News in brief

Your round up of news from across the Council. Issue 72: w/e 17 March 2019

Updates:

Business as usual at the Mersey Gateway
You may have seen reports in the press following the Traffic Penalty Tribunal adjudicator’s decision in the recent appeal of Mr Damian Curzon. Although this is currently being reviewed the Council would wish to reiterate that:

- Adjudication by the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT) cannot and does not, in law, invalidate or remove the powers in place from the 14 October 2017 to administer and enforce tolls on the Mersey Gateway Bridge.
- Adjudication is specific to the case being considered, and any decision of an Adjudicator only relates to that particular case.
- A decision of TPT does not have general effect nor carry any weight as precedent.
- Any suggestion that the Council has no power to charge or enforce how it does this or that the Council’s is acting inappropriately or “illegally” is misleading, inaccurate and wrong in law.
- The Adjudicator’s decision in respect of signage contradicts the decision of the Adjudicator in the an early case where the Adjudicator concluded signage is “large, well sited, in clear view, and to communicate to a driver unfamiliar with the area that a payment was required and how to pay.”

It is business as usual at the Mersey Gateway – please continue to pay to use Mersey Gateway. Over 96% of users are paying for their crossings on time experiencing quicker, easier and more reliable journeys across the river. You can pay online over the telephone on 01928 878 878 or in person at the Runcorn walk-in centre and at Payzone outlets.

New ‘Brexit Council’ for Liverpool City Region

Private and public sector leaders from across the Liverpool City Region have met for the first time as part of a new group that aims to safeguard the region’s business interests as the UK leaves the EU.

The group will work to ensure the region’s economic resilience, including supporting local businesses, as the UK prepares to leave and finally exits the EU. It will also offer co-ordinated responses to local and national government on how the city region is progressing and any challenges it faces.

LCR Pride Foundation to lead Liverpool City Region bid for Gay Games 2026

LCR Pride Foundation has revealed its intention to bid for the Liverpool City Region to host the 2026 Gay Games.

The news also comes alongside the announcement of British Paralympian, Claire Harvey MBE, as its newest Patron. Recognised as a world leader in diversity and inclusion and culture, the former LJMU student is now the Director of Culture and Inclusion for EDIT Development.

The Gay Games is a worldwide sport and cultural event that takes place every four years, welcoming more than 10,000 athletes competing in 30+ sports. It attracts tens of thousands of spectators who also attend to take part in the event’s extensive cultural programme, which includes music, visual arts...
and mass participation events such as fun runs.

For more information visit www.LCRGayGames.com or follow us on Twitter @LCRGayGames or Facebook at LCR Gay Games 2026.

Astmoor regeneration event

Astmoor is one of eight regeneration impact areas across where the Mersey Gateway and the reconfigured road network has unlocked land for new development opportunity and reposition the area for growth.

In December, a consultant team led by town planners, urban designers, and architects from BDP was appointed to develop a five-year Masterplan and Delivery Strategy for Astmoor Industrial Estate. BDP is supported by commercial property consultancy JLL, Curtins highway engineers, and social value specialist’s EKOSGEN.

The purpose of the Masterplan will be to set out a cohesive package of development and investment opportunities and identify the key infrastructure and place-making projects the Council is looking to bring forward to support growth on Astmoor.

With the draft Masterplan almost complete, the Council is holding two drop in consultation events; the first is on 18th March targeting Astmoor businesses and landlords, with the second event on 19th March, aimed at the public, particularly in the neighbouring Wards of Mersey, Halton Castle, Windmill Hill and Halton Brook.

Everyone is welcome to drop in to either event to view the draft Masterplan, meet the consultants, ask questions and give feedback. More information is available at www.runcorn-widnes.com/merseygateway.

Halton Mayor’s Award

The Halton Mayor’s Award is a bespoke programme of exciting challenges and activities. The Award is like a mini Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, which has been particularly successful in Halton.

The Mayor’s Award promotes learning and personal development through a variety of activities, encouraging commitment and a sense of achievement. It supports young people in developing new friendships, new talents and abilities and making a positive contribution in their communities. Young people can achieve up to three levels of the Awards, Bronze, Silver and Gold. The programme is open to all young people in Halton aged 10-13 years old. The programme is run from a number of locations:

- Murdishaw Community Centre: Mondays 4.30pm-5.30pm
- Beechwood Community Centre: Tuesdays 4pm–5pm
- Grangeway Youth Centre: Wednesdays 4pm-5pm
- Upton Community Centre: Wednesdays 4.30pm-5.30pm
- St Mary’s Community Centre: Thursdays 4pm-5pm

For more details contact 01928 240406 or email haltonadmin@addaction.org.uk

Chair required for Halton Autism Action Alliance

A newly established board, responsible for the delivery of the new One Halton All-Age Autism Strategy and associated Delivery Plan is looking for a Chairperson.

The Halton Autism Action Alliance wants this ambitious new strategy, to take a more joined-up and holistic approach to developing opportunities and realising potential for people with Autism at every stage of people’s lives.
The Halton Autism Action Alliance brings together different organisations, services and stakeholders to create an integrated strategic planning forum that is responsible for identifying local commissioning priorities and developing and improving autism provision across the local health and social care landscape.

The post is hosted by Halton Borough Council will be filled for a period of two years on a consultancy basis. Applicants must have relevant experience in Autism and will need to demonstrate significant experience of working at a senior leadership level within health and social care. The post holder will be required to attend six board meetings per calendar year and this would include setting agendas and reading/preparing for the meetings up to a maximum of 6 days per year.

Find out more about the role contacting Principal Manager, Emma Sutton-Thompson.

Wedding and Partnership Fayre at the Halton Stadium
This free event will take place on Sunday 24 March from 12noon to 4pm at the Halton Stadium, Lowerhouse Lane, Widnes and has the added attraction of a prize draw for couples attending.

Entry to the draw means they have the opportunity to win £1000 off a new full day wedding booking.

Guests can tour the various impressive suites and will have the opportunity to discuss with the staff all their various requirements for their big day.

There will be a huge variety of products and services to cater to lots of different wedding and partnership needs. The exhibitors will include caterers, entertainers, florists, event planners, hair and beauty, jewellers, licenced venues, photographers, transport and wedding wear. For more information visit: www.haltonstadium.co.uk or call 0151 510 6020. You can keep up to date with the latest updates on social media at www.facebook.com/haltonstadium

Easter holiday free sports activities
If you are looking to keep the children busy over the Easter holidays, a range of free events for children and families are available at locations across the borough. There’s something for everyone to enjoy with activities from table tennis to archery, boxercise to football. For the full timetable, click here.

Help celebrate Volunteers Week
Volunteers Week is happening in June this year and to celebrate, Volunteer Centre Halton & St Helens has organised a series of events.

For bookings or more information contact Alison or Linda on 01928 593112 or email: volunteerhalton@haltonsthelensvca.org.uk

Council Business:
Schools Forum (20 March);
Executive Board (22 March)
Health & Wellbeing Board (27 March)
Business Efficiency Board (27 March)

For the full calendar click here.

Liverpool City Region CA business
For the latest news from the Combined Authority, including the announcement of plans for a new station in Liverpool city centre click here.
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Combined Authority: Recent/future meetings (click on link for agenda packs and minutes):

Audit & Governance Committee (20 March)
Transport Committee (4 April)

For the full calendar click here.

Staff news:

Election to purchase Additional Pension Contributions in relation to the four days unpaid annual leave
There are only a couple of weeks left to purchase additional pension contributions in relation to the four days unpaid leave.

Local Government Pension Scheme defines the four days unpaid leave as a period of authorised unpaid leave and this is not pensionable.

Although for many the amount of pension lost will be a relatively small amount, you can choose to purchase lost pension by purchasing an Additional Pension Contribution (APC). In this instance, this would be a shared cost APC (SCAPC), which means that if you elect to make the payment within a specified 30 day period you will pay $\frac{1}{3}$ and the employer will pay $\frac{2}{3}$. The specified period will be 1 – 30 March 2019, irrespective of when the leave is actually taken.

You can obtain a quote or purchase lost pension by visiting the LGPS 2014 website and selecting the on-line calculator here.

For more details and instructions on how to complete the form, click here.

Volunteers needed for rest centres
Staff are being asked to consider being part of a voluntary rota, for staffing a Rest Centre.

A ‘Rest Centre’ is a place of safety, were people who have been affected by an Emergency are taken in the short term, until people are able to return to their homes or placed in temporary accommodation, such as a hotel.

In the event of an Emergency within the Borough, Rest Centres are not always required. However, when they are, we as a Local Authority need to be prepared, to support the people who have been affected.

In the past three years, there has been three incidents within the Borough, were a Rest Centre has been required, activated and staffed for a short number of hours.

There are 11 designated Rest Centres within the Borough, the majority are Leisure Centres and Community Centres.

The roles required in a Rest Centre are:

- Rest Centre Manager and a
- Rest Support Officer

What is the role of a Rest Centre Manager?
With the support of Emergency Services and Health Colleagues, Rest Centre Manager’s manage the displaced people who have been affected by the Emergency. They also manage the coordination of the rest centre. The role is also supported by the Council’s Emergency Planning Team, who co-ordinate the Local Authority response to the Emergency.
What is the role of a Rest Centre Support Officer?
This role provides administrative support to the Rest Centre Manager in the management and coordination of the centre.

We aim for support officers to be part of this rota, one day/evening per month. Full training is provided. You do not need to live in the borough to be part of the rota. If you are needed you will receive time for the hours worked.

The authority would welcome officers support regarding this important piece of work.

If you have any questions, please give Michelle Cotgreave a call or email: emergency.planning@halton.gov.uk

New Learning & Development Opportunities 2019 – 2020
The Learning and Development team are extremely pleased to announce the launch of the all new Learning & Development Calendar.

The calendar offers a wide variety of training courses with all new Masterclasses and Mindfulness Sessions. We are however, also continuously responding to the changing needs of the organisation and aim to tie our work to emerging agendas and new developments as they arise.

Our core business revolves around our Learning & Development Calendar. This Calendar opens up a variety of learning opportunities to meet the specific job needs and the transferable skills requirements of Council employees.

Halton's Health Improvement Team's (HIT) training calendar is also available to view within this document.

If you require further information about a specific training course or wish to book a place on a Corporate Calendar event then please email training.reception@halton.gov.uk or call 0151 511 7111

To book a place on any HIT courses, please email HIT@halton.gov.uk or call 0300 029 0029

If you have any items you would like to include in the News in Brief, email michelle.osborne@halton.gov.uk