

Directorate Overview Report – Corporate & Inclusion – Quarter 2

Reporting Period: 1st July – 30th September

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the second quarter of 2025/26 for service areas within the remit of the Corporate & Inclusion Board.

1.2 It covers key priorities for development or improvement in the various functional areas reporting to the Board in relation to the Council's priority of Corporate Effectiveness and Business Efficiency i.e.:

- Finance
- Operational HR Division, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
- ICT Infrastructure
- Legal and Democracy
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services
- Property Services

1.3 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 5 of this report.

1.4 Corporate Priorities



Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029
Our Community, Our Priorities, Our Future

Plan on a Page



2.0 High Priority Equality Actions

- 2.1** Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.
- 2.2** The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>


3.0 Performance Overview

- 3.1** Key Performance Indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.
- 3.2** It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget.
- 3.3** Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

Finance


Key Objectives / milestones

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
FS01	Higher proportion of council tax income due for the year to be collected compared to the previous year


Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the in-year collection rate will be compared to the same point of the previous year		<p>Council tax collection for the period ending 30 September 2025 is 53.71% which is 0.11% down on the same period for last year.</p> <p>Debt relating to previous years continues to be collected, the Council utilises powers through charging orders and attachment to earnings/benefits to secure debts.</p>

		<p>£1.634m has been collected in relation to previous year debt, equivalent to 8.35% of outstanding debt as at 31 March 2025. This is an improvement of £0.263m compared to the same period in 2024/25.</p> <p>For 2024/25 the Council's in-year council tax collection rate was 93.98% which compares to the national collection rate of 95.9%. Council tax collection rates are impacted by deprivation, where it is evidenced the higher the deprivation the lower the collection rate. Despite this Halton outperforms a number of unitary and met authorities who have a lower deprivation ranking.</p>
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Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
FS02	Higher proportion of business rates income due for the year to be collected compared to previous year

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the in-year collection rate will be compared to the same point of the previous year		<p>Business rate collection for the period ending 30 September 2025 is 58.6% which is 0.16% lower than the collection rate at the same point last year.</p> <p>Despite the collection rate being lower on the same point last year it is worth noting 2024/25 collection rates were the highest in over a decade. The collection rate at 30 September 2025 remains high and is the third highest collection rate over the past decade.</p> <p>£0.736m has been collected in relation to previous year debt.</p>

Corporate Priority	Priority 4 - Tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need
FS 03	Reducing the average time for processing new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction claims by 1 day, compared to the previous year, to an average of 21.65 days.


Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the same quarter last year (Q1 2024/25 20.83 days).		<p>Q2 2025-26 25.01 days Q1 2025-26 27.26 days Q4 2024-25 18.97 days Q3 2024-25 18.94 days Q2 2024-25 19.58 days Q1 2024-25 20.83 days</p> <p>In the second quarter there has been an improvement of over two days in the speed of processing for new claims compared to quarter one. The Benefits Service has recruited three Benefit Officers in August 2025 and they should have a positive impact on processing times later in the year. At this stage of the year, it is too early to predict whether the target of 21.65 days will be achieved.</p>

Corporate Priority	Priority 4 – Tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need
FS 04	Reducing the average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction by 1 day, compared to the previous year, to an average of 8.55 days.


Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the same quarter last year (13.70 days).		<p>Q2 2025-26 19.17 days Q1 2025-26 14.30 days Q4 2024-25 9.16 days Q3 2024-25 12.19 days Q2 2024-25 15.62 days Q1 2024-25 13.70 days</p>

		<p>The performance for changes in circumstances has deteriorated in quarter two compared to quarter one in part because of the large number of transactions being sent by the DWP in respect of council tax reduction claims. The volume of these transactions varies throughout the year and in quarter two the numbers were high. The Benefits Service has recruited three Benefit Officers in August 2025 and they should have a positive impact on processing times later in the year. At this stage of the year it is too early to predict whether the target of 8.55 days will be achieved.</p>
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Corporate Priority	Priority Two - Building a strong, sustainable, local economy
FS 05	Ensuring 90% of all suppliers' invoices are paid within 30 days, including those which are disputed invoices.





Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the proportion of suppliers' invoices paid within 30 days will be assessed		<p>As of the end of Quarter 2, 91.22% of the Council's supplier invoices for the current financial year were paid within 30 calendar days of receipt. This marks a slight improvement compared to Quarter 1, where the figure stood at 90.92%.</p> <p>This performance reflects the Council's ongoing commitment to prompt payment practices, which help foster positive and reliable relationships with suppliers. It is important to note that this metric includes all invoices, including those subject to disputes or delays due to queries, ensuring a comprehensive view of payment performance.</p>

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
FS 06	Higher proportion of historic sundry debt to be collected compared to the same point the previous year


Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the collection rate for the total outstanding historic debt (balance as at the previous year-end) will be compared to the same point the previous year		<p>As at 31 March 2025, the total outstanding historic debt stood at £19,407,241. By 30 September 2025, 59.56% of this debt had been successfully recovered, representing an improvement compared to 55.01% at the same point in the previous year.</p> <p>This positive trend is partly attributed to the continued support provided by the Council's external debt collection agency in those cases where normal in-house recovery action has not been successful. Additionally, Adult Social Care has recently appointed two extra staff members to support recovery efforts, which is expected to further enhance collection rates in the coming months.</p> <p>The Council has also seen a notable improvement in the recovery of debt raised during the current financial year (2025/26). At the end of Quarter 2, 79.82% of this debt had been collected, compared to 62.19% at the same stage last year.</p>




Key Objectives / milestones

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
CXDU 01	Reduction in Sickness absence across the Council - Review and amend policy to focus on attendance, train and empower managers to apply procedure timely.



Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Reduce the sickness absence days FTE average across the Council by March 2026 Total 14.19 days for 2024/2025.	 	3.52 Q1 2025/26 - 3.57 Q2 2024/25 – 3.69
Reduce the average cost of absence across the council by March 2026	 	£1,480.55 Q1 2025/26 - £1,561.79 Q2 2024/25 - £1,246.94

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
CXDU 02	Promote increased stability of the workforce across the organisation - Improve the Employer value proposition of HBC to Attract and retain talent and become an Employer of choice.





Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Improve turnover rate with a target of 13%		17.24%

Workforce Stability: 87.12%		<p>Q1 2025/26 Turnover 17.32%</p> <p>Q2 2024/25 Turnover 13.8%</p> <p>There is no cost associated with this as data does not take into account level and salary of leavers and starters.</p> <p>Calculated at Turnover: No leavers/No employees * 100</p>
Improve workforce stability rate with a minimum 88% target	 	<p>85.49%</p> <p>Q1 2025/26 Stability 85.73%</p> <p>Q2 2024/25 stability 89.24%</p>

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
CXDU 03	Reduce flexible workforce (agency) spend and deployment across the organisation

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Reduce agency costs across organisation by March 2026	 	<p>Total Spend £3,319,643.57</p> <p>Connect2Halton £2,933,216.56</p> <p>Off contract £386,427.01</p> <p>Q1 2025/26 - £3,397,163.09</p> <p>Q2 2024/25 - £3,988,737.08</p>
Reduce agency usage by March 2026		672 agency placements


Corporate Priority	Priority 1-6 - Resilient and Reliable Organisation
CXDU 04	To increase the number of post filled 1st time To reduce the proportion of vacancies required advertisement

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
To reduce the proportion of vacancies required re-advertisement	 	9% Q1 2025/26 – 9% Q2 2024/25 - 6%
To increase the number of post filled 1st time	 	85% Q1 2025/26 – 84% Q2 2024/25 - 94%

ICT


Key Objectives / milestones

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
ICT 01	LD1 Average availability of the Council's M365 Systems 24/7 - 365.


Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
2023 – 2026 is seeing the delivery of the Azure and Microsoft M365 E5 platforms – through 2025 the teams continue to deliver updates with key technical partners, new integrated systems and further deployments of Cloud and on-premise deliveries as part of this major technology change programme.		<p>This programmes Phase 1 objective has been the full transformation from legacy telephony and contact centre systems to modern, integrated communication and data analysis infrastructure.</p> <p>The programme includes decommissioning outdated hardware, Cloud application deployment, implementing new cloud-based contact centre solution, building a secure on-premise and hybrid data Lakehouse.</p>

	<p>Whilst delivering a business intelligence platform that supports the Halton operational and strategic goals.</p> <p>These huge programmes of work will offer new and innovative platform technologies for the wider organisation to build upon this is not just a technical project set but a platform for the authority to innovate with process change and digital first strategies.</p> <p>The delivery of the new Telephony solution completed in October will enhance the development of the Salesforce delivery bringing with it Ai technologies and developments such as citizen portals and a greater level of integrated services at the front end through the authority's web site and social media presences.</p> <p>As noted within the previous quarter the centralisation of the authority's data assets is again a major project that will allow the delivery of accurate live reporting as well as form the base for Ai into the future.</p> <p>Ai is a complex beast and not something the authority can afford to buy off the shelf not only because of the cost in monetary terms but the cost of accuracy and the delivery needs of the authority many will be impatient to implement pockets of Ai but the HBC technical strategy is clear our objective is to containerise specific Ai deliveries and deliver the Knowledge based systems first then moving onto the more complex capabilities of generative Ai projects in test over Q3/Q4.</p>
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Corporate Priority	
ICT 02	LD2 Security Incidents across each reporting quarter

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
<p>The software packages and monitoring solutions will be in place by the 2nd quarter 2025. This will include the delivery of DR and BCM opportunity through this new open-source platform. The Platform will be based upon a small proportion of paid for solutions with the balance based upon pure open-source technologies releasing further savings into the future.</p>		<p>As above we discussed the centralisation of data in order to deliver a standardised reporting platform allowing live data to be reported against in some cases improving the authority's accuracy and future planning efforts. Added to this we will be replacing the ageing HR and Pay platforms and linking them to a new cloud-based Finance system this will be the same finance solution we have successfully hosted in partnership with the Liverpool City Region, Mersey Travel and Sefton MBC.</p> <p>This platform will form the new ERP base supported by the data project over the next 12 months. This needs to be noted that this project is a considerably complex and time-consuming effort and will be reported against over the coming quarters and into the next financial year.</p> <p>This platform has now completed the technical development; phase 2 of the project has commenced defining the reporting requirements and dashboard requirement.</p>

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
ICT 03	LD3 Number of resolved customer contacts – Contact Centre

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the delivered process and the number of contacts will be reported with an objective of delivering contact through all digital means, reducing wait times and improving resolution at 1 st contact for those services that will allow. With the colossal amount of work being undertaken within this area through the delivery of the Sales-Force CRM, Ai and new Telephony that will now integrate with the new internal platforms and remove the old Skype telephony solution by October 2026.		30,211 individual call contacts across Quarter 2 The new Contact Centre Solution went live on the 15 th of October, the new cloud-based solution is now operating successfully linked to the authorities current CRM solution with plans over the next quarter to deploy and link this system to the new Salesforce CRM and supporting systems when this goes live later in the year.

Corporate Priority	Priority 4 - Tackling inequality and helping those who are most in need
ICT 04	LD4 Number of resolved contacts – One Stop Shop's



Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
The partnerships within the shop's continuing to increase at a pace and a programme of work linked to the Transformation programme owned by the department. This is currently under development to increase the levels of services available and looking to partner with key external agencies. Integration and an HBC staffing presence within the NHS Halton Health Hubs has been agreed with a 3 rd quarter 2026 target for the Runcorn opening.		30,144 individual face to face interactions across Quarter 1 The Customer Journey transformation strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to enhancing the full customer journey using personalised web portals, chatbots, mobile technologies, social media integration, and the latest AI and chat technologies.

		<p>The goal is to seamlessly link the authority's contact centre and shops with these technologies, improving both face-to-face and digital customer experiences while ensuring accessibility for all, including those with limited access to technology. This strategy will also integrate with existing CRM and Office 365 technologies to improve internal and external client interactions from contact to resolution. Digital poverty remains an issue within Halton as it does in many areas across the Northwest new ways of interacting with this client base will be part of the customer journey programme, but the shops remain an essential aspect of the front door into the council for many.</p> <p>This programme of work will also be linked to a newly agreed partnership with NHS led Halton Health Hubs – discussions continue to evaluate the options for a presence within the new Runcorn Old Town hub and also to offer an NHS presence within the HBC locations. The management within this area are discussing options to increase the number of council services within the locations bringing services into the community on a face-to-face basis. Digital poverty and low digital skills make sure not all interactions can be digital.</p>
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Legal & Democracy

Key Objectives / milestones



Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
LD 01	To ensure that decision makers are supported through the provision of timely and accurate advice and information and are kept informed of changing legislation and responsibilities

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Revised Constitution to be approved by Annual Council each May	 	Approved by Annual Council in May 2025



Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
LD 02	To provide efficient and effective Democratic Support Services that provides Elected Members, as key decision makers, with the necessary information, support and training opportunities to fulfil their individual potential and management and governance role effectively

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Inductions to be completed by June following election and offer of MAPs to be monitored on a quarterly basis	 	There were no local elections in May 2025, and no new Member Inductions have taken place this year. All Members have now been issued with a MAP. 90% of Members have now attended at least one training course

Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
LD 03	Ensure that prosecutions are carried out expeditiously by monitoring average time taken to issue from receipt of full instructions. The target is within 10 working days.

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the target	 	All prosecutions have been issued within 10 working days from receipt of full instructions.







Corporate Priority	Priorities 1 - 6 Building a Resilient and Reliable Organisation
LD 04	Ensure that care cases are carried out expeditiously by monitoring average time taken to file application for Care proceedings at Court from receipt of all written evidence from client department. The target is within 3 working days

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
On a quarterly basis, the average processing times will be compared to the target: Children's – 24 cases issued	 	Decline in hearings issued and timeline targets have been met.



Catering Stadium & Registration Services







Key Objectives / milestones

Corporate Priority	Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Four - Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most in Need. Registrars
ERD 26	Provide accessible and efficient Registration Service to Halton residents.



Milestone:	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
95% of Births registered (or declarations) within 5 working days of request.	 	98% (National benchmark is 95%)
95% of Deaths registered (or declarations within 2 working days of request). <i>95% is national benchmark.</i>	 	95.6% (National benchmark is 95%) Customer attendance / choice impacted
90% of customers seen early, on time or within 10 minutes of their appointment time.	 	99.67% (National Benchmark is 90%) Figure due to late arrival of customers, not due to previous appointments over running.










Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong Sustainable Local Economy. Widnes Market
ERD 36	Provide a variety of affordable trading spaces at Widnes Market

Milestone:	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Achieve a minimum of 80% indoor stall occupancy	 	82% occupancy rate. The market experiences good trader occupancy levels in an economy where many local markets are suffering from reduced trader numbers, with the national average of local market occupancy rates at 72% (in accordance with the 2023 survey from NABMA) 5% reduction on the same period in the previous year, this is attributed to the retirements of traders and the reduction in stall sizes without a loss of trader.

		In addition, not included in the figures the market has supported 31 community stalls across the period.
Achieve a minimum of 80% outdoor stall occupancy levels	 	78.75% a slight reduction of 2.5% on the same period 2024/25. Widnes outdoor market regular trading days are Monday, Friday and Saturday with the Flea and Collectors market on Wednesday. A combined flea and retail trading day was introduced on Thursdays in April 2022 and uptake on this day each week is low in comparison to established regular days which reduces the overall occupancy in terms of data analysis, however, operates at no additional cost to the Council.
Achieve minimum annual overall footfall of 585,000	 	363,686 visitor footfall is down by 9.7% on the same period last year, the national average footfall across the markets and retail sector has reduced in the same period by 7.45%
Strive for minimum 120% service budget recovery.	 	147.78% , an increase from 121.95% in the previous quarter.

Corporate Priority	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community The DCBL Stadium
ERD 37	Provide affordable space for business, community, cultural and recreational activities to take place.


	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Achieve minimum 55% meeting space occupancy.	 	72.08% a decrease in usage of meeting space from 75% in Q1 however an increase from the same period in the previous year at 42.3% .

Achieve minimum 55% meeting space occupancy.	 	42.97% a slight increase from 41.03% in Q1 however a decrease from 50.4% in the same period in the previous year. This decrease can be attributed to periods of closure of the conference suites over the period for essential building maintenance.
Achieve minimum 55% sports hall occupancy	 	66% a slight increase from 64% in Q1 and an increase from 57.69% in Q2 24/25.
Achieve minimum 75% 4G pitch occupancy levels	 N / A	Winter occupancy commences in Q3, although the pitch is available for use outside of peak-season, this is low level and doesn't inform comparable data.
95% Customer satisfaction 4/5 star reviews	 	100% of returns rated the stadium in terms of 'Quality of Venue' between 4 and 5 stars. 80% of returns rated the stadium in terms of 'Quality of Catering' between 4 and 5 stars. 100% of returns said they would likely or very likely use the stadium again. 100% of customers would likely or very likely recommend the stadium to others. (1 star being very poor and 5 stars being excellent) Overall, 100% of customers rated the stadium very good or excellent.
53% Service budget recovery annual target.	 	47% , a marginal reduction from Q1 47.06% Overall, the Stadium achieved 62.32% in 24/25 and 64.46% in 23/24. Christmas event and the start of the new season in Q4 should contribute to increased budget recovery in the remaining quarters.


Property Services

Key Objectives / milestones



Corporate Priority	Priority Two – Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Priority Six - Valuing and Appreciating Halton and our Community. Asset Management & Valuation
ERD 07	Provide Support for the Council's Corporate Priorities through the Provision of Property Advice

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
To achieve full cost recovery for the service whilst providing support to departments with their property requirements.		Asset Management have introduced a recharge policy for providing services to other departments. This is implemented by a case-by-case instruction form requiring the department to provide a cost code to be recharged.

Corporate Priority	Priority One – Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence. Priority Three – Supporting Children, Young People and Families. Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Property Services
ERD 09	Rationalise the Council's main office accommodation to deliver revenue savings.

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Exec Board approval to rationalise the Council's accommodation and progress with associated works including the review of the desk ratio policy.		Executive Board gave approval at the September meeting to develop options for the future use of the Council's office accommodation.

Corporate Priority	Priority Five – Working Towards a Greener Future. Property Services
ERD 10	Reduce Carbon Emissions from the Council's Property Portfolio

Milestone	Progress Q2	Supporting Commentary
Deliver the solar connection to the Leisure Centre by March 2026		The tender documentation for the project will be going out for pricing within the next few weeks. The procurement process inclusive of the tender evaluation will likely mean that the project won't be completed by 31 st March, however it is hoped the scheme will be on site by then.
Carry out decarbonisation measures on a minimum of 2 buildings to produce carbon emission reductions to contribute towards 1.5% by March 2026		<p>The decarbonisation works at Picow Farm Depot have been tendered and a preferred contractor has been appointed. A design meeting has been held with the contractor, and they are now tasked with refining the design to meet our specific needs. The current programme for Picow is that works will be complete by 31st March 2026.</p> <p>The decarbonisation works at Runcorn Town Hall and Kingsway Learning Centre are currently out to tender in conjunction with other buildings within the City Region. These projects will be delivered later in 2026/27.</p>

4.0 Financial Statements

Finance Department

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	7,460	3,690	3,577	113	226
Insurances	1,048	694	576	118	234
Supplies & Services	1,129	380	433	(53)	(108)
Rent Allowances	31,500	13,021	13,021	0	0
Concessionary Travel	1,902	783	751	32	65
LCR Levy	1,902	0	0	0	0
Bad Debt Provision	223	0	0	0	(65)
Non HRA Rent Rebates	70	41	13	28	57
Discretionary Social Fund	106	50	1	49	99
Discretionary Housing Payments	279	107	109	(2)	(3)
Household Support Fund Expenditure	1,106	1,106	1,106	0	0
Total Expenditure	46,725	19,872	19,587	285	505
Income					
Fees & Charges	-351	-220	-237	17	33
Burdens Grant	-58	-51	-58	7	14
Dedicated schools Grant	-150	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Liability Order	-670	-530	-574	44	87
Recovery of Legal Costs	-10	-5	0	(5)	(10)
Business Rates Admin Grant	-157	0	0	0	1
Schools SLAs	-319	-309	-308	(1)	(1)
LCR Reimbursement	-1,902	0	0	0	0
HB Overpayment Debt Recovery	-300	-122	-57	(65)	(129)
Rent Allowances	-30,700	-12,215	-11,959	(256)	(512)
Non HRA Rent Rebate	-70	-49	-34	(15)	(31)
Discretionary Housing Payment Grant	-279	-94	-93	(1)	(2)
Housing Benefits Admin Grant	-453	-227	-227	0	0
Housing Benefits Award Accuracy	0	0	-22	22	22
Universal Credits	-5	-3	0	(3)	(5)
Household Support Fund Grant	-1,106	-2	-2	0	(1)
VEP Grant	0	0	0	0	3
CCG McMillan Reimbursement	-89	-22	-22	0	0
Reimbursements & Grant Income	-187	-147	-277	130	260
Transfer from Reserves	-27	-13	-13	0	0
Total Income	-36,833	-14,009	-13,883	(126)	(271)
Net Operational Expenditure	9,892	5,863	5,704	159	234
Recharges					
Premises Support	493	247	247	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	2,092	1,046	1,046	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-6,814	-3,407	-3,407	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-4,229	-2,114	-2,114	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	5,663	3,749	3,590	159	234

Comments on the above figures

Net spend for the Finance Department is forecast to be £0.234m below budget at financial year-end. Reporting at the end of July 25 had projected net expenditure above budget of £0.331m.

The differential between periods is largely due to an increase of monthly rent allowances income. M4 net effect was a shortfall on income target of £1.205m, but the shortfall is now anticipated to be lower at £0.512m. The rental allowance income subsidy had been reducing year on year as Housing Benefit claimants are being transferred onto Universal Credit.

Employee costs are forecasted to underspend £0.226m largely due to unable to recruit to key vacancies, budgeting for posts which have been deleted and managing other vacant positions throughout the year.

Concessionary Travel spend is forecast to be £0.065m under budget at the end of the financial year-end, this is based on an estimate of passenger numbers provided by concessionary travel partners.

Discretionary Social Fund has not been utilised over the recent years due to the increased funding option of Household Support Fund being used, the department is forecasting an underspend of £0.099m.

Supplies and Services forecast overspend of £0.108m is due to audit fees and bank charges, based on previous years expenditure and the increasing costs coming through Stripe / Worldpay and Merchant Acquirer price increases for card fee rates, more customers choosing card payment as their preferred payment.




The business rates team are still engaging with Inform CPI Ltd (Analyse Local) who specialise in identifying new business rate premises that have not been included within the rating list. This will help increase income on the Collection Fund through additional business rate billing.

There has been a reduction of insurance premiums through negotiating better terms/changing providers. Public liability claimant damages have significantly reduced from previous years however motor liability claims have increased and along with movement in insurance provision results in an underspend position of £0.234m. This variance can will fluctuate due the unpredictable nature on public liability claims. July had been showing a £0.180m underspend.

Reimbursement & grant income has increased due to receiving unbudgeted income from Natwest purchase card rebates and administration income relating to Household Support Fund resulting in a favourable outturn position of £0.260m

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Finance

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Internal Audit	300	Restructure in light of potential retirements over the next two years within the Internal Audit Team.	50	0		It appears unlikely that the proposed £50k budget saving will be fully realised this year, if at all
Council Tax	84	Increase the charges applied when a court summons is issued by 30% (£23), to achieve full cost recovery over the three year period.	40	0		Increase in costs to be applied from 2026/27, dependent on Government not fixing maximum summons charges.
Debt Management		Debt Management – undertake a review of debt management policies and procedures, in order to implement a more robust approach to debt management and debt recovery, considering options such as seeking payment in advance wherever possible, to improve cashflow and reduce the risk of non-recovery.	0	100		Is currently being reviewed by the Transformation team.
Total Finance Department			90	100		

Chief Executive's Delivery Unit

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,569	1,757	1,737	20	41
Employees Training	99	59	43	16	33
Apprenticeship Levy	330	123	149	(26)	(52)
Supplies & Services	412	246	257	(11)	(23)
Agency	3	3	3	0	0
Total Expenditure	4,413	2,188	2,189	-1	-1
Income					
Fees & Charges	-241	-168	-179	11	20
Schools SLA Income	-580	-536	-495	(41)	(81)
Total Income	-821	-704	-674	(30)	(61)
Net Operational Expenditure	3,592	1,484	1,515	(31)	(62)
Recharges					
Premises Support	157	79	79	0	0
Transport Support	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support	1,008	504	504	0	0
Asset Rental Support	53	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-3,653	-1,826	-1,826	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,435	-1,243	-1,243	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	1,157	241	272	(31)	(62)

Comments on the above figures

The Chief Executive Delivery Unit Department (CXDU) is projecting an outturn position above the approved budget profile by £0.062m.

Forecasting an underspend against budget of £0.041m on salary costs due to unfilled vacant positions. However, July position was £0.091m, this has significantly reduced due to 2 apprenticeships becoming Policy Officers.

Apprenticeship Levy will maintain overspend as consistently incurring monthly costs of £0.031m against a £0.330m budget. Currently projecting a £0.052m against budget.

The School SLA Income has been reducing as some schools have become academies and are not buying back our services.

Capital Programme 2025/26

	2025/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Sept 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
Transformation Programme	1,538.0	2,465.7	1,212.2	1,631.8	1,920.1	2,169.7	296.0	
Accelerated Growth	0.0	650.7	328.2	445.5	553.0	650.7	0.0	
Chief Executives Directorate Total	1,538.0	3,116.4	1,540.4	2,077.3	2,473.2	2,820.4	296.0	0.0

ICT Department

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	5,899	2,894	2,803	91	183
Supplies & Services	1,063	682	608	74	147
Capital Finance	496	159	150	9	17
Computer Repairs & Software	1,724	1,962	1,974	(12)	(25)
Communication Costs	138	53	86	(33)	(66)
Premises	139	74	71	3	5
Transport	3	1	1	0	1
Other	4	1	4	(3)	(5)
Total Expenditure	9,466	5,826	5,697	129	257
Income					
Fees & Charges	-849	-239	-257	18	37
Schools SLA Income	-659	-512	-364	(148)	(295)
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	-3	3	3
Total Income	-1,508	-751	-624	(127)	(255)
Net Operational Expenditure	7,958	5,075	5,073	2	2
Recharges					
Premises Support	373	187	187	0	0
Transport	22	11	11	0	0
Central Support	1,391	696	696	0	0
Asset Rental Support	1,494	0	0	0	2
HBC Support Costs Income	-10,969	-5,484	-5,484	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-7,689	-4,590	-4,590	0	2
Net Departmental Expenditure	269	485	483	2	4

Comments on the above figures

It is currently forecast net spend for the department will be £0.004m below the approved budget at the end of the financial year. This position has changed from the end of July 25 which was £0.119m below budget, largely due to the under recovery of School SLA income.

The main pressures faced by the ICT Department is now in relation to the IT infrastructure, with the move to Microsoft 365, staff have been able to utilise much more efficient hardware. However, the software utilised by the new hardware is at a premium and will be a continuous pressure and the Council will need to react to as prices fluctuate.

Budgets have been reallocated to align where expenditure has occurred.

Employees are forecasting to underspend by £0.183m due to the difficulty in recruiting skilled staff.

Supplies & Services was forecasted to overspend £0.202m in M4 but is now showing an underspend of £0.147m due to the Dell Technologies rental charges now allocated to Capital Financing.

There has been a substantial increase in communication costs resulting in a projected £0.066m overspend for BT & Vodafone quarterly bundle charges. This has reduced from £0.087m in M4.

Schools SLA income was forecasting to be £0.098 below budget in M4. The School SLA recharges have since been posted and the actual position is £0.295m below the budgeted income target. The reduction is due to more schools becoming academies and are declining in buying back departmental services.

Capital Programme 2025/26

	205/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Spend to 30 Sept 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
IT Rolling Programme	805.6	1,305.6	828.9	937.5	1,100.5	1,305.6	0.0	1,200.0
Total IT Rolling Programme	805.6	1,305.6	828.9	937.5	1,100.5	1,305.6	0.0	1,200.0

Legal and Democratic Services Department

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	2,314	1,094	855	239	477
Agency Related Expenditure	63	63	165	(102)	(203)
Supplies & Services	181	112	95	17	35
Civic Catering & Functions	21	3	1	2	5
Legal Expenses	418	98	170	(72)	(146)
Transport Related Expenditure	8	3	3	0	0
Other Expenditure	1	1	1	0	(1)
Total Expenditure	3,006	1,374	1,290	84	167
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-75	-27	-10	(17)	(34)
School SLA's	-100	-88	-77	(11)	(23)
Licence Income	-370	-127	-112	(15)	(30)
Total Income	-545	-242	-199	(43)	(87)
Net Operational Expenditure	2,461	1,132	1,091	41	80
Recharges					
Premises Support	62	31	31	0	0
Transport Recharges	0	0	0	0	0
Central Support Recharges	275	138	138	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Support Recharge Income	-2,475	-1,237	-1,237	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,138	-1,068	-1,068	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	323	64	23	41	80

Comments on the above figures

As at the end of July 2025 the department was reporting a net overspend against budget of £0.019m. This has significantly reduced, the revised position is now £0.080m below budget.


Employee costs will now be less than the revised budget due to the difficulties in recruiting to the vacant positions and retaining current staff as well as savings in Democratic Services due to a non-election year saving on election payments.

As a result of the number of vacancies that exist within the department and outstanding workload, agency staff are required to maintain the service. The main area of concern for the department is the volume of agency costs resulting from hard to fill vacant posts. These costs are currently expected to total £0.203m at the end of the financial year however this could increase to meet caseload demands.

Legal expenses are forecast to be over the approved budget by £0.146m, largely as a result of the limited number of staff available to clear an increasing caseload. As recruitment is undertaken these costs are expected to slowly reduce. The impact of transformation and recovery work in Children Services, as well as alternatives to agency staff such as attractive market supplements should help drive down the overspend in the department.

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Legal and Democratic Services

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Members		Deputy Mayor – cease provision of the Deputy Mayor's allowance, whilst retaining a nominated Deputy Mayor.	0	6		Achieved.
Total Legal and Democratic Services			0	6		

COMMUNITY & GREENSPACE

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2025

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	15,451	7,788	7,486	302	603
Agency - Covering vacancies	20	12	12	0	0
Agency - In addition to establishment	16	16	199	(183)	(274)
Premises	3,304	1,562	1,609	(47)	(93)
Supplies & Services	3,659	1,514	1,639	(125)	(249)
Transport	117	66	83	(17)	(33)
Extended Producer Responsibility	500	0	0	0	0
Other Agency Costs	454	209	228	(19)	(39)
Other Expenditure	187	13	13	0	0
Waste Disposal Contracts	7,121	1,125	1,133	(8)	(16)
Transfers to Reserves	1,091	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	31,920	12,305	12,402	(97)	(101)
Income					
Sales Income	-1,359	-687	-691	4	8
Fees & Charges Income	-6,300	-3,622	-3,709	87	174
Rental Income	-1,118	-465	-428	(37)	(73)
Government Grant Income	-5,210	-1,319	-1,319	0	0
Reimbursement & Other Grant Income	-871	-371	-371	0	0
SLA Income	-23	0	0	0	0
Internal Fees Income	-216	-39	-129	90	179
Capital Salaries	-236	-15	0	(15)	(31)
Transfers From Reserves	-619	-4	-4	0	0
Total Income	-15,952	-6,522	-6,651	129	257
Net Operational Expenditure	15,968	5,783	5,751	32	156
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,657	829	829	0	0
Transport Support	2,433	1,270	1,312	(42)	(84)
Central Support	4,297	2,148	2,148	0	0
Asset Rental Support	199	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-843	-422	-422	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,743	3,825	3,867	(42)	(84)
Net Departmental Expenditure	23,711	9,608	9,618	(10)	72

Comments on the above figures

Net spend against the Community and Greenspaces department has seen an improvement to the net outturn position since the previous report at 31st July 2025. The forecasted outturn is now expected to fall £0.72m under the approved budget profile (in comparison to £0.123m overspend previously forecasted).

Employee spend continues to be an area providing underspend for the department into the new financial year, forecast spend being £0.603m under the approved budget profile. There continue to be vacancies held for restructures taking place contributing to the underspend. However, as a result of this, in order to facilitate the very visible services provided to the residents of Halton, both Agency and Supplies & Services expenditure is forecasted to be (£0.274m and £0.249 respectively) above the approved 2025/26 budget.

Estimated spend on premises costs is forecast to be £0.093m over budget in 2025/26. The Stadium utility costs are notably higher than the available budget and will continue to be a budget pressure this year. There is more focus on internal services that can be provided (See £0.179m forecast

overachieved Internal Fees Income), and should this continue it can be utilised to offset the premises costs in subsequent financial years.


Supplies and Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.249m which is a budget pressure throughout the Department, and is primarily caused by inflationary cost increases of key goods and services over recent years. There is a risk if the Council were to contain these costs within the budget profile there would be a reduction in the service provided.



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

Income for the Community and Greenspaces Department is on track to be higher than the approved budget by £0.257m. The aforementioned internal fee focus by the Stadium is contributing to this as well as increasing usage of internal room hire across the buildings within the Department. The benefit of this income staying within the council rather than going to external suppliers is offset by some other income targets being unachievable. The main contributor to the overachievement however is with Halton Leisure Centre, income is remaining consistently high and forecasts have been adjusted as such to reflect this. In comparison to last financial year, the outturn income figure is expected to rise by approximately 99%.

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

APPROVED BUDGET SAVINGS COMMUNITY AND GREENSPACES DEPARTMENT

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Stadium & Catering Services	12	Cease to deliver the school meals service, which has made significant losses of over	12	0		School meals service has ceased and is reflected in the 25/26 budget.

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
– School Meals		£200,000 for a number of years and is forecast to make a similar loss by year-end. Work would be undertaken with schools over the next two years to support them to secure an alternative means of delivery, whether in-house or via an external provider.				
Green Waste		Green Waste – increase green waste charges from £43 to £50 per annum, to bring Halton onto a comparable basis with charges levied by neighbouring councils.	0	100		Green waste charges have been increased to £50.
Area Forums		Area Forums – cease the funding for Area Forums.	0	170		Area forum budgets have been removed in 25-26
Total Community & Greenspace Dept			12	270		

Capital

Scheme Detail	205/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Actual Spend to 30 Sept 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Stadium Minor Works	22.1	22.1	24.6	24.6	24.6	24.6	-2.5	30.0
Halton Leisure Centre	99.7	99.7	89.3	86.8	88.8	90.8	8.9	0.0
Children's Playground Equipment	67.8	67.8	50.5	60.5	60.5	65.0	2.8	65.0
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Upton Improvements	13.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	0.0
Crow Wood Park Play Area	12.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	0.0
Open Spaces Schemes	600.0	770.0	564.5	600.0	650.0	770.0	0.0	600.0
Runcorn Town Park	450.6	450.6	0.0	0.0	60.0	125.0	325.6	280.0
Spike Island / Wigg Island	1,841.6	250.0	152.5	170.0	180.0	250.0	0.0	1,591.6
Pickerings Pasture Cafe	469.2	450.0	110.3	175.0	300.0	450.0	0.0	19.2
Cemetery Infrastructure work	469.1	469.1	0.0	89.0	207.0	410.0	59.1	683.0
Stadium Public Address System	810.0	346.0	34.9	176.0	286.0	346.0	0.0	379.0
Litter Bins	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0
Replacement Cremator	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Stadium Steelwork Repairs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	600.0
Brindley Lighting	0.0	200.0	0.0	100.0	150.0	200.0	0.0	0.0
Grangeway Court Refurbishment	0.0	52.0	8.0	10.0	16.0	52.0	0.0	948.0
CCTV Infrastructure Works	0.0	105.0	1.2	5.0	50.0	105.0	0.0	395.0
Total Community & Greenspaces	5,215.2	3,327.3	1,035.8	1,496.9	2,072.9	2,933.4	393.9	5,630.8

There were some delays to capital projects starting within the last financial year due to staffing issues. These are likely to be completed within the 2025/26 capital scheme. In regards to the cemetery infrastructure work there is potential to receive grant/external funding rather than rely solely on borrowing. The *replacement cremator* line is in relation to a cremator installed last year, however the contractors are requiring some additional works required to get it fully commissioned and proper emissions testing to be carried out. Management are currently reviewing options, where possible this will be funded from underspend from other schemes.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Operational Budget at 30 Sept 25

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	3,864	2,456	2,331	125	251
Agency - covering vacancies	0	0	172	(172)	(259)
Repairs & Maintenance	1,687	877	877	0	0
Premises	174	136	137	(1)	(1)
Energy & Water Costs	1,043	393	346	47	93
NNDR	647	647	635	12	12
Rents	157	80	79	1	1
Economic Regeneration Activities	43	8	8	0	0
Security	508	82	84	(2)	(4)
Supplies & Services	516	261	261	0	0
Supplies & Services - Grant	772	272	272	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	72	29	29	0	0
Total Expenditure	9,483	5,241	5,231	10	93
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-407	-203	-239	36	72
Rent - Commercial Properties	-906	-352	-351	(1)	(1)
Rent - Investment Properties	-38	-19	-18	(1)	(1)
Government Grant	-854	-705	-705	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-149	-149	-149	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-55	-48	-48	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-260	-47	-47	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-574	-522	-522	0	0
Total Income	-3,243	-2,045	-2,079	34	70
Net Operational Expenditure	6,240	3,196	3,152	44	163
Recharges					
Premises Support	2,738	1,369	1,369	0	0
Transport	26	13	13	0	0
Central Support	2,878	1,439	1,439	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-9,342	-4,671	-4,671	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-3,696	-1,850	-1,850	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,544	1,346	1,302	44	163

Comments on the above figures

Finance maintains regular communication with the department to monitor and analyse expenditure, helping to identify potential savings that can support both current and future priorities. In today's climate of tight budgets, achieving these efficiencies is more important than ever.

The latest report indicates that the department is projected to be under budget by £0.163 million at year-end. This improved forecast is largely due to increased income from fees and charges, following the reconciliation of service charge invoices, as well as a review of repairs and maintenance spending throughout the year.

Supporting Information

Maximising grant funding remains a key priority, supported by diligent account monitoring and careful planning. Specific projects have been identified, with staff time allocated to ensure delivery aligns with funding objectives. Compliance with grant conditions is maintained at every stage, and this focused approach will continue throughout the year.

Maintaining a fully staffed team is essential to fulfilling statutory and contractual obligations and driving forward the borough's regeneration agenda. Despite the introduction of a market supplement, recruitment for key roles, particularly surveyors, recruitment continues to be challenging due to a limited pool of qualified candidates. On a positive note, the successful appointment of Project Managers marks a significant step forward and is expected to reduce reliance on agency staff, helping to manage costs more effectively. Agency staffing costs are currently projected at £0.259 million for this financial year. These roles are critical to the delivery of regeneration activity. Without them, there is a risk of project delays, which could impact future revenue from business rates and council tax. Where possible, staffing costs are recovered through capital budgets and external funding streams.

The financial impact of vacant properties across the borough continues to present a significant budgetary challenge. In addition to the loss of rental income while these properties remain unoccupied, further costs are incurred for utilities, repairs, and ongoing maintenance. As of the end of July, total costs stood at £0.136 million, rising to £0.154 million over the past two months. To help reduce these expenses, it is essential to accelerate leasing activity or explore interim uses, such as short-term rentals or community-based initiatives, that could generate income and offset costs. However, several properties are currently in poor condition and will require refurbishment before they can be considered for letting.

Despite a notable rise in energy costs over recent years, the department is currently forecasting a year-end underspend of £0.093 million. However, this projection may be reduced if energy usage increases, particularly as more staff return to the office or if demand rises due to seasonal temperature fluctuations.

The Repairs and Maintenance programme is subject to ongoing review to ensure expenditure remains within the allocated budget. It is projected that costs will be contained within budget for the remainder of the financial year. Regular monitoring will continue to ensure early identification of any emerging pressures, allowing for timely intervention and mitigation where possible.

Approved 2025/26 Savings

Please see Appendix A for details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in March 25.

Capital Budget at 30 Sept 25

	205/26 Original Allocation	2025/26 Revised Allocation	Cumulative Actual Spend to 30 Sept 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 30 Nov 2025	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 Jan 2026	Cumulative Forecast Spend to 31 March 2026	Allocation remaining	2026/27 Forecast Allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Equality Act Improvement Works	303.5	303.5	0.0	150.0	236.0	303.5	0.0	300.0
Foundary Lane Residential Area	3,520.9	3,520.9	878.0	1,020.9	1,200.0	3,520.9	0.0	0.0
Property Improvements	231.1	231.1	111.2	133.2	153.6	231.1	0.0	200.0
Town Deal	21,823.1	18,949.5	4,986.3	8,663.1	11,300.7	13,210.2	5,739.3	2,873.6
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	101.2	101.2	0.0	20.0	55.0	102.2	-1.0	0.0
Runcorn Waterfront Residential Development	82.0	82.0	4.2	33.3	56.4	82.0	0.0	0.0
Changing Places	17.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.0	0.0	0.0
Kingsway Centre Demolition	708.0	708.0	293.0	438.0	488.0	538.0	170.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury Project Violet	2,200.0	2,200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,200.0	0.0	0.0
Astmoor Masterplan	81.6	81.6	0.0	0.0	30.0	81.6	0.0	0.0
Sci-tech Daresbury - CPO	3,000.0	3,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,000.0	0.0	0.0
Warm Homes Plan	0.0	587.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	587.6	0.0	0.0
Total Economy, Enterprise & Property	32,068.4	29,782.4	6,272.7	10,458.5	13,519.7	23,874.1	5,908.3	3,373.6

Comments on above figures

Foundry Lane

The development at Foundry Lane continues to progress at pace, with several key milestones achieved over the past two months. On-site operations remain well-coordinated and steady, keeping firmly on track to deliver this exciting new housing scheme.

All remaining homes scheduled for completion by 26 November.

To maintain momentum, outline planning permission has now been submitted for Phase 2, ensuring the next stage of development can move forward without delay.

Sci-Tech Daresbury Project Violet

The LCR CA have approved the full business case for the lab building and the grant funding agreement is currently being drafted. The second building which was initially expected to be office space is currently being reviewed as a potential second lab construction, with an outline business case being prepared for the CA. The current programme anticipates tendering the project and contract award in late 2025 and construction commencing in July 2026.

Property Improvements

Various works undertaken as and when required, works ongoing, the budget will be spent at year end

Changing Places

Works complete, all retention monies to be paid.

Town Deal

All Town Deal funded projects are progressing at different stages of work.

The Brindley extension started on site August 2024. Estimated date for completion is April 2026. RIBA stage 4 of the Brindley Green has started following submission of the planning application.

The youth centre -part of the Creative and Digital Skill centre - started September 2024, with the new build now well advanced with interior work now taking place. The roof of the wintergarden is now in place. Completion is expected March 2026.

The Health Hub started work on site April 2025, after the library vacated to temporary location. The construction work is expected to be completed November 2025 followed by commissioning by the NHS.

The Runcorn Street art was delivered in May 2025. A celebration event was held 26 July. This project is completed

The construction of the Temple Hall started March 2025, with foundation complete. All steelwork is up, and block walls erected, with outer skin of brick work progressing well. Practical completion is expected by the end of 2025.

The construction of two canal trip boats has been ordered at a boatyard in Liverpool, with one boat having been launched in Runcorn on the canal 26 July.

The over 55s apartment block Mercia House is under construction at High Street has now all doors and windows in, and external brickwork is well advanced. Legacie are preparing for the external landscaping.

HBC has entered into a pre-construction service agreement with F Parkinsons through a design and build route for the Enterprise Facility.

Design work progresses on the remaining projects.

Kingsway Leisure Centre Demolition

The demolition works are now complete.

UKSPF

New reduced allocation for 25/26 which is for town centre improvements.

Sci-tech Daresbury Project – CPO

The JV continues to develop the required documentation to make the CPO in order to secure land for the delivery of the Sci-Tech Daresbury masterplan. It is anticipated that the CPO process will run during 2026 with funds only required at the conclusion of that project or shortly after. The majority of spend is potentially in 26-27 at the earliest.

ECONOMY, ENTERPRISE AND PROPERTY DEPARTMENT




APPENDIX A

Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value		Current Progress	Comments
			25/26 Agreed Council 01 February 2023 £'000	25/26 Agreed Council 05 March 2025 £'000		
Asset Management		Accelerate the lease or sale of surplus land, non-operational buildings, surplus space within building, etc. to either generate lease rentals or capital receipts to help fund capital schemes and thereby reduce future capital financing costs.	0	100	U	It is not expected this saving will materialise in the current year.





5.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green 	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber 	Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved</i>
Red 	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

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