

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning & Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 19th November 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Business Growth Programme in Halton: Update

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report and presentation will inform members about the current performance of the Halton Business Growth Programme

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) Members note the activities and performance of the Business Growth Programme and the support available to Small to Medium Enterprises within Halton
- ii) Members note the proposed extension of the Business Growth Programme from 2019 – 2021 and support the provision of additional business assistance within Halton

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

The Business Growth Programme within Halton is part of a City Region initiative designed to assist Small to Medium Enterprises to grow and create employment. The Business Growth Programme started in January 2016 and is due to finish December 2018.

The Business Growth Programme provided assistance by commissioning external suppliers to undertake a 2-stage intervention with eligible Halton businesses.

Stage 1:

An initial Diagnostic phase considering overall business performance and identifies areas for improvement or to capitalise upon strengths. This results in an Action Plan and set of priorities for additional support from the Business Growth Programme

Stage 2:

Additional support from the Business Growth Programme in one or more of the following disciplines:

- Financial Management
- ICT
- Improving Environmental Performance and Waste Minimisation
- Improving HR Practices and Procedures
- Process Efficiency, including Manufacturing
- Procurement and Tender Readiness
- Sales and Marketing
- Strategic Business Planning

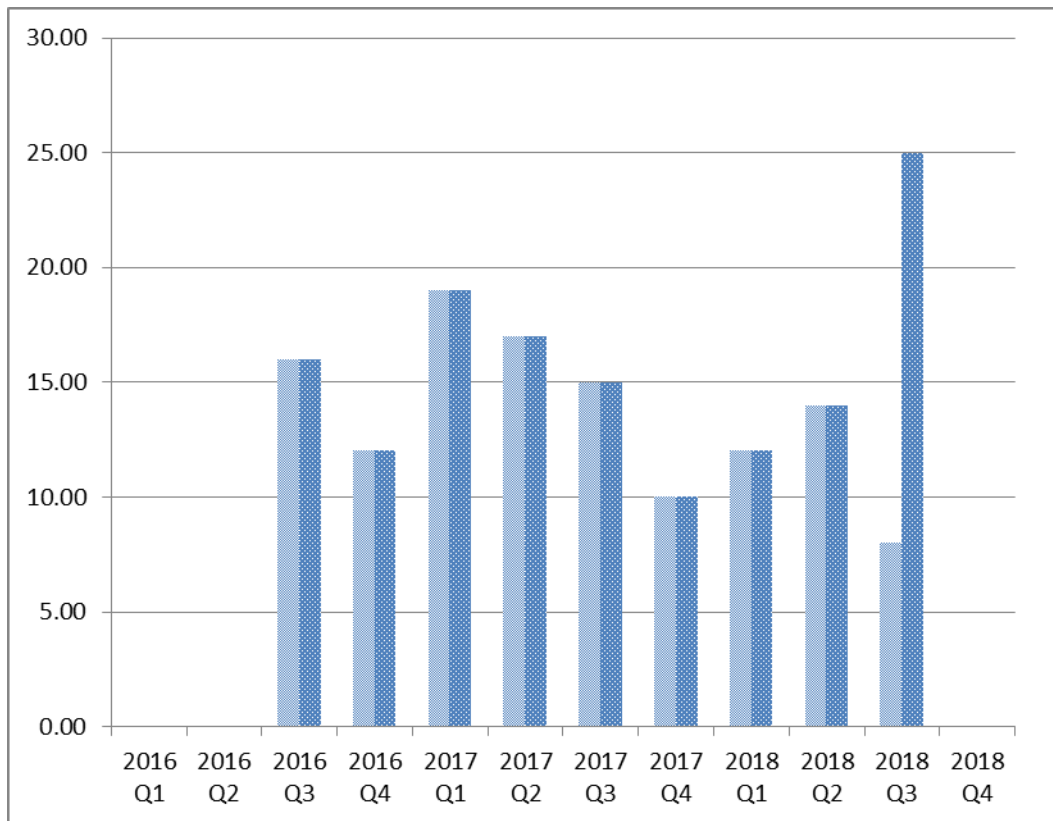
Table 1 shows the Business Growth Programme targets for Company Assists and Jobs Created.

Table 1: Business Growth Programme Targets

	2016	2017	2018	Total
Company Assists	29	68	26	123
Jobs Created	0	56	52	108

Fig. 1 shows performance against Company Assists from the start of the programme from January 2016 to November 2018:

Fig. 1: Company Assists Q1 2016 – Q3 2018



Legend:

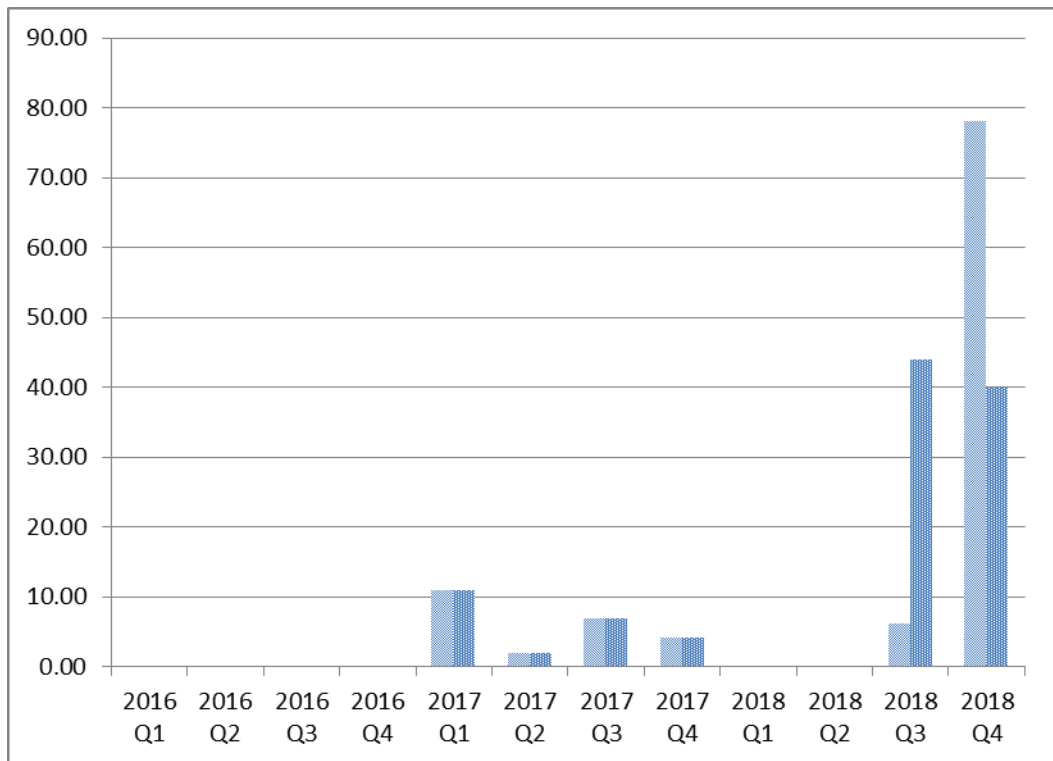
- Target
- Actual

As of November 2018 230 Halton Businesses have participated in the programme. The Halton Business Growth Programme has assisted 140 Businesses against a target of 123.

The delivery of the Business Growth Programme complements the business support offered by the Growth Hub Advisor with the Halton Chamber of Commerce. Halton's Business Growth programme activity pertinent to the Growth Hub is been logged on to the City Region Evolutive Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. As of October 2018, there were 861 such Evolutive entries.

Fig. 2 shows performance against Jobs Created from the start of the programme until November 2018:

Fig. 2: Jobs Created Q1 2016 – Q3 2018



Legend:

■ Target

■ Actual

To date the Halton Business Growth Programme has assisted in creating 30 Businesses against a target of 108.

In order to meet the Jobs Created target the programme is working with suppliers to identify those businesses who are most likely to have generated additional jobs following Halton Business Growth Programme engagement. These businesses are being contacted and individual visits undertaken. This exercise will draw upon additional resources from within the Business Improvement & Growth Team and in so doing build upon the relationship between the Business Improvement & Growth Team and key businesses within the area. This exercise will continue until March 2019 in order to meet the Jobs Created target of 108.

Halton Borough Council has been working with City Region Partners to secure an extension of Business Support within Halton following the end of the current programme in December 2018. It is anticipated that the Business Growth Programme will be extended to cover the period 2019 - 2021. The extended project will have a target of assisting a further 95 businesses and creating an additional 95 jobs over the 3 year period from 2019 - 2021.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The support available through the Business Growth Programme will positively impact upon the sustainability and growth of businesses located in the Halton area.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Business Growth Programme in Halton is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (50%) and Halton Borough Council (50%).

Halton Borough Council's match contribution for the proposed 2019 – 2021 Business Growth Programme is anticipated to be £159,108.04.

Halton Borough Council's match contribution will be met from existing Departmental budgets.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The presence of sustainable and growing businesses within Halton will result in greater employment opportunities for the Borough's young people.

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

The presence of sustainable and growing businesses within Halton will result in greater employment opportunities for the community of Halton.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Access to sustainable employment will impact positively upon the health of the Borough

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

No implications

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

No implications

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The resources of the Business Improvement and Growth Team are finite. Adequate resources will be required to successfully complete the Business Growth Programme within Halton.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Promotional information	Foyer and 5 th Floor Halton Borough Council Municipal Building Kingsway, Widnes WA87QF	David Unsworth Tel: 0151 511 6803