



Personnel and Organisational Development

SERVICE PLAN

April 2007 to March 2010

Advanced Draft 08.02.07

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

To meet Halton's most pressing needs, the Borough Council has identified **6 key priorities**, which, as detailed within the Council's Corporate Plan, are: -

- **A Healthy Halton**
- **Halton's Urban Renewal**
- **Halton's Children & Young People**
- **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**
- **A Safer Halton**
- **Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency**

The primary purpose of Service Plans is to provide a clear statement on what individual services are planning to achieve and to show how this contributes towards achieving the corporate priorities of the Council. They are an essential tool for making key decisions about future service provision and the level of resources required. Additionally the service plan is designed to enable the public, Elected Members and staff to monitor how well this part of the Council is performing in improving the quality of life for local people.

2.0 SERVICE PROFILE

2.1 Purpose

The Department is a central support service whose main function is to ensure corporate awareness of, and compliance with, the various personnel policies adopted by the Council and employment legislation. On occasions, the department will lead in negotiations with Trade Unions on matters of corporate consequence such as Pay and Grading Reviews. In addition, the department takes the central lead in providing training and development opportunities for elected members and employees.

The department is responsible for

Personnel

- Advising Councillors and management on personnel policy, strategy and procedures.
- Recruitment of staff.
- Pre-employment checks of prospective employees.
- Advice on, and interpretation of, national and local conditions of service and employment related legislation.
- Industrial/Employee Relations.
- Employee Welfare.
- Equality of Opportunity in Employment.

Training

- Management of the Corporate Training Centre
- Provision of in-house training
- Commissioning of external training provision

In recruiting and retaining staff, providing the appropriate level of support and training to staff and directorates, and ensuring that employees are equipped with the skills needed to deliver the Council plans and strategies, the Personnel Services function ultimately benefits all members of the community.

2.2 Key Messages

The Government's Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government has identified the five "Priority Themes" that each council should address to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery. These are:

- Developing leadership capacity
- Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce
- Developing the organisation
- Resourcing, recruitment and retention
- Pay and rewards.

The Council in the production of Directorate Workforce Plans, and, in Autumn 2005, a Corporate Workforce Development Plan, has addressed all of these themes. In addition during 2006/07 the Council developed and adopted a new 3-year Human Resource Strategy. These plans set a strategic framework for the Council's approach to its workforce and a programme of work projects covering the next few years. Much of the work of this department over the period of this Service Plan will be specifically targeted at ensuring these projects are successfully completed in line with action plans set out in the Strategies.

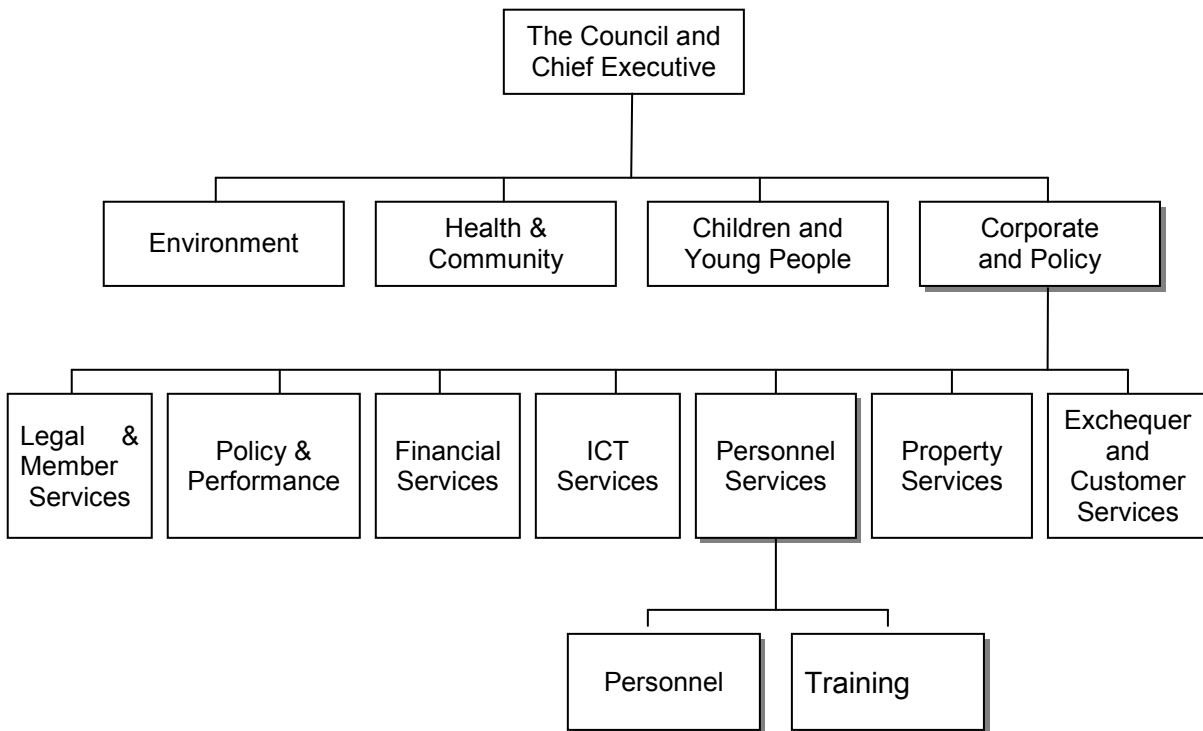
Linking in with the themes of developing the organisation and the skills and capacity of the workforce, 2006 saw directorates undertaking succession planning projects as anticipated in the Workforce Development Plan. This requirement was also highlighted by anticipated budget shortfalls for 2007/08 and future years.

Further evidence of the Council's determination to develop and improve its leadership capacity saw the Executive Board and Management Team work with the Local Government Leadership Centre to develop and introduce joint leadership development events.

An interesting initiative during 2006 was the formulation of the North West Improvement Network (NWIN). This organisation, funded with Government grant, is seeking to bring authorities together at regional and sub regional level to develop new initiatives and joint working to address common needs and problems facing Local Government. Within the network, and to take advantage of the opportunities that membership of the organisation presents, Halton has secured extensive representation at both Councillor and officer level.

A significant advantage for any organisation in managing its human resources is the availability of timely and accurate intelligence and information and to this end the Council approved in 2006 the acquisition of a new integrated Human Resources and Payroll software system. Much of the work of the Personnel department during the year has gone into the implementation of this system commencing with the new payroll module. Additional modules will be implemented during 2007 and additionally this system will facilitate a merger of the two departments leading to a much improved and efficient service.

2.3 Organisation Structure



Current Staffing Levels

The following table identifies the number of staff employed within each of the Divisions that form the Department

Division	Category			Total
	Managerial	Professional	Administrative	
Operational Director	1	-	-	1
Personnel	2	6	7	15
Training	2	1	6	9
Total	5	7	13	25

3.0 AIMS OF THE SERVICE

The Council has identified six key strategic priorities that are detailed within the introduction to this plan. Whilst the majority of Council services will contribute in some way to each of these priorities those that are most relevant to Personnel & Organisational Services, and the Service Aims associated with them are:-

Corporate Priority 6 Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency

Area of Focus 39

Ensuring that human resources are managed and deployed to their best effect and improving the relevance, availability and use of HR information.

Departmental Service Aim 1

To maintain, monitor and provide workforce data and information to the Council and Statutory bodies.

Departmental Service Aim 2

Ensure that the Council recruits, retains and develops staff with the skills needed to perform its functions and deliver services required now and in the future.

Area of Focus 40

Ensuring that the Council has the right people with the right skills and who are informed and motivated and provided with opportunities for personal development and engagement.

Departmental Service Aim 3

Assist in developing and promoting fair and consistent personnel policies of opportunity in employment.

Departmental Service Aim 4

Ensure that the Council implements a fair, consistent and systematic procedure in its recruitment of staff that complies with its current Equal Opportunities legislation and continues to promote the 'best person for the job' principle.

Departmental Service Aim 5

Ensure that the Council recruits, retains and develops staff with the skills needed to perform its functions and deliver services required now and in the future.

Departmental Service Aim 6

Develop the knowledge and skills of Council employees by providing a comprehensive training and development service and assist the Council to maintain its Investors in People accreditation.

4.0 FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE

4.1 External Factors

The following table identifies those external factors that will, or are likely to, impact upon the service during the period of this plan.

Key Developments	Timeframe	Comments
Political (Local) Pay and Grading Review	2006-2007	Significant resource issue for department in completing this review. Following the implementation of the Job Evaluation outcomes, an appeals process will be allowed that will be undertaken during 2007.
Economic Budget pressures/Efficiency gains	2006-2008	Expectation by Government for all authorities to make 2.5% efficiency gains each year.
Social Continuing Government agenda for Work/Life balance initiatives	2006-2008	Expectation of Government that employers continue to introduce initiatives encouraging flexibility, work/life balance in the workplace
Technological New integrated HR/Payroll IT system	2006-2007	Staff resources required to ensure implementation of system plus subsequent training requirements
Introduction of Home-working policy	2006	Implications of introduction of this policy still to be determined.
Legislative Age Discrimination legislation	2006	Requirement to review Personnel policies in light of new legislation
Government changes to Pension Schemes.	2007	Requirement to review and revise Council's Retirement Policy.
Government requirement to promote gender equality	2007	New duty for employers to actively promote gender equality. To be addressed through the Council's Equality Group.
Environmental Recruitment and retention of quality staff	2006-2008	Requirement to assess ability of Council to recruit and retain quality staff in a competitive "market". Constant review of staff benefits to ensure Council remains competitive.

4.2 Service Developments

During 2005/06 three internal audits have been carried out on the work of the department together with one external inspection.

The way in which Criminal Record Bureau checks are carried out has been the subject of both internal and external inspection. Minor changes in processes have been made as a result of these that have resulted in an improved information database and improved security of information

Additionally, internal audits focussed on Training and Development and the management of sickness absence. Actions agreed following the audits were implemented during 2005/06 and those relating to Training and Development in particular helped the Council retain Investor in People status in October 2006.

4.3 Efficiency Improvements

Over the next twelve months a new integrated HR/Payroll IT system will continue to be implemented. As part of this process, alternative service delivery methods will be investigated in both HR and Payroll to seek more efficient work practices including the merger of the two sections. This will require a review of the structure of the whole department.

4.4 National, Regional & Sub-regional Focus

Halton is a member of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities and also the North West Employers Organisation.

During 2004/05 the Council worked with the Regional Skills and Capacity Advisor to develop and produce Directorate Workforce Plans and a Corporate Workforce Development Plan. As the first council in the North West to produce such plans, staff continue to offer advice and guidance to other councils in this process.

The Council has joined with neighbouring authorities - primarily St Helens, Knowsley and Wirral - to propose joint development work to the North West Improvement Network. This has involved producing a Learning Plan indicating areas of joint need in training and development terms that can be addressed by joint working. A bid for funding for this work was made to NWIN and was successful. This joint work will commence in 2007.

4.5 Equality

Halton Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and combating discrimination and victimisation within all aspects of its service delivery, policy development and as an employer. This commitment is reflected in a range of policies, strategies and framework documents that underpin the work of the Council in its day-to-day operation and in the services it delivers.

The Council fully supports the broad principles of social justice and will oppose any form of discrimination and oppression. Council policy will apply to all of those who come into contact with it, i.e. those who presently use directly provided services or services provided on the Council's behalf; potential users of services; other agencies and professionals; employees and job applicants; and the general public.

During the course of 2005 – 06 all Council Services conducted Equality Impact Assessments to examine the equality implications of all policies, procedures and practices within their area.

As a result this department developed an Equalities Action Plan, which is subject to an annual review, that identified a number of low / medium priority areas for action that will be taken during the lifetime of this plan (refer section 6.3).

4.6 Unforeseen Developments

Whilst every effort has been made to identify those developments that may influence or impact upon the service during the life of this plan the possibility exists that unforeseen developments may occur that need to be considered as and when they arise. Such developments will be detailed and commented upon as appropriate in the sections dealing with key developments or emerging issues within the relevant Service Plan Quarterly Monitoring Reports.

In addition to the normal reporting cycle the service may also report 'by exception' to the appropriate Policy and Performance Board when unforeseen developments occur. Where a more immediate decision is required due to the pressing nature of the unforeseen development, this will be referred to Management Team and the Executive Board for attention. The respective Policy and Performance Boards will be kept informed of any developments of this nature.

All reports to the Policy and Performance Boards with the exception of Part II items, are publicly available documents and can be accessed through the Council's website at <http://hbcweb.halton.gov.uk/>

5.0 RESOURCES

5.1 Budget Summary and Service Costs

INFORMATION TO FOLLOW

5.2 Future Staffing Requirements

As indicated earlier in this Plan, it is highly likely that a merger of the Personnel and Payroll sections will take place in 2007. At this time it is not possible to confirm staff numbers etc and therefore the numbers below reflect the Personnel requirement only.

Year	Managerial	Professional/ Technical	Administrative/ Clerical	Front Line
2007/08	5	7	13	0
2008/09	5	7	13	0

5.3 Future ICT Requirements

As described within the previous section the merger of the payroll and personnel functions may have implications for future ICT requirements, although at this stage these are not possible to determine. However as we move into 2007 this situation will become clearer and the service will respond accordingly.

5.4 Future Accommodation/Property Requirements

As described previously the merger of the payroll and personnel functions may have implications for future property requirements, although at this stage these are not possible to determine. However it is anticipated that no significant additional accommodation space will be required and as we move into 2007 this situation will become clearer and the service will respond accordingly.

6.0 SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Plans are no use if they do not produce real results. We need to set targets and measure our performance to know if we are achieving the improvements intended. Various types of indicator are used here to do this:

- Objectives and Key Milestones. These show the major events in the work of the Department that are planned to take place during 2007–10, such as the launch of new initiatives, production of key plans and strategies and progress on major projects†
- Performance Indicator Targets. These show performance on indicators that are prescribed by central Government as part of their drive to ensure that councils deliver best value in serving their local communities.
- Local Performance Indicators. These show performance on indicators that the Department or the Council has adopted locally themselves and those adopted from national and other sources.
- Local Public Service Agreement Targets. Such targets are the result of an agreement between the local authority and the Government. This agreement sets out the authority's commitment to deliver specific improvements in performance and the Governments commitment to reward these improvements. **THIS SECTION OF THE PLAN WILL BE REVISED IN LIGHT OF THE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT THAT IS PRESENTLY UNDERGOING DEVELOPMENT**
- National Floor Targets. These are targets that set a minimum standard for disadvantaged groups or areas or a narrowing of the gap between such areas and the rest of the country.

† Against each key objective the overall initial and residual risk assessment (before and after the risk control measures have been identified) is shown. The risk mapping exercise scores the potential impact on the key objective (severity) and the likelihood (probability) of the risks happening to arrive at a number. This is represented by a number with the associated level of assessed risk.

Risk Score	Overall Level of Risk
1 – 4	LOW
5 – 10	MEDIUM
11 – 16	HIGH

The following tables identify the service objectives and national / local performance indicators, each of which has been referenced to the Corporate Priority to which it relates.

6.1.1 Key Service Objectives

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 39</i>	<i>Ensuring that human resources are managed and deployed to their best effect and improving the relevance, availability and use of HR information.</i>

Service Objective: PS O1	To ensure the Council's strategic approach to the management of Human Resources is reviewed and is consistent with best practice and reflects a modern, excellent authority.					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Priority Actions identified within the new Human Resources Strategy – March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Priority Actions identified within the new Human Resources Strategy – March 2009 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Priority Actions identified within the new Human Resources Strategy – March 2010 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (s)	Linked Indicators	
	Residual	Low				

Service Objective: PS O2	To ensure that the Council rewards staff in accordance with legislation through a modern pay and grading system.					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the outcomes of the completed Pay and Grading Review and undertake any appeal hearings that may arise March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	Not applicable					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	Not applicable					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Responsible Officer	Operational Director (s) (Personnel/Exchequer & Customer Services)	Linked Indicators	
	Residual	Low				

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 39</i>	Ensuring that human resources are managed and deployed to their best effect and improving the relevance, availability and use of HR information.

Service Objective: PS O3	To ensure that the Council has a modern and effective Human Resource management IT system to improve the relevance, availability and use of HR information.					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a full merger of the existing payroll and personnel functions. – September 2007 Implement the remaining modules of the Trent IT system. – December 2007 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	Not applicable					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	Not applicable					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Low	Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (JB/HJ)	Linked Indicators	
	Residual	Low				

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 40</i>	Ensuring that the Council has the right people with the right skills and who are informed and motivated and provided with opportunities for personnel development and engagement.

Service Objective: PS O4	Ensure that School Governors, Heads and teachers are fully equipped and competent to undertake their roles, and as required by legislation, in relation to performance management of schools.					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with colleagues from the Children's and Young Peoples Directorate, devise, develop and deliver an appropriate training programme. – March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver appropriate training – March 2009 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	Not applicable					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Low	Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (JB)	Linked Indicators	
	Residual	Low				

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 40</i>	Ensuring that the Council has the right people with the right skills and who are informed and motivated and provided with opportunities for personnel development and engagement.

Service Objective: PS O5	Ensure that Managers are equipped with the skills to manage projects competently and in an effective and efficient manner.					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce an on-line support tool to augment the Council's in-house project management training and encourage and facilitate consistent organisational good practice. – December 2007 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	Not applicable					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	Not applicable					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Low	Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (HJ)	Linked Indicators	
	Residual	Low				

6.1.2 Other Service Objectives

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 39</i>	Ensuring that human resources are managed and deployed to their best effect and improving the relevance, availability and use of HR information.

Service Objective: PS O6	Ensure a pro-active approach on the part of the Council Managers to the health, safety and welfare of employees.		
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement procedural changes arising from the review of the management of sickness absence and devise and deliver appropriate training for managers. –March 2008 		
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	Not applicable		
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	Not applicable		
Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (JB)	Linked Indicators	

Service Objective: PS O7	To ensure that the Council employs best practice in maintaining employee records and complies with CSCI requirements.		
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with Senior Managers in Health & Community Services, carry out an audit of personnel files for staff in this Directorate and reconfigure files according to CSCI requirements. – August 2008 		
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 		
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable 		
Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (HJ) Relevant Operational Directors	Linked Indicators	

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 39</i>	Ensuring that the Council has the right people with the right skills and who are informed and motivated and provided with opportunities for personal development and engagement.

Service Objective: PS O8	To expand and improve the extensive range of development opportunities provided by the Corporate Training section and to ensure that managers, both existing and potential, are equipped with a skills and knowledge base that optimises their performance.		
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise, develop and implement a Management Induction Programme for all new Managers joining the Council. July 2007 		
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop in-house training sessions leading to the award of both ILM level 2 Certificate in Management and the Introductory Diploma in Executive Management, and gain accreditation for their delivery by the Council from the Institute of Leadership and Management by April 2008 		
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	Not applicable		
Responsible Officer	Principal Personnel Officer (HJ)	Linked Indicators	

6.2 Performance Indicators and Targets (Statutory & Local Indicators):

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2005/6 Actual	2005/06 Quartiles ² (All England)			Halton 2006/7 Target	Halton 2006/7 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			07/08	08/09	09/10
Service Delivery											
PSLI 1 SA4	Percentage of requests for advertisements received by Tuesday noon in any week will be advertised internally by Friday of the same week and if required by Friday of the following week in external newspapers etc.		N/a				100%		100%	100%	100%
PSLI 2 SA4	Percentage of applications received in the division for any post acknowledged within one day		N/a				100%		100%	100%	100%
PSLI 3 SA4	Percentage of candidates attending interview who are unsuccessful informed within five working days.		N/a				100%		100%	100%	100%
PSLI 4 SA4	Percentage of enquiries for work answered in writing within one week.		N/a				100%		100%	100%	100%
PSLI 5	Percentage of requests to amend the establishment received from Operational Directors considered by the Executive Board member for Corporate Services on two specific days in the same month if received 10 days prior to these days (second and last Wednesday of each month).		N/a				100%		100%	100%	100%

¹ Key Indicators are identified by an **underlined reference in bold type**.

² No quartile data is available for local performance indicators

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2005/6 Actual	2005/06 Quartiles ² (All England)			Halton 2006/7 Target	Halton 2006/7 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			07/08	08/09	09/10
Quality											
Fair Access											
Cost & Efficiency											
Corporate											
<u>BVPI 11</u>	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are:-										
a)	Women		39.64				42.0		44.0	45.0	46.0
b)	From black and ethnic minority communities		2.86				3.4		3.6	3.7	3.8
c)	With a disability		3.16				3.2		3.25	3.3	3.5
<u>BVPI 12</u>	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness		11.38				11		10.5	10	9.8
<u>BVPI 14</u>	Early retirements (excluding ill-health) as a percentage of the total workforce.		0.33				0.18		0.17	0.17	0.16
<u>BVPI 15</u>	% Of employees retiring on grounds of ill-health as a percentage of total workforce		0.2				0.25		0.20	0.18	0.16

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2005/6 Actual	2005/06 Quartiles ² (All England)			Halton 2006/7 Target	Halton 2006/7 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			07/08	08/09	09/10

Corporate cont'd

<u>BVPI 16a</u>	No of staff declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act as a % of the total workforce.		0.72				1.2		1.4	1.6	1.8
16b	% Of economically active disabled people in LA area.		19.7				N/a		N/a	N/a	N/a
<u>BVPI 17a</u>	Minority Ethnic community staff as % of total workforce.		1.91				2.0		2.1	2.2	2.3
17b	Economically active BME population in LA area.		1.13				N/a		N/a	N/a	N/a

6.3 Equality Action Plan

6.4 Local Public Service Agreement

THIS SECTION OF THE PLAN WILL BE REVISED IN LIGHT OF THE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT THAT IS PRESENTLY UNDERGOING DEVELOPMENT

6.5 National Floor Targets

There are presently no National Floor Targets that are directly relevant to the service

7.0 PERFORMANCE REPORTING

One of the main purposes of having a Service Plan is to enable the Council and interested members of the public to keep track of how the Council and its Departments are doing and to help councilors and managers see whether the service is performing as planned and achieving its targets.

Progress will be monitored through:

- **Day to day monitoring by Strategic Directors through their regular interaction with Operational Directors;**
- **Quarterly progress reports to the Management Team;**
- **The inclusion of quarterly service plan monitoring reports as a standard item on the agenda of all the Council's Policy and Performance Boards.**

Policy and Performance Board agenda are public documents and can be accessed free using Internet access at any library where assistance with the technology is available if needed.

8.0 STATUTORY & NON-STATUTORY PLANS

- **List the statutory and key non-statutory plans that have an influence on or relevance to, the service and the divisions within it.**

The following plans and strategy documents are relevant to this service plan:

[Community Strategy](#)
[Halton BVPP 2006/07](#)

Risk Assessment for Key Service Objectives Initially assessed as 'High' Risk

Key Objective Ref	Initial Risks identified*

*Risk treatment measures associated with the risks identified can be found in the departmental risk register. A commentary will be included in the quarterly service plan monitoring report to indicate the progress

Equality Action Plan

The Department carried out an Equality Impact Assessment during 2005 and a number of actions that needed to be taken were identified. Those yet to be completed that are considered to be high priority are detailed in the table below.

Strategy/Policy/Service	Impact Assessment (High/Low/None)	Action(s) Proposed	Timetable			Officer Responsible
			2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	