

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills and Community
PPB

DATE: 15th September 2014

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Children and Enterprise

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Presentation on Halton's Work Programme
Contracts

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members that there will be a presentation on progress regarding Halton's Work Programme Contracts.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board

- (i) Notes the progress made to date on Halton's Work Programme contracts.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Members are advised that on 16th June 2011, the Board supported the decision to enter into contracts with Ingeus and A4E to deliver the (Single) Work Programme in Halton.

Members of the Employment Learning and Skills and Community PPB receive regular updates relating to performance on both contracts through the Quarterly Monitoring Reports. However, it is felt that Members would appreciate a more in depth presentation, which will provide details on how the contracts operate.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As part of the contract negotiations Members were advised that a balance was found to ensure that the priorities of the organisation are met, whilst at the same time ensuring that the maximum number of residents benefit from a close working relationship between the prime contractors and Halton Borough Council.

The prime contractors see the benefit of working with Halton Borough Council; not least in respect of the networks and expertise that we continue to provide. We have determined that by operating as a sub-contractor has provided an advantage to the Council in that we do have influence and a degree of control in how the contract operates in the Borough.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The Single Work Programme operates on a payment by results basis. This means that if a person is helped into work, a fee will be provided. In summary only 10% of the total fee will be paid by Government when an individual starts the work programme. A job outcome fee is paid only after an individual has been in work for 6 months. Then a sustainment payment is spread over 1-2 years once this person has been in work longer than 6 months.

This approach resulted in Halton Borough Council being required to invest staff in managing the process, and a return on this investment has only taken place once a person has entered into work.

It is pleasing to note that the Council is starting to see an initial return on its investment, whilst at the same time is continuing to provide a service which helps some of our most disadvantaged residents back into work.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Many aspects of the Work Programme build on a model that has been used for many years through the Halton People into Jobs 'one stop' job brokering and job support initiative.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

There is a relationship between poor health and low levels of wealth in the borough and, therefore, by reducing the number of people on benefits and increasing the income of local people, will help to reduce levels of illness often associated with low levels of income in families.

6.4 A Safer Halton

It is argued that by helping people into work the risk of some individuals resorting to crime and anti-social behaviour is reduced.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are a number of opportunities in the pipeline arising from Halton's portfolio of employment sites and this makes Halton an attractive proposition for the prime contractors; i.e. they can see a return on their investment as they can see the availability of jobs in the Borough over the next few years.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Entering into a 'payment by results contract' required the Council to invest up front in staff resources, accommodation and equipment. However, to mitigate this many of the work programme requirements mirrored services previously provided by the Halton People into Jobs Team. The department set aside contingency resources to offset any delays associated with supporting the individual and then subsequently receiving payment once the individual has started work, and been in work for 6 months.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no equality and diversity issues.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.