

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

*At a meeting of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 14 November 2011 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Edge (Chairman), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chairman), Carlin, Howard, Macmanus, Parker, C. Plumpton Walsh, Roberts, Rowe and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Horabin

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Hatton, C. Johnson, N. Mannion, C. Patino, D. Parr, M. Simpson and W Rourke

Councillor Jones in accordance with Standing Order 33.

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

*Action*

#### ELS20 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### ELS21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The board was advised that no public questions had been received.

#### ELS22 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the minutes of the Executive Board relevant to the Employment Learning and Skills and Community Portfolio since the last meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

## ELS23 DARESBUY ENTERPRISE ZONE - PRESENTATION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided information on the recently approved Enterprise Zone for Daresbury. The report set out what Enterprise Zone Status meant for the Borough and what benefits would arise and the proposed timetable for implementation.

Members received a presentation from David Parr, Chief Executive, on Daresbury Enterprise Zone which set out the following:-

- Daresbury National Science and Innovation Centre (DNSIC) was one of only two in the country;
- brief history, campus model was presented to Government in 2004, DSIC Board established to test model in 2005, in January 2006, Government asked for same model to be introduced at Harwell;
- the site is located on bunter sandstone which was geologically the most stable material in the world;
- large scale facilities for particular physics, technological resource centres and a computational science and engineering department where major science themes, capabilities and funded activities were carried out;
- the Cockcroft Institute was a national accelerator science centre which had won major awards and helped development of Big Science;
- the campus was a magnet for ultra-high-tech industry and combined business and science together improving economic growth for Halton;
- 109 campus companies, and cluster companies were built around biomedical, digital/ICT/mobile, advanced engineering and instrumentation plus energy and environmental technologies;
- success rate of retaining businesses in the location was excellent, 98% of business start ups at Daresbury have succeeded and the site was currently 100% full;
- the centre facilitates partnerships and deals between SMEs and blue chips;
- a high profile of visitors had visited the centre;
- new DSIC Joint Venture (JV) Partnership had 90 initial expressions of interest;
- the JV was formed in December 2010 and the private sector partner was Langtree;
- master Plan and Phasing Plan for the Enterprise

- Zone;
- details of Enterprise Zone Status; and
- Sci-Tech Enterprise.

Arising from discussion of the presentation Members noted the equal stake that Halton had in the Joint Venture, DSIC was working closely with schools to raise awareness of science, the range of high tech opportunities available and the need to educate to the standard required and the importance of the employment of people from Halton and the possibility of rolling out super fast Broadband beyond Daresbury.

Members noted how this was a very exciting opportunity and the Chairman thanked David Parr for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

#### ELS24 EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS QUARTERLY POLICY UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources which set out recent national policy announcements relevant to Employment, Learning and Skills.

It was reported that a steady flow of policy announcements, consultation exercises, reports and ministerial statements were issued by Government departments and agencies and had varying degrees of relevant issues on the Employment Learning and Skills agenda related topics.

The report set out brief summaries of key announcements to the Board for information, along with observations of local relevance, where appropriate. This provided the opportunity for Board Members to consider whether to initiate more detailed scrutiny and/or reports to a future meeting. The report set out the following:-

- Higher Education White Paper;
- DEP Worklessness Co-Design;
- Launch of Higher Apprenticeships Fund;
- Flexible, effective, fair: Promoting economic growth through a strong and efficient labour market;
- Launch of Lifelong Learning Accounts;
- Europe 2020 Strategy; and
- Liverpool City Region – Building on its

## Strengths: An Independent Report.

Members welcomed the report as it provided an update on the current position in regard to policy matters and would help to plan the future work of the Board. It was also suggested that this be a regular item on future Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board agendas.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

### ELS25 CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise and the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources which sought endorsement of the Halton Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2011-2013.

It was reported that the 2010 Child Poverty Act that received all party support, created a Government commitment to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Specific duties imposed upon local authorities and designated partners included co-operation to mitigate the effects of child poverty, undertake a local Child Poverty Needs Assessment, adopt a strategy to tackle child poverty and that the child poverty be taken into account when preparing or revising the Sustainable Community Strategy.

It was reported that in anticipation of the Child Poverty Act the CES Board had commissioned the development of Liverpool City Region (LCR) Child and Family Poverty Framework with Knowsley MBC acting as the lead City Region authority for Child and Family Poverty through the City Employment Strategy. It was further noted that Halton had been an active partner and participant in this work, which had facilitated the adoption of common definitions, the sharing of data and good practice across the City Region authorities.

The Board was advised of one of the key outputs of the collaborative approach across the LCR was the report: "A Brighter Future: Working together to tackle child and family poverty". It was further reported that Halton's own detailed Child and Family Poverty Needs Assessment was completed and published in December 2010. A copy could be downloaded by following the link set out in the report.

It was further noted that it was planned to undertake a fresh needs assessment in 2013. The strategy had been subject to extensive consultation and had benefited from

input from a range of organisations and groups, particularly with regard to the Development Plan, colleagues engaged on drafting the Liverpool City Region Child Poverty and Wellbeing Strategy and the Halton Child and Family Poverty Steering Group.

Members were advised that the strategy had been endorsed by Halton Strategic Partnership and Halton Children's Trust Board and was formally approved at Executive Board on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011. The Strategy was appended to the report for consideration.

The report further set out key underlying causes of child and family poverty in Halton, identified key priorities to tackle child and family poverty in Halton and key issues and barriers to overcome first to tackle child and family poverty in Halton.

Members commented on the age of the data and requested whether recent information could be provided in the near future, whether family learning could be increased to all schools in Halton and the need to address mental health issues in relation to becoming barriers for getting people back to work. In response it was noted the new needs assessment scheduled for 2013 would benefit from more up to date data such as the 2011 Census and the recently completed Halton Residents survey. The Halton People into Jobs service were dealing with issues around mental health as part of their client assessment.

RESOLVED: That the Halton Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2011-2013 be formally endorsed.

## ELS26 DRAFT SPORTS STRATEGY

The Board received the report of the Strategic Director, Communities which set out the draft Sports Strategy and provided an update on the operational issues.

It was reported that the Sport and Recreation team reported its performance to this Board through quarterly monitoring reports produced by Community and Environment Services. Members were advised that this year a key objective was to produce a new sports strategy for Halton and consultation was essential for the success of the strategy which had already begun with a sports forum. A draft copy of the Halton Sports Strategy for 2012-15 was appended to the report for information.

Members were advised that the Strategy took into

account Government policy, Sport England Strategy, national policies from other relevant bodies; relevant regional policies, sports specific policies and local plans plus strategies and priorities. The strategy identified 6 key themes as follows:-

- increased Participation and Widening Access;
- club development;
- coach education and volunteering;
- sporting excellence;
- finance and funding for sport; and
- Sports Facilities.

It was reported that one of the key outcomes was to increase participation, in which Halton had made excellent progress which was evidenced within the strategy.

It was further reported that participation in sport had increased by 7.3% over the last five years and the proposed strategy sought to increase this further.

Members raised concerns regarding current play space being used for building sites. In response, it was noted that developers had to go to the Council's Planning Framework and Sport England were a statutory consultee, therefore it was not a simple process to develop housing schemes on playing fields.

RESOLVED: That draft Sports Strategy be received.

## ELS27 CORPORATE BUSINESS PLANNING

The Board considered the report of the Strategic Director Policy and Resources which gave Members an opportunity to contribute to the development of Directorate Business Plans for the coming financial year.

Members were advised that each directorate of the Council was required to develop a medium term business plan in parallel with the budget that was subject to annual review and refresh. The process of developing such plans for the period 2012-2015 was just beginning.

The Board was further advised that at this stage Members were invited to identify a small number of priorities for development or improvement (possibly 3 – 5) that they would like to see reflected within those plans. Members also suggested that Arts and Culture development could be investigated including further development within

the role of Libraries.

Suggested proposals for priorities for development or improvement included:-

- Welfare Reform and the Single Programme;
- Interface with private sector and employer facing services;
- Sector development;
- Arts and culture development, including the role of libraries;
- Low carbon economy; and
- Apprenticeships.

It was reported that Strategic Directors would then develop draft plans which would be available for consideration by Policy and Performance Boards early in the new year.

It was reported that plans could only be finalised once budget decisions had been confirmed in March and that some target information may need to be reviewed as a result of final outturn data becoming available post March 2012.

The report also detailed the time frame for planned preparation, development and endorsement.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the priority areas identified above be agreed for development or improvement in the Directorate Business Plans 2012-15.

Strategic Director  
- Policy &  
Resources

*Meeting ended at 8.16 p.m.*