

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

*At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 15 June 2015 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Edge (Chairman), Baker, Cassidy, Howard, P. Lloyd Jones, Logan, Parker and Joe Roberts

Apologies for Absence: Councillors MacManus, C. Plumpton Walsh and Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: W. Rourke, A. Jones and C. Patino

Also in attendance: None

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

*Action*

#### ELS1 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 23 March 2015, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### ELS2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

#### ELS3 ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and the Economy, which provided an Annual Report outlining the work carried out by the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board for 2014/15.

The Chairman wished to place on record her thanks to Members and Officers for their continued support and hard work throughout 2014/15.

**RESOLVED:** That the 2014/15 Annual Report be recommended to Full Council.

## ELS4 ADULT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, Children and Economy, which provided a summary of the Government's consultation document '*A Dual Mandate for Adult Vocational Education*', which was published in March 2015.

It was reported that the consultation would close on 16 June 2015 and would summarise Government's proposals for future adult vocational education. Further, the consultation document described what had been done since 2010 to promote vocational education and training for adults across further and higher education sectors and analysed England's performance on higher level vocational education against our comparator nations.

Members noted that the report identified three core themes associated with higher level skills (funding; institution building; and the ownership and development of qualifications, standards and curricula) and recognised the importance of individuals being given a second chance to gain the fundamental skills required for life and work. These core themes were discussed in detail in the report.

Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was Halton's draft response to the consultation; which had been developed with the Halton Employment Partnership. It was noted that although the consultation period closed on 16 June 2015, Board Members comments would be taken into consideration and included in the feedback.

Members' comments included the following:

- concerns were raised over the future funding of Vocational Adult Education. Members suggested that it was important that activities to support Vocational Adult Education were appropriately managed to ensure that there was synergy between the respective offers of the Council and Riverside College. It was noted that Mary Murphy, the Principal of the College had been invited to give a presentation on the College at the next meeting;
- suggestion that the Council worked closer with academies/free schools so that courses were not duplicated in the Borough; the Operational Director, Employment, Enterprise and Economy, had already planned a meeting with the Operational Director – Education, Inclusion and Provision, to look at

ensuring that there was strong collaboration between Education and Business sectors in the Borough to ensure that all schools had consistent and equal access to the economic opportunities that were being developed in the Borough;

- A question was raised regarding future funding in respect of 16-19 year olds as part of national discussions on devolution.

RESOLVED: That the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board:

- 1) welcomes the work underway in developing a Halton consultation response; and
- 2) delegates the final approval of the Halton consultation response to the Operational Director (Economy, Enterprise and Property) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Chair of the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community PPB.

#### ELS5 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

The Strategic Director, Children and Economy, presented a report which updated Members on the development and implementation of the European Programme for the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

It was reported that the LCR Employment and Skills Board had held detailed discussions and consulted on the proposed allocations for the Inclusive Economy element of the City Region's European Programme. This led to an allocation which was approved and submitted to the City Region's ESIF Committee on 26 February 2015.

This approved allocation was attached to the report as Appendix 1 and was submitted to the Department for Work and Pensions as Managing Authority for the European Social Fund (ESF) programme.

Members were informed of two bids submitted on behalf of partners: the European Social Fund the Ways to Work (WtoW) Programme and the Business Support ERDF.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the report.

ELS6 SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUP

The Board received an update on the Inward Investment Topic Group, from the Strategic Director, Children and Economy.

Members were advised in January's PPB meeting that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) was developing a collaborative City Region approach to Inward Investment. Following this the Board agreed that it was important to understand the current arrangements for managing Inward Investment enquiries locally, including the source of these enquiries and the resources allocated to delivering the service. It was noted that this would then determine whether there was synergy between a local and city region wide inward investment service and where added value could be obtained.

It was proposed therefore that a Scrutiny Topic Group be established to enable Members to evaluate the effectiveness of the current Inward Investment service and assess where Halton's Inward Investment priorities should lie, together with an assessment of future resource requirements.

The update provided Members with a topic brief and programme and details of the content of the first and second meetings, as referred to in Appendices 1, 2 and 3. Members discussed the proposals for the next steps of the Topic Group and it was hoped the final report would be presented to Members in September.

Members requested a brief account of the content of the employment charter developed through the Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Board. An update on this would be provided at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the progress to date and supports the next steps outlined in the report.

Strategic Director  
- Children and the  
Economy

ELS7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REALISING TALENTS DOCUMENT

The Board received a summary of the *Local Government Association Realising Talent: a new framework for devolved employment and skills*, which recommended options for the devolution of employment and skills to local areas.

The report explained Government proposals on how

the anticipated employer demands of the future would be met, how to up-skill the workforce and get more people back to work. It was noted that the Government faced two significant challenges to achieving this as follows:

- 1) A better local skills match between training and employer demand; and
- 2) Integrating employment, skills and health provision at the local level – more effective and more efficient support.

The report informed Members that the recommendations recognised all councils believed that much more could be done locally to reduce unemployment, and more effectively match local skills supply with current and future employer demand. It set out the minimum expectation to improve services for all areas, and created the space for those who had already made great strides in devolving powers, to go further. The report listed the recommendations called for, listed below and provided commentary on each:

- The introduction of Local Labour Market Agreements by 2016/17;
- A shift in national focus to help the most disadvantaged by replacing the £260 million Work Programme with two new programmes, and devolving it;
- Devolving skills funding and commissioning for all ages;
- Devolution of post 16 learning, and a new Youth Offer;
- Job Centre Plus Support Contracts and Flexible Support Fund to be co-commissioned with councils; and
- A National Employment and Skills Partnership.

It was noted that the Liverpool City Region was well placed with the work underway on potential devolution and their response was attached at Appendix 1 of the report for Members information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ELS8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS - QUARTER 4 2014-15

The Strategic Director, Children and the Economy, presented the performance management reports for Quarter

4 of 2015-16 and requested the Board to consider them and raise any questions or points of clarification.

It was noted that the key priorities for development or improvement in 2014-17 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:

- Enterprise, Employment and Skills; and
- Community and Environment

The report detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

Following Members queries the following information was requested:

- to know more about the Club Halton Accreditation; and
- the nature of work of the Community Sports Coaches was requested and how they were selected.

Officers would respond after the meeting via email to all members as this information was not to hand.

**RESOLVED:** That the Board receive the Quarter 4 performance management reports.

*Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.*