

**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, 17 September 2012 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: H. Coen, M. Simpson and W Rourke

Also in attendance: Cllr E Jones in accordance with Standing Order 33

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

	<i>Action</i>
ELS11 MINUTES	
The Minutes from the meeting held on 30 May 2012, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
ELS12 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was reported that no public questions had been received.	
ELS13 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The Board considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board relevant to the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Portfolio, since the last meeting of the Board.	
In relation to EXB36 Members queried whether Halton had interest in the site. In response it was reported that the Council did have an interest in the site.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.	

ELS14 SSP MINUTES

The Board received the minutes of the Employment, Learning Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership from the 30 July 2012.

Arising from the minutes Members discussed the consortia for Mersey Gateway. It was noted that there had been negotiations regarding tenders and the Board expressed a desire to employ local companies where possible.

RESOLVED: That the minutes and comments made be noted.

ELS15 ENTERPRISE OFFICERS, HALTON PEOPLE INTO JOBS - PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from Eddie Dourley, Enterprise and Employment Officer, which provided details of Enterprising Halton Service and the wider provision available to local residents that were considering starting up their own businesses or becoming self-employed.

The presentation set out the following:

- Halton People Into Jobs (HPIJ) had successfully delivered the Enterprising Halton programme since 2007;
- details of one to one business start up advice, including Kick Start Course and Funding;
- between 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012 there had been 354 business start up enquiries, 15 Kick Start courses delivered and 95 new business start ups supported;
- case studies of business start ups in Halton and other examples of new businesses that had opened in Widnes Market;
- barriers individuals were faced with when starting their own businesses and support provided to them; and
- aims, objectives and future focus for 2012-13.

Arising from the presentation Members discussed survival rates of new start ups and support provided for young people and requested data in comparison to last year.

The Chairman thanked Eddie Dourley for an

informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation and comments made be noted.

ELS16 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)
PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which provided a view of the first five years of the Business Improvement District (BID programmes at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates). The report detailed the measures that had been put in place to secure a positive vote from the business community to continue to deliver the programmes for a further 5 years.

It was reported that BIDs were a partnership between local authorities and local businesses to provide additional services or improvement to a specific area funded by an additional levy to the non-domestic rates.

Members were advised that all rate payers in the BID area had the opportunity to vote on the proposed BID and approval of a BID had to meet two tests. Firstly a simple majority of those voting in the BID ballot must vote in favour. Secondly, those voting in favour must represent a majority by rateable value of the rateable properties of those voting.

It was reported that BIDs were completely private sector lead so local businesses had control over how the resources of the BID were spent. Local businesses could therefore develop local solutions to address local issues and by investing collectively in those solutions they could make a real impact on their business area.

It was noted that the Astmoor and Halebank BID programmes had been operating since April 2008 and the report set out the following:

- impact;
- security and recorded crimes at each BID programme;
- examples of physical environment enhancements;
- administration;
- business support;
- training programmes; and
- timetables for the BID 2 process.

Arising from the report Members noted the attendance of training programmes which were relevant to the types of businesses in each of the BID areas.

The Board noted the impact the BID programme has had over the last 5 years and supported a positive vote for a further 5 year BID programme.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Board notes the positive impact that the BID programme has made over the last 5 years at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates; and
- 2) The Board notes the steps that are currently being taken to ensure that the businesses at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates vote positively for the programme to continue for a further 5 years.

Strategic Director
- Children and
Enterprise

ELS17 EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS QUARTERLY POLICY UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which informed Members of recent national policy announcements relevant to employment, learning and skills.

It was noted that a steady flow of policy announcements, consultation exercises, reports and ministerial statements were issued by government departments and agencies with varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills agenda and related topics.

The report set out brief summaries of key announcements as follows:

- results of Portas Pilot rounds 1 & 2;
- Queen's speech;
- Beecroft report on employment law;
- talent march;
- apprenticeships;
- universal jobmatch;
- 2011 census; and
- welfare reforms – universal credit.

In relation to welfare reforms, Members queried the amount of residents that would be affected by this. In response it was noted that an answer would be sought from the Revenues and Benefits section and reported to Board Members. Members commented that they would welcome a seminar covering all the issues arising from the welfare reforms.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the provision of a seminar on welfare reforms be explored.

ELS18 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which set out the Priority Based Performance Management Report for the first quarter of 2012/13 to June 2012. The report detailed progress against service objectives / milestones and performance targets and described factors affecting the service, structured by key priorities as stated in section 3.3 of the report.

It was reported that in line with the revised Council Performance Framework for 2012/13, the PPB had been provided with an ELS&C Priority Based Overview Report which identified the key issues that arose from performance in Quarter 1. The priorities and common areas of focus were set out in the report as follows:

- supporting growth and investment;
- raising skill levels and reducing unemployment; and
- enhancing residents' quality of life.

Members were advised that the two departmental quarterly monitoring reports for Economy, Enterprise and Property, and Community and Environment, were available via the following link:
<http://srvmosswe1:40000/sites/Teams/PerformanceandImprovement/Pages/QuarterlyMonitoringReports.aspx>

Arising from discussion of the reports Members noted the following:

- the downturn in the economy was hindering the Council's ability to let HBC Industrial Unites with some companies and queried whether the rents had been adjusted. In response it was noted that this was being looked at through the Asset Management Working Group to review the strategy for those assets and the Council still had to meet income targets;
- with regard to milestone EEP3 – Deliver work programme via sub contract arrangements to prime Contractors for A4E and Ingeus Delotte, a performance improvement plan would be implemented in quarter 2 to address underperformance against targets set. Members requested an update be brought to a future meeting. It was further noted that contractual arrangements prevented work programme data being published until October 2012. Delivery of work programme continued monthly with prime contractors to review performance;
- in relation to the abolition of National Library Standards, Members requested an update be brought to a future meeting;
- in respect of the unemployment rate in Halton, Members noted the huge variances between wards as set out in graphs from

the report, and discussed looking at Children's Centres and the Team Around the Family approach to addressing worklessness.

RESOLVED: That the first quarterly monitoring report and comments made be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.