

**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING, SKILLS AND COMMUNITY POLICY AND
PERFORMANCE BOARD**

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board on Thursday, 13 January 2011 in the Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Edge (Chairman), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chairman), Austin, Carlin, Findon, Horabin, Howard, Macmanus, Parker and Roberts

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Simpson, H. Cockcroft, R. Mackenzie, A. Villiers and W Rourke

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

Action

ELS30 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 15th November 2010, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

ELS31 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that the following question had been received:-

Ref CS2 Section – Deliver a Programme of Reader Development Activities

Making decisions in times of budget reduction requires a close understanding of the customer base. To involve the customers in making decisions between tough options, makes any reduction more acceptable rather than an imposed cut. For instance the decision to stop buying CD stock may have been a wise management decision, but it doesn't appear so to the average user no explanations were provided.

Why have User Groups not been developed at the Libraries?

Response

Thank you for your question. Whilst there are currently no permanent user groups in libraries, the service does have a good knowledge of its customer base and uses a variety of mechanisms to ensure it consults and gathers information to inform its decision making process. The national public library user surveys, Halton 2000, suggestions and comments forms, constant stock monitoring as well as feedback gathered via Facebook and Twitter all contribute to this.

Specific project and service redesign have involved users and non-users through community consultation events, focus groups and steering groups some of which continue to meet and contribute to service development.

The strategy for libraries, which will consider user engagement, is due for publication this year. This will be subject to public scrutiny and consultation.

RESOLVED: That the public question be noted.

ELS32 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board was informed that there were no minutes from the Executive or Executive Board Sub-Committee that were relevant to the Employment Learning Skills and Community Portfolio since the last meeting of the Board.

ELS33 SSP MINUTES

The Board received the Minutes of the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership Meeting held on 6th December 2010.

The Members were advised that a briefing on Construction Halton and what services the casting model could provide would be circulated to Members.

In receiving the minutes the Members noted the following:

- Work carried out by the Scientific Work Topic Group must be taken into consideration;

- Adult learning must continue to be encouraged; and
- Existing projects had been evaluated in relation to support required once the WNF funding had ceased.

The Board requested that a report be brought to the next PPB detailing which projects would continue and which projects would cease. Members also requested that their concerns be recorded regarding the lack of funding resulting in the end of various projects.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes be noted;
- (2) a report outlining which projects would be continued and which projects had stopped be brought to the February meeting of the Board.

Strategic Director
- Resources

ELS34 WORK PROGRAMME INITIAL TOPIC IDEAS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Environment and Economy which was the first step in developing a work programme of Topics for the Board to examine 2011/12. Members were requested to forward ideas to Wesley Rourke or Councillor Edge for suggestions of Topics to be considered over the year. It was suggested that the information of past Topic Groups carried out to date be circulated to the Board in order for new Members to have an overview of work carried out in the past.

Members discussed initial suggestions such as Youth Unemployment, Education and Skills Training, facilities in the Borough, and something within the Community remit such as Libraries and Community Centres.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) Members e-mail Wesley Rourke or Councillor Edge with Topic suggestions / ideas before the 4th February 2011.

ELS35 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic

Director Resources which provided progress against the Service Plan objectives and performance targets. Performance trends/comparisons affecting services for Economic Regeneration and Culture and Leisure for the second quarter of 2010/11.

The following comments arose from the report:-

- In relation to the self-service machines, for issuing and returning books in the libraries this had a very high take-up and there was secured funding for all the libraries to receive the latest machines;
- With regard to the number of local people with disabilities into permitted and paid work, it was noted that other agencies would also be responsible for achieving these targets, not just the Council's contribution;
- In relation to NI153 worklessness within 25 most deprived LSOAs it Members felt that it would be beneficial to have the actual number of people rather than a percentage figure.

In response it was noted that in future the actual figure of worklessness within the 25 most deprived LSOAs could be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the second quarter monitoring reports be received; and
- 2) the actual number of worklessness within the 25 most deprived LSOAs be provided in future reports be circulated to Board Members for this quarter.

ELS36 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY MID YEAR PROGRESS REPORTS 2010 - 2011

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Resources, which provided information on progress in achieving targets contained within this Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton.

It was reported that an updated Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton was the central document for the Council and its partners and was presently at an

advanced stage of preparation and would become live from April 2011.

The Board was advised that the coalition Government had set out its performance measures in Government Departmental Business Plans and many of the performance measures were already included in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

It was further noted that the Sustainable Community Strategy included targets which were also in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The report advised that attached at Appendix 1 to the report was progress to the 2010/11 mid-year which included information for those specific indicators and targets that fell within the remit of the Board.

The Board was advised that in considering the reports Members should be aware of the following:-

- All of the measures within the National Indicator Set (NIS) were monitored through Quarterly Departmental Service Plan Monitoring Reports. The purpose of the report was to consolidate information on all measures and targets relevant to the Board in order to provide a clear picture of progress; and
- In some, outturn data couldn't be made available at the mid-year point. Additionally, all measures captured through the National Place Survey, which was due to be undertaken this year, had been deleted from the NIS by Central Government and therefore no further data would be made available in 2010/11. The future requirement for localised perception survey under the transparency agenda was presently subject to consideration.

Arising from the report Members requested to see the results of the Active People survey. Members also discussed whether the targets in relation to increasing participation in sport and physical activity would be achievable should funding cease for Sport England and other agencies.

Members also discussed the careers advice provided by schools and it was noted that guidance was provided in collaboration with help from the Economic Development and Children and Young People's Team.

RESOLVED: That report and comments made be noted.

(NB Councillor Lloyd Jones declared a personal interest in the following item due to being a non-executive director for Halton and St Helens PCT)

ELS37 DRAFT BUSINESS PLANS FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment and Economy which provided an update on the Business Planning for the period 2011-14 and considered the Directorate priorities, objectives and targets for services for this period that fell with the remit of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community PPB.

The Board was advised that each Directorate was required to develop a medium term business plan, in parallel with the budget, that was subject to annual review and refresh. Draft Service Objectives and Performance Indicators and targets had been developed by each department and the information was included in the Appendices to the report. These objectives and measures would form the basis of the quarterly performance monitoring received by the Board during the future year.

The Board was further advised that due to the proposed structural changes across the Council and the need to better integrate the Directorate's priorities as last year a combined plan would be published rather than individual Departmental Service Plans. The plan was, however, subject to reconfiguration of services between Directorates and subject to consultation.

The Board discussed the establishment of a parking partnership with private sector operators and it was noted that a response could be provided of the progress made so far. Members also raised concerns in relation to the bus services running in the evening travelling through economically deprived areas. In response, it was noted that this question could be forwarded to the Public Transport Advisory Panel. The Members suggested that a feasibility study in relation to parking be brought back to a future Board.

RESOLVED: That Board Members pass any detailed comments they may have on the information in the Business Plans for 2011/2014 to the relevant Operational Director by

20th January 2011.

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Meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.