



**Environmental and
Regulatory Services**

SERVICE PLAN

April 2009 to March 2012

Executive Board Draft 2009

Contents

	Page
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Service Profile	6
3.0 Factors Affecting the Service	13
4.0 Resource requirements	28
5.0 Service Performance	30
6.0 Performance Reporting	44
7.0 Statutory and Non-Statutory Plans	45

Appendices

- 1. Equality Impact Assessments – High priority actions*
- 2. Corporate Priorities and Key Areas of Focus.*

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: -

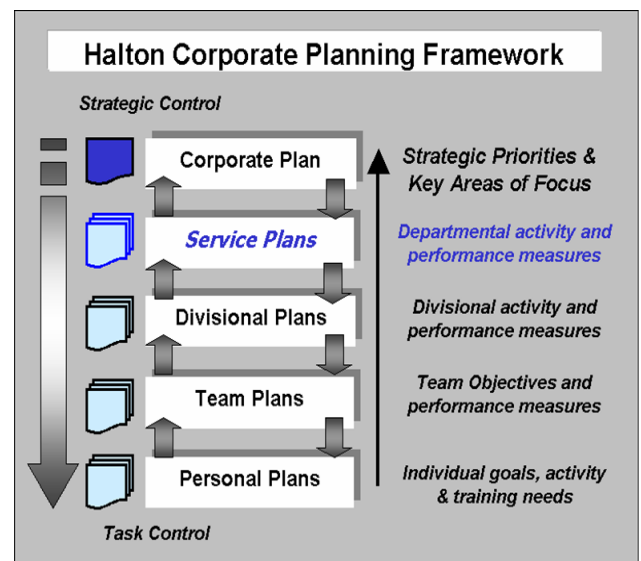
- **A Healthy Halton**
- **Halton's Urban Renewal**
- **Halton's Children & Young People**
- **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**
- **A Safer Halton**
- **Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency**

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

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 those Areas of Focus that have been most significant in the development of this plan are detailed below: -

Strategic Priority 1:

A Healthy Halton

Area of Focus (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

Area of Focus (2)

Improving the future health prospects of Halton residents through encouraging and providing the opportunities to access and participate in physically active lifestyles.

Area of Focus (5)

Actively managing the environmental factors that are detrimental to good health.

Strategic Priority 2:

Halton's Urban Renewal

Area of Focus (10)

Revitalising the economy by sustaining and developing an environment that compliments the core brand values of existing and potential investors.

Area of Focus (12)

Providing opportunities for recreation and fostering conservation by developing attractive and accessible parks and open spaces.

Strategic Priority 5:

A Safer Halton

Area of Focus (27)

Reducing the physical effects of anti-social and criminal behaviour

Area of Focus (29)

Improving the quality of community life by enhancing the visual amenity of Halton's neighbourhoods.

Strategic Priority 6:

Corporate Effectiveness & Efficient Service Delivery

Area of Focus (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.

Area of Focus (35)

Implementing and further developing procurement arrangements that will reduce the cost to the Council of acquiring its goods and services.

2.0 SERVICE PROFILE

2.1 Purpose

The Environmental and Regulatory Services Department was created on the 1st April 2006, with the purpose of co-ordinating a number of key services which share, as part of their wider objectives, improving the environmental quality of the borough. In particular, the service aims to support and deliver on the corporate objective/vision of providing a modern and high quality urban environment, which is safer and more attractive and which provides for a better quality of life for the boroughs residents.

Within the Department there are four Divisions,

Environmental Health, Enforcement and Building Control
Landscape Services
Planning and Policy
Waste Management Services

These Divisions contribute to the Departments objectives in the following ways,

Environmental Health, Enforcement and Building Control

Ensures that, through monitoring, regulation and enforcement and advice, residents and businesses can enjoy an environment which is, so far as possible, safe and without risks to their health or welfare.

Ensures high standards in construction work, protecting the health and safety of people in or about buildings and making sure that the requirements of people with disabilities are met.

Provides an enforcement service to ensure a fair and transparent development control system so that proposed development conforms to the development plan and current planning policies.

Provides co-ordination of enforcement activities with other enforcement agencies within the Council, particularly in relation to protection of the environment.

Core functions being:

Building Control: to deliver sustainable, energy efficient and accessible buildings that meet existing and future building regulation requirements through the provision of building regulation, public safety and access services.

Environmental Health: to deliver is a diverse collection of statutory regulatory functions and related services covering a range of activities including food safety, health& safety at work, pollution control, contaminated land, air quality

management, noise control environmental protection and private sector housing.

Planning compliance: to investigate, research, and enforce to ensure that the controls operated within the Development Control and Local Development Framework are complied with in the interests of the public good and in accordance with local and nationally agreed policies.

Landscape Services

Manages the Borough's public spaces through its Parks and its Streetscene Sections and it provides landscape maintenance services to external organisations and School's through its External Contracts Section.

The Parks Section provides attractive parks, children's playgrounds, youth activity areas, sports pitch facilities, local nature reserves for the enjoyment of the people of Halton. The section is also responsible for Nature Conservation and the Wild about Halton project.

The Streetscene Section is responsible for the horticultural and cleansing management of other public spaces including streets, town centres and general public open spaces. The Division also provides an advice and maintenance service for the other Departments of the Council.

The Division is supported by its own Landscape Design and Development Team who manage, develop and take forward landscape improvement and refurbishment schemes, through capital investment, including external funding.

Planning and Policy

Manages and controls the development and use of land, taking enforcement action where appropriate consents are not sought. Encouraging business development and ensuring accurate interpretation of statutes. Defends appeals against Council planning decisions, and provides land charge searches on planning matters.

Prepares and adopts the Local Development Framework (LDF) and associated Core Strategy, Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. Provides listed building and conservation advice.

Provides input into Regional Spatial Strategies. Produces the Evidence Base for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and publishes statutory monitoring reports assessing performance of the Local Development Scheme and performance management indicators.

Manages departmental data, information and systems. Provides corporate Geographical Information Systems (GIS), graphics and cartography services. Act as the Authority Liaison Officers and Local Land and Property Gazetteer custodians for Halton.

Waste Management

As a Unitary Authority, Halton Borough Council has responsibility for both the collection and disposal of municipal waste arising within the borough, along with responsibilities and powers for other waste management activities including recycling, composting, street cleansing, enforcement and promotion of waste minimisation activities.

The Waste Management Division develops strategies, makes recommendations for policy and manages services and facilities to enable the Council to meet its statutory and non-statutory obligations concerned with managing waste and improving the local environment.

The Division provides accessible, high quality, cost effective waste collection and recycling services to all residents of the borough. The Division's Waste Strategies and Plans take into account the socio-economic and demographic make up of the Borough and services are delivered on an area by area basis that meet the needs of local communities.

Working closely with other sections of the Council and external agencies, the Division contributes to a co-ordinated approach to litter prevention and enforcement by utilising all statutory provisions available to it for the purpose of addressing all forms of environmental nuisance within the boundaries of the Borough.

The Division manages cleaning and housekeeping services to schools and other public buildings to maintain clean and safe environments for those working within, and visiting those premises.

Other core functions include the provision of facilities for residents to deposit and recycle household waste, kerbside recycling collection services, education and promotion of recycling, waste minimisation and wider waste issues such as the Council's carbon management programme.

2.2 Key Messages

- 2.2.1 The level of burden placed upon the Service through increasing Regulation continues to grow, as does the expectation of service users. A consistent level of demand upon all aspects of the Departments services has remained throughout the last 12 months against a backdrop in many cases of reduced capacity, with the result of reduced performance levels in certain service areas. Re-dressing this situation will be a key focus during the next 12 months.
- 2.2.2 The Better Regulation Executive (BRE) expects local authorities to have regard to the national enforcement priorities contained in the Rogers Review of 2007. The current national priorities advocated by Rogers were given statutory force with the setting up of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO). The current national enforcement priorities are:-

- Air quality, including regulation of pollution from factories and homes
- Alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment licensing and its enforcement
- Hygiene of businesses selling, distributing and manufacturing food and the safety of food in premises.
- Improving health in the workplace
- Animal and public health
- Fair trading

The work the Council's Environmental Health figures strongly in the first five of these.

2.2.3 A key issue for environmental health services is the establishment of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO). This builds on the concepts initiated by the 'Hampton Review' into regulatory services and one of the key roles of the LBRO will be to reduce administrative burdens on business by establishing a framework to ensure a consistent, risk-based approach to the delivery of local authority regulatory services. In the establishment of the framework the LBRO will be looking closely look at a number of activities including:-

- consistency and accessibility of advice to businesses
- improving service to businesses operating in more than one area
- sharing of information about businesses
- arbitration/conciliations
- national co-ordination of campaigns and initiatives

2.2.4 The regulatory services that local authorities provide do more than simply protect consumers, workers and the environment – they also provide much needed and valued support for businesses in complying with regulations. The Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) has laid out its plans for environmental health services in a three year strategy that will see substantial investments in improvements between 2008 and 2011. It outlines action planned to:

- support services in making improvement
- enhance the regulatory system
- delivery greater consistency

2.2.5 Key areas of work for environmental health will include the production and implementation of the following statutory documents:

- Food safety and standards inspection and enforcement plan
- A health and safety at work
- A pollution control enforcement and inspection plan
- A review and assessment of local air quality
- An animal welfare enforcement and inspection plan

In addition the following areas of work will also be undertaken:

- Review of the contaminated land inspection strategy and ongoing work determined by that strategy
- The department have taken on board the operation of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and its associated enforcement powers in private sector housing to assess and deal with unhealthy and hazardous conditions in housing accommodation.
- Work continues on the strategy for inspection of contaminated land. Sites have been identified and recorded within the new information management system developed specifically for the task and the final prioritisation and data presentation will be complete before the milestone date. The process of detailed inspection and assessment has been commenced with the in-house production of Phase 1 documentation for high priority sites. The next phase, which includes physical site investigation, is dependent upon a bid to DEFRA for funding being successful.

2.2.6 A key cross cutting task for the department will be to utilise powers presented in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Act to improve the quality of the local environment, by deterring litter, fly-tipping, fly-posting, graffiti and dog fouling; to require managers of land used by the public to remove litter and abandoned vehicles; and to enable local authorities to use enforcement powers to tackle poor environmental quality and anti-social behaviour.

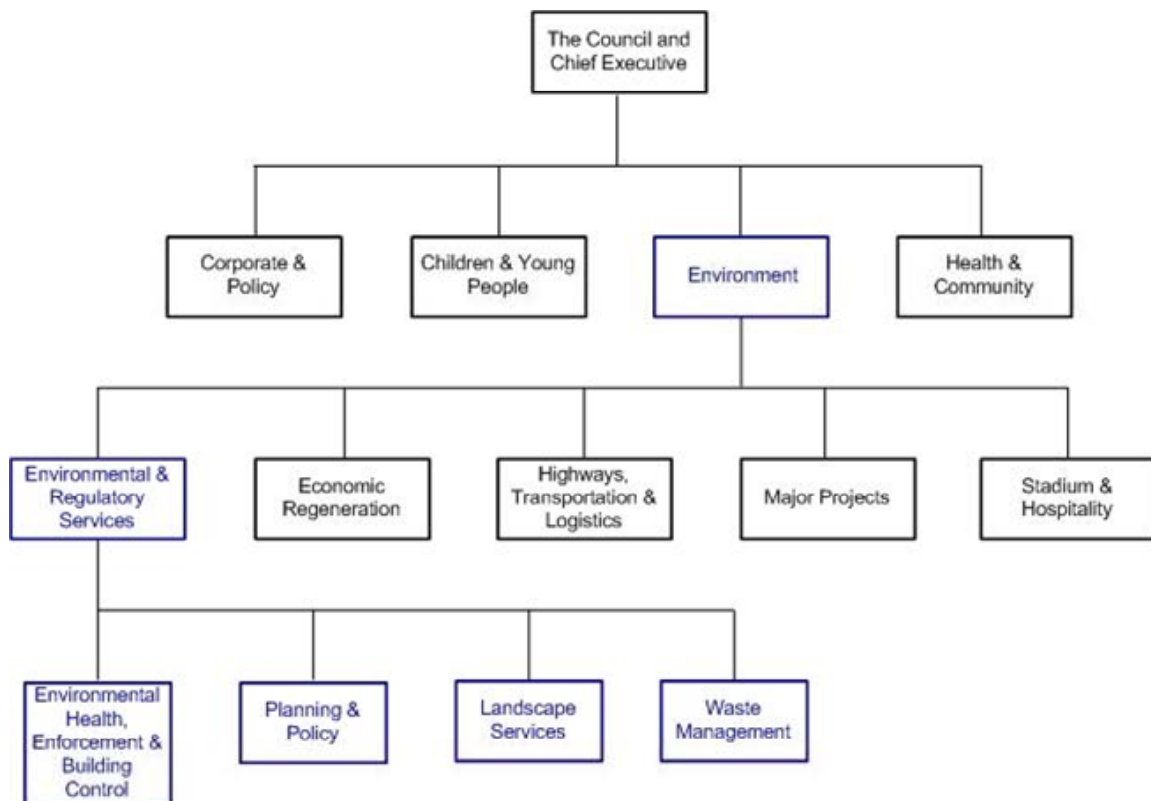
2.2.7 The waste management agenda continues to move at a great pace and there remain powerful economic, environmental, legislative and policy drivers for continued change. In order to meet the requirements of the EU Landfill Directive, implemented in England through the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS), Waste Disposal Authorities were set diminishing limits on the levels of biodegradable waste permitted to be disposed of at landfill sites. This legislation continues to represent the most significant driver for change, and the one that has the greatest financial impact upon the authority. The Council must also continue to increase levels of recycling of waste to meet future targets. The department plans to meet future targets, and minimise future cost increases, through delivering a programme of waste reduction initiatives, the implementation enhanced recycling services as set out in the Councils Waste Action Plan, and through the procurement of new residual waste treatment facilities. During the life of this Plan the Council's current Waste Management Strategy is to be reviewed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose to guide the Council's actions on waste.

2.2.8 The Council has committed significant investment to deliver enhanced kerbside recycling services to meet future targets, however, regardless of the systems that are implemented, the Council will only be successful in achieving targets if it has the cooperation of the residents of Halton. Essential to achieving increased cooperation and participation is a raised awareness of waste related issues. The Councils Waste Strategy highlights the need for effective communications and awareness raising and during the life of this plan the Department will continue to develop and deliver comprehensive and targeted education and communications programs. Communication and education strategies, together with improved community engagement activities, will enable key messages to be conveyed to the

residents of Halton to help support behaviour change to meet the demanding targets faced by the Council.

- 2.2.9 Local environmental quality is important as it impacts on the whole community and is consistently rated as the most important issue for local people. Whilst the Departments approach to changing attitudes will focus upon increased education and community engagement the strengthening of enforcement measures will be required to underpin the Council's efforts to tackle such environmental nuisances. The department now delivers a more coordinated approach to ensuring a cleaner, greener, safer environment and a continued emphasis will be the development and implementation of plans, strategies and policies to tackle environmental nuisance, and will require the further coordination of departmental enforcement activities and joint working with key partners.
- 2.2.10 There has been and continues to be a problem with recruiting staff across the professional regulatory domain which has the potential for affecting the Departments ability to deliver a challenging agenda. There is only a finite pool of available qualified labour to tap into and replacing staff members almost always involves poaching from neighbouring authorities. The end of temporary funding streams such as the Planning Delivery Grant scheme does not help this situation.
- 2.2.11 Requirements to prepare sustainability appraisals and 'Appropriate Assessment' of the impact plans may have on the environment have increased project timescales for all planning documents. Similarly, tests of 'soundness' for the Local Development Framework (the replacement Unitary Development Plan) require considerably more public consultation and a wider and rigorous evidence base. Divisional resources have been switched to concentrate on the core strategy to meet government expectations, implement the Sustainable Communities Strategy and replace outdated UDP Policies. The Division will continue its commitment to the Growth Point for Halton, St. Helens and Warrington that aims to provide an additional 20% more housing in the Borough. The Division will need to support the Mersey Gateway Scheme Public Inquiry through up-to-date planning policy. These requirements put additional pressures on existing resources and again have the potential to impact upon service delivery.
- 2.2.12 The Council's success in securing 'Playbuilder' funding, of £1.121 million over a three year period, to develop play facilities in the Borough has placed extreme pressure on the Landscape Services Divisions Design and Development team who are charged with delivering the physical facilities aspect of the project. Revenue maintenance costs would have been an issue that may have derailed the 'Playbuilder' scheme but funding has been secured from the PCT for two additional Playground Maintenance Operatives. This funding is in place for a five-year period. The Council has made a commitment to the PCT to provide five new play facilities.

2.3 Organisation Structure



3.0 FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE

3.1 External Factors

Key Developments	Comment(s)
<i>Political</i>	
Liveability Agenda	<p>An integral aspect of meeting the Government's Liveability agenda is the prevention of environmental crime and enforcement of illegal activity such as littering, flytipping and other forms of environmental nuisance. The department will continue to tackle these issues through a co-ordinated approach to its enforcement activities, supported by the delivery of education and awareness raising campaigns.</p> <p>Of equal importance in relation to the Liveability agenda is the desire to provide quality public spaces that attract people to use them and in turn promote social interaction. The department will continue to drive up the physical quality of its parks, public squares, streets and other public spaces.</p>
Climate Change	<p>The management of over 70 hectares of woodland the Department contributes towards reducing carbon emissions by creating a healthy tree stock that is able to fix carbon that has been released into the atmosphere.</p> <p>Waste management activities generate CO2 and methane. The department has a vital role to play in helping to tackle climate change by meeting the aims, objectives and targets contained within its Municipal Waste Management Strategy.</p>
Strong and Prosperous Communities	<p>The Local Government White Paper was published in October 2006. The White Paper builds on the progress in improving the quality of our public services to turn reform into lasting transformation. The Department has restructured and will continue to re-format to deliver quality services.</p>
Waste Management	<p>The developing partnership with the Merseyside Authorities to deliver future waste management facilities, and the potential wider implications of the Liverpool City Region, will impact upon aspects of the</p>

	department's services during the life of this plan.
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<i>Economic</i>	
Efficiency in the Current Economic Climate	The Department will benefit from both financial and quality efficiencies as a result of working in Partnership with the Merseyside authorities for the procurement of long-term waste management contracts. We will continue to strengthen and formalise joint arrangements with those authorities, and other suitable partners, where efficiencies can be gained.
Better regulation.	<p>In the old regulatory model upon which output performance indicators were based – which started in Victorian times – the implicit regulatory principle has been 100 per cent inspection of premises, procedures and practices irrespective of known risks or past results. The theory has been to inspect everyone continuously, demand information wholesale, and require forms to be filled in at all times, the only barrier to the blanket approach a lack of resources.</p> <p>The modern enterprise challenge is to enhance the flexibility needed for a successful economy and tackle the regulatory concerns without sacrificing the standards a good society needs. The Government is committed to improving the quality of guidance on regulation because of its importance in improving compliance and reducing the burden of regulation. If regulation is to achieve its objectives in protecting consumers, workers and the environment and making markets work efficiently it must be clear what businesses and other organisations need to do to comply with the law. The new model being introduced will be a risk-based approach where there is no inspection without justification, no form filling without justification, and no information requirements without justification. Not just a light touch but also a limited touch. Instead of routine regulation attempting to cover all, the risk-based approach will target only the necessary few.</p>
Rigorous processes	Requirements to prepare sustainability appraisals and 'Appropriate Assessment' of the impact on the environment combined with the 'tests of soundness' for the Local Development Framework and enhanced public consultation are increasing the financial cost of producing plans and increasing the timescales for their completion.
Waste	The cost of dealing with waste will rise significantly in the

Management	coming years due to the need to implement more complex and comprehensive waste collection and recycling services. New waste treatment facilities will be required to avoid landfill disposal methods.
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Social	
<i>Reformed public services-</i>	The Department is focussed on providing a modern "joined up" service, Many of the requests for assistance received involve a multi-agency response. It is anticipated that these partnerships will become increasingly important.
<i>Work-life balance-</i>	Use of flexible hours and working from home has been used to retain essential staff and skills whilst at the same time accommodating changing work patterns. This is seen as a key challenge for a service where customer expectations are high.
Improving public health and reducing health inequalities and deprivation	Production of the Local Development Framework by the Planning Division will implement the land use aspects of the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreements. Through the LDF the Department will help to tackle many of the issues leading to poor health and deprivation. The Department contributes to the promotion of healthy lifestyles by providing quality public parks, children's play areas, safe pedestrian routes and sports field's. The public health agenda requires professionals working within environmental health to position themselves to ensure that their role and skills are understood and valued by other professionals and stakeholders. The Playbuilder programme and the funding for revenue maintenance secured from the PCT will be used to create new play facilities of the highest standard in areas of the Borough that currently have little or no provision.
The Population and People	Halton's population is changing. The younger and economically active households are leaving the Borough creating implications for services such as schools and an ageing population remains with increasing care and support needs. The challenge for Service, especially Planning, will be to make Halton a more attractive and affordable place for young people and families to live and work; and provide access to the necessary services and facilities required by an older population.
Accessible Waste Services	Working closely with the Community and Voluntary sector the Waste Division needs to deliver services that reflect particular local circumstance (e.g. low car ownership) in order to ensure

	ease of access to waste recycling services and facilities to all residents of the borough.
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<i>Technological</i>	
Mobile working	Much of the Departments workforce is mobile. Accompanied by the right technology some tasks could be completed in the field. To enable the Department to achieve this vision the technology needs to be dependable, secure, and staff are trained and prepared for the cultural changes that flexible and remote working will involve.
PARSOL, eGovernment and Management Information Systems	Planning and Regulatory Services Online (PARSOL) have published e-Service Delivery Standards for Planning, Environmental Health and Building Control. They are designed to help professionals to deliver faster, more joined-up and integrated services. The Department will continue to follow best practice initiatives in this area. To ensure continued cost effective and efficient service deliver, the department will invest in Vehicle management systems, data capture and surveillance equipment.

<i>Legislative</i>	
Planning for a Sustainable Future	<p>Detailed reforms to the planning system to improve speed, responsiveness and efficiency, alternatives for the delivery of major infrastructure planning are contained in the Planning Bill and Killian Pretty Review.</p> <p>A 'delivery strategy' for the Core Strategy to underpin a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) requires preparation. The CIL will empower local authorities to charge most types of new development in their area for the provision of new infrastructure.</p> <p>Planning Policy Statement 12 changes the way documents in the Local Development Framework are prepared. An Infrastructure Plan will be part of the 'delivery strategy' mentioned above to underpin CIL. The preparation of this Infrastructure Plan will have staff resource implications beyond that available in the Planning Division.</p> <p>Changes in Permitted Development rights should lead to a reduction in householder planning applications. This provides a much needed opportunity for development control to develop a positive and clear policy basis through site</p>

	<p>development briefs and supplementary planning guidance.</p> <p>The Government's Housing Green Paper published of July 2007 seeks views on the Government's proposals to increase the supply of housing, to provide well designed and greener homes that are supported by infrastructure and to provide more affordable homes to buy or rent.</p>
Waste Management	<p>Meeting legislative and policy requirements will continue to guide the activities of the department, and have a continued and significant impact upon resources.</p> <p>There is a broad and diverse range of European policy and legislation governing and directing all aspects of waste management from treatment and disposal options, to the management of specific waste streams.</p> <p>These policies and resulting strategies have a direct impact on national and local waste management and influence the way in which Halton's waste strategies and plans are developed.</p> <p>Overarching guidance on the effective management of waste is provided by the <i>Waste Framework Directive</i>. This requires the development of national strategies, encouraging prevention and reuse of waste and to ensure provision of a suitable infrastructure for recovery and disposal supported by an appropriate regulatory framework to protect the environment and public health. Amendments to the Framework were agreed by the EU Council in June 2008 and mean that member states will have to recycle 50% of household waste by 2020. EU countries will have two years to make the legislation part of their own national laws and governments will now have to draw up waste prevention programmes based on a five-step hierarchy, with waste prevention as the preferred option, followed by re-use, recycling, recovery and, finally, safe disposal.</p>
Building Control	<p>The Future of Building Control published by Department for Communities and Local Government in March 07, acknowledges the Building Regulations ensure that our buildings are safe, sustainable and make a direct contribution to tackling climate change. There was strong National endorsement for the majority of the 28 proposals which were designed to raise compliance with the building regulations while reducing the burden and cost on industry. The DCLG intend to follow up the analysis of consultation responses with an Implementation Plan, outlining how the successful proposals will be taken forward. The delivery of the service and enforcement of the regulations in the coming 12 months is</p>

	likely to change radically and presents a challenge to the service including new enforcement powers which to include stop notices
Environmental Health	<p>On the 21 July 2008 the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 (RES) received Royal Assent. The Act is part of the Governments implementation of the 2005 Hampton Review “Reducing Administrative Burdens: effective Inspection and Enforcement”. The RES Act creates a number of new responsibilities for local authorities. In addition to the Primary Authority scheme, these duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A duty to have regard to any guidance given by LBRO • A duty to follow a specific directive given to it by LBRO • A duty to have regard to the list of national enforcement priorities published by LBRO. <p>These duties are in addition to and complimentary with the duty to follow the new Regulators’ Compliance Code and the Legislative and Regulatory (Regulatory Functions) Order 2007.</p>

3.1.1 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 corporate Climate Change Action Plan is being prepared, but each department can make its own contribution.

Consideration will be given throughout the life of the Service Plan to ways in which support can be given to the action plan and to identify and implement opportunities to reduce any contribution to Climate Change and to promote best practice in the reduction of carbon emissions. Through planning policies the Department provides a huge contribution through sustainable planning practices including the promotion of renewable energy, surface water management systems, Building for Life standards and sustainability appraisal.

The Council has signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme in the early part of 2007/08. The programme will guide the Council 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 to reduce energy bills 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.

The Department will continue to develop its parks, woodlands and local nature reserves to promote biodiversity. Sites will be managed according to specifically drawn up Management Plans and where applicable Green Flag Award status will be applied for. The Department will also develop key strategic assets that have a carbon fixing capability such as the Expressway woodland planting which has reached a semi mature stage.

The Council's Waste Strategy sets out the key principles, policies, aims, objectives, and targets for the management of waste in Halton. The development of the strategy informed the production of a Waste Action Plan that contains details of services and initiatives to be introduced over a 3 year period to deliver enhanced recycling services to all households within the borough. The Plan will result in an increase in the level of waste recycled and that the level of bio-degradable waste sent to landfill for disposal is continually reduced. Halton continues to work with partner authorities in Merseyside to secure longer-term contracts for the diversion of more waste from landfill and in particular the biodegradable element of waste which contributes to the effects of climate change.

Under the contaminated land provisions contained in Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and the associated Statutory Guidance, local authorities are required to take a strategic approach to inspecting their areas and to describe and publish this in a written strategy. The strategy provides inspection arrangements and procedures, but also a justification for, and transparency in, Halton's decisions on how they will inspect their areas for contaminated land. Outside of the formal Contaminated Land process several large projects are also addressing significant Contaminated Land problems. The key project and the focus of considerable resource now and over the next five years is the Mersey Gateway Bridge. This and other large developments are anticipated to tackle many of the potentially contaminated sites; therefore whilst not formally part of the Part IIA process they do form a significant part of the workload for the contaminated land team over the next five years.

The Environment Act 1995 imposes an ongoing obligation on local authorities to review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in their areas against nationally determined air quality objectives. Local authorities are required to issue an order for any area where air quality standards are not being met, designating it an air quality management area (AQMA). Where a local authority has declared an AQMA they must carry out further assessments and draw up an action plan specifying the measures to be carried out and the timescale to improve air quality in the area to within the prescribed objective limits

3.2 Service Developments

During 2008 the Landscape Services Division completed its restructure, which has allowed it to better focus on its key areas of delivery in the coming decade. The new structure gives a clear management focus to Design, Parks Management and Conservation, Streetscene Services and the delivery of external contract works to organisations outside of the Council.

Landscape related industry awards show through independent assessment and verification that the service has continued to reach standards that are amongst the highest nationally. Green Flag awards gained and retained,

Hough Green Park, 7th year of award
Pickering's Pasture LNR, 8th year of award
Phoenix Park, 1st Year of Award.
Runcorn Hill Park and LNR, 9th year of award
Runcorn Town Hall Park, 1st year of award.
Rock Park, 5th year of award
Spike Island, 1st year of award.
Victoria Park, 2nd year of award
Victoria Promenade, 2nd time it has won the award.
Wigg Island, 3rd year of award

The Department is a member of the APSE Performance Network through which it benchmarks its performance against other similar authorities. The APSE Performance Report produced in November 2008 and based upon performance data collected during the financial year 2007/8 shows that the Division is in the highest Quartile for quality of service delivered, in the lowest Quartile for price per hectare, one of the most productive services in terms of number of hectares managed per employee and provides the cheapest landscape maintenance service for Parks, School's and on its highway estate. In December 2007 the Division won APSE 'Most Improved Performer – Parks, Open Spaces & Horticulture' Award and it is nominated for 'Best Performing Council Award in 2008.

The Planning Division has been implementing the Local Development Scheme, a 3-year project plan for the production of development plan and supplementary planning documents that together form the Local Development Framework (LDF). Over the next three years it is expected that the Core strategy part of the LDF and attendant planning documents will be progressed. Progress will be reported in the statutory Annual Monitoring Report and quarterly reports where necessary. In order to fulfil statutory requirements the LDF must be accompanied by a robust and sound evidence base to fully justify the policy produced. As part of this evidence base detailed land use compendiums, covering all land uses, were completed together with a multitude of other studies including strategic flood risk assessments, strategic housing land availability assessment, employment land study, habitat regulations assessment and sustainability appraisal. These documents form an essential part of the scrutiny and review process. To ensure wide consultation and transparency the evidence base has been made available to the corporate geographical information systems (GIS) and also has been made available through the Council's website and public access GIS. The production of the LDF and the evidence base will remain key Department priorities in the future. The Department will continue to work in partnership, where possible, to produce joint documents, for example the Joint Waste Development Plan Document for Halton and Merseyside. Input will continue to be provided for the Regional Spatial Strategies and emerging Single Regional

Strategy. A major task for the Department over the coming year will be the Public Inquiry in March 2009 announced by the Secretary of State for Transport concerning the Mersey Gateway transport scheme. The public inquiry will have considerable resource implications for staff time.

During 2008 the Waste Management Division updated the Council's Waste Management Strategy and has been implementing the actions contained within the Council's Waste Action Plan, a 3 year Plan to deliver enhanced recycling services to all households in the borough. This has included the roll out of Multi-material Kerbside Recycling Collections to a further 20,000 properties in July 2008, taking the total number of properties receiving the enhanced service to 26,000. Through a combination of wheeled bins, communal recycling containers and appropriate receptacles for terraced and 'sack' collection properties, the Council will deliver enhanced recycling services to all properties by 2010/11. The Waste Action Plan includes plans to deliver garden waste collections to all suitable households within the Borough. Where properties are not suitable for wheeled bins, it is planned that an alternative receptacle will be provided, such as a re-useable or biodegradable sack. It is planned that all suitable properties will be added to the green wheeled bin collection service in February 2009, and all other suitable properties will receive the service by 2010/11.

Following a review of the use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), officers from the Environment and Regulatory Services Department secured an agreement that Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) be authorised to issue FPNs on behalf of the Council. This agreement demonstrated the continued and increased partnership working in tackling environmental crime and anti-social behaviour. All PCSO's, together with a further number of Environment Directorate officers, subsequently received training in the issuing of Council FPN's and the department now has a core resource to deliver programmed enforcement initiatives to further deter environmental crime.

Members of the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board supported proposals for the development of plans to tackle litter and environmental nuisance, and approved that recommendations be made to adopt policies to take a minimum tolerance approach to environmental crime. During the coming year officers from the department will present further reports to elected members to recommend policy, and will continue to develop plans and strategies in relation to enforcement and nuisance prevention.

The Environmental Health team have taken some private sector housing functions of that fall mostly under the Housing Act 2004 including tenants complaints, overcrowding, disrepair, houses in multiple occupation licensing and inspection, immigration inspections, unlawful evictions. Also included is inspection and regulation of residential caravan sites. This introduces a new way of assessing homes in respect of housing complaints/disrepair The new system has been introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and it covers 29 hazards SEE below including:

- Dampness, excess cold or heat
- Pollutants such as asbestos, carbon monoxide and lead
- Lack of space, security, lighting, excess noise
- Poor hygiene, sanitation, water supply
- Accidents such as falls, shocks, fires, burns and scalds
- Collisions, explosions, structural collapse

If an officer identifies any type of hazard, they have to assess how serious it is and the level of harm that could result. The Government has provided detailed guidance on how assessments must be carried out and they have to be based on the risk to the occupant. The Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service are available for advice on fire issues and model protocols are published to facilitate this sharing of expertise.

3.3 Efficiency Improvements

As a result of the integration of the Environmental Health, Planning, Waste and Landscape services in July 2006, the structure of the department was fundamentally changed to maximise functional relationships, avoid duplication and to maximise efficiencies.

Efficiency gains as well as budgetary savings were delivered through further changes to the delivery of combined enforcement and regulation. In addition, a review of special support and administrative needs is underway. The process involves surveying staff to establish where standard and repetitive tasks can be automated or aggregated to free officer time. As a consequence the role of support staff will be re-engineered. In 2008/09 net savings of £120,000 were delivered as a result of the restructuring of the Department focusing on the Waste and Landscape Divisions.

The Department will benefit from both financial and quality efficiencies as a result of working in Partnership with the Merseyside authorities for the procurement of long-term waste management contracts. We will continue to strengthen and formalise joint arrangements with those authorities, and other suitable partners, where efficiencies can be gained. In particular economies of scale will be sought in the procurement of joint waste facilities.

Further work will be carried out during the coming 12 months to explore the benefits of delivering further services in partnership with neighbouring authorities or by external agencies.

3.4 National, Regional & Sub-Regional Focus

The outcome of the Review of Enforcement in Environmental Regulation, undertaken by DEFRA, is to be tough on serious offenders, but to give enforcers the flexibility to deal more proportionately with businesses that try to protect the environment. It has looked at enforcement processes for existing regulations, from the actions of courts and enforcers like local authorities, to how the wider community can assist effective enforcement. The community includes individuals, community groups, national non-governmental organisations and businesses.

The Department was involved in the strategic development of a CABE Space (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) that champion's the role of urban parks and green spaces, provides a national voice and potentially secures greater resources. The Department continues to engage with CABE Space.

The Department is also involved in the regional North West Parks and Green Spaces Forum, the objectives of which are similar to those of CABE Space but with a specific regional and local authority focus.

Issues arising in RSS (Regional Spatial Strategy) are of significant importance to Halton and our LDF (Local Development Framework). The RSS will be used, together with the UDP (Unitary Development Plan), to determine planning applications. The RSS was published 30th September 2008. This will now be subject to a partial review focussing on Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Show People and Regional Parking Standards. Work has begun on a Single Regional Strategy (SRS) that will combine the Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy. This SRS will not simply draw together existing documents. It will set out a clear vision for the region with unified and specific spatial, economic, environmental and social priorities and action. It is being prepared by 4NW, the new Regional Leaders Forum for the North West. It is essential to ensure that the SRS reflects Halton's corporate policies, plans and objectives. SRS has an ambitious 24 month preparation timetable that will have resource implications for the Planning Division.

The RSS, together with Merseyside Authorities Joint Waste Development Plan will also affect the provision of waste management and treatment facilities in the region, Merseyside, and Halton. The type, scale and location of such facilities will have a direct impact upon the Councils waste management strategy, and associated costs.

The Waste Strategy for England 2007 set new national targets for recycling and composting as follows:

- To recycle or compost at least 40% of household waste by 2010
- To recycle or compost at least 50% of household waste by 2020

Proposals to meet these targets include,

- Placing greater focus on waste prevention.
- Developing a recycling and re-use culture
- Recovering more resources from business waste.
- Securing technologically efficient investment in the treatment of Waste
- Measures to promote recycling in public spaces

Where targets are adopted at a national level, these have, in the past, been translated to different targets at a local level, that reflect an improvement on current performance which may be below or above the national target. No new statutory targets have been set for Halton, however, the authority agreed stretched performance targets for recycling with the Government Office for the North West (GONW) in June 2008. These are contained within Halton's Local Area Agreement and require:

- 28% recycling by 2008/09
- 31% recycling by 2009/10
- 34% recycling by 2010/11

There is a strong commitment in the North West region towards adopting and adhering to sustainable development principles in all aspects of regional activities. The 'Action for Sustainability' programme (coordinated by the North West Regional Assembly) represents a regional framework and provides a strategic basis for the promotion of relevant issues within the region. The programme has identified key areas of priority as:-

- Energy & Climate Change
- Sustainable Consumption & Production
- Natural Resource Protection & Environmental Enhancement
- Sustainable Communities

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.

The Department delivers a regulatory and advisory function primarily concerned with enhancing or protecting the environment and the wellbeing of the boroughs residents in respect of:

- Controlling the built environment
- Managing environmental factors that impact on health and wellbeing
- Regulating the commercial sector
- Managing the Borough's Natural Assets
- Neighbourhood cleansing Streetscene Services
- Delivering sustainable linked communities with the Local Development Framework
- Delivering a waste management service managing and encouraging responsible actions from diverse parties.

As an environmental and regulatory service, the issues around service performance tend to focus the speed and consistency of the service provided with ad hoc procedures in place on access to these services to reflect equality and diversity and the demographic make up of the borough. The service, which is delivered by a team of predominantly professionally qualified officers, is largely governed by statute and accompanying codes of practice and deals with matters affecting those living, working or just visiting the Borough. In order to effectively target the services and enable continued improvement of its effectiveness, a high proportion of visits and inspections operation are scheduled following the principal risk assessments.

There is currently no evidence of adverse equality impacts using this approach however, it is accepted insufficient data is being collected upon which a robust statement can be made. The service, whilst endeavoring to be equally available to all, is not currently able to demonstrate whether this is being achieved.

It is intended to undertake research into service users and to set up a system for monitoring the diversity background of service users to ensure the service does not inadvertently discriminate, and enable the service to be more effective where highest need has been identified and to be able to demonstrate achievements. When this information has been collated an action plan with targets can be drawn up within the lifetime of this service plan.

The Council is also mindful of the socio-economic and demographic factors affecting the Borough. To ensure equal access to services in the most deprived areas of the borough these issues are also addressed through

consultation on a neighbourhood basis, through the area forums and the development of local waste management plans.

3.6 Risk Management

Risk Management, which forms a key element of the strategic management and performance management, processes of the Council 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

Insert extracts from budget book

4.2 Human Resource Requirements

Table: Number of F.T.E. Staff

	Environment al Health, Enforcement & Building Control	Planning & Policy	Landscape Services	Waste Management
2008 / 09	46	25	126	268
2009 / 10	42	24	124	260
2010/11	42	24	124	260
2011/12	42	24	124	260

The significant changes that will affect the operation of the Department over the next 3 years as a result of the in external influences as detailed in Para 4.1 will affect the resource requirements of the Department, however, the details of those requirements are not yet know.

4.3 ICT Requirements

There is a need to ensure that the best return on investment in systems and annual maintenance is achieved. Core Department software, including GIS, requires updating to allow legislative changes to be incorporated, functionality extended, 'bugs' to be fixed, and each system keep pace with technological progress as system vendors such as Microsoft and Oracle de-support their older systems.

Key elements in terms of significant new hardware, software, training and ICT staff resources over the next three years will include:

- Consideration of the aggregation of the Department's individual core systems together to derive 'open access' to information and economies of working through reduced ICT hardware and 3rd party vendor involvement.
- Further investment in the PARSOL (Planning and Regulatory Services Online) software 'tool kit' to improve accessibility of Planning, Building Control and Environmental Health services.
- Improved internal standards and streamlining of data collection for service monitoring and management particularly in the areas of waste disposal and in green space management.

- Improved on-line payments for documents, regulatory applications and other services.
- Expansion and development of mobile technology for site inspection work for Environmental Health, Enforcement, Streetscene and Building Control. The technology will provide in-office systems to those in the field allowing data processing to be carried out 'on-the-job'.
- Full electronic document retrieval, record and workflow management system in Development Control, Spatial Planning and Building Control. This will use the in-house CSD system produced by ICT.
- Some Divisions will need to upgrade their core Windows 2000 software to Windows XP to allow core business software to be supported by vendors.
- The Landscape Services Division has operated for a number of years on the Citrix System through terminals instead of PCs. This has been an effective way of working for the Division and has enabled it to be innovative in the way it organises its front line operations. However it appears that the Citrix system used by the Council is no longer supported. The system will need to be updated if issues of failures are to be avoided in the future. This issue will be reviewed by ICT Services.
- The Landscape Services and Waste Management Division's are now using the Fleetmatic Vehicle Management system which allows for better planning of routes, provides security to lone workers, protects assets and allows managers to monitor fleet movements and generate reports that evidence work's completed. The system should be applied to all vehicles within the Department.

4.4 Accommodation and Property Requirements

- The Planning Policy, Waste and Environmental Health Divisions are located in Rutland House and have no additional short-term accommodation needs.
- In 2008 it was agreed that the Landscape Division would continue to be based at Picow Farm Depot, which has undergone improvement and modernisation in recent years. It has also been agreed that when external tenants currently based at Picow Farm Depot vacate the Department will make use of the space. The Landscape Services Division also has a new depot at Victoria Park where its Parks Team are based and has space at Lowerhouse Lane Depot where elements of its Streetscene section are based.

The development of services delivery models, in particular considerations of joint delivery protocols with nearby authorities may influence requirements.

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 2008–11, 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. 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)

Progress against the achievement of LAA targets is reported to all stakeholders at regular intervals. Following the establishment of the LAA, plans are being formulated to ensure that in future years the LAA and the Council's service plans are completely aligned.

5.1 Service Objectives –

(NB Other than by exception those service objectives and/or Key Milestones shown in *italics* will only be reported at Quarter 2 (half-year) and Quarter 4 (year-end.)

Corporate Priority:	A Healthy Halton Halton's Urban Renewal A Safer Halton
Key Area (s) Of Focus:	AOF 2 Improving the future health prospects of Halton residents through encouraging and providing the opportunities to access and participate in physically active lifestyles. AOF 12 Providing opportunities for recreation and fostering conservation by developing attractive and accessible parks and open spaces. AOF 29 Improving the quality of community life by enhancing the visual amenity of Halton's neighbourhoods.

Service Objective:	EAR 1- Continue to improve Parks, Sports Grounds, Open Spaces and Local Nature Reserves (LNR's).	
	Key Milestones	Responsible Officer
2009 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake refurbishment and improvements at Runcorn Town Hall Park including additional imaginative play facilities for all age groups. (AOF2, 12 and 29) – March 2010 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct an imaginative new play area as part of the Playbuilder and Big Lottery programme at Spike Island and secure additional funding for refurbishment of the park and St Helen's Canal (links with South Widnes SPD), (AOF2, 12 and 29) – March 2010 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver key elements, including the construction of a new Play Area, improvement to paths and entrance features, of the Hale Park 'Parks for People' project. Commence year 1 events programme. (AOF2, 12 and 29) – March 2010 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbish and enhance the play area at Town Park (Stockham Lane) – (AOF2, 12 and 29) September 2009. 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services.
2010 -11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish arboretum at Runcorn Town Hall park as part of the general refurbishment of the site. (AOF2, 12 and 29) - December 2010 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver key elements, of the Hale Park 'Parks for People' project. (AOF2, 12 and 29) – December 2010 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore funding opportunities for refurbishment of Runcorn Hill Park. (AOF2, 12 and 29) – December 2010 	Divisional Manager, Landscape Services

2011 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of landscape strategy for phase two of Widnes Waterfront. (AOF2, 12 and 29) – December 2011. 			Divisional Manager, Landscape Services
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Linked Indicators	EAR LI13
	Residual	Medium		

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Urban Renewal
Key Area (s) Of Focus:	AOF 10 Revitalising the economy by sustaining and developing an environment that compliments the core brand values of existing and potential investors.

Service Objective:	EAR 2 - To prepare and adopt a local development framework (LDF) and to review the LDF on a regular basis ensuring that an up to date development plan is available (statutory requirement). To achieve this by producing the following targets set out in the LDS 2009:-
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Key Milestones		Responsible Officer		
2009 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preferred Options for the Core Strategy reported to Full Council July 2009 Risk Management Milestone – Publication of Local Development Scheme, agreed by Government Office North West, March 2010. <i>(Associated risk: Failure to produce strategy could jeopardise future government funding e.g. Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Control Measure: Ensure delivery of strategies in line with government requirements).</i> Risk Management Milestone – Biannual Local Development Working Party Meetings. <i>(Associated risk: Production of unsound plans resulting in abortive costs and repetition of work. Control Measure: Consultation with relevant internal officers and external experts to ensure proper evaluation of requirements to pass tests of soundness).</i> 	Divisional Manager, Planning Services		
2010 -11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of the Core Strategy, September 2010 Risk Management Milestone – Biannual Local Development Working Party Meetings. <i>(Associated risk: Production of unsound plans resulting in abortive costs and repetition of work. Control Measure: Consultation with relevant internal officers and external experts to ensure proper evaluation of requirements to pass tests of soundness).</i> 	Divisional Manager, Planning Services		
2011 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of the Core Strategy, January 2012 Risk Management Milestone - Biannual Local Development Working Party Meetings. <i>(Associated risk: Production of unsound plans resulting in abortive costs and repetition of work. Control Measure: Consultation with relevant internal officers and external experts to ensure proper evaluation of requirements to pass tests of soundness).</i> 	Divisional Manager, Planning Services		
Risk Assessment	Initial	High	Linked Indicators	No indicators
	Residual	Medium		

Corporate Priority:	Corporate Effectiveness & Efficient Service Delivery
Key Area (s) Of Focus:	AOF 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.

Service Objective:	EAR 3 - Implementation of actions to meet the objectives of the Council's Waste Management Strategy and Waste Action Plans
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Key Milestones		Responsible Officer		
2009 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension to kerbside wheeled bin multi-material recycling service. Sep 2009. (AOF31) Extension to kerbside wheeled bin green waste collection service May 2009. (AOF31) Extension to the network of neighbourhood recycling 'Bring Sites'. March 2010. (AOF31) Development and delivery of a co-ordinated Environmental Education and Communications Campaign. July 2009. (AOF31) 	Divisional Manager, Waste Management		
2010 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension of kerbside multi-material recycling service to all properties. March 2011. (AOF31) Extension to the network of neighbourhood recycling 'Bring Sites'. March 2011. (AOF31) 	Divisional Manager, Waste Management		
2011 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no key milestones in this year. 			
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Linked Indicators	NI 191, NI 192, NI 193
	Residual	Medium		

Corporate Priority:	A Safer Halton
Key Area (s) Of Focus:	AOF 29 Improving the quality of community life by enhancing the visual amenity of Halton's neighbourhoods.

Service Objective:	EAR 4 - Carry out local Streetscene environmental improvements. (Street Scene is part of the Council's Environment Directorate that incorporates a number of services that have an important impact on the "street" and public open spaces in terms of their appearance and condition. It is one of the few services that in some way affects everyone using the Borough. Keeping our streets and our open spaces looking clean and tidy and well maintained).
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Key Milestones			Responsible Officer	
2009 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 20 small scale environmental improvements. Will include items such as installation of new street furniture, repair of existing street furniture and improvements to soft landscape. Dec 2008. (AOF29) 		Divisional Manager Landscape Services	
2010 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 20 small scale environmental improvements. Items will include installation of new street furniture, refurbishment of existing street furniture and small scale soft landscape improvements. Dec 2009. (AOF29) 		Divisional Manager Landscape Services	
2011 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 20 small scale environmental improvements. Items to include installation of new street furniture, refurbishment of existing street furniture and small scale soft landscape improvements. Dec 2010. (AOF29) 		Divisional Manager Landscape Services	
Risk Assessment	Initial	Low	Linked Indicators	No relevant indicators
	Residual	Low		

Corporate Priority:	A Healthy Halton
Key Area (s) Of Focus:	AOF 5 Actively managing the environmental factors that are detrimental to good health.

Service Objective:	EAR 5 - Implement the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy. Take a strategic approach to inspecting the borough for potentially contaminated land under the provisions contained in Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and to describe and publish this in a written strategy.
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Key Milestones			Responsible Officer	
2009 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to identify and classify potentially contaminated sites from available data. Mar 2009. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue comparing the potentially contaminative land uses to information on pathways and receptors and categorise into risk categories A B and C. (Ordered and rational manner to identify and prioritise sites. Categories are a broad risk assessment with A as the highest category and 1400 potential sites). Mar 2009. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the identification of the Group A, B and C sites. Mar 2009. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence detailed inspections of high risk sites (group A) Mar 2009. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
2010 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue detailed inspection of sites commencing with risk group A. Mar 2010. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
2011 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the detailed inspection of 25% of the Group A sites. (Once inspections are complete it will be necessary to decide on levels of risk presented by each site and either implement remediation or prioritise down to a lower category). Mar 2011. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy originally produced in 2001, and last reviewed in 2006. Sep 2010. (AOF5) 		Principal Contaminated Land Officer	
Risk Assessment	Initial	Medium	Linked Indicators	EAR LI15 & 16
	Residual	Low		

Corporate Priority:	A Healthy Halton
Key Area (s) Of Focus:	AOF 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

Service Objective:	EAR 6 - To support initiatives to address obesity within Halton by introducing the Halton Early Years Food Award (HEYFA) to all Pre-school settings in the Borough and to develop a Healthy Eating award (HEAFB) to be initially introduced in Business canteens in the Borough
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Key Milestones			Responsible Officer	
2009 - 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the HEYFA in 70% of Pre-school settings in Halton 		Stephen Burrows (Principal Environmental Health Officer)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate discussions with PCT and nutritionist for Healthy Eating Award for Businesses (HEAFB) 		Stephen Burrows (Principal Environmental Health Officer)	
2010 - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish HEYFA in 80% of all Pre-school settings in Halton. Pilot HEAFB 		Stephen Burrows (Principal Environmental Health Officer)	
2011 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish HEYFA in 90% of all Pre-school settings in Halton. Launch HEAFB 		Stephen Burrows (Principal Environmental Health Officer)	
Risk Assessment	Initial	Low	Linked Indicators	NI 55 NI 120
	Residual	Low		

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

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2007/8 Actual	2007/08 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2008/9 Target	Halton 2008/9 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			09/10	10/11	11/12
Corporate Health											
There are presently no indicators of this type identified for the service											
Cost & Efficiency											
There are presently no indicators of this type identified for the service											
Fair Access											
There are presently no indicators of this type identified for the service											
Quality											
EAR LI2	Greenstat-Survey, satisfaction with the standard of cleanliness and maintenance of parks and green spaces.	CP2 AOF12 CP5 AOF29	77	-	-	-	84	TBC	88	90	92
EAR LI3	Number of Green Flag Awards for Halton.	CP2 AOF12	6	-	-	-	8	10	10	11	12
NI 182	Satisfaction of business with local authority regulation services	CP6 AOF32	tbc	-	-	-	N/a	tbc	TBC	TBC	TBC
Service Delivery											
<u>EAR LI8</u>	Greenstat-Survey, Satisfaction with the standard of maintenance of trees, flowers and flower beds.	CP2 AOF12 CP5 AOF29	N/a	-	-	-	N/a	TBC	75	80	85
NI 190	Achievement in meeting standards for the control system for animal health	CP1 AOF7		** see note-	-	-		TBC**			

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

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2007/8 Actual	2007/08 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2008/9 Target	Halton 2008/9 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			09/10	10/11	11/12
	** Targets for this indicator have not yet been developed, it was deferred until 2009 because Defra intend to carry 2008.										
NI 191	Residual household waste per household (Kgs)	CP1 AOF7	New Indicator	-	-	-	967	TBC	856	826	796
NI 192	Household waste recycled and composted	CP1 AOF7	25.4%	-	-	-	28%	TBC	31%	34%	35%
NI 193	Municipal waste land filled (Kgs)	CP1 AOF7	New Indicator	-	-	-	71.2%	TBC	63	61	60
NI 195	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - (a) Litter and detritus (b) Graffiti (c) Fly-posting	CP5 AOF29	14% 1% 0%	-	-	-	14% 1% 0%	TBC	14% 1% 0%	14% 1% 0%	14% 1% 0%
NI 196	Improved street and environmental cleanliness - Fly tipping	CP5 AOF29	2	-	-	-	2	TBC	1	1	1
NI 197	Improved local biodiversity – active management of local sites	CP2 AOF12		-	-	-	N/A	N/A	15%	18%	22%
NI 184	Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	CP1 AOF7	N/A	-	-	-	70%	TBC	72%	74%	75%

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2007/8 Actual	2007/08 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2008/9 Target	Halton 2008/9 Actual	Halton Targets				
				Top	Middle	Bottom			09/10	10/11	11/12		
NI 154	Net additional homes provided	CP2 AOF11		-	-	-			518	518	518		
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	CP2 AOF11		-	-	-			20	20	20		
NI 157	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major', 'minor' and 'other' application types	CP2 AOF10		-	-	-			60	60	60		
									80			80	80
									80			80	80
NI 159	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	CP2 AOF11		-	-	-			110%	110%	110%		
NI 170	Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years * Targets cannot be set until the DCLG publish their Urban Settlements report which contains data critical to the calculation. This is defined in the DCLG document National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Handbook of Definitions 1/4/2008. The lack of DCLG report has been queried with	CP2 AOF8		-	-	-							

Ref ¹	Description	Corp. Plan Priority	Halton 2007/8 Actual	2007/08 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2008/9 Target	Halton 2008/9 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			09/10	10/11	11/12
	the Audit Commission.										

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.

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

<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 AND NON STATUTORY PLANS

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

International

Johannesburg Declaration
Kyoto Protocol
The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)
EU Sixth Environmental Action Plan
Habitats Directive
Water Framework Directive
Birds Directive
Nitrates Directive
Air Quality Directive
Waste Framework Directive
Directive to Promote Electricity from Renewable Energy
Aarhus Convention

National

Securing the Future - UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy
Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation White Paper
Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future
Urban White Paper
Rural White Paper
The Future of Transport a Network for 2030 White Paper
Aviation White Paper
The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
Working together for clean air
Water Resources for the Future – A Strategy for England and Wales
Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1 – Creating Sustainable Communities
Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 2 – Green Belt
PPS 3 – Housing
PPG 4 – Industrial, commercial development and small firms
PPS 6 – Planning for Town Centres
PPS 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPG 8 – Telecommunications
PPS 9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
PPS 10 – Planning and Sustainable Waste Management
PPS 11 – Regional Spatial Strategies
PPS 12 – Local Development Frameworks
PPG 13 – Transport
PPG 14 – Development on Unstable Land
PPG 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG 16 – Archaeology and Planning
PPG 17 – Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
PPG 20 – Coastal Planning
PPG 21 – Tourism
PPS 22 – Renewable Energy
PPS 23 – Planning and Pollution Control

PPG 24 – Planning and Noise
PPG 25 – Development and Flood Risk
UK Climate Change Programme
Natural Environment and Communities Act (2006)
Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities, Natural England
Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
Climate Change supplement to PPS1
Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method
Environment Agency's Flood Risk Standing Advice
Environmental Quality in Spatial Planning – Incorporating the natural, built and historic environment, and rural issues in plans and strategies (2005)
Guidance for Local Authorities on Implementing the Biodiversity Duty (DEFRA, 2007).

Regional

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West
Emerging Single Regional Strategy
Regional Economic Strategy
The Cultural Strategy for England's North West 2001
Advancing Sustainable Energy – A Sustainable Energy Strategy for the North West
North West Regional Freight Strategy
Regional Waste Strategy for the North West
Regional Housing Strategy for the North West
Investment for Health A Plan For North West England 2003
Action for Sustainability
The North West Best Practise Design Guide, NWRA
The Draft Green Infrastructure Guide for the North West, NWRA
The Sustainable Energy Strategy, NWRA
The Sustainability Appraisal Toolkit, NWRA
Rising to the Challenge: A Climate Change Action Plan for England's Northwest, NWDA

Local / Sub-Regional

Liverpool City Region Prospectus
Multi-Area Agreement
Local Area Agreement
Corporate Plan for Halton Borough Council
Sustainable Communities Strategy
Local Transport Plan 2
Housing Strategy
Halton's Natural Assets Strategy
Halton: Gateway to Prosperity 2005-2008
Sports Strategy 2002 – 2007
Safer Halton Partnership Strategy 2005-2008
Halton's Biodiversity Action Plan
Equal Opportunities Policy
Waste Management Strategy
The Council's Waste Action Plan

Waterside Development Strategy

Homelessness Strategy
LA 21 Strategy Action Plan for Halton
Halton BVPP 2007/08
The Unitary Development Plan
Local Development Framework
Local Development Scheme
Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy
Park Management Plans.

Playground Stratppendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessments – High Priority Actions

No high priority actions have been identified within the Departmental Equality Action Plan.

Appendix 2

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.