

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, 25 June 2018 in The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors MacManus (Chair), C. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair), Cassidy, Leck, Logan, June Roberts, Rowe, Teeling, Wallace and Whitley

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: W. Rourke and A. Jones

Also in attendance: Councillor Jones, in accordance with Standing Order number 50 and one member of the public

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

ELS1 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 19 February 2018, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

ELS26 – It was announced that the DWP contract had been renewed for a further 6 years.

ELS 27 – The Chair advised the recommendations from the Topic Group had now been to Executive Board. He invited the Portfolio holder for Economic Development, Councillor Jones, to update the Board with the recent progress made in relation to the promotion of Halton's Cultural Offer within a City Region context.

ELS 32 – It was confirmed that the Liverpool City Region Skills Strategy document would be included on the next agenda.

ELS2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that there were no public questions received.

Action

Operational
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ELS3 ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The Board received the Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2017-18.

The Chair wished to convey his thanks to the Vice Chair and all Members of the Board and Officers for their support throughout the year.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report is received.

ELS4 POLICY UPDATE

The Board received a Policy update which informed them of recent national policy announcements relevant to the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board.

It was reported that there were a number of policy, legislation, consultation and guidance documents that were issued by Government departments and agencies that had varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills and community agenda and related topics.

Members were invited to view further information on the items discussed in the report on the Government's web site, and were advised that the information should be considered alongside the key developments and emerging issues that were set out in the quarterly monitoring reports.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

ELS5 APPRENTICESHIPS GROWTH PLAN

A report was received from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which updated Members on the significance and relevance for stakeholders in the Borough of Halton, of the recently published Apprenticeship Growth Plan.

It was noted that the Apprenticeship Growth Plan had been developed in direct response to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Area Review of Post-16 Education and Training that reported on 10 January 2017. The Area Based Review recommended an '*apprenticeships growth plan to drive forward targets for the expansion of the breadth and volume of apprenticeships*'.

Members were advised that the LCR Apprenticeship Hub, on behalf of the Combined Authority, commissioned *Eunoia* Research to develop the Apprenticeship Growth Plan in conjunction with employers, stakeholders, local authorities, colleges and independent training providers. The Plan offered a truly collaborative approach to ensuring a greater alignment between the demand for and the supply of high quality apprenticeships and was a key document to develop collective action, galvanise and promote collaborative activity by colleges and training providers and ensure a co-ordinated approach to driving forward apprenticeship delivery over the next 3 years. Further it was reported that the aspiration was to deliver 20,000 apprenticeships across the LCR per annum by 2020.

The report continued to discuss the aims of the Plan and its key challenges, as well as the priorities for growth and key actions to drive growth.

Following Members' discussion it was noted that European Social Funding (ESF) money would be available until 2021/2022 and discussions were ongoing with Government regarding replacement funding. Also, some small to medium enterprises (SMEs) were put off by employing apprentices due to costs, however they were encouraged to do so and were helped by subsidies in some cases.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the report; and
- 2) notes the comments made in consideration of how the Board could help support the Growth Plan's supporting ambitions.

ELS6 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS FESTIVAL

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the recent International Business Festival (IBF).

It was reported that the Festival was first established in 2014 and was held every two years. Previous festivals had attracted over 50,000 attendees and facilitated an estimated £500m worth of business deals. Members were advised that it was claimed to be the world's largest business festival, providing businesses the space, support and expertise to make connections and realise their potential.

It was noted that the event took place on nine days over three weeks, between 12 and 28 June 2018, with open hours between 8.00 am to 18.30 pm. There would be a focus on a different growth industry theme for each day. It was reported that there would be 100 world leading companies, institutions and trade and investment bodies showcasing their products and services. The report provided further information on the industry types attending, the delegates and guest speakers.

Regarding Halton's involvement it was noted that the Regeneration and Business Growth Teams had been involved in the planning, design and delivery of the promotional materials, and featured on the staffing rota for the Liverpool City Region (LCR) stand.

The report also made reference to the LCR Skills show that was coordinated by the LCR Apprenticeship Hub (which was hosted by Halton). This took place on 18 June 2018 and was a free one day event which brought together the residents within the LCR area and local employers, apprenticeship providers, colleges and universities, under one roof.

In response to queries it was noted that Members could attend next year but there was a cost involved and there was a requirement to register. With regards to previous feedback from the event, it was suggested that there were previously too many speakers and people wanted more networking opportunities; this seemed to have been addressed this year and was considered a success with many innovative employers in attendance.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the progress made to ensure the success of the event.

ELS7 SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUP

The Board received the proposed Scrutiny Topic Group brief for the year 2018-19.

Further to the PPB meeting in March, it was reported that Members agreed to the establishment of a Scrutiny Topic Group which would consider how local residents could be encouraged to access the better paid jobs being created in the Borough.

The structure and format of the Topic Group was presented to Members in Appendix 1 attached to the report. It was noted that Members' comments with regards to young

people with post graduate degrees finding it difficult to find jobs and the aspirations of young people not being heard in schools, would form part of the scrutiny.

The following Members nominated themselves to join the group: Councillors Wallace, June Roberts, Teeling, Leck, C. Plumpton Walsh, Whitley, Cassidy and the Chair, Councillor MacManus.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) Agrees to the project brief and scope of the Scrutiny Topic; and
- 2) That the Members named above be included in the Scrutiny Topic Group.

ELS8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS QUARTERS 3 & 4 - 2017-18

The Board received the performance management reports for Quarters 3 (sent earlier to Members) and 4 of 2017-18 and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

It was noted that the key priorities for development of improvement in 2017-18 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various function areas reported to the Board as follows:

- 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.

Members queried the cancellation of swimming lessons at the Community Centres due to lack of staff and the reasons for this. Also, with regards to the *Households into Work* programme that went live in quarter 4, Members requested to know where the households were in the Borough. It was noted that the financial figures relating to the end of last year would be available for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That Quarters 3 and 4 performance management reports be received.

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Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.