

**REPORT TO:** Employment Learning and Skills and  
Community Policy Performance Board (PPB)

**DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Enterprise, Communities and  
Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Economic Development

**SUBJECT:** Scrutiny Topic Group Creating Better Jobs

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed project brief for the PPB's Scrutiny Topic for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) Members agree the project brief and scope of the Scrutiny Topic.
- ii) Members confirm nominations to sit on the Scrutiny Topic Group.

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 At the last PPB meeting in March, 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.

3.2 Members receive a Monthly Economic Assessment report. The data in the report indicate that significant numbers of jobs are being created in the borough, but that the earnings of local residents are lower when compared with regional and national averages. Interestingly, workplace earnings in the borough exceed regional averages.

This would suggest that a large proportion of Halton residents are employed in the lower-paid jobs and clearly an aspiration should be to see more of our residents moving into higher paid employment.

3.3 It is worth pointing out that the Council and its partners provide a number of support services which are aimed at helping residents into work. It is suggested that the Topic Group would wish to

evaluate the success of these initiatives and consider whether there are other factors and constraints which would have an impact on a resident's ability to take up employment and indeed 'better paid employment'.

Members are advised that this is a complex area. To do justice to the Topic, it is suggested that its duration will be 12 months.

As the attached Brief explains, a significant amount of work will be required to understand the 'baseline position'.

There is synergy and learning from previous Scrutiny Topic Groups entitled "Barriers to Employment from an Employee perspective" and, "Barriers to Employment from an Employer perspective". However, these reports were written eight years ago and during this time the policy and funding landscape has changed.

Equally, as mentioned above, this Scrutiny Topic will go beyond an analysis of how residents are supported in finding work, but a reflection on the type of work they secure.

As the project evolves and given, the vastness of the topic, it is suggested that Members will need to focus on one element or factor. This will be assessed during the 'Define' stage as outlined in the Project Brief, but might take the following into account

Geographic Focus – targeting More deprived or less deprived areas?

Demographic Focus – targeting an age group?

Economic Regeneration Zone Focus – targeting a specific area identified for economic development.

Thematic Focus – targeting a specific Growth Sector or type of Company in Halton.

The proposed structure and format of the Scrutiny Topic Group is presented in Appendix 1.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no further policy implications.

#### 5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no further financial implications.

#### 6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

It is anticipated that cross-referencing to the work that the Council does to support young people and families to find further training and employment will be highlighted.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The implications for this priority are outlined in the report

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

N/A

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

N/A

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The main risk is that given the complexity and vastness of the topic area, it may be difficult to maintain focus on specific issues and the danger of opening up new Key Lines of Enquiry. This should be addressed at the inception meeting when an agreement to concentrate on one aspect will be reached.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None at this stage, although there may be barriers to employment identified as the Topic Group progresses.

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

9.1 There are no background papers.