MEETING OF THE NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Date:	Friday, 9 October 2026	
Invitees		
Name	**Role**	**Organisation**
Mandated Board Members		
Chris Hickey	Chair	Mercury Hampton
David Baines MP	Member of Parliament, St Helens North	Member of Parliament, St Helens North
Natalie Carroll (maternity cover for Amie Parsonage)	Portfolio and Partnerships Officer	Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner
Ian Lewis	Investment Manager	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Mark Palethorpe	Chief Executive	St Helens Borough Council
Councillor George Woodward	Leader of the Council	St Helens Borough Council
Jon Julian Smith	Chief Inspector, St Helens	Merseyside Police
Councillor Jack Benyon	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Property and Planning	St Helens Borough Council
Community & Co-Opted Board Members		
Alex Myhill	Community Representative	Willow & Ram
Joanne Edge	Community Representative	Newton Sports Club
Debbie Taylor	Business Representative	Es Paradis Salon & Domestic Abuse WA12 CIC
Paul Romanko	Business Representative	United Utilities Water Ltd
Fiona Ruddy	Third Sector Representative	Newton Community Centre
John Unsworth	Cultural, Arts, and Heritage including Sports Groups Representative	Sea Cadet Corps
Rev Chris Stafford	Faith Representative	Team Rector at St Peter's, Emmanuel Wargrave, and St John's
Claire Glover	Health and Wellbeing Representative	Operations Manager at St Helens Wellbeing Service (CHCP)

Simon Pierce	Education and Opportunity Representative	Chief Executive at St Helens College
Local Authority Representatives		
Mary Jefferson	Head of Regeneration & Growth	St Helens Borough Council
Matthew Valentine	Programme Lead	St Helens Borough Council
Glenn Taggart	Programme Manager	St Helens Borough Council
Donna Wilby	Finance Business Partner - Regeneration	St Helens Borough Council
Rod Thomson	Interim Director Public Health	St Helens Borough Council
Apologies Received		
Councillor Jack Benyon	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Property and Planning	St Helens Borough Council
Councillor George Woodward	Leader of the Council	St Helens Borough Council

ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Friday, 9 October 2026

AGENDA

Item	Title	Lead
1.	Welcome and Introductions	CH
2.	Declarations of Interest	CH
3.	Minutes of the previous Neighbourhood Board meeting held on 17 July 2026	CH
4.	Draft Monitoring Return	MV
5.	Changes in Board Membership	MV
6.	Subgroup and Project Updates	MV
7.	Building Improvement Programme	MV
8.	Finance Update and Management Fee	MV
9.	Any Other Business	All

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ITEM 1

ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Welcome and Introductions

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose is to welcome Board members and make introductions.

2 Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) Note the apologies received.

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ITEM 2

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Declarations Of Interest

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose is for Board Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interests.

2 Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) Note the declarations of interest.

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ITEM 3

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD HELD ON 17 JULY 2026

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose is to give an overview of the previous Board meeting (held 17 July 2026), as agreed by the Board.

2 Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) Note the previous minutes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Minutes of Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board (17 July 2026)

Appendix 1 - Minutes of Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board (17 July 2026)

Minutes of Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board

Friday 17 July 2026

Invitees			
Name	**Initials**	**Role**	**Organisation**
Mandated Board Members			
Chris Hickey	CH	Chair	Mercury Hampton
David Baines MP	DB	Member of Parliament, St Helens North	Member of Parliament, St Helens North
Natalie Carroll (maternity cover for Amie Parsonage)	NC	Portfolio and Partnerships Officer	Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner
Ian Lewis	IL	Investment Manager	Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Community & Co-Opted Board Members			
Alex Myhill	AM	Community Representative	Willow & Ram
Joanne Edge	JE	Community Representative	Newton Sports Club
Debbie Taylor	DT	Business Representative	Es Paradis Salon & Domestic Abuse WA12 CIC
Fiona Ruddy	FR	Third Sector Representative	Newton Community Centre
John Unsworth	JU	Cultural, Arts, and Heritage including Sports Groups Representative	Sea Cadet Corps
Reverend Chris Stafford	CS	Faith Representative	Team Rector at St Peter's, Emmanuel Wargrave, and St John's
Catherine Twist	CT	Education and Opportunity Representative	Independent Member for Admissions and Exclusion appeal in St Helens
Claire Glover	CG	Health and Wellbeing Representative	Operations Manager at St Helens Wellbeing Service (CHCP)
Paul Romanko	PR	Business Representative	United Utilities Water Ltd
Local Authority Representatives			
Matthew Valentine	MV	Programme Lead	St Helens Borough Council
Rachel Bebby	RB	Project Officer	St Helens Borough Council

Glenn Taggart	GT	Project Manager	St Helens Borough Council
Mary Jefferson	MJ	Head of Regeneration & Growth	St Helens Borough Council
Apologies Received			
Jon Julian Smith	JJS	Chief Inspector, St Helens	Merseyside Police
Mark Palethorpe	MP	Chief Executive	St Helens Borough Council
Councillor George Woodward	GW	Leader of the Council	St Helens Borough Council

Item	Title	Lead
1.	Welcome and Introductions	CH
2.	Declarations of Interest	CH
3.	Minutes of the previous Neighbourhood Board meeting held on 24 April 2026	CH
4.	Change in Board Membership	MV
5.	Community Pot Outcomes	MV
6.	Building Improvement Programme	MV
7.	Early Delivery Projects Update	MV
8.	Staffing Update	MV
9.	Any Other Business	All

1) Welcome and Introductions

Chris Hickey (CH) welcomed the Neighbourhood Board to the meeting
CH acknowledged apologies received from:

- Mark Palethorpe, Jon Julian Smith and George Woodward.

2. Declarations of Interest

CH informed members that no declarations had been received ahead of the meeting and invited Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board Members to present any new declarations relevant to the agenda items. Declarations of interest were received from Joanne Edge, Debbie Taylor, Fiona Ruddy, John Unsworth, Reverend Chris Stafford and Paul Romanko for Agenda Item 5; whilst declarations of interest were received from Debbie Taylor for Agenda Item 6. All declarations were noted by the Chair for reference at the appropriate time.

3. Minutes of the previous Neighbourhood Board meeting held on 24 April 2026

CH reminded the Board that minutes from the previous Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board meeting on 24 April 2026 have been agreed and are live on the St Helens Borough Council (SHBC) website. An overview of the key discussions and endorsements were provided, including:

- Catherine Twist (CT), and Claire Glover (CG) being appointed to the Board and attending their first meeting following the open application process for two additional Neighbourhood Board members;
- Overview of communications received from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), following submission of the Regeneration Plan, release of monitoring guidance and the request for approval of the submission of the initial monitoring return for the Newton-le-Willows Pride in Place programme;
- Update on the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board Branding project, including endorsement of the draft Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board logo;
- Noting progress on the delivery of 'early delivery projects' for Year 1 of the programme, covering 'St John's Playground', 'Earlestown Town Hall Audio, Visual and Lighting' installation, and 'Arts on Prescription'; and
- Outline of the proposed approach to the 'Community Pot' grant scheme, and to request endorsement for a pilot scheme developed for Year 1 of the programme.

4. Change in Board Membership

CH noted the change in Board membership due to local elections; Anthony Burns and Kate Groucutt are no longer on the board, stating that their input had been vital and wishing them the best for the future.

MV update the board on the Council's local elections in May 2026, the outcome of which saw Reform UK become the new administrative party for SHBC. On 21 May 2026, the new council was sworn in, with Cllr George Woodward as the leader, thus replacing Anthony Burns on this Board, with no direct replacement for Kate Groucutt. Both Cllr George Woodward and Mark Palethorpe could not attend today's board as they are both at a Liverpool City Region meeting.

5. Community Pot Outcomes

CH requested that members of the Board with interests in the item leave the room, to which all conflicted Board Members, as listed in Section 2 complied.

MV outlined the process undertaken following the previous Neighbourhood Board meeting, in which the Community Pot approach was endorsed. Accordingly, a review panel was formed with CH, JJS, and MV as members to assess all applications. The panel liaised to agree documentation, inclusive of application forms, guidance and supporting materials, prior to the launch of the grant application window on 1 June 2026. Applications were accepted for a period of five weeks, until closure of the window on 5 July 2026. A dedicated email account, NleWPrideInPlace@sthelens.gov.uk, was created to receive the applications and allow for correspondence with community groups who held an interest in the grant fund.

MV further added that a marketing campaign was undertaken to ensure local community organisations were aware of the opportunity, which included a press release on 1 June 2026 to announce the commencement of the application window.

In tandem with this, other channels of promotion began, including targeted flyer distribution, inclusion within a residents' newsletter and Council staff newsletter, alongside the Halton & St Helens VCA e-bulletin.

To further enhance the local publicity, the Project Team hosted a drop-in event at Newton-le-Willows Library, with 17 groups attending the session. In addition, the Project Officer attended and presented at the Halton & St Helens VCA Forum. Finally, a dedicated Community Pot video was released on social media to provide information about the grant fund and signpost interested organisations.

MV summarised that due to the comprehensive engagement approach, 24 applications were received, with total bids being requested for just under £75,000 (circa £43,000 capital, £31,000 revenue). As the Community Pot has a £25,000 allocation in Year 1, this meant that the available funding was oversubscribed, though MV noted the level of funding applications received would fully expend the Year 2 allocation of £75,000.

MV added that the Community Pot review panel created an assessment criteria, which consisted of outputs and community benefits, sustainability, deliverability and value for money. Each panel member then carried out individual, independent assessments to ensure objectivity, prior to a moderation. This process ensured that the assessment was undertaken in line with good practice from public sector procurement rules, to ensure a fair and transparent process

MV detailed that circa £24,400 was allocated, with the remaining £600 to be rolled over into Year 2 of the Community Pot, this is due to the remaining balance not fulfilling any additional eligible applications. Confidentiality has been maintained so only the panel members and present board members know who's been awarded monies.

MV stated that should Board endorse the Community Pot outcomes, all applicants will be notified prior to the end of July. MV further added that further details of the awards and scoring process are available in Appendix 1, which redacted from publication under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act Section 3.

CH noted the difficulty in assessing the applications and how much he appreciated the time, effort, and thought put into the proposals.

Neighbourhood Board members commented on the process of the Community Pot, through development, engagement and assessment and supported that the process was ran in a fair and equitable manner to ensure that all applications were assessed on an even footing. Board members further added that the level of applications received was positive and that with further engagement ahead of a Year 2 allocation, an increase in applications should be expected.

In addition, Board members queried what monitoring controls would be in place to ensure that distributed funds were spent as anticipated. MV advised that a proportionate assurance process would be in place, whereby successful bidders would be required to evidence spend and activity, without being too onerous for the value of the award.

DECISION: Neighbourhood Board members endorsed the successful applications.

Neighbourhood Board members who had declared an interest were invited back into the room.

6. Building Improvement Programme

CH introduced the Agenda Item 6 and asked MV to provide a detailed overview.

MV outlined that following the Neighbourhood Board's endorsement of the Building Improvement Programme at its meeting of 16 January 2026 and endorsement of Investment Theme subgroups on 6 March 2026, the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage subgroup was created with PR, IL, and JU as members.

MV further detailed that meetings were held on 17 June 2026 and 2 July 2026 to create a proposed process and define key programme criteria. MV noted that eligibility criteria were created which propose that:

- The applicant property must be located within the Earlestown conservation area;
- Applications must be submitted by the property owner or the leaseholder with a minimum of five years remaining on the lease and leaseholders can apply in partnership with the property holder;
- Planning permission and relevant consent (where required) should be granted prior to application;
- Only full and complete applications will be assessed.

MV explained that the proposed eligibility criteria have been informed by best practice from other similar programmes, to ensure that grant allocations are made on an appropriate and safeguarded basis.

Eligible works will include repair works to buildings, reinstatement and restoration of architectural features, professional fees, preliminaries and contingencies. The subgroup are proposing a draft assessment framework and scoring matrix, which will ensure that appropriate buildings are funded and fully aligned to the Neighbourhood Board's priorities.

MV added that the subgroup have identified primary and secondary priorities for assessment, whereby a weighting multiplier will be utilised to ensure applications are appropriately scored. The primary priorities, which are proposed to receive a 3x multiplier, are:

- Building condition;
- Townscape impact; and
- Support for longstanding and independent businesses.

Secondary priorities, which are proposed to receive a 2x multiplier, are:

- Heritage significance;

- Architectural merit;
- Occupancy; and
- Business type.

MV explained that whilst the priorities have been identified, the exact assessment criteria for each priority are yet to be developed and will be brought back to Board in October 2026. In addition to the priority criterion, any application located within the priority area of Stanley Street, Oxford Street, Bridge Street and Market Street (between Stanley Street and Bridge Street) will be given a 1.2x multiplier, which will be applied on the overall assessment score. A Neighbourhood Board member enquired as to how the programme will be resourced, MV replied that the programme will be supported by the Heritage Project Officer and MV, as agreed in the 16 January 2026 endorsements, with associated Council sections such as Planning briefed on the programme to ensure applicants are informed appropriately.

MV further detailed that engagement with local business and building owners is proposed to take place with a two-phase approach. Phase 1 is proposed to begin in Summer 2026, with the intention of providing high level detail and informing further programme development. Engagement throughout phase one will give potential applicants high level funding information, such as the proposed grant contribution rate of 85% in Year 1 and 75% in Years 2 and 3 of programme delivery, alongside the maximum grant allocation of £100,000 per project. Additionally, building and business owners will be informed of a high-level programme timeline and the aforementioned Board priorities.

MV continued that Phase 2 is proposed to be undertaken in January 2027, which will allow for full document packs to be developed and presented to the Neighbourhood Board in October 2026 and Council Cabinet in December 2026. This documentation pack will include, but not limited to, application information and guidance, grant funding agreements and design packs. Phase 2 engagement will be undertaken via an Expression of Interest process; whereby potential applicants can engage with the Project Team to gain a greater understanding of the programme and allow for tailored discussion around any potential application.

MV noted that further information for the assessment criteria and process flowchart can be found within the appendices for Agenda Item 6.

CH invited Neighbourhood Board members to make any comments or queries in relation to the provided update.

Neighbourhood Board members discussed the risks of the programme, particularly that safeguards should be in place to ensure unsuitable buildings are not funded if applications are brought forward. Members of the Regeneration, High Streets and

Heritage Subgroup responded by explaining that the assessment criteria had been stress tested to ensure that it was fit for purpose as the primary vehicle of ensuring suitable applications could be progressed through to funding.

In addition, Neighbourhood Board members noted the positive progress to date on the programme and recognised the positive and transformational potential that the programme can bring to the Earlestown conservation area.

DECISION: Neighbourhood Board endorsed the proposal for the Building Improvement Programme framework.

7. Early Delivery Projects Update

CH introduced this item on the progress made towards the 'early delivery projects' for Year 1 of the programme and invited MV to provide an update.

MV updated the Neighbourhood Board as follows:

St Johns Playground

Community consultation, which commenced in May 2026, has now concluded. Sessions were undertaken at numerous venues across the area at St Johns Playground, Hope Academy, Newton-le-Willows Library, Lyme Community Primary, Newton-le-Willows Health and Fitness Centre, and Newton-le-Willows Football Club.

The proposed playground theme, voted for by respondents of the survey, is canals and trains. Further information provided by the consultation includes types of play equipment desired and comments on what will make the playground more welcoming.

MV further added that alongside the community consultation, procurement activities have begun, with an expression of interest process resulting in five contractors submitting documentation. The next step will include the five contractors submitting to a competitive tender, which will be facilitated according to public sector procurement rules, ensuring compliance. Following this, design and a planning application will follow, pursuant to works being undertaken in Winter 2026/27

Neighbourhood Board members agreed that this is a key project and will show intent with works commencing over winter and were keen to ensure that there would be a social value weighting in the procurement process so local companies would feature in the running to deliver the works.

ACTION: Project Team to circulate full consultation outcomes to Neighbourhood Board members.

Earlestown Town Hall AV and Lighting

MV outlined that enabling works are now underway, which have been funded by the Council through the main works construction programme of Earlestown Town Hall. Simultaneously, the procurement process is ongoing which will identify the supplier to supply and install lighting and AV equipment following practical completion of the Earlestown Town Hall main works construction programme.

Neighbourhood Board members enquired as to whether a visit to the Town Hall could be organised, to which MV responded that the Project Team will look into this request.

ACTION: Project Team to review access request to Earlestown Town Hall

Arts on Prescription

MV updated the Neighbourhood Board that a progress meeting was held on 3 July 2026 with the Arts on Prescription delivery team. Initially, uptake was lower than anticipated and further engagement was undertaken. Consequently, four taster sessions and two open days at Newton Library have now been held, along with additional marketing and communications. At the time of preparing papers for the Neighbourhood Board, 18 expressions of interest had been received.

MV continued that of the 18 expressions of interest, 9 have identified as being suitable candidates for the programme. The attrition in this number is in part due to some expressions of interest requiring support above that which the project can offer; those expressions are signposted to an appropriate provider for their needs. The sessions began on the 29 June 2026 and will continue until 7 September 2026.

Neighbourhood Board Members added their support to the progress of the Arts on Prescription project. The Board felt that the implications of getting people onto the programme would greatly benefit the wider community.

Spring Clean

MV advised that the subgroup has proposed a potential date of 8 May 2027, with the intention to build a bigger programme around this. The proposal includes a community day based at a central location, with an option for an informal community engagement, alongside litter picking teams to tackle pre-determined routes. In addition, community groups and organisations could be engaged to participate in a wider effort with skips provided to tackle additional areas around Newton-le-Willows. Neighbourhood Board Members were keen to suggest that certain local ‘grot spots’ could be targeted to be cleaned up. There was a request that sequencing the community clean up with the Council’s ongoing maintenance would be advantageous.

8. Staffing Update

MV detailed that on 3 October 2025, the Regeneration Plan was endorsed by the Neighbourhood Board alongside the Council management fee for the programme, which was agreed at 6%

MV added that the 6% management fee included provision for a full-time Project Officer and Programme Lead of one day a week. Also included within the fee was services such as financial and legal, with the management fee agreed to be reviewed annually based on the programme requirements.

Thus, the management fee will be taken under review and brought back to the October 2026 Neighbourhood Board meeting for discussion. This approach ensures that adequate resourcing is provided for the programme requirements. Neighbourhood Board members noted the requirement to ensure that the programme is properly resourced as the delivery phase progresses and noted the value to date of delivery.

MV added that, as of 20 July 2026, RB will no longer be allocated to the Newton-le-Willows Pride in Place Programme. RB has taken up an opportunity as Programme Lead for the Town Centre East and Fingerpost Pride in Place Programme, an opportunity which is well deserved. In place, MV introduced GT would be joining the programme as an experienced Project Manager.

CH, MV and Neighbourhood Board members put their thanks on record to RB for the work to date in supporting the Board and associated activities.

9. Any Other Business

CH thanked Neighbourhood Board members for their contributions and invited any other business.

Neighbourhood Board members noted that the ongoing projects are progressing well and requested a standing item of a high-level visual project plan of current progress, including milestones. MV responded that this can be built into future Board papers.

ACTION: Project Plan timeline to be built into future Board papers

Neighbourhood Board members discussed the ongoing roadworks and diversions within Earlestown town centre. The Neighbourhood Board raised concerns about the impacts on Earlestown and requested an update from Council officers and whether any actions could be undertaken by the Board, or representations made from the Board to support local businesses. MV noted that the Neighbourhood Board is a distinct organisation from the Council and should Board members wish to make a representation they could choose to do so; however, he noted that any representation would be required to reflect a unanimous position of all Board members. MV also noted the remaining funding allocations and that any direct interventions would need to align with the Regeneration Plan mandate and advised that subgroups could discuss this.

CH closed the meeting.

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ITEM 4

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARD

Draft Monitoring Return

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft monitoring return for endorsement, which is required to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

2 Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) Endorse the Draft Monitoring Report contained within Appendix 1 for submission to MHCLG, subject to accountable body approvals.

3 Background

3.1 As detailed in the Pride in Place Programme Monitoring Guidance, published by MHCLG on 2 March 2026, a scrutiny requirement of each Pride in Place area is to publish a monitoring return at half yearly intervals, each April and each October.

3.2 At the meeting of 24 April 2026, the Neighbourhood Board endorsed the first monitoring return, which was subsequently submitted to MHCLG on 30 April 2026. The monitoring return contained details on:

- Capacity funding activities;
- Projects delivered using programme funding (N/A on first return);
- Projects planned which will draw upon programme funding;
- Neighbourhood Board details;
- Forecast capacity fund spend; and
- Outputs.

3.3 The second draft monitoring return portal opened on 1 October 2026 and is due for submission on Thursday 29 October 2026. This monitoring return has a reduced requirement for submission and will consist of:

- Capacity funding activities;
- Projects delivered using programme funding;
- Projects planned using programme funding; and

- Neighbourhood board details

4 Conclusion

4.1 The development of the monitoring return has been informed by the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board's progress to date, drawing upon capacity spend to date, project endorsements and Neighbourhood Board membership changes. Should the monitoring report be endorsed by the Neighbourhood Board at the 9 October 2026 Board meeting, the monitoring report will be updated to reflect this, prior to submission before 23:59 on Thursday 29 October 2026 to MHCLG.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Newton-le-Willows Draft Monitoring Return

ITEM 5

ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board

Changes in Board Membership

1. Purpose of this report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Neighbourhood Board of changes in membership to the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) Note the updated Board Membership in line with the Pride in Place Programme governance.

3. Background

3.1. Following the local elections on 7 May 2026, results saw Reform UK appointed as the ruling political party for St Helens Borough. Accordingly, at Annual Council on 20 May 2026, councillors formally approved the new political leadership for the Council, with Councillor George Woodward appointed as Leader of the Council.

3.2. In May 2026, at the Annual Council meeting, it was agreed that the Leader of the Council would sit on the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board and at this time the Portfolio Holder position remained vacant.

3.3. Subsequently, Councillor Jack Benyon (Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Property & Planning) has been appointed to the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board, filling the Portfolio Holder position on the Board previously occupied by Kate Groucutt.

3.4. In addition, following the Neighbourhood Board meeting of 17 July 2026, the Chair of the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board and Programme Team received notification from Catherine Twist that she regrettably intended to step down from her position as Education and Opportunity Representative.

3.5. Due to the short period of time elapsed from the previous recruitment exercise, a review of alternative applications was undertaken with the Chair of the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board and MP for St Helens North.

3.6. Subsequently, agreement was reached to appoint Simon Pierce to the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board as Education and Opportunity representative. Simon brings a wealth of strategic experience to the Neighbourhood Board as Chief Executive and Principal of St Helens College, who serve the educational needs of Newton-le-Willows and the whole St Helens Borough.

4. **Conclusion**

4.1 The change in Board membership following administrative changes for the Council, relevant to the Pride in Place Programme and resignation of the Education and Opportunity representative is made in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board.

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ITEM 6

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL	**Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board** **Subgroup and Project Updates**

1. Purpose of this report

1.1. The purpose is to advise the Neighbourhood Board of the progress made in Neighbourhood Board Subgroups and ongoing project delivery.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) **Note the update contained within this report on Subgroup delivery and project updates.**

3. Background

Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup

3.1. The Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup met on 20 August 2026 and 11 September 2026 to develop the Building Improvement Programme documentation which will be presented in Item 7 of the Agenda.

3.2. Additionally, the Subgroup have developed a project framework for the Spring Clean initiative for endorsement by the Neighbourhood Board and subject to further operational development.

3.3. A community launch day will signify the beginning of the Newton-le-Willows Spring Clean, with ongoing delivery throughout the month of May. This launch day will take place on Saturday 8 May 2027, as previously advised at the 17 July 2026 Neighbourhood Board meeting.

3.4. A primary location has been identified as Earlestown town centre for a centralised location, with possibilities to be explored around the presence at this location and where a central base can be designated; however, consideration will be given to additional launch locations subject to appropriate logistical support for the launch day.

3.5. The launch day will incorporate community involvement of litter picking along designated routes, alongside a Neighbourhood Board presence to provide community engagement, with an opportunity to capture residents' viewpoints.

3.6. Alongside the launch day, community groups will be identified and asked to engage with the project. To support this engagement, it is the intention to deliver skips (where appropriate) and litter picking packages for a more targeted approach to tackle particular hot spot areas.

3.7. The Pride in Place Programme Team are liaising with internal Council colleagues to ascertain whether a coordinated approach can be achieved with planned Council service operations to maximise project impact.

3.8. Further operational development and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken, prior to returning to the Neighbourhood Board for budget and delivery endorsements.

Education and Health Subgroup

3.9. The first meeting of the Education and Opportunity Subgroup took place on 4 August 2026, at which consultation outcomes were reviewed to ensure that further discussion was informed by the mandate provided within the consultation and reflective of the Regeneration Plan.

3.10. Following the initial meeting, mapping of existing provision which relates to identified themes is being undertaken to ensure that any project delivery adds value to and strengthens, rather than duplicating, existing provision.

3.11. In addition, consideration was given to the delivery model for Education and Health projects, with discussions ongoing to an appropriate vehicle for funding distribution and project management.

3.12. A second meeting of the Education and Health Subgroup was held on 25 September 2026, with discussion held on additional membership to the Subgroup and early identification on priority interventions.

3.13. A workshop will take place prior to Christmas 2026, where delivery models and priorities will look to be confirmed ahead of further project development.

Stakeholder Engagement Subgroup

3.14. Following request of the Neighbourhood Board, an expression of interest form was circulated to all Board members, to be completed and returned to the programme team by 25 September 2026.

3.15. This subgroup will be responsible for developing the Neighbourhood Board's Strategic Communication Plan, which will include but is not limited to stakeholder analysis and mapping, engagement strategies, tools and activities and risks and issues that may arise within the programme, linked to project communications.

3.16. Following return of expressions of interest and review by the Chair of the Neighbourhood Board, the Stakeholder Engagement Subgroup will be formed in due course, with membership to be confirmed.

3.17. The first meeting of the Stakeholder Engagement Subgroup will begin development of a Strategic Communication Plan.

Early Delivery Projects

Arts on Prescription

3.18. The first of three cohorts has now concluded, with seven of the initial 10 places completing the first cohort. Excellent initial feedback was received from participants that the project had contributed positively to their wellbeing. A case study has been requested from the delivery team and will be shared with the Neighbourhood Board once available.

3.19. The second cohort of delivery begun on 25 September 2026. At the time of producing this briefing, anticipated uptake was strong and a project progress meeting is scheduled for the afternoon of 9 October 2026.

3.20. Additional Social Value for the project has seen a local volunteer gain part-time sessional employment with the delivery provider, Creative Alternatives.

Earlestown Town Hall AV and Lighting

3.21. As part of the Earlestown Town Hall restoration project, the Council have provided enabling works for the routing of cables required for installation and structural surveys to ensure that the equipment can be mounted safely.

3.22. Following procurement activity, an equipment and installation contractor was identified, with Adlib being appointed. Adlib are a specialist audio, lighting, video, rigging and staging provider who also provided initial designs and specifications to the AV project.

3.23. Following practical completion of the Town Hall, the appointed contractor will now deliver and install the AV and Lighting Equipment, ensuring that systems are appropriately balanced for the space.

St Johns Playground

3.24. The St Johns Playground project submitted a planning application on 26 August 2026, which is due to be considered at the October 2026 meeting of Planning Committee. The project is concurrently running procurement activity to identify a contractor to undertake design and installation of the playground.

3.25. Tender returns were received by 28 September 2026 and assessment is being undertaken prior to contract award, this assessment will incorporate quality assessment of submitted bids and additional social value of the delivery.

3.26. Following contract award, the design process will begin, based on the scope provided by the Neighbourhood Board and consultation outcomes. This design will be an iterative process with opportunity for Neighbourhood Board input through the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup.

Community Pot

3.27. The successful applicants were notified following the Neighbourhood Board meeting on 17 July 2026 and requested to sign and return offer letters to for a formal acceptance to the grant.

3.28. All ten offer letters were returned and subsequently payments have been processed to all organisations upon receipt of confirmation of bank details.

3.29. Development of monitoring and evaluation documentation is now underway and will be distributed to organisations prior to the targeted project end dates, subject to review by the Community Pot Review Panel. This will ensure that project outputs and benefits can be accurately reported to MHCLG through the required scrutiny process and monitoring returns.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Subgroups continue to develop frameworks for projects within their operational remit to be presented to the full Neighbourhood Board for their endorsement. A stakeholder Engagement Subgroup has been formed to produce a strategic communications plan for the Board. Ongoing projects are progressing towards completion, with key milestones achieved since the previous meeting of the Neighbourhood Board.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Early Delivery Project Highlight Reports

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ITEM 7

ST HELENS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board

Building Improvement Programme

1. Purpose of this report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Neighbourhood Board on the development of the Building Improvement Programme for Earlestown Conservation Area. This report will request Board endorsement of a suite of documentation to support delivery of the Building Improvement Programme, following an initial engagement period with potential applicants and subsequent development by the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) **Endorse the appended document pack for the Building Improvement Programme.**

2) **Note the progress made on public engagement to support project pipeline development and increase awareness of the programme.**

3) **Endorse delegations to the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup, contained within paragraphs 3.5 and 3.20 of this report, relating to authority to award grants and authority to approve programme guidance.**

4) **Endorse delegation to the Project Team, contained within paragraph 3.22 this report, relating to authority to manage project contingencies.**

3. Background

3.1. At its meeting of 17 July 2026, the Neighbourhood Board endorsed the initial engagement approach and the Programme framework for the Building Improvement Programme. This included a two-phase engagement with potential applicants, with the first period to be undertaken in August-September 2026.

3.2. The programme framework includes the key objectives of delivery, eligible works, contribution rate and maximum grant cap, and assessment criteria overview. The assessment criteria overview included the Neighbourhood Board priority interventions, along with an assessment multiplier for applications within the identified priority area.

3.3. Since the endorsements to the engagement approach and programme frameworks were achieved, the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup have met on 20 August 2026 and 11 September 2026, pursuant to the development of Building Improvement Programme documentation.

3.4. Drop-in sessions were held for business and building owners to attend and discuss the programme with members of the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup and Council officers. The sessions were well attended and provided valuable insight to the intentions of potential applicants and positive feedback was received towards the programme. Drop-ins were held at the Ways to Work Service premises on Bridge Street in Earlestown on the following dates:

- Thursday 20 August 2026 – 12:00 to 14:00; and
- Thursday 17 September 2026 – 16:30 to 18:30.

3.5. A delegation is requested to the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup to approve appropriate guidance to accompany application documentation. This delegation will allow all design guidance to be informed by ongoing project development and feedback, alongside consultation with planning colleagues to ensure the guidance meets the conditions and requirements of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

Overview

3.6. Further to Neighbourhood Board endorsements, subgroup development and engagement feedback, the proposed documentation pack has been developed with alignment to the key programme objectives:

- Boost Economic Activity – by attracting more footfall and revenue through new/enhanced retail spaces and hospitality venues;
- Improve Connectivity – supporting the wider regeneration efforts in Earlestown which aim to enhance connectivity between the Rail Station, Town Hall and Market Square; and
- Support Local Businesses – provide grant funding to independent businesses/landlords to improve their facilities and spaces for local enterprises to thrive.

3.7. The documentation pack will provide the facility to ensure a fair and equal programme, where applications are assessed on merit against the key

programme objectives and provide meaningful outputs to improve the Earlestown Conservation Area.

3.8. The documentation pack is separated into three main sections, of which a summary of relevant documents is provided below. The three sections to be considered for endorsement are:

- Application Documents;
- Assessment Documents; and
- Award Documents.

3.9. All documents have been developed with guidance from the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup and in consultation with legal and finance colleagues of the Council to ensure documentation is fit for purpose. In addition, consultation has been undertaken with STAR Procurement, the Council's procurement advisor, to ensure that the process is compliant with any applicable Council and public procurement procedures.

Application Documents

3.10. The application documents included within the documentation pack are an expression of interest form, grant application form and owner consent form.

3.11. The expression of interest form will be the first document required to be submitted by any potential applicant and has been developed to capture high level information on proposed improvements, project timelines and property ownership. It is anticipated that the expression of interest period will launch in January 2027.

3.12. In addition, the expression of interest form will ensure applicants are aware that the Building Improvement Programme requires an applicant contribution to works and that payments can be claimed in arrears, once approved works are undertaken; this protects the Neighbourhood Board from future misunderstanding and potential misuse of public funding by any applicant.

3.13. Upon receipt of an expression of interest form, the project team will engage with the applicant to provide advice surrounding eligible works and design considerations. This will ensure that forthcoming applications should be suitable for assessment and reduce abortive works undertaken by applicants.

3.14. Following the expression of interest period, applications are anticipated to open in Spring 2027. The application form will capture all required project documentation including but not limited to scope of works, contractor quotes and declarations.

Assessment Documents

3.15. An eligibility checklist has been produced for assessment use; this document will provide assessment assurance that all applications are eligible for funding, and the appropriate background information is provided prior to any assessment.

3.16. An assessment matrix is included within the document pack which will provide a fair benchmark for assessment across all applications. The draft assessment matrix was previously endorsed by the Neighbourhood Board at its meeting on 17 July 2026, noting that the scoring criteria were due to be updated.

3.17. The scoring criteria has been developed and finalised to provide a robust assessment matrix which ensures Neighbourhood Board strategic objectives for the programme are appropriately measured across each application.

3.18. By way of reminder, the priority scoring objectives previously endorsed are as listed below. The scoring weighting for each category can be found within the assessment criteria matrix in Appendix 1.

Primary Objectives

- Townscape Impact;
- Building Condition; and
- Support for independent and long-standing businesses.

Secondary Objectives

- Heritage Significance;
- Architectural Merit;
- Occupancy; and
- Business Type.

3.19. The Project Team will undertake an initial assessment of applications, with feedback to be provided to the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup in a consistent format through a recommendation report. The Subgroup would then undertake scrutiny of the assessment and provide any feedback against scoring methodologies, incorporated into the final assessment and application outcomes.

3.20. It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Board delegate authority to the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup to approve project funding on an application-by-application basis. This approach will ensure construction programmes can be managed and applications processed efficiently, outside of the quarterly formal Neighbourhood Board meetings.

3.21. Due to the volatile nature of construction costs and contractor availability, the timely processing of applications will be vital in ensuring that projects can be delivered within the scope and costs submitting in each application.

3.22. A contingency budget of 5% will be included within each application, however, this budget will be held outside of the agreed scope of works. Any applicant would be required to lodge a claim to access the contingency budget, protecting against improper use. It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Board delegate authority to approve use of contingency budget to the Project Team to ensure rapid responses can be made to genuine claims which may require immediate intervention.

Award Documents

3.23. The award documents contained within the document pack include a grant offer letter, grant funding agreement and unsuccessful letter.

3.24. The award documents provide the base legal agreement for entering into a grant with the applicant. Provisions outlined at the previous Neighbourhood Board meeting have been included to protect against any misuse of public funding. These provisions include, but are not limited to:

- The Neighbourhood Board retains the right to assess each application on a case-by-case basis at its total discretion;
- Claw back provisions in the event of any unreasonable sale of property within three years of funding;
- Claw back provisions in the event of ongoing vacancy of funded units, where the property owner has made little effort to occupy the unit;
- Requirements to submit information, where appropriate, to allow the Council to undertake subsidy control assessments; and
- Monitoring and evaluation requirements to ensure funding is only released to the agreed scope of works.

3.25. An unsuccessful letter has been included within the document pack to notify applicants where funding is not granted. Feedback will be offered to all applicants on why the application was unsuccessful and whether key eligibility criteria were met.

Guidance

3.26. A full suite of guidance documentation will be developed ahead of the opening of the expression of interest window. It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Board delegate authority to approve the guidance documents to the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup.

3.27. The guidance documents will be split into public facing documents and project management as follows:

Public Facing

- Application Guidance;
- Eligible Work Guidance;
- Design Guidance;
- Consultant and Contractor Directory; and
- Frequently Asked Questions.

Project Management

- Assessment Guidance
- Eligibility Checklist
- Award Recommendation Report

3.28. The Project Team are currently in consultation with Planning Service colleagues to inform design guidance to ensure that any information presented as guidance will be appropriate to achieve planning consents, strictly related to the design of proposed improvements. Along with the application guidance and eligible work guidance, this would allow all applicants to access wraparound guidance to support their application, preventing submissions which would fail eligibility checks.

3.29. Furthermore, a consultant and contractor directory will be provided to give applicants a number of contacts that could be engaged, should they wish to do so. Critically, this directory does not form a recommendation from the Neighbourhood Board or the Council.

3.30. Project management guidance will be in place to ensure all applications are treated on a fair and equal footing, with consistency in place across assessments. The assessment guidance will play a crucial role in this and will provide assessors background information to inform their scoring of all applications.

3.31. A minimum of three assessors will undertake scoring independently, after which individual scores will be collated to form an overall score and presented as part of the recommendation report for scrutiny. A minimum score is proposed to be developed, ensuring only projects which provide good correlation to the programme outcomes are funded.

3.32. All awards will be subject to the appropriate accountable body approvals to ensure wider scrutiny of the programme is undertaken and all decisions made are compliant with the requirements of public funding.

<u>Programme Timelines</u>

3.33. The following information outlines the key milestones for the development and delivery of the Building Improvement Programme:

3.34. **January – April 2027, Soft Launch and Applicant Development:**

- Delivery of Phase 2 engagement activity;
- Launch of the Expression of Interest (EoI) process; and
- Workshops and support for prospective applicants

3.35. **April 2027 – April 2030, Full Launch and Delivery:**

- Opening of the full grant application process;
- Assessment of applications; and
- Approval of grants and commencement of project delivery

4. Conclusion

4.1 The proposed Building Improvement Programme document pack provides a comprehensive structure to the previously endorsed Building Improvement Programme Framework. Documentation has been developed in consultation with the Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage Subgroup, legal and finance colleagues and procurement advisors. The full documentation pack will be subject to accountable body approvals, relating to compliance of the proposed documentation.

Appendix 1: Building Improvement Document Pack

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ITEM 8

ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board

Finance Update

1. Purpose of this report

1.1. This report provides Board with an update on the financial position in relation to the Pride in Place grant funding approved by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The total of £19.54m available includes £14.94m Capital grant and £4.6m Revenue Grant. This report focuses on Investment Period 1 funding of £6.658m up to 31 March 2030, along with Capacity Funding of £0.376m. Accounting considerations for the Council will report via Capital Programme and Revenue budgets as appropriate.

1.2. This report also addresses the annual management fee review, with a recommendation for endorsement of amendment to the management fee to reflect increasing programme complexity.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Board is recommended to:

1) **Note the financial position for actual expenditure to date against the Pride in Place grant funding to August 2026.**

2) **Note the forecast for remaining expenditure of current approved Projects until 31 March 2030 and the tracking charts.**

3) **Endorse the proposed management fee of 7.5% to improve resource on the Pride in Place Programme and oversight of ongoing delivery.**

3. Background

3.1. This report provides an update on the financial position in relation to grant funding for the Pride in Place projects for Newton-le-Willows in respect of the Council's position as the accountable body.

Total Funding – Grant Expenditure to Date

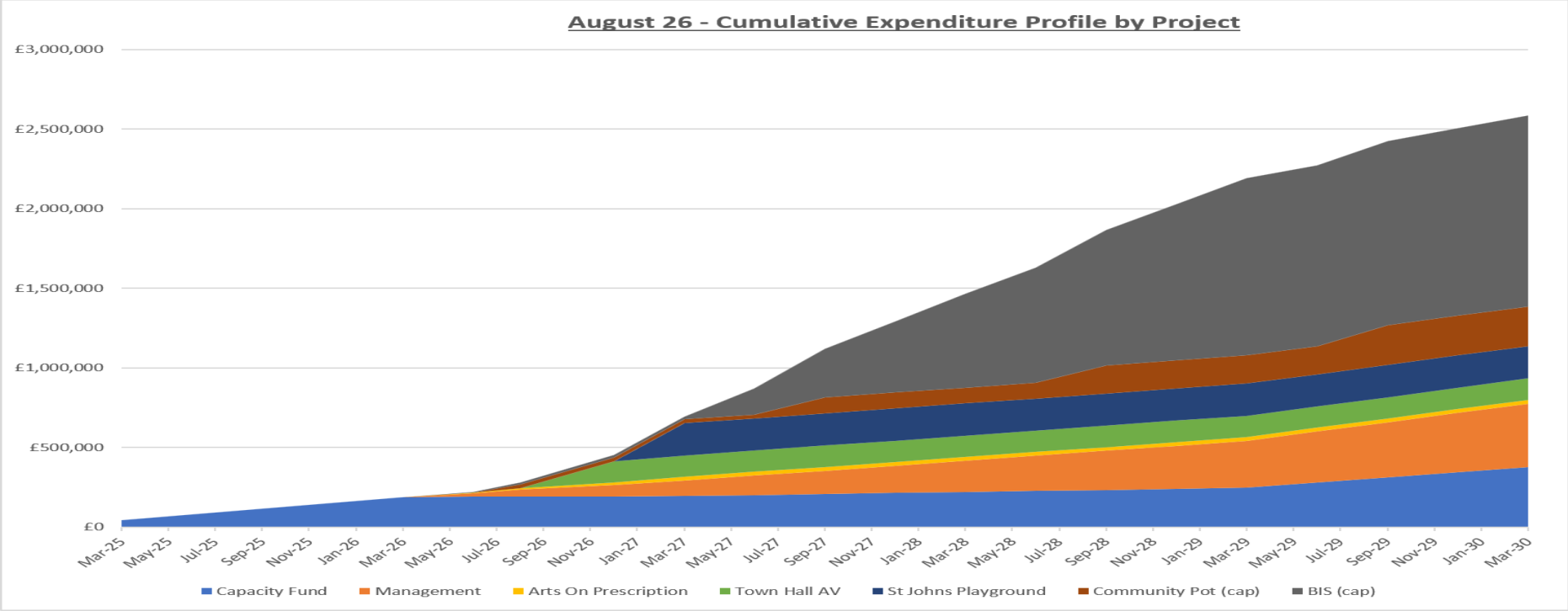
3.2. For the first financial report to the Board on project progress, expenditure has been tracked up to the end of August's month reporting period, and quarterly forecasts have been collated that can be monitored against for progress. Table 1 below shows the detail. 3% of expenditure has been incurred against the available grant and expected Capacity Fund usage as per the Investment Plan for period 1 submitted to MHCLG.

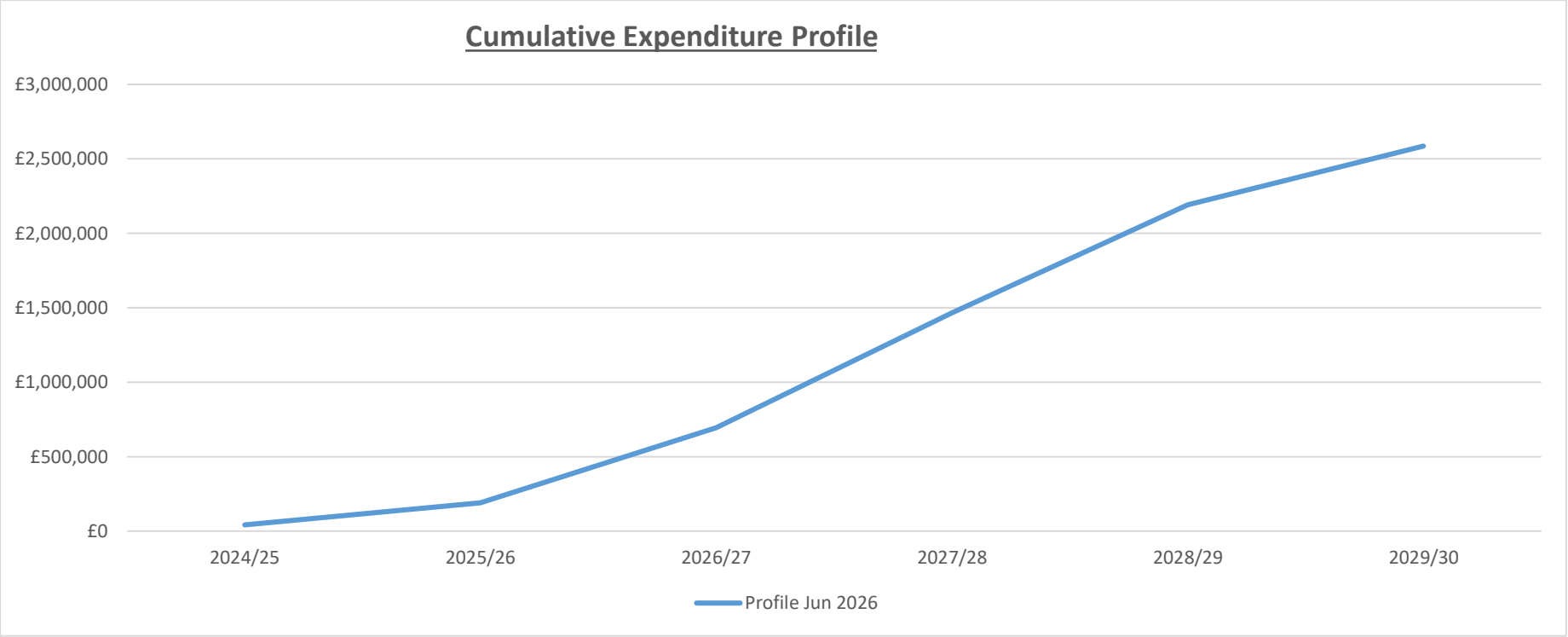
Table 1 **Theme**	**Project Allocation or Remaining- Capacity Funding and Investment Period 1 Allocation**	**Total Grant Funded Budget (A)**	**Actual Expenditure by Aug 26 (B)**	**Grant Remaining (A-B)**	**% of Grant Spend to date (B/A)**
		£	**£**	**£**	**%**
Capacity Fund	**Capacity Fund**	376,285	190,508	185,777	51%
Management	**Management**	399,480	35,825	363,655	9%
Community Pot	**Community Pot**	250,000	0	250,000	0%
Regeneration, High Street and Heritage	**Arts On Prescription**	23,408	7,803	15,605	33%
	Earlestown Town Hall AV	134,000	0	134,000	0%
	St Johns Playground	203,000	0	203,000	0%
	Building Improvement Scheme	1,200,000	7,692	1,192,308	1%
	Unallocated	578,625	0	578,625	0%
Education & Opportunity	**Unallocated**	2,084,957	0	2,084,957	0%
Health & Wellbeing	**Unallocated**	1,784,531	0	1,784,531	0%
	Totals	**7,034,286**	**241,828**	**6,792,458**	**3%**

Project Forecasts

3.3. The table and chart below show the quarterly forecast up to March 2030. This has been collated in collaboration with all Project Managers. The second chart shows the change in profile over the programme period.

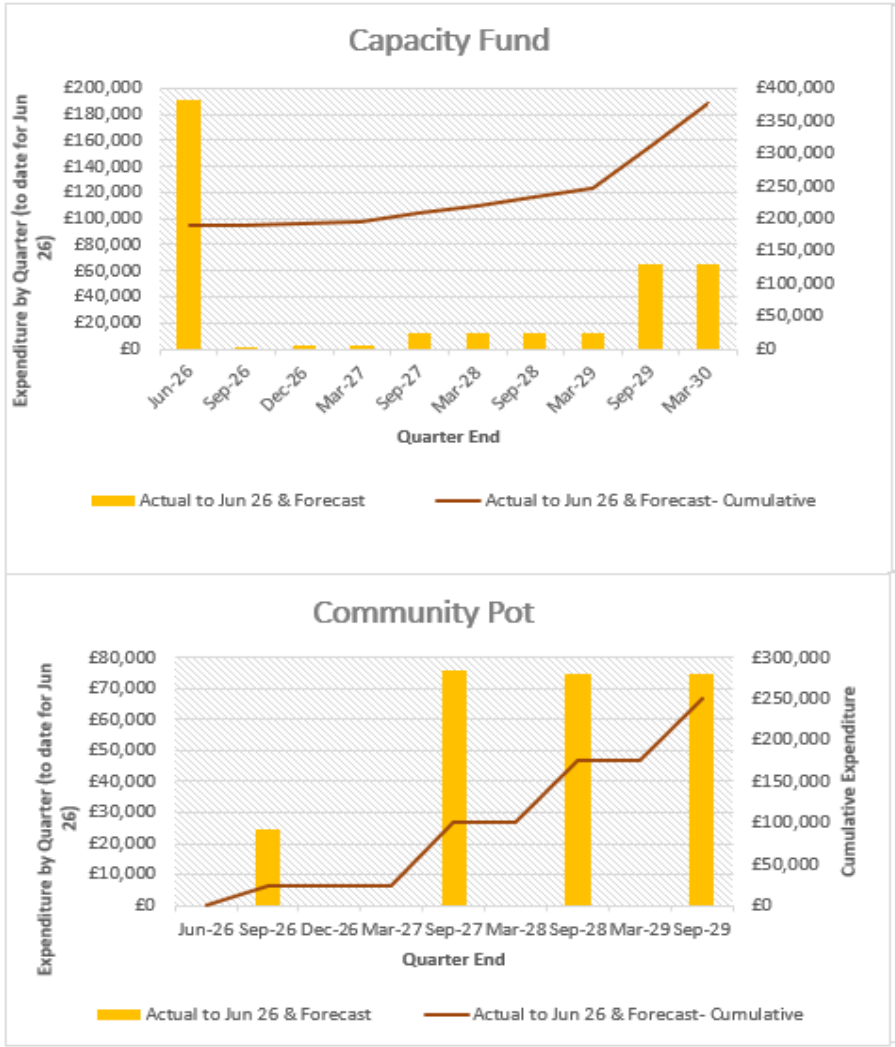
Table 2- Actual and Accrued Expenditure to June 2026 and forecast to March 2030	To date as	2026/27			2027/28				2028/29				2029/30				
	Jun-26	July - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr- Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr- Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr- Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Totals
	Actual/ Accrued	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£									£
Capacity Fund	190,388	120	2,250	2,250	6,335	6,335	6,335	6,335	6,335	6,335	6,335	6,335	32,649	32,649	32,649	32,649	376,285
Management	21,495	22,813	26,244	26,244	24,642	24,642	24,642	24,642	25,219	25,219	25,219	25,219	25,811	25,811	25,811	25,809	399,480
Community Pot	0	24,366	0	0	0	75,634	0	0	0	75,000	0	0	0	75,000	0	0	250,000
Arts On Prescription	3,901	5,852	5,852	7,803	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23,408
Earlestown Town Hall AV	0	0	133,685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	133,685
St Johns Playground	0	0	0	203,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	203,000
Building Improvement Scheme	4,615	4,920	4,802	4,802	142,561	142,564	142,564	142,564	131,215	131,215	131,215	131,215	21,437	21,437	21,437	21,437	1,200,000
Totals	**220,399**	**58,071**	**172,833**	**244,099**	**173,538**	**249,175**	**173,541**	**173,541**	**162,769**	**237,769**	**162,769**	**162,769**	**79,897**	**154,897**	**79,897**	**79,895**	**2,585,858**

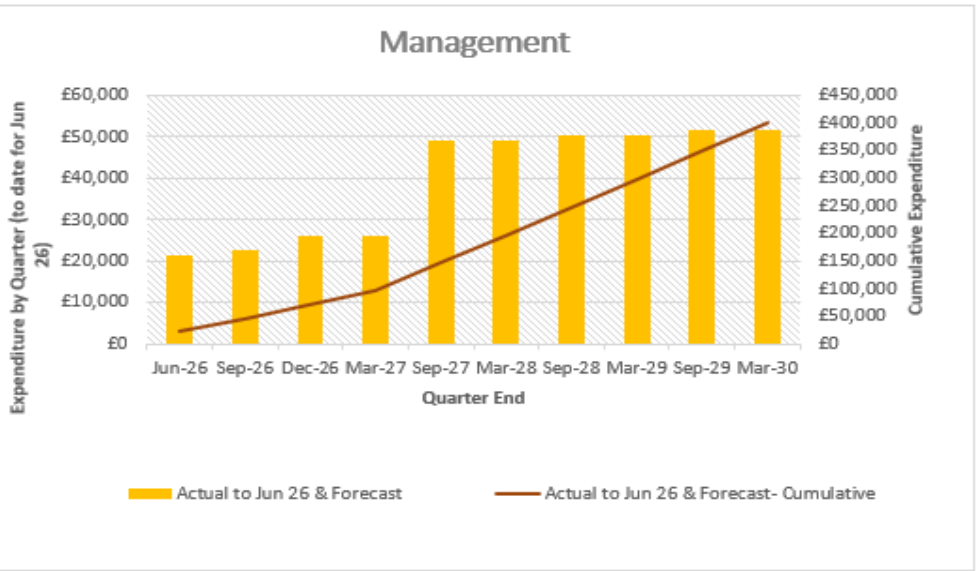




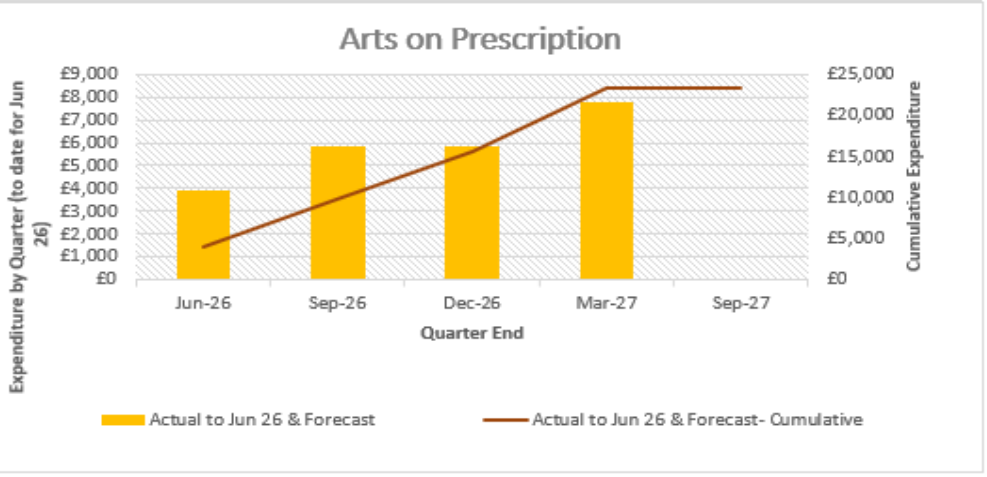
Quarterly Forecast Charts

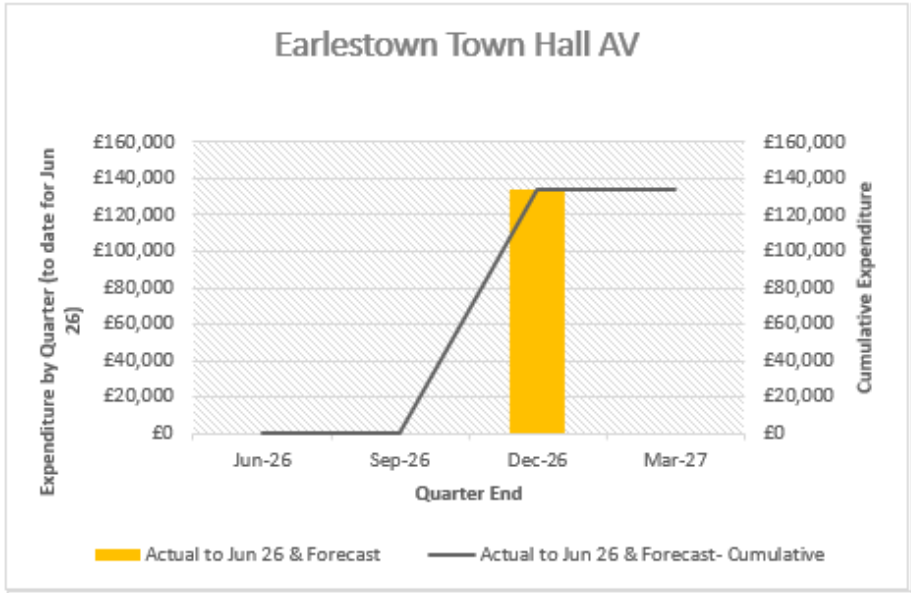
3.4. The below charts have been developed using the quarterly forecasts for each live project – these can be used to track movements in forecast over the Investment Period. The column shows the quarterly figure, and the line shows the cumulative position.

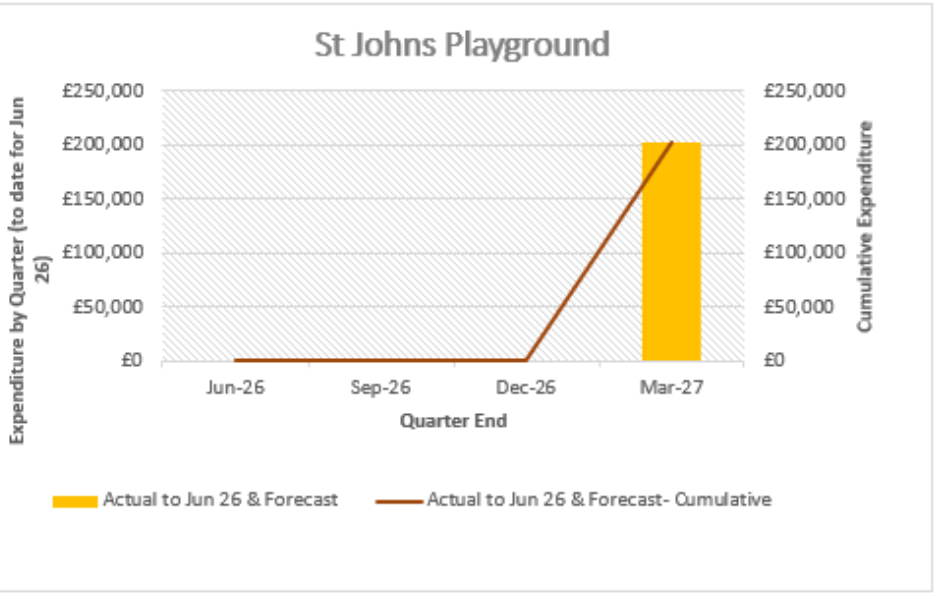

Capacity Fund
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
£200,000
£180,000
£160,000
£140,000
£120,000
£100,000
£80,000
£60,000
£40,000
£20,000
£0
£400,000
£350,000
£300,000
£250,000
£200,000
£150,000
£100,000
£50,000
£0
Cumulative Expenditure
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Sep-27
Mar-28
Sep-28
Mar-29
Sep-29
Mar-30
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative

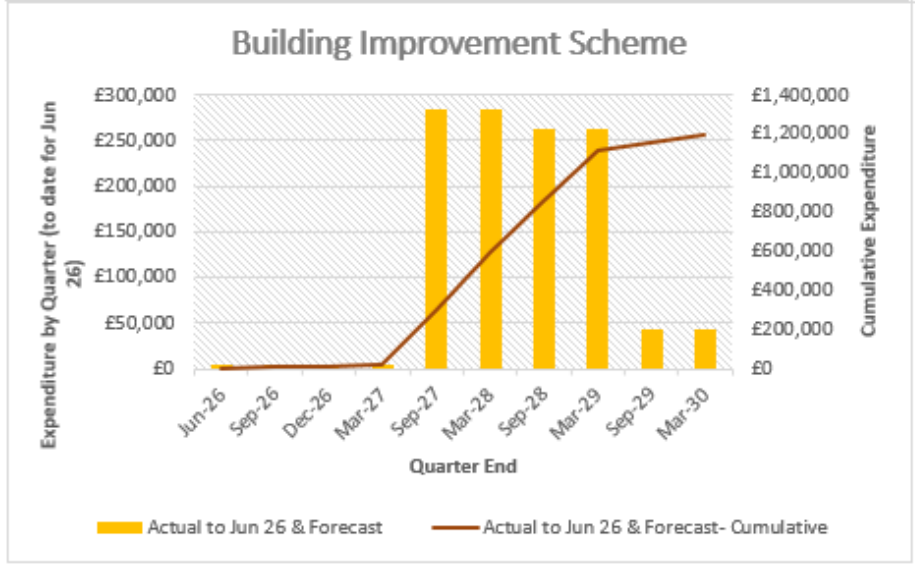

Management
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
£60,000
£50,000
£40,000
£30,000
£20,000
£10,000
£0
£450,000
£400,000
£350,000
£300,000
£250,000
£200,000
£150,000
£100,000
£50,000
£0
Cumulative Expenditure
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Sep-27
Mar-28
Sep-28
Mar-29
Sep-29
Mar-30
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative

Community Pot
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
£80,000
£70,000
£60,000
£50,000
£40,000
£30,000
£20,000
£10,000
£0
£300,000
£250,000
£200,000
£150,000
£100,000
£50,000
£0
Cumulative Expenditure
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Sep-27
Mar-28
Sep-28
Mar-29
Sep-29
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative


Arts on Prescription
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
£9,000
£8,000
£7,000
£6,000
£5,000
£4,000
£3,000
£2,000
£1,000
£0
£25,000
£20,000
£15,000
£10,000
£5,000
£0
Cumulative Expenditure
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Sep-27
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative


Earlestown Town Hall AV
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
Cumulative Expenditure
£160,000
£140,000
£120,000
£100,000
£80,000
£60,000
£40,000
£20,000
£0
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative


St Johns Playground
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
Cumulative Expenditure
£250,000
£200,000
£150,000
£100,000
£50,000
£0
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative


Building Improvement Scheme
Expenditure by Quarter (to date for Jun 26)
Cumulative Expenditure
£300,000
£250,000
£200,000
£150,000
£100,000
£50,000
£0
£1,400,000
£1,200,000
£1,000,000
£800,000
£600,000
£400,000
£200,000
£0
Jun-26
Sep-26
Dec-26
Mar-27
Sep-27
Mar-28
Sep-28
Mar-29
Sep-29
Mar-30
Quarter End
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast
Actual to Jun 26 & Forecast- Cumulative

Management Fee

3.5. At the Neighbourhood Board meeting on 3 October 2025, the Neighbourhood Board approved an allocation of 6% for management of the Newton-le-Willows Pride in Place Programme. It was noted at this meeting that the management fee would be reviewed on an annual basis and may be subject to proposed increases or decreases.

3.6. At the meeting of the Neighbourhood Board on 17 July 2026, Council Officers informed the Neighbourhood Board that the annual review of the management fee would be undertaken ahead of the October 2026 Neighbourhood Board meeting.

3.7. Neighbourhood Board members recognised the requirement to ensure that the programme is adequately resourcing, particularly due to the evolving complexity of the Pride in Place Programme as development, delivery and monitoring streams are carried out simultaneously.

3.8. As such, a review was undertaken against the benchmark funding position of 6%, as agreed at the 3 October 2025 Board Meeting. Table 1, below, provides a breakdown of salary recharges within the 6% fee.

Table 1 - Breakdown of salary recharges under the existing 6% management fee

Management Costs across the 10-Year programme						
Council Resource	**Project Officer**	**Programme Lead**	**Project Officer Support**	**Finance Business Partner**	**Principal Accountant**	**Principal Solicitor**
Time allocation	Full time	1 day a week	2 days a month	1 day a month	1 day a month	1 day a month
% allocation of time to Plan for Neighbourhoods	100%	20%	10%	5%	5%	5%

3.9. Following review of commitment to existing provision, the Council in consultation with the Chair are recommending an amended management fee of 7.5%, across the duration of the remaining programme, to ensure appropriate oversight can be provided the wider Pride in Place Programme. A full breakdown of recommended salary recharges is included with appendix 1.

3.10. The amended salary recharge allows for a full-time Programme Lead to oversee delivery of the Pride in Place Programme, giving appropriate support to the aspirations of the Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board. Due to the increased oversight at Programme Lead level, the requirement for a dedicated Project Officer is reduced to 2.5 days a week to provide critical administration and clerical support.

3.11. Ancillary support provided by Project Officers and corporate colleagues remains unchanged in line with existing provision. It is proposed that the 7.5%

management fee would take effect from 1 October 2026 and an internal Council reallocation of resources has been undertaken to facilitate this amendment.

3.12. Within the management fee, provision is included for the Council to undertake its role as accountable body, as detailed within the Pride in Place Programme guidance. The management fee, if agreed, would continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Board is recommended to note the contents of the report and overall financial position of the grant funded expenditure.

4.2. An uplift in management fee is proposed to ensure that the Newton-le-Willows Pride in Place Programme is appropriately resourced and ensures that oversight can be provided across all projects as the programme enters a simultaneous delivery, development and monitoring stage.

Appendix 1: Proposed Management Fee

Council Resource	Programme Lead	Project Officer	Project Officer / support	Finance Business Partner	Principal Accountant	Principal Solicitor
Time allocation	Full time	2.5 days a week	0.5 days a week	1 day a month	1 day a month	1 day a month
Start from	Oct-2026	Oct-2026	Oct-2026	Oct-2026	Oct-2026	Oct-2026
% allocation of time to Pride in Place	100%	50%	10%	5%	5%	5%

Management Fee Allocation Per Investment Period				
	Investment Period 1	**Investment Period 2**	**Investment Period 3**	**Total**
Investment Period	2026-27 to 2029-30 4 Years	2030-31 to 2032-33 3 Years	2033-34 to 2035-36 3 Years	10 Years
Management Cost £000s	530	427	460	1,417
Total Revenue Grant Funding Available £000s	1,352	1,301	1,350	4,003
Total Grant Allocation £000s	6,658	6,116	6,165	18,939
Management Cost % of total Grant allocation	8.0	7.0	7.5	7.5

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ITEM 9

ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Newton-le-Willows Neighbourhood Board

Any Other Business

1 Summary

1.1 This report item provides an opportunity for Board Members to raise any other relevant business that has not been previously discussed within these papers.