

Public Document Pack



Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 16 November 2015 at 6.30 p.m.
Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Walsh'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Susan Edge (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Andrew MacManus (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Sandra Baker	Labour
Councillor Lauren Cassidy	Labour
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Geoffrey Logan	Labour
Councillor Stan Parker	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Joe Roberts	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrat

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ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Wednesday, 6 January 2016*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	1 - 3
4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	4 - 7
5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES	
(A) RIVERSIDE COLLEGE PRESENTATION	8 - 9
(B) LIBRARY SERVICE PRESENTATION	10 - 11
(C) EUROPEAN PROGRAMME 2014-2020	12 - 19
(D) GROWING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY IN HALTON UPDATE	20 - 27
(E) BUSINESS PLANNING 2016-19	28 - 43
(F) PEOPLE AND ECONOMY POLICY BULLETIN	44 - 48

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

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

DATE: 16 November 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

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** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

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

DATE: 16 November 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Community Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015

42	LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH GRANT REVIEW
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which updated Members on the delivery of the £15 million Liverpool City Region (LCR) Business Growth Grant Programme.

The Board had previously considered a report that described the proposed roll-out of the LCR Business Growth Grant in Halton in November 2014.

The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LCRLEP) had secured £10 million from Round 3 of the Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) programme and a further £5 million from RGF Round 4 to establish a pan-Merseyside scheme to provide grant support of between £50,000 and £1,000,000 to eligible businesses across the City Region. The LCR Business Growth Grant supported business planning to invest in capital or equipment that directly created or safeguarded jobs and to increase business output. This was designed to unlock private sector investment, which would be at least 5:1 - every £5 invested by a business could potentially lead to £1 of support from the LCR Business Growth Grant.

The Board noted the final RGF3 and the current RGF 4 spend position. To date, 90.95 % of contracted grant (RGF3 and RGF4) had been paid to businesses. A total of £3,239,554.03 of private sector leverage had been invested in the Borough as a consequence of the award of grant against total project expenditure of £3,916,416.64. The Programme had created 26 jobs, and safeguarded a further 23 jobs to date. Grant recipients had until 2017 to meet the jobs created and safeguarded targets associated with the award of grant. It was anticipated that the Programme would create 102 jobs and safeguard 72.

RESOLVED: That the positive performance of the Liverpool City Growth Grant Programme in Halton be recognised in respect of the number of companies supported; the level of grant contracted and paid; private sector leverage generated as a consequence of the receipt of grant; and the anticipated number of jobs created and safeguarded as a result of the receipt of grant.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2015

48

UPDATE ON LIVERPOOL CITY REGION EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INITIATIVE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People and Economy, which provided an update on the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Employment and Skills Initiatives in Halton.

The Board noted that the Employment and Skills Board was the LCR lead strategic voice for improving the employment, skills and productivity of the LCR's residents and workforce. The report set out details of the four programmes within the Youth Employment Gateway, where Halton benefitted and had taken a lead role on implementing those initiatives. These included:

- Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Hub;
- Skills for Growth Capital Fund;
- Calls for European Funding; and
- Access to Employment.

It was reported that in future, it was likely that Government would transfer the allocation of resources to the City Region level and that the current Growth Plan concept would be extended, so that the Combined Authority and the Employment and Skills Board would have more influence over the allocation of resources within the LCR.

RESOLVED: That the positive progress being made to deliver Liverpool City Region initiatives in Halton be supported.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	16 th November 2015
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People and Economy
PORTFOLIO:	Economic Development
SUBJECT:	Presentation Riverside College
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To receive a presentation from the Principal of Riverside College. This item was deferred in September, because the College had just received notification of an Ofsted inspection.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) That the board notes the presentation and action points.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Members will receive an update from the Principal on the College's strategic priorities.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that the Principal will cover several areas of interest, i.e. Quality of Teaching and Learning; Enrolments; Funding; key developments.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no further policy implications.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 N/A

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The work of Riverside College complements a wide range of the Council's priorities, and the college is an important and supportive strategic partner in contributing to the borough's economic regeneration and growth agenda.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks identified.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community, Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	16 November 2015
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Community and Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Community and Sport
SUBJECT:	Library Service
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Members on the new library service, following the implementation of the Efficiency Review findings in April 2015.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Detail of report contained in attached power point.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

All content supports the delivery of the Library Service Strategy.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Library service strategy supports children and young people through a variety of reading activities, class visit programme, story sessions, learning activities and a volunteer programme.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Library service strategy supports employment, learning and skills through the provision of public access computers and free Wi-Fi in all libraries, support for people getting online, support for job seekers, and access to resources for those learning new skills.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Library service strategy supports health through the provision of venues from which to deliver health and wellbeing events, Books on Prescription & Mood Boosting collections in all libraries, reminiscence work in the community using Memory Boxes, partnerships with local groups, development of the Community Library Service, and all library staff are trained as Dementia Friends.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None at present.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The service is open and accessible to all Halton residents.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy Performance Board
DATE:	16 th November 2015
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director People and Economy
PORTFOLIO:	Economic Development
SUBJECT:	European Programme 2014-2020
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Programme 2014 to 2020.

The report sets out the context at a Liverpool City Region (LCR) level and also gives details on the funding bids Halton has been developing. Reference is made to future funding 'calls for bids'

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- 2.1 Members note the update on the European (Structural and Investment Funds) programme 2014 – 2020.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 A number of calls were published in March to which Halton responded and were invited to submit full applications in September 2015.
- 3.2 A full application for European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) under Priority Axis 3c 'SME Support' was submitted by a consortia of LCR Partners on Friday 11 September for an 'LCR Integrated Business Support' Project that will provide SME's with bespoke, intensive and specialist support and will link with the LCR Growth Hub. The Consortium comprises the LCR Local Authorities, Liverpool Vision, the LEP and St Helens and Liverpool Chambers of Commerce.
- The total value of the bid is £6m with approximately £3m emanating from ERDF. Halton BC is providing over £230k in match funding to deliver a three year project costing over £450k in total and will be looking to support around 130 businesses in Halton with intensive diagnostic support, which will hopefully help them create over 100 jobs. The Department of Communities and Local Government

(DCLG) has undertaken a first stage assessment of the bid. Assuming the consortium can address the issues raised by DCLG it is anticipated that the programme will be approved in December and delivery will commence in Halton in January 2016.

- 3.3 A full application for European Social Funding (ESF) was submitted on Friday 02 October under the Priority Axis 1 'Inclusive Labour Markets' by a consortium comprising the six Liverpool Combined Authority Local Authorities and Merseytravel. The Council's Employment Learning and Skills Division has been playing a leading role to work with the other Local Authorities to submit an ESF application for the 'Ways to Work' Project for young people & adults to progress to sustainable employment.

The project will also incorporate elements of the Youth Employment Gateway (YEG) project. Young people will also have access to intensive mentoring and be provided with paid employment placements.

The total bid is £42m, £30m of ESF and Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) funding has also been allocated to the project. Halton BC is providing £1.3m in match to deliver a three year project costing £3.3m in total. The project will support around 2000 Halton residents in finding education, training and employment and will help place around 650 of these in sustainable employment. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) provided feedback at the end of October. If successful, the project will commence in the first quarter of 2016.

3.4 **August Calls:**

DCLG also published further calls under Priority Axis 3 for the following:

- Place Marketing for Investment
- Gap Funding Projects for new commercial facilities

For the 'Place Marketing for Investment' call, the Council is part of a consortium where the LCR LEP is the lead applicant for the bid with a view of the Combined Authority being the Accountable Body. Sci-Tech Daresbury is also a partner. The project aims to develop a supply chain\sector development initiative focused upon the Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing and pharma' sectors. The Council has indicated that it could provide cash match, not exceeding £25,000.00 each year, for a three year period.

Regarding the 'Gap Funding' call, the Council cannot provide match funding, but has, instead, promoted the opportunity to commercial developers. To date two developers\companies have submitted outline applications to DCLG.

One of them, Langtree, has submitted an Outline Application on behalf of the Sci-Tech Daresbury Joint Venture for new commercial

facilities as part of the next phase of development at the campus known as the 'Eastern Plots'. The application identified a request of £2.1m gap funding for the £10.7m project.

3.5 **October Calls:**

The Council has also submitted an Expression Of Interest to 'VOLA' VOLA is a consortium of Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector service providers operating in Liverpool City Region. VOLA is the lead applicant on a Digital Inclusion application to the Big Lottery Fund (BLF). The Council will be working with VOLA and other partners over the next couple of months to submit a 1st stage application by the end of November. Applicants will then be requested to submit full applications in the New Year with a view to projects starting in July 2016.

3.6 **The ESIF Committee:**

- The LCR ESIF Committee meetings continue to take place, with Cllr Dave Cargill attending as a representative of the Combined Authority.
- One of the roles of the ESIF Committee will be to assess applications for Strategic fit.
The respective Government Departments responsible for managing the programmes i.e., DCLG for ERDF and DWP for ESF, will provide a summary of the applications to the ESIF Committee, who will then have 5 days to provide feedback.
This is significantly less input, time and information than had been originally envisaged and committed to by Government and is a real concern to partners.
- The ESIF Committee has been supported by relevant officers including Halton's Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property across the City Region to provide technical input and a perspective on strategic fit.
- This is due to the level and volume of the bids being received. Strategic fit must be based on the ESIF Strategy written by the LEP, which has been developed with strong references to the Strategic Growth Plan and a number of LCR wide Strategies, including the Innovation Plan, the Low Carbon Plan, the Super Port Plan, the emerging Enterprise Strategy, the Annual Employment and Skills Statement and associated Skills for Growth Agreements.

3.7 **Next Steps**

The next steps for Halton are as follows:

- Continue to work with partners to identify and agree suitable projects.
- The Council's External Funding Team and Portfolio Leads will identify further potential match funding opportunities in order to maximise the benefit to Halton that the European programme provides.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This is in line with the Council's Corporate Priorities and with the requirement to lever as much external funding as possible into the borough to support the communities of Halton.

4.2 It is proposed that the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property will take the strategic lead on overseeing the successful delivery of Halton's European projects and will be supported by the External Funding Team who will offer a borough-wide service helping with application writing, funding claims and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of projects.

It is imperative that all Halton's applications are realistic and robust and meet the eligibility criteria and that they are underpinned by a comprehensive monitoring system.

It is therefore, anticipated that support will be required from the Council's Internal Audit and Accountancy Divisions.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The matching funding referred to in the report has previously been agreed and will be met from income generated through the prudent management and delivery of Government funded Employment, Learning and Skills contracts.

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

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

There is a significant opportunity for the EU programme to benefit all of the Council's priorities. Specific projects will be developed to support Children and Young People, targeting the resources where they are most needed.

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

Overall the EU programme will assist in providing job opportunities for local people and will go some way in addressing the level of unemployment in Halton. The projects being developed will support the local economy, local businesses and the local community which

in turn will skill up Halton's workforce and create more jobs locally. The relevant key challenges which LCR wishes to use EU funding to help address are:

- Economic competitiveness: £8.2bn output gap
- Business base: deficit of 18,500 businesses
- Economic activity: deficit of 35,000 economically active working age individuals
- Employment: deficit of 46,200 people in employment
- Skills base: deficit of 82,000 individuals holding NVQ4 qualifications, 32,600 more individuals with no qualifications
- Job creation: need for 90,000 additional jobs

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The EU programme will promote healthier communities through jobs opportunities, the development of green transport and housing initiatives.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

The EU programme will complement the initiatives of the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy and the good work of the Police and Community Safety and through its projects look to reduce the fear of crime.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The EU programme will act as a catalyst to attract developers and new businesses to the area by creating an attractive, well-accessed and serviced area, which provides a safe and attractive environment for employees and visitors.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There is some risk that the Council and its partners will not be in a position to access the EU grant funding if it cannot source the match funding required.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 It is anticipated that reference to Equality and Diversity principles will be a prerequisite for any funding available. In fact, the theme 'Inclusive Economy' focuses on supporting disadvantaged either to enter into the work place or remain in the work place.

8.2 European Regulations governing use of the ESIF require that all activities supported using ESIF must be committed to following the framework of Public Sector Equality Duty.

Halton must ensure that activities have due regard to equality and are able to promote the three elements of that Duty: eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. The equality duty covers the following nine groups with protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

APPENDIX 1*ACRONYM Buster*

Acronym	Represents
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
CCT	Cross Cutting Theme
CLG	Department of Communities & Local Government (also DCLG) (Managing Authority for ERDF)
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions (Managing Authority for ESF & Opt-In Org)
EC	European Commission
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIF	European Investment Fund
EOI	Expression of Interest
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Fund
ESIF Committee	Local EU Sub-Committee
EU DG	Local EU Delivery Group
GA	Growth Accelerator (BIS product)
GDT	Growth Delivery Team (DCLG Local team)
GPB	Growth Programme Board (once England programme has been approved it will be named Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC))
GPF	Growing Places Fund
GVA	Gross Value Added
HCA	Homes & Communities Agency
IAS	Internal Audit Service (CLG, Article 16)
IP	Investment Priority
ITT	Invitation to Tender
JEREMIE	Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium-sized Enterprises (Financial Instrument)
JESSICA	Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in Inner City Areas (Financial Instrument)
LA	Local Authority
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
MAS	Manufacturing Advisory Service (BIS Product)
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NWF	North West Fund
OJEU	Official Journal of the European Union
OP	Operational Programme
Open Call	Open commissioning that any partner can apply for but must provide match funding element
Opt-In Org	Opt-in's will be provided by a national body to deliver part of the ESIF and allows partners to deliver ESF whilst accessing national match funding
PA	Priority Axis

Acronym	Represents
PAV	Progress And Verification visit
PEV	Project Engagement Visit
RGF	Regional Growth Fund
RONW	Rest of the North West
SFB	Super-Fast Broadband
SME	Small to Medium-sized Enterprise
SUD	Sustainable Urban Development
TA	Technical Assistance
TO	Thematic Objective
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSB	Technology Strategy Board
UKTI	UK Trade and Investment (BIS Product)
VCLF	Venture Capital Loan Fund
VCSE	Voluntary, community and social enterprise sector
YEI	Youth Employment Initiative

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	16 th November 2015
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People and Economy
PORTFOLIO:	Economic Development
SUBJECT:	Growing Economic Prosperity in Halton Update
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update PPB Members on business support activities that have been undertaken to support the growth of Halton's economy. At the request of the Chair, it is hoped that a short presentation will be provided by a business that has benefitted from the Council's support.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- I) Members note the progress being made on business support activities in Halton.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Members will recall that a business support model or 'business attractiveness model' for Halton was presented to this PPB in March 2015. It was felt appropriate to provide an update on the activities that the Council has been developing since March. In summary the purpose of the model is to shape and inform the level and type of support that we provide to businesses in Halton.
- 3.2 Although the model applies a basic principle that priority should be given to those businesses that will make the greatest contribution to growing and sustaining Halton's economy, the Council aims to provide a comprehensive business support service known as a "soft landing and retention service" to all the borough's existing businesses, as well as new businesses looking to relocate to the borough. Often, however, the level of support that the Council can provide is either predicated by funding criteria and or is determined by Government policy. A recent example of this being the establishment of a Business Support Growth Hub, (presented to the last PPB in September), where Government has been prescriptive in how support to businesses should be channelled through this mechanism.

There are a number of activities that have contributed to the growth of Halton's economy. During the last 12 months, the Council's Business Improvement and Growth Team has also undertaken 'customer surveys' to better understand the needs of our businesses. These surveys have also informed the list of activities set out below.

It is worth noting that economic indicators recently published point to a number of positive developments in regard to the number of jobs being created in the borough and the proportion of private sector jobs being created. Appendix 1 illustrates this.

Inward Investment

Members will be aware of the work of the team in attracting Inward Investment to the borough through the recent Scrutiny Topic Group on Inward Investment. Therefore, this report does not expand on this aspect of supporting business

Sector Focus

In reflecting the principles of the business attractiveness model described above, the Business Improvement and Growth team has applied a sectoral focus to some of the businesses it supports. The Advanced Engineering Manufacturing (AEM) and Pharmaceutical sectors are good examples of this. In this respect, the Council has an ability to take a strategic view and has facilitated an AEM cluster network group for the exchange of ideas between businesses. Businesses quickly see the mutual benefits of collaboration.

Members have seen examples of this sector focus through recent study visits to individual businesses, which also picked up on the borough's other key sectors including Science and Innovation and Logistics and Distribution.

Relationship Management & Account Manager Approach

The Leader and Chief Executive have emphasised to the team of the need to maintain positive and strong relationships with the borough's businesses, likening this to an account manager role. This sees the Business Improvement and Growth Team acting as the one stop contact point for any enquiries businesses have in respect of accessing Council services and professional expertise. This concept has been extended to provide a greater engagement with Halton's **Key Companies** i.e. large employers in the borough.

Evolutive Database

A frustration for businesses can be the fact that they are often contacted by a wide range of organisations either seeking support

from the business or offering support to the business. The Evolutive database will further improve the communication with businesses, but more importantly across internal and external partners to ensure that the support to businesses is consistently managed. This is a useful tool in providing good relationship management as described above.

Externally funded business support programmes

Members have received reports at previous meetings regarding externally funded support programmes that are managed by the Council's Business Improvement and Growth Team. These include the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) grants to business programme and the European Regional Development Fund Business Support Programme. Through these schemes, businesses have benefitted from capital investment or tailored mentoring and diagnostic support aimed at helping the business to grow. The role of the team has been vital in guiding businesses through the finer detail of Government contracts and the complexities of State Aid and funding body criteria.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

Although the Council has transferred the day to day running of the BIDs programme to the Chamber of Commerce, the Council continues to play a strategic oversight role in guiding and inputting into the BIDs' Business Plan. The team has also been working to secure a retail BID for Runcorn.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council has allocated time to the effective monitoring and evaluation of the programmes described above. The Council has acquired a positive reputation for the effective management of these programmes. As a result, the Council is in a good position to work with partners to ensure that Halton businesses benefit from successor programmes such as RGF 7 and ERDF 2014-2020 schemes. Furthermore, the Council has procedures and structures in place to manage and deliver the future Business Growth Hub Brokerage and Support service.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Whilst there are no financial implications arising from the report, it is worth acknowledging the relationship between a strong and vibrant business base and the potential for sustained or increased business rates income for the Council. The Business Improvement and Growth Team plays an important role in creating a business friendly borough aimed at attracting and retaining businesses in the borough.

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

6.1 The report has positive implications for all of the Council's priorities for the reasons set out in section 4. However, the report is most relevant to the Employment Learning and Skills and Urban Renewal priorities. The activities described in this report are aimed at increasing employment opportunities for our residents. At the same time some incentives are provided to businesses to improve the environment in which they operate.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks identified.

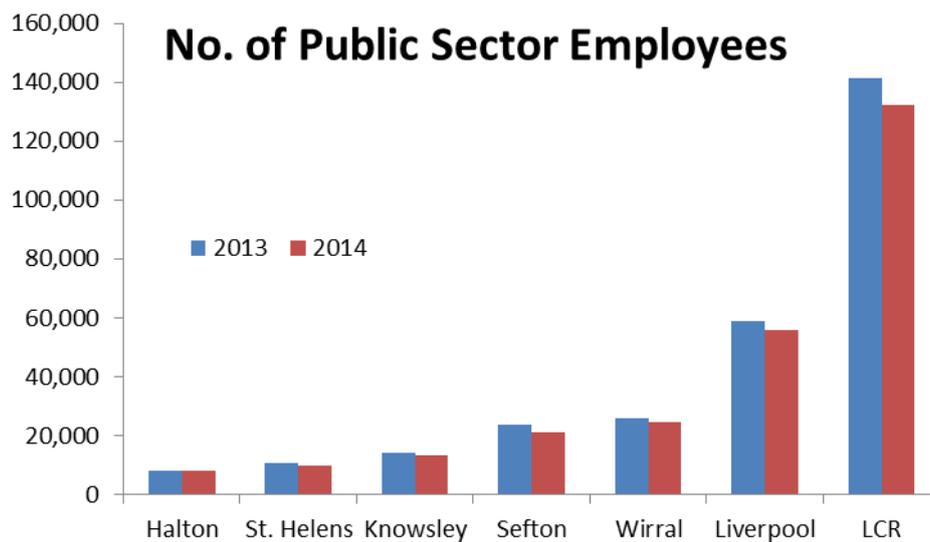
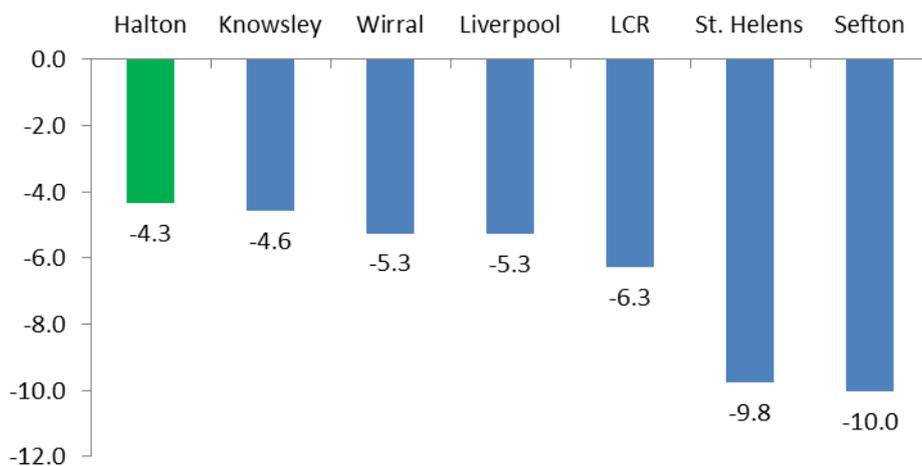
8.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.

Business Register and Employment Survey (2013 -14)

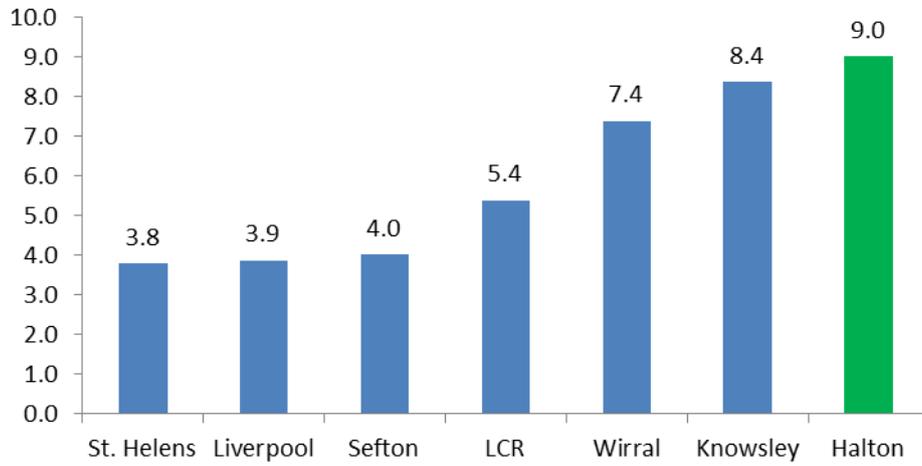
Public Sector

% change in public sector employees



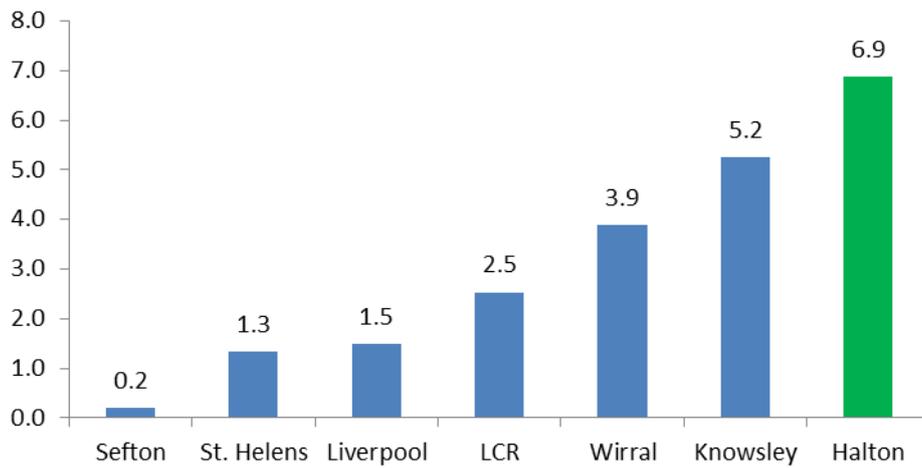
Private Sector

% change in private sector employees



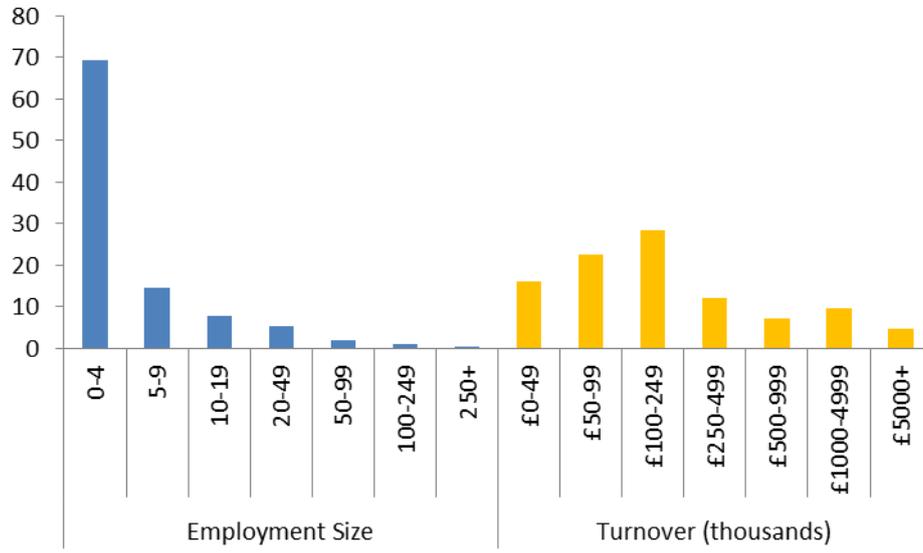
Total Employees

% change in total employees

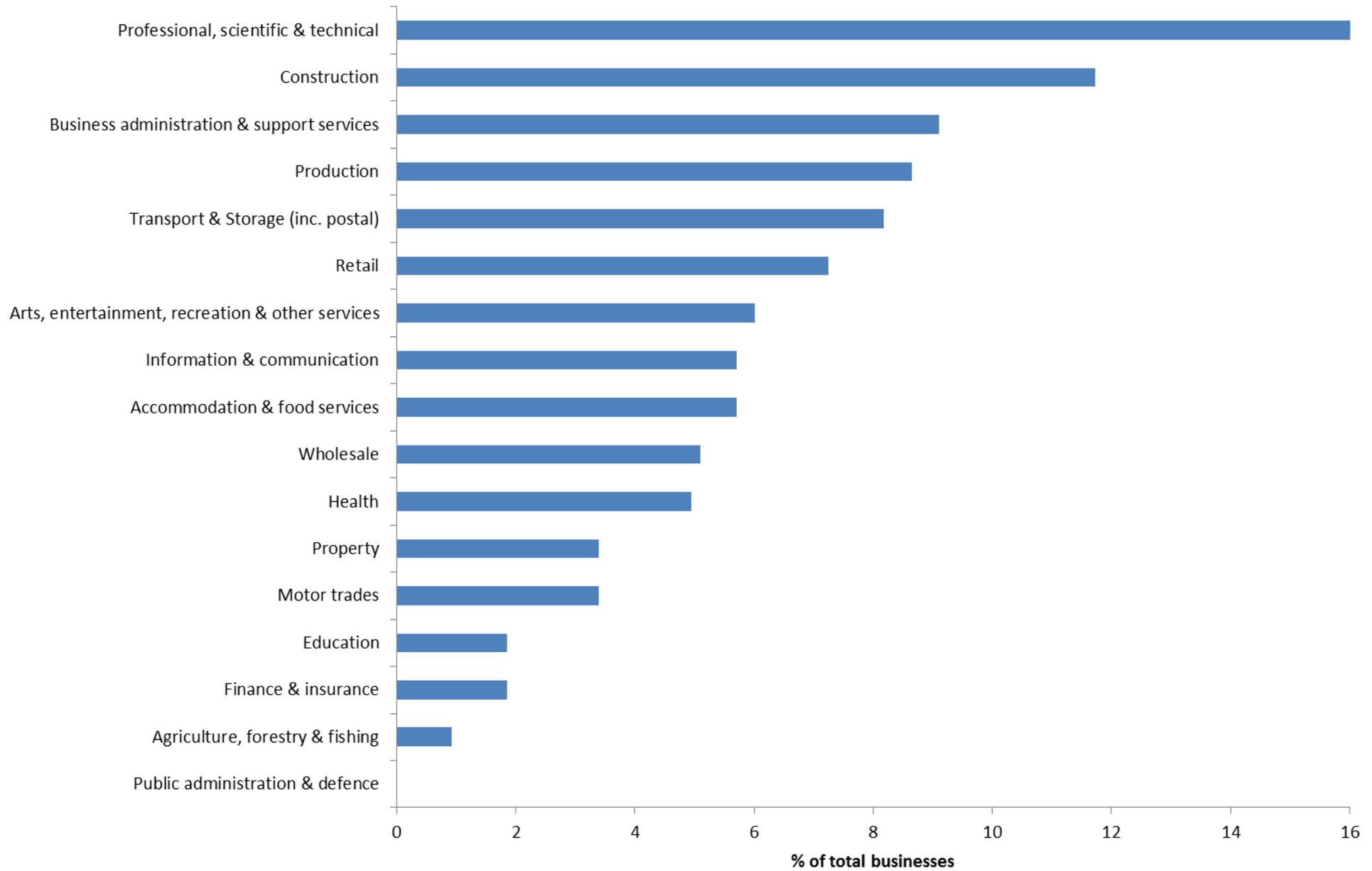


UK Business: Activity, Size and Location (2015)

Number of Businesses/Turnover



Industry Type (2015)



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

DATE: 16th November 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Business Planning 2016-19

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To offer a timely opportunity for Members to contribute to the development of Directorate Business Plans for the coming financial year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive the information provided and indicates any areas of service activity that are considered relevant to plan development.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following the reduction of three directorates to two, the Council will be developing a 'one Council' medium-term business plan, in parallel with the budget, that is subject to annual review and refresh. The process of developing such plans for the period 2016-2019 has now begun.
- 3.2 At this stage Members are invited to identify a small number of priorities for development or improvement (possibly 3-5) that they would like to see reflected within those plans. Strategic Directors will then develop draft plans which will be available for consideration by Policy and Performance Boards early in the New Year.
- 3.3 Whilst providing a Directorate and an organisational context each of the Directorate Business Plans will contain appendices identifying specific Departmental activities and performance measures and targets that would provide a focus for the on-going monitoring of performance throughout the year.
- 3.4 It is important that Members have the opportunity to provide input to the process at the early stages in order that their knowledge of local and organisational issues forms an integral element of plan development.
- 3.5 It should be noted that plans can only be finalised once budget decisions have been confirmed in March and that some target information may

need to be reviewed as a result of final outturn data becoming available post March 2016.

- 3.6 To assist the Board the Operational Director (Economy, Enterprise and Property) and the Operational Director Community and Environment will give a short presentation on the issues and challenges facing the areas that fall within the Board's remit over the period of the next plan and will circulate the outline of that presentation in advance of the meeting.
- 3.7 The timeframe for plan preparation, development and endorsement is as follows:

Receiving Audience	Information / Purpose	Timeframe / Agenda on Deposit
PPB	Discussion with relevant Operational / Strategic Directors concerning emerging issues, proposed priorities etc.	Autumn 2015
Directorate SMT's	To receive and endorse advanced drafts of Directorate Plans	SMT dates to be agreed with all Strategic Directors
Management Team	To receive and comment upon / endorse advanced drafts of Directorate Plans	December 2015
PPB's	Receive advanced draft plans including details of relevant departmental service objectives/milestones and performance indicators	January / March PPB cycle
Executive Board	To receive advanced drafts of Directorate Plans for approval	March 2016

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Business Plans form a key part of the Council's policy framework and as such will be developed taking account of known and anticipated changes within the Council's operating environment.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Directorate Plans will identify known or anticipated resource requirements relating to finance, HR, ITC and accommodation needs.
- 5.2 Arrangements for the provision of Quarterly Priority Based Performance Monitoring Reports to Members would continue. Such reports would routinely contain information concerning key developments and emerging issues and departmental objectives and performance indicators.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The business planning process is one means by which the progression of the Councils strategic priorities is integrated into the operational activities of Departments and Divisional Teams throughout the organisation.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The development of a Directorate Plan will allow the authority to both align its activities to the delivery of organisational and partnership priorities and to provide information to stakeholders as to the work of the Directorate over the coming year.
- 7.2 Risk Assessment will continue to form an integral element of Directorate Plan development. This report also mitigates the risk of Members not being involved in setting service delivery objectives.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues directly related to this report. However such matters will continue to be reported annually through the performance monitoring process.

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

There are no relevant background documents to this report.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Members Briefing Note – 16th November 2015

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide members of the PPB with an overview of key strategic issues facing the Board over the medium-term.

As you will appreciate this briefing cannot cover all aspects of the delivery of services across all of functional areas that fall within the remit of this Board but will provide details of the primary drivers that will shape the work of services in supporting and delivering the Council's organisational priorities and business needs.

Strategic Context

- **Ongoing Financial Constraints**
- **Difficult Choices**
- **Things that we must do**
- **Lots of change and uncertainty**
- **Maintaining Stability**

The Council continues to operate in an extremely difficult financial climate. We will need to ensure that we continue to meet our statutory responsibilities across all areas of our operations and the Economy, Enterprise and Property Department and the Community and Environment Departments will continue to play a key supporting role in this endeavour, for example through effective financial management and the integration of national policy initiatives with

PPB Areas of Responsibility

- **Consider each area in turn**
- **Key issues for each**
- **Overview**

efficient arrangements for service delivery.

An overview is provided for each priority for comment and discussion. Members are advised that some priorities will resonate in other PPBs, for example, Environment and Urban Renewal and Resources, as the Council's

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Economic Regeneration function encapsulates both place and people in driving the borough's economic growth and prosperity agenda.

Overview

- Public Sector Transformation
- Welfare Reform
- Fixing the Foundations
- Devolution
- Northern Powerhouse
- Education Reforms
- Liverpool City Region Single Inward Investment Framework
- Further Education Area Based Review
- Business Growth Hub
- Redesign of the Work Programme

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EMPLOYMENT LEARNING AND SKILLS
AND COMMUNITY PPB**

For 2016/17 the main issues that will influence and impact on the work of the Employment Learning and Skills and Community PPB are: -

Public Sector Transformation

This will have a greater impact on the PPB and the work of the Council's Economy, Enterprise and Property (EEP) department because we need to focus more on customer-led co-design as well as co-commissioning. In our case input from both residents and businesses will be required. This should result in:

- Greater co-working with local and central partners i.e. businesses.
- Greater use of "what works" analysis and using information to provide evidence of success.
- Greater promotion of our service and service innovation through digital and Big Data.

Welfare Reform (ELS&C PPB)

Our resident's economic circumstances will be affected by the changes Government has introduced. The PPB will need to be made aware of the work

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

that the EEP department will be undertaking to ensure that local people have the skills needed to take advantage of local growth opportunities.

“Fixing the Foundations: Creating a More Prosperous Nation”

This details the Government’s plans to raise productivity across the Country and is based around “long-term” investment, and, “promoting a dynamic economy”. As a Council our thinking will need to focus on providing services which increase the borough’s productivity in its broadest sense i.e. improved productivity through improved infrastructure, but also through improvements to Halton’s workforce. The Council’s EEP department has a key role in supporting this.

Devolution

Devolution through the Devolution Act presents an opportunity to transfer additional levers of Economic Development to the City Region. From an EEP departmental perspective this could result in the pooling of human and financial resources to deliver macro-economic as well as local outcomes.

Northern Powerhouse

In the budget a number of statements were made in relation to the Government’s Northern Powerhouse commitments, including the launch of a new transport devolution package for the North. Building on the Northern Transport Strategy, Government confirmed that it will devolve some powers over transport to the North’s Mayor-led city regions. It will establish Transport for the North (TfN) as a statutory body with statutory duties to develop a long-term transport strategy for the North, with an update to be published by Budget 2016. The aim is to redress the North-South economic imbalance, and to attract investment into northern cities and towns.

Education Reforms

A number of Education reforms have been announced but the key points that are important to the department and the ELS and C PPB are that the government will be introducing new, more rigorous GCSE and A-levels in maths and science, and will focus on increasing the take-up of STEM subject A-levels, for girls in particular. Young people without good grades in maths and English at GCSE will continue to study the subjects until the age of 18. The Government will also be moving away from the funding per qualification model for adult learners and, with input from local areas and employers, will develop options to ensure provision is targeted at training with the greatest impact.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Ofsted has recently introduced a new Common Inspection Framework for Further Education. In fact, Riverside was the first college in the country to be inspected using this framework. Learners' views are a key component of the Inspection regime.

Emerging Issues

There are several issues which the Employment Learning and Skills and Community directorate will need to consider when developing its list of key actions for 2016/17. These are:

Liverpool City Region Single Inward Investment Framework

Work continues on the establishment of a Single Investment Framework for the City Region. The Employment Learning and Skills and Community PPB has completed a 'Scrutiny Topic Review' to consider how Halton could and may interface with the City Region, but clearly the Council will need to deploy resources through its EEP department to respond to or adapt to any proposals.

Further Education Area Based Review

Government recently announced a review of FE provision. In summary, Government wishes to see FE providers offering courses which are relevant to the area in which they operate. The EEP department will contribute to this work through the Liverpool City Region's Employment and Skills Board and Combined Authority.

However, the Council's ELS and C PPB will need to ensure that it is cognisant of the need to provide complementary adult Education services in the borough which accord with the principles of the Area Based Review.

Business Growth Hub

The creation of Growth Hubs is a government initiative intended to:-

- Provide clarity, consistency and simplification across the business support agenda
- Increasingly 'migrate' business support from the public to the private sector.
- Provide gateway support, that is information, guidance and brokerage to the business community

Growth Hubs are, therefore, not intended to be suppliers of business support rather the interface between the business community and, increasingly, commercial business support providers

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Halton Borough Council and Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise have submitted a joint response to the Growth Hub tender. The ELS and C PPB will need to ensure that the new arrangements meet the needs of local businesses

Redesign of the Work Programme (ELS&C PPB)

Since 2011, the Council's EEP department has successfully managed and delivered the work programme, importantly helping many of our residents into work, but it has also generated income, which has been reinvested in employment, learning and skills provision. The evolution of a successor programme will need to be reported to the ELS and C PPB as the detail emerges.

PRIORITY WORKSTREAMS for the Economy, Enterprise and Property Department 2016/2017.

Members of the ELS and C PPB are advised that the EEP department proposes the following priority work streams to respond to the key factors and emerging issues described above:

Implementation of the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy (Master planning)

Coordinate and deliver the borough's Major Regeneration Projects

Development of Halton Place Marketing proposal

Development of a Halton Growth Plan

Development of Local Strategic Partnership Asset Management Plan

Contribute to Liverpool City Region's Devolution asks, particularly in regard to Business Support, Employment, Regeneration and Skills

Support Area Based Review

Contribute to Halton's Vision for 2035.

Preparing for Ofsted Inspection – (the department's Adult Learning service will be due for an inspection).

Contribute to Green Belt Review and Delivery Allocations Plan

Contribute to the borough's retail study.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

PRIORITY DELIVERY ACTIONS 2016/17

Members of the ELS and C PPB are advised that the EEP department proposes the following priority delivery actions in 2016/17. Clearly a number of these actions accord with the remit of other PPBs including for example the Urban Renewal and Resources PPBs.

Development and Investment Services Division

1. Implement Markets Business Plan and accompanying Delivery Plan
2. Continuing development of the following regeneration projects:

St. Paul's Quarter, Widnes
Sci-Tech Daresbury
3MG
St. Michael's Golf Course
Venturefields, Widnes Waterfront
Bayer, Widnes Waterfront
Astmoor
Castlefields
Runcorn Town Centre
Halton Lea including Runcorn Shopping Centre
Sandymoor
Murdishaw Local Centre

3. Implement Business Growth Hub concept.
4. Support Town Centres through Town Team and Business Improvement District (retail)
5. Charging Policy for Business/Funding support
6. Establish SLA with 3rd Sector regarding external funding provision
7. Ensure that third party occupations and tenancies are properly managed, documented and optimise revenue receipts.
8. Ensure accurate record keeping and up to date plans, and valuations are consistent to support the management of the borough's assets.
9. Undertake analysis of business needs in relation to premises and relocation opportunities
10. Roll out Business Attractiveness Model principles

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

11. Support the identification of external funding opportunities
12. Ensure the timely disposals of surplus assets.
13. Facilitate accurate and appropriate Asset Valuation reporting.
14. Progress and complete the sale of the Council's industrial estates.

Employment Learning and Skills Division

1. Work Programme focuses now on difficult/harder to reach clients and developing the necessary staffing structure changes to reflect this.
2. Prepare for changes to work programme post June 2017 and forward plan to help advisers to prepare for this.
3. Apprenticeships Hub – broadening remit and, managing co-ordinators and monitoring progress.
4. Supporting Skills Group at Sci-Tech.
5. Developing and Implementing European Projects and Programmes.
6. Adult Learning changes to the curriculum for next year given reductions in funding.
7. Preparing for Inspection.
8. Deliver Youth Employment Gateway
9. Further developing our Employment and Business Partnership

Property Services (Operations)

1. Contribute to One Public Estate concept to better understand how assets are managed in a broader City Region context.
2. Develop a prioritisation process for managing 'non-maintenance' property enquiries
3. Develop a Property Customer Charter giving details on how often property services could respond to enquiries/ lead in times for responses.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

DESIRED DEPARTMENTAL OUTCOMES

The outcomes and key performance indicators highlighted below will for part of the quarterly monitoring reports that will be presented to respective Council PPBs i.e. our success will be measured by:

More businesses coming to the borough

More businesses staying in the borough

A Workforce with better skills and qualifications

Stronger relationship with businesses

More people in work

More people studying and achieving better results

Increased revenue streams for the Council

External Funding resources secured and used effectively

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

We will measure our performance and the effectiveness of these actions through the following Key Performance Indicators:

Jobs Created

Businesses Supported

Land Disposal

Land Remediation

Qualifications

Skills Levels

Business Satisfaction levels

Increased Funding/Investment

Occupancy Rates on properties

Unit Costs – office accommodation

Attracting Inward Investment i.e. an increase in new businesses relocating to Halton.

In conclusion, this document identifies the main factors and emerging issues affecting the Employment Learning and Skills and Community PPB.

The document also outlines the proposed key priority workstreams and priority actions to be undertaken by the Council's Economy, Enterprise and Property Department during the financial year 2016/17.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

COMMUNITIES PRIORITIES

Community Involvement

Community Involvement consists of the Community Development service, Community Centres at Castlefields, Ditton, Grangeway, Murdishaw and Upton and Area Forum projects.

Community Development

- Develop
- Facilitate community engagement to shape services and support policy development
- Leverage external funding for community activity into Halton
- Effective networking and cross sector working with voluntary sector & faith organisations

Overview:

Community Development supports the creation, development and sustainability of independent local community groups. This generates the capacity for effective and inclusive community engagement with council departments and services thus enabling the delivery of community initiatives to tackle strategic objectives and community needs. The Community Development team have both a strategic and neighbourhood role in co-ordinating partnership support to respond to community concerns and aspirations and create cohesive neighbourhoods which are participative and vibrant with a strong sense of community connectedness. The team provides capacity building support to empower Halton's residents to develop social capital, facilitate effective community engagement with Halton's stakeholders and build community resilience. The team have a key role in enabling local community groups to access grant funding leveraging in additional funds to the Borough.

The service will continue to support existing community organisations, their volunteers and facilitate new community activity to increase participation and community resilience.

The service will develop digital information to promote community activity and achieve wider reach to Halton residents.

The service will work in tandem with the Community Centres service to identify gaps in community centre usage and provision and work collaboratively to support a wider offer to community activity, access to services and community events.

The service will support community & voluntary sector organisations to access external funding to bring investment into the Borough.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board**

Business Planning 2016 – 19

The service will support strategic activity with key partners to place community engagement and community insight at the heart of service development for Health & Wellbeing in the Borough.

The service will lead a review of partnership forums for front line services in community engagement, information and advice services and streamline the mechanisms as endorsed by Halton Strategic Partnership Board.

Community Centres

- **Facilitate community led activity**
- **Enable neighbourhood delivery & grass roots access to services**
- **Increase usage, Service Level Agreement's & income**
- **Provide digital access**

The Community Centres service consists of five buildings, Castlefields, Ditton, Grangeway, Murdishaw and Upton. The centres have programmes of community activities, varying models of community café's and service outlets, i.e. children's centre, youth provision, adult day services. These centres provide a community hub, a central point at the heart of these communities for residents to enjoy chosen activities and receive services in their neighbourhoods. They are based in the most severely deprived wards in the Borough and are well utilised.

The service will strive to increase partnership delivery at neighbourhood level and increase service level agreements to improve accessibility to services and support sustainability.

The service aims to increase usage, in particular weekend usage. A marketing strategy will be developed to promote the centres and seek new areas of business that provides an enhanced offer for local residents and works towards seven day demand.

Increase digital access in community centres by expanding community library IT provision and deliver skills development, adult education and job clubs to contribute in tackling worklessness.

The service will aim to expand community café provision enabling access to one at each community centre and further develop the café service to embrace Halton's Health & Wellbeing ambition.

The service will develop customer satisfaction and insight to better understand which parts of the service are highly valued, which require further development and identify gaps for future areas of focus.

The service will contribute to a partnership asset review and proactively develop the community centres service to strengthen the hub concept of neighbourhood access.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Library Service

- Deliver a comprehensive and efficient library service with new operational structure and changes to resources.
- Continue to deliver the library service strategy.
- Continue to support the Society of Chief Librarians Universal Offers for public

Overview:

Following a review of the service changes have been made to the library staff structure and building opening hours. The changes have been effective since April 2015. A number of new staff have been recruited into the new structure and they are being trained and supported to ensure quality support can be delivered to customers.

A number of pilot activities are currently taking place to deliver the library service strategy including development of a Community Library Service to include expansion of the home delivery service.

The library service continues to support people to get online and are expanding this provision, improving staff training to support Universal Credit customers, and improving access to technology in the buildings.

The latest Universal Offer from the Society of Chief Librarians will launch 4/11. The Learning Offer highlights how libraries can support learning through a baseline sign up to provide internet access, space and resources for learning.

The project also includes the development of a digital making kit helping libraries develop their work with children and young people around science and technology; including building computers, coding and robotics, which will support Halton Libraries development of learning activities.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Sport and Recreation 2015 – 2018

- Assisting the inactive to become active
- Leisure Centre operations
- Supporting voluntary Sports Clubs
- Build on and create new income streams
- Sports Strategy review 2015/16
- Playing Pitch Strategy Consultation 2015/16

Overview

The council has an extensive programme of physical activity initiatives designed to improve health and develop healthy life styles. The Sport and Recreation service covers a wide range of important priority work areas that contribute towards delivering the Councils adopted Sports Strategy 2012 to 2015.

Sports Development Team concentrates on development of programmes and activities to support the local sporting infrastructure. The Team directly supports local residents and voluntary sector sports clubs, by facilitating activities, such as:

- Sports development grant scheme (groups and individuals)
- Grass Sports Hire; 50% subsidy for competitive junior matches
- Halton Leisure Card
- Coach, Club and Volunteer Development Programme
- Community Sports Coaching, in schools, clubs and community settings
- Halton Sports Partnership Executive Committee
- Funding clinics, assisting clubs with grant applications

In addition the team seeks additional resources, so it can deliver activities that can support people to start and stay active, current projects include:

- Sportivate (lottery funded project, for 11 – 25 years); Door Step Club (Street Games funded project, for 14 – 25 years); Girls Football (Football Foundation funded project, for 10 – 14 years); Get Active Project (lottery funded project, to support inactive residents 25 – 55 years get active); School Sport Coaching SLA

The service has a challenging income generation target, the team need to continue to identify areas to increase income in order to support current delivery, failure to generate sufficient income could lead to a reduction in staffing levels and thus delivery.

The majority of the service is non-statutory, however, it does include elements of a statutory nature, including, provision of school swimming lessons and providing services to support residents achieve good Health and wellbeing.

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and
Performance Board
Business Planning 2016 – 19**

Leisure Centre Management:

Kingsway Leisure Centre; Brookvale Recreation Centre and Runcorn Swimming Pool are Council owned Leisure Centres. They provide a range of affordable activities that contribute to resident achieving a healthy lifestyle. In addition the facilities provide the main water space and training to support people, specifically young people, to be safe and confident in water.

The 3 centres have a combined annual visitor figure of circa. 680,000. Reducing or withdrawing services could have a detrimental effect on the Health of people in Halton.

The service is contracted out to Places for People Leisure until March 2016. The Council will be bringing the Leisure Centre operations back in house from 1st April 2016. The facilities are old and further capital investment will be required.

Frank Myler Sports and Recreation Ground

Operation of the new facility has been added to the Sport and Recreation Teams duties.

The Council is preparing a Playing Pitch Strategy; evidence of consultation needs to be robust, in order to produce a technical document compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework. The action plan identifies priorities for which resources should be sought.

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

DATE: 16th November 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – People and Economy.

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: People & Economy Quarterly Policy Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of recent national policy announcements relevant to employment, learning and skills.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 **That the report is noted.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A number of policy, legislation, consultation and guidance documents, are issued by government departments and agencies that have varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills agenda and related topics.

3.2 A brief summary of key announcements is provided in this report along with observations of local relevance, where appropriate, so the Board can consider whether to initiate more detailed scrutiny and/or report to a future meeting.

3.3 This report also links to the item on business planning elsewhere on this agenda as it serves to identify policies and announcements that may become important emerging issues for the PPB.

4.0 NEW POLICY, STRATEGY, STATUTORY GUIDANCE & GENERAL INFORMATION

4.1 [NAO Report – Managing Provider Failure](#)

The National Audit Office (the NAO) has published a paper which explores the principles Whitehall departments should use to manage service provider failure. Much of this is relevant to commissioning across the public sector, including local government

4.2 National Audit Office report **[Outcomes-based payment schemes: government's use of payment by results](#)** reviewing the government's recent experience of using 'payment by results' mechanisms to deliver public services.

- 4.3 **'Telephone Support' psychological wellbeing and work feasibility pilot evaluation** An evaluation of the 'Telephone Support' intervention to improve employment and health prospects for people with mental health conditions.
- 4.4 **Business regulation: Better Business for All**
Background on Better Regulation Delivery Office's involvement and toolkit for local Better Business for All partnerships.
- 4.5 **Enterprise Bill: summary factsheet**
Summarises all of the measures included in the Enterprise Bill.
- 4.6 **Public sector apprenticeship targets: Enterprise Bill factsheet**
Outlines the measures that will be included in the Enterprise Bill.
- 4.7 **Ofsted good practice examples: further education and skills**
Ofsted publishes a series of good practice examples in further education and skills derived from its regular inspection activity
- 4.8 **Preparing vulnerable young people for employment**
This Ofsted good practice example shows how [Developing Initiatives for Support in the Community \(DISC\)](#) provides an education and training programme aimed at particularly vulnerable young learners to enable them to develop independent living skills and get ready to begin an apprenticeship, take further courses or start work.
- 4.9 **Helping women from disadvantaged backgrounds make a new start**
This Ofsted good practice example shows how [Blackburne House Education \(BHE\)](#), helps women from disadvantaged backgrounds develop confidence and skills that prepare them for work, further education or training.
- 4.10 **Apprenticeships Levy: Employer owned apprenticeships training**
As part of the new Government's Emergency Budget in July 2015, the Chancellor announced the intention to introduce a new apprenticeship levy. The levy will aim to incentivise Apprenticeship starts within large businesses, in order to help meet the Government's pledge of creating 3 million new Apprenticeships by 2020. The consultation summarises Government's proposals for the implementation of the levy. A second consultation exercise, focusing on the rate and scope of the levy, is expected later this year.
- 4.11 **Preparing vulnerable young people for employment**
Ofsted good practice example showing how [Developing Initiatives for Support in the Community \(DISC\)](#) provides a successful programme.
- 4.12 **Hancock: Every young person should be earning or learning from April 2017**
The government details radical plans to end long-term youth unemployment and decades of welfare dependency.
- 4.13 **LGIU Policy Briefing - Apprentices 2015-20: challenges and opportunities for local government** (*requires log in*)

This briefing describes government's proposals, draws on recent lessons on and evidence, to consider the opportunities and challenges for local authorities (LAs) in contributing to apprenticeship policy.

- 4.14 **Apprenticeships Policy – House of Commons Briefing Paper**
In the 2015 Queen's Speech the Government set out its intention to create a duty to report on progress to meeting the target of 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020. Public sector bodies will be required to employ apprentices and be set targets to increase apprenticeships.
- 4.15 **Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation (HM Treasury Report)**
This plan responds to the recent slowdown of productivity growth in the UK and to the long-standing gap compared to other countries.
- 4.16 **Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the 'glass floor' – SMCP report**
The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission has published a research report on the 'glass floor', which protects less able, better-off children from falling down the social ladder as they become adults – inhibiting opportunities for more able children from less advantaged backgrounds.
- 4.17 **The Welfare Reform and Work Bill and LGIU Policy Briefing**
The Welfare Reform and Work Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 9 July 2015; it is scheduled to become law before the start of the new financial year in 2016. The Bill consists of several parts, one of which is of provisions relating to changes to welfare benefits; other parts include new duties on the Government to report to Parliament, the repeal of most of the 2010 Child Poverty Act, and changes to rent policy in social housing
- 4.18 **Open consultation: National Minimum Wage: 2015 - 2016 Evidence**
New online survey seeking evidence to inform the Low Pay Commission's report on the National Minimum Wage rates.
- 4.19 **JRF Report Understanding Age and the Labour Market and LGIU Briefing**
This report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation uses a range of indicators, including unemployment statistics, employment projections, employment, and education policy and practice, to investigate the role that age and generation play in employment, and how far this has changed over time.
- 4.20 **Further Education – Overseeing Financial Sustainability – NAO report and LGIU Briefing**
The National Audit Office has looked at the future financial sustainability of FE colleges, and the system of Government levers to help FE colleges get back to financial health.
- 4.21 **The Dowling review - Business-university research collaborations final report**
The final report of Professor Dame Ann Dowling's review of business-university collaborations.
- 4.22 **Guidance: Local partnership opportunities with Jobcentre Plus**

Updated list of Jobcentre Plus District Managers- Partnership opportunities for public and voluntary organisations to help Jobcentre Plus move people off benefits and into employment.

4.23 **Policy paper: Think, Act, Report**

Information about the purpose of the Think, Act, Report initiative and how to get involved. Think, Act, Report provides a simple step-by-step framework to help companies think about gender equality in their workforces, particularly in relation to recruitment, retention, promotion and pay.

4.24 **Local areas get their say on Sunday trading**

The government has launched a consultation on plans to give local areas the power to allow large shops to open for longer on Sundays.

4.25 **Non educational barriers to the elite profession evaluation**

The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission has published research 'Non educational barriers to the elite profession evaluation' showing that working-class applicants struggle to get access to top jobs in the UK. The research is the product of extensive interviews with staff from 13 elite law, accountancy and financial services firms, who together are responsible for 45,000 of the best jobs in the country. It finds that elite firms are systematically excluding bright working-class applicants from their workforce. Data collected for the project showed that as much as 70% of job offers in 2014 were to graduates who had been educated at a selective state or fee-paying school, compared to 4% and 7% of the population as a whole.

4.26 **Welfare to Work Devolution in England**, published by the Joseph Rowntree Trust, examines the case for more devolution in welfare-to-work schemes in England through a detailed examination of the history of central and local government partnerships in skills and employment programmes

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The varied range of issues covered in this report potentially present a number of challenges and opportunities across a number of the Council's current priorities. Where appropriate a more detailed analysis of the information and relevance to the council will take place.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Currently the changes are out for consultation so there are no direct implications at this time.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 There are no immediate risks directly relating to the information in the report.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 None

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

7.1 None under the meaning of the Act. (For information - Hyperlinks to all of the full reports are embedded within the headings.)

8.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

8.1 If members would a more detailed analysis of any of the issues mentioned in this report, or paper copy of any of the documents referred to, they should contact; Debbie Houghton Principal Policy Officer at debbie.houghton@halton.gov.uk or 0151 511 8231