

REPORT TO: Business Efficiency Board
DATE: 11 June 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 contents of the report be noted.

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

There are none.

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

There are none under the meaning of the Act.

Halton Council Efficiency Programme

Progress update – June 2014

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

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

The Efficiency Programme Office and Service Management are currently working on 'To-Be' options, with a view to assessing findings and savings potential.

Indications are that the potential for financial savings is low, but there is scope for improvement in some business processes.

Review of Library Services (Wave 5)

The development of initial 'To-Be' options for future service delivery is concluding and these will be scheduled for consideration by the Programme Board during June.

Review of Learning & Achievement (Wave 5)

The 'As-Is' report for the 0 – 19 Division was considered by the Programme Board at the end of April. There are a number of options to be followed up as a result of this review, which are now being coordinated.

The Programme Office is working with the 0 – 25 Inclusion Division on the development of an appropriate structural model to accommodate new practices and process brought about by the national reform of Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Review of Halton Supported Housing Network (Wave 5)

The 'As-Is' report for HSHN was considered by the Programme Board at the end of April. This included detail on management and staffing arrangements, service provision, rotas, costs and activity. Opportunities to generate efficiencies and savings in the service are now being considered and will be drawn up into 'To-Be' options.

Supplier Relationship Review (Wave 5)

As part of the review, a number of the Council's external contracts have been selected on a pilot basis to be examined in order to establish the potential for efficiencies within existing contracts.

This links to Procurement activity and the workstream is being delivered jointly by the Efficiency and Procurement functions.

A report on the childcare voucher scheme contract has presented to the Programme

Board and a number of actions are being followed up to attempt to secure better value for money in this area.

The Council's security contracts are currently being reviewed. The findings of this tranche of the pilot will be presented to the Programme Board at its next meeting.

Review of Highways Services (Wave 5)

Service areas to be in scope are Bridge & Highway Maintenance Division, Highway Development Division, and Traffic.

Baseline information is currently being compiled for this review and an Outline Business Case will be presented to the Programme Board at its next meeting.