Support	1,947	1,298	1,298	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,142	2,222	2,226	(3)	(5)
Net Departmental Expenditure	12,142	7,978	8,571	(593)	(1,034)

Community & Greenspaces

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	15,639	10,403	9,996	407	611
Agency - Covering vacancies	20	16	16	0	0
Agency - In addition to establishment	16	16	201	(185)	(272)
Premises	3,304	1,973	1,995	(22)	(32)
Supplies & Services	3,659	2,416	2,597	(181)	(272)
Transport	117	72	91	(19)	(28)
Extended Producer Responsibility	500	30	30	0	0
Other Agency Costs	454	287	275	12	17
Other Expenditure	187	102	99	3	4
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	2,867	2,906	(39)	(57)
Transfers to Reserves	1,091	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	32,108	18,182	18,206	(24)	(29)
Income					
Sales Income	-1,359	-931	-916	(15)	(23)
Fees & Charges Income	-6,300	-4,678	-4,806	128	192
Rental Income	-1,118	-632	-573	(59)	(88)
Government Grant Income	-5,210	-1,458	-1,458	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-871	-493	-493	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-216	-98	-199	101	152
Capital Salaries	-236	-76	-67	(9)	(14)
Transfers From Reserves	-619	-4	-4	0	0
Total Income	-15,952	-8,370	-8,516	146	219
Net Operational Expenditure	16,156	9,812	9,690	122	190
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,657	1,105	1,105	0	0
Transport Support	2,433	1,714	1,781	(67)	(102)
Central Support	4,297	2,865	2,865	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-843	-562	-562	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,743	5,122	5,189	(67)	(102)
Net Departmental Expenditure	23,899	14,934	14,879	55	88

Economy, Enterprise & Property

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,915	3,314	3,134	180	250
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	206	(206)	(270)
Repairs & Mainenance	1,700	1,262	1,262	0	0
Premises	174	136	137	(1)	(2)
Energy & Water Costs	1,075	560	506	54	80
NNDR	647	647	676	(29)	(29)
Rents	157	118	117	1	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	3	3	8	(5)	0
Security	508	257	256	1	3
Supplies & Services	578	317	317	0	(1)
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,040	485	485	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	72	35	35	0	0
Capital Finance	22	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	9,891	7,134	7,139	(5)	32
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-398	-272	-308	36	89
Rent - Commercial Properties	-929	-572	-571	(1)	4
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-26	-25	(1)	(1)
Government Grant	-1,118	-1,119	-1,119	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-203	-172	-172	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-55	-55	-58	3	3
Recharges to Capital	-367	-158	-158	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-564	-535	-535	0	0
Total Income	-3,672	-2,909	-2,946	37	95
Net Operational Expenditure	6,219	4,225	4,193	32	127
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,738	1,826	1,826	0	0
Transport	26	17	17	0	0
Central Support	2,878	1,918	1,918	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-9,342	-6,228	-6,228	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,696	-2,467	-2,467	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,523	1,758	1,726	32	127

Planning & Transportation Department

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,957	3,961	3,570	391	587
Efficiency Savings	-100	-66	0	(66)	(100)
Premises	188	122	100	22	34
Hired & Contracted Services	415	98	103	(5)	(8)
Supplies & Services	142	203	350	(147)	(220)
Street Lighting	1,643	479	527	(48)	(72)
Highways Maintenance - Routine & Reactive	1,803	781	1,142	(361)	(542)
Highways Maintenance - Programmed Works	812	574	153	421	632
Fleet Transport	1,467	921	927	(6)	(10)
Bus Support - Halton Hopper Tickets	14	9	4	5	8
Bus Support	506	587	587	0	0
Agency Related Expenditure	8	6	141	(135)	(202)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	31	31	31	0	0
NRA Levy	75	74	74	0	1
LCR Levy	1,553	1,164	1,164	0	0
Contribution to Reserves	359	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	14,873	8,944	8,873	71	108
Income					
Sales & Rents Income	-97	-72	-64	(8)	(12)
Planning Fees	-798	-534	-750	216	324
Building Control Fees	-251	-167	-131	(36)	(55)
Other Fees & Charges	-971	-634	-1,166	532	798
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-174	-160	-160	0	0
Government Grant Income	-57	-57	-57	0	0
Halton Hopper Income	-15	-10	-7	(3)	(5)
Recharge to Capital	-119	0	0	0	0
LCR Levy Reimbursement	-1,553	-1,164	-1,164	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-132	-157	-157	0	0
Total Income	-4,167	-2,955	-3,656	701	1,050
Net Operational Expenditure	10,706	5,989	5,217	772	1,158
Recharges					
Premises Recharges	739	493	493	0	0
Transport Recharges	808	517	517	0	(2)
Central Recharges	2,505	1,672	1,672	0	0
Asset Charges	918	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,347	-4,346	-4,502	156	234
Net Total Recharges	-1,377	-1,664	-1,820	156	232
Net Departmental Expenditure	9,329	4,325	3,397	928	1,390

Corporate & Democracy

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	432	275	316	(41)	(40)
Contracted Services	12	6	0	6	0
Supplies & Services	102	89	-79	168	42
Premises Expenditure	24	18	17	1	0
Transport Costs	1	0	40	(40)	0
Members Allowances	994	663	703	(40)	0
Contingency	674	447	0	447	670
Contribution to Reserves	300	300	263	37	(647)
Debt Management Expenses	20	13	63	(50)	(13)
Precepts & Levies	244	244	244	0	0
Interest Payable - Treasury Management	2,303	1,538	1,298	240	360
Interest Payable - Other	215	143	143	0	0
Capital Financing (Minimum Revenue Provision)	3,004	3,004	2,966	38	38
Cost of Exceptional Financial Support					
Interest Payable	1,225	817	731	86	129
Capital Financing (Minimum Revenue Provision)	500	500	500	0	0
Cost of Dedicated School Grant Deficit					
Interest Payable	725	483	594	(111)	(166)
Efficiency Savings:					
Purchase of Additional Leave	-100	-67	-114	47	165
Voluntary Severance Scheme	-200	-133	0	(133)	(200)
Apprenticeship First Model	-200	-133	-17	(116)	(174)
Agency Staff Reduction	-1,700	-1,133	0	(1,133)	(1,700)
Accelerate the Lease or Sale of Surplus Land	-100	-67	0	(67)	(100)
Review of Debt Management	-100	-67	0	(67)	(100)
Review Existing Contracts	-200	-134	0	(134)	(200)
Total Expenditure	8,175	6,806	7,668	(862)	(1,936)
Income					
Interest Receivable - Treasury Management	-3,045	-2,030	-2,914	884	1,270
Interest Receivable - Other	-19	-13	-13	0	57
Other Fees & Charges	-146	-91	-80	(11)	(26)
Grants & Reimbursements	-334	-223	-223	0	0
Government Grant Income	-6,272	-4,181	-4,181	0	0
Total Income	-9,816	-6,538	-7,411	873	1,301
Net Operational Expenditure	-1,641	268	257	11	(635)
Recharges					
Premises Support	22	15	15	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	898	632	632	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-3,304	-1,678	-1,678	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,384	-1,031	-1,031	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-4,025	-763	-774	11	(635)

Public Health

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,631	3,410	3,318	92	109
Other Premises	6	4	0	4	6
Supplies & Services	439	168	228	(60)	(90)
Contracts	6,918	3,910	4,075	(165)	0
SLA's	372	115	77	38	0
Transport	4	2	2	0	1
Transfer to Reserves	660	0	0	0	(150)
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	20	2	2	0	0
Other Agency	24	24	24	0	0
Total Expenditure	14,074	7,635	7,726	(91)	(124)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-122	-57	-86	29	43
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-647	-737	-795	58	88
Transfer from Reserves	-428	-348	-357	9	13
Government Grant Income	-12,478	-9,285	-9,294	9	13
Total Income	-13,675	-10,427	-10,532	105	157
Net Operational Expenditure	399	-2,792	-2,806	14	33
Recharges					
Premises Support	209	139	139	0	0
Transport Support	24	16	17	(1)	(2)
Central Support	1,937	1,304	1,304	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-669	-446	-446	0	0
Net Total Recharges	1,501	1,013	1,014	(1)	(2)
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,900	-1,779	-1,792	13	31

High Needs 2025/26 Forecast Spend Position

Appendix 3

	Annual Budget £'000	Forecast Spend £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure			
High Needs Place Funding - Mainstream Units	1,432	2,047	(615)
High Needs Place Funding - Special Schools	4,946	7,365	(2,419)
High Needs Place Funding - PRU	996	1,089	(93)
Top-Up Funding - Maintained Mainstream Schools	2,728	4,512	(1,784)
Top-Up Funding - Maintained Special Schools	2,151	2,845	(694)
Top-Up Funding - Maintained PRU	1,743	1,739	4
Top-Up Funding - Maintained Academies, Free Schools and Colleges	2,029	3,383	(1,354)
Top-Up Funding - Academies Special	990	3,336	(2,346)
Top-Up Funding - Non-Maintained and Independent Providers	7,272	11,087	(3,815)
Top-Up Funding - Post 16 FE	2,796	2,167	629
SEN Support Services	2,280	2,234	46
Special Free School	331	579	(248)
Exclusions	0	59	(59)
Support for Inclusion	45	45	0
Therapies and Other Health Related Services	20	20	0
Total Expenditure	29,759	42,507	(12,748)

Progress Against Agreed Savings

APPENDIX 4

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 Unit.	0	280		Unlikely to be achieved – currently forecast overspend position. However, these services are currently being reviewed as part of the transformation programme.

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		Unlikely to be achieved to be achieved on a longer term basis. Interim measures in place to support the current year position includes use of surplus capital grants. While the current overspend is being reduced significantly, it is unlikely the required budget reduction will be achieved by year-end.
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		Unlikely to be achieved by financial year-end.
Total ASC Directorate		225	1,655		

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		Look to increase costs in 2026/27 but this is pending a Government consultation on council tax of which summons charges are being reviewed.
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.
Total Finance Department			90	100		

Legal and Democratic Services

Service Area		Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value	Current	Comments
--------------	--	--------------------------------	---------------	---------	----------

	Net Budget £'000		25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000	Progress	
Members		Deputy Mayor – cease provision of the Deputy Mayor’s allowance, whilst retaining a nominated Deputy Mayor.	0	6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Achieved.
Total Legal and Democratic Services			0	6		

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 priorities 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		<p>Whilst residential placement cost is currently forecast to be within budget, uncertainty continues on the saving being achieved given the risk of children entering into care during the remainder of the financial year.</p> <p>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</p>

						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,	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

		thereby reducing the timescales involved and cost of court proceedings, in order to reduce the current overspend and ongoing costs.				underway to reduce the number of C2 applications to court. PLO process is proving effective for some families in diverting away from 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
Total Children & Families Department			22	1,900		

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 which will not be implemented until Autumn 2026
Total EIP Department			0	300		

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Green waste charges have been increased to £50.
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26

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		
Total Community & Greenspace Dept			12	270		

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	U	It is not expected this saving will materialise in the current year.
Total EEP Dept			0	100		

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.
Total PPT Dept			0	100		

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Charges Increased
Total Public Health Directorate			0	45		

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 has been agreed and implemented. Prudent forecast of saving against the scheme is estimated to be in the region of £0.265m
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. Unlikely to be in place for this financial year.
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. It is currently forecasts savings of £0.026m will be achieved by financial year-end.

		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		<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		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		<p>Review of debt management particularly with Adult Social Care has commenced.</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		<p>Currently part of workstream being undertaken by the Transformation Programme.</p>

Total Corporate & Democracy		0	2,400		

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>
	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.
	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.
	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025

APPENDIX 5

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Childrens Directorate							
Capital Repairs	882.1	882.1	700	700	754.0	128.1	0.0
Asbestos Management	10.0	10.0	0.5	6	10.0	0.0	0.0
Schools Access Initiative	37.7	37.7	34	34	41.0	-3.3	0.0
Basic Need Projects	600.8	600.8	0	0	100.0	500.8	0.0
Small Capital Works	173.0	173.0	98	105	170.0	3.0	0.0
SEND capital allocation	1,871.2	1,871.2	202	675	1,275.0	596.2	45.0
SEND capital unallocated	1,775.5	1,775.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,775.5	0.0
SCA unallocated	129.3	129.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	129.3	0.0
Family Hubs & Start for Life	63.0	63.0	11.0	11.0	63	0.0	65.0
Childcare Expansion	314.8	314.8	18	18	314.8	0.0	0.0
AMP Data	25.0	25.0	23	24	25.0	0.0	0.0
Childrens Directorate Total	5,882.4	5,882.4	1,086.6	1,573.1	2,752.8	3,129.6	110.0

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Adults Directorate							
Grants - Disabled Facilities	2,200.0	2,000.0	999.0	1,400.0	2,000.0	0.0	700.0
Stair Lifts	400.0	650.0	355.0	450.0	650.0	0.0	700.0
Joint Funding RSL Adaptations	300.0	250.0	187.0	220.0	250.0	0.0	300.0
Madeline McKenna Residential Home	300.0	200.0	43.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Millbrow Care Home	200.0	200.0	54.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
St Lukes	50.0	200.0	115.0	150.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
St Patricks	200.0	200.0	63.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Care Home Refurbishment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Telehealthcare Digital Switchover	135.0	135.0	0.0	0.0	135.0	0.0	0.0
Oakmeadow and Peelhouse Network Improvements	40.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Lane Specialist Housing	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	250.0	0.0	0.0
Adults Directorate Total	4,075.0	4,125.0	2,066.0	2,770.0	4,125.0	0.0	1,700.0
Public Health							
New database for Public Protection Regulatory Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
Public Health Directorate Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Environment & Regeneration Directorate							
Stadium Minor Works	22.1	22.1	24.6	24.6	24.6	-2.5	30.0
Halton Leisure Centre	99.7	99.7	92.5	94.0	95.0	4.7	0.0
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	52.5	60.5	65.0	2.8	65.0
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	770.0	650.9	700.0	770.0	0.0	600.0
Runcorn Town Park	450.6	450.6	10.2	60.0	125.0	325.6	280.0
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,841.6	250.0	173.4	180.0	250.0	0.0	1,591.6
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	469.2	450.0	301.2	360.0	450.0	0.0	19.2
Cemetery Infrastructure work	469.1	469.1	10.5	207.0	410.0	59.1	683.0
Stadium Public Address System	810.0	346.0	34.9	286.0	346.0	0.0	379.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0
Replacement Cremator	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Stadium Steelwork Repairs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	600.0
Brindley Lighting	0.0	200.0	0.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Homeless Accommodation Refurbishment	0.0	52.0	49.3	51.0	52.0	0.0	948.0
CCTV Infrastructure Works	0.0	105.0	1.2	50.0	105.0	0.0	395.0
Equality Act Improvement Works	303.5	303.5	17.7	150.0	303.5	0.0	300.0
Foundary Lane Residential Area	3,520.9	3,520.9	1,229.3	1,850.0	3,520.9	0.0	0.0
Property Improvements	231.1	231.1	121.7	153.6	231.1	0.0	200.0
Town Deal	21,823.1	13,210.2	6,294.6	9,550.0	13,210.2	0.0	8,612.9
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	101.2	101.2	0.0	55.0	101.2	0.0	0.0
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	82.0	82.0	4.2	35.0	82.0	0.0	0.0

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation £000	2025/26 Revised Allocation £000	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026 £000	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026 £000	Allocation remaining £000	2026/27 Forecast Allocation £000
Changing Places	17.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	17.0	0.0	0.0
Kingsway Centre Demolition	708.0	708.0	438.3	488.0	538.0	170.0	0.0
Port of Weston	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,200.0
Astmoor Masterplan	81.6	902.6	902.6	902.6	902.6	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury - CPO	3,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,000.0
Warm Homes Plan	0.0	587.6	0.0	0.0	587.6	0.0	587.6
Runcorn Town Centre Management	0.0	822.0	524.6	650.0	822.0	0.0	0.0
Widnes Town Centre Framework	0.0	200.0	53.0	100.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Bridge and Highway Maintenance	839.2	839.2	181.2	510.2	839.2	0.0	0.0
Runcorn Busway	90.0	90.0	35.9	63.0	90.0	0.0	0.0
ATF3 Murdishaw to Whitehouse	757.0	757.0	538.3	647.7	757.0	0.0	0.0
ATF4 - Widnes Town Centre Accessibility	114.5	114.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	114.5	0.0
A56 Reconstruction	943.7	943.7	95.0	519.4	943.7	0.0	0.0
LCWIP phase 2 Daresbury	3,862	100	30.9	57.7	84.5	15.5	0.0
Pot Hole Funding	968	968	243.8	605.9	968.0	0.4	0.0
CRSTS	4,405	4,405	2,709.9	3,557.5	4,405.0	0.0	0.0
Street Lighting - Structural Maintenance	1,025.1	1,025.1	0.0	100.0	200.0	825.1	1,025.1
Street Lighting - Upgrades	728.4	728.4	0.0	50.0	50.0	678.4	528.4
East Runcorn Connectivity	5,851.7	14,442.2	6,283.7	10,363.0	14,442.2	0.0	0.0
Risk Management	712.9	120.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	97.0	120.0
Widnes Loops	0.0	0.0	65.1	65.1	65.1	-65.1	0.0
Fleet Replacements	4,482.0	2,500.0	1,070.1	1,785.0	2,500.0	0.0	4,482.0
Early Land Acquisition Mersey Gateway	210.0	80.0	49.4	73.0	80.0	0.0	80.0
Mersey Gateway Crossings Board	60.0	-226.7	-226.7	-226.7	-226.7	0.0	60.0
Environment & Regeneration Directorate Total	62,333.3	50,900.2	22,086.8	34,300.9	48,674.7	2,225.5	26,826.7

2025/26 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2025 continued

Scheme Detail	2025/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Chief Executives Directorate							
IT Rolling Programme	805.6	1,305.6	1,022.0	1,245.1	1,245.1	60.5	1,200.0
Halton Smart Microgrid	10,870.0	1,000.0	0.0	0.0	1,000.0	0.0	9,870.0
Transformation Programme	1,538.0	2,465.7	1,557.1	1,928.9	2,195.6	270.1	
Accelerated Growth	0.0	650.7	440.0	546.9	643.9	6.8	
Chief Executives Directorate Total	13,213.6	5,422.0	3,019.1	3,720.9	5,084.6	337.4	11,070.0
Grand Total	85,504.4	66,329.6	28,258.5	42,364.9	60,637.1	5,692.5	39,906.7

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	Pay costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay award Staff Turnover Saving Target Agency, casuals and overtime National Living Wage Pension Costs 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget based upon individual staff members/vacancies Budget monitoring Contingency Balances Medium Term Forecast Engage with Cheshire Pension Scheme and pension actuary Market supplement paid in multiple service areas Employer of Choice Initiative Connect to Halton – Review of Scheme 	3	3	9	ED/SB/Directors	Monthly	<p>2025/26 budget includes pay growth at forecast 2% pay award. Pay offer agreed at 3.2%, backdated pay actioned in August 2025. Actual cost of the pay award higher at £1.214m that then £1m figure previously estimated.</p> <p>Agency costs and usage remain high although clear evidence of reduction in numbers.</p> <p>Market Supplements being paid across increasing number of services.</p>	30/11/25

											Connect to Halton scheme went live September 2024, agency and casual appointments to be covered by the scheme.	
2	Redundancy and Early Retirements	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits Tracking Process • Future savings to take into account cost of redundancy and early retirements. • Seek Government approval to use capital receipts to fund transformation costs. • Develop policy for voluntary severance scheme 	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. Scheme unlikely to go live in current financial year.</p>	30/11/25

3	Savings not achieved	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget monitoring • Contingency • Rigorous process in approving savings. • Review of savings at departmental and directorate level • Monthly budget monitoring • Medium Term Financial Forecast • RAG monitoring of savings included in bi-monthly monitoring reports. • Transformation saving targets reported monthly through Transformation Programme Board. 	4	3	12	RR/ED/SB/Directors	Monthly	<p>Savings for 2025/26 have been written into Directorate budgets.</p> <p>Budget savings monitored closely and if necessary offsetting savings sought.</p> <p>Transformation Programme Board meet on monthly basis to discuss progress against programme.</p>	30/11/25
---	-----------------------------	---	---	----	--	---	---	----	--------------------	---------	---	----------

4	Price inflation	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prudent budget provision • Latest forecast information used eg. utilities • Budget monitoring • Contingency • Balances • CPI/RPI monitoring • MTFS 	3	3	9	ED/SB	Monthly	<p>CPI for November 2025 is 3.2% and RPI is 3.8%. Both running higher than inflation included in 2025.26 budget.</p> <p>Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast inflation is to remain above 3% for the remainder of 2025 and drop to 2.5% in 2026 and then hit the Government target of 2% in 2027.</p>	30/11/25
5	Review of LG Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business rates retention – 100% Pilot and Review • Fair Funding Review • National Public Spending Plans • Social Care Green Paper 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPs • SIGOMA / LG Futures • Liverpool City Region & Merseyside Treasurers Group • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Member of business rate retention pilot region 	4	4	9	ED/SB/NS/MW/MG	Weekly/ Monthly	<p>Business rate retention 100% scheme to continue over three year period 2026/27 to 2028/29.</p> <p>Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement issued 17 December 2025. Funding behind modelled levels from Fair Funding</p>	30/11/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue with DCLG • Responding to reviews and consultations 						<p>consultation (Summer 2025) and LG Finance policy Statement (Nov 25). Government have redirected funding towards greater levels of funding for temporary accommodation needs.</p> <p>Core Spending Power increase for 2026/27 will be set at the 'floor level' of 5% and 2.1% and 2.9% in the following two years. Increases for last two years based on Council increasing Council Tax by 4.99% in each of them years.</p>	
6	Treasury Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borrowing • Investment 	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management Strategy • Link Asset Services advice • Treasury Management planning and monitoring 	1	3	3	ED/SB/MG	Daily / Quarterly	<p>BoE base rate reduced to 3.75%.</p> <p>Impact of Exceptional Financial Support request to be assessed with regards to timing</p>	30/11/25

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at Networking and Benchmarking Groups Officer and Member Training 						of future borrowing.	
7	Demand led budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children in Care Out of borough fostering Community Care High Needs 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget monitoring Contingency Balances Review service demand Directorate recovery groups Monthly budget monitoring Children Improvement Plan Investment Funding 	4	4	16	ED/SB/NS/MW	Monthly	<p>Numbers of children in care and with protection plans reviewed on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Community care costs and 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>	30/11/25
8	Mersey Gateway Costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs 	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular monitoring with Crossing Board 	2	1	2	ED/SB/MG	Quarterly	Arrangements in place to monitor spend and	30/11/25

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toll Income • Funding • Accounting treatment 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital reserve • Government Grant • Liquidity Fund 						availability of liquidity fund.	
9	Council Tax Collection	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council tax monitoring on monthly basis • Review of Collection Rate • Collection Fund Balance • Provision for bad debts • Review recovery procedures • Benchmarking 	3	2	6	ED/PG/SB/P D/BH/MG	Monthly	<p>Council tax collection rate through to the end of November 2025 is 71.34% which is 0.09% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>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. £1.992m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.</p>	30/11/25

10	Business Rates Retention Scheme	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and monitoring of latest business rates income to baseline and estimate for year. Prudent allowance for losses in collection Prudent provision set aside for losses from valuation appeals Regular monitoring of annual yield and baseline / budget position Benchmarking Groups Review recovery procedures 	3	1	3	ED/SB/LB/MG	Monthly	<p>Business rate collection through to the end of November 2025 is 75.01% which is 1.02% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>£0.945m has so far been collected this year in relation to previous years' debt.</p>	30/11/25
11	Income recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertainty to economy following cost of living and high inflation 	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate charging policy Budget monitoring Contingency Balances Income benchmarking 	3	1	3	ED/MM/SB	Monthly	<p>Income shortfalls identified and cause of increased concern in certain areas are being closely monitored.</p> <p>Additional posts created within Adult Social Care Directorate, responsible for improving the</p>	30/11/25

											overall collection of social care debt.	
12	Capital Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs • Funding • Key Major Projects • Clawback of Grant • Availability and timing of capital receipts • Cashflow • Contractors 	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management • Regular monitoring • Detailed financial analysis of new schemes to ensure they are affordable • Targets monitored to minimise clawback of grant. • Contractor due diligence • Dialogue with Government departments. 	3	2	6	Project Managers/ED /SB/LH	Quarterly	Capital receipts have been over committed therefore new capital schemes need to bring own funding.	30/11/25
13	Academy Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of transfer upon Council budget • Loss of income to Council Services 	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early identification of school decisions • DfE Regulations • Prudent consideration of financial transactions to facilitate transfer • Services continue to be offered to academies • Transfer Protocol 	1	3	3	ED/SB/NS	Monthly	Consideration given in MTFs for loss of funding.	30/11/25

14	Reserves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diminishing reserves, used to balance budget, fund overspend positions. 	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored on a bi-monthly basis, reported to Management Team and Exec Board Benchmarking Financial Forecast Programme to replenish reserves. 	3	3	9	ED/SB	Quarterly	<p>Monitored and reported on a regular basis. Council reserves at historic low levels.</p> <p>Reserves will need to be replenished within future budgets</p>	30/11/25
15	Budget Balancing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has struggled to achieve a balanced budget position for a number of years. Forecast for current year is an overspend position of £19m. Reserves insufficient to balance current year budget. Council has been given approval in-principle for Exceptional Financial Support (day to day costs funded through capital borrowings) 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current year budgets monitored on a regular basis. Forward forecasting through to March 2029 reported on a prudent basis. Regular conversations with DHLUC re Council's financial position. LGA to undertake a financial assurance review. Transformation programme in place. Financial Recovery Plan required to better inform how the Council 	4	4	16	ED/SB	Ongoing	<p>Council has received in-principle agreement to fund day to day costs through Exceptional Financial Support.</p> <p>EFS covers a total of £52.8m over two years, 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</p>	30/11/25

	for 2024/25 and 2025/26.				will achieve future sustainable budgets.						be put in place to limit Council exposure to EFS and repayment of borrowings to date.	