

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, 18 November 2019 in the Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor June Roberts

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: C. Patino, W. Rourke, A. Jones, T. Booth and K. Hayes

Also in attendance: One member of the press

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
ELS20 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 23 September 2019 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p> <p>The Chair provided the following updates with regards to:</p> <p>ELS13 – PRESENTATION RIVERSIDE COLLEGE – the Chair and one other Board Member had completed a tour of the College today which had proved to be extremely worthwhile and interesting.</p> <p>ELS18 – SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUP ITEMS 2019/20 – Further to the decision of the topic group establishment – <i>Traded Areas of the Borough</i>, the Operational Director Finance, would prepare some financial information on this for presentation at the group's first meeting.</p>	
ELS21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.</p>	

ELS22 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Executive Board minutes relating to the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Portfolio were provided to the Board for information.

RESOLVD: That the minutes be noted.

ELS23 BUSINESS GROWTH PROGRAMME

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which informed on the current and future performance of the Business Growth Programme (BGP).

Members were advised that the report reflected on the changes from Phase 1 of the Liverpool City Region Integrated Business Support (LCRIBS) Programme through to Phase 2, now named as the Business Growth Programme, and the nature of support across the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

It was reported that it was proposed to extend the Programme and if this was successful, Phase 3 would commence January 2022. It was noted that the project met a distinct gap in the current City Region business support delivery positioned between pre start / start up / post start up delivered by others within the LCR. Further, supporting Phase 3 of the BGP would align with the Council's priorities in improving the economic growth; by aiding SME's within Halton to grow, develop, become more sustainable and increase jobs.

Further to Members' queries, the following information was added:

- A risk analysis was done once a year using the Local Economic Assessment;
- Some SME's (Small to Medium Sized Enterprise) failed in their first 3 years of trading; accurate statistics relating to Halton would be available later in the year and reported to the Board;
- SME survival rates in the Borough were comparable and slightly exceeded the LCR average; and
- Information on job numbers and types of business were provided in the monthly economic report produced by the Council's Customer Intelligence Unit.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the activities and performance of the BGP, which sought to align with the local delivery and with emerging City Region business support delivery; and
- 2) notes that further engagement with the Combined Authority and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) would be required to consider the implications of an 18 month Programme extension – Phase 3 of the Business Programme.

Operational
Director
Economy,
Enterprise
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Property

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ELS24 APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

The Board received a report which provided an update on the new Skills and Apprenticeship Hub and the Apprenticeship Ambassador Programme launched in January 2019.

It was reported that following a recent successful funding application, the Combined Authority was bringing together the expertise of the existing Apprenticeship Hub (managed by Halton Borough Council), the City Region's Skills for Growth Service, and the work the Combined Authority led on around specific sectors and careers, all under the umbrella of a new 'Skills and Apprenticeship Hub'.

The Service would be in place from 1 November 2019 and have 5 main functions, these were outlined in the report with the management and delivery arrangements.

The following comments / queries were made following presentation of the report:

- It was good to see older people (25+) doing apprenticeships as some were not ready to take an apprenticeship straight from school, so it was an option for them later on in life;
- It was also encouraging to see that some people were continuing up to higher levels within their apprenticeships;
- The importance of the College in ensuring that students were 'job ready' was discussed;
- There were also a number of older people retraining to follow different career paths;
- The workforce requirements of companies within the Borough were shared with the Council and the College, so that skills and qualifications shortages could be identified and could be focussed upon;
- Members requested to know how many

apprenticeships were completed and how many apprentices actually secured employment from them; and

- Members requested a breakdown of apprenticeships for Halton and how many of those were school leavers.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the updates provided.

Operational
Director
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ELS25 POLICY UPDATE

Members received a report informing them of the recent national policy announcements relevant to the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board.

The announcement headings were as follows:

1. Changes in the Department for Education (DfE);
2. FE and Skills Funding;
3. Ofsted – Education Inspection Framework (EIF);
4. Curriculum Reforms;
5. LCR Apprenticeship Hub;
6. Brexit Council and Brexit Executive Team;
7. Growth Platform – A new company to deliver growth for Liverpool City Region;
8. Local Industrial Strategy; and
9. Alstom – Social Mobility Foundation for Liverpool;

RESOLVED: That the updates be noted.

ELS26 THE BRINDLEY THEATRE

The Board received a presentation from the Brindley Arts and Events Manager which included an update on the Theatre's successes and future priorities.

Information was provided on external and internal improvements since 2017; the new Website; how income was generated; how customers bought their tickets; and future regeneration opportunities. It was noted that 50% of the Brindley's customers were from outside the Borough.

The Board discussed the possibility of using the green space outside The Brindley for outdoor events in the future; an area that benefits from being in the Town Centre and with free parking. It was noted that this site was being surveyed at the moment in order to progress this. The possibility of encouraging inward investors to the Town

Centre was discussed and the Operational Directors, Environment and Community, and Economy, Enterprise and Economy were working collaboratively on this.

Members welcomed the positive progress being made to promote The Brindley Theatre as an important visitor destination. The Officer's presentation would be sent to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

Operational
Director -
Community &
Environment

ELS27 BOROUGH OF CULTURE CONSULTATION

The Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, invited Members to attend a consultation which will explore the themes identified for Halton's Borough of Culture Year in 2021.

The Board was advised that the award of Liverpool City Region Borough of Culture was inspired by the UK City of Culture Programme which followed Liverpool's European Capital of Culture in 2008. This new initiative was launched in 2018 as Liverpool celebrated its 10th Anniversary as the UK's only European Capital of Culture.

It was noted that the Borough of Culture initiative was a non-competitive process which would rotate round the City Region with the aim of encouraging each Borough to collaboratively develop its local talent and potential, whilst reflecting the ambitions and aims of the Regional Culture and Creativity Strategy, which looked to build sustainable capacity across the City Region.

Further, Members were advised the aim of Halton's Borough of Culture Year was to increase participation in quality cultural activity across Halton, helping more people to experience the arts and to benefit from the role that culture could play in transforming lives, improving health and wellbeing, reducing social isolation, increasing community cohesion, inspiring creativity, supporting learning and making Halton a great place to live and work. It was reported that this would be delivered under the banner of 'Celebrate Halton' and would look to celebrate Halton's past, present and future, through a programme of activity ranging from small community led activities to large scale events which bring in national / international artists.

Further to discussions, the following further information was noted:

- Funding of £200k was available for Halton's Borough of Culture Year;
- Halton's had its own talented artists and these would be identified and invited to join in the celebrations;
- Many community groups had expressed an interest in taking part in the consultation, which could be arranged;
- A previous year's topic group was focussed on culture; the findings of which would be revisited and hopefully used;
- It was important that local people were aware of the historical heritage and culture of where they lived but many did not, it was hoped that this event would inspire and appeal to all people and communities; and
- It was agreed that this opportunity needed to be maximised for the legacy of the Borough and for the younger generation, so input from everyone was welcomed.

It was confirmed that due to the Election on 12 December, the original date of the consultation event had been cancelled. Once the new date was known, Members would be advised.

RESOLVED: That Members of the Board are welcome to attend the consultation session to give their views on Halton's Borough of Culture Year themes.

Operational Director -
Economy, Enterprise &
Property

ELS28 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS 2019/20 - QUARTER 2

The Board received the performance management reports for Quarter 2 of 2019-20 (1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019) 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 2019-20 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. Also, progress concerning the implementation of any high risk

mitigation measures relevant to this Board was included.

Further to Members' queries clarification was provided to some points as follows:

- The use of local businesses for the new leisure centre build on Moor Lane was reflected in the social value clauses contained in the contract with the Wates Group;
- There had been an impact on all gyms in Widnes Town Centre since the opening of the one in the old BHS outlet;
- It was noted that the gym at Kingsway Leisure Centre had an offer '10 months for the price of 12', which was competing with this;
- There had been an improvement in the Community and Environment overspend since the end of Q2 (September); this would be reflected in Q3 figures; and
- The loss of the Halton Suite function room and the gym had impacted on the income for the Stadium.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 2 performance management reports be received.

Meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.