



**Property Services
Department**

SERVICE PLAN

April 2009 to March 2012

Draft JH-MF 18TH DEC 2008

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

To meet Halton's most pressing needs, the Borough Council has identified [6 key priorities](#), and a number of associated key Areas of Focus, 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**

Departmental Service Plans form an integral part of the authority's corporate planning framework, as illustrated within the diagram opposite.

This framework ensures that the Council's operational activities are complementary to the delivery of its community aspirations and legal and statutory responsibilities.



Departmental Service Plans are primary documents that communicate:

- The existing and future influences that have informed the shaping of service delivery in the medium term.
- The existing and projected resources that are, or may, be required to deliver services.
- Departmental Service Objectives and Key Milestones that are to be delivered over the next three years.
- Those national and local performance indicators for which the department has a responsibility to report.

Such plans, and the Quarterly Service Plan Monitoring Reports that flow from them, are an essential tool in enabling the public, Elected Members, Senior Management, and staff how well Council departments are performing and what progress is being made in relation to improving the quality of life within the borough and service provision for local people, businesses and service users.

The Strategic Priority and associated Areas of Focus that have been most influential in the development of the service plan are

Strategic Priority 6

Corporate Effectiveness and Efficient Service Delivery

Area of Focus 36

Ensuring that the Council's portfolio of land and property are managed effectively.

Area of Focus 37

Ensuring that the council's buildings are safe, accessible, meet the needs of service users and the organisation and comply with legislative requirements.

2.0 SERVICE PROFILE

2.1 Purpose

Property Services exists to provide corporate support to all areas of the Council in relation to the management, maintenance and development of the Council's property portfolio and regeneration schemes. The Department comprises the following teams: -

Operations.

Manages and implements capital projects, repairs and maintenance and facilities management.

Strategic Asset Management.

Forward planning for acquisitions and disposals, budgeting and financing property and property related services, estate management of all properties, including management of the Council's Investment portfolio and Retail Markets.

In exercising its functions Property Services acts as a Corporate Landlord by providing, maintaining and managing the Council's accommodation including: -

- Provision of a safe and efficient working environment for all employees.
- Provision of Depots for Neighbourhood Services
- Provision of Other Council buildings e.g. for Leisure, Culture and Social services.
- Provision of all property related services to schools that have 'opted in'.
- Policing standards for those schools that have 'opted out'.
- Managing Major work programmes on Corporate Property for both Capital and Maintenance Programmes
- Management of Widnes and Runcorn markets.
- Managing a sizeable investment portfolio.

In addition to these landlord functions the Property Services Department also plays a significant supporting role in: -

- Raising capital via property rationalisation and disposal to balance the Council's capital programme.
- Regeneration projects including the regeneration and redevelopment of the Widnes, Runcorn and Halton Lea town centres.
- Acting as a Building Consultancy for the delivery of the Council's Capital Works and Maintenance programmes.
- Carrying out the Landlord function to the Corporate, Educational and Non-Operational Estate.
- Acting as Property Consultant to all our users.
- Providing Professional support to other areas of the Council's operations including the Economic Development Zone, Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park, New Mersey Crossing, Castlefields and other regeneration working parties and projects.

The activities and functions of the Property Service Department underpin every aspect of the Council's work by ensuring that its land, buildings and property portfolio are managed effectively. This in turn facilitates the delivery of front-line services that benefit those who live, work, and visit the Borough.

2.2 Key Messages

Energy Use.

Rising energy prices will have a major impact on our budgets over the next few years. Our existing fixed priced contracts are coming to an end and the new contracts will see large price increases. We are predicting total expenditure on gas, electric and oil within our corporate stock of buildings to be in the region of £1.77m in 2009/10, up approximately £650k on the current anticipated spend in 2008/09, which itself is approximately £120k higher than anticipated at the outset of 2008/09.

The overall impact of the rise in energy prices will see the total spend on gas, electric and oil within all our buildings inclusive of schools increase to approximately £4.031m in 2009/10, with the total spend on energy inclusive of street lighting being in the order of £5.33m.

In order to mitigate the impact of such rises as far as possible the authority has developed and implemented an Energy Policy to introduce measures that will reduce energy consumption across the authority's estate. Energy efficiency is now an integral part of all capital and maintenance projects, as such energy consumption is being reduced wherever possible. There are many recent examples where energy efficiency measures have been incorporated into schemes, which will have the effect of reducing consumption, the newly refurbished Town Hall being a good example.

Property Services are also heavily involved in the authorities carbon management programme and in respect of this we are utilising the 'invest to save' fund in order to introduce further energy saving technology into our premises. The introduction of voltage optimisation equipment (powerperfectors) into a number of our premises being a good example of this, these should generate a 10% reduction in electric consumption within these buildings, the first unit having already been installed in Kingsway Learning Centre.

Building Schools for the Future

The authority is in wave 6 of the Building Schools for the Future initiative (BSF), and will be submitting the SFC2 and OBC prior to the start of 2009/10. The BSF programme is worth £100m+ and due to its size is being managed through a programme board and core delivery team which sits outside of Property Services as such at present we have a limited involvement with the process other than having a presence on the technical work-stream and programme board.

Primary Capital Programme

Indicative funding for the primary capital programme (PCP) amounts to £3m for 2009/10 and £5.3m for 2010/11, this is subject to confirmation that the 'Strategy for Change' document submitted in April is approved however. It is proposed that a significant proportion of these monies will be added to the BSF pot to facilitate the primary element of the proposed Grange all through school. In addition to this however it is proposed to upgrade two other primary schools within the borough during this first phase of works, one community and one diocese school. Whilst the longer term method of procurement for the PCP has yet to be decided, Property Services are progressing with the works to the first community school in the programme.

The impact of the PCP cannot be fully assessed until the longer term procurement method has been determined. Property Services have the resources to manage the programme however and are ideally placed to carry out the work.

Procurement

Partnering is a form of procurement that the authority has approved in principle. This approach has been explored on a number of recent projects by bringing contractors on board at an early stage, and in a recent report from Internal Audit they commented that this approach was innovative and provided a number of benefits. These included how the contractor becomes part of the design team facilitating a partnering approach throughout, and how the cost is developed using an open book methodology which aims to provide greater cost certainty and helps to establish cost saving strategies for the project.

Whilst we would like to develop a partnering framework for delivery of projects within the borough the anticipated workload is such that this is not possible in isolation. We are exploring the possibility however of joining with other North West authorities through an NWIEP initiative which is looking at developing regional wide frameworks for the delivery of construction projects. This is in its early stages at present but could provide a good opportunity for the delivery of projects within Halton.

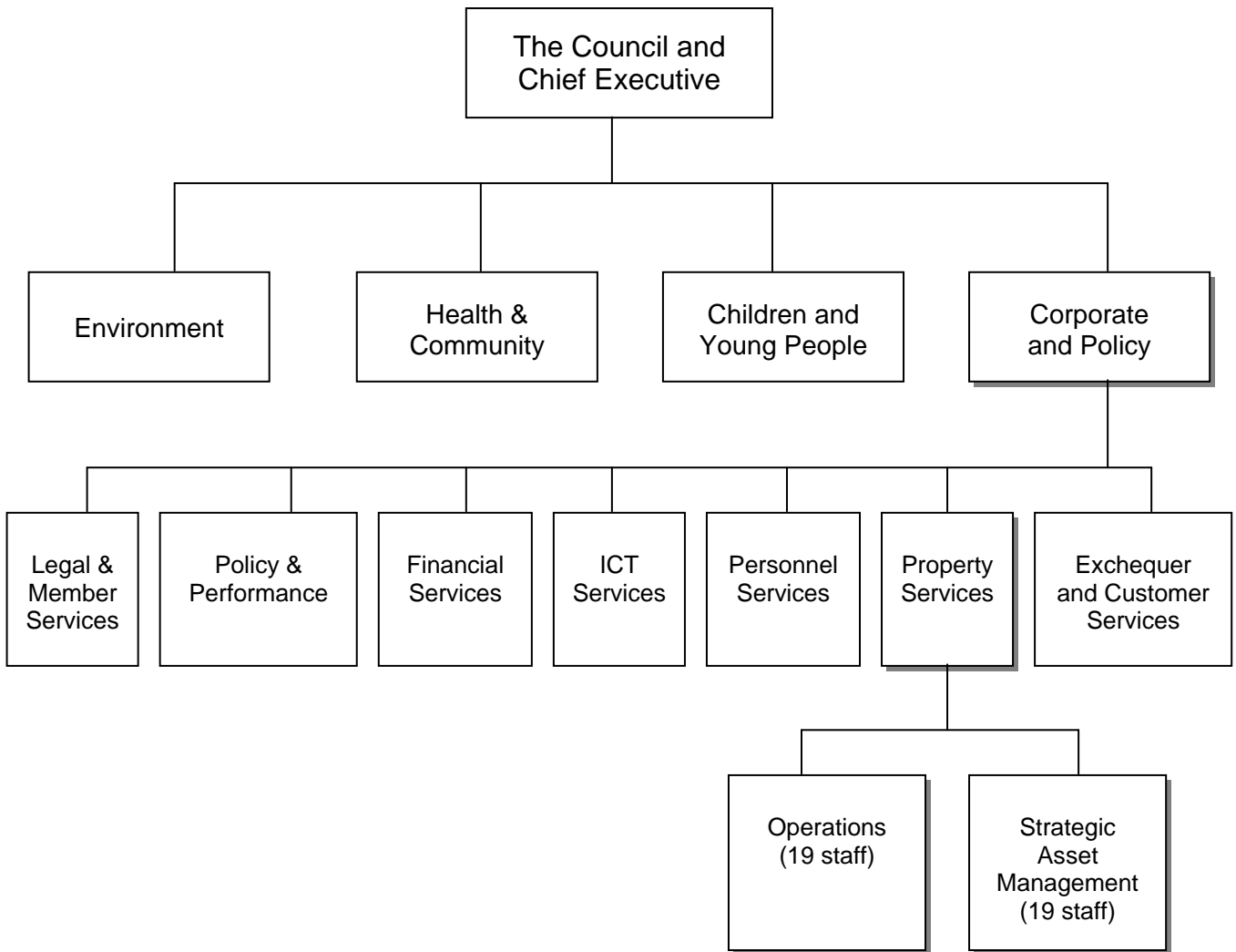
Repairs and Maintenance

The current level of required maintenance work on corporate buildings is circa £3.5m this has reduced from the previous year mainly as a result of the capital expenditure on Runcorn Town Hall. The actual current level of revenue budget available for repairs and maintenance will have little impact on reducing the figure further, and if the monies available are reduced due to financial constraints there will be a detrimental affect on the estate whereby the level of required works will start to increase.

Disability Discrimination Act Works

The authority's buildings continue to be upgraded in line with Disability Discrimination Act requirements. However given the extent of the works that are required and the resources at the department's disposal this is a programme that will need to continue both throughout, and beyond the life of this plan.

2.3 Organisation Structure



3.0 FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE

3.1 External Factors

The table below 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)		
1. Restructuring / business focus / partnerships	2009 – 12	Impact upon property requirements as yet unknown.
2. Home-working	2009 – 12	Impact upon property requirements as yet unknown.
3. New Mersey Crossing	2009 – 12	Resource implications for site assembly
4. Widnes Waterfront	2009 – 12	Resource implications for land acquisition and development site disposal.
5. Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Terminal	2009 - 12	Resource implications to deal with infrastructure delivery and development opportunities.
6. Castlefields Regeneration	2009 – 12	Resource implications of dealing with the various partnerships and land transactions
7. Building Schools for the Future	2009 -12	Procurement method will impact on workload and resources required
8. Schools Primary Capital Programme	2009-12	Procurement method will impact on workload and resources required
Economic		
9 Budget pressures / Efficiency Review	2009 – 12	Expectation by Govt for all authorities to make continued efficiency savings throughout 2008/11.
8. Move to whole of Government Accounts	2009 - 12	Depreciation of property values to be included in accounts as a cost to the Authority. This will have a significant effect on the need to deal with maintenance issues as they add to the depreciation.
9. Available land for disposal	2009 – 12	The quantum of available land and its value is diminishing
Social		
10. 24/7 access to services	2009 - 12	Impact upon accessibility and security of Council buildings outside of normal office hours
Technological		
11. Development of thin client	2009 –12	Staff training issues and the operational implications of a central information file on the server
12. Asset Management software	2009 - 12	Need to provide and implement software to meet needs of service and CPA

Protecting Our Environment

Awareness of Climate Change is growing and the Council is committed to taking a lead and setting an example in tackling the associated problems. A climate change strategy has now been produced outlining how the authority intends to address some of issues contributing to climate change.

Consideration will be given throughout the life of the Service Plan to ways in which support can be given to this strategy and to identify and implement opportunities to reduce any contribution to Climate Change and to promote best practice in the reduction of carbon emissions.

The Authority joined The Carbon Trusts Carbon Management Programme. The programme aims to guide authorities through a systematic analysis of its carbon footprint, outline opportunities to help manage carbon emissions, develop Action Plans for realising carbon and financial savings; and embed carbon management into the authority's day-to-day business.

As part of the programme the Council has developed a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan which aims to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions over the next five years. Through the Strategy and Implementation Plan, Council services will need to encourage closer examination of their policies around procurement, transport and the use of renewable energy.

3.2 Service Review and Developments

Over the past 12 months we have utilised the frameworks available through OGC Buying Solutions in order to procure consultant services, this has proved successful and the intention is to continue to procure services via this method.

The P2 web based Property Management System has been further developed over the past 12 months giving greater benefits to users in terms of both quantity and quality of information in the support of it's day to day running of the business and contribution to the effective management of assets. Further developments are taking place in respect of other aspects of the departments operations including document management and modules relating to Mapinfo and the management of legionella and asbestos arrangements.

Additionally work has also been undertaken with the Association of Chief Estate Surveyors in Local Government to provide comparable data that can be used for the purpose of local and national benchmarking. ???

A minor reorganisation has taken place within the past 12 months in Property Services which has seen the office support function integrated into both Operations and Strategic Asset Management. The integration has taken place in order that these support functions can be more closely aligned with the two individual teams.

3.3 Efficiency Improvements

Over the past few years we have reviewed the way some of our workload is managed and procured. We have now brought the management of a number of elements of work, particularly repair and maintenance based work back in-house, which continues to generate savings by reducing our expenditure on consultant's fees.

Last year we reorganised the way the caretaking service is delivered generating a saving in the order of £16,000, we intend to further rationalise the service this year which will generate an additional £15,000 worth of savings.

We are also going to be re-tendering a number of a term contracts over the next 12 months and it is envisaged that savings will be generated by this exercise the extent of these cannot be confirmed at this stage however.

Two members of the operational staff left us this year which gave us the opportunity to carry out a minor reorganisation within the operational team, the result of which was the downsizing of the team by one post which will generate ongoing revenue savings of £13,000 per annum.

We will be renewing our security contract within the next 12 months and it is anticipated that via some minor rationalisation of security at Rutland House/ Halton Lea we will be able to achieve revenue savings in the order of £10,000.

Two of the posts within the strategic asset management team that were filled with agency staff have now been filled with permanent staff members which will save in the order of £30,000 per year.

Strategy have also made a temporary appointment to address the backlog of work and increase potential income, this work had being going out to consultants and a saving of circa £40,000 per annum is envisaged due to this.

3.4 National, Regional & Sub-Regional Focus

The revised CPA's Financial Management requirements within the Use of Resources Key Line of Enquiry will have a very significant effect on the way Assets are managed in future. The main property issues emerging are as follows:

- Adequate provision will have to be made for repairs and maintenance.
- Investment and disposal decisions will have to be based on option appraisal and whole life costing.
- Depreciation to be included in the budgets.

- The need to show a strategy and funding for reducing the backlog of repairs and maintenance.
- The ability to show interest gained by investing the proceeds of capital disposals as an efficiency gain. Versus the loss of revenue if the asset was an investment property gaining revenue.

3.5 Equality and Diversity

Halton Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity 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 that it delivers.

This commitment is encapsulated in the equal opportunities policy that the Council has adopted. The policy sets out the Council's approach to promoting equal opportunities; valuing diversity and encouraging fairness and justice; and providing equal chances for everyone in Halton to work, learn and live free from discrimination and victimisation. The Council will combat discrimination throughout the organisation and will use its position of influence in the Borough, wherever possible, to help to identify and overcome discriminatory barriers that may exist.

Each year Departments undertake Equality Impact Assessments to examine the equality implications of all of their policies, procedures and practices. As a result an Equality Action Plan is developed to identify those issues that demand attention. This forms a contribution to the overall Corporate Equalities Plan.

As a result of such assessments any high priority actions that have been identified, that fall within the life of this plan, are detailed in section 5.

3.6 Risk Management

Risk Management, which forms a key element of the strategic management and performance management processes of the Council, is a business discipline that is used to effectively manage potential opportunities and threats to the organisation in achieving its objectives.

Risk assessments are the process by which departments identify those issues that are, or may be, likely to impede the delivery of service objectives. Such risks are categorised and rated in terms of both their probability, i.e. the extent to which they are likely to happen, and their severity i.e. the potential extent of their impact should they occur.

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. Such numbers are then translated into a Low, Medium or High category.

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

Following such assessments a series of risk treatment measures are identified that will mitigate against such risks having an adverse impact upon the delivery of the departmental objectives.

Mitigation measures for those risks that were initially assessed as high have been included as an Appendix within this plan. As such their implementation will be monitored through the Quarterly Departmental Service Plan Monitoring Report process.

3.7 Unforeseen Developments

Whilst every effort has been made to identify those significant 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 any 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://www2.halton.gov.uk/>

4.0 RESOURCES

4.1 Budget Summary and Service Costs

INFORMATION TO FOLLOW

4.2 Future Staffing Requirements

During the course of 2008 / 09 there were a considerable number of changes within the strategic asset management division. Previously unfilled posts have been filled, only one part time member of staff now being agency based. This has helped impact of the backlog of work and potential income, both of which have improved and will continue to that we are better placed to give support to Major Projects on some of the larger projects such as Widnes Waterfront, 3MG and the Mersey Gateway.

As previously mentioned two members of staff have left the operational team over the past 12 months which gave us the opportunity to carry out a minor reorganisation the result of which being that one post was deleted. Recruiting for the one vacant post however has proved difficult and at present this remains vacant. This will soon start to impact of the delivery of the service and the use of agency staff may be required in the near future.

The staffing levels for this and the preceding year are detailed within the table below.

Year	Operations	Office Support	Strategic Asset Management	Total
2008/09	14	6	17	37
2009/10	19	0	19	38

4.3 Future ICT Requirements

Currently all work stations need, and have, PCs. Both the hardware and software is of varying age and capacity. Both elements need continuous upgrading in an efficient manner to meet changing circumstances and improvements in technology. Current levels of budgetary provision will deal with these issues through time; however it will inevitably add pressure to the already stretched resources of IT Services.

4.4 Future Accommodation/Property Requirements

The Council occupy 2 premises where the leases expire within the timescales of this service plan as such we will need to develop a strategy for dealing with the implications of this. The premises in question are Grosvenor House where we currently have circa 350 staff located and Midwood House where we have approximately 70 staff located. The leases expire in August 2012 and January 2013 respectively.

5.0 Service Performance

As detailed in the introduction to this plan, the primary purpose of the Service Plan 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 and / or its statutory responsibilities. The service utilises a variety of measures and targets to enable performance against the service plan to be tracked, monitored, and reported. Details of these measures and targets are given below.

Objectives and Key Milestones.

These show the major events in the work of the Department that are planned to take place during 2009–12, such as the launch of new initiatives progress on major projects or the delivery of business critical activity. Objectives and Milestones are clearly linked to the appropriate Key Areas of Focus in the Corporate Plan 2006-11.

National Performance Indicators.

This is a national set of 198 indicators that have been prescribed by Central Government that are intended to measure the extent to which authorities are operating effectively and efficiently and are delivering upon both national and local priorities.

Local Performance Indicators.

These are indicators that have been developed by the Council and any relevant non-statutory indicators that have been adopted from national or other sources.

Local Area Agreement Targets.

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three-year agreement based on Halton's Community Strategy. The second round LAA commenced on 1st April 2008, and included within it are improvement targets for the Borough of Halton to which both the Council and its partners will contribute.

The LAA contains 86 key targets addressing all of the priority issues identified in both the Community Strategy, and the Council's Corporate Plan. Of the 86 key targets, 34 are mandatory and also included are the 12 LPSA targets to which the Council signed up.

Many of the objectives contained within the current service plans are designed to support the achievement of LAA targets. A full version of Halton's LAA can be viewed on the Halton Strategic Partnership Website at [http://www.haltonpartnership.net/site/images/stories//laa_final_\(march_2007\).pdf](http://www.haltonpartnership.net/site/images/stories//laa_final_(march_2007).pdf)

5.1 Service Objectives

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 36</i>	<i>Ensuring that the Council's land and property portfolio is managed effectively</i>

Service Objective: PS O1	Review of Property Assets for potential disposal					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	• Annual review to produce disposal programme complete March 2010					
Key Milestone(s) (10/11)	• Annual review to produce disposal programme complete March 2011					
Key Milestone(s) (11/12)	▪ Annual review to produce disposal programme complete March 2012					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Responsible Officer	Head of Strategic Asset Management	Linked Indicators	Not applicable
	Residual	Medium				

Service Objective: PS O2	Reduce backlog of maintenance on property portfolio (currently £3.5m)					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	▪ £3.4Million					
Key Milestone(s) (10/11)	▪ £3.3Million					
Key Milestone(s) (11/12)	▪ £3.2Million					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Responsible Officer	Head of Operations	Linked Indicators	Not applicable
	Residual	Medium				

Corporate Priority:	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
Key Area Of Focus: 36	Ensuring that the Council's land and property portfolio is managed effectively

Service Objective: PS O3	Review Value of Property Assets for Councils accounts (20%)		
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	▪ Annual Review of Value complete March 2010		
Key Milestone(s) (10/11)	▪ Annual Review of Value complete March 2011		
Key Milestone(s) (11/12)	▪ Annual Review of Value complete March 2012		
Responsible Officer	Head of Strategic Asset Management	Linked Indicators	Not applicable

Corporate Priority: 6	Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency
<i>Key Area Of Focus: 37</i>	<i>Ensuring that the council's buildings are safe and accessible, meet the needs of service users and the organisation, and comply with legislative requirements.</i>

Service Objective: PS O4	Fulfil requirements of Asbestos Audits and Management Regulations					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	▪ Confirm 100% compliance					
Key Milestone(s) (10/11)	▪ Confirm 100% compliance					
Key Milestone(s) (11/12)	▪ Confirm 100% compliance					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Low	Responsible Officer	Head of Strategic Asset Management	Linked Indicators	Not applicable
	Residual	Low				

Service Objective: PS O5	DDA Works Corporate (Non Schools) subject to funding (currently £200k per annum)					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	▪ Complete ?% of Priority 2 works by March 2010					
Key Milestone(s) (10/11)	▪ Complete ?% of Priority 2 works by March 2011					
Key Milestone(s) (11/12)	▪ Complete ?% of Priority 2 works by March 2012					
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Responsible Officer	Head of Operations	Linked Indicators	Not applicable
	Residual	Medium				

5.2 Performance Indicators and Targets (Statutory & Local Indicators)

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2007/08 Actual	2007/08 Quartiles ² (All England)			Halton 2008/09 Target	Halton 2008/09 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			09/10	10/11	11/12
Corporate											
PYSLI 1	% Of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days	CP 6 AOF 33	100				100	TBA	100	100	100
Cost and Efficiency											
PYSLI 2	% Cost Performance on projects over £50k (Contract Let to Practical Completion within 5% of the allotted cost – excluding Client changes)	CP 6 AOF 34	81				90	TBA	90	90	90
<u>PYSLI 3</u>	Occupancy of Industrial Units	N/A	83				80	TBA	80	85	90
PYSLI 4	% Of rent collected as % of rent due (Excluding bankruptcies and the like)	CP 6 AOF 34	92				95	TBA	95	95	95
<u>PYSLI 5</u>	Occupancy of Market (Widnes) %	“ “ “ “	86				85	TBA	85	85	85
PYSLI 6	% Of rent collected as % of rent due	“ “ “ “	98				95	TBA	95	95	95
<u>PYSLI 7</u>	Occupancy of Market (Runcorn) %	“ “ “ “	50				55	TBA	60	65	70
PYSLI 8	% Of rent collected as % of rent due	“ “ “ “	89				95	TBA	95	95	95

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

² No quartile data is available for local performance indicators

Ref ³	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2007/08 Actual	2007/08 Quartiles ⁴ (All England)			Halton 2008/09 Target	Halton 2008/09 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			09/10	10/11	11/12
Fair Access											
PYSLI 9	The percentage of Authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	CP 6 AOF 32	61				65	TBA	70	75	80
Service Delivery											
PYSLI 10	Time performance on projects over £ 50 K (Contract let to practical completion within a margin of 5% - excluding Client changes)	CP 6 AOF 34	63				90	TBA	90	90	90

³ Key Indicators are identified by an **underlined reference in bold type**.

⁴ No quartile data is available for local performance indicators

5.3 Data Quality

Good quality data provides the foundation for managing and improving services, determining and acting upon shared priorities, and accounting for performance to inspecting bodies and the local community.

In recognising this, the Council has developed a Corporate Data Quality Strategy that will provide a mechanism by which the authority can be assured that the quality of its data remains robust and fit for purpose. This strategy, which will remain subject to periodic review, establishes the key dimensions of good quality data and identifies five Key Corporate Objectives namely;

Objective 1

To provide assurance to all stakeholders that the quality of data used in decision making and in accounting for and reporting the performance of the authority, either directly or through partnership arrangements, is wholly fit for purpose.

Objective 2

That, through a rigorous process of monitoring, review and refinement, the authority's arrangements for securing data quality remain relevant, reliable and robust and that exemplary arrangements for securing data quality are achieved within the medium term

Objective 3

That arrangements for securing data quality are widely shared, communicated and understood by all of those with data quality responsibility and that relevant staff are provided with timely and appropriate guidance and support.

Objective 4

That all departments, partners and agencies that deliver services on behalf of the Council use complete, accurate and verifiable data which is collected and communicated in an effective and timely manner.

Objective 5

That all data used in the calculation of nationally prescribed performance indicators is definition compliant and verifiable and that no such indicators will be amended or qualified as a result of work undertaken by inspecting bodies.

In supporting the delivery of the corporate strategy the department will ensure that appropriate systems and processes are in place to secure the quality of its data and that such systems are subject to periodic and risk based review.

In so doing the department will pay particular attention to the six key dimensions of good quality data i.e. that data is

- **Accurate** For its intended purpose;
- **Valid** By being consistently recorded and used in compliance with predetermined definitions and rules;
- **Reliable** By reflecting stable and consistent data collection processes;
- **Timely** By being made available as soon as possible after the activity or event and in line with organisational requirements;
- **Relevant** For the purpose intended;
- **Complete** In that the monitoring of incomplete, missing or invalid data is avoided.

Such systems include, for example

6.0 Performance Reporting

As detailed in the introduction to this plan, the primary purpose of the Service Plan 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 and or delivering it's statutory responsibilities.

It is imperative that the Council and interested members of the public can keep track of how the Council and its Departments are progressing against objectives and targets, and that mechanisms are in place to enable councillors and managers to see whether the service is performing as planned.

As a result Departmental progress will be monitored through:

- **The day to day monitoring by Strategic Directors through their regular interaction with Operational Directors;**
- **Provision of Quarterly progress reports to Corporate and Directorate Management Teams;**
- **The inclusion of Quarterly Service Plan Monitoring reports as a standard item on the agenda of all the Council's Policy and Performance Boards.**
- **Publication of Quarterly Service Plan monitoring reports on the Councils intranet site.**

In demonstrating it's commitment to exploiting the potential of Information and Communications Technology to improve the accessibility of its services and related information an extensive range of documentation, including this plan and it's associated quarterly monitoring reports, are available via the Council's website at

<http://www2.halton.gov.uk/content/councilanddemocracy/council/plansandstrategies>

Additionally information and assistance can be accessed through any of the Council's Halton Direct Link facilities (HDL) or the Council's libraries.

7.0 STATUTORY & NON-STATUTORY PLANS

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

[Community Strategy](#)

[Halton BVPP 2006/07](#)

Accommodation Strategy

Asset Management Plan

Appendix 1

Halton Corporate Plan (2006 – 2011) – Council Priorities and Key Areas of Focus.

A Healthy Halton

1	Improving the future health prospects of Halton residents, particularly children, through the encouragement of an improved dietary intake and the availability of nutritionally balanced meals within schools and other Council establishments.
2	Improving the future health prospects of Halton residents through encouraging and providing the opportunities to access and participate in physically active lifestyles.
3	Delivering programmes of education to improve the health of Halton residents.
4	Helping people to manage the effects of ill health, disability and disadvantage.
5	Actively managing the environmental factors that are detrimental to good health.
6	Providing services and facilities to maintain the independence and well-being of vulnerable people within our community.
7	Providing services and facilities to maintain existing good health and well-being.

Halton's Urban Renewal

8	Exploiting the benefits of inward investment opportunities by creating a physical environment that is both attractive and responsive to the needs of existing and potential business.
9	Maintaining and developing local transport networks that meet the needs of resident's, businesses and visitors to Halton.
10	Revitalising the economy by sustaining and developing an environment that compliments the core brand values of existing and potential investors.
11	Maintaining levels of affordable housing provision within Halton that provides for quality and choice and meets the needs and aspirations of existing and potential residents.
12	Providing opportunities for recreation and fostering conservation by developing attractive and accessible parks and open spaces.

Children & Young People in Halton

13	Improving the educational attainment of pupils in Halton, by providing effective teaching and school support
14	To improve outcomes for looked after children by increasing educational attainment, health, stability and support during transition to adulthood.
15	To deliver effective services to children and families by making best use of available resources
16	To provide transport facilities that meets the needs of children & young people in Halton accessing education and training.
17	Provide an effective transition for young people from school to employment, through opportunities for work related learning, and post 16 education, voluntary and community work.
18	To reduce the conception rate amongst women under 18 by providing awareness, education and relevant support
19	To ensure a safe environment for children where they are supported and protected from abuse and neglect

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

20	To increase self-confidence and social inclusion by providing opportunities to adults to engage in basic skills learning.
21	To improve access to employment by providing opportunities to enhance employability skills and knowledge
22	Working with employers to identify and secure opportunities for the unemployed.
23	To provide transport facilities that meets the needs of those people in Halton accessing employment and training.
24	To sustain current employment levels by providing practical and financial advice and assistance to those from disadvantaged groups
25	To increase employment opportunities and business start ups in Halton, by developing an enterprise culture

A Safer Halton

26	Actively encouraging socially responsible behaviour by engaging with Halton's young people and by providing opportunities for them to access and take part in affordable leisure time activities.
27	Reducing the physical effects of anti-social and criminal behaviour
28	Providing and maintaining a highways and footpath network that is safe, accessible, and meets the needs and expectations of those living, working or visiting in Halton.
29	Improving the quality of community life by enhancing the visual amenity of Halton's neighbourhoods.
30	Improving the social and physical well-being of those groups most at risk within the community

Corporate Effectiveness & Efficient Service Delivery

31	Working with partners and the community, to ensure that our priorities, objectives, and targets are evidence based, regularly monitored and reviewed, and that there are plausible delivery plans to improve the quality of life in Halton, and to narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the rest of Halton.
32	Building on our customer focus by improving communication, involving more service users in the design and delivery of services, and ensuring equality of access.
33	Ensuring that we are properly structured organised and fit for purpose and that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information.
34	Attracting and managing financial resources effectively and maintaining transparency, financial probity and prudence and accountability to our stakeholders
35	Implementing and further developing procurement arrangements that will reduce the cost to the Council of acquiring its goods and services.
36	Ensuring that the Council's land and property portfolio is managed efficiently
37	Ensuring that Council buildings are safe and accessible, meet the needs of service users and the organisation, and comply with legislative requirements
38	Exploiting the potential of ICT to meet the present and future business requirements of the Council, and ensure that customer access is improved by means of electronic service delivery.
39	Ensuring that human resources are managed and deployed to their best effect and improving the relevance, availability and use of HR information
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.