HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

the mersey gateway
A BRIDGE TO PROSPERITY

Mersey Gateway Project

Income and expenditure summary 2021/22 to 2025/26

This report details income and expenditure data in relation to the Mersey Gateway Project for the last five financial years to March 2026.

Photograph by Ian Cank Photography

Income and expenditure – April 2021 to March 2026

The graph and table below show that, as was projected in the project's planning and development phase, annual expenditure exceeds annual income each year.

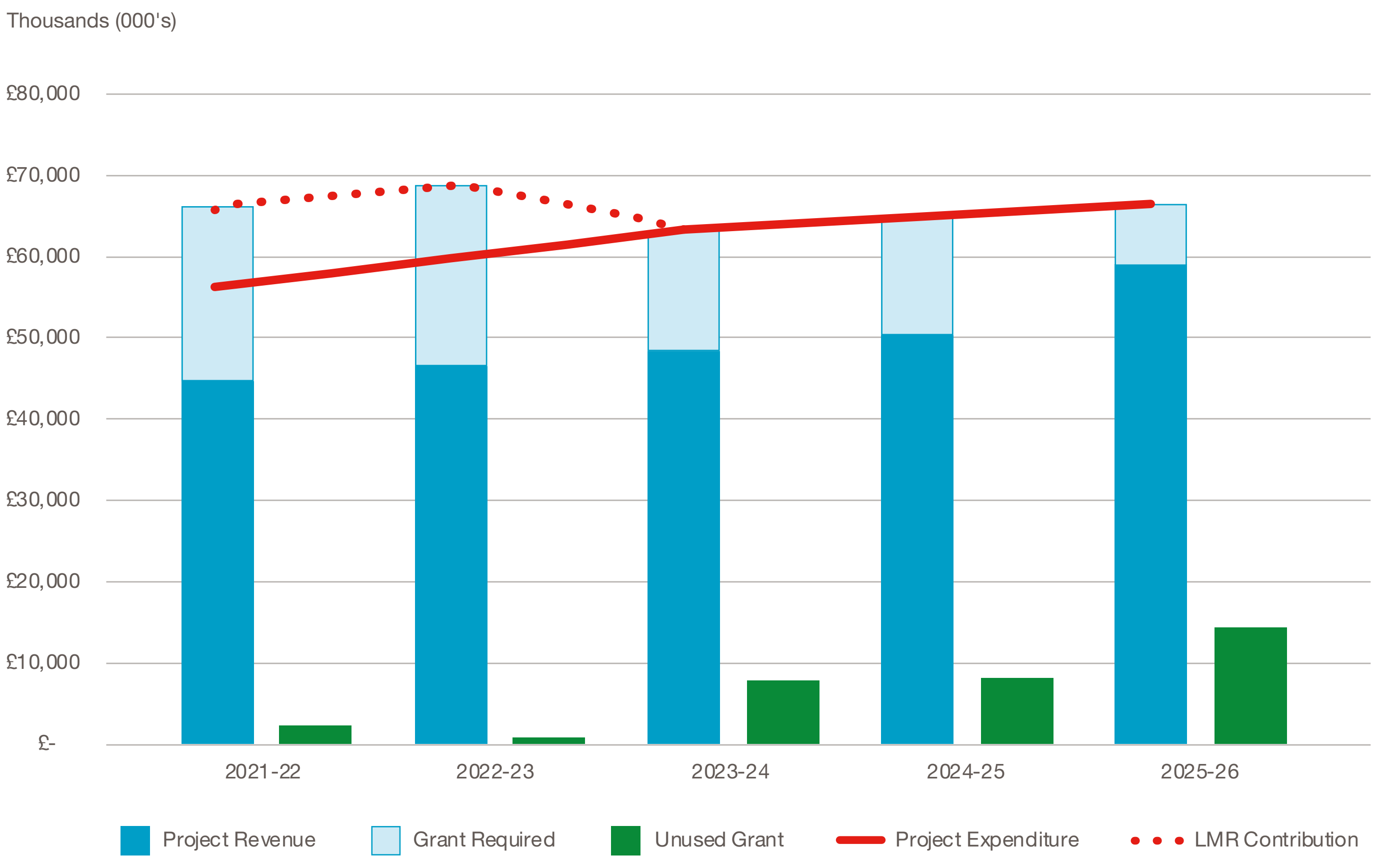
The shortfall between income and expenditure is covered by Government funding in the form of a grant provided by the Department for Transport (DfT) at the start of each financial year. This amount is an annual estimate of the grant funding required and is paid in advance.

The grant funding that has been required has been steadily decreasing since 2022-23 for a range of reasons:

- Project revenue has increased steadily in recent years, returning to pre-pandemic levels in 2023-24 and continuing to grow since then.
- Traffic volumes have steadily increased since 2020, with the total number of crossings in 2025-26 up by 3% compared with 2024-25.
- April 2025 saw the first increase in toll charges since the Mersey Gateway Bridge opened in 2017.
- Careful management of project finances meant that this increase was well below the rate of cumulative inflation over this period, resulting in a £2.40 toll charge for a Class 2 vehicle rather than £2.90 if the full impact of inflation had been passed on to motorists.
- Although, project expenditure has steadily increased since 2021-22 with costs being above those forecast due to higher than expected inflation.

This means that, as anticipated, an element of the grant has not been used. This unused element is returned to the DfT, with 15% being retained by Halton Borough Council.

Mersey Gateway Project – Income and Expenditure 2021/22 to 2025/26



A guide to reading this graph:

- The blue columns represent project revenue – income from toll charges, account and plan fees, and Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).
- The light blue and green columns represent total grant funding received from UK Government.
- The solid red line indicates the annual project expenditure.
- The dotted red line shows the project's contribution to the Liquidity Maintenance Reserve (LMR) in 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Income and expenditure table

The table below shows the income and expenditure figures for the project by financial year. It details the figures represented in the graph above. Figures in thousands (000's).

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
1 **Actual Revenue**	£44,453	£46,360	£48,147	£50,122	£59,025
2 **Actual Project Costs**	£55,979	£59,560	£63,234	£64,678	£66,432
3 **Transfer to LMR***	£10,000	£9,000			
Deficit	**-£21,526**	**-£22,200**	**-£15,096**	**-£14,566**	**-£7,407**
DfT Grant Received	£23,719	£22,940	£22,566	£22,469	£21,837
Unused Grant	£2,193	£740	£7,470	£7,903	£14,430
DfT Share @ 85%	£1,864	£629	£6,350	£6,718	£12,266
HBC Share @15%	£329	£111	£1,121	£1,185	£2,165

** Liquidity Maintenance Reserve (LMR)*

1. Actual Revenue includes income received from toll charges, account and plan fees and PCNs.
2. Actual Project Costs includes payments to:
   a. Merseylink for the Design, Build, Finance and operation of the Mersey Gateway associated roads,
   b. Emovis for the operation of the tolling contract,
   c. Insurance premiums,
   d. Interest on prudential borrowings associated with the project, and
   e. The cost of operating the Mersey Gateway Crossings Board.
3. The Liquidity Maintenance Reserve is a separate ring-fenced bank account required under the terms of Funding Letter which is to be used to manage any short-term financial shortfalls.