

**REPORT TO:** Business Efficiency Board

**DATE:** 12 March 2014

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Efficiency Programme Update

**WARDS:** All

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To inform the Board of progress made to date with the Efficiency Programme (refer to Appendix 1).

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board is asked to note the contents of the report.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Up to date workstream information is available via the Efficiency Programme Office's team site at: <http://hbc/Teams/EFFIC/Pages/Home.aspx>

### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None identified at this stage. Activity within the Efficiency Programme may result in recommendations to change policies as individual workstreams progress.

### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

It should be noted that since commencing in 2009, the Efficiency Programme, and activity associated with it, has identified savings in the region of nearly £12m. This has assisted the Council in the difficult task of dealing with the budget gap.

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

The Efficiency Programme is designed to improve the effectiveness of services across the authority and reduce costs associated with service delivery. This affects all of the Council's priorities.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

Given the financial constraints facing the Council in the immediate and medium terms, failure to continue to progress Efficiency Programme workstreams into future stages may result in the Efficiency Programme not achieving its objectives – primarily cost reduction. This could result in services being underfunded, with departments unable to meet the costs of staff and other resources required to deliver to the community of Halton.

As resources become ever more restricted, the organisation should remain aware of the possibility of ‘double counting’ of savings. The Efficiency Programme Office and Financial Management Division have worked together, and continue to do so to manage this risk.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

N/A

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

**Halton Council Efficiency Programme**

**Progress update – September 2013**

Progress to date against each of the current workstreams is given below.

**Review of Child Protection (Children in Need Service) (Wave 4)**

This workstream has now concluded. The Efficiency Review recommended the placing of additional administrative support into the service, which has resulted in an increase in productive Social Worker time.

An examination of the utilisation of Inglefield Short Breaks Centre took place and indicated a range of potential uses to build on the services currently provided at Inglefield. Some of these have been adopted and the facility is now generating income through the provision of short breaks capacity to neighbouring authorities. Other potential opportunities are being progressed by the service.

The workstream is now closed. There was no savings target for this workstream, however productivity has increased and additional income is now being generated as a result.

**Review of Employment, Learning and Skills (Wave 4)**

This review has now concluded, and has been closed. Savings of £230,000 were generated from this review against a target of £200,000.

**Review of Intermediate Care – Adult Social Care (Wave 4)**

The As-Is report for this workstream was considered by the Efficiency Programme Board in mid-December. A range of improvement opportunities are now being followed up. These will be reported back to the Efficiency Programme Board in the coming months.

**Review of Library Services (Wave 5)**

The As-Is phase of this workstream has been completed and the As-Is report was considered by the Efficiency Programme Board in December. Work is now commencing on developing To-Be options for future delivery of the service.

### **Review of Learning & Achievement (Wave 5)**

The As-Is phase of this workstream has been split and two reports will be produced. One relates to the 0-19 Division and will be considered by the Efficiency Programme Board at the end of March. A further report related to the 0-25 Inclusion Division will be produced in shortened form, as the service is already considering how it needs to work in the future to respond to the changes to be implemented as a result of the Children & Families Bill, particularly around Special Educational Needs Reform. The work of the Efficiency Programme Office will link into this.

### **Review of Halton Supported Housing Network (Wave 5)**

The As-Is for this workstream will be presented to the Efficiency Programme Board in at the end of March 2014.

### **Supplier Relationship Review (Wave 5)**

The early stages of work have been completed on this pilot workstream, which is being delivered jointly by the Efficiency Programme Office and the Procurement Division. Initial analysis is underway to examine spend within (and outside of) a small selection of contracts that are part way through their term. Once this analysis has been completed, the project will engage with the relevant service departments and highlight opportunities to seek efficiencies that can be passed on to the Council.

### **Review of Highways Services (Wave 5)**

Service areas to be in scope are Bridge & Highway Maintenance Division, Highway Development Division, and Traffic. This review will commence later in the year.