HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

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For Immediate Release

Enjoy Hallowe'en safely this year

Have fun, but stick to the rules to keep each other safe is the message from Halton Borough Council in advance of this year's Hallowe'en.

Under the 'very high' Covid alert level, Halton and other areas of the Liverpool City Region are subject to increased measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19, these include:

- A ban from mixing with anyone outside of your household or social bubble, in homes, gardens or any other indoor setting – this is enforceable by law.
- You may meet others from outside your household or social bubble in some outside areas (like parks), but there must not be more than six in the group
- Travel outside of Halton to other areas, particularly those in a lower alert level (for example Warrington where the level is currently high) is strongly advised against. Likewise, travel into the area is discouraged. Mixing of households indoors in high level areas is also banned.

Instead of 'Trick or Treat, which risks spreading the virus, families are being encouraged instead to take children 'pumpkin spotting' - looking for pumpkins or pictures of pumpkins in the windows of houses – again, this must only be done with members your household or social bubble. If you are registered with one of our Children's Centres, you can pick up a Halloween craft bag to help create your pumpkin artwork.

Other ideas include a family Hallowe'en movie night with themed tea time treats and drink, or taking part in one of the virtual costume competitions that are being organised in the borough.

Talking about the changes needed this year, the Council's Executive Board Member for Community Safety, Cllr Dave Cargill said: "We know how much families enjoy Hallowe'en and this is not about spoiling people's fun. However, we cannot stress enough just how important it is that at the moment that we do not mix indoors with people from outside of our household or social bubble.

"Hallowe'en parties with groups of friends or between different families must not happen this year – not only are they illegal, but they will put our community at unnecessary risk of this deadly virus, which thrives on company.

"What we don't want the scariest part of this Hallowe'en to be, is for more of our community to become really unwell, or end up in hospitals that are already under increased pressure. It is up to all of us do the right thing, and follow the rules in place"

Cheshire Police will have an increased officer presence across the borough to provide reassurance to the public and anyone who may have any concerns over the Hallowe'en period.

Supt Jo Marshall-Bell said "Hallowe'en is an exciting time of year and should be celebrated. We don't want to stop people from enjoying themselves, but we really need to continue to stick to the rules so that we can help reduce the spread of the virus. There are still plenty of ways you can celebrate to make the most of the spooky festivities.

"The majority of residents are sticking to the rules and are doing all they can to plan Hallowe'en celebrations safely. We are encouraging young people to have fun but to do so without causing harm and distress to others and within the law. Anti-social behaviour and criminal damage can have a significant impact on the local community and have a long lasting effect on victims. Now more than ever we need to pull together to celebrate Hallowe'en safely."

For full details on the restrictions in place for the 'very high' Covid-alert level in Halton and the Liverpool City Region, go to www.gov.uk . Or visit www.halton.gov.uk for our frequently asked questions on the restrictions

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