

Corporate Policy and Performance Board– Priority Based Monitoring Report

Reporting Period: **Quarter 1 – 1st April 2021 to 30th June 2021**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the first quarter of 2021 / 22 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:
 - Financial Services
 - Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency
 - ICT Infrastructure
 - Legal and Democracy
 - Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
 - Property Services
- 1.3 The emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 8 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments during the period which include:-

Financial Services

2.2 Benefits Division

Coronavirus Self-isolation Support Payment

On 28th September 2020 the Government introduced Self-isolation Support Payments whereby a payment of £500 will be made to those on low incomes, to support them if they cannot work during their self-isolation period and thereby suffer financial hardship. The Government has recently extended the scheme to end on 30th September 2021. At 30th June 2021 the table below shows the number of awards paid. Since 30th June 2021 the number of applications has risen considerably, which reflects the increased numbers of people testing positive for Covid19.

Self-isolation Payment awards at 30th June 2021

SIP Awards	Mandatory	Discretionary
Fund available	£310,000	£239,999
No. of awards	457	204
Current spend	£228,500	£102,000

Universal Credit Implementation

The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) statistics indicate at June 2021 there were 16,277 people within Halton claiming Universal Credit. By way of providing context, in March 2020 there were 10,918 Halton residents claiming Universal Credit, and this illustrates the impact of Covid19.

Processing Times

At 30th June 2021 processing times for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction were as follows: new claims 15.51 days and changes in circumstances 16.75 days.

2.3 Revenues and Financial Management Division

2020/21 Financial Outturn and Statement of Accounts

The 2020/21 financial outturn position was reported to Executive Board on 17 June 2021. It reported net spend for the year was £2.340m below the approved budget. It also reported that Covid19 costs and loss of income for the year were fully funded from available Government grant. The reporting position is caveated by 2020/21 being an extraordinary year in terms of what has driven the Council's financial position as a result of the pandemic.

Work is underway on completing the Councils 2020/21 Statement of Accounts. The draft version of the Statement will be published on the Council's website by Friday 30 July 2021, this will be followed by the audit of the accounts by Grant Thornton UK LLP.

Council Tax and Business Rate Collection

Council tax collection for the 1st quarter of the year is 27.89%, up 0.91% on this point last year and slightly down by 0.09% from that reported in 2019/20. Cash collection over the past quarter is £20.055m, this includes £0.790m collected in relation to previous year debts.

Business rates collection for the year to 30 June 2021 is 28.52%, up 1.54% on this point last year but down by 2.19% from that reported for the same period in 2019/20. Cash collected over the past quarter is £15.395m.

Collection for council tax and business rates over the remainder of the year remains difficult to forecast, given uncertainty as to how the national and local economy will recover during the next phase of the pandemic.

Breathing Space

From May 2021 the Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space) has provided someone in problem debt with the right to legal protections from their creditors. There are two types of breathing space: a standard breathing space and a mental health crisis breathing space. Since the start of the scheme the Council has received 88 Breathing Space applications for debt totalling £0.200m as follows;

Council Tax – 54 applications, value of debt £0.130m

Housing Benefit – 3 applications, value of debt £0.026m

Mersey Gateway – 31 applications, value of debt £0.044m

Business Support Grants

The Business Rates team are currently finalising payments of the final round of Covid19 business support grants, titled the Business Support Re-Start Grant programme. Applications for the grant had to be submitted by 30 June 2021 with final payments made no later than 30 July 2021. To date the Council has made payments to 611 businesses with a total grant value of £4.212m.

Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, the Team have administered over £25m in business support grant payments and awarded over £14m in business rate reliefs, to businesses across the Borough.

2.4 Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance Division

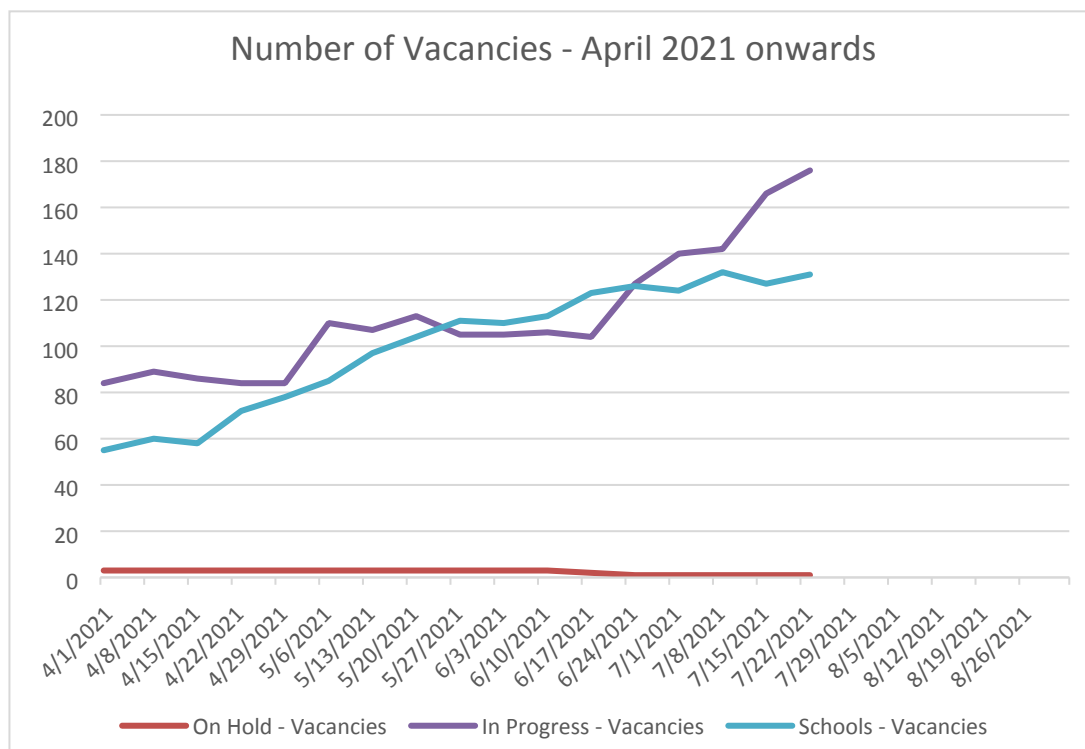
Annual Governance Statement

As required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) has been published on the Council's website. The draft AGS was formally reviewed and approved by the Audit and Governance Board at its meeting on 7 July 2021. The document explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively and the changes made to the Council's governance arrangements during 2020/21 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The AGS is produced following a review of the Council's governance arrangements and includes an action plan to address any significant governance issues identified.

2.5 Recruitment

The Department has continued to support the wider Council in the response to COVID-19. HR services have supported the management of staffing scenarios related to absence, working practices, and restrictions. The resourcing of priority service activity (e.g. Public Health and Adult Care) has been an ongoing feature of the departments work. The Efficiency, Resourcing & Recruitment Service has come under significant pressure as a result of unprecedented demand for recruitment across the council, and schools. The graphic below shows the pattern of demand. In order to ensure that recruitment related to COVID-19 and / or the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals, it was agreed during the quarter that all recruitment related to social worker posts would be prioritised. Given the resources available, there is no scope to intensify activity to meet demand, instead some services will experience slower recruitment as the demand curve flattens out.



Staff in the department have continued to work remotely (since March 2020) and services are being delivered effectively. Virtual processes and procedures are in place to cover all necessary requirements. This will remain the case during the period following Step 4 of the Government’s ‘unlocking’ plan, in accordance with the decision taken corporately to maintain a cautious approach.

2.6 Restructure

Following a restructuring exercise, a new Organisational Development & Performance Management Service goes live on 1st July. This sees the merging of these two business disciplines into one coherent service model that will connect business planning, performance monitoring, and Organisational Development under a single management line. The aim is to use performance information (both employee and service based) to inform the development of OD interventions and programmes, that will in turn enhance delivery against the key objectives set out in business plans and ultimately contribute to the delivery of the Council’s priorities..

2.7 The Policy Framework

The policy framework developed earlier in 2020 to enable the Council to safely return physical premises and work spaces to operation following the 'lockdown' between March and July 2020 and Nov – Dec 2020 has proved effective and was used to shape the risk assessments required to manage the reinstatement of some services as lockdown 3 was eased during the reporting quarter.

It was previously reported in Q4 of 2020/21 that the Council had considered its options around how employee capability, working practices, premises and technology can be combined to ensure an effective organisation for the future, and the basis of a structured 'Future Work' change programme had been developed. Given the issues around workplace management associated with the easing of lockdown, and the prevailing high prevalence of COVID cases in the community at large, this work remains held and will only commence once conditions permit..

2.8 Leadership and Management Framework (LMF)

Cohorts 1 & 2 of a new Leadership and Management Framework (LMF) programme for managers across the Council commenced in May 2021 with the Chief Executive presenting Management Team's commitment and expectations at the launch event. Following the delivery of the first module, Leadership & Partnerships, a review took place that identified that merging the cohorts together would allow for greater diverse group work and would reduce costs. An evaluation of this will take place in quarter 2 to ensure the learning transfer was effective. Cohorts 2 & 3 are planned to start their programme in October 2021.

2.9 Face to Face Training Trial

The COVID Management Team Group approved the trial of COVID-secure face-to-face training for subject matter that can't be delivered virtually due to the practical elements involved. The areas involved in the trial are First aid at Work qualification and Moving & Handling Training. The trial period will cease at the end of July, however, initial investigations indicate that this has been a success. A final review will take place and recommendation will be present to Management Team for consideration.

2.10 E-Learning

As previously reported, uptake of e-learning has increased dramatically over the last 18 months. Within the quarter, 2678 modules have been completed, and a range of new e-learning provision has been developed to further expand the flexible offer;

- ILM- Leadership Styles & Theory
- ILM Emotional Intelligence
- Building Manager
- Updates to Corporate Induction module to include new leader information and Leadership & Management Framework
- Asbestos Awareness
- Legionella Awareness
- Visual Impairment
- Future of Work modules: Transitioning back to the Workplace & Hygiene at Home and Away (awaiting confirmation to upload)

The Organisational Development (OD) Team inducted 9 newly elected members to the service on 13th May 2021. The session introduced the e-learning platform, highlighting those new courses that may be relevant to members such as the Unconscious bias module. The OD Team is Working with Member Services to develop a more detailed training schedule for Elected Members to enhance the platform and offer other relevant content

ICT and Administration

2.11 ICT and Support Services Restructure

In summary the process completed Sunday the 13th of June, the wider process has been extremely successful with a number of people gaining promotion into new positions and bringing a new dynamic and diversity into the departments that will further support the changes made to fit with new ways of working across the authority and the new technologies and systems in place.

2.12 Technical Perspective

The upgrade of key server software solutions to accommodate the redevelopment of the infrastructure that supports all desktop, telephony and server-based systems has taken place.

2.13 Schools Support

Levels of support into the **schools** for the delivery of on-line and on premise learning has been a focus and those requiring services have been supported within this area – some issues are still apparent with non-Halton SLA schools as their networking configurations are not capable of supporting some of the requirements. Help has been offered to those with issues.

2.14 One Stop Shops

One Stop Shops remained open during the National lockdown as they are seen as an essential service within Halton. Opening hours had been reduced over this quarter to allow the team to support the Contact Centre in managing inbound/outbound calls for COVID Support from Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) individuals.

Catering, Stadium and Registration Services

2.15 Stadium

The first wedding was held in over 12 months with restricted numbers and Covid guidelines in place. It went very well, if a little different from the norm. Future events are planned with fewer restrictions; we hope that future events will be more like the norm. We are receiving more enquiries now from people with existing bookings to finalise their plans. We have also had some new weddings and birthdays booked with us.

2.16 The PPE Hub

The PPE Hub continues, and is managed by the Health & Safety Team. A room on the ground floor has been assigned to the H&S team as a permanent PPE Hub.

2.17 Community Meals

An audit review is being carried out on Community Meals, this will help decide the future of Community Meals. HBC is the only council who provides a delivered hot meal in the Merseyside and Cheshire area.

2.19 School Meals

School Meals has continued to work during the pandemic. We have had a number of partial school closures but have continued to provide FSM pupils with food hampers and packed lunches. All schools are on the new SLA for 2021/22. There are three types of SLA, Maintained schools, Academies and the Pilot Scheme.

Legal and Democracy

2.20 Elections

The Local, Metro Mayor, PCC and Parish Council elections were all carried out very smoothly in Quarter 1. All new Halton Members received a full induction programme.

Council approved the revised Constitution in May.

A return to face to face Council, Board and Committee meetings has been successfully implemented following the expiry of the legislation which permitted virtual meetings.

Annual Council appointed Cllr. Christopher Rowe as Mayor and Cllr Mark Dennett as Deputy Mayor.

Property Services

2.21 Millbrow Care Home- Proposed refurbishment

The proposed refurbishment works at Millbrow, at an estimated cost of £1.5m, have been on hold since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Adults Services are now looking again at their model of delivery and further feasibility works are being undertaken in respect of the service requirements going forward.

2.22 Proposed New Leisure Centre Moor Lane

The Pre Construction Services Delivery Agreement (PCSDA) stage has been completed. Planning approval is in place and the costs and timescales have been agreed, the project can't commence on site however until the date of vacant possession is known and in respect of this there is an ongoing CPO process taking place. A date has been set for the public enquiry which is 28th/29th September, subject to the successful outcome of the CPO, and the planning inspectorate confirming same in a timely manner we hope to be in a position to commence work on site by Spring/early summer 2022.

2.23 Education maintenance programme

The 2021/22 Education maintenance programme was approved by Council In March. The programme consists of 18 separate projects at a total cost of circa £1.36m. A significant number of the projects are due to commence in the summer holiday period, the remaining projects will then be carried throughout the remainder of the year and all should be completed by year end.

2.24 Corporate Maintenance programme

The 2021/22 Corporate maintenance programme was approved by the AMWG in January. The programme consists of numerous projects which will be undertaken across the full year. Some smaller projects have been completed the majority of projects however are yet to be started on site, all the budget will be fully expended by year end however.

2.25 Mersey Gateway Handback Sites

A settlement deed is now in place, in respect of the remaining outstanding works on the handback sites, this has yet to be signed by all parties however due to some outstanding issues with United Utilities which are yet to be resolved. We have confirmed with Merseylink that once signed all sites will have been deemed to be handed back. Merseylink are currently carrying out some works on site B in Widnes, these being the making good works to C&T Garage following the demolition of Viking House. United Utilities have some works to complete on Site A, other than that any other necessary outstanding work will be completed by HBC using the funds set aside by the agreement.

2.26 Crow Wood Lane Supported living development

Design development work has been completed however the project has been put on hold whilst Adult Services consider other options.

2.27 71 High Street Runcorn- Refurbishment

Design work has been completed in respect of the refurbishment of this vacant commercial property in the Old Town, which has listed status. Planning approval is in place and we are now in the process of obtaining competitive prices for the work, with the intention of tying this in to obtaining the approval of funding following which works will be able to commence on site.

2.28 Decarbonisation scheme- Halton Stadium

£1.3m has been secured from the Government's decarbonisation fund for works at Halton Stadium. Design works are now complete and the quotes are in the process of being assessed. It is hoped works will start on site in summer however the project will not be completed by late September 2021 due to complications with the designs and the lead in time for materials, it is hoped works will be completed by year end however.

2.29 Brookvale Rec- Proposed Artificial Pitches

Planning approval has now been obtained in respect of the above, and we are now awaiting confirmation from the football foundation in respect of the funding, this decision is expected around Sept/Oct. Once in place it is hoped works could commence on site later in the year.

2.30 Pickering Pastures- Proposed new pavilion building

A feasibility study is being undertaken in respect of the proposal to replace the existing ranger cabin building with a new pavilion type facility which would include a café area. It is intended that the feasibility will be completed by late September.

2.31 Broseley House- Demolition

Tenders have been received and a contractor selected in respect of the above. Works were due to commence on site in early July but have now been delayed due to Scottish Power Energy Networks not being able to confirm a date when the internal substation will be disconnected. The contract period is 8 weeks as such it is hoped that works will be completed this year, subject to Scottish Power.

2.32 Cavendish School- Internal remodelling

Internal remodelling works are due to commence on site in late July with a planned completion date of early September to tie in with the start of the Autumn term.

2.33 Lunts Heath- Eco Classroom

The installation works to create a new Eco classroom are due to commence on site in late July with a planned completion date of early September to tie in with the start of the Autumn term.

2.34 Asset Management

Broseley House – the final occupier vacated the property 30 June 2021 and the demolition works can be arranged.

Carter House Way Widnes – the easement to Mulberry Homes was completed 9 July 2021 giving a capital receipt to the Council.

5 Granville Street, Runcorn – the tenant vacated the unit 19 June 2021 and marketing agents have been instructed to find another tenant

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of services including:-

Financial Services

3.2 Benefits

Verify Earnings and Pensions Service: Introduction of Fluctuating Non-state Pension Alerts

On 23rd June 2021 the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) introduced a new system whereby they will inform local authority Benefits Sections through an automated computer link, of changes to a claimant's non-state pension. This new DWP process is known as fluctuating non-state pension alerts, and will be for any changes over £3 per week compared to the previous payment received. The DWP consider that this will help local authorities identify more pension age fraud and error within the Housing Benefit system.

3.3 Revenues and Financial Management Division

Medium Term Financial Strategy / Budget Development

The Budget Working Group (BWG) met on 17 June 2021 to consider development of the Council's 2022/23 budget. They agreed an approach for identifying budget savings for each department which will involve review meetings with the relevant Executive Board Portfolio Holder, working with the appropriate PPB Chair and Operational Director/Divisional Managers. The review meetings are now underway with the support of Financial Management. The aim is to report back to BWG in September 2021 with savings proposals, which will ultimately be presented to Council in December 2021 for approval. Ahead of this, work is underway in developing the Medium Term Financial Strategy which will be reported to Executive Board in November 2021.

3.4 Audit, Procurement & Operational Finance

Procurement

The Cabinet Office has published a new National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) setting out the strategic priorities for public procurement, and how contracting authorities can support their delivery. The National Procurement Policy Statement asks that all contracting authorities have due regard to a set of national strategic priorities when exercising their functions relating to procurement.

The guidance focuses on three areas:

- **Social value**

The NPPS sets out national priority outcomes for social value. It places emphasis on creating new businesses, new jobs and new skills; tackling climate change and reducing waste, and improving supplier diversity, innovation and resilience, all themes within the social value model.

- **Commercial and procurement delivery**

The statement requires all contracting authorities to consider whether they have the right policies and processes in place to manage the key stages of commercial delivery it sets out, where relevant to their procurement portfolio.

- **Skills and capability for procurement**

The statement requires all contracting authorities to consider their organisational capability and capacity, with regard to the procurement skills and resources required to deliver value for money.

The Government intends to bring forward legislation to ensure that all contracting authorities are required to have regard to the National Procurement Policy Statement when undertaking procurements.

Human Resources, Organisational Development, Policy, Performance and Efficiency

3.5 Holiday Pay

Although replicating previous reports, there remains an absence of clear direction in legal terms on the matter of holiday pay resulting from voluntary overtime. Conflicting case-law still exists and legal cases remain pending in the UK legal system. As such, this remains an ongoing matter.

3.6 Public Sector Exit Payment Cap

During Q1, the Government unexpectedly revoked the legislation around the Public Sector Exit Payment Cap. That simplified matters for the moment, however it appeared clear that Government would be returning to consider different measures to achieve the same aim. It has now become clear that a new scheme is being brought forward – government will consult on measures to restrict “Special Severance Payments’ during July / August, which will likely bring about a regulatory framework that will limit severance payments in a wide range of scenarios. Whilst the rationale for this has logic, the consequence of it is that restructuring proposals will ultimately be more difficult to progress, and as these regulations will make voluntary redundancy less attractive, the likelihood of compulsory redundancies increases. Once the regulations are confirmed, the Council’s Staffing Protocol will need to be redrafted, negotiated with the joint Trade Unions, and submitted to the Council’s Appointments Committee for approval.

3.7 Agency Workers

The continual need to engage agency workers to meet increased service demand in areas such as adult social care has been highlighted in previous reports, and the situation continues. The HR service is supporting a restructuring exercise in two of the Council’s care homes, with an implementation date of November 2021. It is likely however that after conclusion of the process, vacancies will remain. Nursing vacancies in particular are proving challenging to fill at the current time. With repeated recruitment attempts producing very few (or no) applicants. HR colleagues are currently considering what options can be considered to address this matter.

3.8 Senior Team

Over the summer of 2021, three of the Council’s senior team are retiring (Director of Public Health, and 2 Operational Directors). The Efficiency, Recruitment & Resourcing Service will support the senior recruitment processes required to appoint suitable candidates. The labour market for such posts is not easy, and the impact of austerity on the Councils structures limits succession planning to some extent, however all efforts will be made to appoint to these positions and maintain a robust and effective leadership group..

ICT and Administration

3.9 Halton Cloud

The development of the Halton Cloud environment continues with the integration of external systems and services within this in-house platform. The integration of Office 365 continues at a pace bringing with it new challenges for corporate telephony and the delivery of a contact centre solution that will compliment these developments.

Legal and Democracy

3.10 Code of Conduct

Council will receive reports in July asking it to approve a revised Code of Conduct for Members, and some changes to the Committee Structure.

Training on the new Code, if adopted, will be provided for all Members in September.

There have been a number of staff changes in key areas in the Department. The ongoing challenge is to recruit the right people and bring them into the team as efficiently as possible.

Property Services

3.11 Carbon emission targets

Government have brought into law a new carbon emissions reduction target of a 78% reduction over 1990 levels by 2035. This brings forward the previous target and will have the effect of speeding up the need to switch away from fossil fuels to heat and provide hot water to our buildings and move to electrically run heat pumps. Funding is being made available via the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for such works, from which we have already secured £1.3m for works to Halton Stadium, hence we now need to assess our buildings to establish where further works could be undertaken to help meet this agenda.

3.12 Agile working agenda

COVID-19 has necessitated the need for home working which in the main has proved successful and quite popular. This shift in working arrangements has presented us with the opportunity to embrace more flexible working arrangements on a more permanent basis in the future once the pandemic is over. This in turn could enable us to make better and more cost effective use of our accommodation and potentially enable us to vacate space and generate more income from renting that space out to other organisations.

3.13 Ventilation guidance for safe use of buildings

As a result of the COVID pandemic new guidance has been issued in respect of the importance of ventilation within buildings, as a result over the coming months we will be assessing if any additional ventilation is required within our buildings to ensure they fit for purpose.

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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>

5.0 Performance Overview

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget.
- 5.3 Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

Financial Management

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
FS 01a	Report 2022-25 Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board - November 2021.	
FS 01b	Report 2022/23 revenue budget, capital programme and council tax to Council - March 2022.	
FS 02c	Provide quarterly monitoring and forecasting reports on the overall budget to Executive Board.	
FS 03a	Publish the Statement of Accounts following external audit and the Annual Governance Statement by 30th September 2021.	
FS 04a	Establish Treasury Management Policy and report to Council - March 2021.	
FS04b	Provide monitoring reports to Executive Board on a bi-annual basis.	
FS 05a	Establish and report prudential indicators to Council - March 2021.	

Supporting Commentary

On target to report the Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board in November 2021. The financial forecast is being regularly updated. Work has commenced with Management Team and Budget Working Group to develop budget proposals for 2022/23. Reports all issued on schedule to date.

Quarter 1 monitoring report on the overall budget will go to Executive Board on 16 September 2021.

It is uncertain whether the accounts will be published on time due to a potential delay in receiving an external audit opinion, given resource difficulties being experienced by Grant Thornton.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	20 / 21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
FS LI 01	Receive an unqualified external audit opinion on the accounts.	Awaited	Yes	Awaited	?	n/a
FS LI 02	Receive positive comment (annually) from the External Auditor relating to the financial standing of the Council and the systems of internal financial control.	Awaited	Yes	Awaited	?	n/a
FS LI 03	Proportion of Council Tax that was due that was collected	94.14%	94.25%	27.89%	✓	↑
FS LI 04	The percentage of Business Rates which should have been received during the year that were received	96.18%	97.50%	28.52%	✓	↑
FS LI 05	Average time for processing new claims (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction)	16.22	18	15.51	✓	↑
FS LI 07	Proportion of all supplier invoices paid within 30 days (including disputed invoices)	92.6%	93.0%	93.1%	✓	↑

Supporting Commentary

The External Auditor is not expected to provide audit opinion until November 2021 at the earliest

The External Auditor is not expected to provide a conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources until November 2021 at the earliest

FS LI 03 is up by 0.91% compared with the same point last year but marginally down by 0.09% from 2019/20. There remains uncertainty on council tax levels for the remainder of the year pending the national and local economic recovery to the pandemic.

FS LI 04 is up by 1.54% compared with the same point last year but down by 2.19% from 2019/20. There remain uncertainty on business rate levels for the remainder of the year pending the national and local economic recovery to the pandemic.

Since March 2021 large volumes of Universal Credit ATLAS transactions have been received from the DWP to process. Since the beginning of July the Benefits processing team has prioritised changes in circumstances. It is anticipated at Q2 the changes in circumstances figure will be much improved.

Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Service

Key Objectives / milestones




Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
PPPE 01a	Promote and take forward the delivery of actions identified within the Organisational Development Strategy May 2019	
PPPE 01d	Full implementation of Leadership and Management Development Programme September 2021.	
PPPE 02b	Establish 20 new existing employee apprenticeships to enable up-skilling in a range of business areas, compliant with the requirements of apprenticeship legislation March 2022	
PPPE 04b	Implement resourcing plans with service management in appropriate areas December 2021.	
PPPE 04c	Ongoing monitoring of agency usage and spend April, September, December 2021, and March 2022.	









Supporting Commentary

PPPE 01a is progressing well. Some examples given in this report (refer to Key Developments) and the new Organisational Development & Performance Management structure above will support this further.

The Leadership & Development Framework delivery is in place and has commenced (refer to Key Developments)

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	20 / 21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
PPPE LI 01	The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness (Corporate)	10.02	9.5 (Days)	2.56 (Days)		
PPPE LI 03	Percentage of Employees without sickness	73.74	70.00	87.49		
PPPE LI 07	Total Agency Worker Cost (gross cumulative cost – year to date)	£3.7m	£2.5m	£1.04m		

Ref	Measure	20 / 21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
PPPE LI 10	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are: ¹					
	a) Women	63.19%	55%	63.37%		
	b) from BME communities	2.78%	2.00%	2.63%		
	c) with a disability	0.89%	8.00%	1.22%		
PPPE LI 13	Average time to recruit (Applicant Tracking System reported figure)	11 Days	13 Days	11.5 Days		

Supporting Commentary

PPPE LI 01 Figure largely as expected at this stage in year. Limited COVID impact during quarter.

PPPE LI 06 Q1 outturn suggests target likely to be missed. Associated narrative included in Emerging Issues section above.

PPPE LI 07 Q1 outturn suggests target likely to be missed. Associated narrative included in Emerging Issues section above.

PPPE LI 10 Positive movement on component indicator (a), which follows improvement in 2020/21.




Fluctuation exists in (b) and (c), due to turnover.

It should be noted that recruitment in to the top 5% of earners is generally very limited, and as such scope for significant change is low, however as noted in Emerging Issues above there are 3 senior recruitments taking pace over the summer.



PPPE LI 13 Positive outturn, particularly in context of increased demand.

ICT and Administrative Support Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
ICT 01a	Continued Enhancement of the virtualization platform to enhanced or new technologies - March 2022.	
ICT 01b	Further development of Cloud Services Platform - March 2022.	
ICT 01c	SharePoint and Records Management enhancements - March 2022.	







¹ Performance targets for these measures take account of local demographic profiles

Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
ICT 01d	Interactive Web Services Enhancement and further SharePoint Integration - March 2022.	
ICT 02a	Continuing improvements, enhancements and commercial use of Cloud system - March 2022.	

Supporting Commentary

Enhancements to the Halton Cloud platform continues at pace with the integration of Vendor cloud based systems and services within our own platform. Enhancement planned in line with vendor software release to enhance functionality and the user experience

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	20 / 21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
ICT LI01	Average availability of the Council's operational servers (%).	99.98	99.00	99%		
ICT LI02	Average availability of the Councils WAN infrastructure (%).	97.97	99.00	100%		
ICT LI03	School Support SLA: % of calls responded to within <u>agreed target</u> *:					
	a) Priority 1	100	85.00	85%		
	b) Priority 2	100	90.00	90%		
	c) Priority 3	100	90.00	95%		
	d) Priority 4	100	95.00	95%		




Supporting Commentary

ICT LI01 Remains in line with target, linked to Halton Cloud Data Centre configuration. A real achievement given the considerable levels of work undertaken over this period mainly out of hours.

ICT LI02 Remains in line with target. Inclusive of planned down time. Especially during these times when connectivity to the centre is key.

ICT LI03 This has been an unusual time with schools impacted by the pandemic and the support required changing on a daily basis with issues also changing on a daily basis. The move to online learning has now impacted the schools especially those that would not upgrade their data connections due to cost, again the Schools and importantly the Corporate teams have worked hard to support any issues that may arise.

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
LD 01	Review constitution - May 2021 .	
LD 02a	To ensure that all members have been given the opportunity of a having a Member Action Plan meeting where desired.	
LD 02b	To induct all new members by October 2020 .	









Supporting Commentary

The revised Constitution has been approved

All Members will be offered a Member Action Plan meeting.

All new Members have been inducted.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	20 /21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
LD LI 01	No. Of Members with Personal Development Plans (PDP) (56 Total).	56 (100%)	54	48 (89%)		
LD LI 03	Average Time taken to issue prosecutions from receipt of full instructions (working days).	10 (Days)	10 (Days)	10 (Days)		
LD LI 04	Average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department (working days).	3 (Days)	3 (Days)	3 (Days)		
LD LI 05	% of Executive Board minutes published within 5 working days after the meeting.	100%	100%	100%		


Supporting Commentary

All 9 new Members have now been offered a Personal Development Plan (PDP). All 45 existing Members will also be offered a PDP review.







All 54 Members are offered a blend of face to face and eLearning packages as part of the Member Development Programme. Training on the new Code of Conduct will be provided for all Members in September.

Community & Environment

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q2 Progress
CE 0 1a	Deliver a promotion and educational campaign (school meals) - September 2021 and January 2022 .	

Key Performance Indicators




Ref	Measure	20 / 21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
CE LI 01	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Primary Schools.	Data unavailable	75%	72.15%		
CE LI 02	% Take up of free school meals to those who are eligible - Secondary Schools.	Data unavailable	60%	45.21%		
CE LI 03	Take up of school lunches (%) – primary schools.	Data unavailable	60%	55.43%		N/A
CE LI 04	Take up of school lunches (%) – secondary schools.	Data unavailable	50%	30.61%		N/A

Supporting Commentary

Planned marketing campaign for September ready for the new children in primary and secondary education

Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q1 Progress
EEP 02a	Proposed new Leisure Centre, Moor Lane- Commence works on site by 31st March 2022	
EEP 02b	Crow Wood Lane, Assisted residential development- commence on site by 31st December 2021	
EEP 02c	Deliver agreed programmed maintenance programme to Corporate Buildings by 31st March 2022 .	
EEP02d	Deliver agreed programmed maintenance programme to schools by 31st March 2022 .	
EEP 02e	Deliver agreed decarbonisation works to Stadium by 31st December 2021 .	

Supporting Commentary

The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process is ongoing, the public enquiry date is set for 28th/29th September, subject to a successful outcome, it may be feasible to commence works on site by March next year however it will be dependent on when the planning inspectorate confirms the decision, and the date by which vacant possession can be obtained.













The project has currently been put on hold by the client team which they consider other options.

There are numerous projects on the programmed maintenance list. They are all at different stages, however it is anticipated that the available budget will be fully expended by year end.

There are 13 separate projects within the programme of works this year. All projects are progressing with a view to getting the majority of the projects on site over the summer holiday period. It is anticipated that all projects will be completed by year end.

Final costs are still awaited on the mechanical element of the project, once obtained it is hoped we will be progressing with the work. Some materials are now on very long order periods so the original programme will have to be amended and completion will be dependant of final delivery dates.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	20 / 21 Actual	21 / 22 Target	Q1 Actual	Q1 Progress	Direction of travel
EEP LI 01	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions indicator (Tonnes CO ₂ e).	11354	11240	9,770		
EEP LI 02	Capital receipts	£614,532, 82% of the target achieved	£1.5m based on an estimate for the amount and timing of receipts as at 20/5/2021	N/A		
EEP LI 03	Commercial and investment portfolio – rent receivable against the budget to monitor receipt of income of rents and service charges.	Investment £39,325 Commercial £319,573	Investment £44,740 Commercial £609,270	Investment £8,764 Commercial £87,155		
EEP LI 04	Occupancy rates of commercial and investment portfolio.	100 % Investment 90% commercial	100 % Investment 90% commercial	100 % Investment 95% commercial		
EEP LI 05	Occupancy of Widnes Market Hall.	93%	94%	96%		
EEP LI 06	Unit Costs – office accommodation space (reported annually).	1069sqm	1058sqm	n/a		

Supporting Commentary

CO2 emissions for 2019/20 amounted to 11,354 tonnes. The emissions for 2020/21 were 9,770 tonnes which equates to a 13.9% overall reduction. Energy consumption in buildings actually fell by 7.6%, but with reductions in each of the other sectors together with a reduction in the kw/h-CO₂ conversion factor

due to the increasing mix of renewal energy being generated the overall CO2 emissions have reduced by almost 14%.

EEP L1 02 No completions during Q1, transactions underway of Linner Cottage and outbuildings and yard, Widnes; 67 Edinburgh Road Widnes ; 4/5 Dock Road Widnes; land Croft St Widnes is a new lease.

COVID has had a significant impact on CO2 emissions this year with reductions across all sectors. Clearly the majority of staff have been homeworking and many buildings were closed for a period of time during lockdown. Fleet transport and business mileage were also significantly down due to homeworking.

The breakdown is as follows:- School Buildings 2798t, Corporate buildings 4385t, Unmetered supply 1502t, Fleet Transport 937t, & Business Mileage 148t. The target for 2021/22 has been set at 9672 tonnes CO2e, a 1% reduction, this will be difficult to achieve given the very unusual circumstances in 2020/21 as a result of COVID.

The annual figure for this indicator is a year behind and therefore only reported in the following year.

The income received has been affected by request from a number of occupiers for further rent holidays and non-payment of rent due to covid situation. Asset management are working with colleagues in income recovery. The tenant of no 5 Granville Street has vacated and the unit will be marketed. Other vacant units are, 6 Church Street Runcorn, former Frankie and Bennies unit at the Hive. It is unlikely that the units will be re-let until Q3. It is uncertain whether the income target will be achieved by Q4

There are 8 vacant properties which will be on the market or unable to market until refurbishment works eg 71 High St Runcorn or clarifying planning status eg the former bus depot Moor Lane Widnes have been completed.

Occupancy levels have increased over the past 12 months during lockdown and reached 93% at year end. At present this has increased to 96% which is up on the same period last year.

EEP LI 06 indicator can only be measured on an annual basis as such it is not possible to give figures on a quarterly basis.

7.0 Financial Statements

FINANCE DEPARTMENT; Revenue Budget as at 30th June 2021

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,641	1,347	1,362	(15)	(59)
Supplies & Services	338	203	194	9	67
Insurances	1,081	520	514	6	23
Concessionary Travel	2,108	0	0	0	398
LCR Levy	2,241	2,241	2,241	0	0
Rent Allowances	35,500	6,923	6,923	0	0
Non HRA Rebates	70	18	18	0	0
Discretionary Housing Payments	528	85	85	0	0
Discretionary Social Fund	106	59	59	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	0	0	0	0	(89)
Total Expenditure	47,613	11,396	11,396	0	340
Income					
Fees & Charges	-254	-81	-77	(4)	(16)
SLA to Schools	-269	0	0	0	(3)
Business Rates Administration Grant	-154	0	0	0	0
Hsg Ben Administration Grant	-495	-124	-124	0	0
Rent Allowances	-35,500	-6,829	-6,719	(110)	(439)
New Burdens Grant	-59	-59	-256	197	197
Council Tax Admin Grant	-204	-204	-216	12	12
Non HRA Rent Rebates	-70	-33	-33	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-90	-58	-63	5	18
Liability Orders	-406	-235	-235	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-46	-42	-42	0	0
Discretionary Housing Payments Grant	-528	-146	-146	0	0
Dedicated School Grant	-106	0	0	0	0
Universal Credits	-6	-6	-6	0	0
VEP Grant	0	0	-10	10	9
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-80	0	0	0	2
LCR Reimbursement	-2,241	-2,241	-2,241	0	0
Total Income	-40,508	-10,058	-10,168	110	(220)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,105	1,338	1,228	110	120
Covid Costs					
Rent Allowance	0	0	27	(27)	(242)
Covid Isolation Grant	0	0	33	(33)	(256)
Supplies & Services	0	0	4	(4)	(4)
Covid Loss of Income					
Reimbursements & Other Grants	-3	0	0	0	(3)
Covid Income					
Covid Isolation Grant	0	0	-33	33	256
Government Grant Income	0	0	-31	31	249
Net Covid Expenditure	-3	0	0	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	240	60	60	0	0
Central Support	2,316	579	579	0	0
Recharge Income	-5,437	-1,359	-1,359	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,881	-720	-720	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	4,221	618	508	110	120

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 1 is under budget by £0.110m with the forecast outturn for the year estimates net spend to be £0.120m below the approved budget.

Employee net costs is projected to over the approved budget due to the staff turnover saving target not being fully achieved, projections are based on vacancies within the department being filled and the restructure of the Procurement team being completed. The forecast outturn is therefore variable dependant on when these changes come into effect.

The staffing budget is based on 154 full time equivalents.

Concessionary travel is projecting a large underspend due to the impact of Halton Transport being no longer in operation following liquidation and reduced passenger numbers as a result of pandemic

Bad Debt provision relates to estimate of possible increases in non-payment of benefit overpayments in this financial year.

Rent Allowance income is showing a significant shortfall. This is because there has been an increase in the costs of supported accommodation. The Council is only allowed to claim 100% supported accommodation costs up to a level agreed by the Valuation Office Agency. Costs above this level the Council is restricted to claiming only 60% with the balance a cost to the Council. Supported accommodation costs have increased significantly over the past couple of years.

New Burdens Grant income is showing overachievement against budget as the Council has received addition allocations in relation to administering and delivering the Covid business support grant scheme.

Covid costs in relation to Rent Allowance are for costs re Columba Hall and Grange Way Court. These house homeless people and the Council is restricted as to the amount of monies which can be claimed re housing subsidy on temporary accommodation. Hence these is projected to be a significant shortfall. As the accommodation is as direct result of Covid pandemic these costs have been supported from the general Covid grant.

Covid Isolation Grant covers financial support for members of the public who have to isolate. Projection on spend relates to the amount of grant the Council has been given as it is not possible to project claims. Expenditure and income net to nil as it is likely any underspend of main grant would have to be returned to Government.

POLICY, PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at June 30th 2021

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	2,068	492	464	28	111
Employee Training	126	39	34	5	18
Supplies & Services	139	56	58	(2)	(11)
Apprenticeship Levy	300	75	73	2	8
Total Expenditure	2,633	662	629	33	126
Income					
Fees & Charges	-104	-21	-29	8	24
Reimbursement and Other Grants	0	0	-2	2	2
School SLAs	-464	0	0	0	(67)
Total Income	-568	-21	-31	10	(41)
Net Operational Expenditure	2,065	641	598	43	85
Covid Costs					
Employees	0	0	0	0	24
Government Grant Income					
Government Grant Income	0	0	0	0	(24)
Net Covid Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	68	17	17	0	0
Central Support	917	229	229	0	0
Recharge Income	-2,855	-713	-713	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,870	-467	-467	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	195	174	131	43	85

Comments on the above figures

At the end of the first Quarter, Policy, Performance, People and Efficiency net spend is below the budget profile by £0.043m.

Employee expenditure is below budget. The majority of this is in relation to the apprentice budget as there are only a few apprentices in post. The outturn position is however likely to change as the number of apprentices is likely to increase. There is also a proposed restructure with the department which could impact on the final outturn position.

The staffing budget is based on 44.7 full time equivalents.

The schools SLA income is projected to significantly underachieve against budget. The existing charges to schools are based on staffing numbers and a reduction in staffing has subsequently reduced the income achieved.

The shortfall in schools SLA income is slightly offset by Fees and Charges income which is projected to overachieve mainly due to charges to Academy schools for HR and payroll services. Covid expenditure projection is in relation to an agency post within Employment Relations to cover additional work as a result of the pandemic

ICT and Administration

Revenue Budget as at 30th June 2021

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	6,873	1,779	1,797	(18)	(73)
Supplies & Services	976	197	150	47	187
Computer Repairs & Software	1,167	931	940	(9)	(37)
Communications Costs	17	8	9	(1)	(5)
Other Premises	65	51	53	(2)	(26)
Capital Financing	78	0	0	0	18
Transport Expenditure	3	0	0	0	0
Transfers to Reserves	15	0	0	0	15
Total Expenditure	9,194	2,966	2,949	17	79
Income					
Fees & Charges	-612	-117	-128	11	45
SLA to Schools	-554	-56	-62	6	25
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	-1,166	-173	-190	17	70
Net Operational Expenditure	8,028	2,793	2,759	34	149
Covid Costs					
Supplies & Services	0	0	11	(11)	(11)
Capital Costs	0	0	7	(7)	(7)
Government Grant Income					
General Covid Funding	0	0	-18	18	18
Net Covid Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	362	90	90	0	0
Transport Support	20	5	5	0	0
Central Support	1,019	254	254	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-11,745	-2,936	-2,936	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-8,850	-2,587	-2,587	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	-822	206	172	34	149

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms spending is below the budget profile at the end of the first quarter. The current forecast is for the department to be under the approved budget at the end of the year.

Employee's costs are currently exceeding the approved budget, however a restructure has just been implemented to the ICT Department and the projections could change once these details are applied. Similarly projections for the Admin staff are based on existing staffing levels, as Admin staffing is changeable throughout the year this could have effect on future outturn.

Supplies and services costs underspend is in relation to savings within all divisions. Within the Admin Division costs have been reduced across all supplies and services due to Covid and staff working from home. Dependant on the progression of the Covid pandemic and restrictions these costs could change.

Computer repairs and software and communication costs are based on historical spend and will projected more accurately for quarter 2 once projections confirmed with managers.

Fees and charges income budget relates to external client income for traded services. This is for Agresso implementation and continued support.

Capital Projects as at 30th June 2021

Capital Expenditure	2020/21 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
ICT Rolling Capital Programme	700	193	193	507
Covid IT Capital Costs	0	0	46	(46)
Total Capital Expenditure	700	193	239	461

Comments on the above figures.

With regard to the Covid related costs which relate to equipment etc to enable working from home, the decision was made to capitalise these costs.

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30th June 2021

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	1,796	505	505	0	(2)
Transport	8	6	6	0	2
Supplies & Services	265	46	26	20	83
Civic Catering & Functions	44	5	0	5	20
Legal Expenses	214	47	47	0	0
Total Expenditure	2,327	609	584	25	103
Income					
Land Charges	-82	-19	-18	(1)	(3)
License Income	-258	-48	-49	1	2
School SLA's	-84	0	0	0	(6)
Fees & Charges Income	-63	-28	-29	1	2
Government Grants	0	0	0	0	5
Total Income	-487	-95	-96	1	0
Net Operational Expenditure	1,840	514	488	26	103
Covid Costs					
Employees	0	0	14	(14)	(18)
Legal Expenses	0	0	10	(10)	(20)
Elections Covid Grant	0	0	17	(17)	(36)
Government Grant Income					
General Covid Funding	0	0	-24	24	38
Elections Covid Grant	0	0	-17	17	36
Net Covid Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	55	14	14	0	0
Central Support	321	80	80	0	0
Recharge Income	-1,747	-437	-437	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-1,371	-343	-343	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	469	171	145	26	103

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms, spending is below budget profile at the end of first quarter by £0.071m, it is forecast this will be the case for the remainder of the year with a forecast underspend against budget of £0.103m

Supplies and services budgets are underspent mainly due to reductions in advertising expenditure, but this is only estimated and could change.

Civic catering and function spend projections are based on historic data, it is assumed after Covid restrictions are lifted events will take place later in the year. Timing of events recommencing will impact on the final outturn position.

Legal expenses are dependent on the volume of cases. These cannot be projected accurately and will only be confirmed further into the financial year. Such costs and timings will have an effect on the overall outturn.

Land Charges and License Income is dependent on demand for property searches and license applications, so variable and difficult to project.

Fees and charges income relates to Legal Fees, these costs cannot be projected accurately and are dependent on number of cases.

Reimbursement and other grant Income actual is the current remaining balance of the 75% payment for election cost in relation to the LCRA metro Mayor elections. Costs are still to be paid from these monies but any unspent grant will be paid back if not utilised.

Covid expenditure relates to staffing costs for the Communications Lead Officer Post, hours have increased due to the pandemic. Other costs relate to outsourcing of legal work as a result of delays in recruitment for solicitor due to Covid

All budget savings applied to 21-22 budget will be achieved.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30 June 2021

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	14,976	3,444	3,234	210	650
Premises	2,279	877	827	50	320
Supplies & Services	1,394	336	317	19	(86)
Book Fund	105	72	72	0	(12)
Hired Services	537	44	43	1	(88)
Food Provisions	459	138	141	(4)	257
School Meals Food	1,835	200	212	(12)	(50)
Transport	115	25	25	0	32
Other Agency Costs	106	29	29	0	(10)
Waste Disposal Contract	6,312	0	0	0	200
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	67	-34	-34	0	12
Grant to Norton Priory	172	87	87	0	(1)
Rolling Projects	0	0	32	(32)	(32)
Capital Financing	0	0	0	0	7
Total Expenditure	28,357	5,217	4,984	233	1,199
Income					
Sales Income	-1,294	-324	-146	(178)	(621)
School Meals Sales	-2,361	-620	-285	(335)	(336)
Fees & Charges Income	-4,474	-1,393	-1,360	(33)	(950)
Rents Income	-201	-44	-44	0	(16)
Government Grant Income	-31	-31	-412	381	412
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-597	-30	-30	0	49
Schools SLA	-2,183	0	0	0	(20)
Internal Fees Income	-333	-63	-18	(45)	(180)
School Meals Other Income	-251	-3	-3	0	(66)
Catering Fees	-28	-7	0	(7)	(23)
Capital Salaries	-173	0	0	0	1
Transfers from Reserves	-80	-1	-1	0	23
Total Income	-12,006	-2,515	-2,298	(217)	(1,728)
Net Operational Expenditure	16,351	2,701	2,686	16	(529)

Covid Costs					
Community Development	0	0	1	(1)	(1)
Community Safety	0	0	9	(9)	(9)
Leisure & Recreation	0	0	7	(7)	(16)
Open Spaces	0	0	248	(248)	(299)
Schools Catering	0	0	19	(19)	(19)
Waste & Environmental Improvement	0	0	3	(3)	(592)
Shielding Hub	0	0	25	(25)	(25)
Avoided Costs					
Commercial Catering	98	24	0	24	98
Community Development	35	27	0	27	35
Leisure & Recreation	368	126	0	126	368
Open Spaces	712	245	0	245	712
Schools Catering	972	651	0	651	972
Stadium	451	92	0	92	451
Covid Loss of Income					
Commercial Catering	-110	-34	0	(34)	(110)
Community Development	-269	-147	0	(147)	(269)
Leisure & Recreation	-1,091	-653	0	(653)	(1,091)
Open Spaces	-1,263	-514	0	(514)	(1,263)
Schools Catering	-1,497	-954	0	(954)	(1,497)
Stadium	-682	-215	0	(215)	(682)
Waste & Environmental Improvement	-12	-12	0	(12)	(12)
Government Grant Income	0	0	-1,676	1,676	3,249
Net Covid Expenditure	-2,288	-1,364	-1,364	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,640	820	820	0	0
Transport Support	2,360	1,184	1,073	111	223
Central Support	4,170	2,085	2,085	0	0
Asset Rental Support	146	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-488	-244	-244	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,828	3,845	3,734	111	223
Net Departmental Expenditure	22,160	5,899	5,633	266	363

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £0.016m under budget at the end of Quarter 1 with the estimated outturn net spend for 2021/22 is £0.474m over the approved budget.

The Department has been greatly affected by Covid-19 for the majority of 2020/21 and this has continued into the first quarter of 2021/22. Many services were halted for at least part of the year, whilst others have had to make changes to working methods and service delivery, all of which have had an impact on the Department's budgetary position. As such, the Department's outturn for 2020/21 varied greatly to that in 2019/20 and this has continued in to 2021/22. There is still considerable uncertainty around when and how service provision can begin to return to normal. The Brindley remains closed to the public and whilst libraries, leisure centres and community centres have been open for several months, there are still various restrictions on their operation in place. These restrictions have caused reduced income levels within the Department compared to pre-pandemic levels but the assumption is that these income streams will return, albeit slowly, closer to 2019/20 levels by the end of the current financial year

Employee expenditure is £0.210m under budget at the end of Quarter 1. The variance relates to a large number of unfilled vacancies in leisure centres, The Brindley and within the Open Spaces Division. Site closures and reductions in service delivery have allowed vacancies across the Department to be held open for longer than usual which has also contributed to the underspend. Savings on casual staff and overtime from sites that are currently closed have been classed as costs avoided due to Covid-19 and have been netted off reported Covid-19 income losses.

Employee budgets are based on full time equivalent staffing numbers of 460.

Premises costs are £0.050m under budget at the end of Quarter 1. Utilities and repair costs have reduced considerably whilst sites have been closed. The outturn position is currently projected to be £0.320m under budget due to ongoing closures at The Brindley, a reduction in services offered at the Stadium and reduced energy usage at the leisure centres due to restricted capacity even as Covid restrictions are eased.

Spend on supplies and services is currently £0.019m under budget and spend on hired services is currently £0.001m under budget. Costs in these areas are forecast to pick up during the year as Covid restrictions are eased and services revert to 2019/20 levels in some areas.

No invoices have been received for the waste disposal contracts in 2021/22. Estimated expenditure will therefore be calculated based on the average cost per tonne in 2020/21 plus estimated additional tonnage in the current year. Given the high value of these budgets any changes to costs could have a large impact on the Department's outturn budget.

It is extremely challenging to estimate the school meals income which is likely to be received during the rest of the year as the service has been subject to considerable disruption since resuming fully in late 2020. Many schools have had to send large numbers of children home to self-isolate which has had an impact on sales of school meals. It is anticipated that when schools return in September, many Covid restrictions like self-isolation, will be replaced with increased testing to allow children to remain in school. Sales income will also be affected by the economic downturn due to a likely increase in free school meals numbers and possible reductions in the amount of household income available for discretionary spending. These factors mean that any projections relating to the School Meals service are subject to a high degree of uncertainty and could change considerably by the end of the 2021/22 financial year.

Fees & Charges Income is £0.033m under budget at the end of Quarter 1. This relates to historic shortfalls in income in the leisure centres and the Stadium, offset by an increase in income for cemeteries, the crematorium and green waste licences.

The Department has incurred £0.023m of additional costs due to Covid-19 at the end of Quarter 1. This is down considerably on the costs incurred in 2020/21. The majority of the costs relates to the hiring of a temporary cremator and also the costs of webcasts for funerals due to government restrictions on attendances. The estimated additional costs for the whole of 2021/22 are £0.338m. The majority of the additional costs are in relation to waste disposal, over the past year there has been a significant increase in the amount of waste generated from households during lockdown. This is a trend that may be a permanent legacy of Covid due to an increase in people working from home. There are also additional costs being incurred relating to PPE and cleaning requirements in buildings which are open to the public.

Covid-19 related income losses across the Department in Quarter 1 are estimated at £0.496m, as sites remain closed or are operating at a reduced capacity. An increase in working from home and a move to hosting meetings virtually is likely to lead to permanent, significant shortfalls in internal income received by the Department, although this will be offset by reduced spending elsewhere in the Council.

It has been assumed that all additional costs and loss of external income that can be attributed to Covid-19 will be covered by government grant funding.

The Council has been allocated £0.610m from the Covid Local Support Grant Scheme to support vulnerable households while Covid restrictions are still in place. An amount of £0.120m was spent in Quarter 1 to provide food vouchers during the school holidays to families with children entitled to free school meals. It is anticipated that the remainder of the allocation will be used to provide food vouchers over the summer holidays.

Transport recharges are currently projected to underspend by £0.056m at the end of 2021/22. This is consistent with the historical trend of reduced transport costs within the Department.

Capital Projects as at 30 June 2021

	2021/22 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	30	5	4	26
Stadium Decarbonisation Scheme	1,200	70	67	1,133
Children's Playground Equipment	65	5	1	64
Landfill Tax Credits	340	0	0	340
Upton Improvements	13	0	0	13
Crow Wood Play Area	50	0	0	50
Peelhouse Lane Cemetery	20	3	3	17
Town Park	280	5	5	275
Open Spaces	650	115	113	537
Litter Bins	20	0	0	20
Brookvale Recreation Centre Pitch	500	0	0	500
Moor Lane Leisure Centre	10,897	50	16	10,881
Total	14,065	253	209	13,856

Comments on the above figures.

Stadium Decarbonisation Scheme - Work has recently commenced on this grant-funded project to reduce the DCBL Stadium's carbon footprint. This will involve replacing the gas boilers with air source heat pumps and installing LED lighting and additional installation.

Children's Playground Equipment - This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds.

Crow Wood Park – The park building and the external works are substantially complete and the next phase of landscaping works is now under way.

Peelhouse Lane Cemetery – The works to the cemetery are now complete. The expenditure in 2021/22 relates to retention payments.

Town Park – The second phase of this project near Palacefields Avenue and Stockham Lane is now underway.

Open Spaces Schemes – This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including work to the Town Park Play Area, Sankey Canal Swing Bridge, Covid-19 Tribute Garden, and the Seafarers' Memorial in Runcorn Cemetery.

Brookvale Recreation Pitch – The Football Foundation Grant application decision is not due until July 2021 so significant spend on this project will not commence until after this date.

Moor Lane Leisure Centre – Works are currently on hold due to potential compulsory purchase orders (CPO) on site.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Operational Budget as at 30 June 2021

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,092	1,157	1,166	(9)	(43)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,926	356	353	3	(1)
Premises	81	77	77	0	0
Energy & Water Costs	714	107	106	1	4
NNDR	547	547	535	12	12
Rents	165	64	17	47	47
Economic Regeneration Activities	37	0	0	0	0
Security	476	85	85	0	0
Supplies & Services	329	110	112	(2)	(7)
Supplies & Services - Grant/External Funded	1,393	124	124	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisation	97	23	23	0	0
Covid-19 Discretionary Business Support Grants	1,518	1,518	1,518	0	0
Capital Financing	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	193	46	46	0	0
Total Expenditure	12,568	4,214	4,162	52	12
Income					
Fees & Charges	-1,195	-244	-244	0	(1)
Rent - Commercial Properties	-837	-227	-209	(18)	(52)
Rent - Investment Properties	-45	-12	-12	0	0
Rent - Markets	-751	-149	-145	(4)	(18)
Government Grant Income	-2,131	-1,456	-1,456	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Income	-1,475	-269	-269	0	7
Schools SLA Income	-420	-6	-6	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-280	-28	-28	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,006	-370	-370	0	0
Total Income	-8,140	-2,761	-2,739	(22)	(64)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,428	1,453	1,423	30	(52)
Covid Costs					
Staffing	0	0	2	(2)	(3)
Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	4	(4)	(19)
Reopening High Street Safely	0	0	35	(35)	(114)
Covid Loss of Income					
Rent - Markets	-50	-50	0	(50)	(50)
Government Grant Income					
Covid Grant - Reopening High Street Safely	0	0	-35	35	114
Covid Grant Funding	0	0	-56	56	72
Net Covid Expenditure	-50	-50	-50	0	0
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,661	415	415	0	0
Transport Support	29	7	7	0	0
Central Support	2,136	534	534	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,402	-1,600	-1,600	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,572	-644	-644	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,806	759	729	30	(52)

Comments on the above figures

Financial Management continue to work closely with the Department to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved.

To date the Department is reporting net spend is below the approved budget by £0.030m, although the longer term forecast through to the end of the year estimates net spend will be slightly above the budget by £0.052m.

Commercial Property rent continues to be the main budget pressure for the department. During the last few years, the Council has disposed of many properties, either in preparation for regeneration projects or to generate capital receipts. The loss of rent has been addressed in the setting of the 2021/22 budgeted income targets. However, there are still a few properties that have been vacated this year due to the current Covid situation.

The saving measures put forward by the Department for 2021/22 are on target to be met this financial year. The staff turnover saving target of £0.095m will not be achieved this year as the department only currently has three vacancies within the Investment & Development Division, of which two of the posts are currently being filled by agency staff.

In previous years the repairs and maintenance budget has been under budget to help the Department achieve a balanced budget. It is expected the department will fully spend the budget this year as the work that was delayed in previous years will take place this year.

Market rent is projected to be under budget at the end of the financial year. The market was closed at the beginning of the year and has gradually opened up in the last few weeks. It is now operational and has a capacity of 96%, which may help bring the budget back in line before year-end.

Capital grant conditions allowed the Council to recharge staff time to projects for the financial year 2021/22. A balanced income budget is forecast this financial year.

Covid Costs

The majority of the costs for COVID are in relation to loss of income for the market. .

Additional costs for the department relate to adaptations to corporate buildings to bring the buildings up to date with current Covid regulations. It is also projected additional cleaning costs will be incurred over the next few months.

Capital Projects as at 30 June 21

	2020-21 Capital Allocation	Allocation to Date	Actual Spend	Total Allocation Remaining
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
3MG	199	8	8	191
Foundry Lane Residential Area	1,682	28	28	1,654
Equality Act Improvement Works	390	60	60	330
Widnes Market Refurbishment	44	0	0	44
Broseley House	389	2	2	387
Solar Farm Extension	146	35	35	111
Property Improvements	200	0	0	200
Murdishaw Redevelopment	38	0	0	38
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	37	0	0	37
Astmoor Regeneration Project	110	22	22	88
Kingsway Learning Centre Equipment	8	8	8	0
Runcorn Town Centre Funds	1,050	0	0	1,050
Halton Lea TCF	1,062	6	6	1,056
Total	5,355	169	169	5,186

Comments on the above figures.

Foundry Lane –The Foundry Lane project is progressing well. Detailed planning design is underway for Phase 1, along with initial master planning and statutory planning documentation collation for Phase 2.

Equality Act Improvement Works – Circa £100k committed to date, Changing place facility to Widnes Market complete, other works on site, further works to spec up from Access Audit work recently undertaken.

Widnes Market – Works are complete on the market. Practical completion payment due soon. Final retention payment due in 12 months.

Broseley House – Demolition works due to commence on site in July with completion hopefully end of September. There has been a slight delay due to Scottish Power Energy Works as they have to decommission a sub-station contained within the building.

Solar Farm – The Solar Farm was commissioned in July 2021. It is approaching its first full year in operation. To date it has produced approximately 950,000kwh of renewable energy which is above predicted expectation of around 850,000 per annum. The Council has a Power Purchase Agreement with EDF for exported energy with a private wire connection to the DCBL Stadium.

Property Improvements – Works will be starting shortly on the projects that have been allocated to the capital programme

Murdishaw –Murdishaw Steering Group has been established and sub-groups to focus on the Local Centre, local environment and bungalow refurbishment. A community led design team has also been established to engage with local residents in the development of project proposals

Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities – Works were completed February 21. Final retention payment is due this financial year. The remaining of the budget will be used towards refurbishment of a meeting room.

Astmoor Regeneration – The overall project remit is to redevelop the 4 ‘handback sites’ handed over from the MGA, and to implement the Astmoor Regeneration Masterplan. The project is currently out to

procurement for a JV Partner – with initial interest boding well. Deadline for initial expressions on interest is 22/07/21, with full submissions to be submitted by 12/09/21.




Kingsway Learning Equipment – All equipment has now been purchased and budget has been spent in full.

Halton Lea Town Centre Fund (TCF) – The Halton Lea TCF programme is on target to deliver by the end of October 2021 albeit some timescales have been re-visited given impacts of Covid.




8.0 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 <u>intervention or remedial action</u> 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.